



## SHAPES, SHAPES, AND MORE SHAPES

(Early Elementary)

**CONCEPT:** Frank Lloyd Wright designed many striking art glass windows and doors for his Prairie School houses. He used geometric shapes to represent patterns he saw in nature. Young children will expand their understanding of Wright's artistry if they experience activities that meet the following objectives:

1. Identify and name geometric shapes
2. Label shapes as they occur in the environment and art
3. Create patterns, objects and designs using shapes

**TO THE TEACHER:** These activities may be presented in any order. Select those that are appropriate to the ability level of your students.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Any of the following children's books:

- Ehlert, Lois. *Color Zoo*. Lippincott, 1989.
- Emberley, Ed. *The Wing on a Flea*. Little, Brown, 1961.
- Fisher, Leonard Everett. *Look Around!* Viking Kestrel, 1987.
- Hoban, Tana. *Circles, Triangles and Squares*. Macmillan, 1974.
- Hoban, Tana. *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes*. Greenwillow, 1986.
- Reiss, John J. *Shapes*. Bradbury, 1974.

Colored pencils in earth tones

Construction paper

Paper plates

Picture or branch of sumac

Images from "Wright Art Glass"

Cut-out geometric shapes

Glue

Copies of drawing of the Dana Thomas House sumac window enclosed in this packet

### **PROCEDURE:**

**Activity 1:** Read together one or more of the books and name the shapes that are found in each book. (Objective 1)

**Activity 2:** Take a "shape walk" in the school, on the playground, or in the neighborhood. Look for the geometric shapes that are in the environment and record the shapes the children have seen when they return to the classroom. (Objectives 1 & 2)

**Activity 3:** Look at selected images from the “Frank Lloyd Wright Art Glass” CD. Explain that when Mr. Wright represented patterns he saw in nature, he used geometric shapes. Additionally, note that Mr. Wright chose earth tone colors for his glass windows to look like the earth outside the house. Find the geometric shapes in each image. (Objectives 1 & 2)

**Activity 4:** Distribute the drawing of the Dana Thomas House sumac window. This is Frank Lloyd Wright’s representation of the sumac plant. Show the class a picture or branch of sumac and discuss the differences between the abstract image and the actual plant. Now ask the class to look carefully at the drawing to find the triangles. Instruct them to color with one colored pencil all triangles (select a gold, brown or green). Repeat the procedure with a different color for the rectangles and then for the parallelograms. (Objectives 1 & 2)

**Activity 5:** Distribute various cut out geometric shapes and pieces of construction paper to each student. Instruct them to use the shapes to create their own plant or animal. When they have arranged their cut out shapes to form their plants or animals, glue the images on to the construction paper for display. (Objective 3)

**Activity 6:** Explain that Mr. Wright designed dishes for some homeowners. The design on the dishes matched images in the house. Since he did not design dishes for Mrs. Dana, invite your students to create dishes for the Dana-Thomas House. Using cut out geometric shapes that are the same that Mr. Wright used in the sumac and butterfly patterns in the house, create a design on a paper plate. When the students have arranged their shapes to their satisfaction, glue them to the paper plate for display. (Objective 3)