



# STORIES IN SHAPES



## RATIONALE FOR ADVENTURE

This adventure will engage the boys' imaginations and creativity as they work on some simple art projects that do not require traditional art skills.

## TAKEAWAYS FOR CUB SCOUTS

- Building listening skills
- Encouraging creativity
- Improving communication with peers
- A Scout is clean. 

*Tiger Handbook, page 204*

## ADVENTURE REQUIREMENTS

1. Visit an art gallery or a museum, explore an art website, or visit your library. Do each of the following:
  - a. Look at pictures of some abstract art with your den or family. Decide what you like about the art, and share your ideas with the other Tigers.
  - b. Create an art piece.
2. Do the following:
  - a. Draw or create an art piece using shapes.
  - b. Use tangrams to create shapes.

### NOTES TO DEN LEADER

This elective allows the boys to be creative and artistic, without requiring particular drawing abilities. While some lead time is necessary to find suitable artwork to show the boys, knowledge of the “art world” is not really a prerequisite. Good resources are likely available through the local school system or arts council, or perhaps in a nearby art gallery.

Meeting 3 is an outing to an art museum or other location where Tigers can view abstract art. Be sure to contact the museum in advance to plan for a tour. In advance of the outing, the leader will need to make arrangements with the outing location and confirm the outing plan with families, including transportation and any additional items they need to bring. Make sure a tour and activity plan has been submitted, if required, and activity consent forms are distributed, signed, and collected.

See the Appendix for optional den meeting activities, including openings, gatherings, and closings.

## MEETING 1 PLAN

### PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Opening: colored masking tape or yarn in red, yellow, and blue
- Materials for the color mixing activity during the Gathering: red, yellow, and blue washable paints or markers. If you are using paint, you will also need cotton swabs or small paintbrushes, small cups for water to wash out brushes, paper plates or paper, and newspaper to cover the area where the colors are being mixed.

- Have enough small slips of paper to give one to each Tiger. On each slip, draw either a red circle, yellow square, or blue triangle.
- Plenty of paper to be used for art expression
- Markers, watercolors and brushes, crayons, or colored pencils—enough for all the Tigers to use
- Abstract artwork examples from such artists as Jackson Pollock, Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall, and Georgia O’Keeffe
- Two music pieces that sound very different—for example, a classical piece and a hard rock song

## GATHERING

All colors are made from just three main colors, called primary colors: red, yellow, and blue. When you mix red and yellow, you get orange. Yellow and blue make green, and blue and red make purple. Orange, green, and purple are called secondary colors.

- Organize a space where the Tigers and their partners can work with the primary colors—red, yellow, and blue—to create secondary colors. Use watercolors or washable, colored markers. Write these questions on poster-size sheets of paper and post them around the space:
  - Can you find a way to make orange, green, and purple using these three colors?
  - Create your own color! What colors did you use?
  - Create a picture using your favorite color or colors.
- Give each Tiger a slip of paper with a red circle, yellow square, or blue triangle on it to use for the opening.

## OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance and, as appropriate, the Scout Oath and Scout Law.
- Use colored masking tape or yarn to mark off a large red circle, a large yellow square, and a large blue triangle on the floor. Based on the colors the boys received, gather each of them with their partners into the circle, square, or triangle. Ask one of the groups to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Another group will lead the Scout Oath, and the third group will lead the Scout Law.

## TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den
- Invite Tigers to show off the pictures they created during the Gathering activity. Be ready to ask questions about each picture to help Tigers understand how colors and shapes can convey a meaning or feeling. As each Tiger finishes, post his picture on the wall, creating a collage of colors and shapes. Point out to the Tigers that the final collage tells many stories.
- Introduce the Stories in Shapes adventure to the den. Say: *Let’s look at other pieces of art to find what stories they tell us!*

## ACTIVITIES

### ◆ Activity 1: Art as Communication (Requirement 1a)

**Materials:** Several pictures showing abstract works of art; online sources may include [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org) and [www.Americanart.si.edu](http://www.Americanart.si.edu).

#### Instructions:

1. If you have found several pictures of abstract art, divide the Tigers into groups and give each group a picture.
2. Ask the groups to spend a few minutes carefully observing everything they can in their pictures, taking into consideration the use of colors, shapes, and proportions.
3. Have the Tigers in each group create an original story about the artwork. Invite the adult partners to help them.

