Chasing Shapes

**Introduction:** When learning about shapes and solids in math class, students usually memorize the number of sides a shape has, the number of vertices a shape has, the dimensions of a shape, etc. This activity combines learning these attributes of shapes and solids with a simple yet fast-paced physical game.

**Grade Level and Subject:** Fifth Grade Math and P.E.

**TEKS:**
- Math 7A, 7B
- P.E. 1B, 1C, 1L, 3A, 7A, 7B, 7C

**Materials:** chalk (optional)

**Resource:** *201 Games for the Elementary Physical Education Program* by Jerry D. Poppen. ISBN: 0-13-042061-1

**Activity:** After a careful study of the attributes of shapes and solids, the teacher should take the students out to the playground or to the gym. If possible, the teacher should mark a large circle on the ground or gym floor with chalk. This circle should be large enough that all students can sit comfortably on part of the circle without being crowded.

The teacher should begin by giving each student an attribute (or more than one attribute, depending on class size) of a shape or solid. For example, he or she might say to the student, “You have four right angles, four vertices, and four sides.” The students are responsible for remembering their particular attributes. The students might want to have a small piece of paper that they can write their attributes on before the game begins, which will depend on the class size (students in smaller classes will have more attributes to remember) and the students’ ability to retain information.

The teacher begins by calling out a shape, such as a square. Any student with an attribute of a square should get up and run around the outside of the circle to get back to his or her position on the circle. Also, the students who are racing around the circle should try to tag the other students who are also racing around the circle. Tagged or not, all students should place themselves back at the spot where they began the game. Each student is responsible for keeping track of how many times he or she was tagged. At the end of the game, the students who were tagged the least are the winners of the game.

Some options would be for the teacher to give new attributes to the students at some point during the game. Also, the students can run two laps around the circle instead of one lap.

**Evaluation:** The teacher should be able to determine which students need additional instruction with attributes of shapes and solids by the students’ confusion during game play. The teacher can give reinforcement during game time or choose to give additional instruction in the classroom.