

LESSON 2

Objective

Identify the positions *top*, *middle*, and *bottom*.

Common Core State Standards

- **K.G.1** Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as *above*, *below*, *beside*, *in front of*, *behind*, and *next to*.

Geometry

Top, Middle, and Bottom

As children become familiar with location, they develop spatial reasoning. This lays a foundation for beginning navigational skills. Understanding the positioning of objects allows children to begin to create mental maps, which is a life skill. In this lesson, children will use the words *top*, *middle*, and *bottom* to describe the location of Snap Cubes®.

Try It! Perform the Try It! activity on the next page.

Talk About It

Discuss the Try It! activity.

- **Say:** Look at the stack of cubes on your desk. **Ask:** Which cube is on top of the stack? How can you remember where the top is?
- **Ask:** Which cube is in the middle? How can you remember where the middle is?
- **Ask:** Which cube is on the bottom? **Say:** Name some ways you can remember where the bottom is.
- Point out the difference between *top*, *middle*, and *bottom* and *first*, *second*, and *third*. Stress that *top*, *middle*, and *bottom* are used only to indicate vertical order, whereas *first*, *second*, and *third* may describe either vertical or ordinal position.

Solve It

With the children, reread the problem. Invite children to draw a bookshelf with three shelves. Ask them to use markers or crayons to draw the red block on top, the blue block in the middle, and the green block on the bottom.

More Ideas

For other ways to teach about the positions *top*, *middle*, and *bottom*—

- Invite children to make stacks of three different Pattern Blocks shapes and identify which block shapes are in the positions *top*, *middle*, and *bottom*.
- Have children work in pairs using the “bookshelves” they drew and Three Bear Family® Counters to further explore the concepts of top, middle, and bottom. One child places one or more bears on the top shelf, one or more in the middle, and one or more on the bottom. The other child identifies which bear or bears are in each position. Children take turns arranging the bears and naming their positions.

Formative Assessment

Have children try the following problem.

Circle the cube that is in the middle. Then place an X on the cube that is on the bottom.



Try It! 15 minutes | Pairs

Here is a problem demonstrating *top*, *middle*, and *bottom*.

Ms. Diaz's class has a bookshelf with three shelves. Ms. Diaz asked Theresa to place a red block on the top shelf, a blue block on the middle shelf, and a green block on the bottom shelf. Can you draw a picture of the blocks on the bookshelf?

Introduce the problem. Then have children do the activity to solve the problem.

Pass out Snap Cubes to children.

Materials

- Snap Cubes® (1 blue, 1 red, and 1 green per pair)



1. Direct children to look around the classroom. Point out objects that are on top of other objects. Instruct pairs of children to set the blue cube in front of them on the desk or table.



2. Now tell children to put the red cube on top of the blue cube. **Say:** *The red cube is on top. The blue cube is on the bottom.*



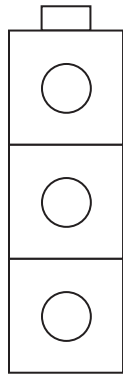
3. Tell children to put a green cube on the bottom of the stack. **Say:** *The blue cube was on the bottom before. Now the green cube is on the bottom. The blue cube is in the middle.* Practice the concept of top, middle, and bottom by instructing children to build more three-cube towers.

! Look Out!

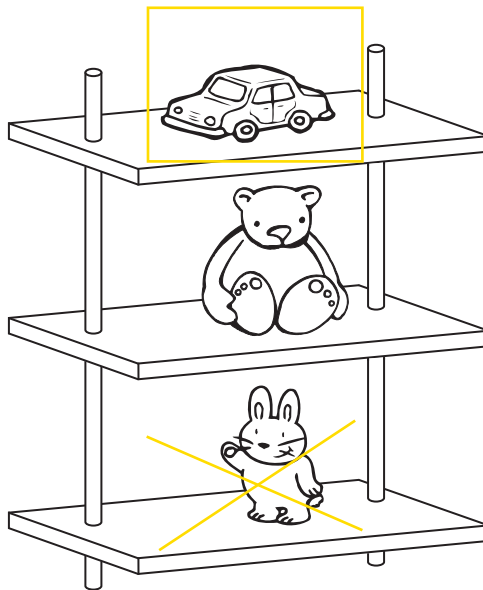
Watch for children who might automatically assume that the first color cube mentioned is the one that goes on the top. Try mixing up the way you state the positioning by starting with the bottom cubes some of the time. Also, be sure that children do not confuse the positions *top*, *middle*, and *bottom* with ordinal numbers such as *first*, *second*, and *third*.

Check children's work.

1.



2.



