

Topic B

Analyze and Name Two-Dimensional Shapes

Transitional Kindergarten students practice their counting and sorting skills as they examine two-dimensional shapes.

It is important to expose even the youngest students to diverse examples of a shape, including variants and distractors (see the Why? section of the Module Overview). Presenting four categories of shapes (circles, triangles, rectangles, and square rectangles) in various orientations and sizes helps students build their internal picture, or concept image, of each shape. This supports students in developing more flexible ideas about shape categories and helps them avoid misclassifying shapes because they are “too tall” or “upside down.”

As students encounter new examples of a shape, they naturally compare the examples with their concept image to see if the examples “fit” the category. Students also get early exposure to recognizing shapes by their defining attributes, such as the number of straight sides and corners, rather than by nondefining attributes, such as color, size, or orientation. It is common for young students to mix informal language, such as *points* and *round*, with rich vocabulary, such as *straight side*, *corner*, and *curved*, to describe features of shapes. Describing shapes by using more precise vocabulary fosters language development and encourages students to use a shape’s defining attributes to describe it. For example, a student may say, “The red shape is a triangle. It has 3 corners and 3 sides.”

Students continue to focus on defining attributes, position words, and communication skills in topic C as they compose and construct two-dimensional shapes.



Exemplar



Variant



Distractor