

Vision Therapy and Team Building

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Purpose

- Our office set out to build our internal communication skills and our “team spirit” with a series of team building exercises.
 - Building a successful vision therapy practice involves the support of a cohesive, integrated team.
 - Internal communications can be strengthened by learning the “language” in which each team member best receives input.

Applied Vision Therapy

- I am sharing my practice's exploration as a "study" in self-application of team-oriented Vision Therapy.
- The results of this experience have included:
 - A lighter office environment
 - Greater appreciation of the therapy process by the front-office staff members
 - Greater interest in cross-coverage and cross-training between team members
 - Richer appreciation of how best to deliver communications to each team member so that it is *effectively received*.

Phase I: Personal Inventory

- We created an open-ended self-assessment activity to provide each team member with the opportunity to reflect on their own preferences before convening as a group.
- We presented a series of “reflecting questions,” followed by an open-ended statement.
- The doctor/ owner (myself) and a group facilitator (hired) reviewed the responses to prepare for the group event.
- Responses were kept private, so that each team member had an opportunity for safe self-expression apart from the group environment.

Phase I: Personal Inventory

- Self-Awareness
 - *I am at my best when...*
- Teamwork
 - *I feel most fulfilled in a team when...*
 - *I am motivated to contribute more actively when...*
- Training
 - *I learn best by (doing/ being told/ reading instructions/ watching/ other...)*
 - *The best way to train me is...*
- Communication
 - *I receive communications best when...*
- Work Environment
 - *I feel safest to express my ideas when...*

Phase II: Communication Skills

- Visual → Verbal → Visual activity
- Teams of two
- Exploring different uses of language
 - Estimated sizes
 - Proportions
 - Mixed language outcomes

Examples to follow...

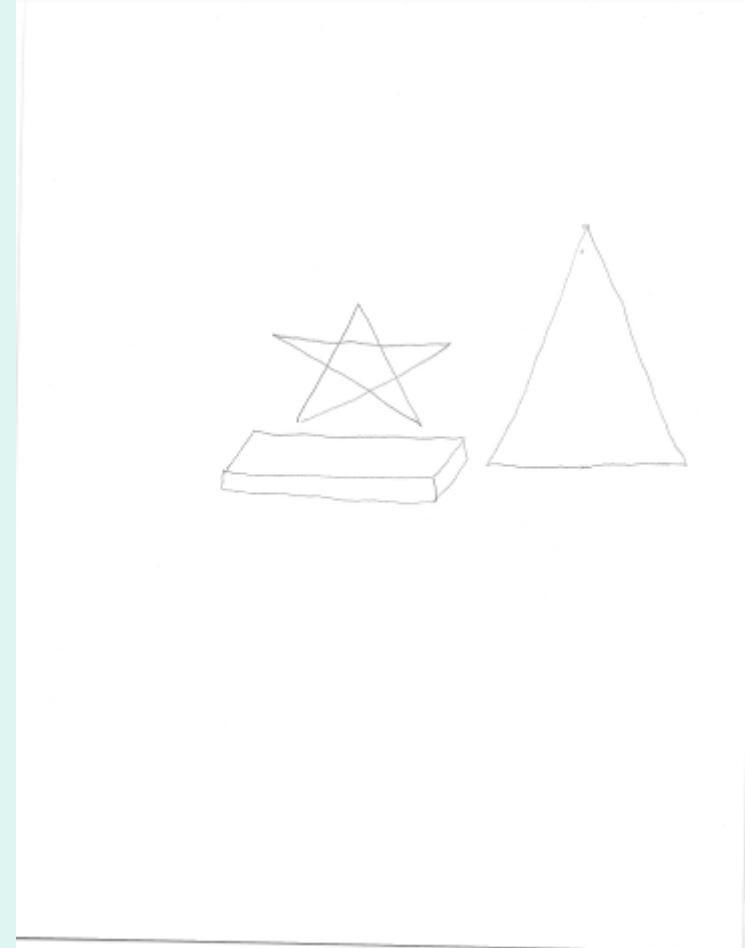
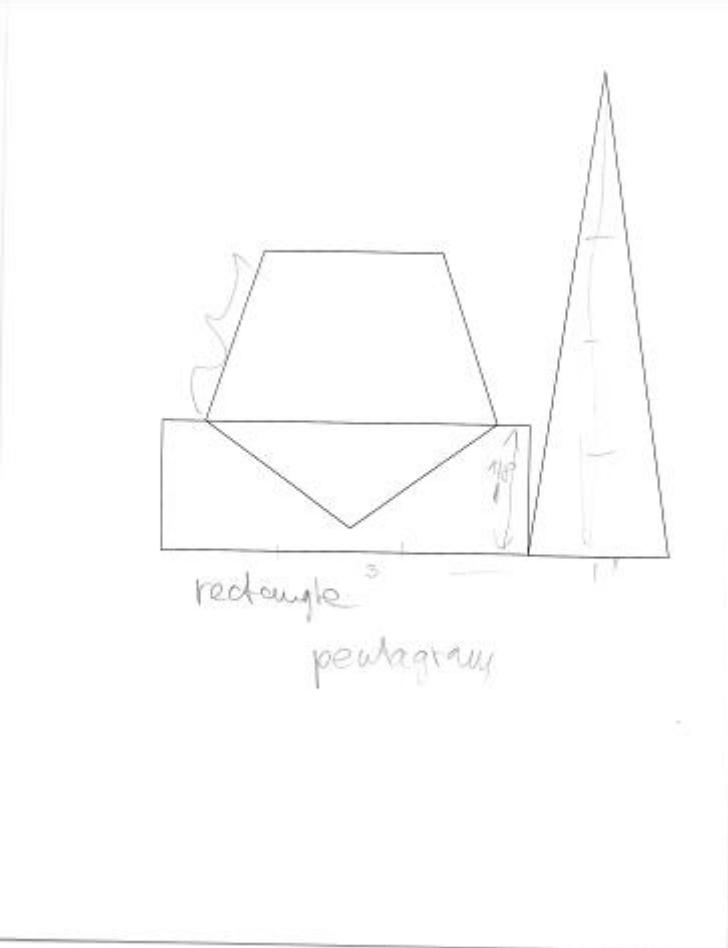
Phase III: Applying Central-Peripheral Integration Skills

- Use Attribute Blocks/ Venn Diagram
- Everyone participates, active or passive
- Explore different roles/ Experience changes in perspective:
 - “Observer”
 - “Doer”
 - “Teacher”
 - Chance to step into one another’s shoes and appreciate how our different vantage points can serve a collaborative purpose

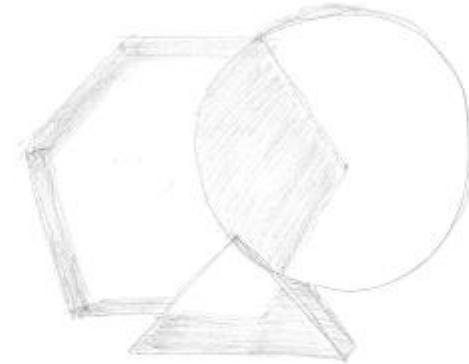
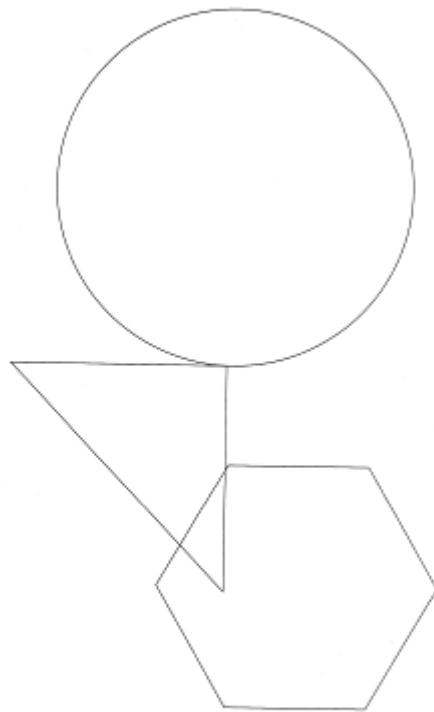
Phase III: Applying Central-Peripheral Integration Skills

- *Observer:* Receptive mode:
 - Attention to details without losing big picture
 - Attention to big picture without missing details
 - Facilitates problem solving
- *Doer:* Proactive mode:
 - Based on the “solution” one determines for the “problem” at hand
 - Set internal filters: *Know what to look for...*
- *Teacher:* Central-Peripheral Integration Mode:
 - Provide timely input/direction while maintaining an awareness for the big picture.

Visual-Verbal-Visual communications

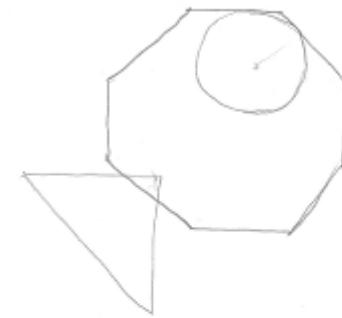
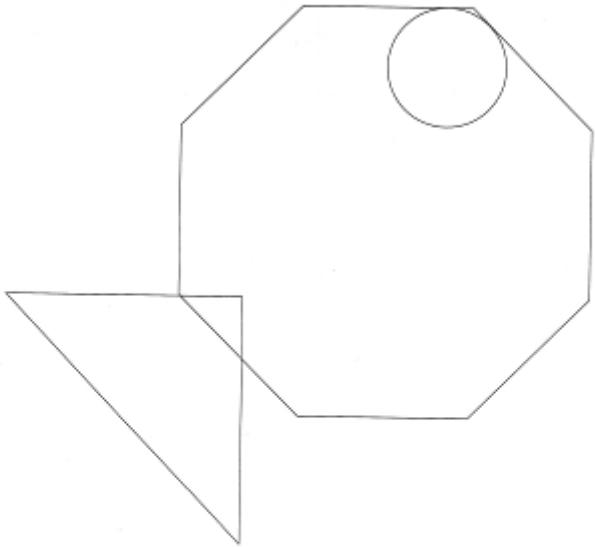


Visual-Verbal-Visual communications



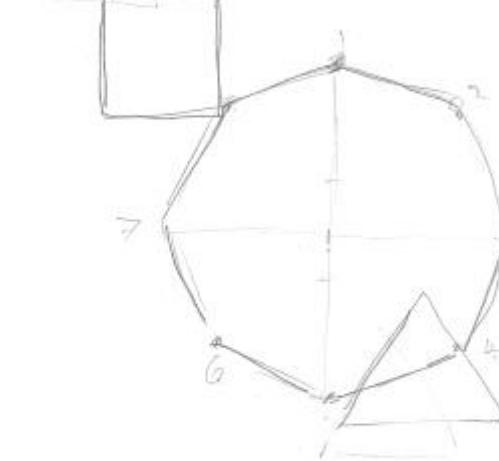
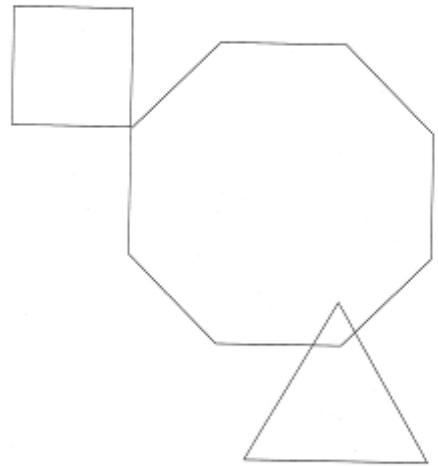
Team B

Visual-Verbal-Visual communications



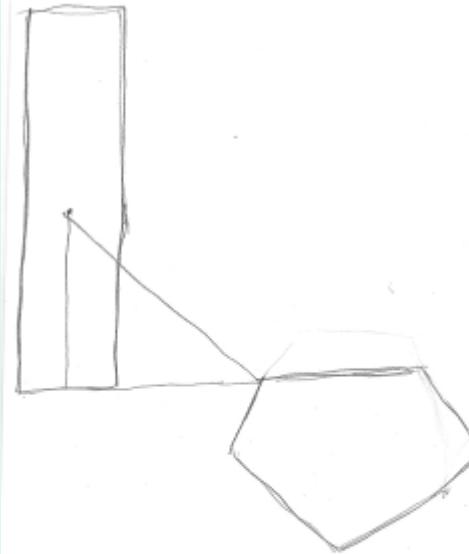
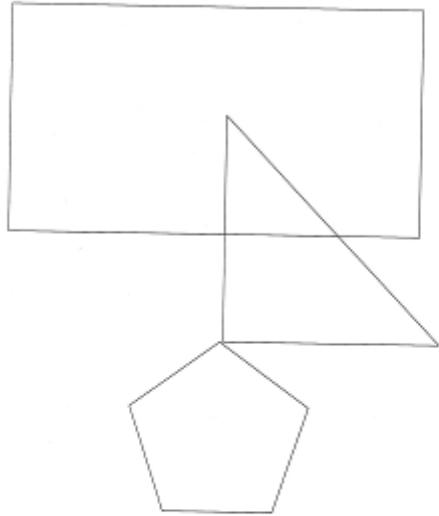
Team C

Visual-Verbal-Visual communications

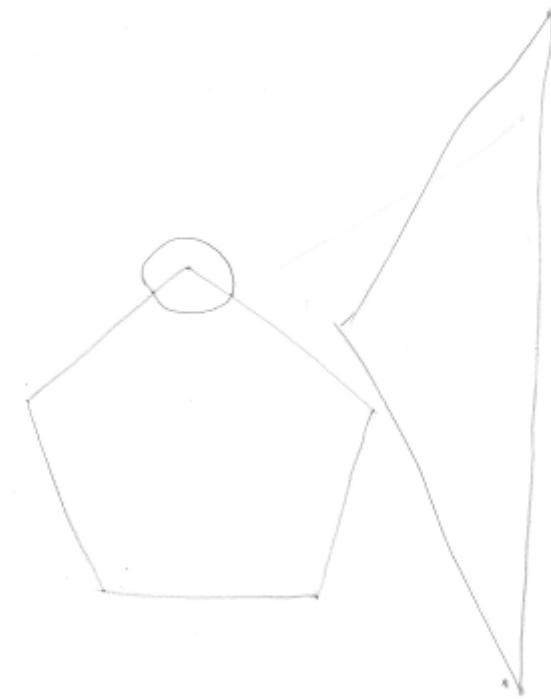
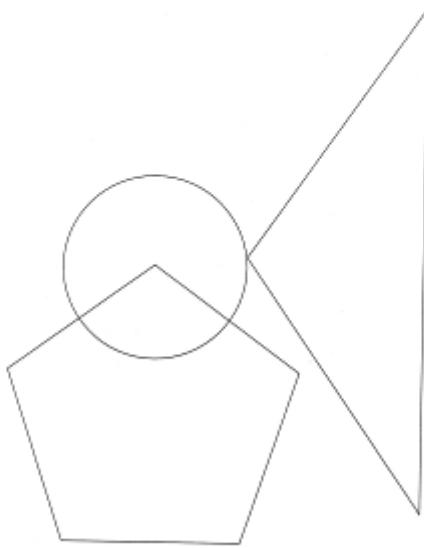


Team A

Visual-Verbal-Visual communications



Visual-Verbal-Visual communications



Team C

Summary: Communications

- Effective communication skills often begin with an organized “image” in one’s head.
- The purpose of communication is to provide a means for building a similar representation in the mind of another.
- In a busy office environment, Visual-Verbal-Visual communications are often the fastest, most convenient form of sending a message...
- ...Unfortunately, it is also the most likely way in which the contents of the message may be misinterpreted!

