

Geometry in the elementary classroom means more than recalling the names of shapes, measuring angles, and making tessellations—it is closely linked to other mathematical concepts. For example, geometric representations can help children make sense of fractions and area.

Children will also understand how "parts" are related to "wholes" as they begin to partition regions into equal shares and use words like halves, fourths, and quarter of. Such understanding is an essential learning component for more in-depth studies of fractions in later elementary years.

Whether studying shapes and their attributes in the early years or working with geometric proofs in the secondary grades, geometry enables learners to interpret and describe their physical environment. It provides children opportunities to physically and mentally change the positions of objects, describe shapes and the relationships among them, and solve problems using special reasoning.

The Grade 1 Common Core State Standards for Geometry specify that children should-

• Reason with shapes and their attributes.

The following hands-on activities enable teachers to help children learn the concepts of geometry in a rich and meaningful way. It is important that teachers and children "label" terms and use such terminology appropriately. Doing so will enable children to develop the precision necessary for recognizing and describing similarities and differences among shapes.