



Scissor Skills

A Paediatric Occupational Therapist advice to help a child or young person with cutting using scissors



With free cutting activates!

Produced by Children's Therapy Solutions Products
January 2025



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Learning to use scissors is a controlled skill which requires many subcomponents and is seen as a high functioning hand skill. Scissors are viewed as one of the functional activities that require the development of skill and the use of fine motor co-ordination and control that is being consolidated at age five to six years.

Scissor Skills incorporates:

Fine Motor Skills: These are patterns that normally rely on both tactile proprioceptive and visual information for accuracy. However, fine motor skills may be accomplished without visual feedback if somatosensory functions provide adequate information. The patterns include basic reach, grasp, carry, release, and the more complex skills of in-hand manipulation and bilateral hand use.

Bilateral Skills: The use of both hands to accomplish an activity

Asymmetrical differentiated bilateral tasks: These are tasks that are done with the dominant hand leading and the non-dominant hand performing a different action.

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A child is ready to start practicing their scissor skills if....

The child.....

1. Enjoys tearing paper
2. Shows an interest in and understands the use of scissors
3. Is able to maintain the correct grip when positioned by an adult
4. Is able to hold scissors appropriately without assistance
5. Begins to open and close scissors
6. Is able to open and close scissors in a controlled action
7. Is able to hold paper and make random cuts
8. Is able to make consecutive cuts with forward movement
9. Is able to cut straight lines avoiding unintentional lateral movement

TIP: Before using scissors, use tongs to collect items from a bucket of water using a squeezing movement. This will help practicing opening/ closing the scissors

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Advice on Scissor skills

Encourage your child to sit at a table and use the table surface to support their arms whilst cutting

Encourage your child to keep both thumbs in an upward position when cutting i.e. the thumb on the scissor hand and the thumb on the hand that is holding the paper or object should both be facing upward, towards the ceiling

Scissor grip

1. Thumb through top loop
2. middle finger through bottom loop
3. index finger helps hold the bottom loop steady
4. two fingers opposing the thumb give more power for controlling the scissors
5. The scissor points away from the body
6. Use simpler scissors to start with if you find the grip and grasp is too difficult

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A child may have difficulties with:

1. Opening/ closing the scissors and holding them correctly
2. Using both hands together to work the scissors and paper
3. Following the direction of the lines
4. Organising the task

Ways to help:

1. Using suitable scissors especially if the child is left handed. If your child has difficulty opening/closing the scissors practice using self opening scissors.
2. Make sure the child is sitting well at a table. Often propping their elbows onto the table can help with controlling the scissors.
3. Start with cutting narrow and small pieces of paper using a snipping action to cut through the strip.
4. Make sure your child moves the scissors in the right direction.
5. Encourage the child to cut away excess paper.
6. Direct the child to cut around the curves by moving the paper with their non-scissor hand.
7. Use paper or thin card to practice cutting.
8. Adjust the paper to suit a left or right handed user.

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Activity 1: Your child is able to hold paper and make random cuts...

Snipping - This is just opening and cutting the blades without advancing forward on the paper. Making lots of snips along the edges of paper or a paper plate to make it look like fringe or grass.

Cutting up plastic straws: Then string up the pieces to make a necklace

Cutting fringes: around the edge of a paper plate to create a lions mane. Then complete by drawing and colouring the face. Include googly eyes and sting for the whiskers for the finishing touches!

Cut short strips of paper: then create interlinked circles to make paper chains

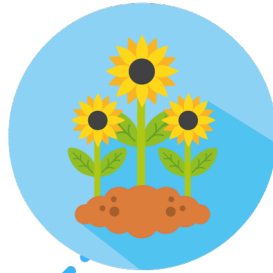
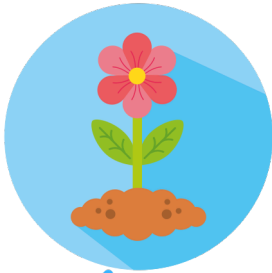


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Name: _____

SPRING FLOWER SCISSOR SKILLS

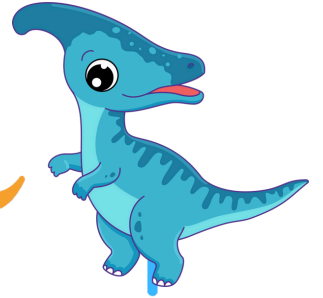
Carefully practice your scissor skills cutting from the bottom to the top of the spring flowers.



