



Activity Ideas

Stuart J. Murphy
MathStart®

Circus Shapes

Recognizing Shapes

Level 1 Ages 3+

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Recognizing shapes is the beginning of geometric thinking.

First the elephants form a circle, then the monkeys make a square. Circus shapes are everywhere! Can you find all the circles, squares, triangles and rectangles? Illustrated by Edward Miller.

DC Standard 4.4, Geometry and Spatial Sense

Children begin to demonstrate an understanding of shape, size, position, direction, and movement, and they describe and classify real objects by shape.

- Ask the children to retell the story using the names of the shapes: “circle,” “triangle,” “square,” and “rectangle.”
- Look for objects around the classroom or the house and name their shapes. For example, clocks on a wall, or buttons on a sweater, or books, tiles, rugs, kitchen towels, and windows. Which are triangles? circles? squares or rectangles?
- Go on a "Shape Hunt" in your neighborhood. Create a chart with each different shape -- circle, triangle, square and rectangle -- drawn at the top of its own column. Encourage the children to make a mark for each shape "sighting." Then add up all the marks and see how times each shape was found.
- Using construction paper, cut out circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles and mix them all up. Together sort them by shape, asking the children to say the names of the shapes. Ask them to draw the shapes and then tell you what they are.

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