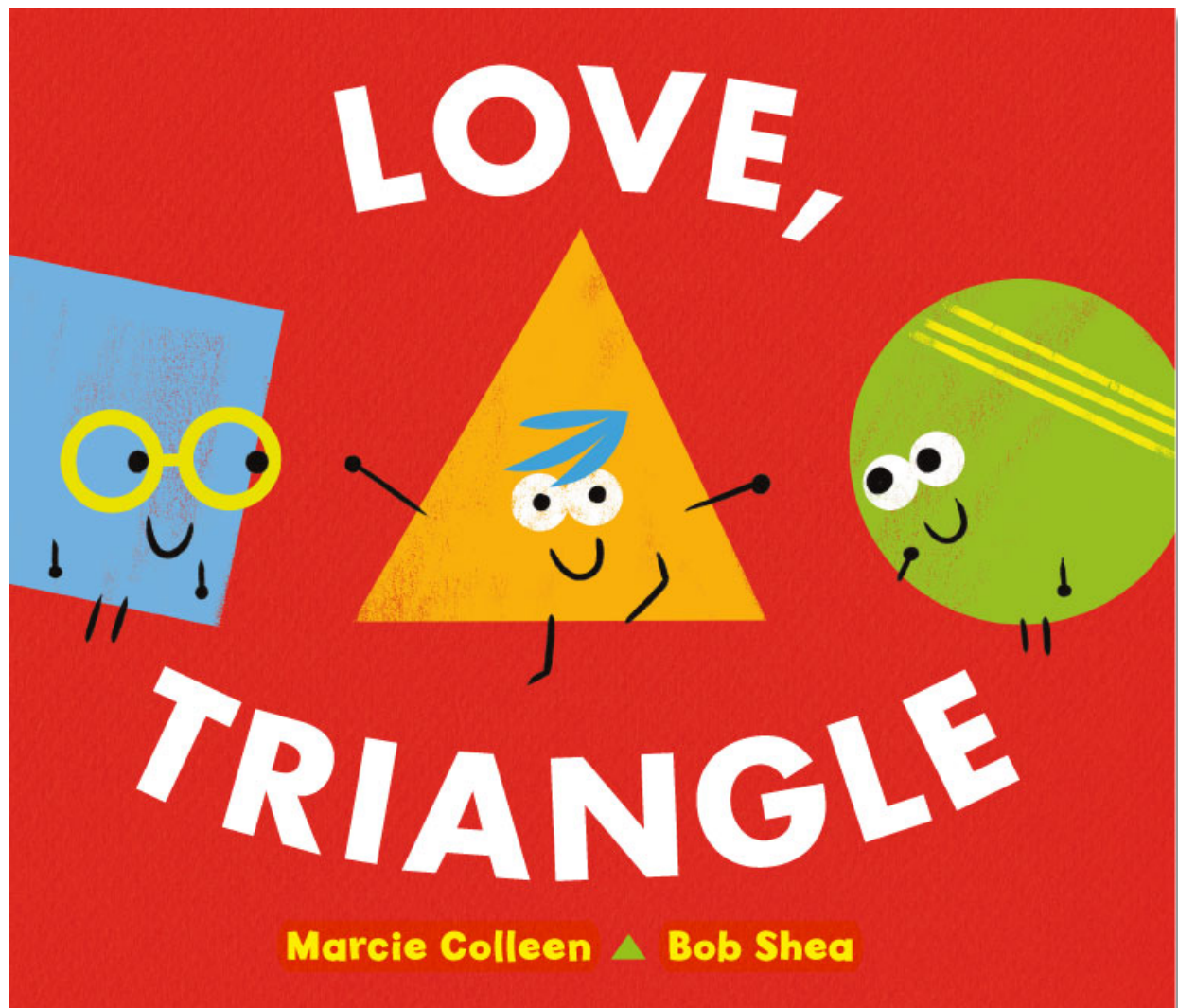


Love, Triangle

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen
based on the picture book
written by Marcie Colleen and illustrated by Bob Shea



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Marcie Colleen
Author, *Love, Triangle*



In previous chapters Marcie Colleen has been a teacher, an actress, and a nanny, but now she spends her days writing children's books! She is the author of The Super Happy Party Bears chapter book series with Macmillan/Imprint. *Love, Triangle* is her debut picture book. She lives with her husband and their mischievous sock monkey in San Diego, California. Visit her at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

Bob Shea
Illustrator, *Love, Triangle*



Bob Shea has written and illustrated over a dozen picture books, including the popular Dinosaur vs. and Ballet Cat series, *I'm a Shark*, and *Oh, Daddy!* His characters and animations have appeared on Nick Jr., Disney Junior, and PBS Kids. Bob spends his days writing and drawing. Visit him at www.bobshea.com.