Summary: Communications

- Vision Therapy exercises can provide a novel opportunity for communication and feedback among team members.
- This sort of group exercise strengthens self-awareness for one's own gaps in both communication and interpretation.
- It also brings to light the **assumptions** one tends to make when giving instructions.

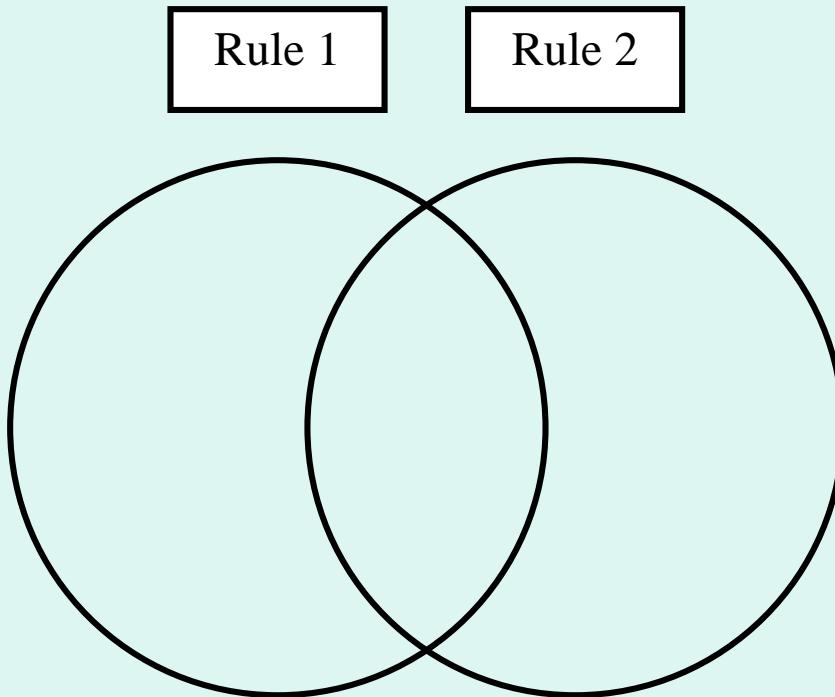
Central-Peripheral Integration Exercise Examples

Attributes/ Venn Diagrams

- The following slides show series of Venn Diagram “puzzles”.
- Each ring has a “Rule.”
 - All pieces must follow that rule in order to be placed in that ring.
- The overlap section is for pieces which follow the Rules for both rings.
 - For this activity, Rules CAN have “AND” statements.
 - No “OR” or “NOT” (exemption) rules were allowed.

Attributes/ Venn Diagrams

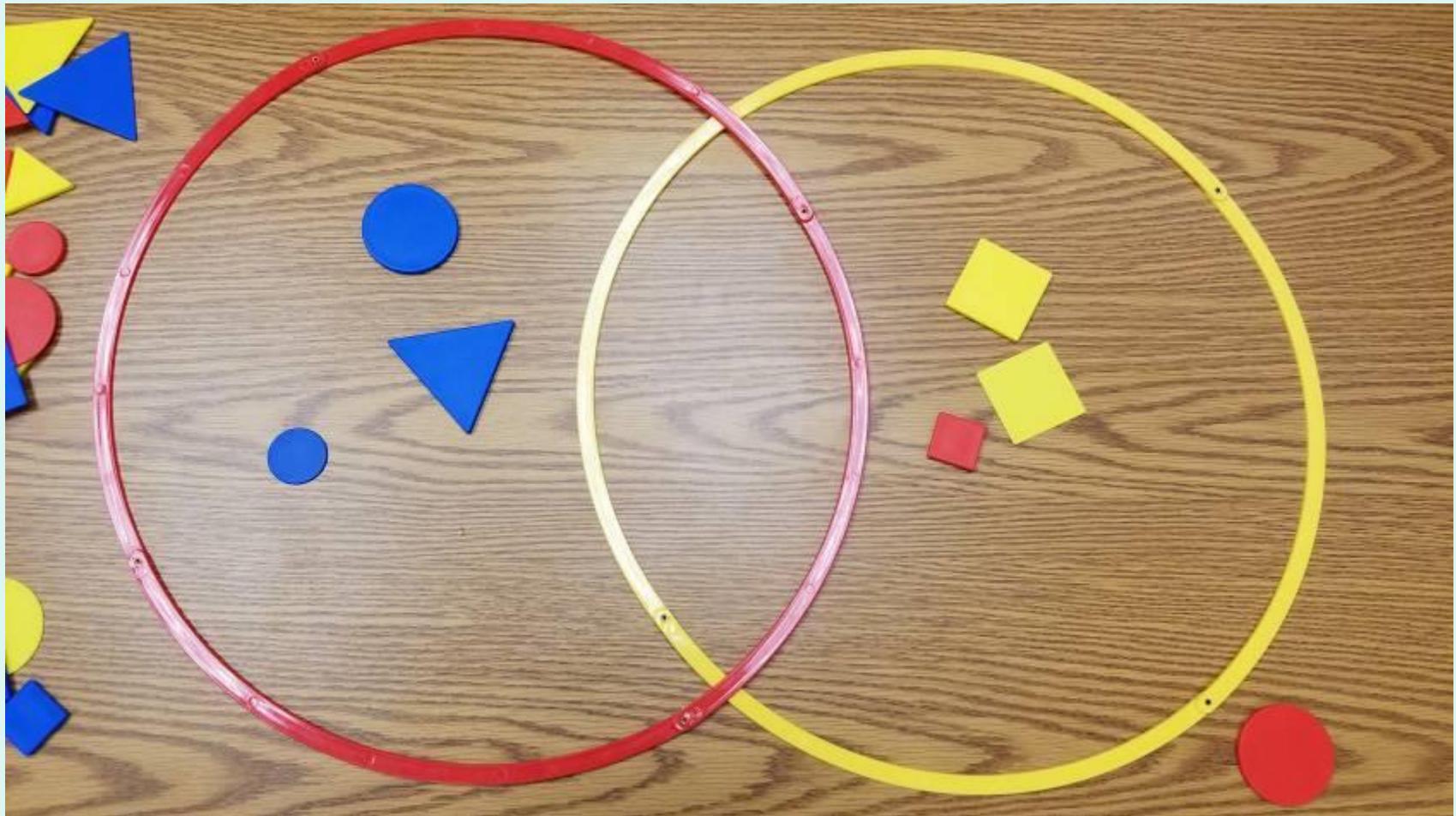
Self-Scoring Sheet



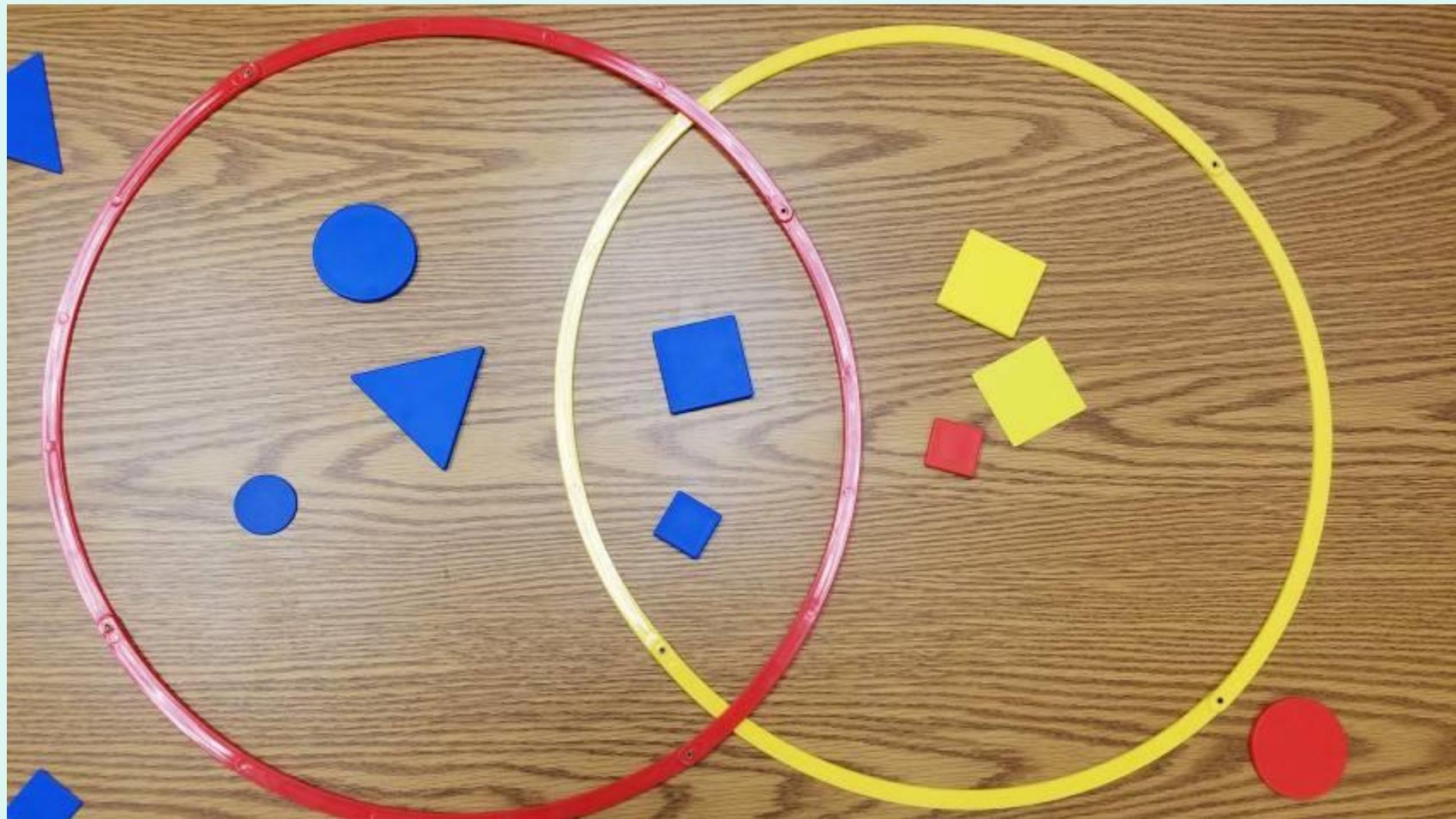
Time to solve
both rules:

Time to complete
sorting process:

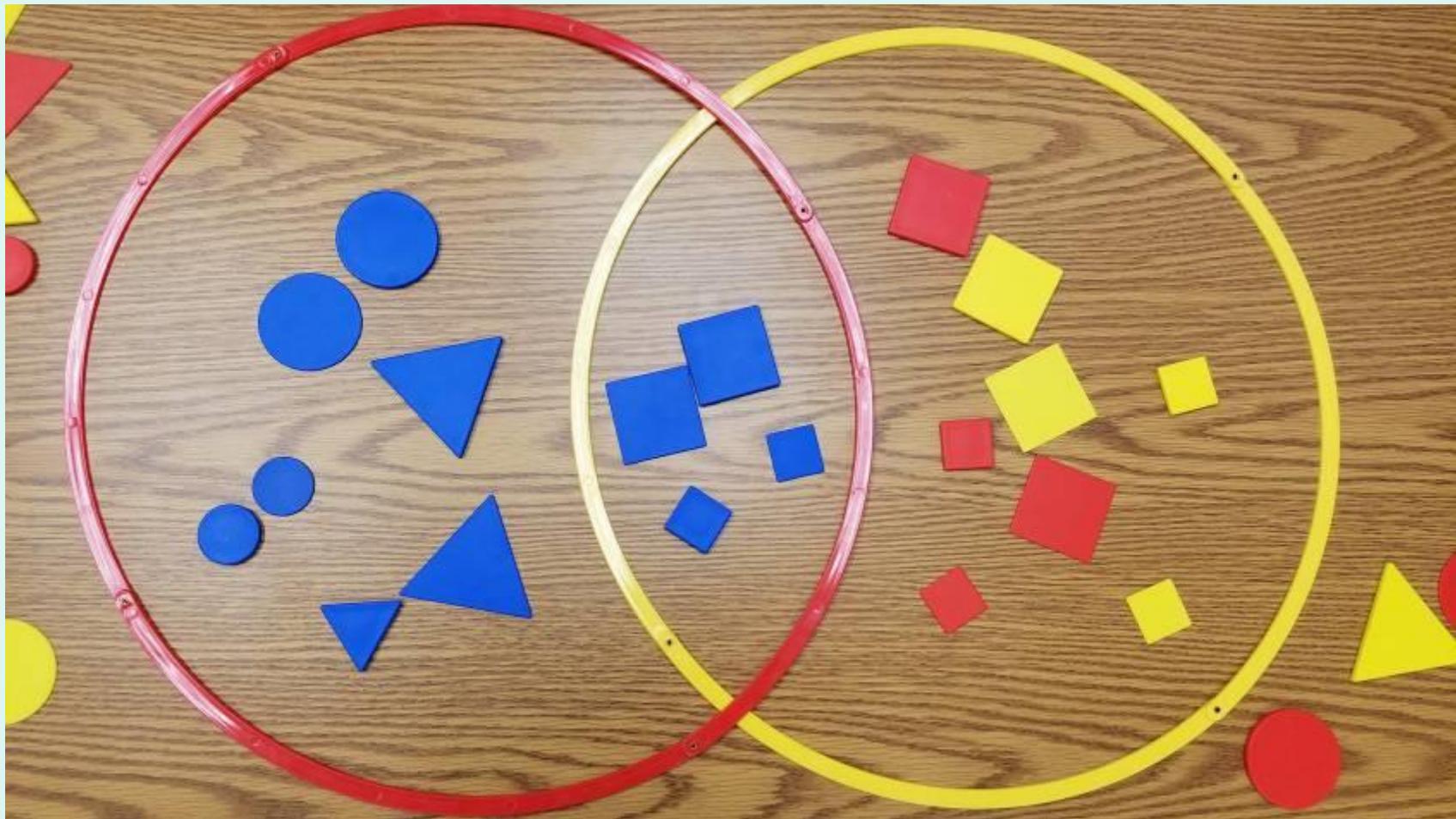
What belongs in the center?



