



Teacher Resource

Ages  
3-6

# 101 Colors and Shapes Activities



- Includes 101 Ideas for Teaching Colors and Shapes
- Spans Multiple Curriculum Areas
- Activities Individually Numbered and Titled
- Supports Popular Kindergarten Standards



# 101

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## Colors and Shapes

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### ACTIVITIES



Ages 3–6

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# EARLY CHILDHOOD

Early Childhood Standards Correlation	Activity
<b>1. Social and Emotional Development</b>	
a. Seeks to be independent and recognizes own unique abilities. Shows perseverance and resiliency.	1, 2, 3
b. Shows respect for self, others, and property.	4
c. Demonstrates proper care of their body.	2, 5
d. Demonstrates an increasing awareness of and ability to control his or her emotions in age-appropriate ways.	6
e. Is aware of own needs and is sensitive to those of others. Wants to be understood and understands others.	5, 10
f. Demonstrates a desire to learn and explore. Shows interest in the world and people in his or her environment.	6, 16, 45, 49, 61
g. Is interested in interacting with others and participates in activities and discussions. Expresses needs and wants appropriately.	3, 4, 7, 8, 49, 65, 73, 83
h. Listens well and follows rules.	60, 84, 85, 86, 90, 95, 97
<b>2. Language and Literacy</b>	
a. Uses language to tell stories and share information while maintaining a topic. Can retell stories and events.	9, 10, 11, 18
b. Develops oral language skills. Speaks understandably using most rules of grammar.	12
c. Demonstrates appropriate language.	12, 13, 14
d. Uses a variety of vocabulary words to share concepts, experiences, and feelings.	14, 15, 16, 83
e. Develops oral language by listening actively. Uses prior knowledge to make predictions and construct meaning.	17
f. Demonstrates an enjoyment of and understanding of the importance of reading. Understands concept of print.	9, 11, 18
g. Becomes familiar with and identifies letters and letter names.	19
h. Begins to use print concepts to write text.	13, 15, 19
i. Begins to develop phonemic awareness.	20
<b>3. Math</b>	
a. Develops an understanding of numerals in the environment, including matching, counting, and grouping. Understands what numbers represent.	25, 39, 67, 70, 78, 81
b. Begins to understand simple shape concepts and can recognize and identify shapes in the environment.	3, 8, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
c. Is able to make comparisons and understands the concept of measurement.	35, 36

# STANDARDS CORRELATION

Early Childhood Standards Correlation	Activity
d. Understands patterns and their relationships. Is able to use this information to construct meaning about the world and make predictions.	25, 27, 28, 29, 34, 37, 38
e. Develops visual discrimination skills.	21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30
<b>4. Science</b>	
a. Communicates observations and explorations. Shares information in a variety of ways.	39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45
b. Demonstrates and develops a sense of curiosity about the world through observation and participation in activities of exploration and discovery.	39, 40, 41, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52
c. Makes connections and comparisons, and notices patterns and processes in the environment.	42, 43, 45, 46, 52
<b>5. Music and Movement</b>	
a. Participates in a variety of musical activities. Creates music through experimentation and improvisation with a variety of musical instruments.	53, 62
b. Participates in dance and creative movement.	54, 55, 57
c. Explores own voice as musical instrument. Understands body is needed to use instruments and participates in musical creation.	56, 57, 58, 59
d. Uses movement to understand new concepts.	54, 55, 56, 58, 60, 61, 63
<b>6. Visual Arts</b>	
a. Recognizes colors and forms.	28, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71
b. Can put shapes and lines together to create a design.	65, 66, 67, 69, 72, 73
c. Uses a variety of art media and develops art skills through experimentation and exploration using a variety of materials and processes.	68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77
<b>7. Dramatic Play</b>	
a. Develops positive sense of self through participation in dramatic play activities. Explores emotions, relationships, and imagination. Acts out a variety of roles.	78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83
<b>8. Motor Skills</b>	
a. Develops age-appropriate gross motor skills. Demonstrates a sense of balance and progression of locomotion skills.	84, 85, 86
b. Develops age-appropriate perceptual motor skills. Demonstrates knowledge of parts of the body and direction of movement. Demonstrates understanding of directional vocabulary.	87, 88, 89, 90
c. Uses age-appropriate gross manipulative skills. Develops skills in catching and throwing.	88, 91
d. Develops fine-motor skills and eye-hand coordination.	87, 89, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101



# INTRODUCTION

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Colors and shapes are essential components of the early childhood curriculum. They form a foundation for geometry, patterning, and a variety of visual and spatial skills. As children see these concepts reflected in the world around them, they become enthusiastic and engaged learners.

*101 Colors and Shapes Activities* is divided into eight chapters, each one reflecting an early childhood curriculum area. You will find activities to foster the children's social and emotional development, language and literacy skills, and understanding of math concepts. You will also find science activities that strengthen the children's observation and reasoning skills, music and movement activities that get everyone involved, and group art activities that inspire creativity and cooperation. There are also activities for group dramatic play and activities to help children develop their fine and large motor skills. An Early Childhood Standards Correlation on pages 4 and 5 will help you quickly identify activities when focus on a specific skill is desired.

Young children love colors and shapes—and you will find endless opportunities for extending and reinforcing these concepts throughout the day. The ideas in *101 Colors and Shapes Activities* are only the beginning.

# CHAPTER 1

## *Social and Emotional Development*

### 1 CRAYON POSTER

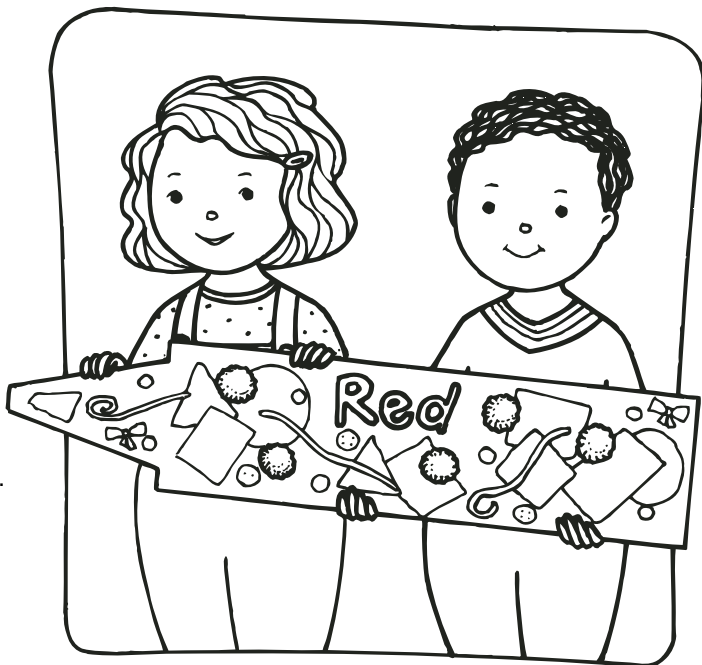
#### Materials

Poster board  
Scissors  
Drawing supplies  
Collage materials  
Glue

#### Activity

When your group is learning a new color, invite them to make a group poster to build collaborative skills and reinforce color concepts. Cut a large crayon shape out of poster board. Set out art supplies such as crayons and collage materials in the designated color. Let the children work together to make a color collage. When the Crayon Poster is dry, cover it with clear self-stick paper for durability. Label it with the name of the color. Display the collage where all children can see it. Have them make a new crayon poster for each color they learn.

- Extension:** Establish an art center where donated materials are sorted by color. Let older children take turns sorting the donated materials and putting them in the art center.
- Variation:** Help children develop motor skills. Have them use finger paints instead of collage materials for a messy hands-on art experience.



# 2 SHAPE SANDWICHES

## Materials

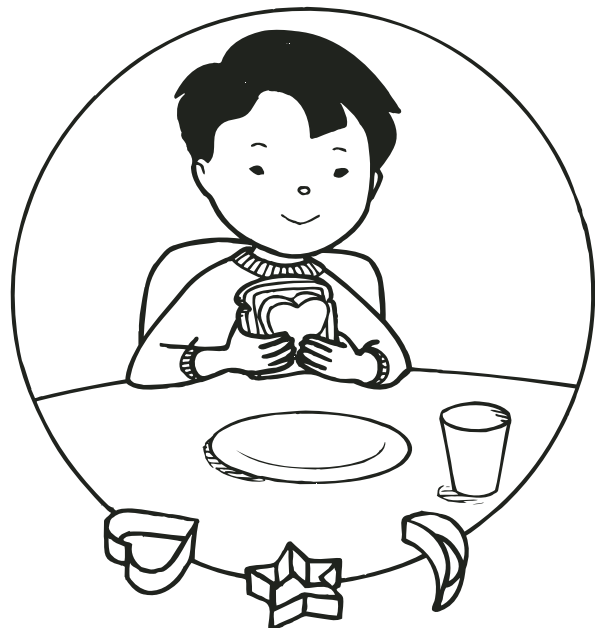
Sliced bread  
Cheese or luncheon meat  
Child-safe knives  
Cookie cutters

## Activity

Cooking is a great way to foster a sense of self-reliance in preschool children. For this simple snack, have the children top slices of bread with cheese or luncheon meat. Provide more bread and a selection of cookie cutters. Have each child choose a cookie cutter and cut a shape from the center of a slice of bread. (This may be easier if the bread is lightly toasted.) As they work, talk about the shapes they have chosen. Finally, have the children finish assembling their Shape Sandwiches.

◎ **Extension:** Top the small bread cut-outs with jam or soft cheese to make dainty open-faced sandwiches, perfect for teddy-bear tea parties.

◎ **Variation:** Use a variety of toppings to make this a lesson in both color and shape. For instance, you might provide orange apricot jam, red strawberry jam, purple grape jelly, and yellow lemon curd. As the children make their sandwiches, encourage them to talk about the colors of the toppings. Have them group the sandwiches according to shape and color.



# 3 HERE'S MY SHAPE

## Materials

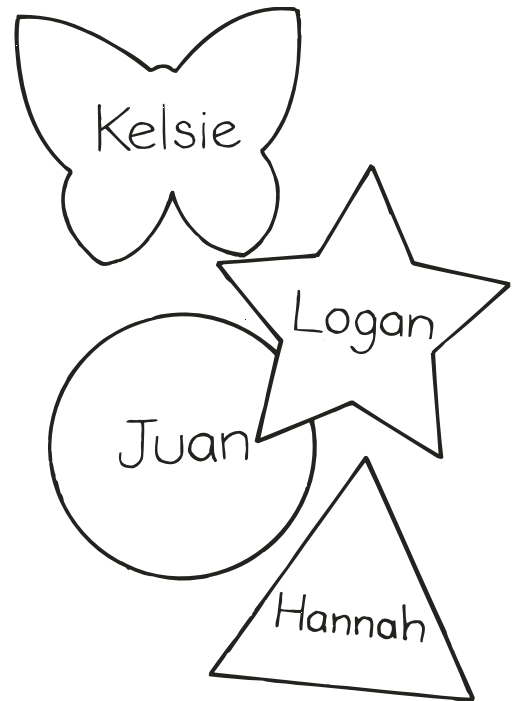
Construction paper  
Scissors

## Activity

Having a unique symbol helps children establish their identity within a group. Try this activity at the beginning of the year, or whenever a new child enters your class. Ahead of time, cut out shapes from assorted colors of construction paper. (Provide more shapes than you have children, and make sure that no two shapes are identical.) As each new child enters the room, invite him or her to choose a shape. Print the child's name on the chosen shape and tape the shape to the child's clothing to make a name tag. Have the children wear their tags throughout the first few days of school as a reminder of the children's names.

**Extension:** Make a supply of tags for each child in his or her chosen shape and color. You will find many uses for these tags throughout the year. For instance, they can be used to identify children and their belongings, to assign children to learning centers, to group them for games, or to list helper chart assignments.

**Variation:** Make a word wall in which children's name tags are displayed according to initial letter.



## 4 COLOR DAY

---

### Materials

Materials will vary.

### Activity

Involve children and their families in your curriculum planning by holding a special day to celebrate each new color you learn. At least a week in advance, send home a note informing families about this special day. Invite the children to dress in the designated color and perhaps to bring in a special item of that color to share with the group. On Color Day, plan activities around the designated color. For instance, on Red Day, children might listen to a retelling of *Little Red Riding Hood*, work with red art supplies, build with red unit blocks, play Red Light, Green Light (Activity 60), and snack on strawberry jam sandwiches.

