

# Foam Geometric Shapes

Item #8867

**What Are the Educational Applications?**

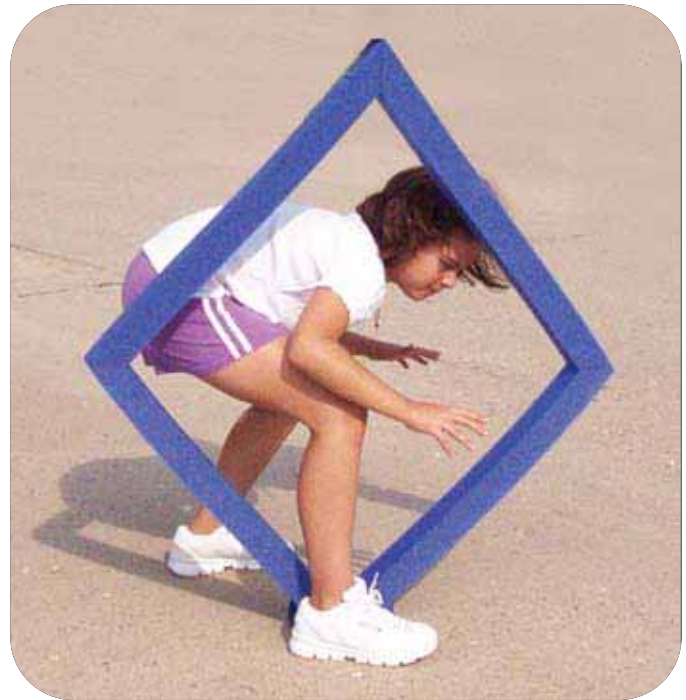
Throwing, striking, and kicking activities are important components at any level in Physical Education. When teaching these types of activities, accuracy should be an important point for discussion. By focusing students on the target area to throw when stagnant or moving, a higher level of success is usually achieved. Moreover, throwing successfully and accurately translates into daily routine. Throwing is used in almost every aspect of activity from dance routine props to typical sport movements such as baseball or football. Some even consider a one-handed roll a variation of an underhand throw because of the same biomechanical principals used to roll. In the same respect, students should also understand the importance of body control and manipulation. By having body awareness, a student can fine tune movements and have success performing various skills.

**How Can I Use This Product With My Students?**

Foam Geometric Shapes are great for teaching children throwing skills and the non-threatening shapes are also ideal for crawling, jumping, and other gross-motor activities. Durable, semi-rigid foam. 3"-dia. Set includes 6 shapes and stands. Some sample activities are described below.

**Activity #1-Make the Grade**

Set up Foam Geometric Shapes side by side with at least 2 feet between each shape. For each shape, using a dome or cone, mark off 5 spots increasing in distance from the target. Have students line up behind the furthest cone to wait for their turn. The closest marker is the lowest grade and the grades increase as the distance increases. Have all students start at the lowest grade. To advance to the next grade (the next closest marker), the student must throw the object through the hole in the foam geometric shape. If the student misses s/he stays at that target's grade level by going to the back of that line and waiting for his or her next turn to try to advance. If the student makes the toss, s/he still goes to the back of the line, however on the next turn the student will throw from the next marker giving more distance between the student and the marker. Variation 1) Change size, shape, or weight of object thrown to Foam Geometric Shapes Variation; 2) Once a student goes through all grades, have him or



her try using their non-dominant arm; Variation 3) Instead of varying distance at one foam geometric shape make different shapes different grades with different distance markers.

This activity focuses on throwing from a stationary position to a designated target. In each situation, the distance between the individual and the target increases. Throwing from a stationary position is an important lead-up to throwing while static or moving because it helps emphasis positioning and gives ample time to work on cues. By standing still and throwing, a student with or without a teacher's aid can evaluate the biomechanics behind proper release time and the effect on reaching a target successfully. By changing a size, shape, or weight of an object and repeating the same movement, a child understands how much force is necessary to propel varying objects. One way to emphasize cues is to have the student say the cue as s/he is doing the movement. This kinesthetic and auditory combination helps the brain connection a child needs to make to correctly do a movement because it combines two out of three learning styles instead of only using one. Another benefit to these activities is that students who are at different levels can do the same



activity while being challenged at the appropriate level.