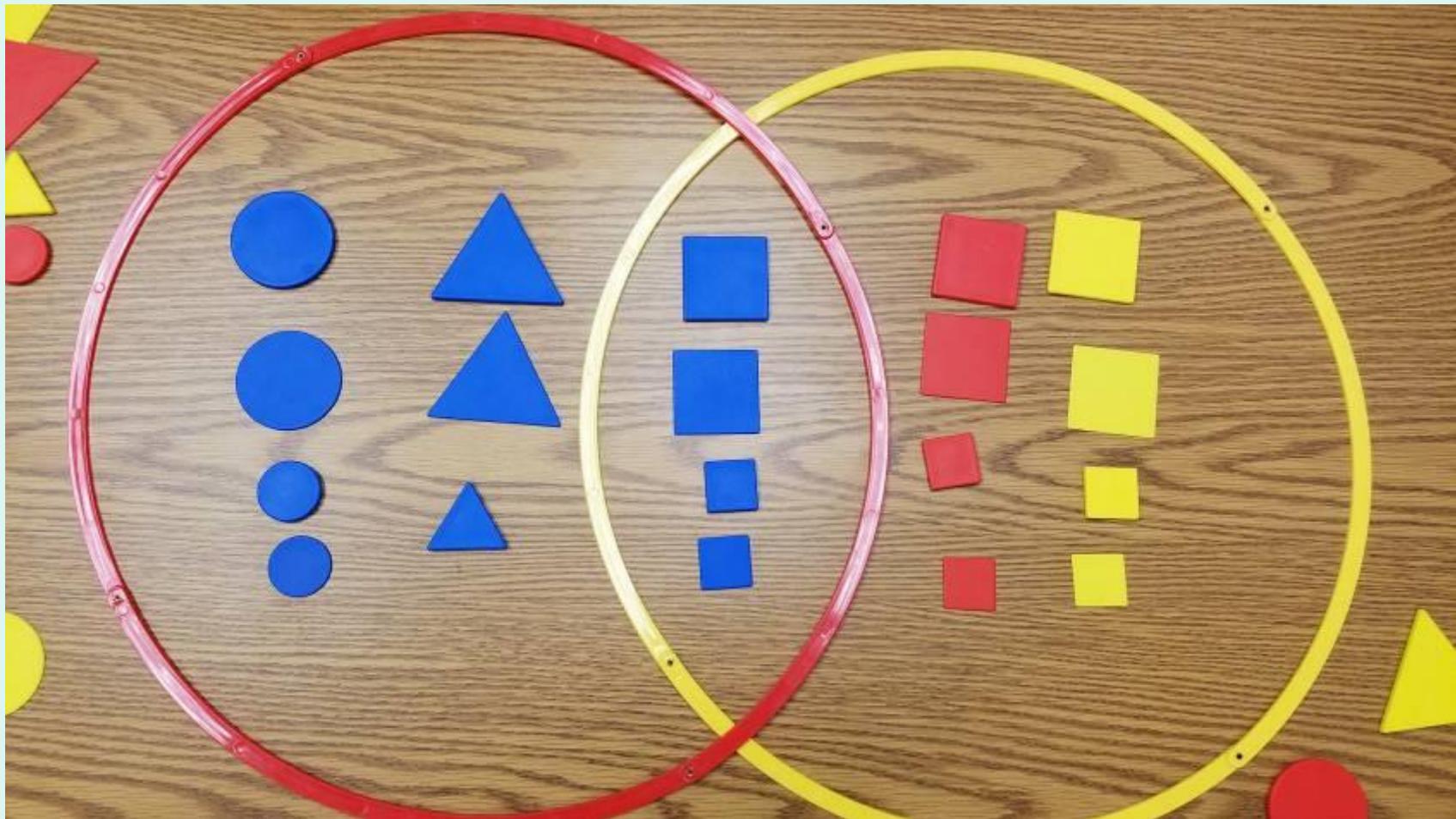
What belongs in the center?



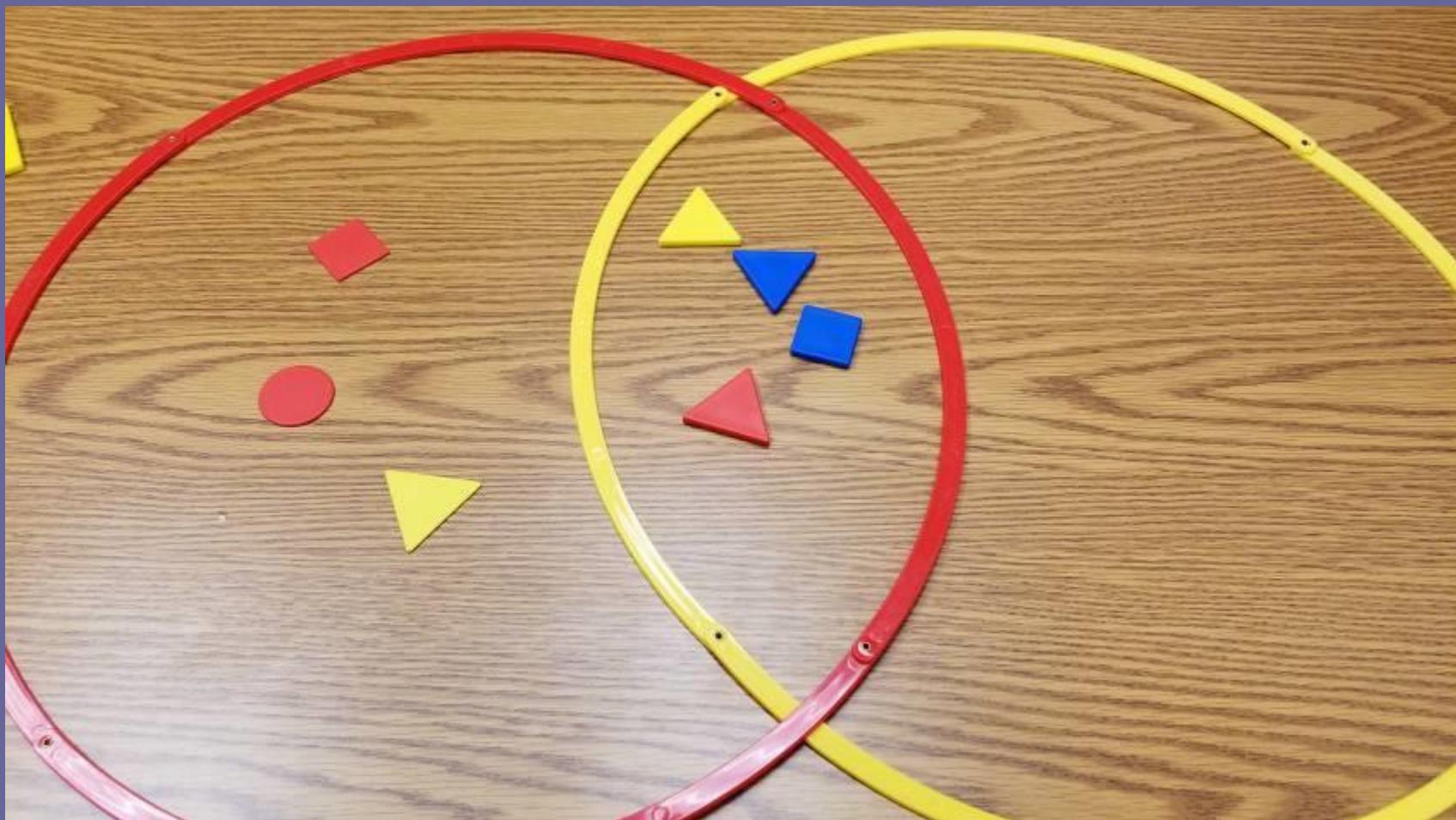
Full set?



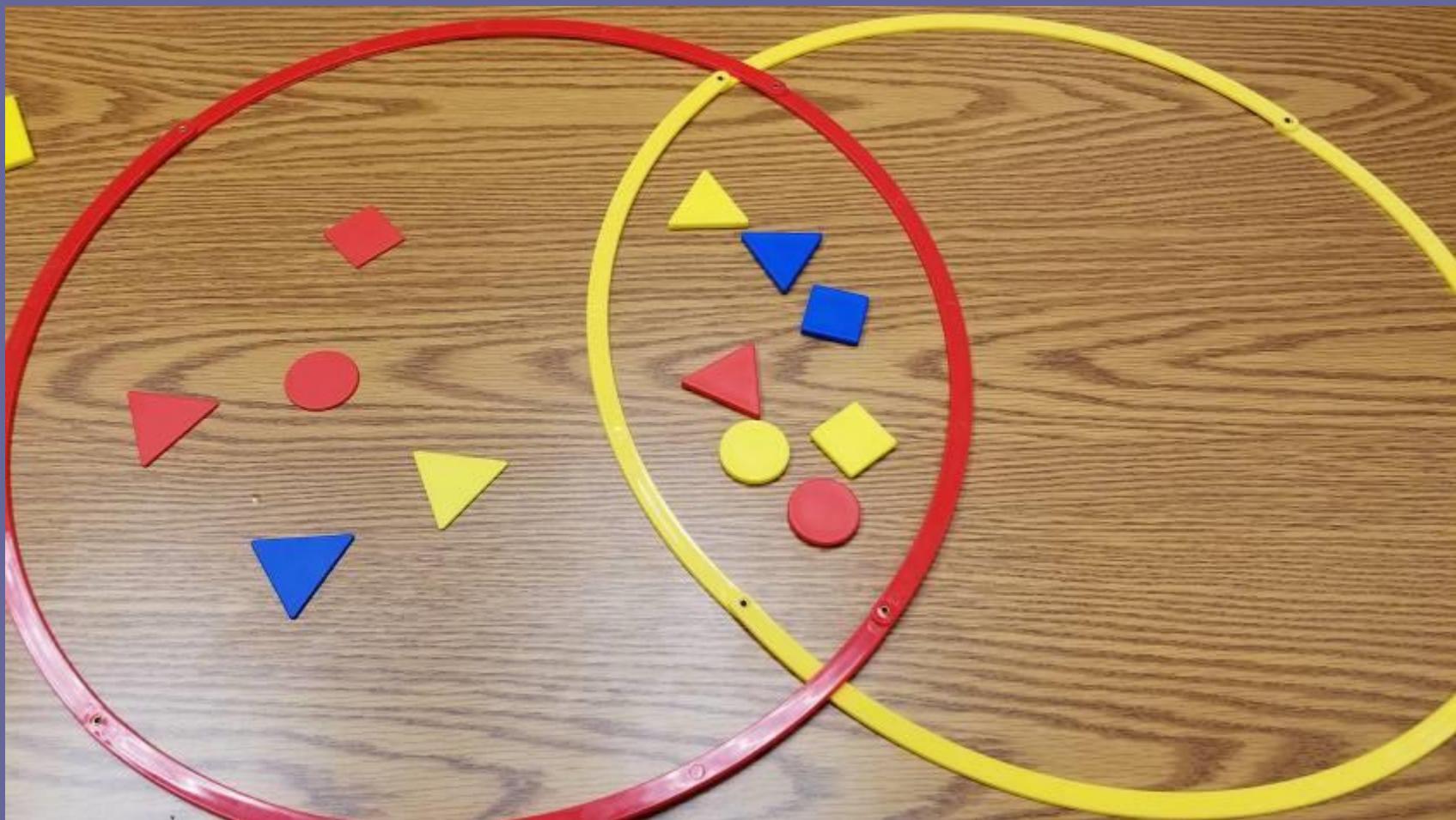
Full set?



What belongs in the yellow ring?

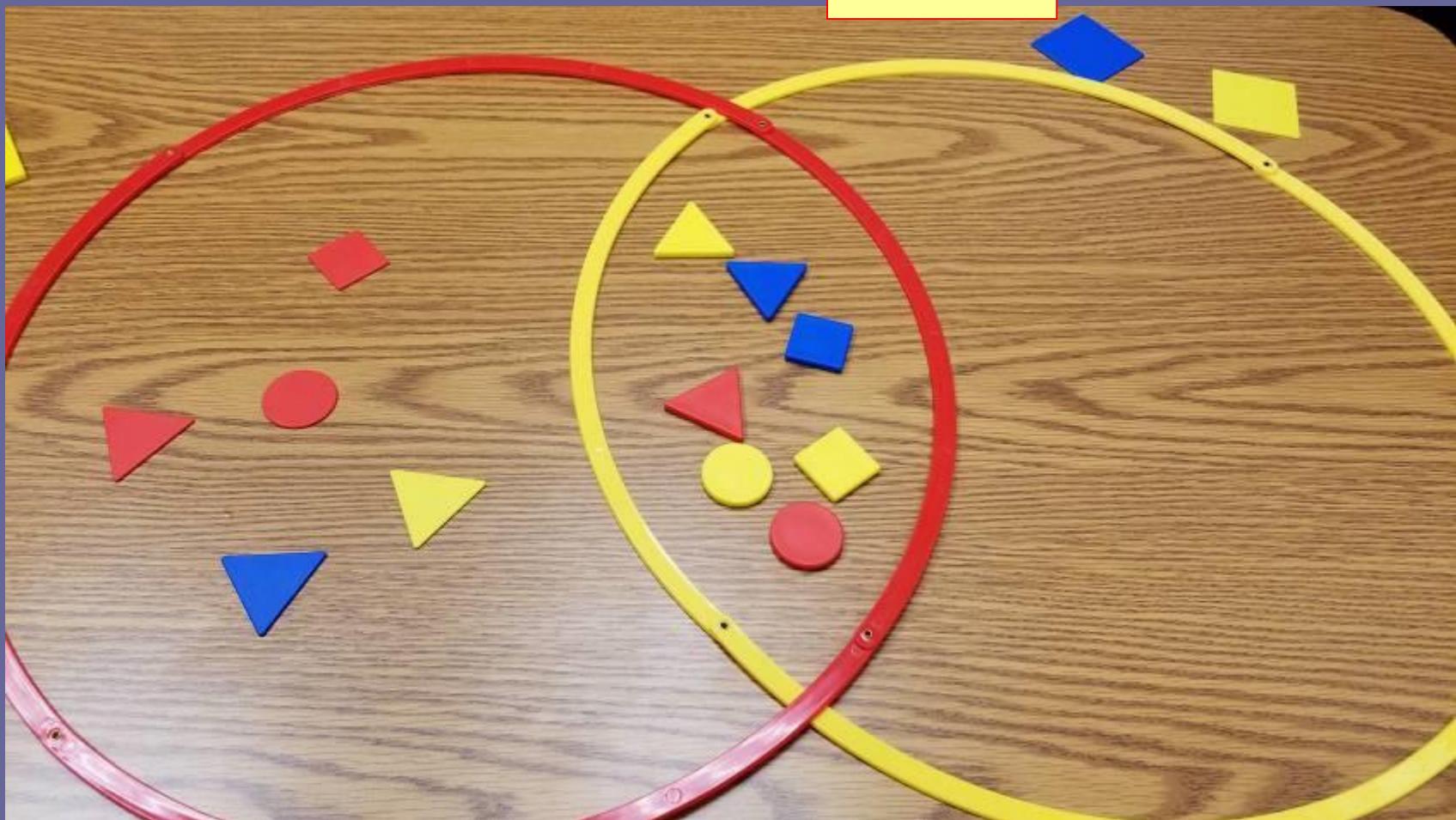


What belongs in the yellow ring?