## 5 BREAKFAST TALK

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### Materials


Chart paper

Pen

Book-making materials

### Activity

During group time, encourage the children to recall what they ate for breakfast. Ask, *What colors were your breakfast foods? What shapes? Can you think of other shapes and colors of foods?* Record the children's responses on chart paper, using a predictable sentence structure. (For instance, *Leila ate square toast.*) Then help them compile their responses in a group book.

 **Extension:** Use this opportunity to talk about how important it is to eat breakfast every day.

# 6 COLORFUL FEELINGS

## Materials

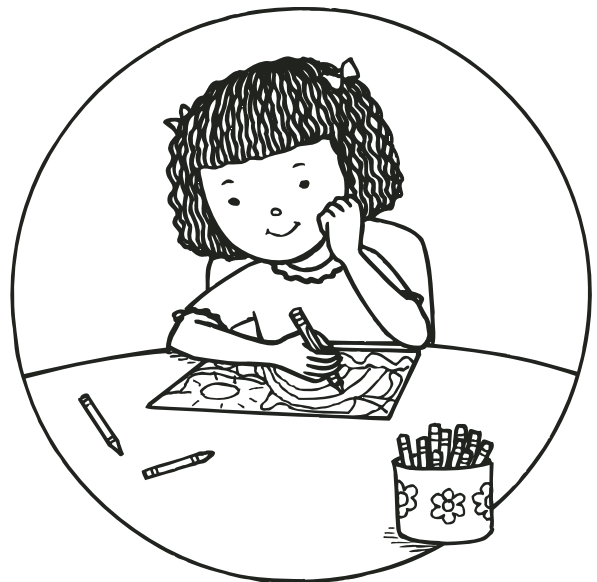
Art books or postcards  
Paper  
Drawing supplies

## Activity

Provide examples of abstract or impressionist art for the children to examine. (The works of Kandinsky and Monet are good choices.) Ask, *How do the shapes and colors make you feel? Do some colors make you feel happy? Do some colors make you feel sad?* Then sit with a small group of children at the art center. Ask them what colors they would use to express their own feelings. *What color is happiness? Sadness? Anger? Frustration? Silliness?* Let each child select a crayon or marker and draw a "Happy Picture," or a picture depicting any other emotion. Make a gallery of colorful feelings pictures for all to enjoy.

☉ **Variation:** Instead of showing the children abstract art, play a recording of instrumental music to set the tone for their drawings. You might choose "The Flight of the Bumblebee," or a selection from *Peter and the Wolf*, *Sleeping Beauty*, or *The Carnival of the Animals*.

☉ **Tip:** If one of the children is finding it difficult to express emotions in an appropriate manner, try letting him or her sit in a quiet place with some art supplies. Many children find drawing to be a soothing activity and some are able to draw more easily than they can speak.




# 7 FIND A PARTNER

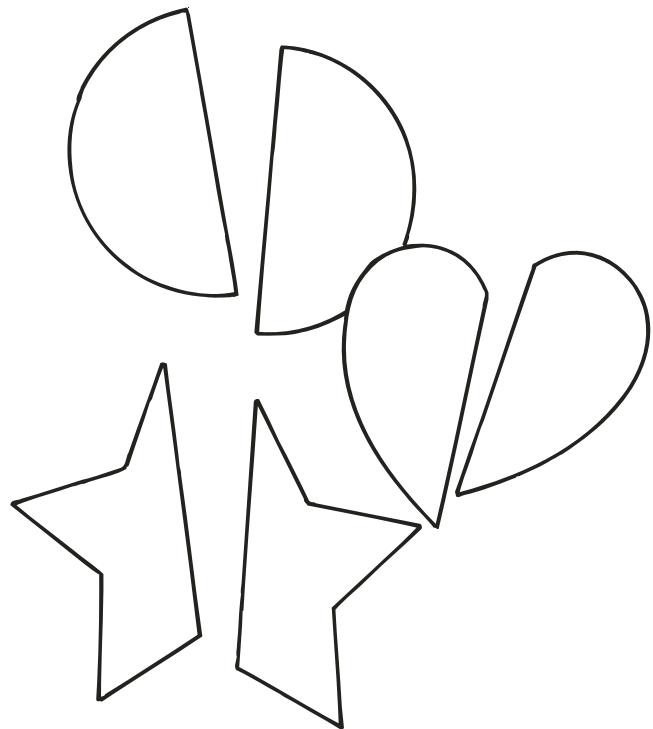
## Materials

Construction Paper  
Scissors  
Large envelope

## Activity

Cut an assortment of shapes, such as circles, squares, triangles, hearts, and stars out of construction paper. Then cut each shape in half to make a two-piece puzzle. Mix up the shapes and put them into a large envelope. Let the children take turns selecting a shape from the envelope. (No peeking!) When everyone has chosen a puzzle piece, have the children put the pieces together. Children with matching puzzle pieces can be partners for the next activity.

 **Extension:** For older children, make the same puzzle in multiple colors. Challenge the children to find the child whose puzzle piece matches theirs in both color and shape. For extra challenge, cut the puzzle shapes into three or four pieces.




# 8 NAME THE MISSING SHAPE

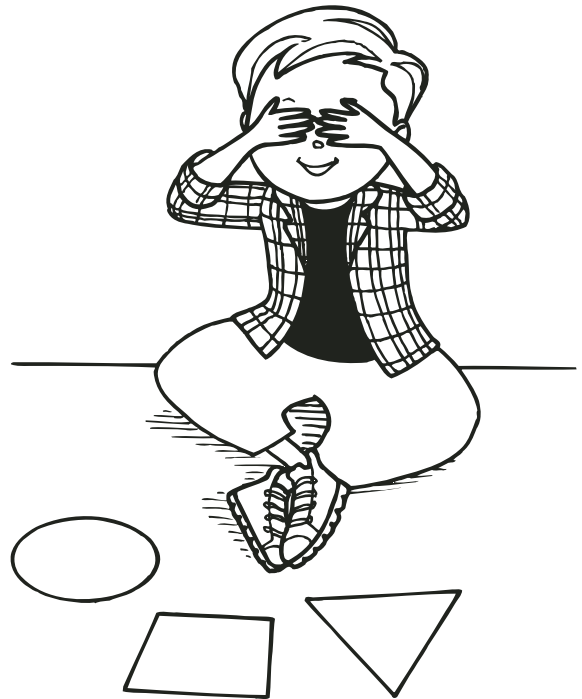
## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors

## Activity

This small-group game is an easy way to assess children's knowledge of shapes. Ahead of time, cut four different shapes from the same color of construction paper. Invite a small group of children to sit with you in a circle. Have them look at the shapes and then have them close their eyes as you remove one shape from the circle. Can the remaining children tell which shape is missing? Once children are familiar with the game, let them take turns hiding the shapes. Call on individuals to name the missing shapes. Continue until all players have had a chance to hide and name the shapes.

 **Variation:** To make this a color game, use the same shape in four different colors. Ask the children to tell which color is missing from the set. For additional challenge, set out an assortment of shapes in a variety of colors. Remove one shape from the group and ask the children to recall both the name and the color of the missing shape.



## CHAPTER 2

# *Language and Literacy*

## 9

## THE STORY OF A CIRCLE

### Materials

Old magazines  
Scissors  
Clear-plastic page protectors  
Self-stick dots

### Activity

Cut interesting full-page pictures from magazines. Insert each picture in a clear-plastic page protector. Add a self-stick circle (available where office supplies are sold) on each page. Let the children take turns investigating the book. They will enjoy finding the circle on each page and making up stories about its adventures. Encourage the children to share their stories with friends and family.

◎ **Hint:** Homemade books are perfect for extending themes. Keep a supply of old magazines on hand for making additions to your classroom library.

◎ **Variation:** Draw faces on the self-stick dots to introduce a variety of circle characters.

◎ **Another Idea:** Use photographs of the children in your group as the background for your book. A digital camera is useful for taking candid shots of children as they are engaged in daily activities or special events.



# 10 ANYTIME EGG HUNT

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## Materials

Plastic eggs  
Small treats

## Activity

Fill plastic eggs with stickers, candies, or other little treats and scatter them in the children's outside play area. (You will need at least one egg per child.) Instruct each child to find one egg. Ask the children to tell what color their egg is and where they found it. Then let them discover the treat hidden inside.

 **Variation:** Let the children take turns hiding the eggs.

# 11 WHO CAN FIND IT?

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## Materials

Picture books

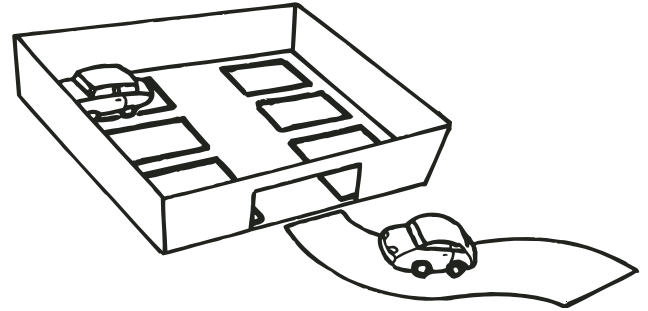
## Activity

Invite a small group of children to join you in a circle. Give each child a book to "read." As the children look at the pictures, ask them to find a particular shape or color. For instance, you might ask, *Can you find all the triangles?* or *Can you find all the yellow things?* Give the children an opportunity to share their books with the group, showing the colors and/or shapes they have found.

# 12 PARKING GARAGE

## Materials

Small toy cars  
Shallow box  
Pen  
Scissors



## Activity

Conversation and play are some of the ways in which children develop vocabulary. This activity is ideal for inspiring reluctant talkers. Select several small toy cars. In the bottom of a shallow box, draw a "parking space" for each car in its matching color. Cut a garage door out of the box. Cut a "driveway" out of the lid. Then set the garage and cars in the block area. Join children as they practice parking the cars in the corresponding parking spots. Ask the children, *How do you know where the cars go? What colors are the cars?*

 **Extension:** Encourage the children to decorate their parking garage with traffic signs and other props.

# 13 SCARF PULL

## Materials

Pillowcase  
Scarves in assorted colors  
Chart paper  
Pen

## Activity

Fill a pillowcase with scarves in various solid colors. (Thrift shops are a good source for inexpensive scarves.) At group time, let the children take turns reaching into the pillowcase, pulling out a scarf, and naming its color. Remind children not to peek! On chart paper, keep a tally of the scarves that are selected. Encourage the children to predict what color will be chosen next.

# 14 I SPY

## Materials

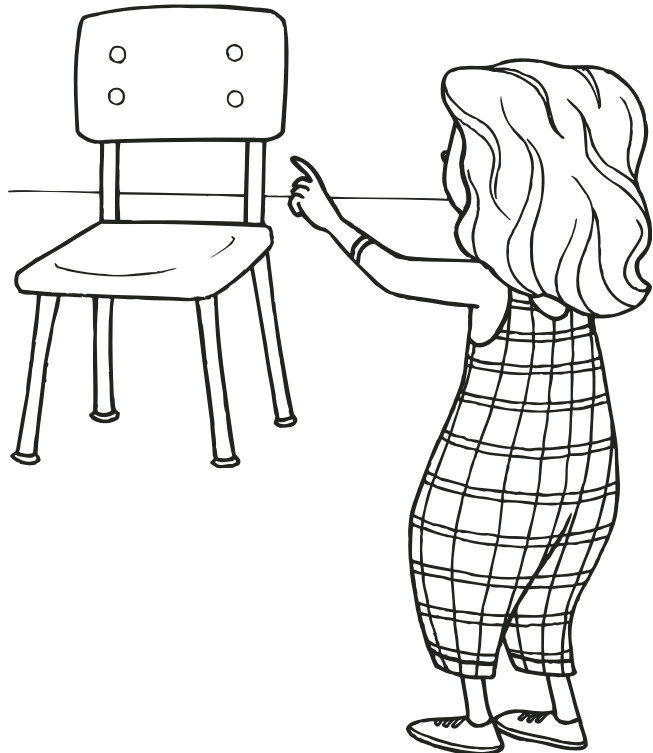
No materials needed

## Activity

This traditional game promotes children's oral language skills and vocabulary development. Have the children glance around the room as you call attention to objects of different colors. Then give a clue about one of the objects using the following format: *I spy, with my little eye, something green.* (A chair.) Let the children take turns guessing the object. Continue, giving plenty of clues, until children are able to play the game with confidence. Then let them take turns giving clues and guessing.

