



Distance Learning Activities 2020

Theatre-Inspired Learning for Preschoolers, ages 2 – 5

Activity: Shape Search Inspired by Everything Is Round



The following activity can be used to either introduce the concept of shapes and shape vocabulary with very young children or adapted to be a review of these important observation skills for slightly older and more advanced preschool learners.

Parents, reinforcing important skills your child needs in order to be academically ready for school success are not hard to lead. You can do it right there at home! This very simple activity reinforces letter and number recognition skills for very young learners. How? Well, being able to look for the details in images that they see (like curved lines vs. straight lines, sharp corners vs. curves, etc.) are important for strong pre-literacy skills.

So whether you are an experienced preschool teacher who wants a fun, new activity for their students or you are a parent looking for ways to keep your youngest children engaged in learning while you are at home together, here is a video to help you along with step-by-step instructions:

Start by telling the young learner that you are going to show them a short video from Pollyanna Theatre's production of **Everything Is Round** by Nicholas Kryah.

Explain that all plays have a playwright that created the story and the characters. The playwright for this play writes plays for people their age. His name is Nick. In this play, Nick created two very different people, one named Circle and the other named Square. Circle and Square are good friends. But sometimes even good friends don't agree on things. Ask the child to [watch the video clip](#) and try to remember what kinds of things Circle seems to like and what kinds of things Square seems to like.

If you are a TEACHER of preschool students, the following activity can be used to help you reach the following learning objectives from the Texas Pre K Guidelines:

- **Development of visual discrimination skills:** children learn to discriminate between similar objects. Strengthening these skills will later help children identify letters, numbers, and shapes, and distinguish the difference between shapes, such as a, q, b, d, and numbers like 6 and 9 or 3 and 8.
- **Development of Gross Motor Skills:** Children explore their physical space and understand how their bodies function in space through active movement experiences. Focus on these gross motor skills will help children develop overall coordination and balance.

While the child watches the video, gather the following supplies for the activity:

Materials

- paper - one sheet per shape your child will be working with. Youngest learners will only be looking for 2 shapes (circles and squares). Slightly more advanced learners may be looking for 4 or 5 shapes. They will need a sheet of paper for each shape.
- magazines (if you do not subscribe to print magazines, advertisements received in your mail will also work for this activity. You might think about starting to collect a few of these for this and similar activities.)
- safety scissors
- glue sticks



Instructions

1. Adult, please draw or trace a square on one of the sheets of paper. Write the word "square" under the shape. Repeat on a separate sheet of paper with a circle. Again, if your child is slightly older, you might create a third sheet with a triangle and a fourth with a rectangle, etc. Remember, recall of these simple shapes and fun activities are strengthened and become true learning experiences when you use shape vocabulary while you do the activities below with preschoolers.
2. Have children look through magazines for things that are circles and squares, (and any additional shapes you may include in the activity). Older children can do this independently. Challenge them to search for each sort of shape for at least 3 to 4 minutes each. Younger children will need your direct help.
3. When they find something that is either a circle or a square in shape, ask them to cut it out (or guide them as they cut it out) and glue it onto the piece of paper with the same shape on it.
4. After they have several items cut out and on the appropriate sheet, [watch the video clip a second time](#).
5. Discuss which sheet of images they think each of the characters in the play might like most? Why do they think that?
6. Expand the activity by asking the child to walk around the room and find 5 things that are shaped like a circle and 5 things that are shaped like a square. This is an important step in the process of developing the ability to "see" shapes all around them. Transferring concepts to various settings is an important pre-literacy skill.
7. Finally, refer back to the video clip. Let the child watch the clip independently for a third time. After the third viewing, ask them what they think might happen in the story next? What makes them think that? Also ask them to show you how the two different characters moved in the video. How was their movement different, one from the other?

Tell the young learner that soon they will be able to see if their prediction of what happens next in the story is the same thing Nick the playwright created because a second activity and video clip will be posted soon.