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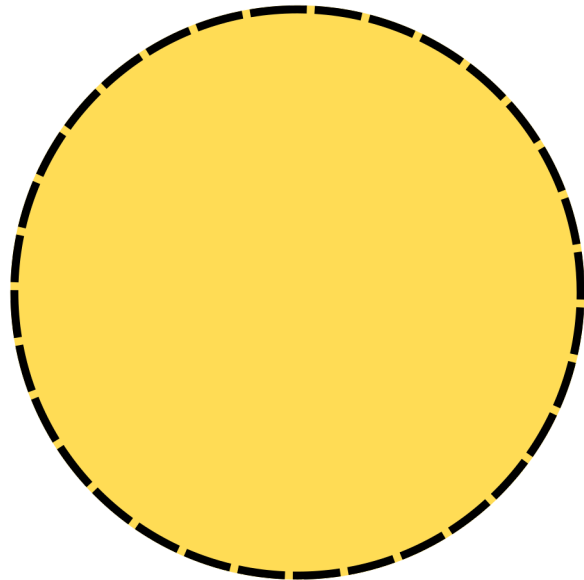
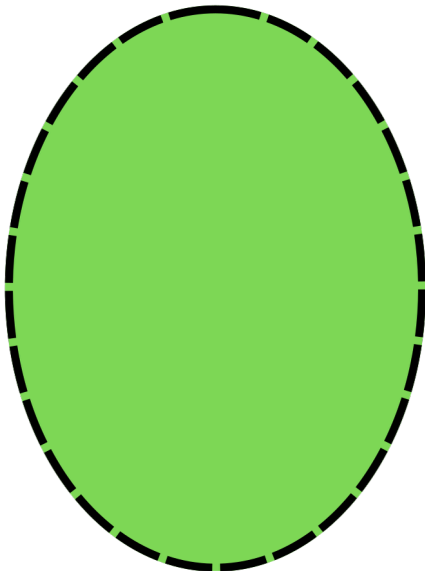
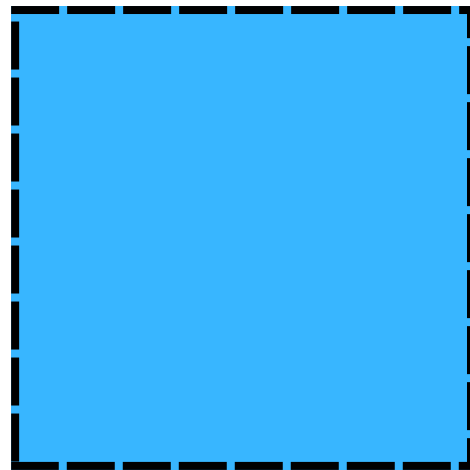
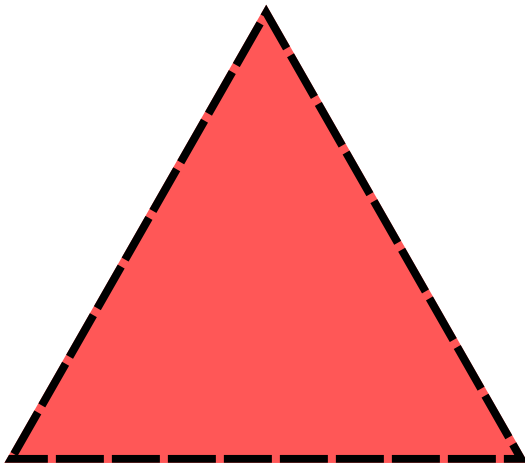
DINOSAUR SCISSOR SKILLS