☉ **Tip:** Encourage the children to give hints (that tell something more about the answer without giving it away). Giving hints can be tricky. As children are learning the art of hint-giving, they will sometimes say the answer. Be patient! It's all a learning experience.

☉ **Variation:** You can use this game to reinforce almost any basic concept. For instance, *I spy . . . something round* (a clock), *something huge* (a tree), *something tiny* (a button).



# 15 THERE'S A WORD FOR THAT

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## Materials

No materials needed.

## Activity

When teaching children about shapes, remember not to oversimplify the words you use. Preschoolers enjoy learning sophisticated words, and an early introduction to math vocabulary benefits them when they begin formal math education. For instance, if a child calls a square a rectangle, do not correct him or her. Instead, point out that a square is a type of rectangle that has four equal sides. Use the terms, *side*, *tip*, or *corner* when describing geometric shapes.

- ◎ **Extension:** Print the children's favorite shape words on a word wall in your classroom. The words can be illustrated with children's drawings or with pictures cut from magazines.
- ◎ **For Older Children:** Provide the children with shape journals where they can record their favorite shapes and shape words.
- ◎ **Variation:** Set aside classroom space for a color word wall. When the children learn a new color word, print the word (in a corresponding color of ink) on a piece of paper and add it to the wall. Include exotic color names learned from the crayon box or from books. Older children can sort the color words according to initial letter. Challenge them to find a color that begins with the same letter as their first name.

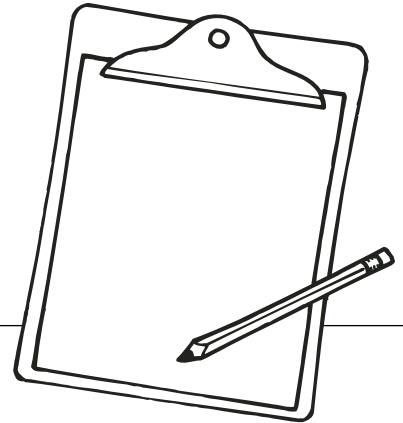
# 16 WHEEL WALK

## Materials

Clipboard  
Paper  
Pencil

## Activity

Children who are learning about circles tend to notice them everywhere they look. To build on this natural interest, invite the children on a Wheel Walk. Bring along a clipboard, paper, and a pencil, and tally the wheels that children find. Look for wheels on cars, busses, bicycles, riding toys, wagons, lawn and garden equipment, and more. After the walk, discuss what the children saw. Which vehicle had the most wheels? The fewest? Did you find any with more than four wheels? What would happen if one of the vehicles lost a wheel?




# 17 COLOR STORY

## Materials

No materials needed.

## Activity

Make up a story that features a number of different color words. As you tell the story, have the children raise their hands whenever they hear the name of a color.

 **For Younger Children:** Use flannelboard figures to enhance the story. Each time you name a color word, place a shape on the flannelboard and have the children name its color.

# 18 BIG BOOK TIME

## Materials

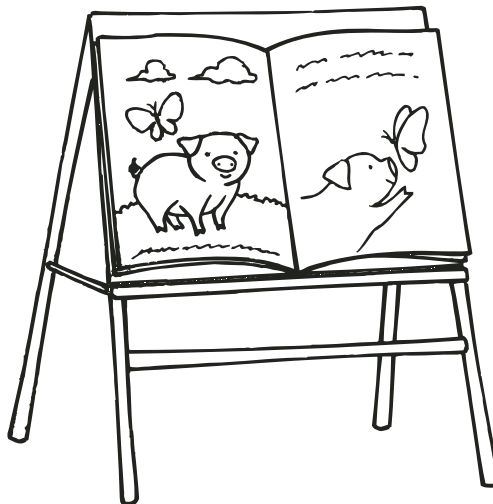
A big book

## Activity

Big books are ideal for introducing preschoolers to how books work. The enlarged print and illustrations capture children's attention and make it easy for them to focus on the words and pictures. When sharing a big book with the children, keep in mind that young children thrive on predictability. They will enjoy experiencing the same book many days in a row. Each time you share a big book with the children, take them on a "picture walk." Flip through the pages of the book and focus only on the illustrations. Encourage the children to predict or retell the story based on what they see in the pictures. Focus on a particular color each day, or ask the children to identify all the colors they see.

☉ **Hint:** Many public libraries offer big books for circulation in their curriculum collection.

☉ **Variation:** Focus on colors one day and shapes the next.



# 19 COLOR JOURNAL

## Materials


White paper  
Stapler  
Construction paper  
Felt-tip markers

## Activity

Help the children staple together sheets of white paper to make booklets. Have each child add a construction-paper cover to his or her booklet. At the top of each page, print the name of a color, using a marker in the corresponding color. Put the journals in a learning center, where children can draw, write, or make collages on the pages.



 **Hint:** This is a great activity for children to share with a parent helper or other classroom visitor.

 **Variations:** Make a new set of Color Journals each time your group learns a new color. Try using colored paper for the pages of the journal. You might use red paper for one journal, blue for another, and so forth.

# 20 THE CRAYON I'M HOLDING

## Materials

Crayons (assorted colors)

## Activity

Invite the children to sit in a circle. Recite the following rhyme, hiding a crayon of the corresponding color behind your back for each verse. Allow ample time for the children to guess each color.

It looks like mustard and rhymes with fellow.  
The crayon I'm holding is the color yellow.

It looks like ketchup and rhymes with head.  
The crayon I'm holding is the color red.

It looks like bubble gum and rhymes with drink.  
The crayon I'm holding is the color pink.

It looks like grass and rhymes with bean.  
The crayon I'm holding is the color green.

It looks like chocolate and rhymes with frown.  
The crayon I'm holding is the color brown.

It looks like night and rhymes with track.  
The crayon I'm holding is the color black.

It looks like snow and rhymes with bite.  
The crayon I'm holding is the color white.

*Heather Tekavec*



# CHAPTER 3

## Math

### 21 GREEN THINGS

#### Materials

Evergreen tree (real or artificial)  
Small green objects

#### Activity

Hide several green objects in the lower branches of an evergreen tree. You might choose small toys or cars, strings of beads and buttons, bows, and so forth. Recite the following rhyme, substituting the name of one of the children for *you*. With each turn, rearrange the objects, adding or removing a few. Have the children count the objects they find.

Green things, green things  
Hiding in a tree.  
How many green things  
Can you see?

*Durby Peterson*

☉ **Variation:** Invite the children to hide objects for one another. Challenge them to look around the room for small green objects to hide.

☉ **Another Idea:** Make this an outdoor activity, using larger weatherproof items.



## 22 CRAYON MATCH-UP

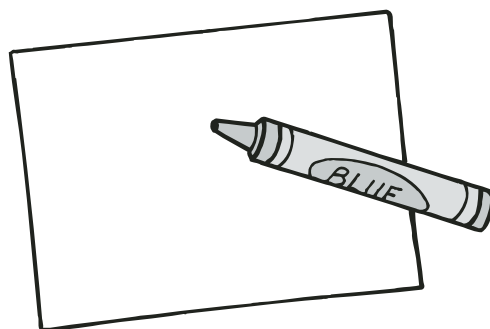
### Materials

Index cards

Crayons in six different colors.

### Activity

Select six index cards. With crayons, color each card a different color. (Include red, yellow, blue, orange, green, and purple.) Invite a small group of children to sit in a circle. Lay the cards facedown on the floor and set the crayons nearby. Let the children take turns selecting a card and matching it to the corresponding crayon.



## 23 IN THE DOGHOUSE

### Materials

Drawing paper

Markers or crayons

Chart paper

### Activity

With brown or black marker, draw simple drawings of puppies. (You will need at least one drawing per child.) Include the following features: brown fur/black fur; big/little; floppy ears/pointy ears. On chart paper, draw six doghouse shapes (one for each attribute). Hide the drawings of puppies throughout the classroom. When each child has found a puppy, invite the children to join you in a group. Have each child put his or her dog in an appropriate doghouse. Ask the children to explain how they sorted their puppies. With time and practice, children will learn to sort their puppies according to a variety of attributes.

# 24 COLORFUL BLOCK TOWER

## Materials

Small white paper plate  
Markers  
Cardboard  
Brass paper fastener  
Plastic interlocking blocks

## Activity

On a small white paper plate, draw three or four “pie pieces” in the same colors as your interlocking blocks. Use a piece of cardboard and a brass fastener to turn the plate into a game spinner. Set out the spinner and blocks. Let the children take turns spinning the spinner, naming the color that appears, and adding a block of that color to the tower. (If no block of that color is available, let the children spin again.) The game continues until all the blocks are used, or the tower falls down.

🌀 **Hint:** You’ll need a generous supply of interlocking blocks for this activity. Sort the pieces ahead of time to make the game easier, or mix up the pieces to make it more challenging.

🌀 **Variation:** For older children, roll a die to determine how many pieces to add to the tower and then spin the spinner to decide what color the pieces should be.



# 25 FLANNELBOARD TRAIN

---


## Materials

Felt (black, red, and assorted colors)

Scissors

## Activity

Cut two or three train engine shapes from black felt and some caboose shapes from red felt. Then cut several train car shapes from other colors of felt. Let the children arrange the shapes on a flannelboard to make trains. Depending on their interests and abilities, they might choose to build a train in which all of the cars are a single color, or they might arrange the train cars in patterns.

 **Extension:** Ask the children to build trains that have a particular number of cars. Have them count the cars, working from left to right.

# 26 MATCH IT

---

## Materials

Index cards


Scissors

Felt-tip marker

Cardboard tube

## Activity

Build visual discrimination skills with this matching game. Cut index cards into two-inch squares. On each small card, draw a different shape. For each shape, collect a short cardboard tube. Use a felt-tip marker to draw that shape near the top of the tube. Lay out the cards facedown and let the children take turns selecting a card and inserting it into the matching tube.

 **Variation:** To make the activity more challenging, draw the same shape in more than one color and have the children match according to color and shape.

## 27 ITTY-BITTY SORTER

---

### Materials

Cupcake pan  
Construction paper  
Scissors  
Small items for sorting

### Activity

Cut circles from different colors of construction paper to line the cups of a cupcake pan. Set out an assortment of small items (colored pasta, pom-poms, yarn scraps, colorful paper clips) for the children to sort into the matching colored section of the cupcake pan.

## 28 PAINT SAMPLE MATCHING


---

### Materials

Paint sample chips  
Scissors

### Activity

Select pairs of paint-sample chips that show shades of different colors. Cut out the samples and let the children find the matching pairs. Challenge the children to arrange the pairs from light to dark.

 **Another Idea:** Mix up the pairs and spread them facedown on a table. Play a Concentration game, in which players take turns flipping over two cards at a time. If the cards match, they are left faceup. If they do not match, play passes to the next player.

# 29 BLOCK PLAY

## Materials


Wooden unit blocks

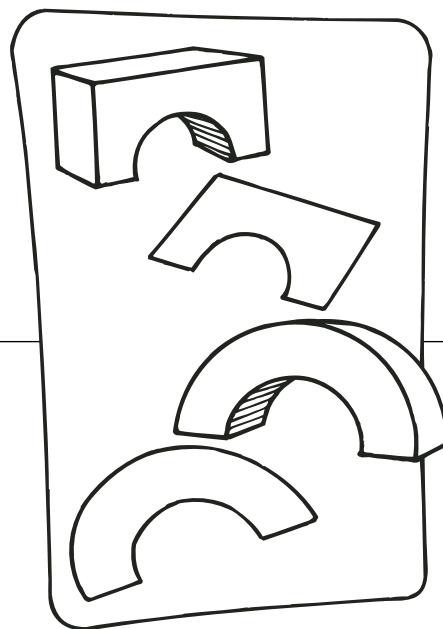
Pen

Tag board

## Activity

Using wooden unit blocks as templates, draw puzzle patterns on tagboard squares. Challenge the children to match the wooden blocks to the shape outlines.

 **Another Idea:** Trace a sequence of unit block shapes on a narrow strip of paper. Let the children try to copy the pattern. Introduce a different pattern each day.



# 30 CIRCLE SORT

## Materials

Felt

Scissors

Plastic hoop

## Activity

From felt, cut out shapes in assorted sizes and colors. Be sure to include plenty of circles. Place a plastic hoop on the floor and let the children sort the felt pieces, first by shape (circle/not circle), then by color or size.

