

TRAIT FOCUS: IDEAS

Lesson Objective

Students demonstrate an understanding that ideas are communicated through listening and speaking.

Listening and Speaking Communications

One of the main goals of primary school instruction is to develop strong reading comprehension skills in early learners. Kindergarten and first grade students begin this development communally through listening and speaking.

While some early learners are able to decode simple text, a majority of Kindergarten students exchange ideas and acquire information solely through listening and speaking. Read alouds and class discussions are a vital means by which an early learner begins to understand that, in addition to oral communication, information can also be written and read by others.

The book *The Wing on a Flea* by Ed Emberly is an excellent mentor text that will be an effective stimulus for class discussions on shapes. Integrate the following Literature/Writing Connection lesson into your curriculum as a way of informing your students about how to exchange ideas.

Story Overview

Rectangles, triangles, and circles can be found in every child's world, and Emberly's rhyming text helps children take notice of these and other geometric shapes. The pages are peppered with fleas, alligators, and birds—all constructed from simple shapes. A train with circular wheels pulls a rectangular circus wagon flying triangular flags.

Early learners will easily recognize the shapes they see, and all the animals the shapes create will spark their imaginations for a lively discussion!

Animals from a Rectangle, Triangle, and Circle

1. In preparation for the activity, use construction paper to cut out sets of one rectangle, one triangle, and one circle for each of your students.
2. Begin the lesson by discussing what makes someone a good listener. Good listeners stay seated, don't talk when someone else is speaking, watch the speaker, pay attention to what is being said, and politely raise their hands when they have a question.
3. Next, discuss what makes a good speaker. Good speakers look at their listeners, speak clearly, speak slowly enough to be understood, and speak loudly enough for everyone to hear.
4. Tell your students that listening and speaking are one way we communicate, or share ideas. Writers and speakers often get their ideas by communicating with others.
5. Read the book *The Wing on a Flea* to your class, stating that if your students are good listeners, you will be a good speaker. Feel free to discuss the book as you read, reminding your students that good listeners ask questions and always raise their hands.
6. Tell your students that the three primary shapes—rectangle, triangle, and circle—gave the writer lots of ideas about different animals to make.
7. Pass out a rectangle, triangle, and circle to each of your students. Brainstorm some ideas of what other animals they can make with the three shapes.
8. Have your students paste the shapes onto a piece of paper as the beginning of an animal picture. They can draw in the rest however they wish. Remind them that listening and speaking was the way in which the class exchanged ideas on the different animal pictures.