4. Invite each group to tell their story to the rest of the den. Ask some reflection questions to make sure these ideas have been covered:
  - a. Were there any words used in these art pieces?
  - b. How did you know what they were telling you?
  - c. Do colors sometimes suggest certain feelings? Which colors? What feelings?
  - d. How is art considered a means of communication if there are no words?

### ◆ **Activity 2: Express Words With Art**

1. Create a list of words for Tigers to draw or paint. Use lots of action words and descriptive adjectives. Words such as *running*, *splashing*, *bouncing*, *laughing*, *angry*, *happy*, *sad*, *quickly*, *dangerous*, *good*, and *bad* are suitable.
2. Distribute enough small pieces of paper and washable markers or paint for each Tiger to use. A Tiger may draw or paint more than one word. Ask each adult partner to keep track of which drawing goes with which word.
3. Have the boys describe why they chose the colors or shapes they did for different words. Be sure to ask each Tiger to explain at least one of his word creations. Allow everyone to use their imaginations and avoid feeding ideas to them: If you, as the leader, say that “anger” looks like a jagged red line, so will each boy.

### ◆ **Activity 3: Create an Original Piece of Art (Requirement 1b)**

1. Tell the Tigers that, as a final activity for the meeting, they will draw or paint their own original piece of art, using music to help them create their story. Make sure each boy has enough space for his paper. Give each one a large sheet of paper (at least 9 by 12 inches), and check that he has enough paint, markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Tell Tigers that they need to wait until they hear the music to start drawing or painting.
2. Play two very different musical pieces. The first piece might be classical, such as Beethoven, Brahms, Haydn, Mozart, or any other classical composer. Some specific song options are: Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, Brahms’ First Symphony, Mozart’s Symphony No. 40, Haydn’s Surprise Symphony, or Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet*.
3. After at least five minutes, change the music to something very different—maybe some hard rock, country, bluegrass, hip-hop, swing band, or any other music that you find. (Be sure to check the lyrics of any song you choose to make sure they are appropriate for this age.) Encourage the boys to use different colors and shapes depending on what they hear. For example, they are likely to use faster strokes for faster music and long, slow strokes for slower music.
4. When the music ends, Tigers are to finish their creations.
5. If paint was used, allow for hand-washing!

## **CLOSING**

- Invite each Tiger and adult partner to stroll around the room, observing the other boys’ artwork.
- Call for the red circle, yellow square, and blue triangle groups to return to their marks on the floor.
- Have each group recite the Cub Scout motto in turn when you count to three.

## **AFTER THE MEETING**

- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirements 1a and 1b.
- Work together to clean up the meeting place.
- Prepare thank-you notes for the Tigers to sign at the next meeting.

# MEETING 2 PLAN

## PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- U.S. and den flags
- Make a copy of a tangram puzzle for each boy (see Meeting 2 Resources for template).
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils for each Tiger to use.
- Have enough paper on hand for each boy to use when drawing shapes.
- Provide scissors for each boy, or enough for them to easily share. Include a pair of left-handed scissors, if those might be needed.
- Print out sample silhouettes of tangram puzzles (see Meeting 2 Resources).
- Provide zippered plastic bags for each Tiger to store his tangram pieces.
- Write instructions on cards or note paper for specific shape-drawing activities. Suggested instructions:
  - Use between 3 and 15 circles, big or small, to draw something
  - Use between 4 and 16 squares, big or small
  - Use 3 to 15 circles and triangles, any size
  - Use 3 to 16 circles, squares, and triangles
  - Use 3 to 20 circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles

Feel free to revise these instructions based on the needs of the Tigers in your den.

## GATHERING

Gather materials for the boys to color their tangram puzzles, using up to seven colors across the puzzle segments. Note: Paint will not work because it will not dry in time for the Tigers to use the tangrams later in the meeting.

## OPENING

- Conduct a flag ceremony of your choosing that includes the Pledge of Allegiance and, as appropriate, the Scout Oath and Scout Law.
- Optional Opening: Call the Tigers to stand together in a square and recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Scout Oath. Have each Tiger greet his neighbor using a hand shape greeting. Start the greeting chain by showing the den one half of a shape using your hands and fingers. Ask the person next to you to make the same shape with his or her hands and fingers, thus making a complete shape! As each boy makes his shape with someone else, he tells the other Tiger something fun that he did during the past week.

## TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den.
- Announce the outing plans for the next meeting. Be sure that everyone knows the name of the museum or art gallery and the address. Remind the Tigers to arrive in uniform and briefly tell them what they will see during the visit, if you have this information.

## ACTIVITIES

### ◆ Activity 1: Group Shape Art (Requirement 2a)

1. Ask the Tigers to form a circle (or sit around a table). Distribute one sheet of paper to two different boys.
2. Each boy starts by drawing one shape on the piece of paper, then passes it to his neighbor.
3. The next boy adds a shape and so on until everyone has had the chance to draw one. Adult partners can also be included in this activity.
4. When everyone has had a turn, it's time to discover what all the shapes together look like! Then the Tigers can give the picture a name or make up a story about it.

### ◆ Activity 2: Individual Shape Art (Requirement 2a)

1. Distribute paper to each Tiger.
2. Have the boys and their partners talk about various, simple geometric shapes.
3. Let each boy draw one shape and then have his partner decide on a simple picture they can draw together, using multiples of the same shape or similar shapes in various sizes. When they finish this, let the partner draw a shape and have the Tiger decide what to create from it.
4. Give each Tiger one of the prewritten instruction cards, and let him draw a shape based on those instructions.
5. Allow a moment for each Tiger to share his creative work of art!

### ◆ Activity 3: Tangram Fun! (Requirement 2b)

1. Once the shape project is complete, have each Tiger return to his tangram puzzle, cut apart the segments, and collect them in his bag.
2. Allow Tigers to use their imaginations to create forms with the tangram pieces.
3. To help them, share the silhouettes of possible tangram forms.

## CLOSING

- Hold a brief reflection time for Tigers to talk about what they enjoyed most during the activities and what they found challenging or surprising.
- Confirm that transportation and other plans are in place for the den outing in Meeting 3.
- Have Tigers sign thank-you notes for the upcoming den outing.