# 31 SECRET SHAPES


## Materials

Shape blocks (tangrams) and other math manipulatives

Sock

## Activity

Set out some shape blocks for the children to investigate. Have them name each shape and count its sides. Then, when the children are not looking, hide one of the shapes in a sock. Invite a volunteer to feel the sock and try to identify the shape. Let each child have a turn guessing.

 **Extension:** Place the sock and shape in a learning center where the children can play this game in pairs or small groups.

# 32 TAKE-HOME FLANNELBOARD KIT

## Materials

Shallow box with lid

Felt (black and colors)

Scissors

Glue

## Activity

Select a shallow box. Line the lid with black felt. (This will be the flannelboard surface.) From assorted colors of felt, cut shapes in various sizes and colors. Set up a check-out system and let each of the children take the flannelboard kit home for a few days. Include a few simple activity ideas for children and families to share.

 **Hint:** Make several kits at once and have replacement felt pieces on hand.


# 33 SANDPAPER SHAPES

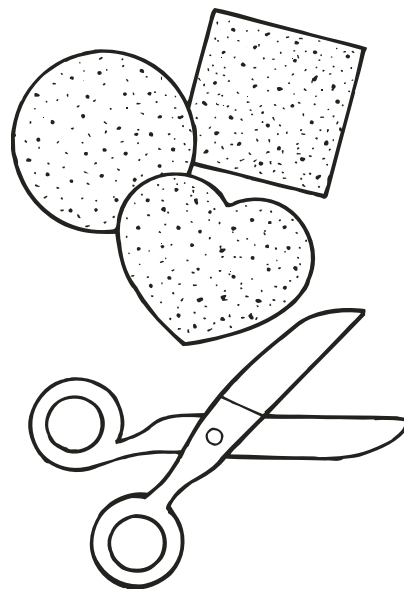
## Materials

Sandpaper  
Scissors

## Activity

Tactile learners will particularly benefit from this activity. Cut various shapes from sandpaper. Invite a small group of children to investigate the shapes. Have the children, one at a time, close their eyes, pick up a shape, and try to identify it by touch. Then have them open their eyes. Were they right?

 **Another Idea:** Put the shapes in an art center for children to touch, trace, or use for crayon rubbings.



# 34 SHAPE PICTURE CARDS

## Materials

Index cards  
Felt-tip pens

## Activity

Select 12 blank index cards. Using a black pen, draw a triangle on each of the first four cards. Draw a square on the next four cards. Draw a circle on the remaining cards. Then use colored pens to turn these shape outlines into drawings of familiar objects. To play the game, lay out three circle cards and a triangle card. Ask the children to decide which shape does not belong. Continue with the other shapes.

 **Suggestions include:**

**Triangle:** pointed hat, ice cream cone, evergreen tree, coat hanger

**Circle:** face, ball, balloon, clock

**Square:** gift box, window, book, picture frame

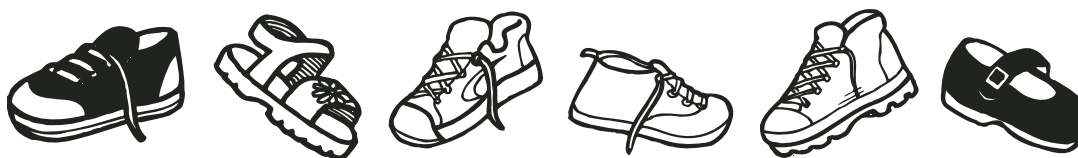
## 35 SHOE SORT

### Materials

No materials needed.

### Activity

Invite the children to join you in a circle. Ask each child to remove one shoe and put it in the center of the circle. As a group, sort the shoes according to color. Then sort them according to other characteristics, such as size, fasteners (laces, buckles, hook-and-loop tape), or patterns (plain or fancy). Challenge the children to think of other ways to sort the shoes.



## 36 TREASURE MAPS

### Materials

Paper

Pen

Scissors

Stuffed animal

### Activity

Hide a stuffed animal in your classroom. Then draw a simple treasure map leading to its location. Use cut-out paper shapes as clues to guide the children to their destination.

# 37 NEIGHBORHOOD PICTURE BOOK


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## Materials

Camera  
Photo album

## Activity

Take pictures of familiar neighborhood landmarks that include various shapes. You might photograph traffic signs, buildings, fences, playground equipment, and so forth. Print the pictures and place them in a photo album. Add the album to your classroom library, and let the children enjoy turning the pages and finding the shapes in the pictures.

 **Another Idea:** Photograph patterns wherever you see them and make a pattern book for your classroom library.

# 38 DO WHAT I DO

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## Materials

Index cards  
Felt-tip pens  
Math manipulatives (color cubes, plastic links, pattern blocks, bear counters, etc.)

## Activity

Use felt-tip pens to draw dots on an index card in an A-B-A-B pattern. Make several cards that correspond to the colors of the math manipulatives in the classroom. Let your children take turns selecting a card and copying the pattern with the manipulatives. As children gain experience, provide more sophisticated patterns to copy.

# CHAPTER 4

## Science

### 39 FOOD COLOR CHART

#### Materials

Poster board  
Markers  
Foods or pictures of foods

#### Activity

Make a three- or four-column chart on poster board. List a different color at the top of each column. You might choose red, green, brown, and white.

Invite the children to sit in a circle. Display the chart, along with a selection of foods or pictures of foods whose colors match those on the chart. Have the children identify the color of the food and place a tally mark or paste a picture in the corresponding column of the chart. Which color is the most common?

**Hint:** If possible, use real foods (fruits, vegetables, canned goods) to accompany the pictures in this activity.

**Extension:** Talk about the foods that children enjoy eating at home. Make a list of different dishes, and then sort the list according to color.

Red	Green	Brown	White
✓ ✓	✓		✓




# 40 SHAKER BOTTLE

## Materials

Colored lamp oil  
Water  
Food coloring  
1 liter plastic soda bottle  
Glue  
Electrical tape

## Activity

To make a color shaker bottle, fill a 1 liter plastic soda bottle with equal parts colored lamp oil and colored water. The colors should differ from one another. Glue the cap onto the bottle and secure it with electrical tape. Then place the bottle in a discovery center. Let the children take turns shaking it to mix up the colors, then watch as the oil and water return to their original state. Encourage them to describe what they see.

 **Variation:** As children learn more about color mixing, make shaker bottles in an assortment of color combinations. Include primary colors (blue and red, blue and yellow, yellow and red) as well as off-beat combinations (purple and green). Encourage the children to predict what color the liquid will become before they shake each bottle.



# 41 SOMETHING BLUE


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## Materials

Blue clear-plastic report cover  
Construction paper (various colors)  
Scissors

## Activity

Select a clear-plastic report cover and several sheets of construction paper in various colors. Cut the paper into assorted shapes. Let the children take turns slipping the shapes inside the report cover and observing what happens to the color of the paper. What happens when they put a blue shape behind the plastic cover?

 **Variation:** Invite the children to draw on white paper using a blue crayon. What happens to the drawing when they slip the paper behind the blue cover?

# 42 APPLE EXPLORATION

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## Materials

Apples (assorted varieties)

## Activity

Set out an assortment of red, green, and yellow apples. Have the children examine the apples. Encourage them to describe the fruit. How does it look? Smell? Feel? Then have the children sort the apples according to color and shape. Finally, cut up the apples and serve them as a snack. Which variety is sweetest? Crunchiest?



# 43 MAKE A RAINBOW

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## Materials

Drinking glass  
Water  
Small mirror



## Activity

To make an indoor rainbow, place a mirror in a glass of water. Tilt the mirror against the side of the glass. Then stand the glass in direct sunlight so that the mirror reflects a rainbow on the wall. Ask the children to look for the rainbow colors. How many colors do they see? Provide paper and drawing materials so that they can draw their own rainbows.



# 44 BUBBLES EVERYWHERE

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## Materials

Bubble wands  
Bubble solution



## Activity

Collect bubble wands in an assortment of shapes, including triangles and rectangles. You may choose store-bought wands, or form your own from wire. Set out the wands, along with bubble solution and ask the children to predict what shape bubble each wand would make. (Children will nearly always predict that the bubble will be the same shape as the wand.) Then let the children test their hypotheses. Were they surprised?

# 45 STUDYING LEAVES

## Materials

Paper bags  
Fallen leaves  
Butcher paper  
Pen  
Glue

## Activity

If you live in an area with deciduous trees, try this activity on an autumn day. Give the children paper grocery bags and lead them outdoors to pick up leaves from the ground. (Remind children that they are only to pick up leaves that have fallen on the ground—they should not pick up any leaves that are still on trees.) Back at the science table, have the children sort the leaves according to color. Then, on butcher paper, make a chart listing the different leaf colors. Have the children glue the leaves into the corresponding columns. Then, as a group, tally the results. Display the colorful graph in the classroom where all can enjoy it.



**Variation:** If deciduous trees are not available, you can collect samples of leaves from perennial and annual plants for children to compare and contrast. Comparisons can also be made in regard to shape or size. Make sure that the plants are nontoxic (a plant encyclopedia or your local poison control center can answer any questions). Explain to children that they will be collecting a single leaf (what scientists call a *specimen*) from each plant.


# 46 MIXING TINTS

## Materials

Plastic milk-jug lids  
Large plastic lid  
Glue gun  
Tempera paint  
Craft sticks or coffee stirrers  
Paintbrushes  
Paper

## Activity

By mixing white paint into colored paint, young children can learn about color theory and cause and effect. To make a palette for mixing paint, use a glue gun to attach several milk-jug lids to a larger plastic lid. Set out shallow containers of white and colored tempera paint, and craft sticks or coffee stirrers for mixing. Let the children mix varying amounts of white paint into the other colors. What happens when they add just a little bit of white? A lot?

 **Extension:** Encourage the children to make up names for the colors they invent.




# 47 COLOR GOO

## Materials

1/3 cup granulated sugar  
1 cup cornstarch  
4 cups cold water  
Food coloring  
Saucepan  
Spoon

## Activity

To make this sensory material, combine sugar, cornstarch, and water in a saucepan. Stir over medium heat until thick. Remove from heat. When cooled, divide the mixture into three containers. Add red food coloring to the first container, yellow to the second, and blue to the third and stir until the colors are thoroughly mixed. For each child, spoon two colors of Color Goo into a heavy-duty resealable sandwich bag. Squeeze the air out and securely seal the bag. Let the children squish and squeeze the bags. What happens?

 **Extension:** Tape-record children's reactions during this activity. Later, play back the tape for the children. Can they remember what they were doing at the time?




# 48 RAINBOW PUDDING

## Materials

Vanilla instant pudding mix  
Milk  
Mixing bowls  
Spoons  
Clear plastic cups  
Spoons  
Food coloring

## Activity

Make a big batch of vanilla pudding mix and divide it evenly into five smaller bowls. Help the children add a few drops of food coloring into each bowl. Have them stir the pudding to mix the color. Then provide each child with a clear plastic cup and a spoon. Let the children take turns spooning the pudding into their cups in colorful layers. As they work, talk about the rainbow colors. What happens if they mix the colors together? Children should not eat their creations.

 **Another Idea:** Make a big batch of vanilla and chocolate pudding, and layer the two varieties in a single clear plastic bowl. Ask the children why they think the two types of pudding do not run together? Serve the pudding with vanilla wafers for a yummy snack.



# 49 LIGHT SHOW

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## Materials

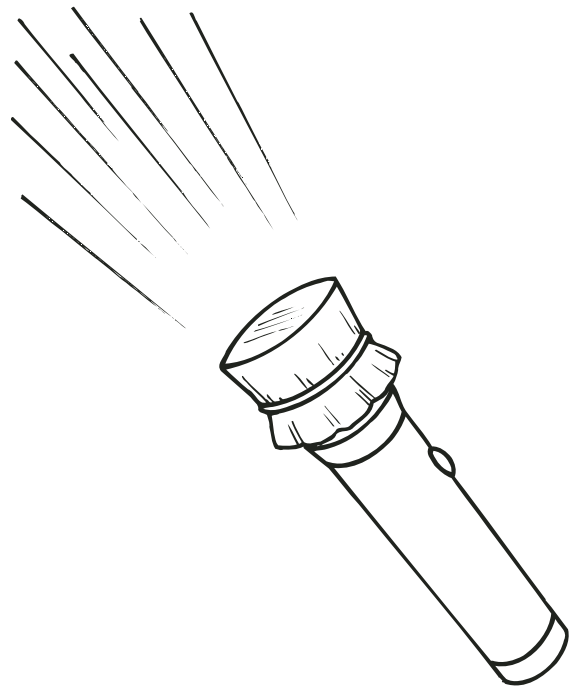
Flashlights  
Colored cellophane  
Rubber bands

## Activity

Cover a few flashlights with colored cellophane. Distribute the flashlights among the children and turn out the room lights. Let the children shine the lights on each other and on various objects in the room. What colors appear? What happens when two colors shine on the same spot?

