The master creator of tessellating shapes was Dutch graphic artist, M.C. Escher (1898-1972). He would take recognizable figures and inventively tessellate the shapes so that they looked like a flock of birds, an army of frogs, or a school of fish. *(Show worksheet)*

Students will need tessellation graph paper (on card stock), dot paper, a pencil, scissors, tape, and colored pencils/markers.

Hand out the Tessellation graph paper. Instruct students to cut out a 3 square by 3 square section. They draw a shape along the right edge of the 3X3 and inside the square. Cut out the shape and slide it across to the left edge of the 3X3 square so that it extends outward from the edge and tape it on. Then draw a shape along the inside bottom, cut it out and slide it up to extend beyond the top of the paper and tape it on. Tell students that simple designs work best (such as the design at the bottom of the page) and remind them to **not cut off any corners**. The students need to be very exact when placing the cut pieces across from where they were cut or the pattern will not tessellate.

Once they have formed their new shape, they are to use that copy as their tracing template. Lay the shape on a sheet of dot paper so that each corner meets, and then trace. Repeat until the dot paper is filled.

Once they have made their copies, look at the template and encourage students to add their own interpretive details with crayons/markers.

Finally, they should add these same details to each of the shapes in their tessellation. Students may color their shapes using two different colors. Students should alternate colors to create a pattern. Then have students trace the outlines of the tessellations with black permanent markers to give the art work a completed look.
M. C. Escher’s Tessellations