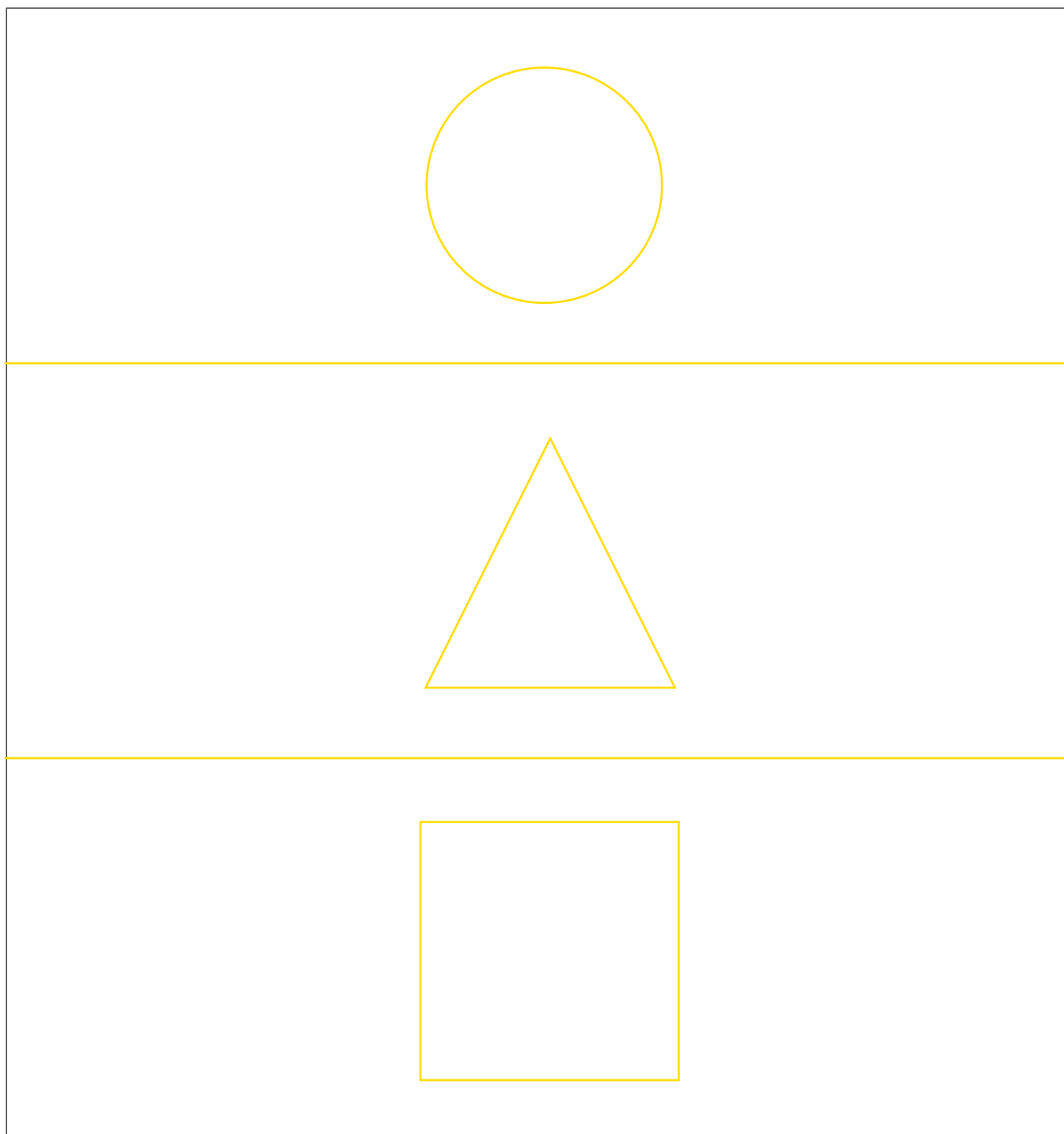
Directions

1. Color the cube in the middle green. Color the cube on the bottom red. 2. Draw an X on the bottom shelf. Draw a square on the top shelf.



Answer Key

Check children's work.



Challenge

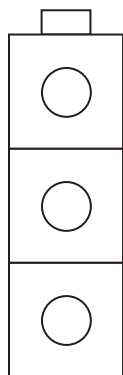
Draw a straight line across your paper two times to make three spaces. Draw a triangle in the middle space. Draw a circle in the top space. Draw a square in the bottom space.

