

## Recommended Shape and Spatial Relations Picture Books Colleen Uscianowski

### Shape

Burns, M., & Silveria, G. (1994). *The greedy triangle*. New York: Scholastic.

At first, the triangle in this book was happy with its three sides, which formed the slice of a pie or the shape when you put your hands on your hips. But soon the triangle became bored with its three sides and sought out the shapeshifter to ask for another side, and then later another. This book can be used to introduce children to different polygons.

Dodds, D. A., & Lacombe, J. (1994). *The shape of things* (1st ed.). Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.

Simple yet colorful illustrations show how different shapes come together to make everyday objects. For example, a square transforms into a house, a circle becomes a Ferris wheel, and a rectangle becomes the caboose of a train. Each page introduces a new shape through both the illustrations and fun, rhyming text.

Emberley, E. (1961). *The wing on a flea: A book about shapes* (1st ed.). Boston: Little, Brown.

The illustrations depict basic shapes composed together to make more complex drawings. Different colors are artfully used to draw the reader's attention to the basic shapes. A triangle becomes an ice-cream cone and an admiral's hat, a rectangle becomes a pirate's map and a checkered coat, and a circle becomes a drum and a Ferris wheel.

Greene, R. G., & Kaczman, J. (1997). *When a line bends...A shape begins*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

This story invites the reader to find different shapes in pictures and text. The rhyming text explains how the shapes are composed from simple lines, such as straight and curved lines. The illustrations show both simple shapes, such as triangles, and more complex shapes, such as octagons.

Light, S. (2015). *Have you seen my monster?* (1st ed.). Somerville, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press.

In this book, a little girl loses her monster in the fair. As she walks through the fair trying to find him, she sees different shapes all around her. From the octagons on the merry-go-round to the hexagons on the fun house, children will enjoy spotting the shapes on each page.

May, E., & Melmon, D. (2013). *Mice on ice*. New York: Kane Press.

Albert is a clumsy mouse who goes ice-skating with his friends one day. His friends make shapes as they skate around the ice. When Albert tries to join them, he is too clumsy to make shapes the right way! But then...surprise! As Albert and his friends skate different shapes on the ice, children can learn the names and features of shapes, such as triangles and squares.

Murphy, S. J., & Miller, E. (1998). *Circus shapes*. New York: HarperCollins.

A family encounters different shapes when they spend a day at the circus. Elephants march around in a circle, horses make a triangle, monkeys make a square, and bears make a rectangle. Children can look for these shapes and more throughout the illustrations.

Thong, R., & Parra, J. (2013). *Round is a tortilla: A book of shapes*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books.

In this rhyming story, the characters discover shapes hidden all around them: round sombreros, rectangular flags, triangular sails on the boat, and an oval locket. Many of the objects are culturally Latino in origin and several Spanish words are featured in the text.

Walsh, E. S. (2007). *Mouse shapes* (1st ed.). Orlando: Harcourt. Space

When the mice run and hide from the cat, they find themselves in a sea of triangles, squares, ovals, and other shapes. Soon they start putting shapes together to make a house, a tree, and many more things. When the cat threatens to come back, they turn the shapes into three big, scary mice to keep the cat away.

### Spatial Relations

Ayres, K., & Westcott, N. B. (2007). *Up, down & around* (1st ed.). Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.

Children learn about spatial directions as seeds drop down into the soil, the stalks reach up to the sky, and the pumpkin vines twirl around and around. Ideas about space are embedded in nature as children also learn about how different vegetables grow.

Berenstain, S., & Berenstain, J. (1968). *Inside, outside, upside down*. New York: Random House.

In this simple story, Brother Bear gets in a box that gets turned upside down, taken outside, and put on a truck. Children learn about spatial words when the box goes outside, falls off the truck, and Brother Bear lands right side up.

Carle, E. (1972). *The secret birthday message*. New York: Crowell.

On Tim's birthday, he receives a mysterious letter with clues telling him how to find his

present. The story includes symbols and shapes to show Tim the directions. Looking below the rock, into the cave, through the opening, and down the stairs, he finds his wonderful birthday surprise!

Hill, E. (1980). *Where's Spot?* New York: Putnam.

In this simple story, a mother dog searches for her lost puppy. She finds other animals hiding behind the door, inside the clock, and under the stairs. Finally the mother dog finds Spot hiding inside the basket.

Hoban, T. (1987). *Over, under & through.* London: Aladdin Books; Collier Macmillan.

Spatial relationships are depicted in the vibrant photographs on each page. Each photograph shows different spatial concepts, such as over, through, across, and between. For example, a child is jumping over the fire hydrant on one page, a chick rests on a hand in another, and cars drive on a road below in a third photograph.

Hutchins, P. (1967). *Rosie's walk.* New York: Macmillan.

When Rosie the hen leaves the chicken coop to go out for a walk, the sly fox closely follows her. But the sly fox can't catch Rosie, as he struggles to follow her across the yard, around the pond, and over the haystack without running into obstacles along the way.

Hutchins, P. (1971). *Changes, changes.* New York: Macmillan.

This is a wordless story about a man and woman who build a house out of blocks. When the house catches on fire, they build a fire truck. The couple continues to rearrange the blocks and build new structures, until they make a new home.

May, E., & Melmon, D. (2013). *Albert is not scared.* New York: The Kane Press.

This is a book about a mouse's day at an amusement park. Albert learns not to be scared to go on rides that go up and down, around, or left and right.

Peterson, M., & Rofé, J. (2010). *Piggies in the pumpkin patch.* Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

Two little piggies run wild through the farm, traveling over the green beans, behind the sleepy sheep, and past the swarming bees before making it back to mama pig just in time for a nap.