☉ **Extension:** Have the children use the colored flashlights as spotlights for puppet shows and dance activities.

☉ **Variation:** To test children's knowledge of shapes and colors, dim the lights and ask a child to shine an ordinary flashlight on an object of a particular shape (for instance, something square), or color (something purple).



# 50 ROLLING ALONG

## Materials

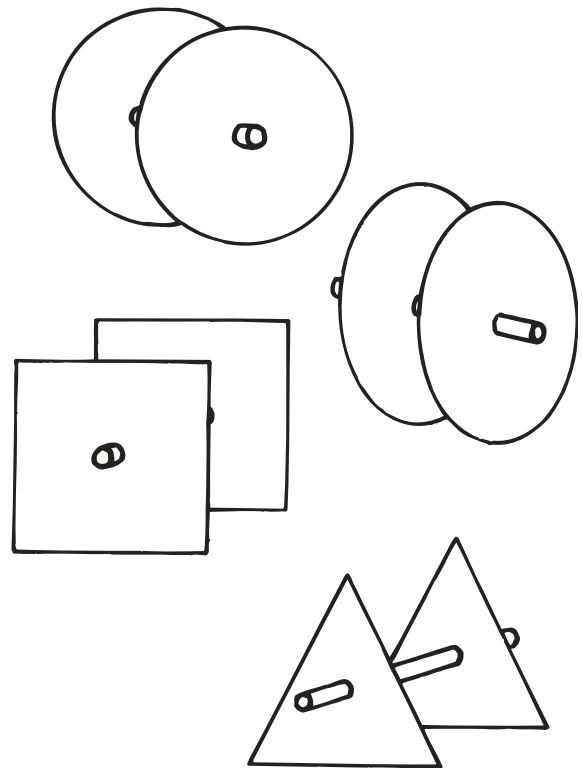
Card stock  
Scissors  
Hole punch  
Drinking straws

## Activity

This hands-on activity helps children understand why wheels are round. Select some card stock (discarded manila folders work well), and cut out several pairs of circles, ovals, squares, and triangles. Punch a hole in the center of each shape large enough for a drinking-straw “axle.” Cut the drinking straws in half and help the children attach a pair of shapes to each axle. Then let the children attempt to roll the shapes across a tabletop. Ask, *Which shapes roll easily? Which shapes don’t roll at all? Why, do you think, circles make the best wheels?*

☉ **Extension:** Have children try rolling film canisters, discarded cans (with sharp edges taped) and other cylindrical objects.

☉ **Another Idea:** Mold wheels from modeling dough or play dough.



# 51 SUN PRINTS

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## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors  
Tape

## Activity

On a sunny morning, cut familiar shapes out of construction paper and attach a loop of tape, rolled sticky side out, to each one. Have the children attach the shapes to dark construction paper to make designs. Set the papers in direct sunlight and ask the children to predict what will happen. At the end of the day, remove the shapes to reveal the dark outlines where the sun did not reach the paper. Encourage the children to explain what they see.

# 52 TINTED ICE CUBES

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## Materials

Water  
Pitcher  
Food coloring  
Ice cube trays

## Activity

Fill a small pitcher with water. Add a few drops of red food coloring to the water. Then pour the tinted water into an ice cube tray. Rinse out the pitcher and repeat, making a tray of yellow ice and a tray of blue ice. Freeze the ice cubes. Then put a cube of each color in a separate clear plastic glass. Have the children predict what will happen, then watch as the ice in each glass turns to colored water. Let them combine the colored water. What happens then? Rinse out the glasses and put ice cubes of two different colors in each glass. Write down the children's predictions and their responses.

## CHAPTER 5

# *Music and Movement*

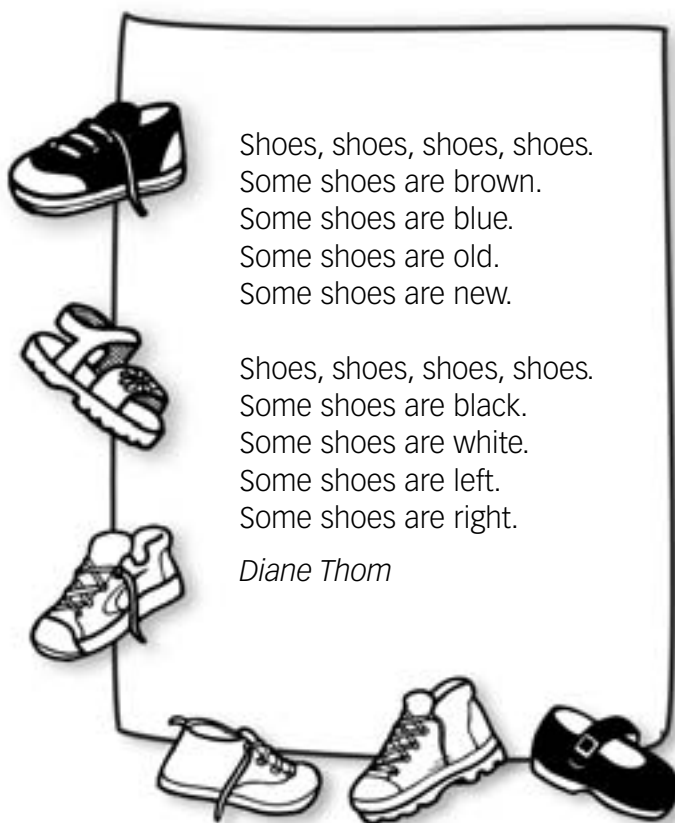
### 53 SOME SHOES

#### Materials

No materials needed.

#### Activity

Invite the children to sit in a circle and remove their shoes. Then have them clap their shoes together in time to the following chant.



# 54 COLOR TRAIN

## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors  
Yarn

## Activity

Cut several train-car shapes from construction paper in the following colors: blue, pink, yellow, green, purple, and white. Cut out a black train-engine shape and a red caboose shape. Punch a hole in each shape, and add yarn ties to make a necklace. Distribute the necklaces among your children. Then sing the following song. With each new verse, have the children who are wearing the matching colored necklace "chug" around the circle.

### **This Little Engine** **Sung to: "This Old Man"**

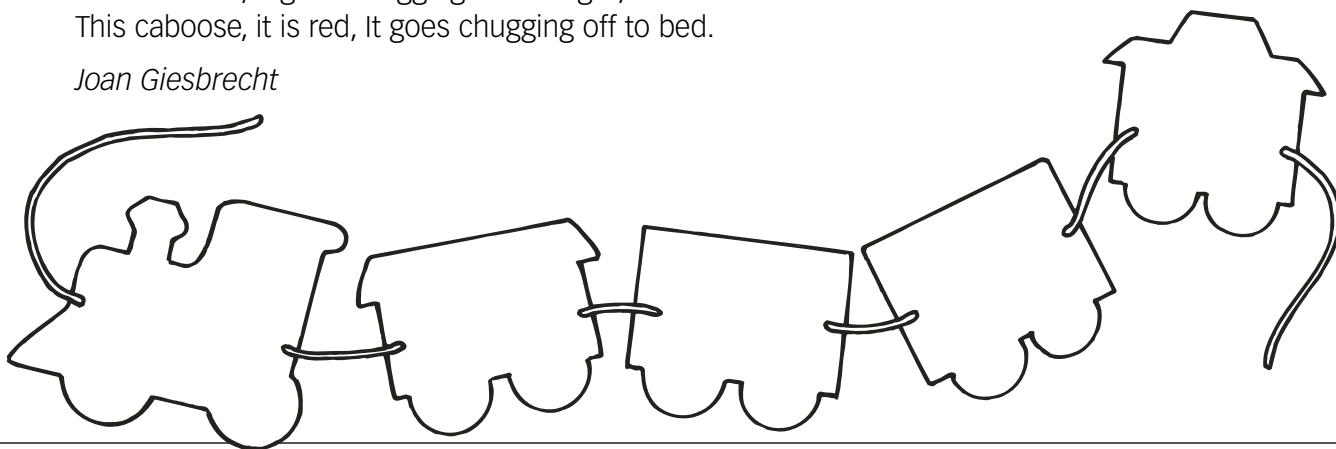
This little engine, it is black,  
It goes chugging down the track.

With a chug-chug, toot-toot,  
Hear the whistle blow,  
This little train goes chugging home.

### Additional Verses:

This little engine, it is blue, It goes chugging right by you;  
... it is pink, It goes chugging quick as a wink;  
... it is yellow, It goes chugging, whistling "hello";  
... it is green, It goes chugging, sounds quite mean;  
... it is purple, It goes chugging, carrying people;  
... it is white, It goes chugging out of sight;  
This caboose, it is red, It goes chugging off to bed.

*Joan Giesbrecht*



# 55 FLAG MARCH

## Materials

Flags  
Construction paper  
Markers  
Stickers  
Tape  
Chopstick or drinking straw

## Activity

Show your children an assortment of flags. Talk about the colors and designs and what they might signify. Then invite the children to make their own flags, using a half sheet of construction paper, and stickers of their choice. Help them roll the left-hand side of the flag around a chopstick or drinking straw handle and secure it with a piece of tape.

Next, have the children march around the room, waving their completed flags. As they march, give the following directions:

If your flag has any red, wave it over your head.  
If your flag has any blue, turn around.  
If your flag has any green, jump with both feet.  
If your flag has any yellow, flap your arms.  
If your flag has any white, freeze.  
If your flag has any black, hold it behind your back.



# 56 IF YOUR CLOTHES HAVE ANY RED

## Materials

No materials needed.

## Activity

Invite your children to stand in a circle and sing this song.

### Sung to: “If You’re Happy and You Know It”

If your clothes have any red, any red,  
If your clothes have any red, any red,  
If your clothes have any red, put your finger on your head—  
If your clothes have any red, any red.

If your clothes have any blue, any blue,  
If your clothes have any blue, any blue,  
If your clothes have any blue, put your finger on your shoe—  
If your clothes have any blue, any blue.

### Additional Verses:

If your clothes have any green, wave your hand so you are seen;  
If your clothes have any yellow, smile like a happy fellow;  
If your clothes have any brown, get up and turn around;  
If your clothes have any black, put your hands behind your back;  
If your clothes have any white, wave your hands with all your might.

*Jean Warren*

**Hint:** When children are first learning their colors, it is helpful to use a prop for each verse. You might hold up a piece of paper or a paint-sample chip for each verse.



# 57 HERE WE GO

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## Materials

No materials needed.


## Activity

### Sung to: "Looby Loo"

Kids with blue shoes in.  
Kids with blue shoes out.  
Kids with blue shoes in.  
Now shake yourselves about.

March in a circle and have the children with blue shoes follow the movement directions. Repeat, substituting other shoe colors for blue, until all shoe colors have been mentioned.

*Betty Silkunas*

 **Variation:** Try singing about other clothing items. You might substitute *socks, shirts, pants, or coats* for *shoes*.



# 58 DO YOU KNOW WHAT SHAPE THIS IS?

## Materials

Felt or paper shapes

## Activity

Select an assortment of shapes cut from felt or paper. Then sing the following song, holding up a shape as you sing. At the end of the verse, have the children name the shape you are holding. Repeat, displaying a different shape each time.


