# **Shape Glossary**

- The shapes in this glossary are generally ordered from familiar to less familiar, so they are in the suggested order for teaching shapes to young children.
- Examples and non-examples of each shape offer ideas for more or less challenge.
- Non-example shapes closely resemble example shapes, but do not have all the properties of the shape, so they would not be safe to jump on.

# **Familiar Shapes**

### Circles

How to describe circles:

- Perfectly round all the way around
- Closed shape with no openings
  No s
- No straight sides and no angles



## Triangle

How to describe triangles:

- 3 straight sides and 3 angles
- Closed shape with no openings
- Can be all different sizes and directions

Teacher tips:

- Do not say, "like a piece of pizza."
- A triangle with one right angle (90° angle, such as the example triangle in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a right triangle.





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### Square

How to describe squares:

• Four straight sides that are all of the same length **and** four right angles



# Rectangle

How to describe rectangles:

• Four straight sides **and** four right angles

Teacher tips:

- A right angle is a 90° angle.
- Do not say, "two long sides and two short sides."
- A square is a rectangle because it has four straight sides and four right angles.



# **Less Familiar Shapes**

#### Pentagon

How to describe pentagons:

- Five straight sides **and** five angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Any closed shape with five straight sides is a pentagon.
- A five-sided shape with all sides of equal length (such as the example shape in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a regular pentagon. If all sides are not of equal length, the shape is called an irregular pentagon.



#### Hexagon

How to describe pentagons:

- Six straight sides **and** six angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Any closed shape with six straight sides is a hexagon.
- A six-sided shape with all sides of equal length (such as the example shape in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a regular hexagon. If all sides are not of equal length, the shape is called an irregular hexagon.





### Rhombus

How to describe rhombuses:

- Four straight sides that are all of the same length **and** four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Exactly two pairs of parallel lines (lines/sides that never cross).
- If the four angles are all right angles, the shape is also a square.



# Trapezoid

How to describe trapezoids:

- Four straight sides and exactly one pair of parallel sides and four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

#### Teacher tips:

- Exactly two pairs of parallel lines (lines/sides that never cross).
- If the four angles are all right angles, it's also a square.
- A trapezoid with one right angle (a 90° angle, such as the example trapezoid in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a right trapezoid.



#### Parallelogram

How to describe parallelograms:

- Four straight sides whose opposite sides are of the same length and parallel and four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Exactly two pairs of parallel lines (lines/sides that never cross)
- All squares, rectangles, and rhombuses are also parallelograms.



#### Quadrilateral

How to describe quadrilaterals:

- Four straight sides and four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

 Squares, rhombuses, rectangles, parallelograms, trapezoids, and all other four-sided shapes are quadrilaterals.



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