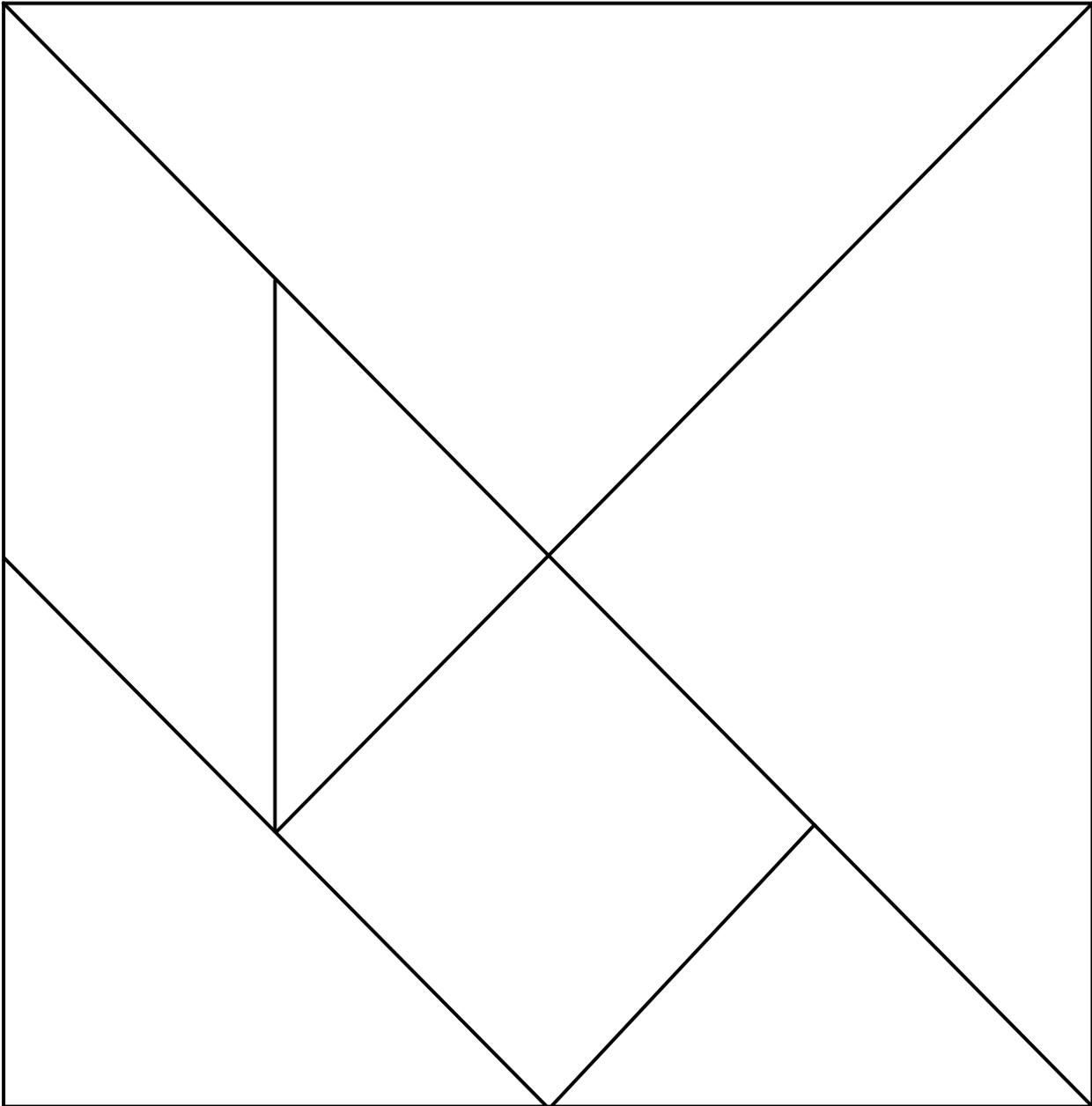
## AFTER THE MEETING

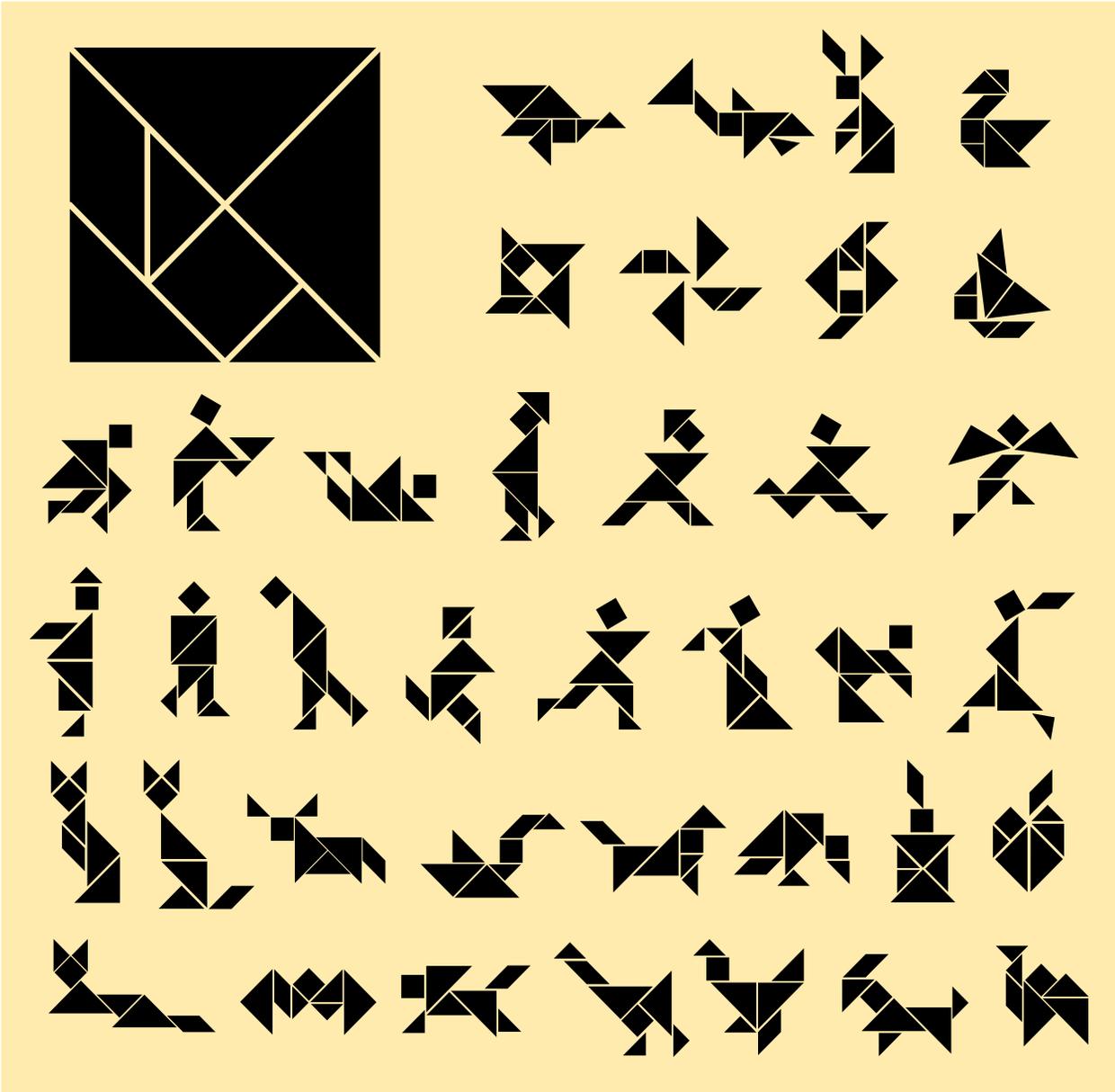
- Serve refreshments, if desired.
- Record completion of requirements 2a and 2b.
- Work together to clean up all art supplies from the meeting place.