### **Activity #2-Color Throws**

Discuss proper throwing technique with students using throwing cues prior to activity. Divide class into teams so that each team has a different but equal throwing object such as different colored beanbags. Create note cards of different colors with the word of the shape along with a picture of that shape. Place cards face down on the opposite end of the gymnasium. Line teams up in center of gymnasium with note cards at one end and a foam geometric shape at the other.

During the activity have students run down and pick a card then run back and try to throw their team's object into that foam geometric shape. If successful, the team keeps that card; if unsuccessful the card must be returned to the pile. This activity also focuses on sprinting and has the cross-curricular component of word identification.

### **Activity #3-Shots into the Foam Geometric Shape Goals**

Discuss proper technique for shooting using cues prior to the activity. Students will attempt four shots at goal (which is one of the foam geometric shapes) trying to get as many shots as possible into the foam geometric shape goal their team is using before time runs out. Rotate shapes when time runs out. For this activity a variety of objects can be used to shoot at the goal. Students need to rotate between the shapes because the accuracy point varies between shapes, yet the space is large enough. Most students after a couple tries can have success at some level. Students waiting must remain in the safety hoop, which is a hula hoop placed in an area where children will be safe from the object being shot hitting the students. The same activity

can be performed using a soccer ball instead of hockey equipment.

### **Activity #4-Throw the Yard**

Divide the area, and students in the class, into four equal-sized "yards" (use cones if needed) and teams, respectively (hint: place students on teams so that each team has students with differing throwing abilities—for example, don't put all the "good" throwers on the same team). This same game can be played with 2 team yards instead of four if equipment or space is limited.

Place the same number of crates, large and small boxes, Foam Geometric Shapes, and large garbage cans in similar places in each of the "yards". Give each team the same number of objects to use for throwing (e.g., yarn balls, "gator" balls, foam balls, etc.). On the "go" signal, students try to throw balls from their area into the containers and Foam Geometric Shapes in the others' yards. Students may pick up items from the ground but may not remove objects from Foam Geometric Shapes or containers. On the teachers "stop" signal, have students divide the balls up so each team once again has an equal number of balls, and begin the game again.

This is a great time to assess a large number of students' abilities to use cues to correctly throw due to the multiple opportunities for students to throw and for you to observe. An example of assessment is: As the game progresses, observe students one team at a time. Record whether they are throwing using the cue you are looking for "most or all of the time"; "some of the time"; "almost none of the time". This activity is another throwing building block. Students are now given the option of throwing an object while moving or standing

still, even though the target remains stationary. In addition, this is an opportunity to work on offense and defense because both sides are aiming for the other team's target while guarding their own. A benefit to this activity is it is an opportunity for students are varying levels to work simultaneously with plenty of attempts without drawing attention to the individual. In addition, the teacher can tie environmental awareness into the lesson and discuss why it is important to keep the Earth clean.

#### **Activity #5-Shape Throws**

Discuss proper throwing technique with students using throwing cues prior to activity. Divide class into teams so that each team has a different but equal throwing object such as different colored beanbags. Create note cards of different shapes with the word of the foam geometric shape along with a picture of that shape. Place cards facedown on the opposite end of the gymnasium. Line teams up in center of gymnasium with note cards at one end and foam geometric shapes at the other. During activity have students run down and pick a card then run back and try to throw their team's object into that foam geometric shape. If successful, the team keeps that card; if unsuccessful the card must be returned to the pile. This activity also focuses on sprinting and has the cross-curricular component of word identification.

#### **Activity #6-Moving Through the Shapes**

Spread Foam Geometric Shapes throughout the gymnasium. Create cards with different movements such as leaps, hops, jumps, skip, etc. and place them in a bucket in the center of the gymnasium. Turn music on. While music is playing, students are to pick a card and move throughout the space doing whatever movement is on his or her card so that the student performs the skill around or through each Foam Geometric Shape. This activity is designed to be a review of basic movements, a warm-up activity, or can be modified as an assessment tool if instead of students picking up a card for movement, the teacher shouts the movement out and then uses assessment rubric while watching students perform movement.

