



Learning About Shapes

Children who learn about shapes are building skills that will help them with reading, writing, and math. A child learns to recognize circles and triangles has gained skills that will help him recognize numbers and letters.

Even babies can see and feel shapes. But they need help learning the name of each shape. Learning about shapes also can help them understand other signs and symbols.

Talk with your child about shapes as he or she plays and explores. When your child throws, pushes, and squeezes things, explain what's happening. Something that is round can roll. Things that are round on the bottom can rock back and forth. And it could hurt to bump into something that is pointy.

Here are some activities you can try with your child.

Foods with Shape — Experiment making food with various shapes. Use shapes that have to do with the seasons, holidays, or other things that are important to your family. For example, you could make snowman pancakes, heart sandwiches, or a soccer-ball cake.

Find Shapes — Point to shapes as you look around a room, while you are on a walk, or while you look at a book.

Cut-Out Shapes — Cut out shapes of objects that are familiar to your child. Play a game with them, putting them in groups of shapes.

Make Shapes — With your child, use a pen or marker to make large, round motions on a piece of paper without lifting the pen. Overlap your lines several times. Look at what you drew. Do you see shapes between the lines you drew? Color each space. Talk about the shapes you created.

Links

1. The Science Museum of Minnesota has information that helps children learn about shapes.
<http://www.sci.mus.mn.us/sln/tf/nav/shapescluster.html>

2. A home childcare provider has listed many ideas for activities with shapes. <http://www.icomm.ca/daycare/cardsi13.html#CIR1450>
3. This site by National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Illuminations Development Team is to help children learn about math concepts. This page is on shapes. <http://illuminations.nctm.org/lessonplans/prek-2/shape/>

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