

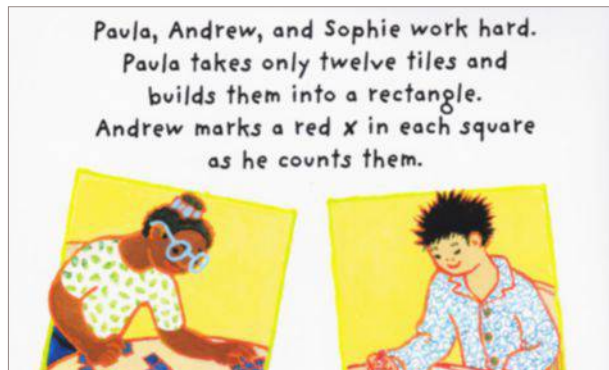
When Sophie Thinks She Can't

by Molly Bang and Ann Stern

AGE LEVEL 5–7 YEARS

About the Story

This book begins with an insult: Sophie's sister says Sophie is not smart because she can't solve a geometric puzzle. Sophie is devastated: "I can't do ANYTHING!" But Sophie's teacher says, "You haven't figured it out... YET" and encourages the class to keep working. Sophie and her classmates tackle a puzzle involving rectangles. At first they struggle. But they don't give up, and each child thinks hard and uses their own method to solve the problem. Sophie's successful method draws on a vegetable garden. She concludes, "I'm getting SMARTER!"



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Words to Learn

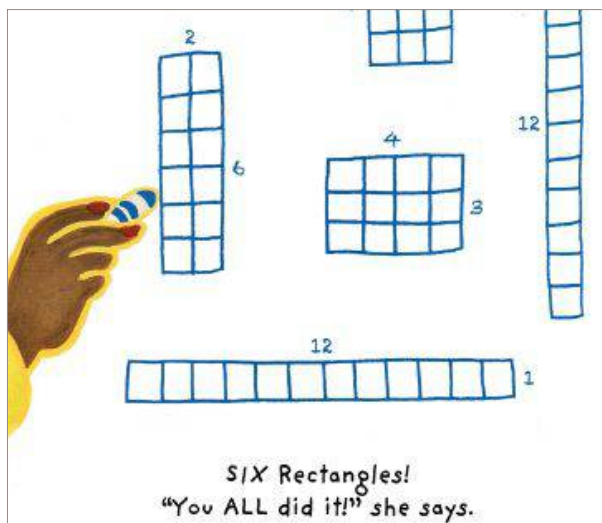
MATH WORDS

rectangle, square, sides, right angle, opposite sides, equal length, parallel, graph paper

About the Math

As Sophie and her classmates tackle the problem, your child can learn:

- How to develop a "growth mindset"—the attitude that you are not necessarily born with math ability but can get better and better at math with hard work and effort.
- The difference between rectangles and squares.
- How a square is a special type of rectangle.
- How to build rectangles out of a given number of squares.



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Math Talk During Reading

TALK ABOUT BEING BORN SMART

What did the teacher mean by flexing the muscles? Did she agree that children are born smart in math? What did she mean by thinking hard? Why is "YET" so important?

TALK ABOUT RECTANGLES AND SQUARES

Why is a square also a rectangle? (Both have 4 straight sides and 4 right angles.) Is a rectangle always a square? (Not unless all four sides of the rectangle are the same length.) Is Sophie's rectangle really a rectangle? Why?

Try to come up with some of your own questions and comments, too!

Activity After Reading

MAKE YOUR OWN RECTANGLE PUZZLES

With your child, cut out a lot of little squares. Then take 4 and ask your child to make as many different rectangles as they can. Then do the same for 6 squares, 8 squares, etc. Write the numbers on the sides of the rectangles, just as Sophie's teacher did.

Mathical

BOOK PRIZE

The Mathical Book Prize recognizes math-inspiring literature for kids ages 2-18. Prize-winning books are selected by a committee of teachers, librarians, mathematicians, and others. To get the Mathical List, plus reading guides, book reviews, and more, see

mathicalbooks.org

PreK WINNERS:

Baby Goes to Market by Atinuke
Crash! Boom! A Math Tale by Robie H. Harris
Have You Seen My Dragon? by Steve Light
Lia & Luis: Who Has More? by Ana Crespo
One Fox: A Counting Book Thriller by Kate Read
ONE Very Big Bear by Alice Brière-Haquet
8: An Animal Alphabet by Elisha Cooper

GRADES K-2 WINNERS:

Absolutely One Thing: Featuring Charlie and Lola by Lauren Child
The Animals Would Not Sleep by Sara Levine
Max's Math by Kate Bank
Nothing Stopped Sophie: The Story of Unshakable Mathematician Sophie Germain by Cheryl Bardoe
One Big Pair of Underwear by Laura Gehl
Pigeon Math by Asia Citro
Sheep Won't Sleep: Counting by 2s, 5s, and 10s by Judy Cox

PreK HONOR TITLES:

Animal Shapes by Christopher Silas Neal
Count the Monkeys by Mac Barnett
Count with Maisy, Cheep, Cheep, Cheep! by Lucy Cousins
Goodnight, Numbers by Danica McKellar
I Know Numbers by Taro Gomi
A Mousy Mess by Laura Driscoll
One Happy Tiger by Catherine Rayner
One Is a Piñata: A Book of Numbers by Roseanne Greenfield Thong
Over in a River: Flowing Out to the Sea by Marianne Berkes
Press Here by Hervé Tullet
Round by Joyce Sidman
100 Bugs! A Counting Book by Kate Narita

GRADES 2-K HONOR TITLES:

Billions of Bricks: A Counting Book about Building by Kurt Cyrus
Bird Count by Susan Edwards Richmond
The Boy Who Loved Math by Deborah Heiligman
Cao Chong Weighs an Elephant by Songju Ma Daemicke

Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13 by Helaine Becker
Counting the Stars: The Story of Katherine Johnson, NASA Mathematician by Lesa Cline-Ransom
Count on Me by Miguel Tanco
The Girl With a Mind for Math: The Story of Raye Montague by Julia Finley Mosca
How Many Jelly Beans? A Giant Book of Giant Numbers! by Andrea Menotti
Is 2 a Lot?: An Adventure with Numbers by Annie Watson and Rebecca Evans
Lifetime: The Amazing Numbers in Animal Lives by Lola M. Schaefer
Shapes, Reshape! by Silvia Borando
When Sophie Thinks She Can't by Molly Bang
Zero the Hero by Joan Holub
3x4 by Ivan Brunetti

HALL OF FAME TITLES:

Hippos Go Berserk! by Sandra Boynton
One Grain of Rice: A Mathematical Folktale by Demi
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