#### **Activity #7-Obstacle Course**

After practicing a variety of movement activities, use the Foam Geometric Shapes to create an obstacle course. The Foam Geometric Shapes can be placed one behind the other to create a modified tunnel; or spread the Foam Geometric Shapes apart so that movement is necessary between each piece of equipment. Next option is to have the Foam Geometric Shapes lined up side-by-side, and students start at one end of the chain and weave throughout the pieces of equipment on a slalom movement pattern. Another way to vary the course is by placing the Foam Geometric Shapes on their stands or on their sides.

#### **Activity #8-Group Race**

Cooperation and teamwork are important to the success in this activity. Place Foam Geometric Shapes at equal intervals around the track or field. Spread students out so some are standing near the different shapes. On go signal, the first student with the baton runs toward the next shape. When the runner gets to the shape, the pass is made and the new runner begins toward the next shape the pattern continues until all students have had their turn to run. The teacher can use this activity to teach goal setting as well if students want to create a time goal for themselves.

#### **How Do I Make This Product Developmentally Appropriate For My Students?**

- Prior to using Foam Geometric Shapes teachers should teach underhand and/or overhand throwing cues
- Prior to using Foam Geometric Shapes teachers should teach correct form for various movements such as leaping, etc.
- Prior to using Foam Geometric Shapes teachers should teach hockey shooting cues
- Prior to using Foam Geometric Shapes teachers should teach soccer shooting cues
- Remind students to be aware of each other and where Foam Geometric Shapes are placed throughout the gymnasium to minimize bumps and falling
- Make sure if practicing throwing from a stagnant position, the Foam Geometric Shapes are firmly planted in the proper place or turned on their side completely.
- Make sure if giving a set distance to throw from, it is an appropriate distance for the given age group.
- Can be used with various ages and skill levels, but recommended for beginners and/or younger individuals
- Make sure if students are retrieving an object from the Foam Geometric Shapes that nobody else is throwing or shooting

#### **How Does This Product Relate to Current Educational Thinking?**

Throwing to a target is a skill used not only in sports but in everyday life. It is often more efficient to toss an object to someone than to walk it over and hand it to the individual. By giving an opportunity to practice throwing accuracy, the instructor is helping to develop a life skill as well as a basis for many different sports. The Foam Geometric Shapes help practice throwing underhand or overhand skills as well as other movement skills in more of a game than traditional sport settings.

**In view of COPEC'S (Council on Physical Education of Children) position that all activities have both appropriate and inappropriate practices, please list and describe a few appropriate practices regarding how this item or these activities are valuable to a physical education program.**

- Teaching underhand throwing with accuracy
- Teaching overhand throwing with accuracy
- Teaching hockey shots with accuracy

- Teaching soccer shots with accuracy
- Teaching movement skills
- Practices throwing skills in non-sport setting
- Can be used indoors or outdoors
- Appropriate for a variety of age ranges
- Appropriate for a variety of skill ranges
- Allows individual development in a group activity session
- Helps teach shapes to younger students
- Helps teach colors to younger students
- Easy to incorporate as a differentiated instruction tool

### **Safety Issues & Concerns**

- Make sure Foam Geometric Shapes are securely planted in place
- Do not allow students to stand near Foam Geometric Shapes when others are throwing
- Do not allow students to stand near Foam Geometric Shapes when others are shooting
- Do not allow students to pull on Foam Geometric Shapes, as this can result in the item coming apart
- Students should be aware and alert when retrieving objects from the area where others are shooting objects
- Students should be aware and alert when retrieving objects from the area where others are throwing objects
- Students should only aim tossing objects at Foam Geometric Shapes, not other people
- Sometimes Foam Geometric Shapes should be placed on their side rather than standing upright when students are moving in and out of them

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