Carefully practice your scissor skills cutting from the bottom to the Dinosaur



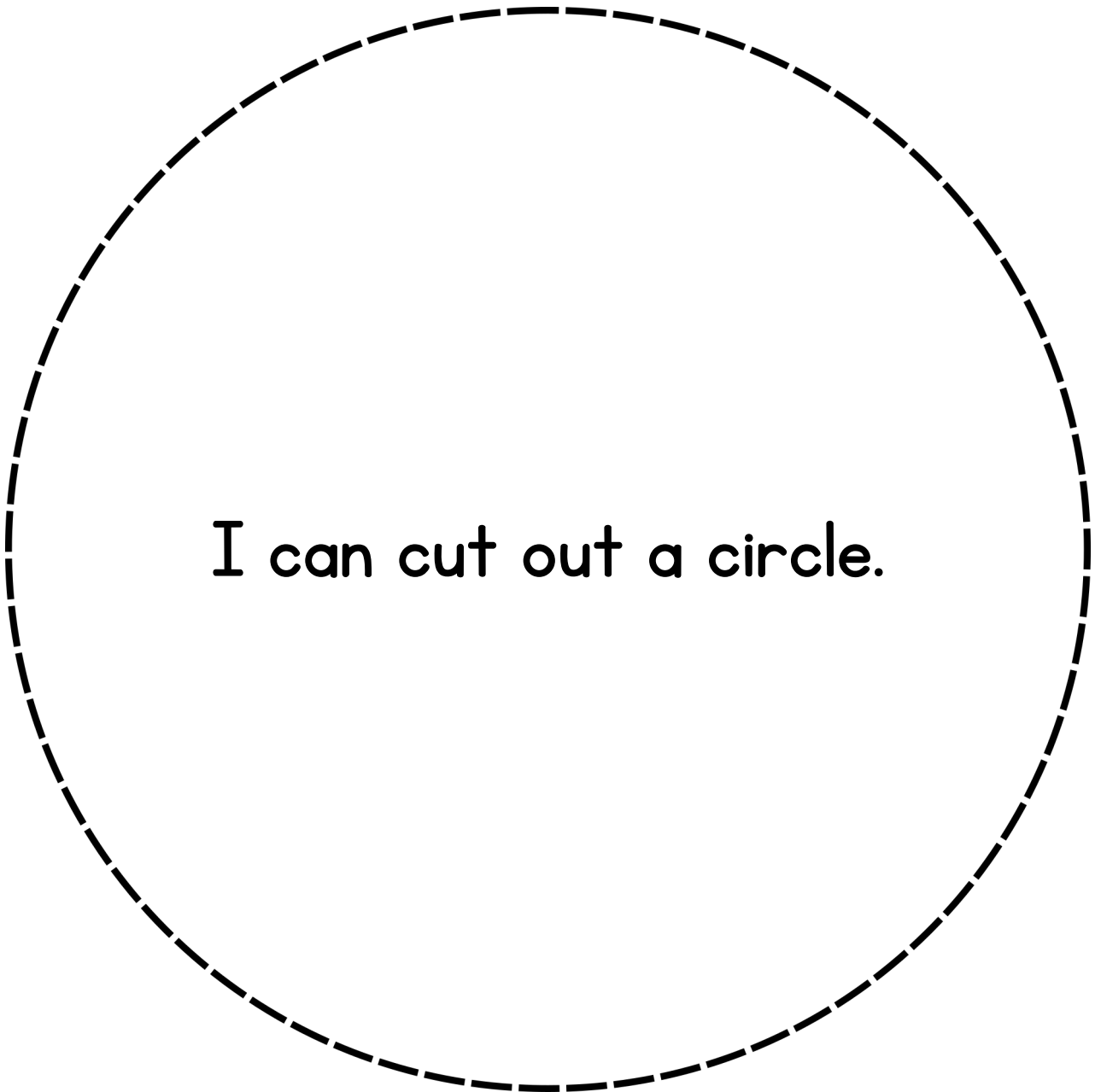
SCISSOR SKILLS

Cut out the shape below on the dotted lines.