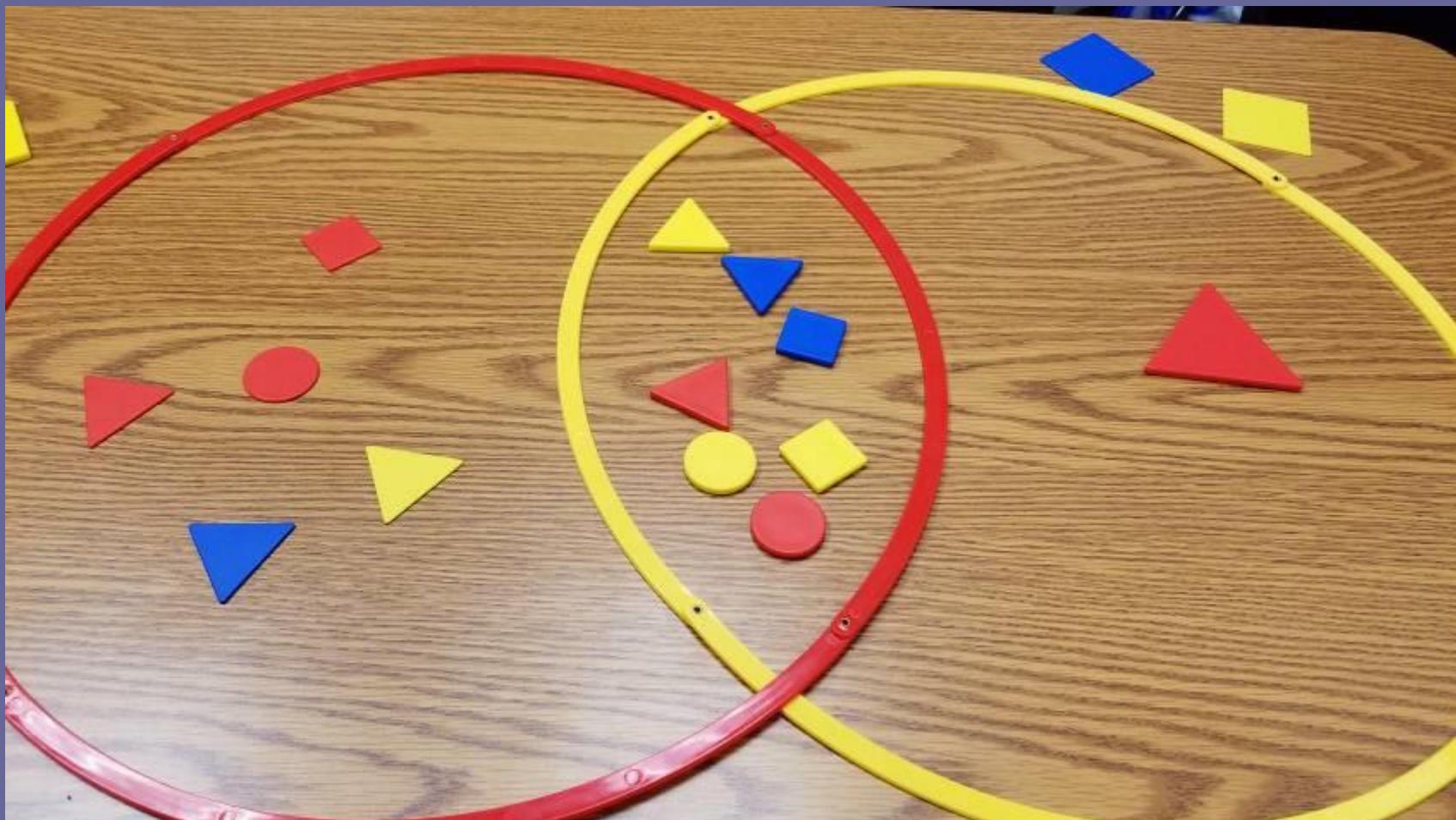


What belongs in the yellow ring?

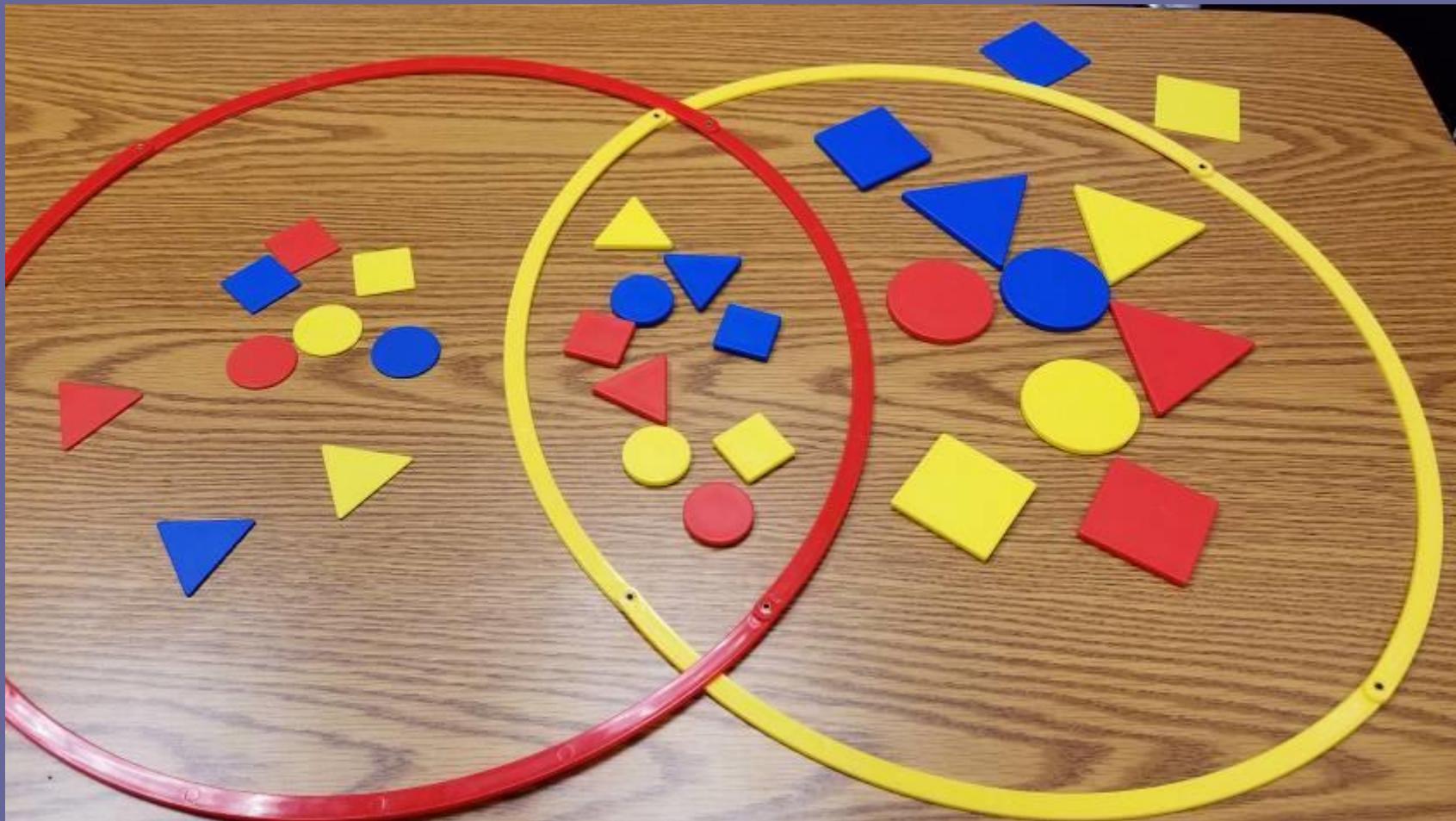
Excluded



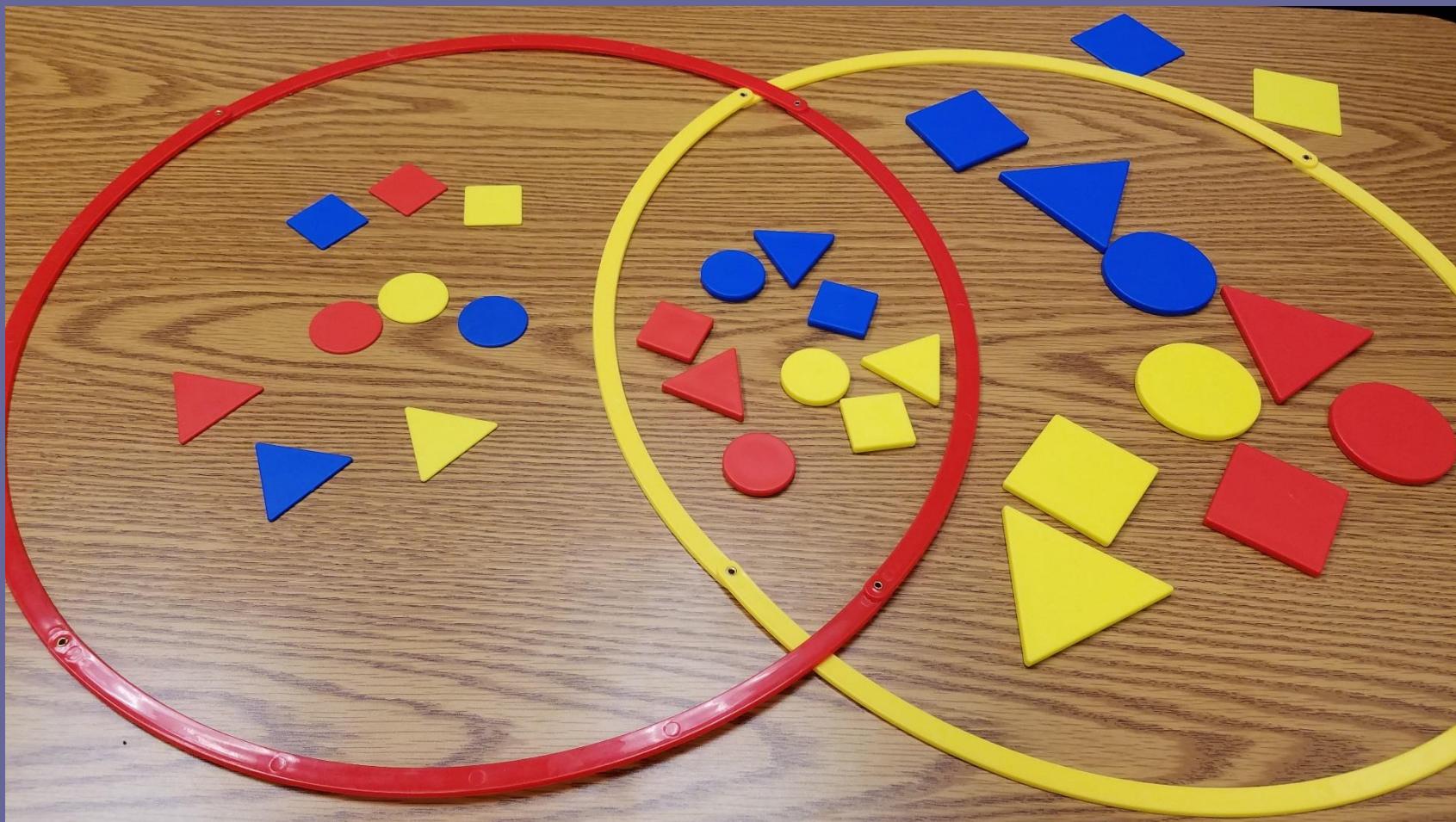
What belongs in the yellow ring?



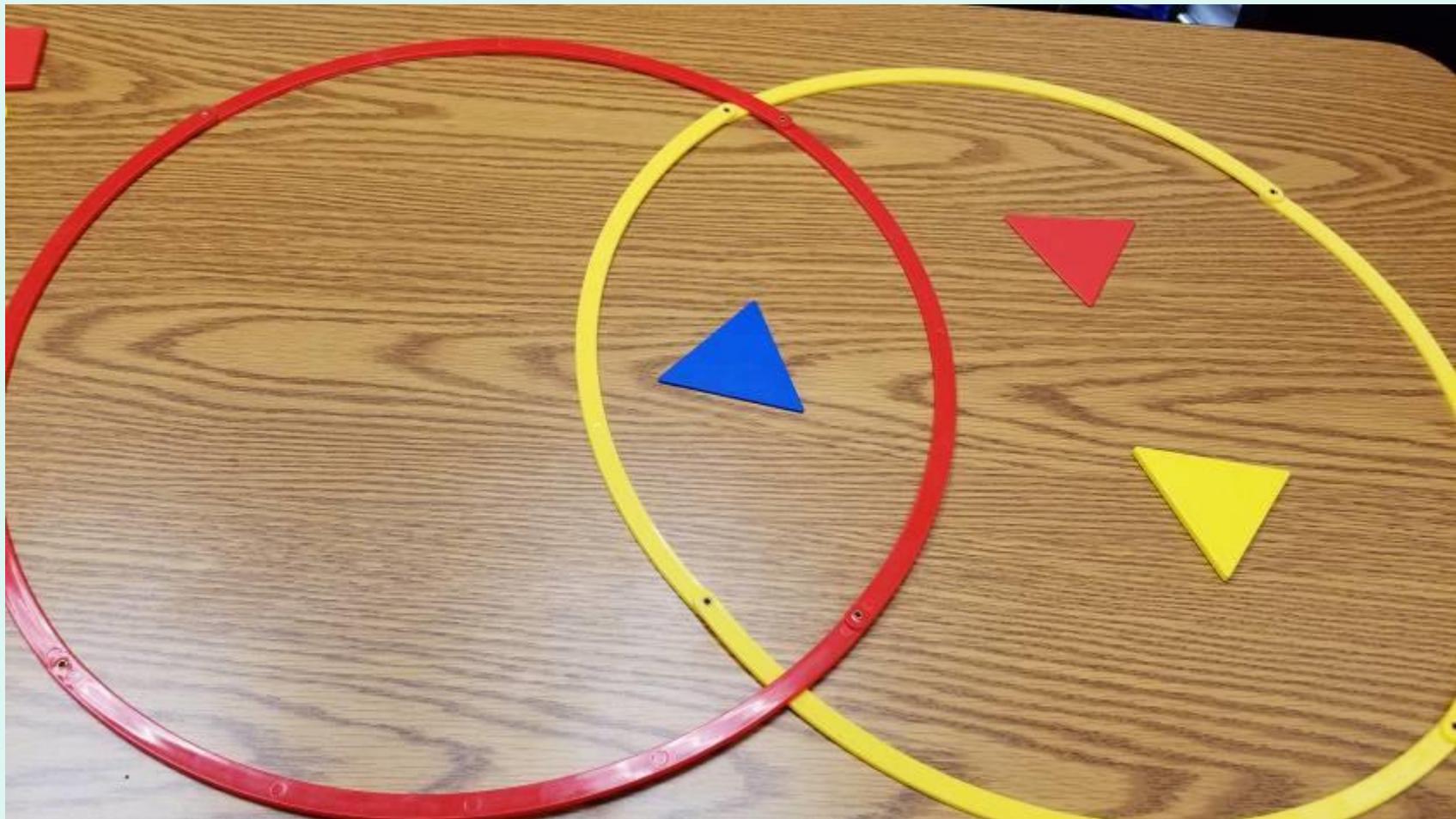
Full Set?



Full Set?