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides for children's books, Marcie can often be found writing books of her own at home in San Diego, California. Visit her at www.thisismarciecolleen.com.

How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Love, Triangle* is designed for students in preschool through third grade. Teachers are welcome to adapt each activity to meet the needs and abilities of their own students.

The guide offers activities to help teachers integrate *Love, Triangle* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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Author: Marcie Colleen
Illustrator: Bob Shea
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Brief synopsis:

Ever since they were a dot and a speck, Circle and Square have been best friends. Then someone new comes along: a cool, exciting Triangle. And three starts to feel like a crowd...

With their friendship bent out of shape, can they put it back together again?

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English Language Arts

Reading Comprehension

Before reading *Love, Triangle*,

Help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, title page, spine, end papers, and jacket flap.

The Front Cover~

Describe the cover illustration.

- o Who do you see?
- o Use one word to describe each character. Explain your answer using evidence from the illustration.

In groups of three, mimic what the shapes are doing.

- o How does this make you feel?
- o How do you think each shape is feeling? What do you think each shape is thinking?

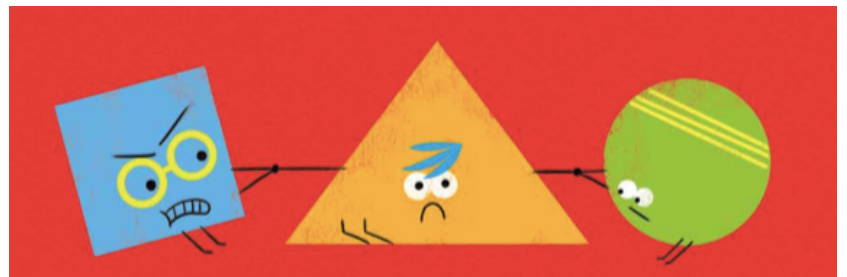
The Back Cover~

Describe the back-cover illustration.

- o Who do you see?
- o Use one word to describe each character. Explain your answer using evidence from the illustration.

In groups of three, mimic what the shapes are doing.

- o How does this make you feel?
- o How do you think each shape is feeling? What do you think each shape is thinking?



- o Compare this illustration to the illustration on the front cover. What is the same? What is different?

The Jacket Flap~

- Read the text aloud.
- Choose three or more key words from this jacket flap.
- Using the text on the jacket flap, describe once again what is happening in the cover and back cover illustrations.

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

Help students define the events in terms of a plot arc by using the following chart.

Beginning	Middle	End
Circle and Square are the best of friends. Introduce character:	Triangle shows up. Describe: The Climax, when everything changes...	Resolution. How are things solved? The ending...

- BONUS: Using the basic plot structure above, students can create an original story about Circle, Square, and Triangle. Students can work individually, with a partner, or as a class.
- Art center ~ Provide a variety of art materials including crayons, pencils, markers, paint, scissors, colored paper, old magazines, and glue for students to illustrate the scenes in their stories.
- Drama center ~ Provide puppets, costumes, and props so students can recreate their new stories.

Let's talk about the people who created *Love, Triangle*.

- Who is the author?

- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Now, let's look closely at the illustrations.

- Check out some of the following details that Bob Shea includes in the illustrations. Find:
 - A bunny doll
 - A skateboard
 - An already-eaten piece of pizza
 - A square bird
 - A hotdog
 - A mountain goat
 - A screwdriver



Writing Activities

Who is Circle? Who is Square? ~ Character Study

Circle and Square have been the best of friends since they were a "dot and a speck."
But who are these characters?

How a character acts can tell readers a lot about who the character is.

