



# The Kindergarten Chronicles

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## Things are Shaping Up!

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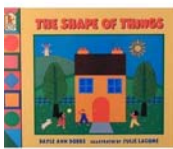
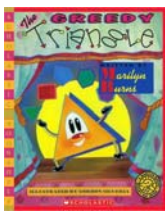
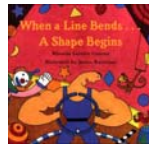
As we begin to teach geometry concepts to our young learners, identifying shapes is one of the first skills we encounter. Our standards have us addressing the following skills: Identify two-dimensional shapes (circles, triangles, rectangles including squares) regardless of orientation (4.K.1); Identify two-dimensional figures (windows are shaped like rectangles) as they appear in the environment (4.K.3); and Identify three-dimensional figures in the environment (sphere, cylinder, rectangular prism, cube, cone) (4.K.4). Most children can quickly learn to identify basic two-dimensional shapes, but we need to help them transfer this knowledge and build an awareness that shapes (and really, all math concepts!) occur everywhere in their environment. Fortunately, there are some wonderful children's books that help introduce this concept.

*When a Line Bends...A Shape Begins* by Rhonda Gowler Greene

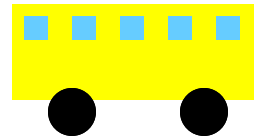
introduces basic shapes and invites children to find shapes on every page. After reading, allow your students to make shapes out of colored chenille wire (pipe cleaners), then use the shapes to retell parts of the story to a partner. *The Greedy Triangle* by Marilyn Burns introduces polygons and angles.

A good follow-up activity might be to classify different polygons by the number of sides they have. Draw each one on a sheet of chart paper, then add examples of objects that are the shape of each polygon.

*The Shape of Things* by Dayle Ann Dodds shows how simple shapes transform to familiar objects when other elements



(a line, more shapes, etc.) are added. After reading this book, provide your students with a sentence frame page: "A \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ until you add \_\_\_\_\_, then it becomes \_\_\_\_\_." (Example: "A rectangle is a rectangle until you add squares and circles, then it becomes a bus.") Have each student use pre-cut shapes to make their object:



Your students can make several of these pages to create their own book, or you can bind all your students' pages together to make one book. This activity can be included as a math center, once you've modeled how to do it.

Even after you've focused your instruction on these skills, your students will continue to see math all around them as they see shapes in everything!

[www.rpdp.net](http://www.rpdp.net)



Bill Hanlon, Director



## Show Me the Money!

Children love the idea of money, however, the skill of identifying it in its various forms can be difficult to teach. A math standard in our third trimester is: Identify and sort pennies, nickels, and dimes (3.K.4). To begin your instruction on money, it might be a good idea to give your students some background knowledge by reading part of a book such as *If You Made a Million* by David Schwartz. After reading about

and discussing concepts of money, you can begin to teach your students to identify and sort coins.

Since teaching money is a very visual activity, it's helpful to have large pictures of coins to show to students. You can purchase a bulletin board set or use the pages found at this site: <http://www.moneyinstructor.com/wsp/>



pages.asp and enlarge them on the copier. Color the coins the appropriate colors, then attach magnets so you can put them on your white board as you teach. You may want to make a few extra sets to be used at a center and also have a collection of real coins for students to identify and sort. Children love to use real money!

As your students begin to learn to identify money, you can con-

tinue on by teaching them the value of each coin and the relationships between coins (there are five pennies in one nickel, different ways can you make twenty-five cents, etc.). You may also set up a "class store" where students can exchange play money for items such as stickers, pencils, and other fun classroom items. The possibilities are endless once you start!