

Summary of the story

Shapes is a non-fiction text designed to introduce young learners to the topic of shapes by reading about six playful mice and their friend, the Owl. Supported throughout by illustrations, *Shapes* encourages young learners to recognize shapes in every day situations.

About the author

Caroline Laidlaw has spent many years working overseas, as classroom teacher and then as teacher trainer. She is the author of published coursebooks, other children's stories and resource material for teachers.

Topics and themes

Animals Mice are not usually safe with an owl. But Owls are usually thought of wise, at least in stories, and so here is their teacher. What are habits of both owls and mice? (For example they both come out at night). Owl pictures could be collected as part of a learning project on these birds. There are different species of both mice and owls, this is another area for research. Mice may be pets, who do not live in the wild.

Food What animals eat in the wild, how much of what they eat has been left by people? Owl doesn't eat in the story. What is his favourite food?

Numbers There is plenty of material in the Reader for simple mathematics. Starting from finding out what are numbers of sides for different shapes, to counting sides when shapes are placed together in a row, in a block, making patterns. How many sides are there in a cube or pyramid if you count insides and outsides too.

School In Mouse school they learn from visiting different places and at different times of the day (and night). Does your school do this sometimes? Make up some trips to find out shapes or another topic, perhaps on mice and owls, or the moon.

Senses Sight is the main sense found in the Reader. The mice see the moon, circles in the water and other objects. There are also Sounds for example, stone in water, triangles, balloons. How different are, a stone, flour, sugar cube to touch?

Shapes This is the main theme of the book, and provides vocabulary, and facts about the different common shapes. Can the pupils separate out flat and three-dimensional objects?

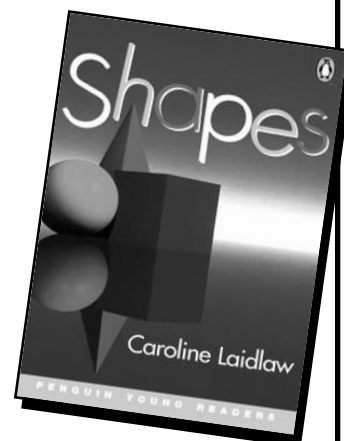
Space Try testing different shapes in different containers eg. which holds most, a box of squares, triangles or round objects of about the same size?

Making use of the Reader

Detectives Tell the pupils that they are going to play detectives. Elicit or suggest a shape to each pupil (or group of pupils) before allowing them a restricted amount of time to find as many things as they can of that shape. Follow this up by asking the pupils to create a wall display of their shape, including pictures of all the things they found and others they can think of.

Shape-shifting As a fun warm-up exercise, ask all the pupils to stand together in a free space in the classroom. Call out a shape and explain that the pupils should arrange themselves in that shape. Call out 'circle', 'triangle' etc. until the pupils are sufficiently 'warm'!

Party hats Pre-prepare a cut-out circle for each pupil, making sure they are appropriate in size. Encourage the pupils to decorate their hats as they wish. You could provide crepe paper streamers for the top of the hat, bits of cotton wool or glitter for the pupils to stick on, or just provide colouring pens or crayons. Show the pupils how to make the circles into cones, encouraging them to work together. Then staple or glue each hat and attach an elastic strap with staples also (with care).



Gift boxes Photocopy enough copies of activity 1. (the cube cut-out) of the photocopiable activities for each pupil and cut them out. Allow the pupils some time to work together, speculating on how the shape might fit together. Elicit the final shape of

the box from the pupils and explain that if one side of the 'cube' is left open, they will have a box. The pupils decorate the box before any glue is applied.

Using the accompanying audio cassette

1. Before listening, draw some of the shapes from the Reader on the board and elicit the vocabulary from the pupils. While listening to the cassette, ask the pupils to point to each shape as it is mentioned.

2. Type out a section of the Reader, leaving gaps for the specific vocabulary or grammar point upon which you wish to focus, or simply leave out a more random selection of words. Photocopy for each pupil and, as they listen to the cassette, ask them to fill the gaps.

Chants

The Chants recycle language from the story. Pupils listen to the chant a few times, clapping in time with the rhythm. Then they say the chant, verse by verse, with the cassette, beating out the rhythm as they say it, to become familiar with the words and rhythm.

Chant 1

Circle inside circles
Circles inside circles
They're tree rings, a new ring
Is growing every year

Circle in the water
Circles inside circles
Growing bigger, growing bigger
Circles inside circles

Chant 2

The mice climbed a tree
To watch the moon
The water's like a mirror
So the moon looks flat

The mice in the tree
Thought the moon looked flat
"It looks like a biscuit
The moon looks flat"

The mice climbed a tree
To watch the moon
The water's like a mirror
So the moon looks flat

Chant 3

The mice are flying
Over Egypt
In a basket
An open basket

Owl is flying
Over Egypt
With a basket
Full of mice

Down below them
See the Pyramids
They're very, very big
And very, very old

The mice are flying
Over Egypt
In a basket
An open basket

Notes on the activities in the Factsheet

Activity 1 Cut out the shapes and encourage the pupils to work together to assemble the cube and the pyramid, folding along the dotted lines and sticking the flaps down. You might encourage them to decorate the cut-outs before applying glue.