Read *Love, Triangle*. Scene by scene, record your thoughts regarding each character, in a chart like the one below.

Text	What Circle does. What Square does.	How would you describe Circle? How would you describe Square?
Example: <i>"Want to share my grilled cheese?" "No thank you. I am suddenly craving pizza."</i>	Square offers to share his grilled cheese with Circle. Circle is distracted by Triangle.	Square: generous, kind. Circle: distracted, wanting something different, curious.

Love, Triangle: the sequel

At the end of *Love, Triangle*, the three friends are playing together when a new character walks by. What do you think will happen? Will Circle, Square, and Triangle play nicely together? Or will each compete to become best friends with Heart? Be creative and create a sequel to *Love, Triangle*.

Triangle's Point of View

Either as a class or individually, explore *Love, Triangle* from the point of view of Triangle.

Advanced classes will be able to rewrite *Love, Triangle* from his point of view. However, if the class is less-advanced, simply have them create captions and thought-bubbles for him. The thought-bubbles and captions can be written on Post-It Notes and placed on the pages of the book.



Speaking and Listening Activities

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some other ways to bring *Love, Triangle* to life in the classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills!

Choral Reading

Divide the class into groups of three. One group will take the role of Circle. Another group will take the role of Square. The third group will take the role of Triangle.

Create a script.

Read the script aloud together.

Emphasize memorization, as well as good vocal expression.

Mime

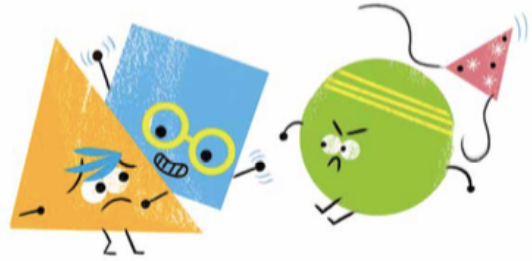
While the teacher reads the book aloud, the students can act out the story.

Emphasize body motion and facial expressions, as well as listening skills.

Drama

- Create a TV commercial to encourage people to read *Love, Triangle*.

- In small groups, act out *Love, Triangle* as an opera, a western, a “breaking news” story, a thriller, etc. The rest of the class should guess what the “style” is.



Language Activities

Vocab Detectives

Love, Triangle has some new and challenging vocabulary.

Words like “admired” and “apex” may be unknown to some young readers.

Re-read *Love, Triangle* aloud and ask students to listen carefully for words they do not know.

- As soon as they come across an unknown word they should raise their hand.
- Repeat the phrase using the unknown word. What might it mean, based on context?
- Look up the word in the dictionary. (*Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this or the teacher can.*) Read the definition.
- Come up with a way to remember what the word means. *Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.*
- Re-read the story and when you come to a vocabulary word, have the students fill in the meaning in how they choose to remember it.

Create a list of vocabulary words and hang it on the wall to revisit again and again.

Pun Fun

A pun is a type of figurative language that uses words that have two or more meanings to create an alternate, sometimes humorous, interpretation. Colleen uses puns throughout *Love, Triangle*. The result is a funny, math-pun-filled story.

Example:

Circle and Square’s friendship had a shape of its own.

The double meaning word in this example is shape.

It means, the state of how something is. (*My math grade is in bad shape.*)

It also means, the outline of an object or area. (*My pool is the shape of a circle.*)

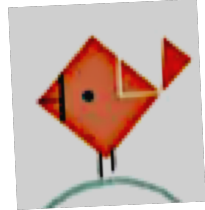
Read through *Love, Triangle*, and for each pun, determine the word or words that create the pun. Then, explain the two meanings.

Math

The Geometry of Art

Drawings are simple shapes put together to create an object.

Have students find circles, squares, ovals, rectangles, and triangles within the illustrations of *Love, Triangle*.



How many circles, squares, or triangles can they find?

As a class, create a table to record how many circles, squares, and triangles appear in each spread of *Love, Triangle*.

Spread	How many circles?	How many squares?	How many triangles?
<i>Ex. Front Cover</i>	20	1	2
Title Page			
"Ever since they were a dot and a speck" page			
"A wedge came between them" spread			

Additional Challenge: Now compare the numbers of circles, squares, and triangles on each spread, using these symbols:

> (is greater than)

= (is equal to)

< (is less than)

Example: On the front cover, the number of circles is > squares + triangles.