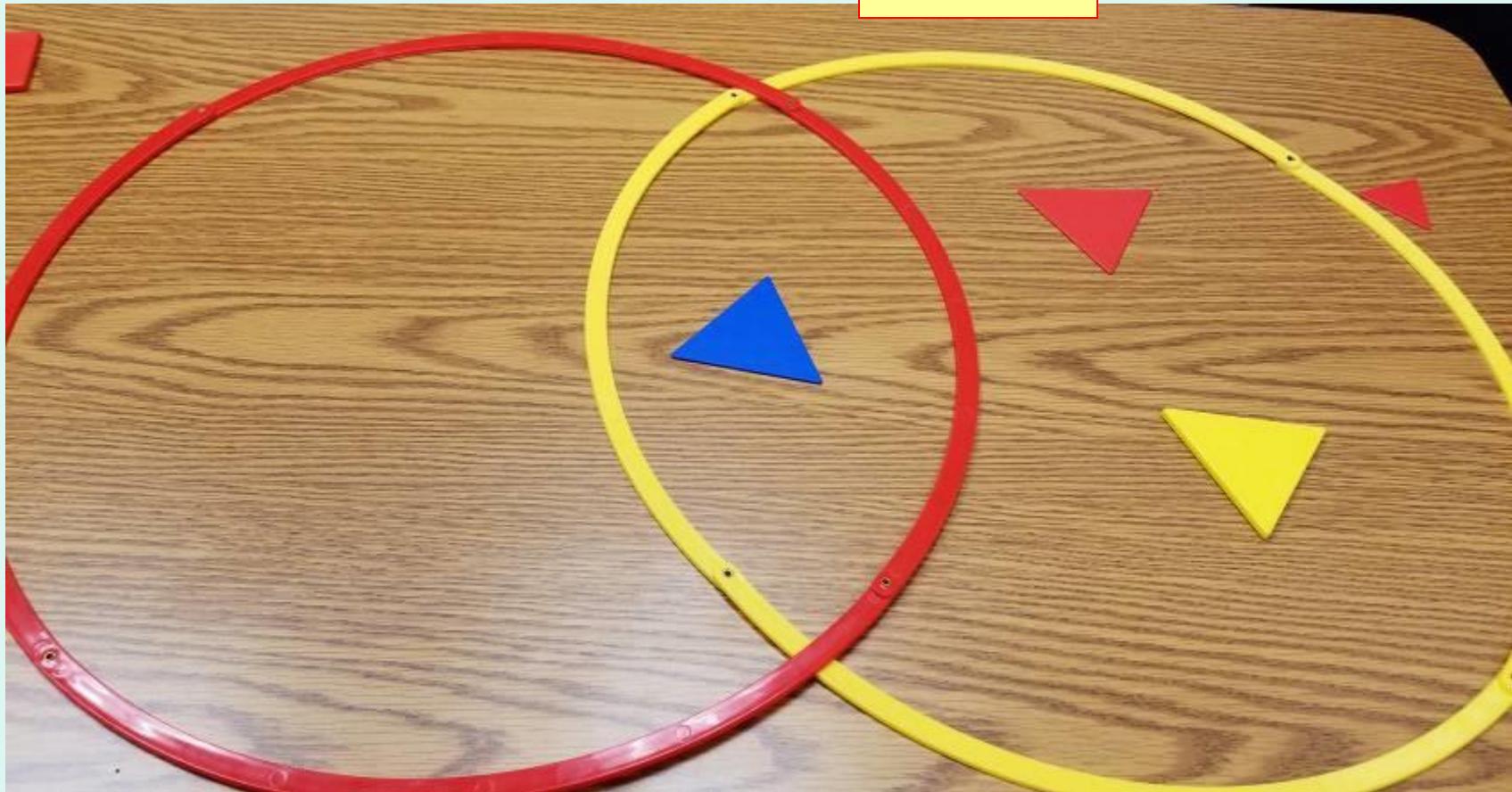


How early can you be confident about the rules?

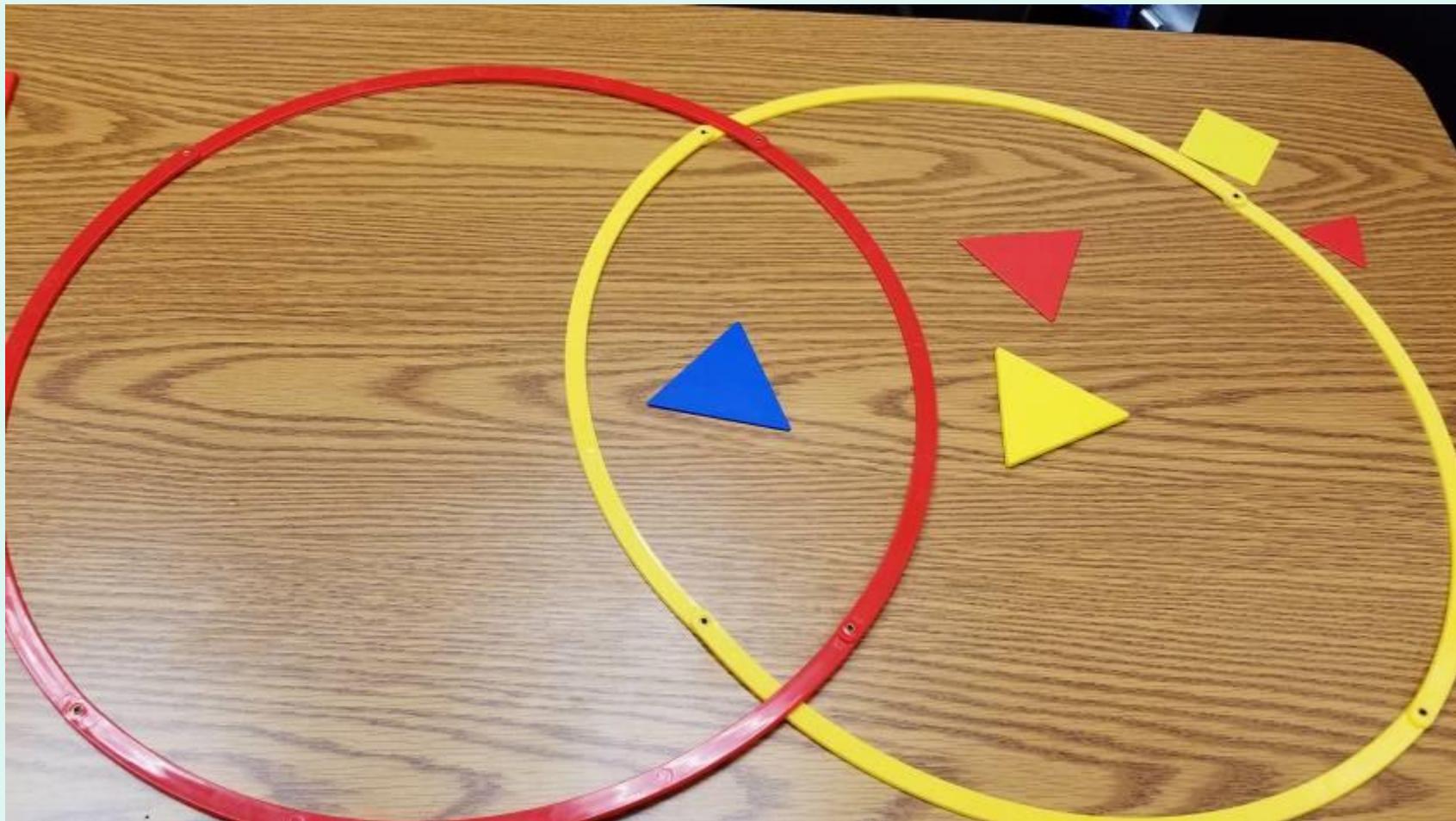


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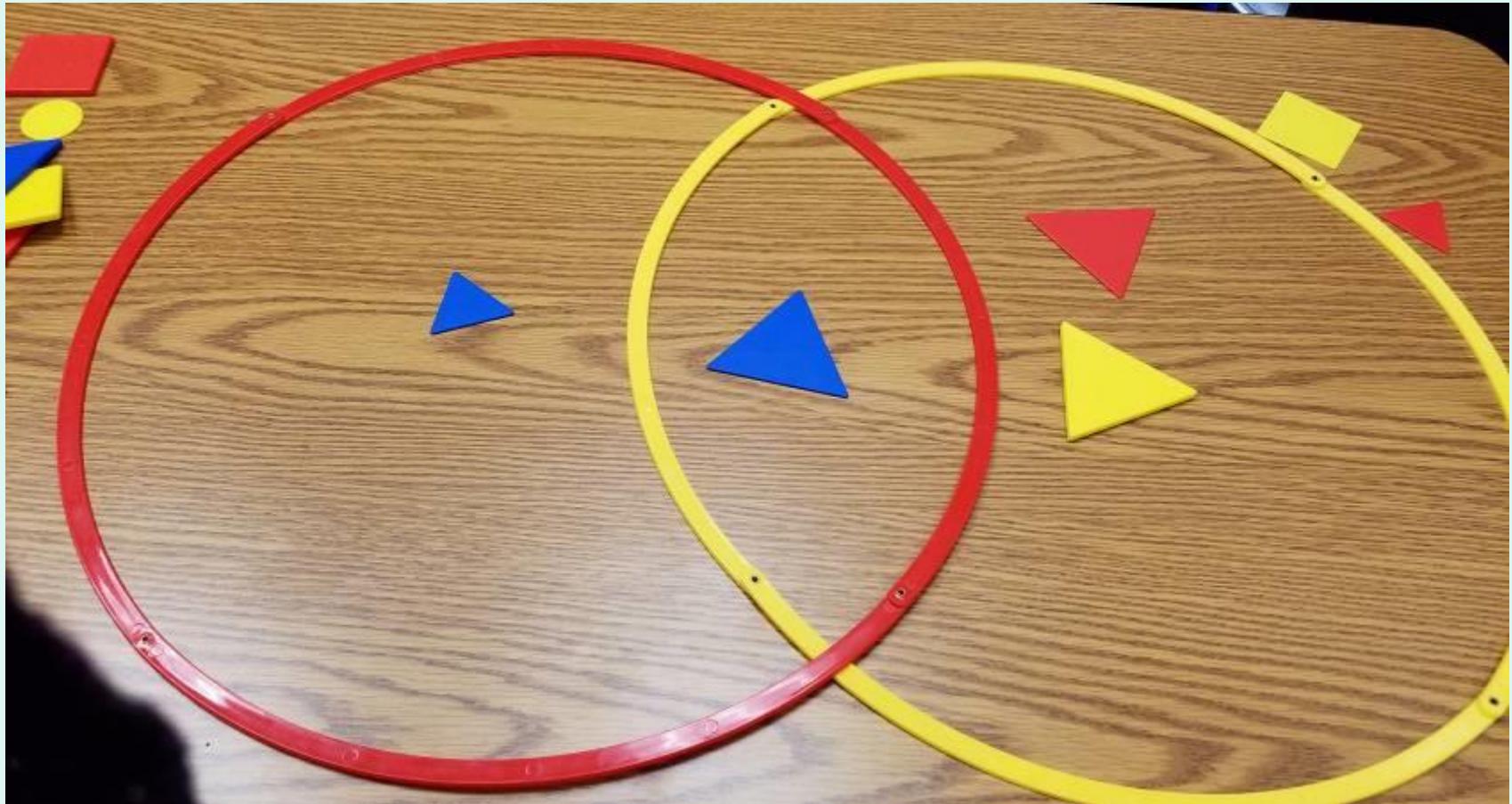
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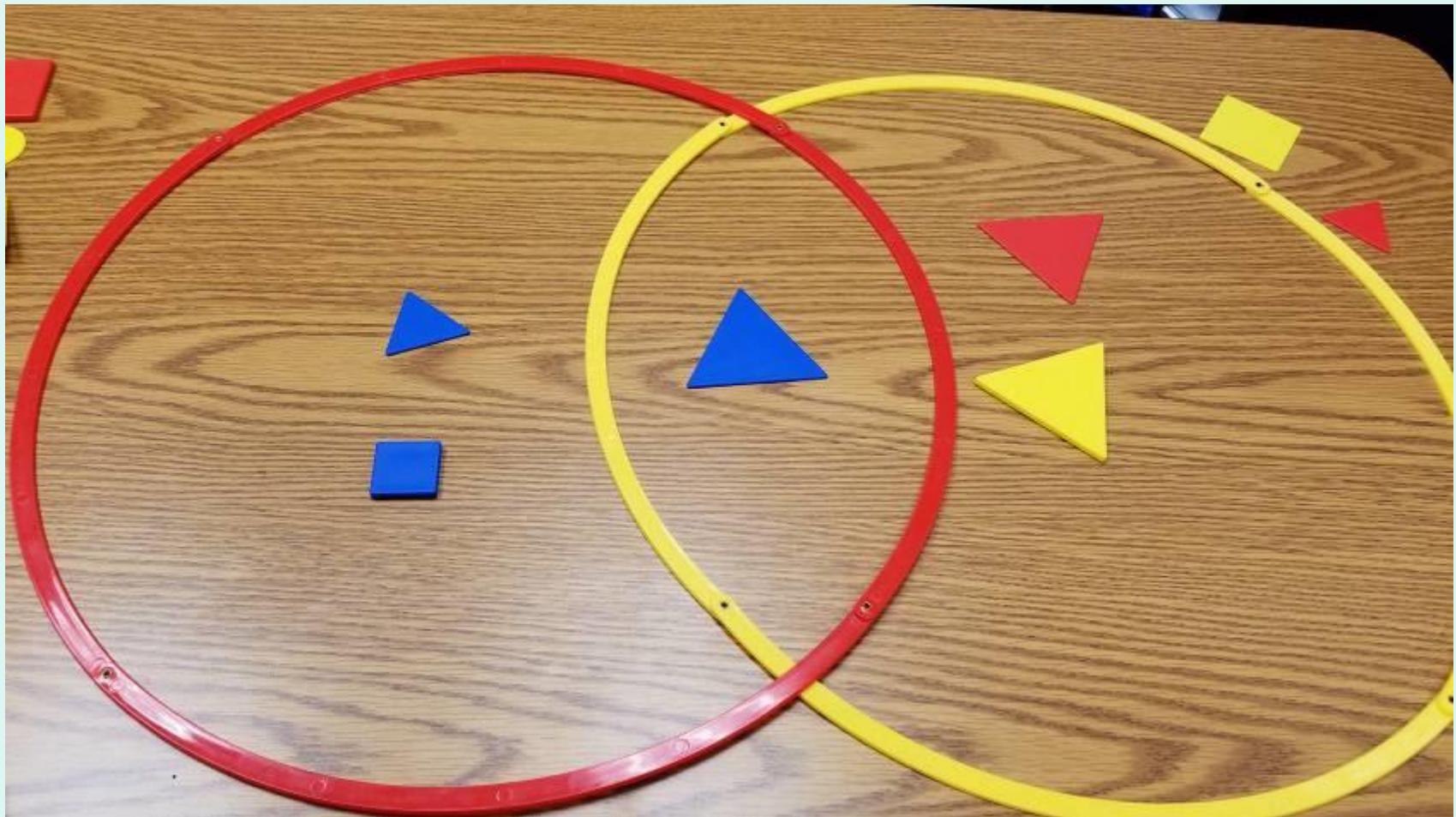
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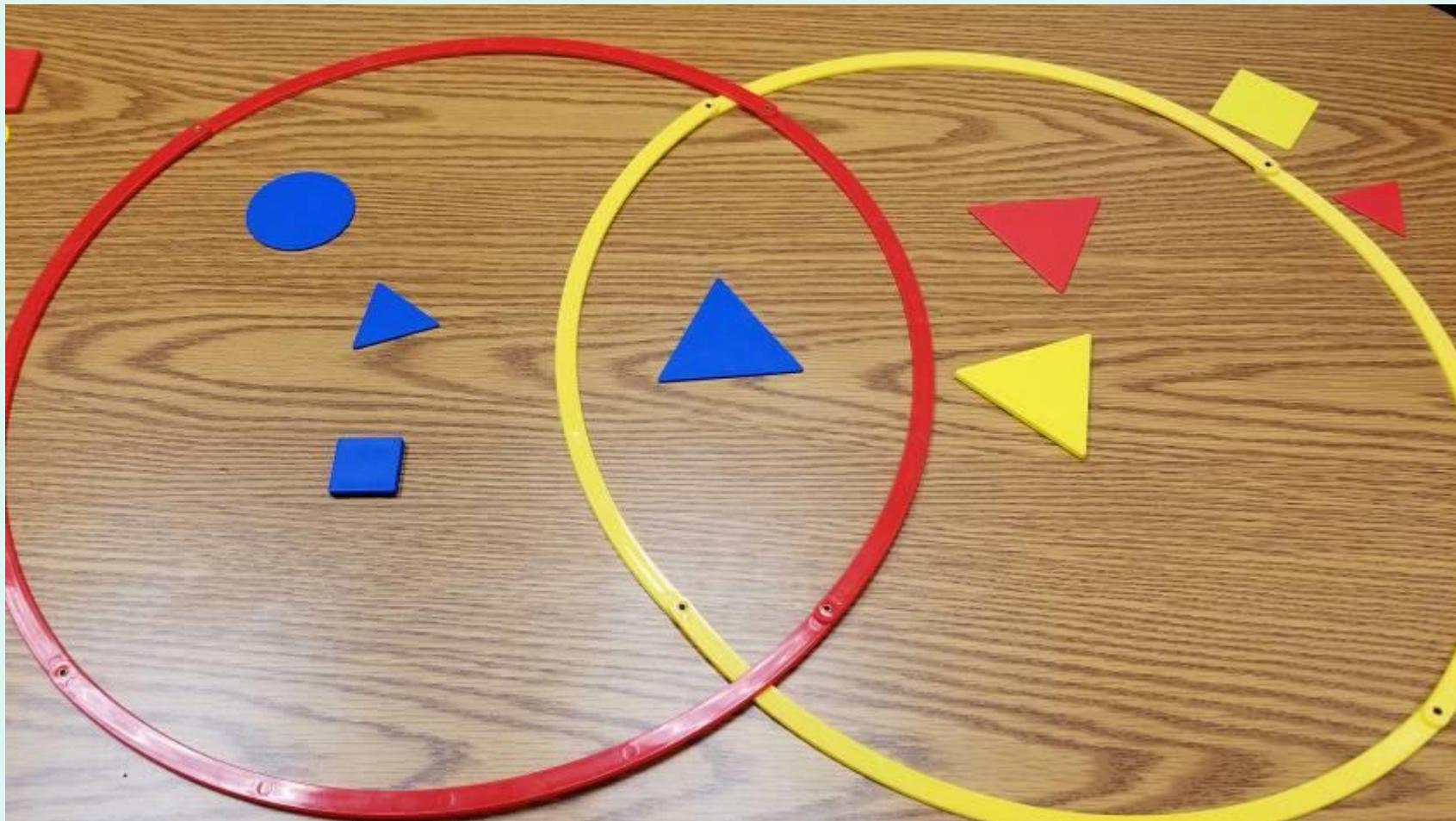
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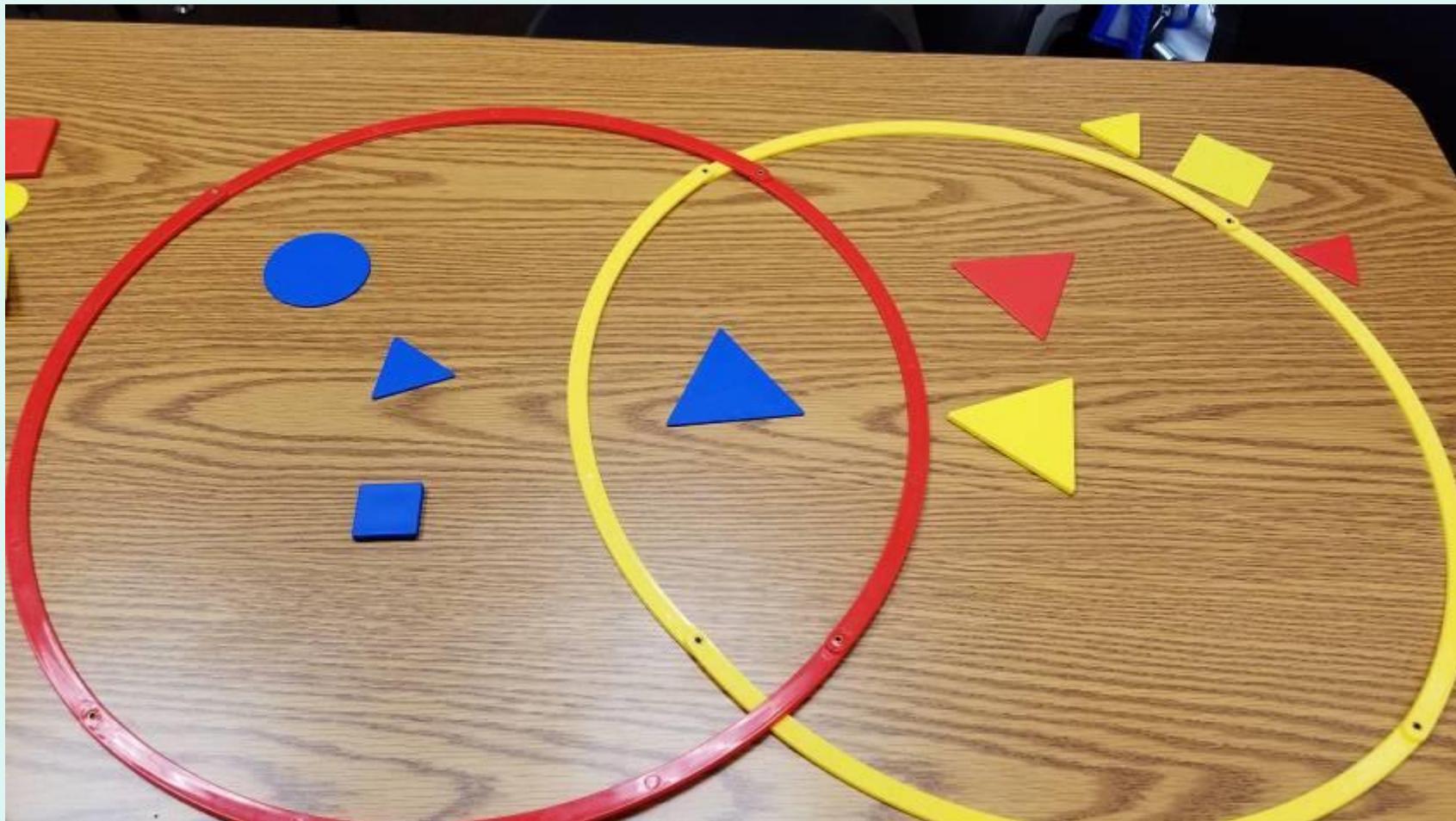
How early can you be confident about the rules?



