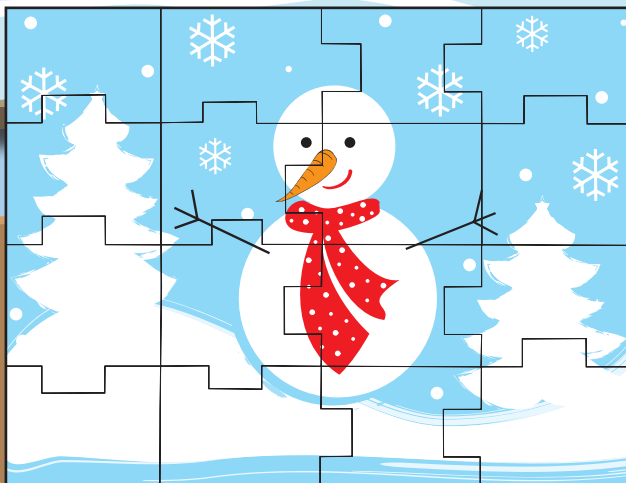


WINTER

CRAFTS AND GAMES



WINTER CRAFTS AND GAMES



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NATURE TIC-TAC-TOE



By Beth Levin



Use sticks and stones to create a game of tic-tac-toe! This twist on a usually-indoor activity is a great way to get your kids moving outside as they hunt for materials to make the game.

What You Need:

- Collection of twigs and pebbles from outside
- Scissors
- Twist ties (the kind that come with garbage bags)
- Optional: Acrylic paint and paintbrushes or permanent markers

What You Do:

1. Have your child go outside to collect twigs, sticks, driftwood and small round pebbles or stones. He will need at least four big sticks of about the same length, 10 smaller sticks (about three inches in length), and around ten pebbles or stones. The stones should be smooth and somewhat round in shape.
2. After he has collected materials, help him create an outdoorsy tic-tac-toe game. He can arrange the four long sticks in a tic-tac-toe grid pattern.
3. Have him use the twist ties to bind the sticks together at the four points where they meet in the grid. He should wrap one twist tie around each intersection point.
4. For the tic-tac-toe X's, he can cross two smaller sticks in an 'X' shape and attach them together with a twist tie; have him repeat to create several more X's. He could also use some pebbles and paint (or write with permanent marker) an X on five of the pebbles.



5. If he used sticks as X's, have him use plain pebbles as O's. If he used pebbles as X's, he'll want to label some other pebbles as O's by painting or writing an 'O' on them.
6. Now he can play tic-tac-toe with a parent or friend! Most kids know the rules for this game, but a parent can review them if needed. He may wish to store his game in a plastic zipper bag, perfect for bringing the game along on outdoor picnics or camping trips. Or, even as a way to bring the outdoors in!



ICE BALLOONS

By Sue Bradford Edwards



Capture a bit of magic with these mesmerizing ice balloons! Made from just water and food coloring, these colorful creations are simple, cheap, and absolutely beautiful.

What You Need:

- Water balloons
- Food coloring
- Old towels
- Cookie sheet
- Freezer
- Bucket
- Scissors
- Old clothes
- Watering can with a narrow spout (optional)

What You Do:

1. Make sure both you and your child are wearing old clothes. This project can get messy!
2. Carefully help your child put one drop of food coloring into her first balloon. Work the food coloring as far into the balloon as possible.
3. Have her fill the balloon with water; a watering can or a small funnel might help. Watch for any leaks. Any leaky balloons need to be thrown away.
4. Once the balloon is filled, let your child tie the end into a knot.
5. Have her place the filled balloon on the cookie sheet.
6. Help her repeat this process with more balloons.

7. When she's satisfied with the number of balloons she has, have her place the filled cookie sheet in the freezer.
8. Wait for the balloons to freeze.
9. Have your child slip the frozen balloons into a bucket.
10. Move the project outdoors. That way when her frozen balloons start melting, dyed water won't seep into your carpets or floors.
11. Discard any balloon that ruptured inside the freezer.
12. Let your child use scissors to cut off the knot from each balloon.
13. Gently help her roll off the balloon material, revealing the beautiful, frozen orbs beneath!
14. Have your child decide what she wants to do with her icy creations. She can set them up as temporary decorations, or make patterns and structures with the colored spheres.



If it gets down to freezing overnight where you live the ice balloons can last for a couple of days. Help your child find a safe spot outside to place her colorful balloons.

ICE ORNAMENT



By Beth Levin

You decorate the tree inside your house during the holidays; why not decorate the trees outside as well? Help your child make an attractive frozen holiday ornament to hang outside during the winter months.

What You Need:

- Pie tin
- Water and freezer
- Scissors
- Yarn, twine, ribbon, or pipe cleaner
- Collection of wintry evergreens, flowers, berries, holly, ivy, twigs, and other items from nature

What You Do:

1. Set out with your child to collect some pretty pieces of nature to put in the ornament such as evergreen leaves, wintry flowers, holly and berries, ivy, and twigs.
2. After he has collected his pieces, bring them inside. Have him arrange the pieces inside of the pie tin.
3. Help him slowly fill the pie tin with water, almost to the top. The pieces may float and move a bit.
4. Help him cut a piece of yarn or ribbon to a length of about 12 inches; long enough that when doubled over it will hold the ornament up after it's frozen. You can also use a long pipe cleaner. Put this "hanger" into the filled pie tin at one edge, with just about 2 inches of each end of the ribbon, or one end of the pipe cleaner, sticking into the water.
5. Now the ornament is ready to be frozen. Carefully place the pie tin in the freezer and leave it overnight.
6. After it is frozen, the ornament can be wiggled out of the pie tin. Run warm water on the back of the pan to help your ornament slide out. Hang it outside on a tree in winter. If the outside weather is cold enough, your ornament may last for a while, or you can store the ornament in a plastic bag in the freezer during warmer weather. Remember to take a photo before it melts!