Geometric Collage

Provide students with various pieces of construction paper shapes: circles, squares, rectangles, ovals, hearts, triangles, etc.

Challenge each student to use the shapes to create a picture. For example, maybe a rectangle turns into a building with a triangle pine tree nearby and a circle sun in the sky.

Try to move students towards creating objects, as Shea does throughout *Love, Triangle*, instead of abstract works.

Encourage adding lines with markers to enhance objects and add detail.

“Shape Up” Field Trip

Divide the students into three teams: Circles, Squares, and Triangles.

Lead them on a field trip to the library, playground, or through the school hallways.

As a group, each team must look for their assigned shape in various objects seen on the trip.

If possible, each team should be given a digital camera to record their findings.

Students should also take notes and jot down what object they found and where they found it.

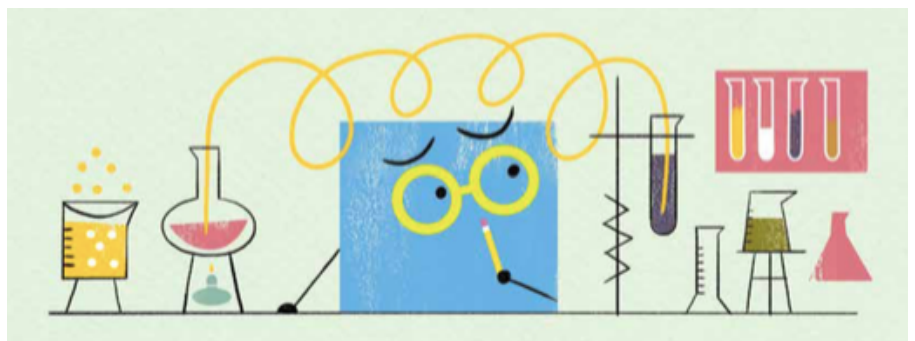
At the end of the field trip, students will return to the classroom and try to draw or create a photo collage of the items that their team found for display in the classroom.

Optional: For further technological experience, teams can use the computer and a scanner to create a multimedia presentation of their findings to present to the class.

Science

The Scientific Method

When Triangle tragically becomes unraveled, Square turns to research and science to solve the problem. Chances are he uses the Scientific Method.



The Scientific Method is an eight-step series that engineers, scientists and inventors use to problem solve.

Step 1: Ask a Question

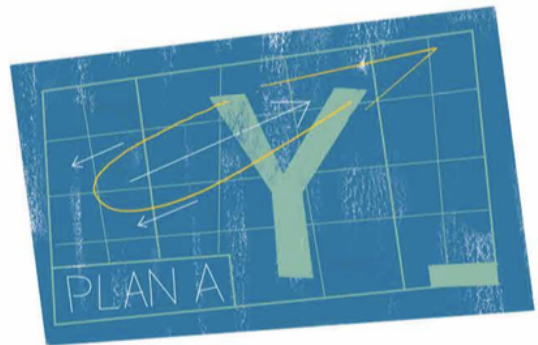
- Step 2: Do Research
- Step 3: Guess an Answer (also called a Hypothesis)
- Step 4: Test Your Guess/Hypothesis
- Step 5: Did it Work? Could it Be Better? Try Again
- Step 6: Draw a Conclusion
- Step 7: Write a Written Report of Your Results
- Step 8: Retest

After introducing the eight steps to the class, lead them through a discussion.

- Describe how these eight steps help with problem solving.
- What do you think would happen if you skipped a step?
- Why do you think step 8 is important?
- Can you find evidence that Square used some of these steps in *Love, Triangle*? Use textual examples.
- Create an eight-page Scientific Notebook. Each page will include a separate step in the process. Imagine you are Square and fill each page with your notes, drawings, and ideas about how to save Triangle. Refer to *Love, Triangle* for ideas, as well as your own creative imagination.

Build a Slingshot Challenge

This challenge allows students to test out the Scientific Method for themselves as they problem solve a way to build a slingshot that really works! Of course, a little imagination is going to go a long way here, too!



