Mathematics

Recognizes shapes

Children recognize the differences in shapes even if they do not know their names yet. When children explore different shapes, they are using the observation of same and different. Shape recognition gives children a process through which they can describe, observe, and discuss the world around them. Ask your child to talk about the characteristics of basic shapes and give them language to help describe the shapes (e.g., round, four corners, three sides).[*]

ACTIVITY IDEAS

Snap a Shape

Use your cell phone to take pictures of basic shape items, such as a clock, window, door, or picture frame. Sit down with your child and have him identify each shape.

Missing Shape?

Cut three shapes from newspaper or construction paper and place them in front of your child. Have her close her eyes while you remove one shape. Ask your child to identify the shape that is missing.

Grocery Shape Search

At the grocery store, ask your child to find items that are triangles, circles, rectangles, and other basic shapes.

I Spy Shapes

Play the "I Spy" game with shapes, including shapes in the environment. You could say, "I Spy a shape that has four sides. The sides of this shape are all the same length." She might say, "A square . . . the window is a square!"

Shape Hunt

Cut out basic paper shapes and place them in a bag. Have your child pull out one shape and name it, then go on a similar shape hunt through the house or yard.

Shape Stories

Read a shape book with your child, labeling and describing each shape. You could say, "A square has four sides that are the same length." Have her count the sides. As she gets familiar with the shapes, have her describe the shapes to you.

[*] National Research Council. (2009). *Mathematics Learning in Early Childhood: Paths Toward Excellence and Equity*. Committee on Early Childhood Mathematics, Christopher T. Cross, Taniesha A. Woods, and Heidi Schweingruber, Editors. Center for Education, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

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