### Sung to: "The Muffin Man"


#### Teacher:

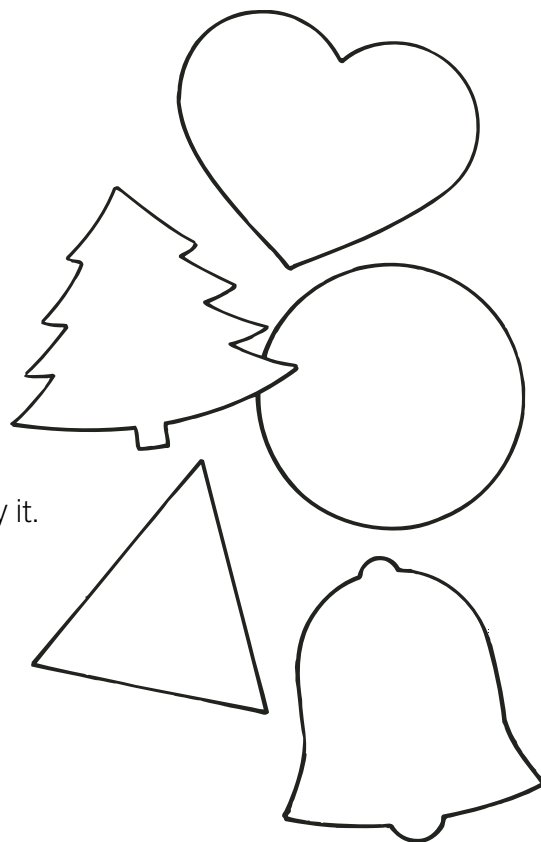
Do you know what shape this is?  
What shape this is, what shape this is?  
Do you know what shape this is,  
I'm holding in my hand?

#### Children:

Yes, we know what shape this is,  
What shape this is, what shape this is.  
Yes, we know what shape this is,  
You're holding in your hand!

 **Extension:** To reinforce vocabulary, substitute other phrases for "I'm holding in my hand." You might sing, "I'm holding in my lap; I'm waving in the air;" or "That's sitting on the floor."

 **Variation:** Sit in a circle and pass the shape around the group while you sing the first verse. Let the child who is holding the shape at the end of the verse identify it.



# 59 COLOR BINOCULARS

## Materials

Toilet tissue tubes  
Tape

## Activity

Make a pair of toy binoculars by taping together two cardboard toilet tissue tubes. Let the children take turns looking through the binoculars in search of colors. As they look, sing the following song. At the end of the verse, have the child who is holding the binoculars identify an object and its color.

### I See Red

Sung to: "This Old Man"

I see red.  
I see blue.  
I see green and orange, too.  
When I take the time to look around,  
Lots of colors can be found!

*Susan Hodges*

 **Variation:** Let the children take turns looking through a pair of real binoculars. What do they see?




# 60 RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT

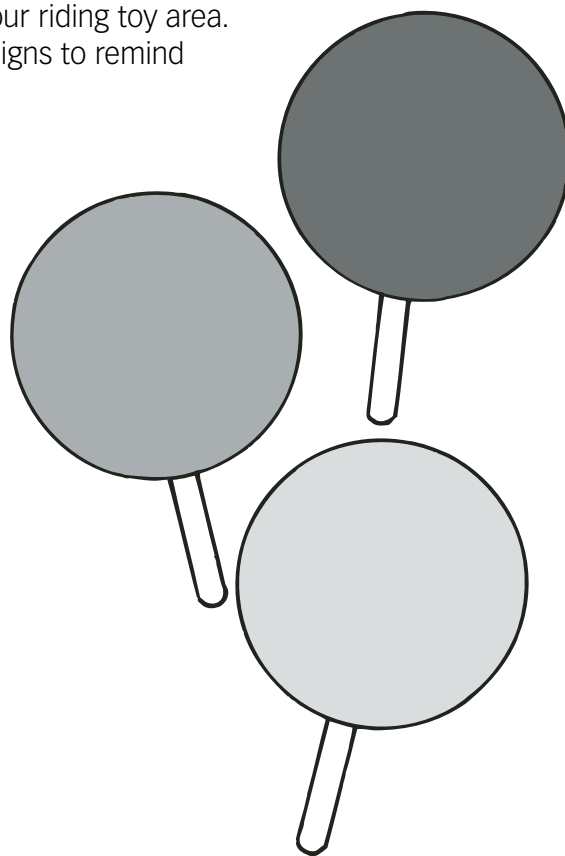
## Materials

Red, green, and yellow construction paper  
Scissors  
Craft sticks  
Tape or glue

## Activity

Introduce a no-lose version of this classic game. Make traffic-light props by cutting large circles from red, yellow, and green construction paper. Attach each circle to a separate craft stick to make a sign. Then invite the children to play a no-lose version of the classic movement game. Explain that the green light means "go," the red light means "stop," and the yellow light means "slow down." Hold up the green sign and ask the children to drive imaginary cars around the classroom or outdoors. Then hold up the yellow sign and wait for the children to slow down. Hold up the red sign to signal them to stop. Continue, switching signs with increasing frequency. Once the children are familiar with the game, let them take turns holding the traffic signs.

 **Extension:** Incorporate the traffic-sign props into your riding toy area. Set up "construction zones" where "flaggers" hold signs to remind drivers to slow down and to stop.



# 61 BODY SHAPES

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## Materials

No materials needed.

## Activity

Invite a small group of children to join you on the floor. Challenge them to form a triangle with their bodies. How many children do they need? Can they form a square? A rectangle? A circle?

⦿ **Extension:** Take photos of this activity for a group book.

# 62 READ THE NOTES

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## Materials

Toy piano  
Self-stick colored dots

## Activity

Use colored dots (available from office supply stores) to color-code several keys of a toy piano. Make sure that each key is a different color. Then ask the children to play the red key, the orange key, and so forth.

⦿ **Extension:** For older children, use the color code to write the notation for simple tunes on index cards. Let the children practice playing such favorites as “Three Blind Mice” and “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.”

# 63 CIRCLE GETS THE SQUARE


## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors  
Tape

## Activity

Cut 3-inch assorted shapes out of construction paper (make more shapes than you have children). Let each child select a shape. Attach the shape to the child's clothing, using a loop of tape rolled sticky-side out.

Ask the children to spread out on the floor. Then call on them according to their shapes, giving a different movement direction for each shape. For instance, *Circle, hop over to a square. Triangle, touch an oval's foot. Rectangle, tap a triangle's shoulder.*

 **Extension:** To add challenge, include colors in your verbal instructions. For instance, *Blue triangle, touch red circle's elbow.*



# 64 THE SHAPES ARE ON THE FLOOR

## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors

## Activity

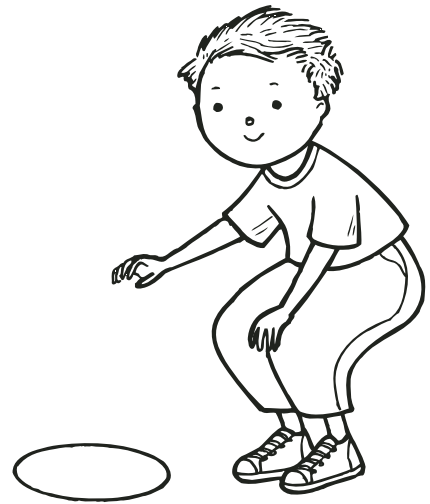
Cut shapes from construction paper and scatter them on the floor. (You will need at least one shape for each child in your group.) Sing the following song and let the children move freely around the room. When the music stops, have each child pick up a shape and name it. Then mix up the shapes and play again.

### Sung to: "The Farmer in the Dell"

The shapes are on the floor,  
The shapes are on the floor.  
Pick one up and say its name,  
And we will play some more.

*Author Unknown*

 **Variation:** Substitute *say its color* for *say its name*.



# CHAPTER 6

## *Visual Arts*


### 65 RECYCLED RAINBOW

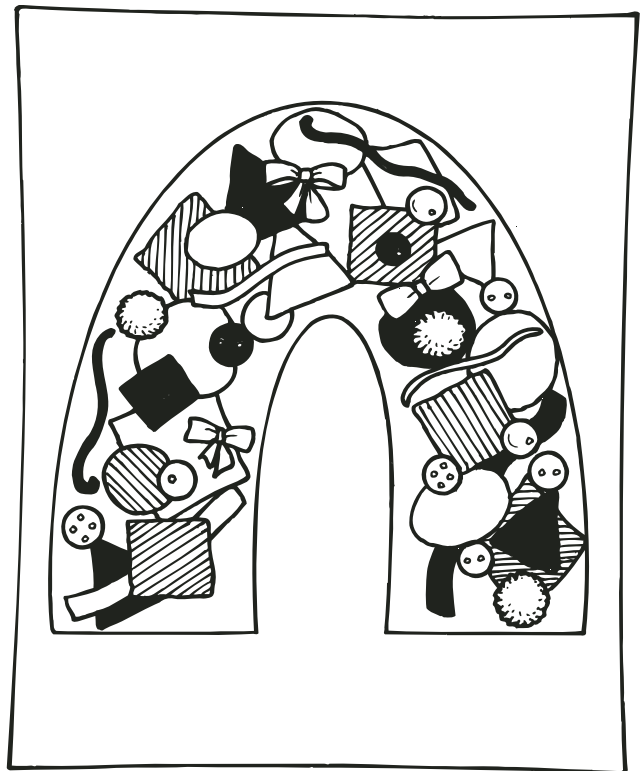
#### Materials

Butcher paper  
Felt-tip pens or colored pencils  
Collage materials  
Glue

#### Activity

Send a note home with children asking for donations of colorful collage materials. (Scraps of yarn, fabric, buttons, and bits of wrapping paper are just a few suggestions.) Once you have collected a good supply of materials, have the children sort the items according to color. As they sort, discuss how items can be used again and explain that this is a form of recycling. Ask the children, *Why is it a good idea to use materials more than once?* Then outline a rainbow shape on butcher paper and let the children glue the items along the outline to make a recycled rainbow.

 **Hint:** “Make a Rainbow” (Activity 43) is a great way to build background knowledge for this activity. Follow up with “Rainbow Pudding” (Activity 48).



# 66 SHAPE PRINTS

## Materials

Small household objects  
Ink pads

## Activity

Select an assortment of small objects that will make the outline of a shape. Possibilities include jar lids, blocks, washers, and cups. Set out the materials, along with an inkpad and a supply of paper. Invite the children to examine the items, predict what shape their print might be, and then test their predictions by making a print on paper.

 **Extension:** Mount the prints on construction paper to make festive note cards.


# 67 COUNTING COLLAGE

## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors  
Glue stick  
Die

## Activity

Set out an assortment of small construction paper shapes, some sheets of construction paper (at least one per child), a glue stick, and a die. Let the children take turns rolling the die, selecting the specified number of shapes, and arranging the shapes to make a collage.

 **Variation:** Make a shape die by attaching a different paper shape to each side of a wooden cube. Have the children roll the cube to determine which shape they will add to their collage.

# 68 MARVELOUS MOBILES

## Materials

Scissors  
Construction paper  
Yarn  
Stickers, crayons, markers  
Hole punch  
Coat hangers

## Activity

Set out an assortment of colorful paper shapes and art materials such as stickers, crayons, and markers. Invite the children to select a few shapes. Then have them punch a hole in the top of each shape and decorate the shapes as they wish. Help them tie a 6- to 12-inch length of yarn to each shape and then tie the shapes to a coat hanger. As children work, talk about the shapes and colors on their mobiles. How many shapes did they use? How many colors?

 **Hint:** Older children will enjoy using templates to cut out their own shapes.

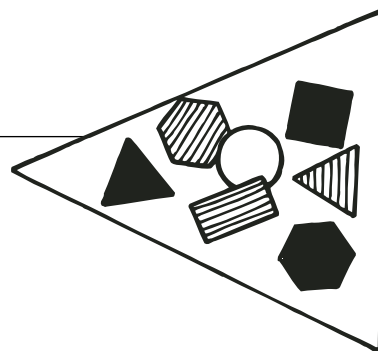
# 69 SHAPE FLAGS

## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors  
Shape stickers

## Activity

Show the children examples of nautical flags. Discuss how the various shapes and designs send out messages. Then give the children an opportunity to design their own nautical flags, using triangular sheets of construction paper and solid-colored stickers in assorted shapes (available where office supplies are sold).



# 70 SHAPE MURAL

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## Materials

Sponges  
Scissors  
Tempera paint  
Butcher paper  
Tape

## Activity

Cut sponges into circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles of various sizes. Tape a sheet of butcher paper to a table and set out the sponges, along with shallow containers of tempera paint. Let the children experiment by making sponge prints in various shapes and colors. As they work, compare the different shapes. Which shapes have four sides? Which have only three? Do any have no sides at all?

