

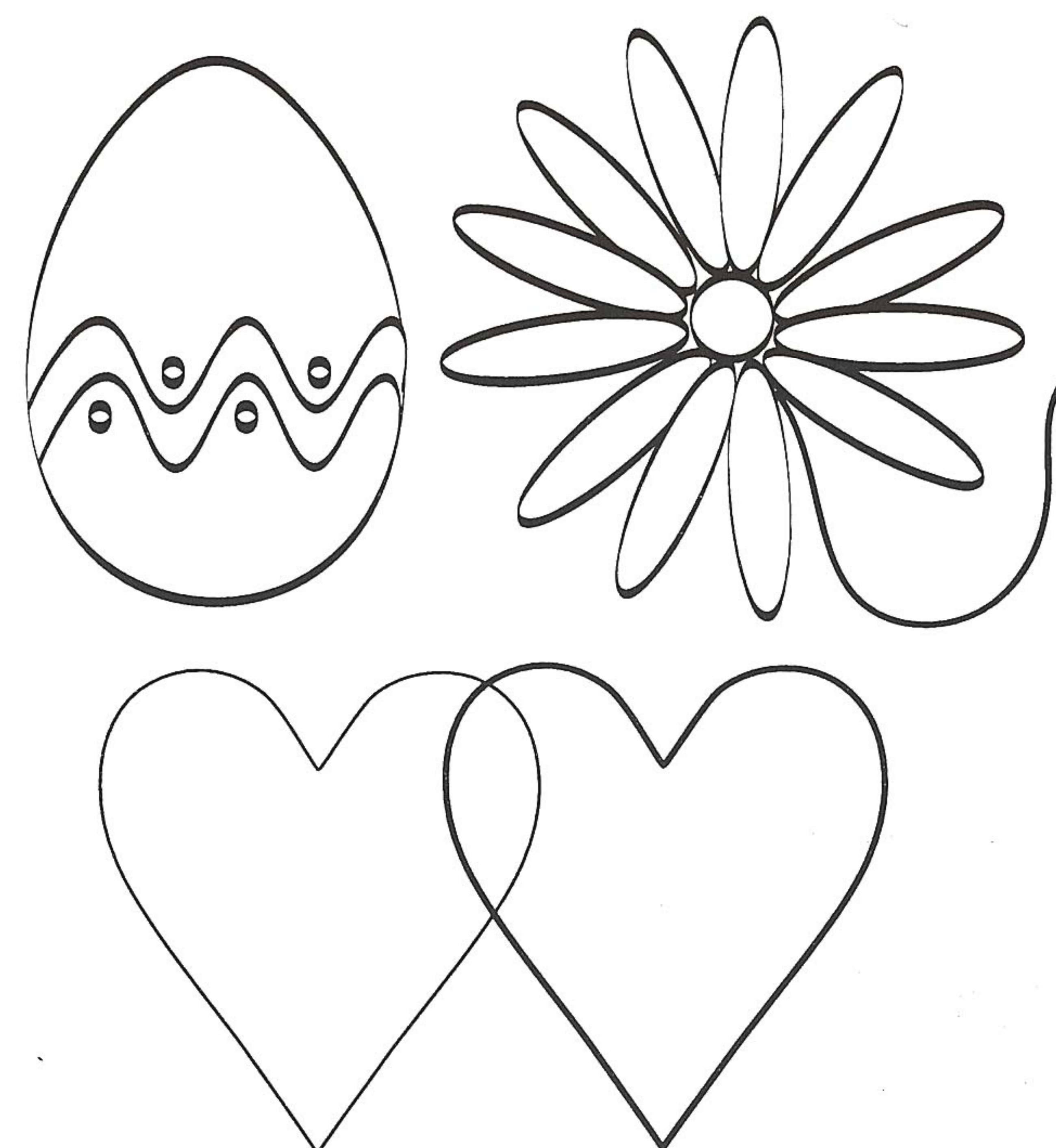
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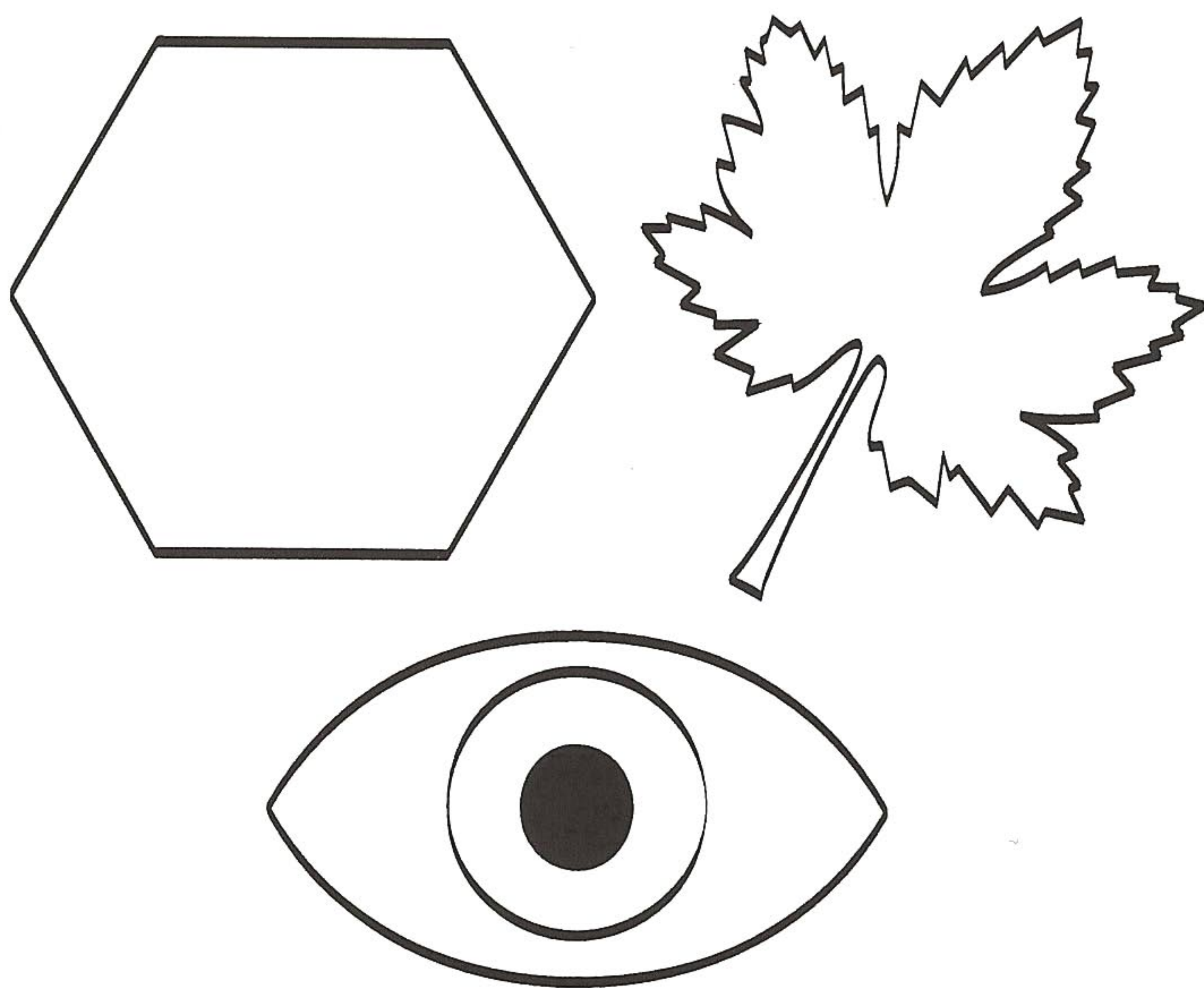
Directions, Please!

