

# Patterns Here, There, and Everywhere

This lesson was created as a supplement to the *Patterns Here, There, and Everywhere* program at the National Building Museum. It is designed to be used in your classroom independently, or as an activity before or after a school program at the Museum. For more information about and to register for the National Building Museum's school programs, visit <http://www.nbm.org/schools-educators/school-visit/>.

The *Patterns Here, There, and Everywhere* program introduces pre-kindergarten through second grade students to patterns and helps students understand their presence in architecture, in other media, and in their everyday lives. Patterns are found everywhere and can help students make connections and predict what will come next. They help young people make sense of the world by organizing it into groupings that can be easily understood. Recognizing patterns will create a foundation for analyzing problems and designing solutions.

## National Building Museum

Created by an act of Congress in 1980, the National Building Museum explores, celebrates, and illuminates achievements in architecture, design, engineering, construction, and planning. Since opening its doors in 1985, the Museum has become a vital forum for exchanging ideas and information about such topical issues as managing suburban growth, designing and building sustainable communities, and revitalizing urban centers. A private, nonprofit institution, the Museum creates and presents engaging exhibitions and education programs, including innovative curricula for school children.

Over the past two decades, the Museum has created and refined an extensive array of youth programming. Each year, approximately 50,000 young people and their families participate in hands-on learning experiences at the Museum: 2-hour-long school programs for grades K–9; major daylong festivals; drop-in family workshops; programs helping Cub and Girl Scouts earn activity badges; and three innovative outreach programs, lasting between 30 and 60 hours, for secondary school students. The Museum's youth programming has won the Washington, D.C., Mayor's Arts Award for Outstanding Contributions to Arts Education and garnered recognition from the National Endowment for the Arts.



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# Patterns Here, There, and Everywhere: Take a Closer Look

## A Material World

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Collect building materials such as bricks, wood, marble, and stone. Have your students classify them into groups by their size, shape, type, color, or texture. Have each student create a variety of patterns (and rubbings) by separating and mixing the materials. Compare and contrast their work. Have each student display his or her patterns while the class describes them.

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## Abstract Architecture

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Have your students create patterns using vegetables. Slice vegetables (potato, radish, carrot, celery, green pepper) in half for them to use as stamps. Have students dip their vegetable pieces in tempera paint (not too much) and stamp patterns onto butcher block paper. Encourage them to experiment using one vegetable and two or more colors to make a pattern and then use two or more vegetables and one color to make a different pattern.

Using markers, have your students transform their vegetable forms into buildings by adding roofs, windows, doors, towers, columns, and other architectural elements. Be sure their buildings form patterns.

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## Exploring Patterns in Nature

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During a walk outside, identify and examine patterns in nature. For example, bark not only helps protect a tree, but its patterns can tell you what type of tree it is. Have students collect materials to create their own pattern-inspired art. Some suggestions are leaves, sticks, nuts, pine needles,

grass, flowers, and pebbles. Encourage them to work in pairs and take turns creating and extending patterns. One student can create a pattern, and his/her partner can identify and extend it. Challenge your students to create a pattern and then repeat it using different objects.

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## Daring Designers

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Organize a Pattern Day when all students wear patterns to school. Fabrics are full of patterns (e.g., stripes, polka dots). Invite clothing or interior designers to discuss why and how patterns are used on fabrics to make them interesting. Contact your local paint and fabric store for wallpaper or fabric remnants. Using large sheets of paper, have your students pretend to be designers responsible for a fresh, new furniture or clothing line. Have them cut and paste a variety of samples using the fabric remnants to create their own designs which they must "sell" (the concept) to the class.

