# Spatial Language and Shape Vocabulary

## SPATIAL LANGUAGE

**Location/position words**: on, off, on top of, over, under, in, out, into out of, top, bottom, above, below, in front of, in back of, behind, beside, by, next to, between, same/different side, upside down, right, left, north, south, east, west

**Movement words**: up, down, forward, backward, around, through, to, from, toward, away from, sideways, across, back and forth

**Distance words**: near, far, close to, far from, shortest/longest path

**Spatial words that describe height, width, and length**: tall, short, wide, narrow, long

**Transformation words**: turn, flip, slide, reflection, rotation, put together, take apart, fold in half

**Spatial words that describe properties of a shape or line**: curve, point, angle, line, edge, corner, vertex, base, face, parallel, perpendicular

*Adapted from Moss, Joan, Catherine Bruce, Bev Caswell, Tara Flynn and Zachary Hawes. 2016. Taking Shape: Activities to Develop Geometric and Spatial Thinking Grades K-2. Toronto, Canada: Pearson Canada Inc; and Copley, Juanita V. 2000."Geometry and Spatial Sense in the Early Childhood Curriculum," Reading #34. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.*

## SHAPE VOCABULARY

### Three-dimensional (3D) shapes:

cube (squared faces, 6 surfaces)

sphere (rounded surface)

cone (circular base)

cylinder (circular ends, rounded sides

**Two-dimensional (2D) shapes:**

circle (no angles, rounded edge)

triangle (3 angles, 3 sides)

rectangle (4 right angles, 4 sides)

square or squared rectangle (4 right angles, same length/congruent sides)

pentagon (5 sides, 5 angles)

hexagon (6 sides, 6 angles)

octagon (8 sides, 8 angles)

rhombus (diamond shaped – 4 angles, opposite sides parallel)

curved line (open curve)

*Adapted from Clements, Douglas H. 2004. "Geometric and Spatial Thinking in Early Childhood Education." In Engaging Young Children in Mathematics: Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics Education, edited by Douglas H. Clements and Julie Sarama, 267-297. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers; and Schwartz, Sydney L. 2005. Teaching Young Children Mathematics. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger.*