



Water-Themed Lessons & Activities

from **FAIRMOUNT WATER WORKS**

Freshwater Mussel Survey 101 (Home version)

Introduction:

Once plentiful in the Delaware River Basin, freshwater mussels are now rare. Many scientists along with volunteers are helping survey our local waters to see if any can still be found. Each species look a little different and color and shape are some ways to help identify them. Scientists are working hard to reintroduce native species into our waterways because they are incredible ecosystem engineers with a natural ability to clean up to 20 gallons of water each. Now that is an ecological rock star!

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to

- Identify different species of mussels by shape

Materials:

- Mussel activity sheet (provided)
 - Pencil
-

Activity Procedure:

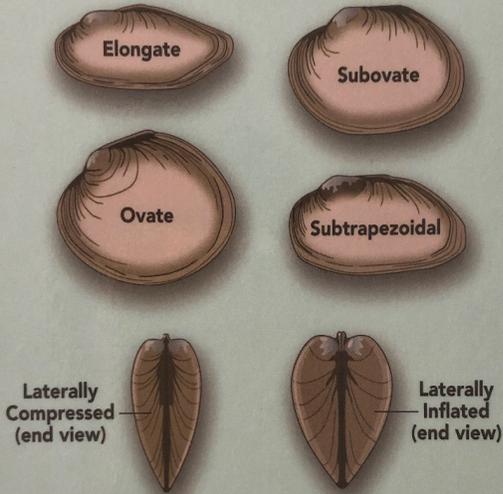
1. Use the attached sheet to study the common shapes of different mussel species
2. Using the mussel photographs, identify and sort them into boxes on the table by name.
3. How do you think these mussels got their names? Draw a new species of mussel from your imagination and name it!

Suggested Grade Level: 3-5th

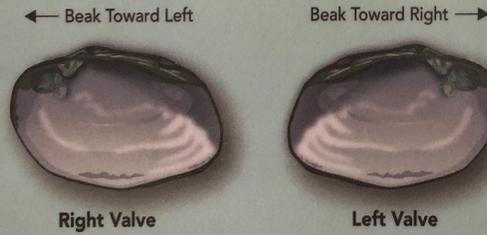
Suggested Subject Area(s): Environmental Science

Common Shell Shapes

In searching for and identifying freshwater mussels, it is helpful to understand some technical words that scientists use for identification purposes.



RIGHT VALVE VS. LEFT VALVE



Elongate	Subovate	Ovate	Subtrapezoidal

Eastern Pondmussel



Eastern Pearlshell



Eastern Elliptio



Tidewater Mucket



Yellow Lampmussel



Green Floater



Triangle Floater



Dwarf Wedgemussel



Brook Floater



ANSWERS (Don't Peak)

Elongate	Subovate	Ovate	Subtrapezoidal
Eastern Pondmussel	Tidewater Mucket	Yellow Lampmussel	Eastern Elliptio
Eastern Pearlshell	Triangle Floater		Dwarf Wedgemussel
	Green Floater		Brook Floater