





Students will work with pattern blocks like the ones above to create more complex shapes out of the shapes they already know. Activities can begin with matching a picture, or filling in the outlined shapes, or eventually using their own combinations and ideas to fill a larger shape.

Spotlight on Math Strategies:

Pattern Blocks

Students will use these blocks to compose shapes in this module of *A Story of Units*.

*A Story of Units* has several key mathematical strategies that will be used throughout a student's elementary years.

This module takes the basic understanding students have about shapes from earlier in the year and stretches their skills to see how to combine and create the shapes they know into new, composite shapes. Pattern blocks are not exclusive to *A Story of Units*. They are tools that have been used to support math learning for many generations of students.

As students use the pattern blocks to create new, larger shapes, we reinforce a central idea of *A Story of Units*: smaller units combine to make larger units. This is true in our work with shapes and area, but it also supports our work with the base ten number system, building a strong foundation for first grade.

Sample Problem from Module 6:

Trace to show two ways to make each shape. How many shapes did you use?

(Students will have several large shapes to fill with different pattern blocks of their choice.)

Sample taken from Module 6, Lesson 6

