

Topic: Let's Talk Turkey!

Have you ever seen a live turkey? What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about turkeys? Would you find Turkeys on a farm?

One of the various birds we can find on a farm are turkeys! Some turkeys are domesticated, meaning they live on the farm in flocks, or large group of turkeys. If they are not raised on a farm, then these turkeys are considered wild. Wild turkeys spend the night in trees. Wild turkeys are native to Northern Mexico and Eastern United States. They were first domesticated in Mexico and brought to Europe in the 16th century.

It is possible that the name 'turkey' was adapted from the Native American word for turkey, which was 'firkee'. Native Americans hunted wild turkeys as early as 1000 A.D.

Can you think of what they would use these parts of the turkey for? They ate the turkey meat and utilized other body parts for tools. The bones were made into "turkey-caller" instruments. The feathers could be used as decorative accessories on clothing or as stabilizers for the hunting arrows. The early European settlers used turkeys as a source of food as well.

Since turkeys are a type of bird, do you think they can fly like other birds?

Some turkeys are great at flying! In fact, wild turkey flying speed can reach up to 55 miles per hour when traveling short distances, and they can glide as far as a mile without flapping their wings! Most domesticated turkeys, such as the broad breasted white turkeys, do not fly.

Why do you think farmers like to domesticate Broad Breasted White Turkeys?



Broad breasted white turkey

- Commercially the most widely used domesticated turkey for meat.
- Bred by crossing White Holland and Broad Breasted Bronze turkeys.
- Large sized birds that are used mostly for meat.
- Completely white, except for pink legs, black beards, and red caruncles.
- They can grow to weigh between 17 kg (kilograms) and 20 kg – 1 kg is 2.2 lb (pounds), how many pounds is 17 kg?

Pick a breed of turkey and find fun facts about it!

<https://www.roysfarm.com/broad-breasted-white-turkey/>



What are some of the details you notice in the above picture of the Broad Breasted White Turkey?

Turkeys have an usual bare head, which actually change colors when they become excited! They also have a beak, as all other birds do. Hanging over their beak is a red appendage called the snood. Another caruncle that is found on turkeys is the wattle, which hangs under the turkey's beak.

Just like any other bird, turkeys lay eggs to reproduce. On average, a hen, or female turkey, can lay up to 115 eggs in a 30-week time period! We can differentiate hens from toms, or male turkeys, with the following:

- ❖ Toms are larger and have longer legs
- ❖ Toms grow a beard of long black feathers in the middle of their chest, while most hens don't.
- ❖ Toms have a larger head and wattle than hens.
- ❖ Toms' snoods usually is long enough to hang down the side of their face.
- ❖ Toms gobble, while hens make a click-cluck sound.

Click on the YouTube link to hear what a turkey's gobble sounds like:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gHhHH7pwYE>

Can you try to make that gobbling sound?

Toms not only gobble, they stand tall and strut about, gobbling loudly while holding their heads high. On a quiet day, a turkey's gobble can be heard a mile away!

Vocabulary:

- **Domesticated:** tamed and kept as a pet or on a farm
- **Wild:** living out in nature, not under human care
- **Tom** or **Gobbler:** a male turkey
- **Hen:** a female turkey
- **Poult:** a baby turkey
- **Rafter** or **flock:** a group of turkeys
- **Caruncle:** a small, fleshy appendage



Name: _____ Date: _____
Age: _____

Turkey trivia

Take a moment to answer the following questions. Use the information sheet to help you find the answers! Email your answers and a picture of your craft to us at hfmuseum@gmail.com.

What is the American Indian name for the turkey?

How fast can a wild turkey fly?

Where do wild turkeys spend the night?

On average, how many eggs can a hen lay throughout a 30-day period?



How far away can a tom's gobble be heard on a quiet day?

What part of the turkey changes color when the turkey is excited?

What is the flap of skin that hangs over the turkey's beak called?



Turkey craft

Materials:

- Construction Paper
- Glue Stick
- Scissors
- Googly eyes (opt.)

Instructions:

1. Trace a circle as big as you can on half of a construction paper color of brown, white, or black.
2. Trace and cut 6 feather shapes of colors of your choice OR Trace your hand and fingers and cut out
3. Glue the trace on the circle.
4. Cut out a small yellow triangle for the beak. Glue in center of circle.
5. Cut out a red sliver (for the snood). Glue it so it hangs from the beak
6. Glue googly eyes OR color in eyes on the circle.