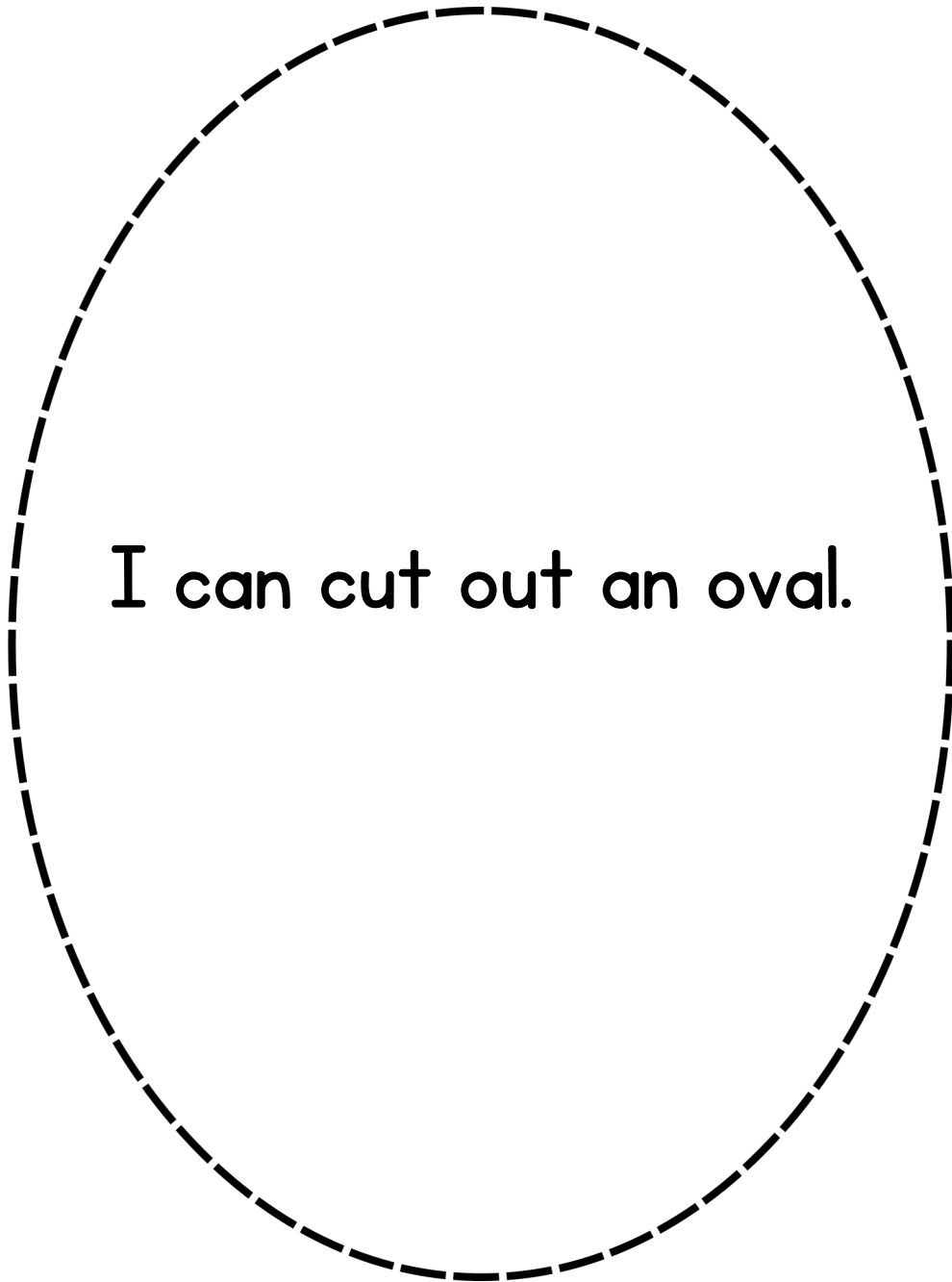
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