# MEETING 2 RESOURCES

## TANGRAM

The tangram is an ancient Chinese puzzle. A tangram always has a total of seven shapes: two large triangles, one medium triangle, two small triangles, one parallelogram, and one square. One challenge is to put the seven pieces together to form a big square.





# MEETING 3 PLAN (Den Outing)

## PREPARATION AND MATERIALS NEEDED

- Confirm with the museum or gallery any plans for a tour guide and rules the group must follow.
- If possible, gather some background information on the type of art the Tigers will observe, so you can help them understand it and ask questions.
- Unit den leader should have in possession (if required by local council practices) the tour and activity plan, signed activity consent forms, and a copy of the *Guide to Safe Scouting*.

## GATHERING

While waiting for everyone to arrive, play a game such as I Spy or I'm Thinking of a Color. In the latter game, you focus on an object without letting the Tigers know what it is—you only give them a color—and they ask questions to try to guess the object. Questions might be "Is it small?" or "Is it large?" or "Is it in this room?" The Tiger who guesses correctly can be the next one to think of a color.

## OPENING

- Say the Pledge of Allegiance and, as appropriate, the Scout Oath and Scout Law. If the den does not have a United States flag on the outing, ask one Scout to display the flag on his uniform for the group.
- This is a good time to remind Tigers to be courteous and obedient. It will also be important to explain the "ground rules" of being inside a museum or gallery. Check with the facility to make sure you know those rules (e.g., do not run, stay with your partner, do not touch the artwork or lean on the display cases). Also go over the procedure to follow in case someone gets lost.

## TALK TIME

- Carry out business items for the den.

## ACTIVITY: ART VISIT (REQUIREMENT 1a)

- Visit an art gallery, art museum, school art department, or another place where there is art to observe. If someone on staff there or a guest will be leading the visit, be sure to introduce that person to the den. Let the person know of any special needs and anticipated questions from the Tigers.
- Tigers and their adult partners will move through the area. Partners will guide Tigers to observe different art pieces and talk about their observations.
- As time allows, give each Tiger and his partner time on their own to find the art they enjoy most.

## CLOSING

- Come together as a den and thank the person in charge of the tour.
- Ask each Tiger to tell you his favorite piece of art and why it was his favorite.

## AFTER THE MEETING

- Serve refreshments, if allowed.
- Record completion of requirement 1a, if not previously completed.

Upon completion of the Stories in Shapes adventure, your Tigers will have earned the adventure loop shown here. Make sure they are recognized for their completion by presenting the adventure loops, to be worn on their belts, as soon as possible according to your pack's tradition.

