

# SHAPES THEME BOX



## Designed to meet these objectives:

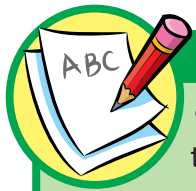
- Students will listen attentively and respond to instructions.
- Students will use oral language to describe objects and experiences.
- Students will learn new words and expand vocabulary.
- Students will sort objects by various attributes.
- Students will recognize and identify 2-D and 3-D shapes.
- Students will build number sense.
- Students will count concrete objects.
- Students will copy and extend simple patterns.
- Students will create and interpret simple graphs and charts.
- Students will make and test predictions.
- Students will develop gross and fine motor skills.

Your new Shapes Theme Box has everything you need for comprehensive, hands-on lessons that span the curriculum. We've included a wide variety of props and manipulatives that help children explore the world of shapes—from 2-D squares to 3-D cylinders! Inside this guide, you'll find ideas for dozens of involving, shape-themed activities covering 10 cross-curricular learning areas—from math to dramatic play. We've even included a list of terrific children's books to build up your classroom library. The Shapes Theme Box is a perfect way to capture children's attention and boost essential skills!

## What's Included

- 3 shape wands
- 100 2-D foam shapes
- 4 3-D foam shapes
- 32 nuts and bolts in assorted shapes
- 10 write & wipe shape photo cards
- Geoboard and rubber bands
- Storage tub
- 4 write & wipe markers





## Language

- Using positional words such as “above,” “beside,” and “on,” direct students to create designs with the 2-D foam shapes.
- Look for shapes in letters of the alphabet. Which letters include a circle? Triangle? Oval? Semicircle?
- Play “What’s My Shape?” Ask a volunteer to choose a shape without letting other children see it. Then, have her describe the shape she chose. Can other children guess what it is?
- Make personal shapes books. Write a line of simple, repetitive text on each page: “I see a circle,” “I see a square,” and so on. Staple the pages together with a cover titled “\_\_\_\_\_’s Book of Shapes.” Have children complete their books by writing their names on the cover and drawing pictures of the shapes on the pages.
- Use a highlighter to write a shape word on an index card, and draw a picture of the corresponding shape above the word. Repeat for each shape you want children to practice. Then, laminate the cards and set them in your writing center along with write & wipe markers. Encourage children to trace over the shapes and words on the cards.
- Practice beginning sound isolation and identification by having children make up names for shapes: Tracy Triangle, Ricky Rectangle, Cindy Cylinder, Carlos Cube, and so on.



## Art

- Use shapes cut from paper, buttons of various shapes, and other shaped materials to create colorful collages.
- Help students understand that even a large, complex shape is actually a combination of simple shapes. Cut several large circles, half circles, ovals, rectangles, triangles, and squares from construction paper. Then, encourage students to use the paper shapes from above to create their own large shape designs. What shapes can you combine to make a house? What shapes will form a car or truck?
- Make shape prints by using a few of the foam shapes as stampers. Be sure to use a washable ink pad and wash the shapes completely after the activity.
- Use the nuts and bolts to stamp different shapes in clay or modeling dough.



## Sand & Water

- Stand the shape wands in three different areas of your sand table. Have children use their fingers to draw the matching shape near each wand.
- Press the nuts and bolts into damp sand to make shape impressions.
- Collect jars, boxes, and other containers of various shapes. Have children predict which have the most capacity, and then test their predictions by pouring sand or water back and forth between containers.
- Pack damp sand into sand molds or plastic containers of various shapes, and then turn them out in your sand table to make sand castles or other structures.
- Wait until the surface of the water is still. Then, gently touch one of the 3-D foam shapes to the water’s surface and lift it away. What is the shape of the ripples that form? (Be sure to dry the foam shapes completely.)



## Science

- Take a nature walk to collect natural objects such as shells, stones, and leaves. Back in the classroom, use a marker to trace each object's outline onto an index card. Use the shapes and objects to play a matching game.
- Create a ramp with a piece of cardboard and shoe boxes or blocks. Then, try rolling the 3-D foam shapes down the ramp. Which ones will roll in a straight line? Which ones won't roll at all?
- Have children build a tower by stacking 3 single unit blocks (i.e., brick-shaped blocks) on their largest faces. Build a second tower by stacking 3 single unit blocks on their long edges. Build a third tower by stacking 3 single unit blocks on their short edges. Which design is the most stable? Add more blocks to find out!
- On a sunny day, go outside and look for shadows. Use sidewalk chalk to trace their outlines. What shapes can you find?