- Explain to students that they will be working in groups of 2-3 to create a slingshot.
- Provide the students with several craft items (rulers, paper, cardboard tubing, empty boxes, tape, glue, etc.) Check the recycling for other ideas of materials.
- Each group's slingshot must:
 - Really work.
 - Be a construction, not merely one material.
- The groups must create an eight-page Scientific Notebook for their slingshot and carefully document their use of the Scientific Method throughout the process of building their slingshot.

Once all slingshots have been built, test them out one by one as a class. Did they work? Do they need to retest? If they didn't work, head back to the drawing board like a real inventor.

Offer up awards to increase the competition.

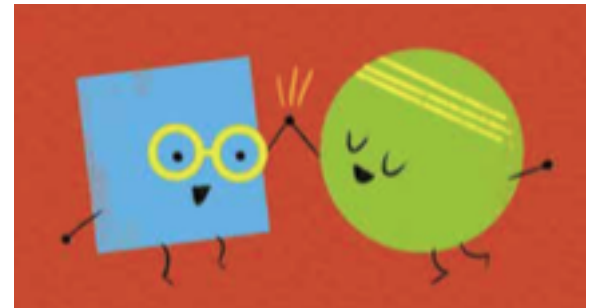
- Farthest-Throwing Slingshot
- Most Attractive Slingshot
- Most Materials Slingshot
- Least Materials Slingshot
- Silliest Slingshot

Social Studies

Finding Commonalities/Uniqueness with our Friends

Circle and Square are alike in some ways. But they are different in other ways.

Finding what students have in common with other people is a good way to start a meaningful relationship.



Here is a way to learn what students have in common with other classmates, while also celebrating what makes each of them unique.

Materials: A pen and two pieces of paper.

- This activity can be done class or in pairs.
- On one sheet of paper, students will have ten minutes to come up with a list of things in common. Completely obvious answers such as “we both have hair” or “we are both in _____ class” are not allowed!
- After ten minutes, switch to the other paper. They now have ten minutes to come up with a list of things that are unique to only one person.
- Share both lists with the class when finished.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Pretending they are talk show hosts, students can introduce a classmate to the rest of the class.

Using Marcie Colleen and Bob Shea’s bios on the back-jacket flap of *Love, Triangle*, have students write a paragraph about a member of their class.

Design a mural, using bulletin board paper, as a tribute to the class’s commonalities and uniqueness to display in the school hallways.



Teamwork Trio

Circle and Square struggle to compete to be best friends with Triangle but learn that if they only work as a team, they gain a new friend without losing each other.

Games can help students develop motor skills, good reflexes, hand-eye coordination, problem solving and language skills. However, competition can cause anxiety and make some kids feel left out.

Cooperative games help promote collaborative skills and teach sportsmanship as kids play by helping each other. These games focus on fun and teamwork rather than winning.

Cooperative Hoops

The game cooperative hoops is a twist on the game "musical chairs." Instead of having each player compete for themselves and exclude others to win as in "musical chairs," this version makes winning about cooperation.

Scatter hula hoops around the play area.

Play music and have the kids move around the hoops but not step inside them.

While the music is playing, the kids must not stop moving, but when it stops, they must have at least one foot inside a hula hoop and not touch the ground outside the hoop.

If any child is not in a hoop when the music stops, they must sit out. On each rotation, remove a ring so that the kids have to share hula hoops.

When the game is down to two hoops, the winners are the kids who got the most people inside one hoop. This game teaches kids to cooperate and help each other to win.

Continuum

This cooperative game also lets even the shyest kids break the ice and get to know one another.

Divide the kids into groups of six to ten people.

Pick a theme and have the kids arrange themselves in the correct order to create a continuum.

This could be favorite colors arranged in the order of the rainbow, birth month from first to last or dark color shirts to lightest. No team loses in this game, but you can applaud the team that got into the right order the fastest.

Keep it Up

In this game, divide the kids into two teams across a net or line.

As in volleyball, they must pass a balloon or ball back and forth without letting it touch the ground. However, the rule is that a different team member must hit the ball or balloon to the opposite team each time. Other team members can help their team players by passing to them.