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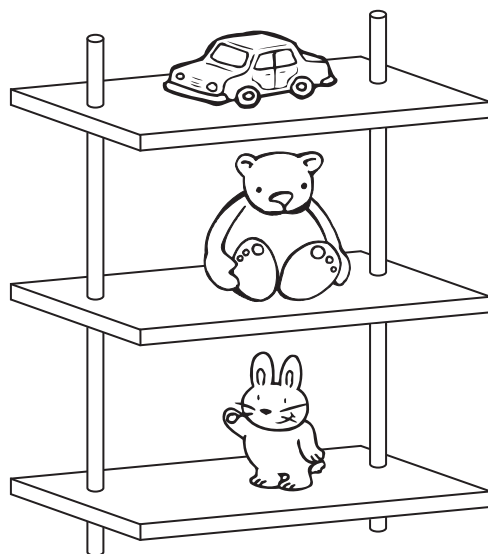


Name _____

1.



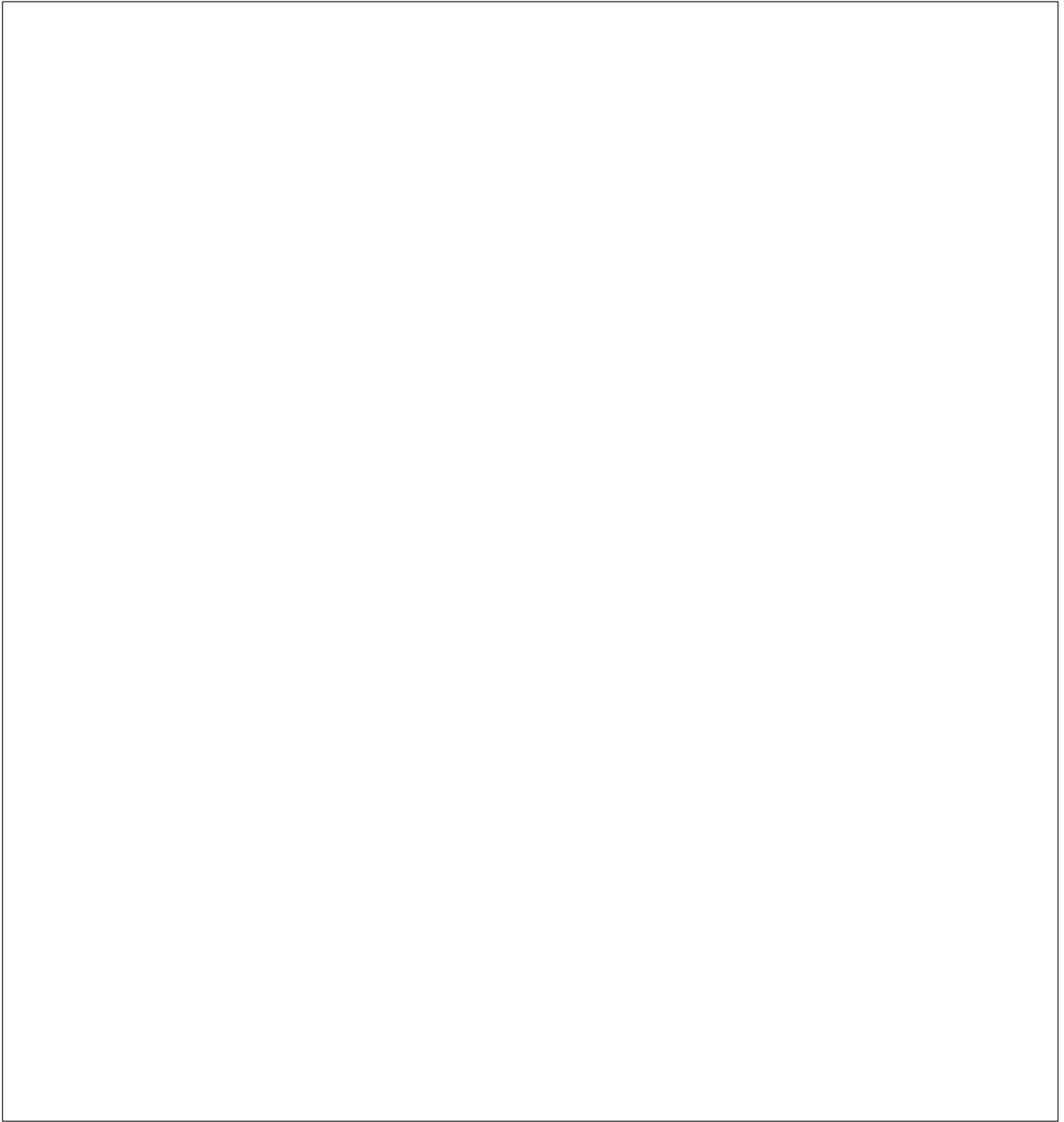
2.



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Challenge

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