One of the most difficult tasks facing teen (and adult) teachers is giving clear directions to young children. The purpose of these communication activities is to give the teenagers practice in giving and receiving directions.

Preparation

- On a sheet of paper, draw three simple symbols such as a lightning bolt, an Easter egg, and a daisy. Add some, but not too much, detail to the symbols. Repeat this step two more times, using a different set of three symbols on each sheet of paper. You should then have three sheets of paper, each with a different set of three symbols.
- Reproduce the drawings on cardstock (enough so that each pair of teens has a set of three). Place each set in a large envelope.





Activity Directions

- Teenagers are paired. Give each pair an envelope of pictures (instruct them not to look at the pictures), three sheets of blank paper, and a pencil. Have the pairs spread out so they are not watching or hearing other pairs' work.
- The activity is conducted in three parts. In each part one teen will be the "director" and one will be the "artist." It is the director's role to provide the artist with instructions which are clear enough that the artist can reproduce the picture the director describes.
- Part 1. The pair sits back-to-back. The director pulls a picture from the envelope without letting the artist see it.
- The artist is given a sheet of blank paper and a pencil. The director then describes the picture to the artist, who attempts to draw the exact same picture on his or her paper. The director may not watch the artist at work. The artist may not ask the director questions. When finished, the artist and director compare the two pictures and discuss: Do the pictures look alike? How are they different?
- Part 2. The teenagers switch roles and repeat the above steps with a new picture except the artist is allowed to ask the

director questions. Again, the pictures are compared and discussed: Do the pictures look alike? Is the task easier when the artist can ask questions?

- Part 3. The teenagers switch roles again and repeat the activity with the third picture. This time the director may watch the artist at work (although he or she does not show the artist the picture) and the artist can ask questions throughout. Compare the pictures and discuss: Do these pictures look alike? Was this process easier?

Reconvene the large group and discuss the process: What is difficult about giving directions? What techniques were used with good results? When did the pictures most resemble each other? What are effective methods of giving directions to young children? The following are some key ideas to discuss:

- It helps to give an overview of the picture before talking about picture details; the same is true when giving directions for an activity.
- Using a frame of reference is helpful, such as: The symbol looks something like a stop sign.
- When giving instructions, make sure the child is paying attention before beginning.
- A child should be able to repeat your directions back to you.