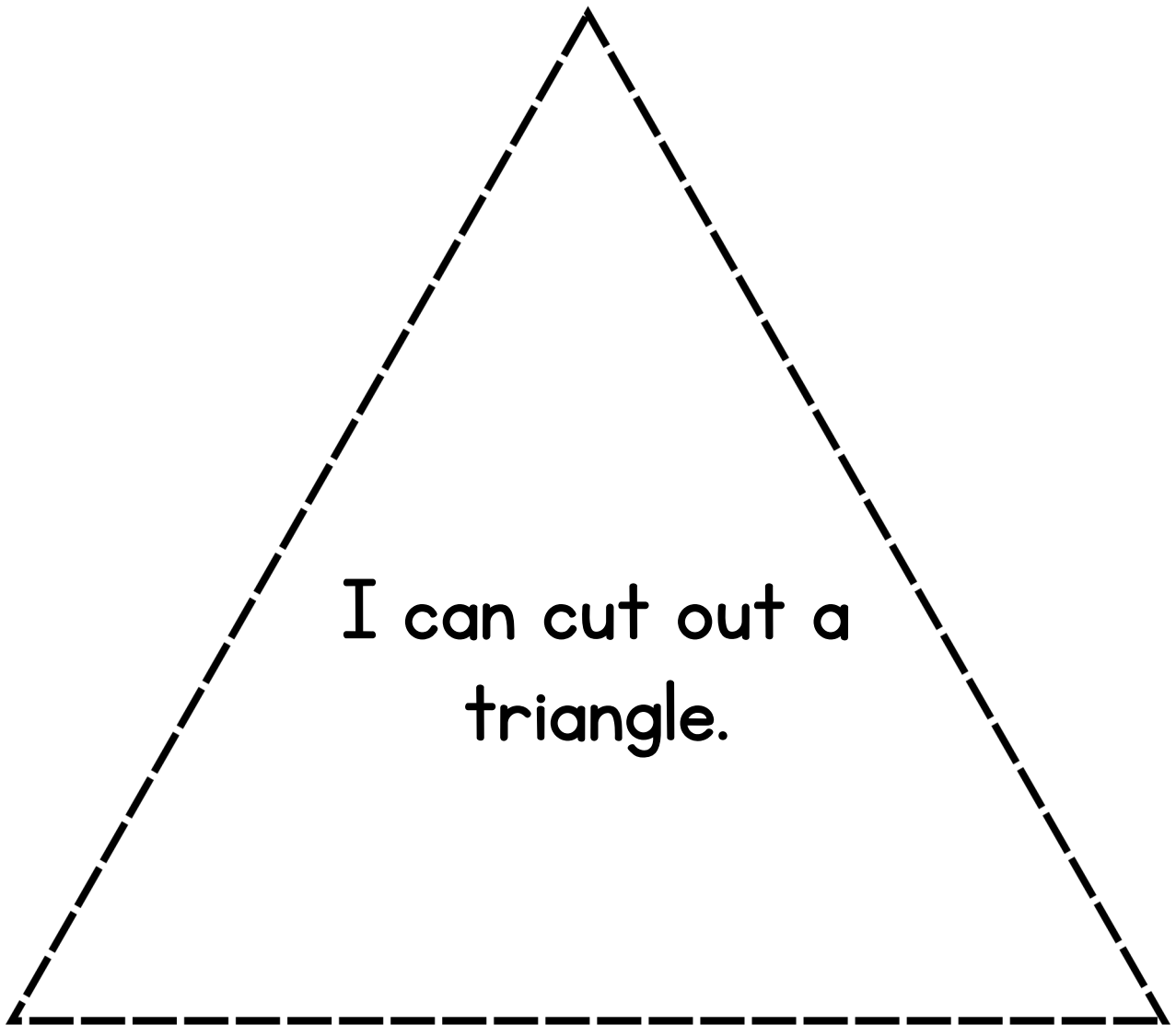
SCISSOR SKILLS

