



The Shape of Things

By Dayle Ann Dodds

The colorful illustrations in this book help children to learn about all of the different shapes that are a part of their world. Simple rhymes help reinforce the concept of different shapes.

BEFORE READING:

- Show the children the front of the book. Ask them to guess what the book is about.
- Ask them to name the different shapes they see on the front cover.

WHILE READING:

- Stop at any time if there is something you or the children would like to talk about.
- Ask them questions so that they can connect what is happening in the book to things they already know about. Try some of these ideas:
 - What shape is the home that you live in?
 - What other things can you think of that are shaped in a triangle?
 - Where else have you seen something that is a circle?

AFTER READING:

- Spend some time talking about the story. Ask the children things like:
 - What color was the triangle?
 - What shape was the kite?
 - What was your favorite color?

Read this book several times to the children. Hearing the same story again and again helps them learn new words and understand the ideas they hear better. Each day, pick a different activity to do with the children after reading “The Shape of Things.”



MATH AND SCIENCE

Find pairs of objects of different shapes and sizes around the room. Try things like bowls from the kitchen, towels from the bathroom, empty toilet paper and paper towel rolls, or anything else you can think of. Put the pairs next to each other in front of the children. Ask them to tell you which one is bigger and which one is smaller.

THINKING SKILLS

Ask the children what they think they would need to fly a kite. Talk about the materials they would use to make their kite and what their kite would look like. Ask them to describe what it would need to be like outside for the kite to fly. Encourage them to tell you how high their kites would go and how they would get there too.

PRETEND PLAY

Pretend you are at a carnival and set up carnival games for the children to play. Use clean, empty plastic bottles and set up a bottle toss. Instead of a ball, use a rolled-up sock for them to toss at the bottles. Encourage them to toss a rolled-up sock into a large pot or mixing bowl for another game. Set up an obstacle course for the children to run through using pillows and rolled up blankets too.

READING READINESS

Ask the children to point to the shapes in the illustrations as you read the words. You can also have them point to the other pictures as you read. For example, have them point to the ocean or the seagull on the page as you read those words.

ART

Using construction paper of different colors or white paper that you color together cut out different shapes. Then, put them together to see what different things you can make. Try making a house, a boat, or a train just like in the book.

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Hold different-shaped blocks or cutout shapes in your hand and sing, “Do you know what shape this is, what shape this is, what shape this is? Do you know shape this is I’m holding in my hand?” Use the tune The Muffin Man as you sing.

MOTOR SKILLS

Make your own train together. Take turns being the engine and the caboose. Place your hands on one child’s shoulders or their hands on your waist and lead the group around the room. Move forwards and backwards as a train and do not forget to make the train noises.

For more information, visit: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/early_childhood_development