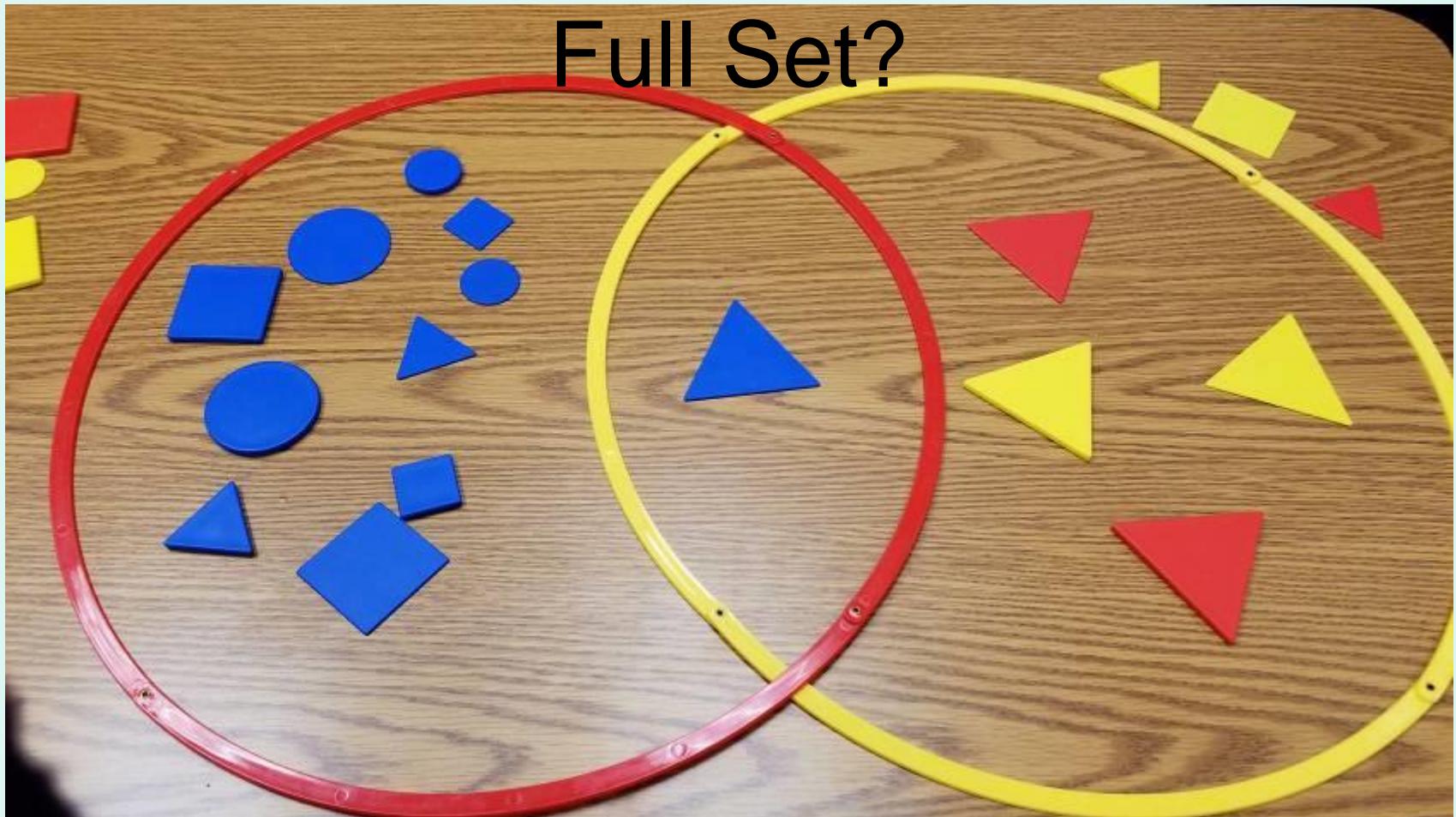
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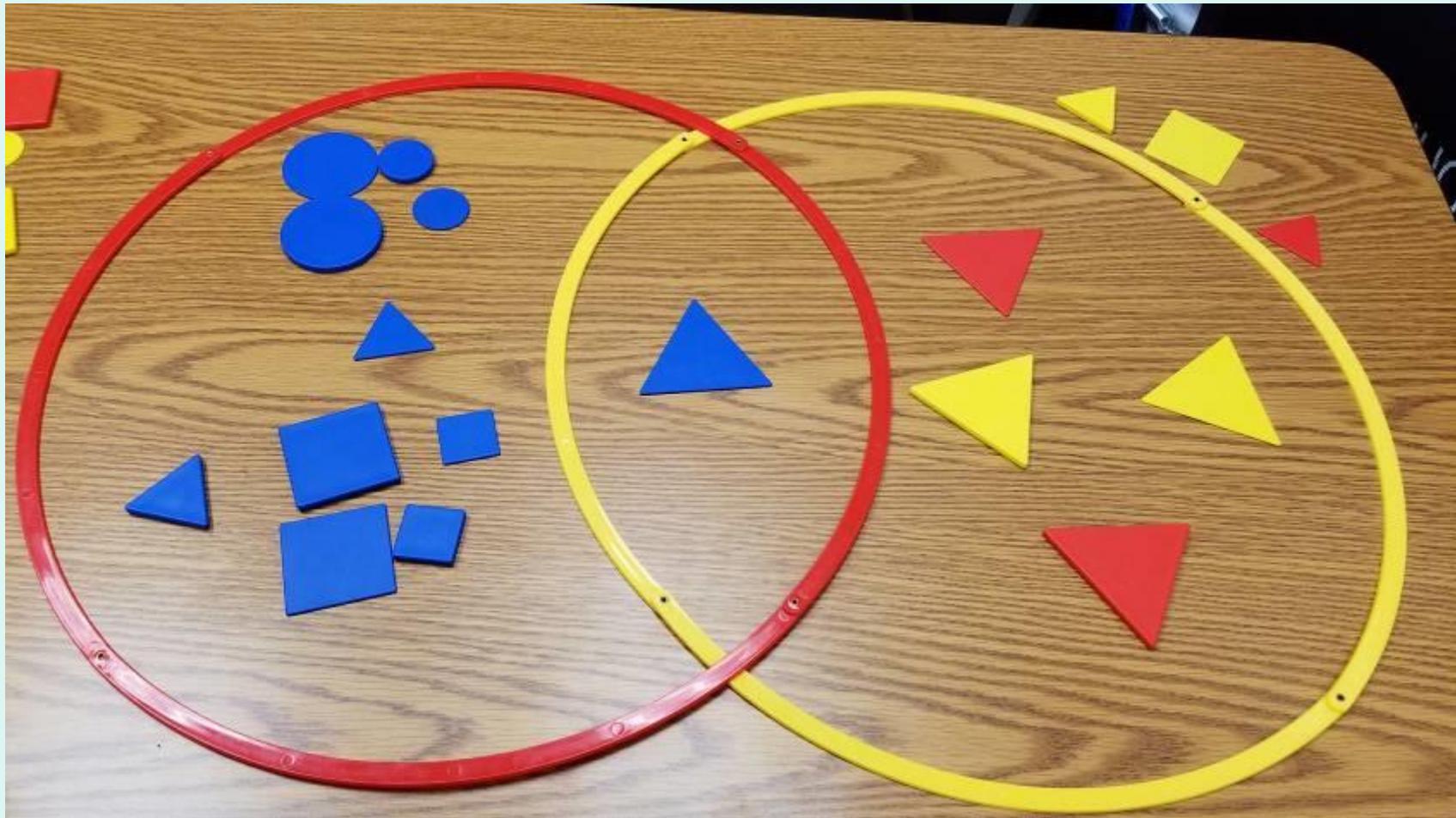
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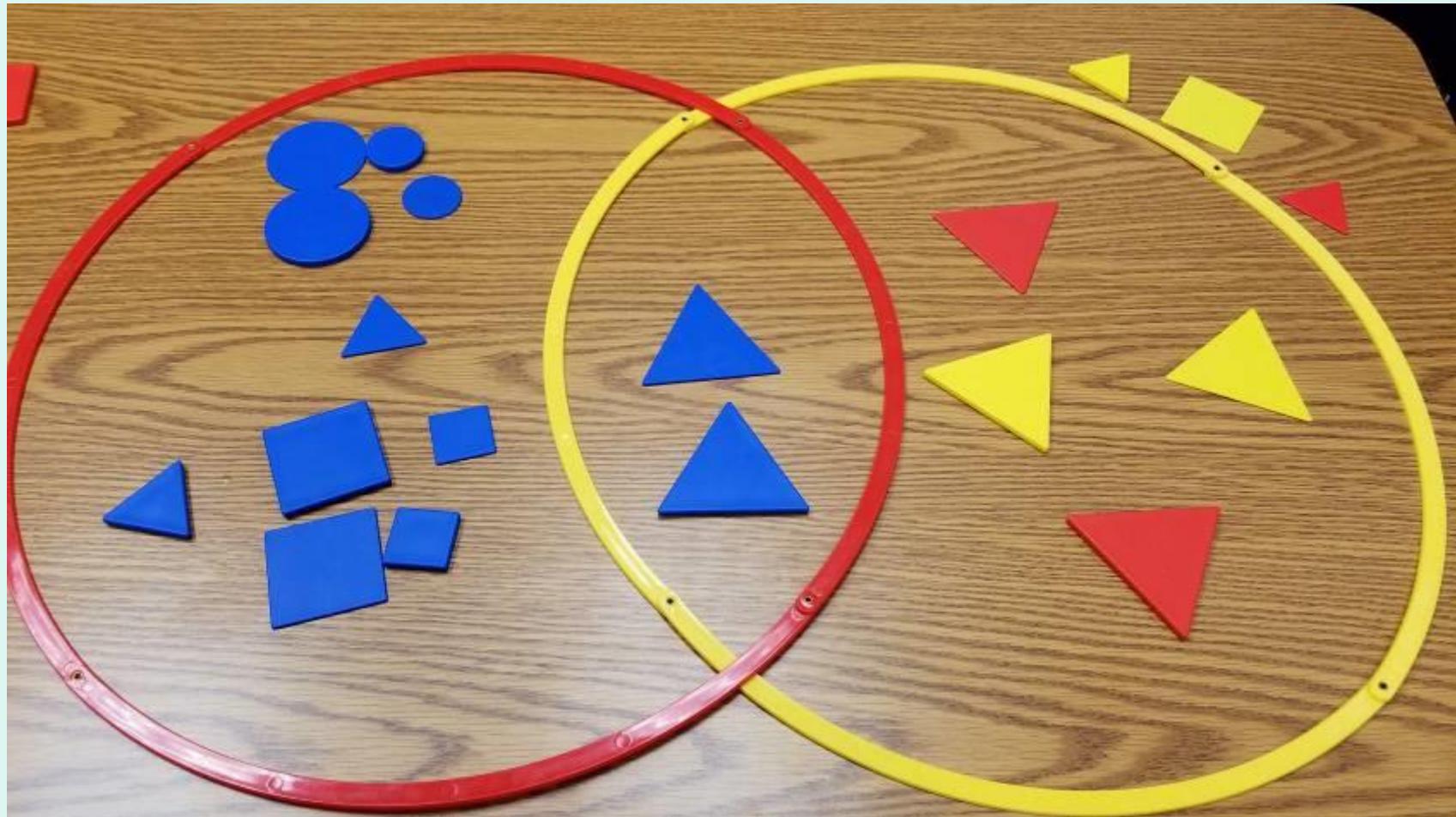
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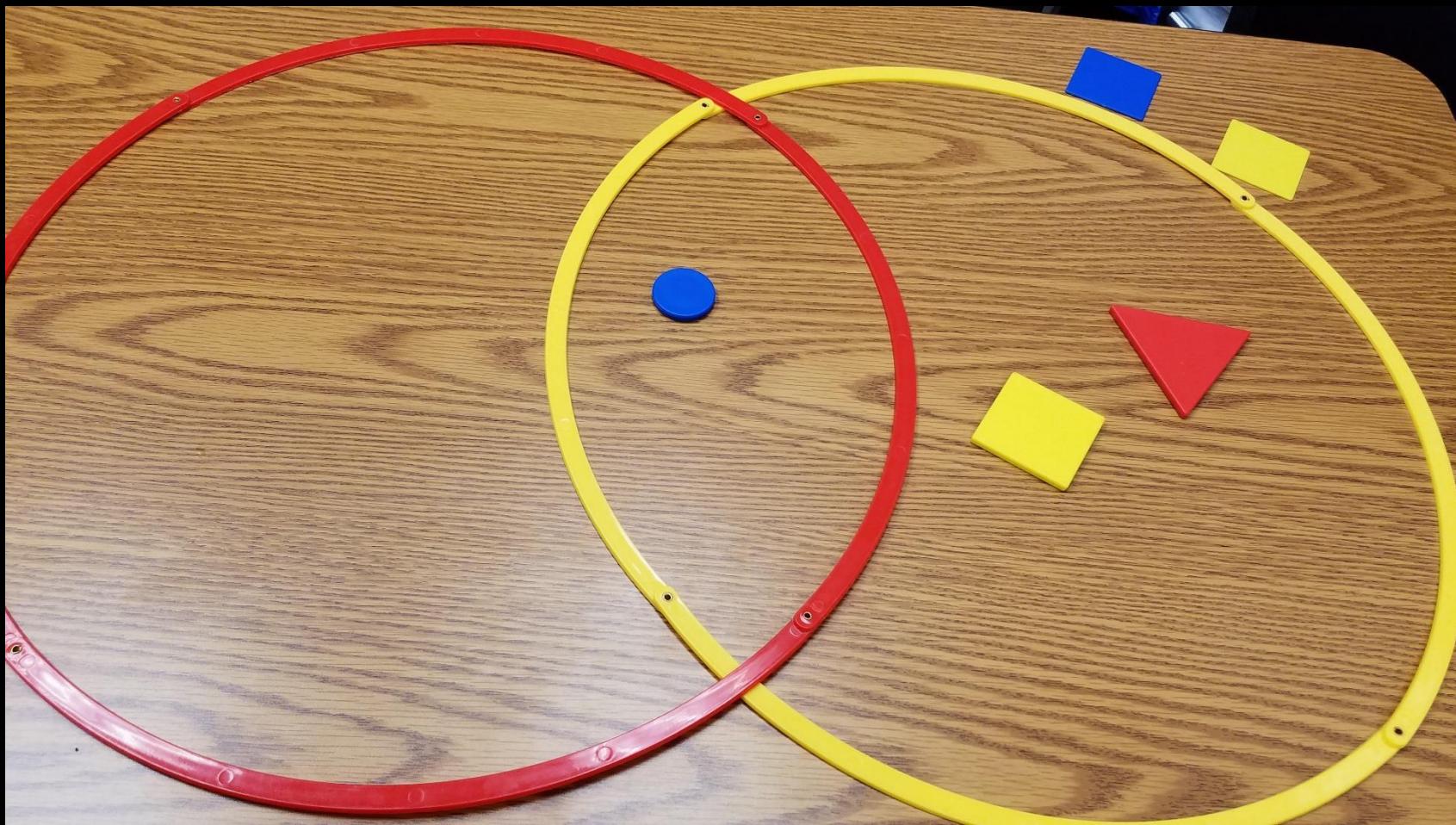
Full Set?