Cut out the shape below on the dotted lines.

I can cut out a square.

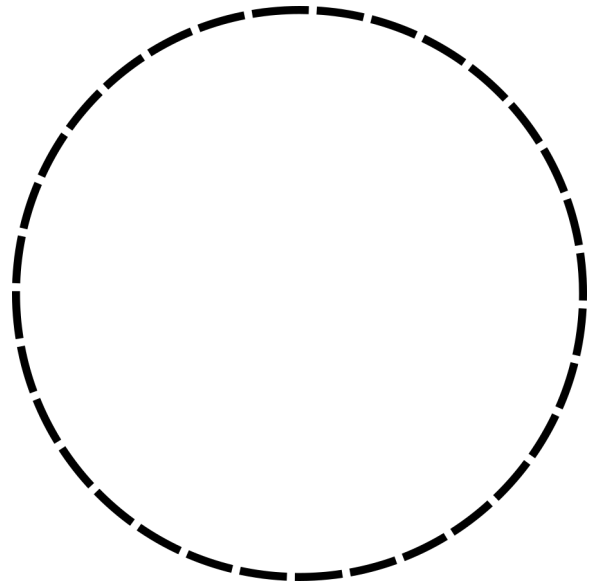
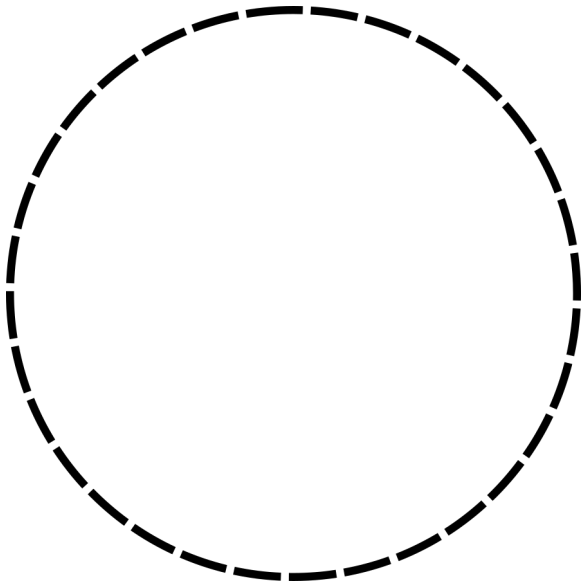
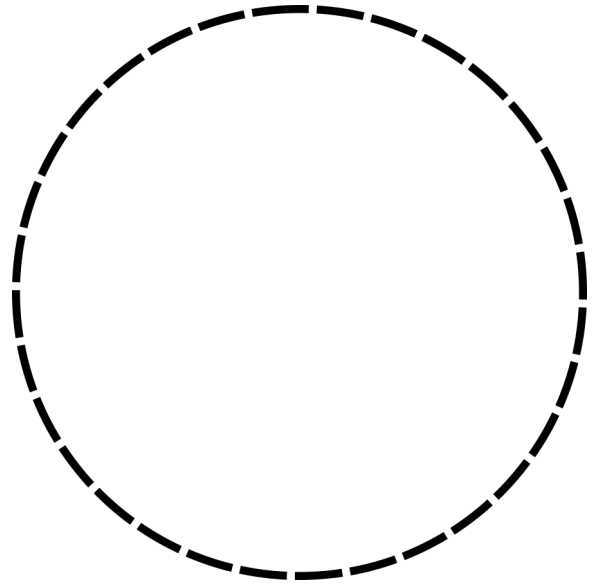
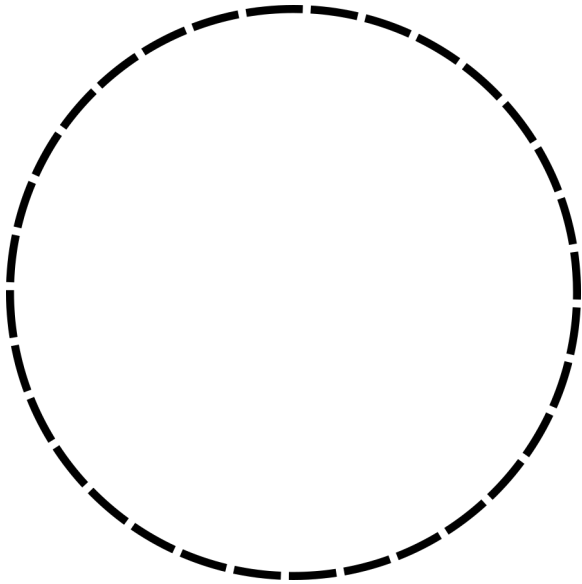
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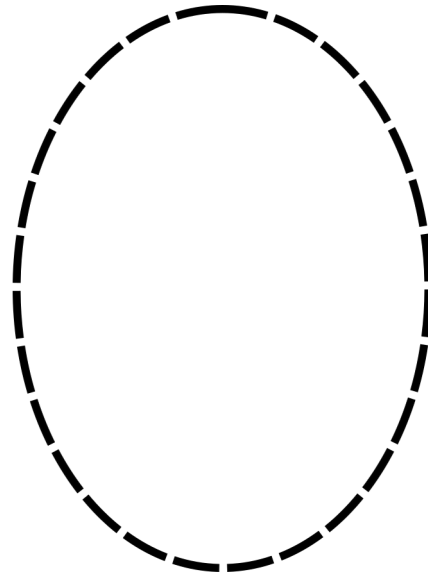
