



**The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!**  
**ACTIVITY**  
**EXPLORING HOW THINGS FIT TOGETHER**



# The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!™

## ACTIVITY

### EXPLORING HOW THINGS FIT TOGETHER

## Overview

Have you ever watched your child put together a puzzle? A lot of thought goes into figuring out which piece goes where. First she has to consider the shape and size of each piece to see if it will fit into a particular space. If the shape looks right, then she has to figure out which way it goes in. She might have to rotate it or flip it so it aligns properly. As your child does the puzzle, she is using spatial skills. Manipulating 3-D objects such as pieces of pasta is another way to practice these skills.

## The Math Idea

Helping your child recognize shapes and how they relate to one another by flipping and rotating them is key to developing the spatial reasoning skills necessary for doing geometry later on. Your child uses these skills everyday—for example, when she determines if a shoe goes on the left or right foot and then positions it so it goes on correctly.

**Skills:** Geometry and spatial skills  
**Ages:** 3–6

## What to Do

- [Follow the Pasta Path](#)
- [Take It Further](#)

## Getting Ready

Open up a box of rigatoni pasta. Talk with your child about the shapes she sees in the pasta. Notice how some pieces are straight, while other pieces curve to the right or to the left. Show your child how she can make a path with the pasta pieces by lining them up piece-by-piece. She can change the direction of the path by choosing pieces that curve left or right.



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## Follow the Pasta Path

### What You Need

- A picture of the Cat in the Hat separated from Thing One and Thing Two
- Marker or crayon
- Dried pasta pieces; rigatoni works best

### How to Do It

1. Oh dear! The Cat has become separated from his friends Thing One and Thing Two. Ask your child to help them get back together.
2. Print out the picture of the Cat separated from Thing One and Thing Two. Use a marker or crayon to draw a wavy line that connects them. The wavy line should be done in a way that your child can easily follow it with pieces of pasta.
3. Give your child a handful of dried rigatoni pasta and ask her to line the pieces up end-to-end so that they follow the curvy path you drew. Before she puts down each piece, tell her to look carefully at the path and decide if she needs a straight piece, a piece that curves right, or a piece that curves left.
4. When she finishes building the pasta path, praise her and say, "Great job! Now the Cat can get back together with Thing One and Thing Two!"

## Take It Further

Make a pasta face. Create a circle out of the pasta pieces, and then use other pieces for the eyes, nose, ears, and mouth. Ask your child if her pasta person is happy or sad.

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## More Ways to Discover and Learn

### Look in a Book

*Go, Dog, Go!* by P.D. Eastman

*We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen; illustrated by Helen Oxenbury

*Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins

### New Words

Position vocabulary: *around, beneath, above, below, beside, in front of, behind, next to, on top of, under, over*

### Related Game

Play the Meerkat Jubilee game on PBS (<http://pbskids.org/catinthehat/games/meerkat.html>)