

# The Shape of Things

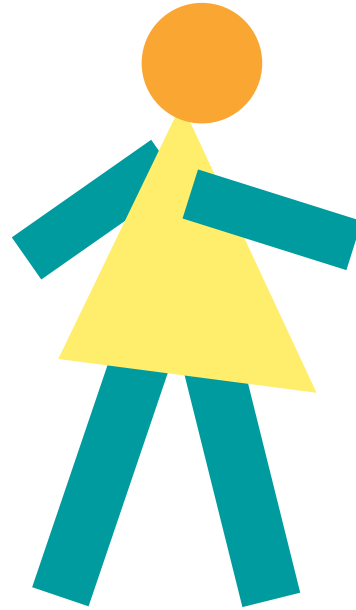
In Jacob Lawrence's art, **shapes** are everywhere! Buildings, streets, trains, walls, doors, windows . . . even hats and luggage are made of different shapes.

Shapes are fun and easy to draw. They are an important part of the artist's language. There are two basic types of shapes: **geometric** and **organic**.

**Geometric** shapes are based on geometry. Examples include squares, rectangles, triangles, and polygons. They often have straight lines and angles.

**Organic** shapes are based on nature, such as animals or flowers, and often have curved lines.

Artists like to see things as shapes. When you draw something as a basic shape, you change it into something **abstract**.



This drawing of a person walking is made of four **rectangles**, a **triangle**, and a **circle**.



## Look closely.

Look at this painting by Jacob Lawrence. Which type of shapes does Jacob Lawrence use in this painting? Geometric? Organic? Both?

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What shapes do you see?

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What colors do you see?

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Jacob Lawrence (American, 1917–2000), printed at Ives-Sillman Publications, *The 1920's . . . The Migrants Arrive and Cast Their Ballots*, 1974, printed 1975. Color screenprint. Princeton University Art Museum. Gift of Lorillard, a Division of Loews Theatres, Inc. © 2013 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

# Experiment with Shapes

**What could these abstract shapes be?**

Using lines and more shapes, transform each of these geometric shapes into something you can recognize, like a popsicle, a bike, or a person.