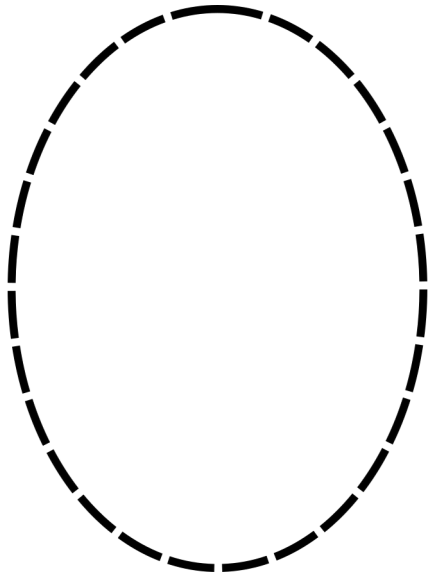
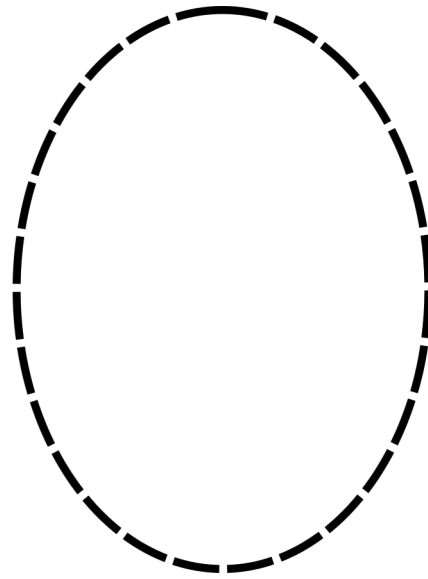
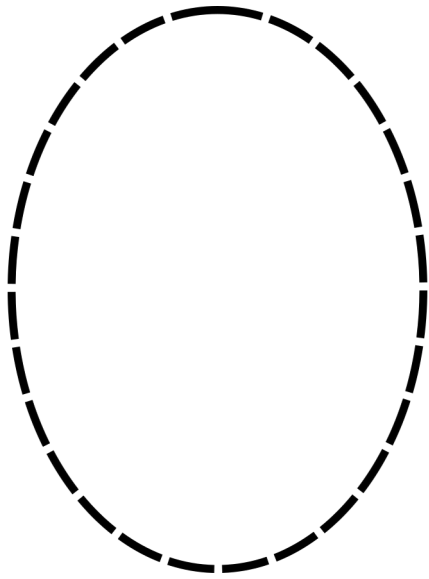
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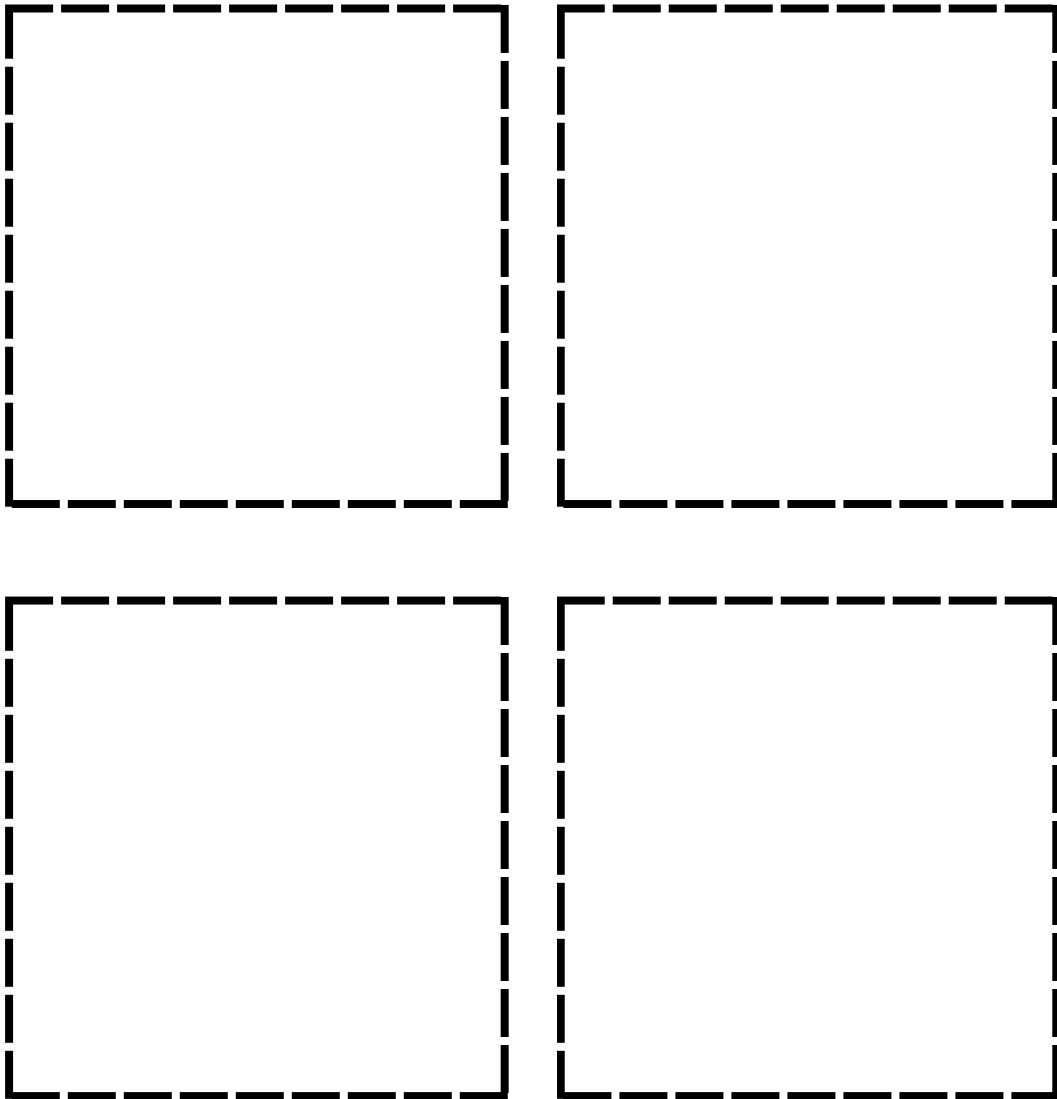
