



Discovering Art — Huntington Gallery

Shape

Grades K – 3

INTRODUCTION

Everything around us has shape. Artists use shapes in their work for different purposes: to convey meaning, to provide balance, as the fundamental form of an object for which they later provide more detail, or just as shapes. Shapes can be placed into three categories:

- *Geometric* — like a circle, square, or triangle
- *Naturalistic* — shapes found in nature, like a tree, flower, or person
- *Abstract* — invented shapes unrelated to objects we know and recognize

DIRECTED LEARNING: *The Young Fortune Teller*, Joshua Reynolds

MATERIALS

- Felt-covered board
- Felt pieces in basic geometric shapes like circles, squares, and triangles

USING *The Young Fortune Teller*:

- Introduce the students to *geometric shapes*. Using the felt board, ask the students to name various shapes as you place the felt shapes on the board. As you place the shapes, ask the students to discuss how the shapes are used, i.e., circles for balloons, triangles for sails, and squares for boxes.
- Have the students name some of the geometric shapes they see in *The Young Fortune Teller* (triangle shapes in the roofs of the buildings, circle shapes in the faces of the children, etc.). Encourage the students to look for the negative space shapes as well.
- Have the students name some of the *naturalistic shapes* they see in the painting, i.e., shapes of the children, tree shapes, etc.
- Ask the girls to pose like Lady Charlotte. What is she doing? Have a discussion about her feet placement: What shape do they make? How would she look if her feet were shoulder width apart? Why did the artist pose her this way? (Conveying meaning, sense of balance)
- Ask the boys to pose like Lord Henry. What is he doing? Have a discussion about his feet placement: What shape do they make? How would he look if his feet were shoulder width apart? Why did the artist pose him this way? (Conveying meaning, sense of balance)
- If you were in this painting, who would you be, and what would you be saying?