# 71 CRAFT STICK SHAPES


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## Materials

Craft sticks  
Glue  
Markers, crayons, or paint

## Activity

Set out the materials and let each child select three or four craft sticks. Have the children glue the sticks together to make a triangle, rectangle, or square. When the glue is dry, have them decorate their shapes with markers, crayons, or paint.

 **Extension:** Use the craft-stick shapes as a frame for a photo or small drawing.

## 72 MOTOR MURAL

### Materials

Three small toy cars  
 Tempera paint (red, yellow, blue)  
 Butcher paper  
 Tape

### Activity

Select three small toy cars in red, yellow, and blue. Set out the cars, along with shallow containers of red, yellow, and blue tempera paint. Tape butcher paper to a table. Let the children take turns dipping the cars in a matching color of paint and driving them across the paper. Encourage them to notice what happens when one car track crosses another. Do the colors blend?

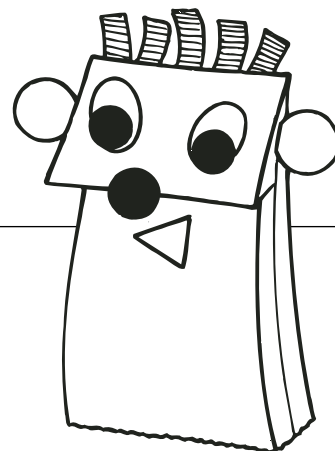
## 73 PAPER BAG PUPPETS

### Materials

Paper scraps  
 Scissors  
 Paper lunch bags  
 Glue

### Activity

Set out an assortment of paper scraps. Let the children cut the scraps into shapes and glue them to paper lunch bags to make puppets. When the glue is dry, ask the children to count and identify the shapes and colors on their puppets. Encourage the children to perform a shape- or color-themed puppet show.





# 74 BUBBLY PAINT

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## Materials

Powdered tempera paint  
Liquid dishwashing detergent  
Water  
Wire whisk  
Paper plates



## Activity

Mix equal parts powdered tempera paint, liquid dishwashing detergent, and water in a container with a lid. Pour the paint into a shallow pan. Whisk the paint to a frothy consistency. Then let the children lay a paper plate on top of the bubbly paint to make a picture. Repeat with other colors of paint if you wish. As the children work, discuss the process. Ask, *What shape are the bubbles? What happens when one color of paint touches another?*



# 75 SUN CATCHER

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## Materials

Clear, self-stick paper  
Scissors  
Tape  
Cellophane



## Activity

Cut a roll of clear self-stick paper into 12-inch squares. Remove the backing and tape the paper to the table, sticky-side up. Set out small shapes cut from various colors of cellophane paper. Let the children arrange the cellophane shapes on the self-stick paper to make a collage. Seal the collage with a second sheet of self-stick paper and hang it near a sunny window. Discuss the light that is cast by the collage. What colors do the children see?


# 76 COLORED SAND

## Materials

Coffee can  
Fine-grain sand  
Tempera paint  
Cake pan  
Shaker containers  
Cardboard or heavy paper  
Glue  
Paintbrushes

## Activity

To make colored sand, fill a coffee can or other container with a tight-fitting lid halfway with fine-grain sand. Add enough liquid tempera paint to dampen the sand. Close the lid securely and shake the container until the sand is evenly dyed. Then spread the wet sand into a cake pan and let it stand uncovered to dry. Pour the sand into a shaker container with large holes. (Shakers for Parmesan cheese work well.) Children will enjoy using the sand for a variety of projects, such as colored sand paintings. To make a sand painting, have the children brush thin glue onto cardboard or heavy paper and sprinkle colored sand onto the glue. Help them shake off the excess sand before letting the sand paintings dry.

 **Hint:** Restaurant supply stores are a good source for shakers of all shapes and sizes.




# 77 MY OWN COLOR BANNER

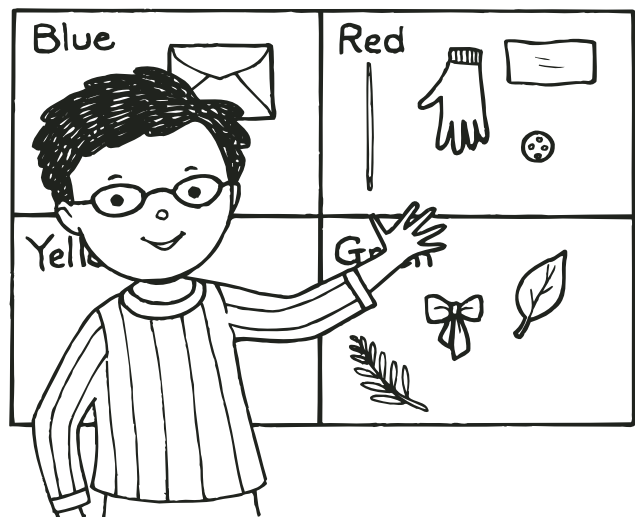
## Materials

Butcher paper  
Markers

## Activity

Make a butcher paper banner for each child and divide it into sections, one for each color your group will be studying. Display the banners at the children's eye level. Whenever you introduce a new color, ask the children to bring an item from home to add to their banner. (Have extra color items on hand.) Help the children label the items, and encourage them to look at one another's banners.

 **Extension:** Ask the children to tell about each item on their banner. Write down each child's words and add them to the banner.



# CHAPTER 7

## *Dramatic Play*

### 78 BLANKET FOLD


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#### Materials

Baby blankets

#### Activity

Use the baby blankets in your housekeeping area for a hands-on geometry lesson. Pass out blankets to a small group of children and have them sit on the floor. Ask the children to spread their blankets out. What shape do they see? (A square or rectangle.) Count the sides. Then have the children fold their blankets in half. What shape do they see now? (A rectangle or triangle.) Count the sides again. Fold the blanket one more time. What shape do they see now?

 **Hint:** Children will enjoy “teaching” dolls and imaginary playmates how to fold blankets in all sorts of ways.



## 79 UNDER THE SEA

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### Materials


Water table or washtub

Toy sea creatures

Small aquarium net or kitchen strainer

### Activity

Fill a water table or washtub with water and add plastic sea creatures in assorted colors. Provide a small aquarium net or kitchen strainer and let the children “fish” for creatures of a particular color.

 **For Younger Children:** Ask the children to fish out the creatures, then help them sort them according to color.

## 80 COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY

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### Materials

Discarded camera

### Activity

An old camera (without film) makes a great prop for dramatic play. Children will enjoy pretending to photograph each other and everything else around them. To extend the learning, ask a child to take a picture of something that is of a particular color or shape.

# 81 THE ICE CREAM SHOP

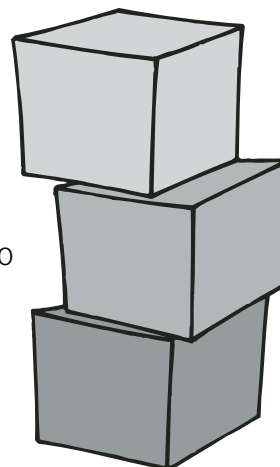
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## Materials

Colored blocks or balls

## Activity

Setting up an ice cream shop in the dramatic play area provides many opportunities for color and shape learning. Use colored blocks or balls to represent the different ice cream flavors. As you play with the children, “order” cones in different color or “flavor” combinations. Challenge them to discover how many combinations they can make from three colors.



# 82 SPECIAL DELIVERY

---

## Materials

Shoe boxes

Envelopes

Pen

Scissors

## Activity

Select a few shoe boxes. Cut a slot in the top of each shoe box and label each box with a different color or shape. Then mark a supply of envelopes to match the “mailboxes.” Ask the children to take turns delivering each letter to its matching mailbox.


# 83 THE FLOWER MARKET

## Materials

Artificial flowers  
Plastic vases  
Toy cash register and money  
Writing supplies

## Activity

Set up a flower shop in your dramatic play area. Ask families for donations of unwanted artificial flowers and plastic vases. Set out these materials, along with a toy cash register and play money. Join the children in arranging floral displays. They may wish to sort the flowers according to color, shape, or size. Have them write signs and receipts for their transactions. As the children play, encourage them to talk about the differences and similarities among the artificial flowers.

 **Extension:** To make this a special treat, add a few real flowers (dandelions are fine) to your flower market. Talk about how to care for cut flowers. What do flowers need?



# CHAPTER 8

## *Motor Skills*

### 84 GET INTO SHAPE

---

#### Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors

#### Activity

Cut a large square and a large circle out of construction paper. With circle and square in hand, gather the children together. Explain that when they see the circle, the children should do jumping jacks. When they see the square, they should run in place. Then hold up one of the paper shapes. Have the children exercise until they notice the shape change.

☉ **Extension:** As the children gain familiarity with the game, introduce additional shapes and movements. Let the children suggest variations.

☉ **Variation:** Let the children take turns holding up the shapes. Make sure that you participate in the game!




# 85 JUST LIKE ME


## Materials

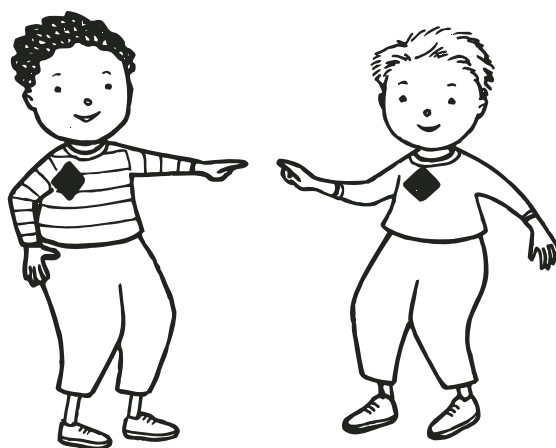
Construction paper  
Scissors  
Tape  
Whistle  
Clear, self-stick paper (optional)

## Activity

Make a construction paper badge for each child, using four or five different colors and shapes. Have each child choose a badge and tape it to his or her chest. Then take the children outdoors. Have them run or skip in a circle until you blow a whistle. Then they must find someone whose badge is the same color or shape.

 **Variation:** Ask older children to arrange themselves in a particular pattern, for instance: *red-blue-red-blue, or circle-square-circle-square.*

 **Hint:** Cover the badges with clear, self-stick paper for durability. You can play this game throughout the year, adding complexity as children's skills develop.



# 86 OUT THE DOOR


## Materials

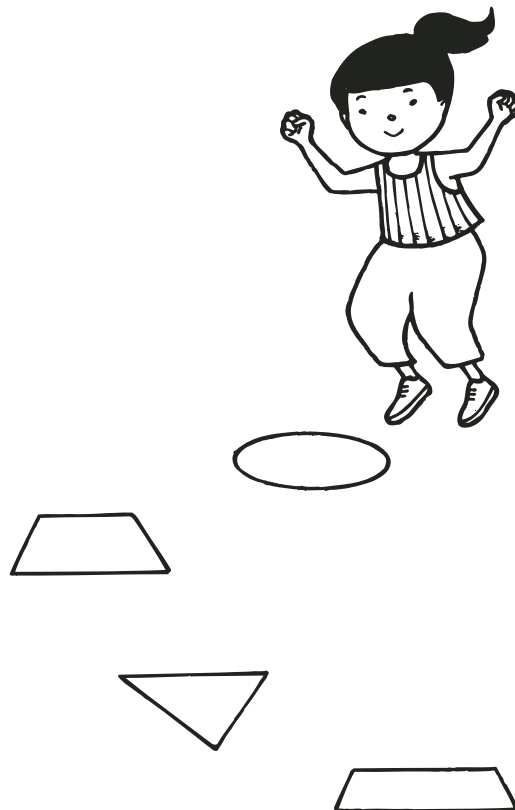
Construction paper (red, blue, green, yellow)  
Scissors  
Clear, self-stick paper

## Activity

Cut large shapes (circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles) from construction paper. Arrange them in a path leading toward the door. Allow about 1 foot between shapes. Secure the shapes to the floor with clear, self-stick paper. During transition time, direct the children, one at a time, to move to a specific shape. For instance, *Lily, will you jump to the yellow circle?* *Henry, will you walk to the green square?* When each child is standing on a shape, the group will be ready to go.

 **Hint:** For each big shape, make a corresponding small shape to hold up if a child needs a hint. Visual cues are especially helpful for English language learners.

 **Variation:** Let the children decide how they will move to their designated shape. They might choose to walk like a gorilla, crawl like a spider, or bounce like a rubber ball.



