

Exploring Line, Shape, and Form

Lines, shapes, and forms are all around us in nature



Age: 4+

Time: 45 minutes

Line, shape, and form are the basic elements of art. We see these elements all around us in the Arboretum. Visit the **Children's Discovery Forest** for this activity.

Here's How:

1. A **line** is formed when a point goes for a walk. See some examples of lines below: crooked, curvy, straight, thick, and thin.



- Find a stick on the ground and use it to **draw different kinds of lines in the soil**: zig zag, crooked, wavy, spiral. Which lines make you feel happy? energetic? sad?

- Gather several sticks and place them end to end on the ground to **make a line of sticks**. Can you make the line zig zag or wave across the ground?
- **Look for lines** around you. For example, a tree trunk, branches, and blades of grass are all lines. Notice how your eyes follow the lines.



2. A **shape** is made when a line closes. Shapes have length and width. See some examples of shapes below. The blue shapes are uniform and geometric, and the black shapes are irregular and free form.

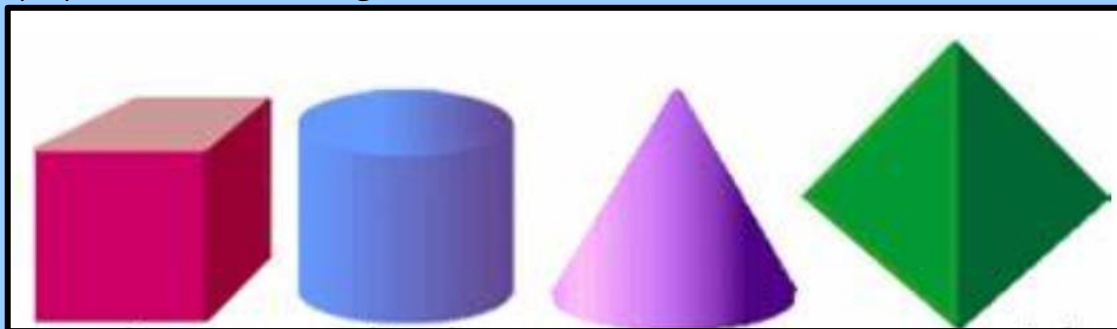


- Use a stick to **draw geometric shapes** (triangle, square, rectangle) **and irregular shapes** in the soil.
- Gather many sticks and **arrange the sticks to make geometric and irregular shapes** on the ground.

- Objects are made up of shapes. **Look for shapes** around you. For example, a seed cone may have an oval shape, a leaf may have a round shape, and a flower may have a star shape.



3. Form has length, width, and depth. It is 3-dimensional, not flat like a piece of paper. The drawings of the forms below show three dimensions.



Everything around you has form and is 3-dimensional: every stone, tree, and seed cone.



- **Pick up a stone and run your finger across its dimensions: length, width, and depth.**
- Look for a log in the games area of the Children's Discovery Forest. Run your finger across its dimensions: length, width, and depth.

The Back Story:

Lines can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, straight, curved, wavy, spiral, thick, or thin. Lines provide a sense of movement and make boundaries. Our eyes follow lines up or down or around and around.

Shapes can be uniform (geometric) or irregular (free form). You can make shapes with your hands. Try to make a heart, a circle, a square, and a rectangle with your hands.

All physical items you touch are 3-dimensional forms. They have an inside and outside and occupy a volume of space. Your body is 3-dimensional: use a tape measure to determine your length, width, and depth.