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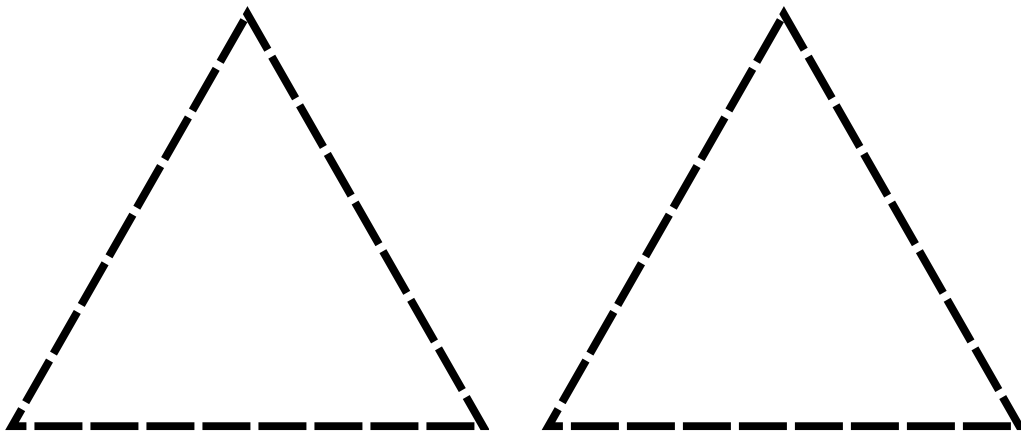
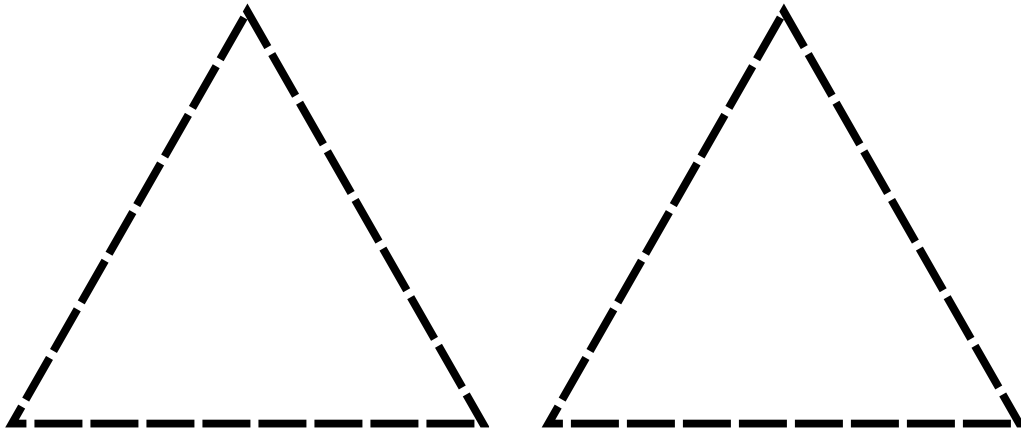
SCISSOR SKILLS

Cut out the shape below on the dotted lines.



SCISSOR SKILLS

Cut out the shape below on the dotted lines.



HOUSE OF SHAPES

Cut out the shapes below to make a house.

