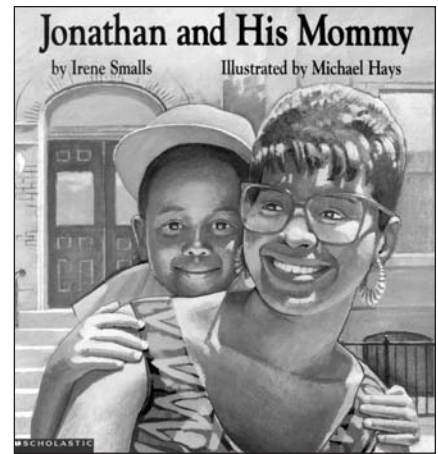


Shape Walk

Children go for a walk in their immediate neighborhood. During that walk they look for and talk about geometric shapes in the environment.



Preparation

What's Needed

A selection of pattern/attribute shapes

Things to Consider

Children will need help in training their eyes to look for shapes. Start by helping them find shapes that are very close, at eye or ground level. Some children will need to trace the outline of a shape with their fingers before they can say what it is. Encourage children to do this.

Look at the shapes page in the appendix to learn (or be reminded of) the name of each shape. You will want to do this investigation many times. Combine the shape walk with other walks.

Children will find many creative ways to play with shapes. Make them available for daily play.

Key Standards Children Practice



Geometry and Spatial Sense: matching, naming and describing basic shapes



Science as Inquiry
Observing and gathering information when noticing and comparing shapes



The Investigation

Step by Step

1. Engage children in a discussion about a particular shape, such as a rectangle. Hold up the rectangle. Ask children what they notice about the rectangle. Listen for words that describe its shape, size, name and other attributes.
2. With the children, look carefully around your room for other rectangles. You'll be surprised at how many rectangles you and the children will see—books, ceiling tiles, windows, etc.
3. Give each child a rectangle. Go on a shape walk. Tell the children you will be looking for rectangles. As you walk, be sure to stop frequently and look all around for rectangles.
4. Repeat this investigation several times, focusing on a single shape each time.

Talk With Children

When you see a shape, describe its position to children. Use positional words such as *over*, *under*, *behind*, *on top of*, *next to*, *in front of*, and other spatial words. Encourage children to use these positional words.

Encourage children to talk about the shapes they see. Ask questions such as *How is that rectangle similar to your pattern block?* and *How are those two triangles different?*



Observe Children

Are children noticing shapes, but mislabeling them? Praise them for finding such shapes and let them know the correct name. Show them the pattern/attribute block that goes with the name.

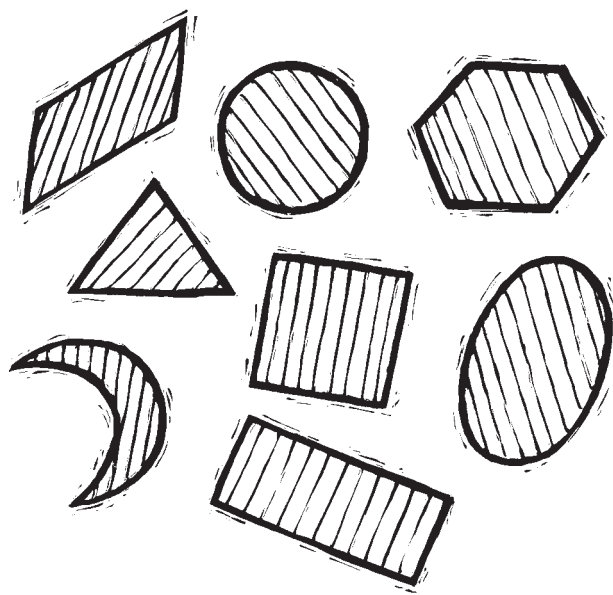
Notice if children see the shape in a whole structure, or just the parts of it. For example, do children notice a circle shape in a church window, or do they notice that the side of the church is one huge rectangle?

Do children use positional words when they show you where a shape is?

Extend Children's Learning

Go on a shape search. First do this in your room then try an outdoor shape search. Instead of looking for just one shape you and the children will try to find and name as many shapes as you can both indoors and outdoors. Keep a list of all the different shapes you see and where you see the shape:

We saw doors that were rectangles, we saw a sidewalk block that was a square.



Connect With Families

Display *Jonathan and His Mommy* near your bulletin board along with cut-out shapes, photographs of shapes you saw on your walk and observations children made on the shape walk.

Post the following on your bulletin board:

Shape Walk

We went on a Shape Walk. We all looked for the same shape—circles, triangles, rectangles, squares or another kind of shape. We kept track of how many shapes we found. On our Shape Walk, we practiced:

- matching, naming and describing basic shapes
- learning about the characteristics of the basic shapes
- gathering information from the environment
- using positional words such as *over*, *under*, *near*, *next to*, etc.