Full Set?

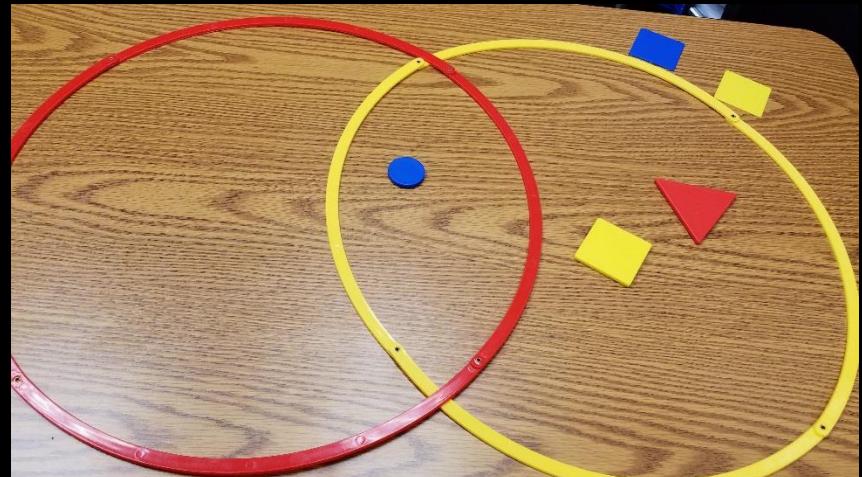


What can you deduce?

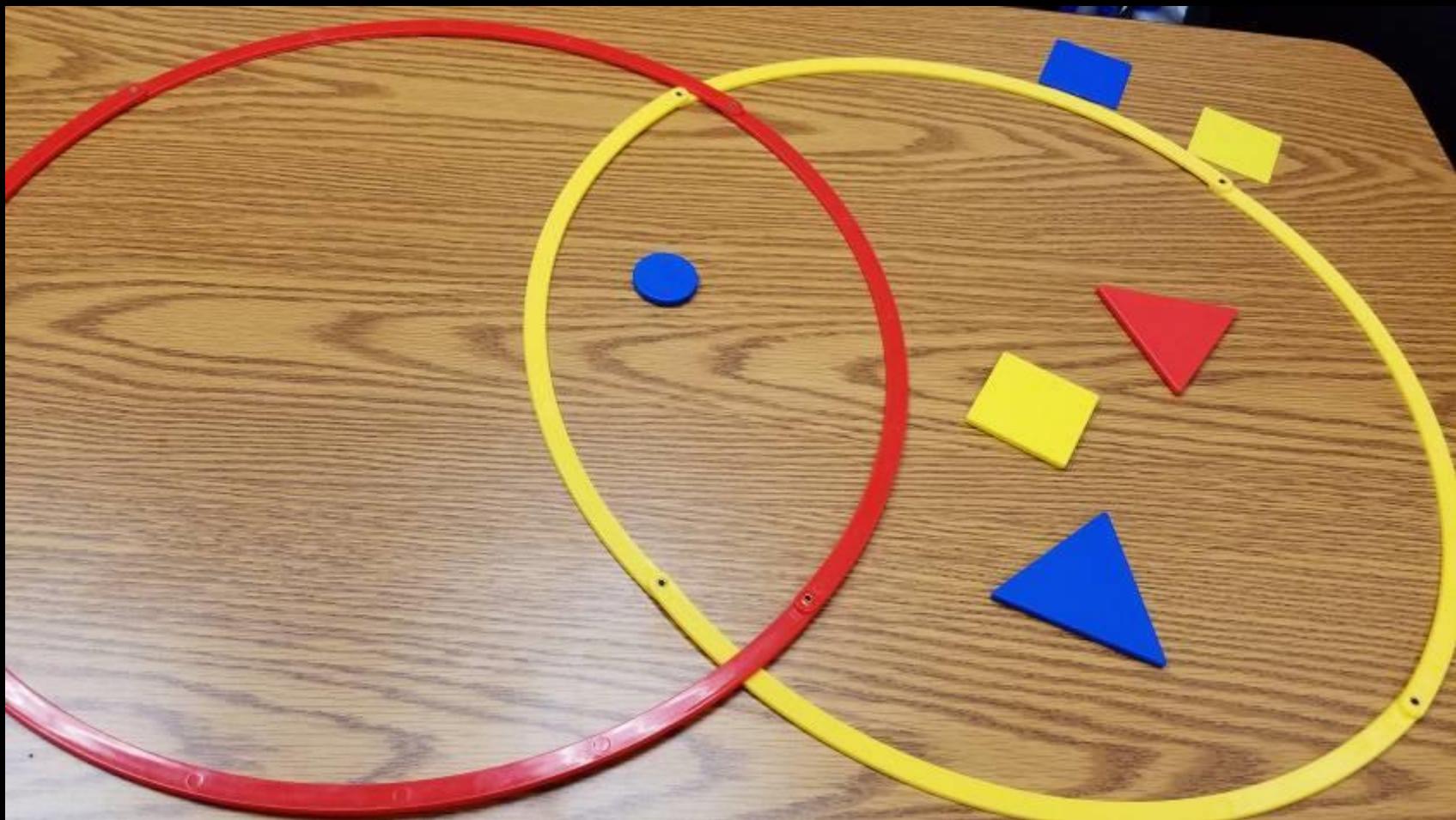


What can you deduce?

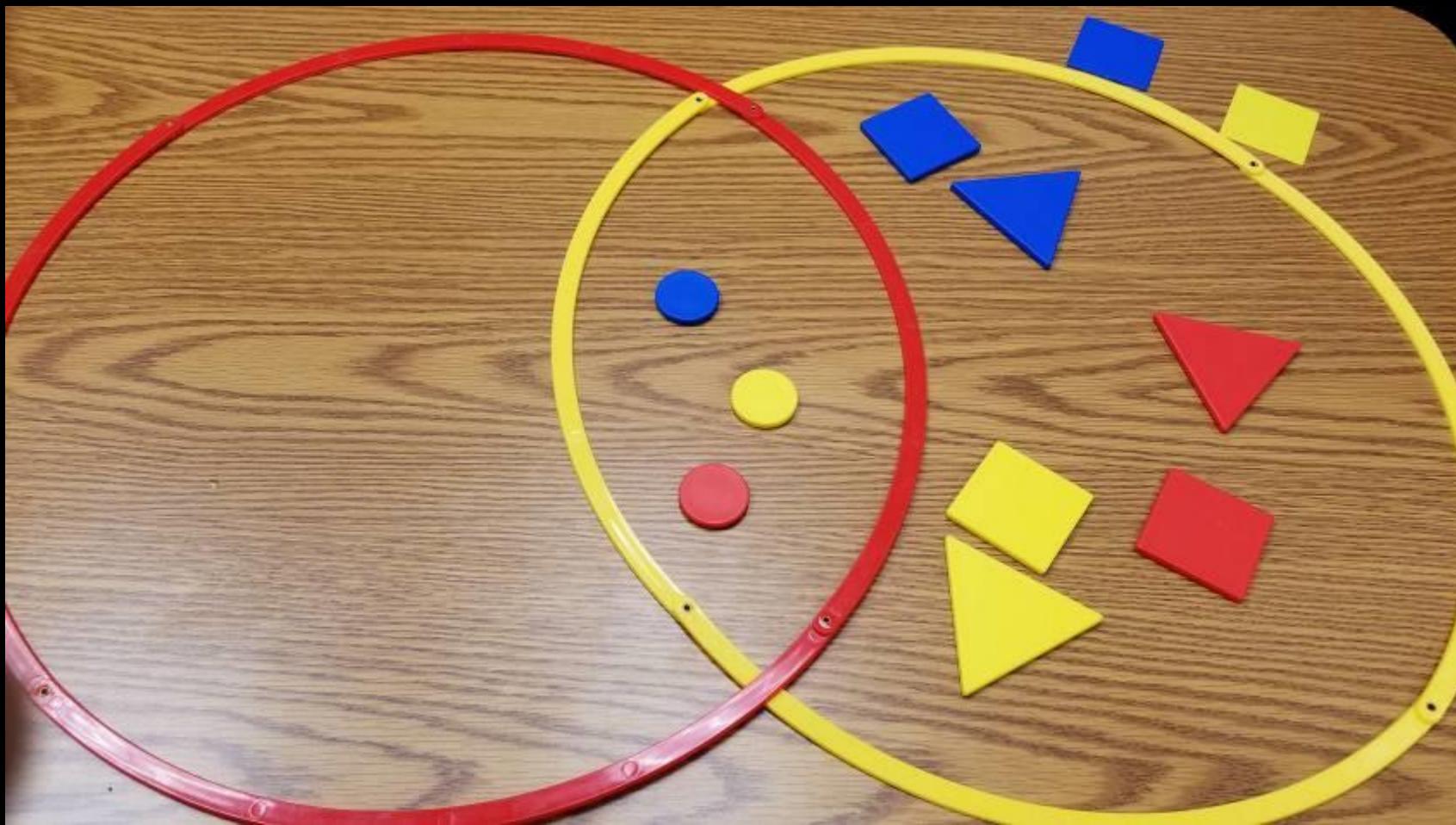
- Is this enough to determine the rule for the yellow ring?
- Why has the shape in the **middle section** been separated?
 - Blueness?
 - Circle-ness?