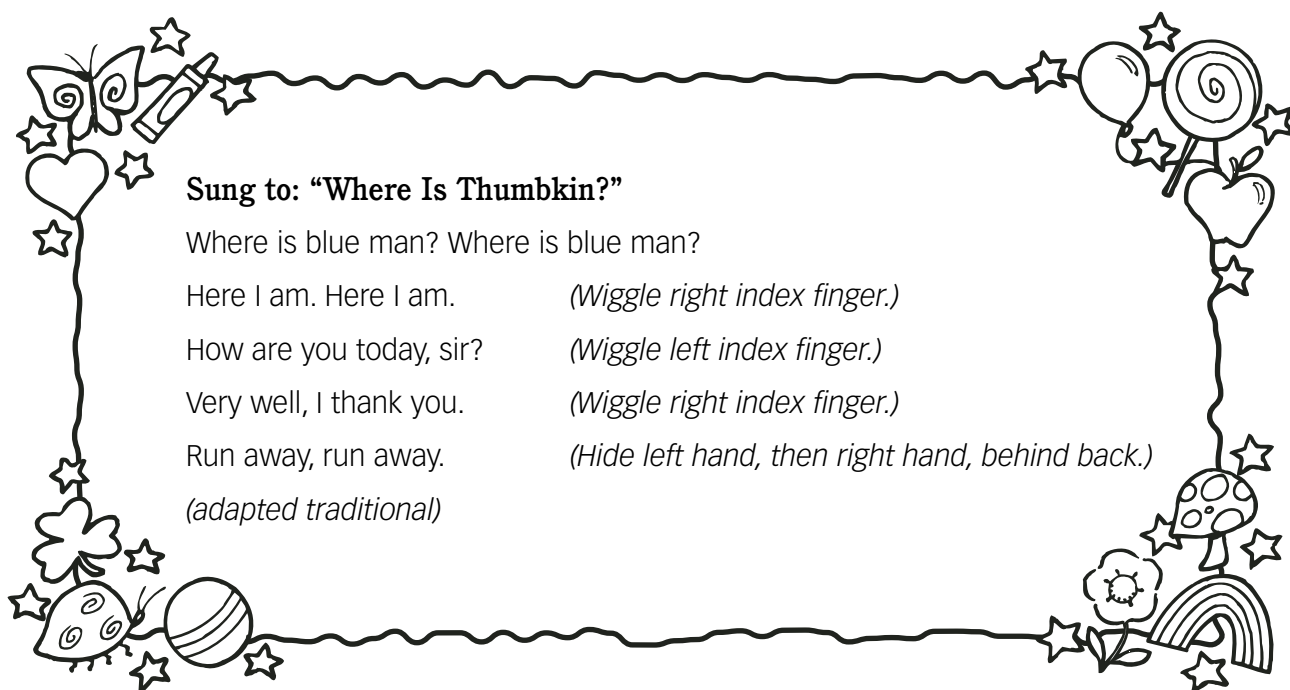
# 87 COLOR THUMBKIN

## Materials

Washable felt-tip markers

## Activity

Use felt-tip markers to draw a different colored dot on each finger of one hand. Repeat for each child. Then sing the following song, acting out the motions:



◎ **Additional Verses:** Repeat for the remaining fingers, substituting the color of each for *blue man*.

◎ **Extension:** Send the words to this fingerplay home with the children and encourage them to teach the motions to their families.



# 88 SHAPE TOSS

---



## Materials

Large cardboard box  
Utility knife  
Beanbags



## Activity

Turn a large cardboard box upside down. Use a utility knife to cut a circle, a square, and a triangle from the bottom of the box. Remove the top flaps. Turn the box upside-down on the floor. Let the children take turns tossing a beanbag or rolled-up pair of socks into the holes. As they toss the beanbags, encourage them to identify the shape of each hole. With practice, they will learn to throw the beanbags with more accuracy. Challenge older children to predict where the beanbag will land before they throw it.



# 89 FINGER DANCE

---




## Materials

Small circle stickers (available at office supply stores)



## Activity

Attach a different colored circle sticker to the fingertips of a child's right hand, and then attach matching stickers to his or her left hand. Have the children match the colors by first putting two fingertips together, then putting two yellow fingertips together, and so on. Then let them try matching fingertips with a partner.

 **Variation:** Have the children touch objects whose colors match their fingertips.

# 90 MOVING SHAPES

## Materials

Construction paper  
Scissors

## Activity

Cut large shapes out of selected colors of construction paper. (You will need at least one shape per child.) Scatter the shapes on the floor, allowing at least a foot between shapes. Review the names and colors of the shapes with the children, and then ask the children to follow directions such as: *Hannah, can you put your foot on an orange circle?* *Nicholas, can you skip to a brown square?* Finally, ask everyone to “freeze” on a shape and identify it.

☉ **Extension:** Have each child pick up a shape and try to match its color to something in the classroom.

☉ **Variation:** To simplify this game, begin by identifying the shapes by color or shape only. Ask, *Tyler, can you sit on a yellow shape?* *Maddie, can you jump to a square?*



# 91 ROLL A TRIANGLE

## Materials

Ball of yarn

## Activity

Invite the children to sit in a circle. Give a ball of yarn to one child. Have that child hold one end of the yarn and roll the ball to another child. Then ask that child to roll the yarn to a third child, who in turn should roll it back to the original child. As a group, look at the triangle. Ask, *How many sides does it have? How many corners?* Roll the yarn into a ball again and play again. Continue until each child has had a turn. Ask, *Why does the yarn make a triangle each time? How are the triangles different? How are they the same?*

 **Variation:** Challenge the children to roll a square or a rectangle.

# 92 NAIL SHAPES

## Materials

Plywood  
Felt-tip pen  
Hammer  
Nails

## Activity

To provide a tactile shape experience, draw shapes on squares of plywood and pound nails along the outline of each shape. Encourage the children to trace the shapes with their fingers or to make shape rubbings of the plywood squares.

 **Variation:** Older children will enjoy pounding the nails themselves.

# 93 COLOR MATCHING BOARD

---

## Materials

Plywood  
Hammer  
Nails  
Craft paint  
Paintbrush  
Rubber bands

## Activity

Pound two parallel columns of nails into a square piece of plywood. Use craft paint to color the nail heads in one column assorted colors. Use the same colors in a different order to paint the other row of nails. Set out the board, along with a supply of rubber bands. Challenge the children to string a rubber band across each pair of matching nail heads.

# 94 CONNECT THE COLORS

---

## Materials

Discarded school supply catalog  
Scissors  
Paper  
Glue  
Markers  
Crayons

## Activity

From the pages of an outdated school supply catalog, cut out pictures that show items that are sold in assorted colors, such as red, yellow, and blue bear math counters. Mount each picture on a separate sheet of paper. Use markers to draw dots in corresponding colors around the picture. Let a child use crayons to connect each pictured object to its matching colored dot.

# 95 I CAN MAKE A CIRCLE

## Materials

No materials needed.

## Activity

Recite the following rhyme with the children. Model how to form each shape with your forefingers and thumb. Have the children follow along.

I can make a circle.      (*Hold thumbs and index fingers together to form circle.*)

How about you?

Make a little circle like I do.

## Additional Verses:

I can make a square . . .

I can make a triangle . . .

I can make a rectangle . . .

*Jean Warren*




# 96 SHAPE SEWING CARDS

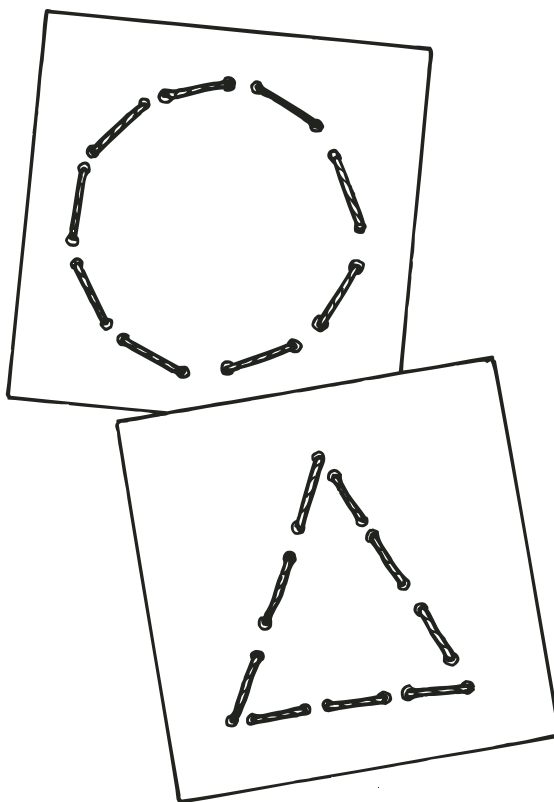
## Materials

Heavy paper  
Scissors  
Hole punch  
Yarn and plastic needle or shoelace with grommet

## Activity

Cut heavy paper into 8-inch squares. Punch holes in the outline of a familiar shape on each square. Give each child a sewing card square and a plastic needle threaded with yarn. Demonstrate how to sew by poking the needle up through one hole and down through the next. Talk about the shape of the design and the color of the yarn.

 **Hint:** Cookie cutters make easy templates for tracing shapes onto paper. You can use a photocopier to enlarge each shape as needed. Make a selection of sewing cards and put them in an activity center for quiet times.




# 97 RAINBOW FRUIT SALAD

## Materials

Red apples  
Sliced pineapple  
Blueberries  
Honeydew (or other green melon)  
Sliced oranges  
Seedless purple grapes (sliced in half)  
Child-safe knives  
Vanilla yogurt  
Granola

## Activity

Set out the ingredients, along with child-safe knives. Let the children cut the fruit into bite-sized pieces. Then serve the fruit salad in small, clear-plastic cups with a dollop of vanilla yogurt and a sprinkling of granola.

 **Variation:** Have the children brainstorm a list of ingredients for a rainbow salad. Then decide as a group which ingredients to include.





# 98 STRING SHAPES

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## Materials

Yarn  
Scissors



## Activity

Tie an 18-inch length of yarn into a loop. Have the children work in pairs or small groups to form the yarn into shapes. Can they make a triangle? A square? A rectangle? What about a circle or an oval? Why are some shapes easier to form than others?



# 99 DOUGH SHAPES

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## Materials

Play dough  
Rolling pins  
Cookie cutters



## Activity

Set out a supply of play dough, some rolling pins, and an assortment of cookie cutters in geometric shapes. Encourage the children to name the shape of each cookie cutter. As they play with the materials, challenge them to sort the dough shapes according to shape, color, and size.


# 100 COLOR MIXING

## Materials

Water  
Small, clear-plastic cups  
Food coloring  
Eyedroppers

## Activity

Fill small, clear-plastic cups with water. Use food coloring to tint each cup of water a different color. Set out eyedroppers and let the children practice using them to pick up and release a few drops of water. Then have the children experiment with color mixing by combining colors in an empty cup. Challenge them to create green, orange, purple, and brown. What colors combine to make brown? Which color is their favorite?

 **Hint:** Keep a close eye on younger children to make sure they don't sample the colored water. It is easy to mistake it for juice.



# 101 POM-POM SORT

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## Materials

Pom-poms (assorted colors and sizes)  
Two large bowls  
Kitchen tongs  
Tweezers

## Activity

Set out a bowl of large and small pom-poms, an empty bowl, a pair of kitchen tongs, and a pair of tweezers. Let the children practice using kitchen tongs to pick up the large pom-poms and tweezers to pick up the small ones. Then challenge them to sort or move the pom-poms from one bowl to another according to color.

🌀 **Hint:** Fabric and craft-supply stores sell big bags of assorted pom-poms. You'll find the best prices after the holiday season.

🌀 **Variation:** Ask the children to pick up a certain number of pom-poms.



# This Book



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# About This Book

Colors and shapes are essential components of the early childhood curriculum. They form a foundation for geometry, patterning, and a variety of visual and spatial skills. In this book you will find endless opportunities to extend and reinforce these concepts throughout the day. You will find activities to foster children's social and emotional development, build language and literacy skills, and develop an understanding of math concepts. You will also find science activities that strengthen children's observation and reasoning skills, music and movement activities that get everyone involved, and group art activities that inspire creativity and cooperation. An Early Childhood Standards Correlation Chart is included to help you quickly identify activities that focus on a specific skill. The ideas in this book are only the beginning. Enjoy!

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