Activity 2 The pupils draw shapes in the box before naming them and thinking of something that is that shape and writing it in the lines beside the box.

Activity 3 The pupils create their own word-search. They write in the names of five shapes before obscuring them by adding letters in the other boxes. Then they exchange word-searches and have a speed competition.

Activity 4 The pupils describe the illustrations from the Reader. Encourage the use of the present continuous and the completion of the exercise without referring back to the Reader itself.

Answers to the activities

In the back of the Reader

1. A. 5, b. 3, c. 4, d. 1, e. 2.
2. (from left to right) pyramid, sphere, cone, cube, triangle, rectangle.
3. There are squares and triangles in the dog; circles and triangles in the cat. The bird has spheres, cones and cubes, also a circle and triangles.
4. there are many different answers to this activity.

In the Factsheet

Activity 2 The names of the shapes will be, circle, square, rectangle, triangle, sphere, pyramid, cuboid. Examples are, clock, rings, boards, windows, musical instrument, triangle, ball, boxes

Activity 3 Five shapes are circle, square, triangle, cone, rectangle, or cuboid, sphere, pyramid, cube

Activity 4 The answers may vary, but the owl is carrying a box in its claws as it flies away over the countryside. In the box are the mice. The box has windows in for the mice to see out of.

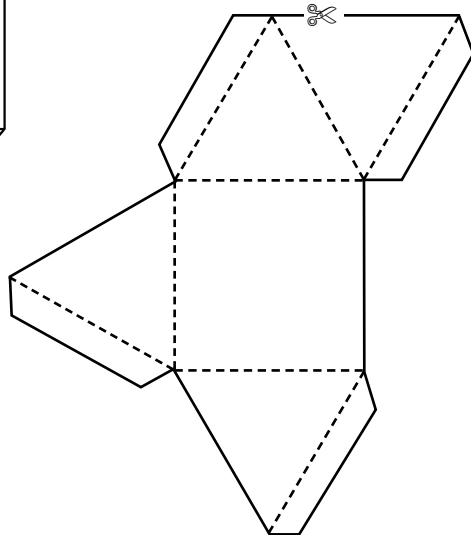
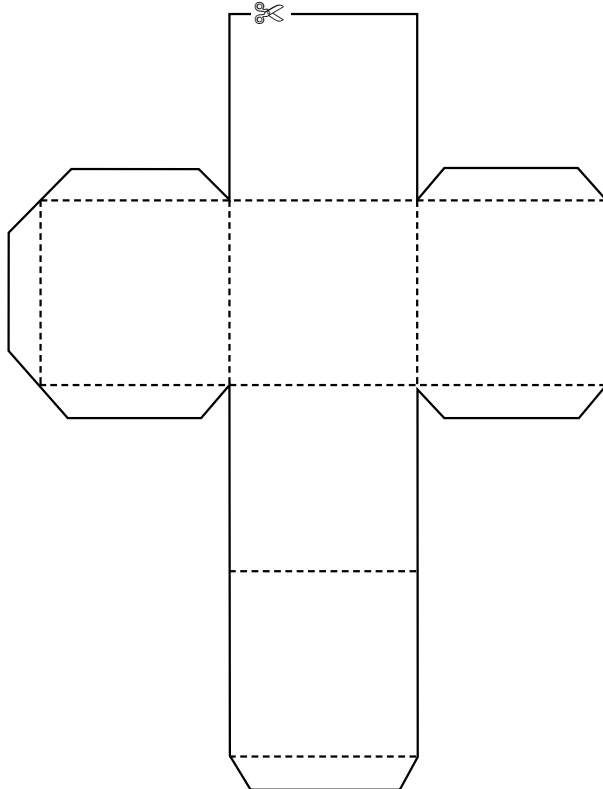


Shapes

Name.....

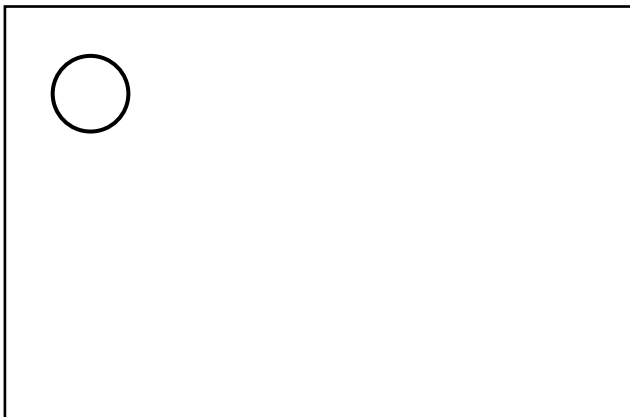
Activity 1

Your teacher will cut these shapes out for you. Can you make a cube and a pyramid?



Activity 2

Draw as many shapes as you can in the box below. What are the names of the shapes? Can you give examples of some things that are these shapes?



eg. circle wheel

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Shapes

Name.....

Activity 3

Make a word-search! Put the names of five shapes in the boxes, then write letters in the other boxes. Give the word-search to your friend and have a competition!

Activity 4

Look at the picture and describe what is happening in it.