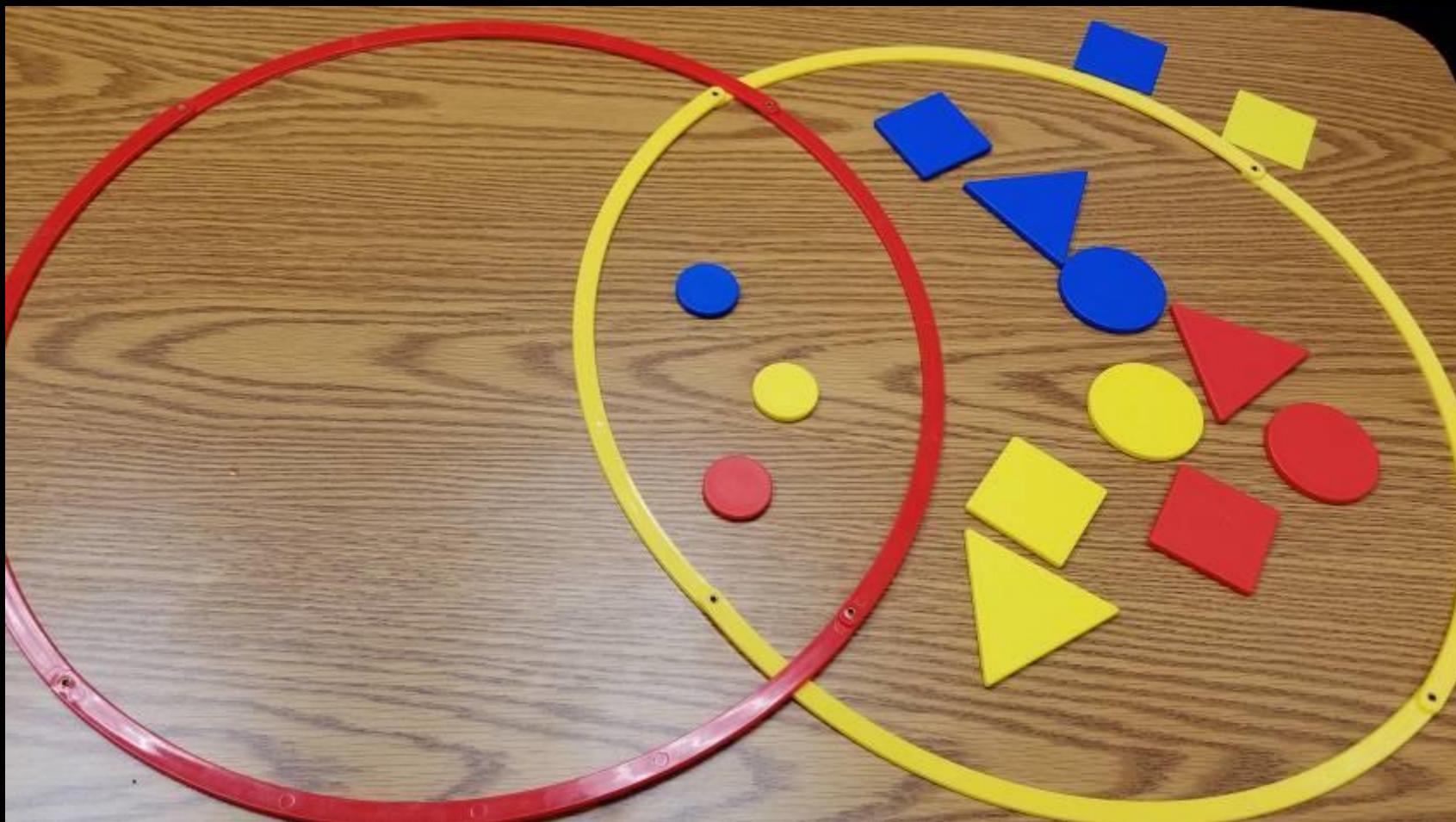
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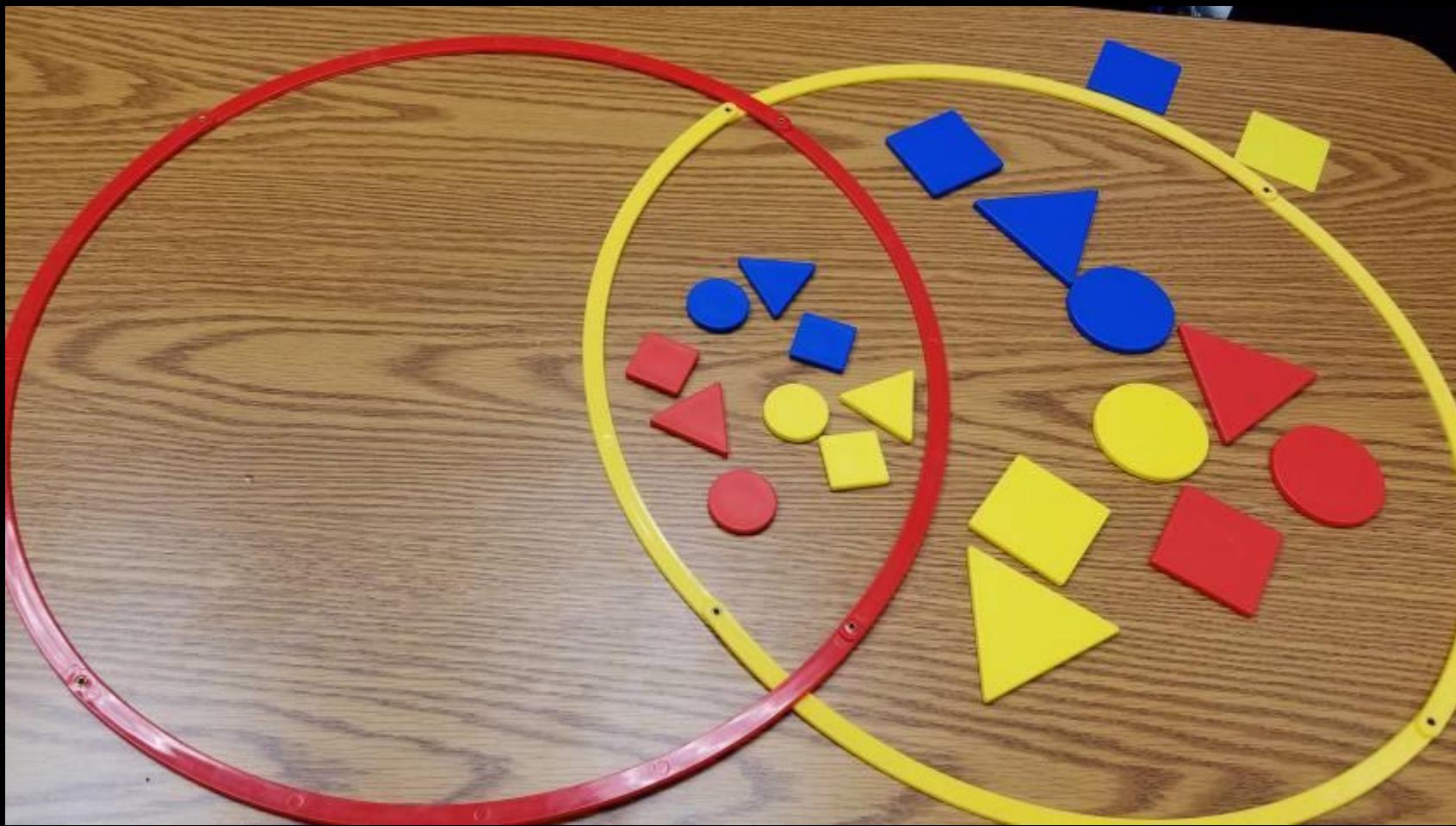
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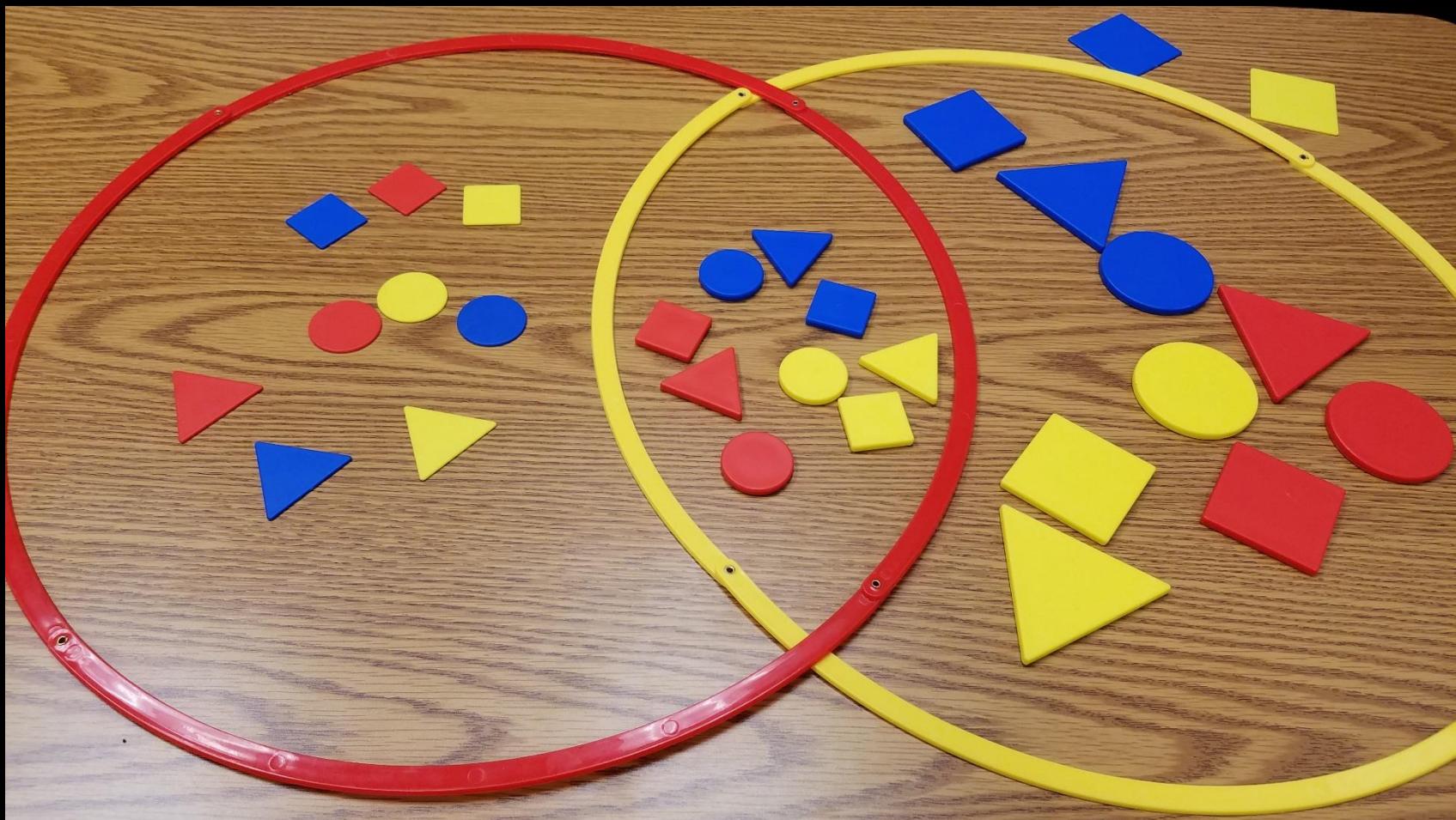
What can you deduce?



What can you deduce?



What can you deduce?



Team Learning: Central-Peripheral Integration

- The team members who were in the role of “Observer” often were able to deduce the two rules before the “Doer.”
 - This helped members appreciate how much clearer things may seem for someone with an outside vantage point.
 - This helps remind team members to provide feedback from our “outside” perspectives on others’ office roles, to support practice growth.
 - It also was a valuable reminder for us all to take a breath and step back for a moment when we need clarity:
The “Doer” also needs to be an “Observer” in order to determine the rules.
 - “Doing” without processing is like reading without comprehending.

Team Learning: Central-Peripheral Integration

- The “Doers” who were most efficient and effective in completing the sorting process *maintained an awareness for both rules.*
 - They were pro-active in looking for the pieces that matched their visual guideline.
 - They did *not* assess the pieces one item at a time.
 - The other team members learned that a big-picture mindset could be more efficient than tunneling one’s attention on one item at a time.

Team Learning: Central-Peripheral Integration

- The most interesting Team Learning: Being the “Teacher” was *extremely challenging!*
 - When the Team members took on the role of Teacher, they were all unable to maintain the Rules in their own minds on the first time out...
 - Or 2nd, 3rd, even 4th...
 - The “cheat sheet” did not help. If it was not “in mind,” mistakes were made!
 - Two team members coordinated to try to come up with a challenging, valid set of rules, and to give the proper instructions on where to place each piece.
 - *This duo had to go “back to the drawing board” 3 times before they were able to create a proper set of rules.*
- The Team gained a greater appreciation for what it takes to Maintain awareness over a broad domain while remaining attentive to details.
 - When the Team-Teacher made errors, both Observers and the Doer were able to spot the rule-inconsistencies.
- This exercise helped to reinforce all Team Members’ roles in supporting the Team as a whole. We are all fallible, and we all can benefit from mutual oversight on our respective domains.

Summary

- The visual system is pervasive throughout all spheres of our activity.
- Vision Therapy activities can help hone skills both individually and collectively.
- Providing a group of individuals with a novel, challenging, non-threatening visual experience can help strengthen communication skills and self-awareness, while enriching appreciation for one another's strengths and differences in perception.
- All of this serves to build a collective bond and cohesiveness among team members, which directly supports both office harmony and practice growth.

Discussion Welcome!

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