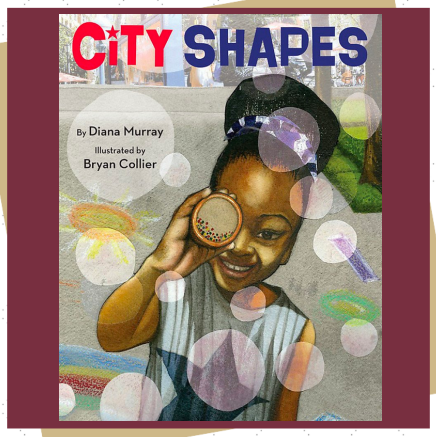


BEYOND THE BOOK GUIDE

City Shapes by Diana Murray

Book Summary

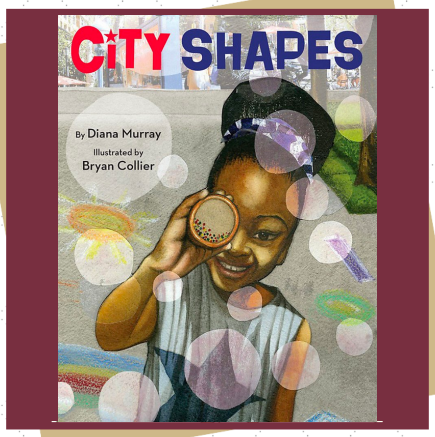
This book takes readers on a journey through New York City's streets with an African-American girl and a pigeon looking for various shapes. During the day, the small girl is shown looking for shapes while bussing across the city. Throughout the city, she comes across rectangles, squares, ovals, diamonds, and stars. As it soars through the city, the pigeon is spotted doing the same.

Before Reading the Story

- Discuss what you see on the cover of the book.
- Make predictions on what the story may be about.
- New York City is a big city, explore the Modern Museum of Art website and try to find the different shapes.
- How many shapes do you see?
- Think about your neighborhood. What are some of the shapes you see from your front door or window?

Target Vocabulary

- **Scenery**: the walls, furniture, trees, etc., that are used on a stage during a play or other performance to show where the action is taking place
- **Haul**: to pull or drag (something) with effort
- **Cityscape**: the area where a city is and the way it looks
- **Skyscraper**: a very tall building in a city
- **Melody**: a song or tune
- **Bangle**: a large stiff ring that is worn as jewelry around the arm, wrist, or ankle
- **Ache**: to want or desire something or someone very much



BEYOND THE BOOK GUIDE

During the Story

- Read the book aloud with the pictures facing your child.
- Make predictions about the story based on the pictures.
- Provide definitions and connections for any of the target vocabulary words that may be unfamiliar.
- Have your child repeat the words that they do not know.
- Relate the details in the story to events and experiences in your everyday life.
- Ask questions throughout the story to help your child understand what's being read.

After Reading the Story

- Have your child retell the story in their own words using the pictures.
- Have your child list any shapes they see in the room.
- Ask if the child has ever been to New York City, if not pull up a live action video of Times Square to watch on EarthCam.
- Do you ever look out the window during a car ride, bus ride, or train ride and see the birds above you? Do you often wonder if they see the shapes you see?

Example Questions to Ask

- "But her heart starts to ache for the SHAPE she loves best. The shape that is...."
- What type of bird is flying above the city?
- Why do you think the girl saw so many shapes?
- What is special about shapes?
- What was the girl riding as she noticed shapes through the city?
- Does the shape of your room at home bring you comfort?
- Why do you think that the whirring of cars is a lullaby for the bird?
- How many shapes do you see daily?