

Did you know...



For babies and toddlers, talking about and playing with shapes is the first stage of recognizing letters.

Babies and toddlers are trying to make sense of their world and one way they do this is to look, taste, listen to, and feel objects. This helps them sort the objects into categories, such as round objects/soft objects; and to tell one object from another, such as a blanket from a ball. Once they are toddlers, they can begin learning about shapes and colors.

Children who recognize shapes and are able to tell the difference between them have an easier time learning about letters.

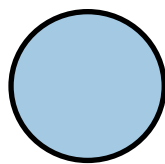
Level 1

Point out shapes around the house



Level 2

Teach names of shapes



Level 3

Look for shapes in letters

Q P
q p

Here's how...

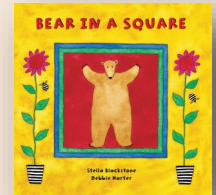


- ⊛ Read shape books together. There are a wide variety of shape board books to interest your child.
- ⊛ Go on a scavenger hunt to look for shapes around the house or in the community. Take a box or bag and collect round things, long things, blue things, etc.
- ⊛ Point out shapes in familiar objects. "Your sandwich is a square shape. See, it has four straight sides, 1-2-3-4."

Read



Bear in a Square, by Stella Blackstone



With large type, easy-to-remember rhyming text and bold artwork, this bright and busy board book is a fun way to introduce your child to simple shapes such as squares, circles, triangles, and other shapes such as hearts and stars.

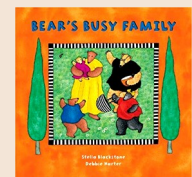
Choosing Books



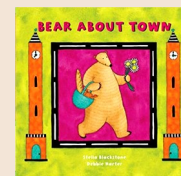
More Bear books to look for at your local library:



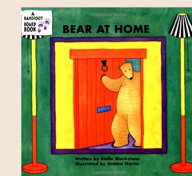
Jobs



Families



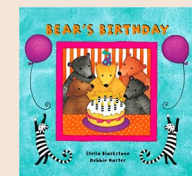
Days of the Week



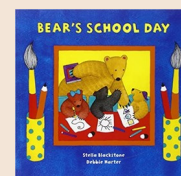
Homes



Transportation



Birthdays



School



Weather

Talk



Toddlers are fascinated by whispering, and it takes some practice for them to be able to do it. Help your child learn to control the level of volume in their voice by having your child mimic you saying a phrase using a “loud” or “big” voice, a “regular” voice, a “soft” or “little” voice, and then a whisper. Then use your whisper voices to give each other commands such as “clap your hands,” or “twirl,” or “hug teddy.” Do this often so your child can have lots of practice. If you have a baby you can use your whisper voice as you talk to her throughout the day.

Ready to Write



Encourage your older toddler to make scribbles using non-toxic crayons or chalk. Choose larger crayons and thick sidewalk chalk, as these are easier for little hands to grasp. See if your toddler can copy you as you draw lines that go across and lines that go up and down.



Play



Rhyme for Baby

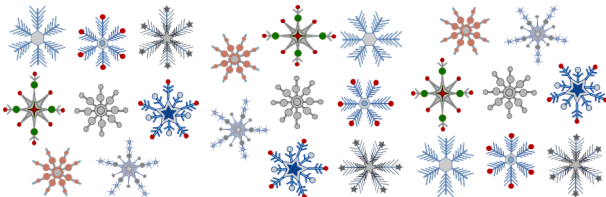
(lay baby on your lap)

Snowflakes falling on the ground,
(Wiggle fingers from high to low)

Snowflakes falling all around,
(Wiggle fingers around baby's body)

Snowflakes falling, gently, see,
(Wiggle fingers where baby can see)

Snowflakes fall on you and me!
(Wiggle fingers and rest on baby's tummy)



Sing



Hokey Pokey Shapes

Cut out a circle, square, triangle, rectangle, and oval from thick paper. Help your child find the correct shape for each verse and do the motions with him.

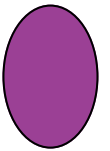
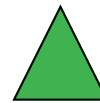
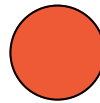
You put your circle in,
You take your circle out,
You put your circle in
and you shake it all about.
You do the hokey pokey
and you turn yourself around.
That's what it's all about!

You put your square in...

You put your triangle in...

Keep going!

Challenge for older toddlers: Make the shapes different colors. Put your red circle in...



At your library...



Don't have a library card? You can still visit your library for storytimes or to read with your child. Ask your librarian about how to apply for your own card today!