## Music

- Sing these lyrics to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb":

Mary has a little square, little square, little square!

Mary has a little square.

It's shaped with four straight sides!

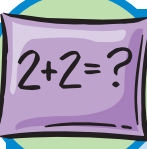
Repeat with other shapes and other children's names.

- Play lively music and have children march or skip behind you as you lead them around in large circles, triangles, and other shapes.
- Pass out instruments to play and look at photographs of instruments. What shapes are they? What kinds of sounds do they make?
- Play dance music and call out a shape. Any children who have that shape somewhere on their clothing can come to the center and dance. (Don't forget to check pockets, buttons, and the soles of your shoes!) Call out additional shapes until everyone is dancing.



## Active Play

- Draw a hopscotch, replacing the squares with a variety of shapes. Number the shapes and play the game just like regular hopscotch.
- Have children lie on the floor and help them form different shapes with their bodies. Take photos and display them on a bulletin board, labeling each shape by name.
- Mark large shapes on the classroom floor or playground with masking tape or chalk. Encourage children to walk around the edges of the shapes, then hop, walk on tiptoe, skip, and so on.
- A ball is a sphere. How many different spheres are in your classroom? Encourage children to bring in their own spheres from home. Bounce, roll, and toss the spheres back and forth.
- Play "shapes kickball." Make each base a different shape. Then, have children run around the bases just like they do in regular kickball. At each base, the runner collects a paper shape that matches that base. When you have collected all the shapes, run for home! (Players are never "out" in this version of the game.)

 $2+2=?$

## Math

- Use the photo cards to introduce different shapes. Choose a card and discuss what is shown in the photograph. What shape does it represent? After reviewing all of the cards, set them out with write & wipe markers and encourage children to draw the shapes on the cards.
- How many sides does each 2-D shape have? Draw the shapes on the board and count the sides. Encourage children to duplicate the shapes with craft sticks.
- Which shapes are most commonly found in the real world? Prompt children to look for shapes at school and at home. Have them draw pictures of what they found.
- Sort the foam shapes by shape. How many do you have in each pile? Sort again by color or size.
- Create patterns using the foam shapes. Start with a simple AB pattern such as “circle, square, circle, square.” Challenge children to extend the pattern. Move on to more complex patterns such as AAB: “triangle, triangle, rectangle, triangle, triangle, rectangle.”
- Use the geoboard and bands to form shapes. How many sides does each shape have?
- Use the geoboard and bands to form a square. Count the pegs around the outside edge. Make a larger or smaller square. How many pegs are on the outside edge of this square?



## Dramatic Play

- Go on a shape safari! Take the wands and hunt for “wild shapes” in the classroom or outside.
  - Add the 3-D shapes to your supply of blocks. Encourage children to add them to their structures.
- Provide cake pans and other baking dishes in a variety of shapes. Suggest that children pretend to prepare different shaped foods, such as round pies, rectangular bread, or square sandwiches.
- Use felt shapes to create a scene on a felt board. Include houses, people, ponds, and more. Invite children to create stories about the scene and share them with their classmates.
- Cut out large construction paper half circles. Tape the edges to form cone-shaped hats for clowns, wizards, and princesses. Discuss how a flat, 2-D shape has been changed into a 3-D shape.



## Cooking

- Cut fruits, vegetables, and other foods in half and discuss the shapes you see: tomatoes form circles, hard-boiled eggs form ovals, bananas form crescents, and so on.
- Make square sandwiches from square slices of bread and cheese. Cut the sandwiches diagonally to form triangular halves or quarters.
- Provide crackers in various shapes and an assortment of toppings. Have children create their own unique “shape snacks.”



## Library

- *Bear in a Square*  
by Stella Blackstone
- *Brown Rabbit's Shape Book*  
by Alan Baker
- *It Looked Like Spilt Milk*  
by Charles G. Shaw
- *Mouse Shapes*  
by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- *Ovals*  
by Jennifer S. Burke
- *Sea Shapes*  
by Suse MacDonald
- *The Shape of Things*  
by Dayle Ann Dodds
- *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes*  
by Tana Hoban
- *So Many Circles, So Many Squares*  
by Tana Hoban
- *When a Line Bends...A Shape Begins*  
by Rhonda Gowler Greene