SNOW PAINT



By Liana Mahoney



Winter brings with it cold, snow, and sometimes, cabin fever. Despite the frigid temperatures, it's important for children of all ages to stay active and get lots of exercise and fresh air.

As early as first grade, children are introduced to fractions. This is a new concept for them, and one that takes practice to fully absorb. Following recipes with simple fractions is a good way to get kids to practice the concept.

Here's an idea that combines fraction practice with winter fun!

What You Need:

- Plastic spray bottles, one for each color
- Dry erase marker
- Water
- Food coloring



What You Do:

1. Fill each spray bottle $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water: Have your child complete this step, and review the concept of fourths in the process. Have him use the dry erase marker to mark lines on the spray bottle so that it's divided into four approximately equal parts. Then, remind him that the fraction $\frac{3}{4}$ means "three out of four parts." Ask him to point to the line that represents $\frac{3}{4}$ before filling the bottle with water.
2. Add drops of food coloring to tint as desired. The darker the color, the better the effect in the snow. Make one color of water for each bottle.

3. Bundle up for some outdoor fun! Take the spray bottles outside and test them to be sure they are working well. Then have your child use the snow paint in a variety of different ways for some great exercise and fun. While you are playing, have your child keep an eye on how much water is left in the spray bottle. When does it get down to $\frac{1}{2}$ full? What about $\frac{1}{4}$ full? To get started, here are some wintry day activities to try with your snow paint:
- Dress the Snowmen Relay: (for two groups of players) Make two plain snowmen, side by side. Divide into two groups, and line up opposite the snowmen, the spray bottles at the front of the line. Race to see who can “dress” the snowman (paint him from head to toe) first!
 - Springtime Wishes: Anxious for spring to arrive? Why wait? Paint a spring scene on the snow bank, complete with a warm yellow sun, green grass, and red and blue flowers.
 - Pattern Block Snow Fort: Pack containers full of snow to make snow bricks. As you stack each brick, spray its side with paint. Challenge your child to create a pattern of colored bricks as she builds a wall in her snow fort.
 - Frozen Painted Butterflies: Lay in the snow with your hands at your sides and your feet together. Fan your arms up over your head to create butterfly wing imprints in the snow. Stand up, and decorate your butterfly with paint!



BLUE PARFAIT



By M.L. Gordon



Are long, gray days dragging your kids down? Try whipping up this sky parfait together. It looks just as good as it tastes!

What You Need:

- 2 cups of whipped cream
- 2 packages blue gelatin dessert
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- 2 cups boiling water
- 2 cups of ice
- Parfait or other clear glasses
- Beaters

What You Do:

1. Begin with the whipped cream, your “clouds”, for this yummy treat. Whip it into stiff peaks by beating the cream on high speed and slowly adding your $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sugar. Make sure it holds its shape before storing it in the fridge.
2. To make the “blue sky”, simply follow the directions for making the gelatin by adding 2 cups of boiling water to your 2 packages of powdered gelatin. Once the powder dissolves, add the two cups of ice—this will help your gelatin set quickly.
3. Stir the ice until the gelatin thickens and you’re left with gelatin that’s not fully set, but solidified enough that you can scoop it without it running.
4. Spoon alternate layers of gelatin and whipped cream into your parfait glass. To make clouds, press a spoonful of whipped cream against the side of the glass, being careful not to smear it. Keep adding layers until you reach the top and you’ll have a yummy concoction sure to brighten your day!

COOKIE PUZZLE

By M.L. Gordon



Celebrate the winter by creating and eating a giant snow globe made from cookie dough. Kids can use their favorite cookie recipe and cut out a scene to create a sweet jigsaw puzzle. After the cookie cools, kids get to decorate it with icing, sprinkles and other festive treats. A crafty twist on a delicious dessert!

What You Need:

- Pencil
- Large bowl
- Large sheet of paper
- Sugar cookie dough
- Rolling pin
- Frosting
- Gel icing
- Paintbrushes
- Sprinkles or tinted sugar
- Cookie cutters

What You Do:

1. Have your child turn the large bowl upside down and trace it on a piece of large paper to draw a perfect circle.
2. Now he can sketch the holiday scene he wants to see in the snow globe. If you're using cookie cutters, see what kind of objects you can create with the shapes you have. Good examples include triangles for trees, gingerbread men and wild animals.
3. Now it's time to head to the kitchen and prepare a favorite sugar cookie recipe. Make sure the recipe yields fairly dry cookie dough—if using a drop cookie recipe, you'll need to add additional flour.



4. Your child can now flour a work surface and a rolling pin and roll out the dough so that it's about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick.
5. Flour the rim of the large bowl, turn it upside down and press it into the sheet of dough. You can remove excess dough from around the bowl to make more cookies later.
6. Now your child can use cookie cutters to mark the puzzle pieces he wants to use for the snow globe. Flour the cookie cutters and then press them into the circle of dough to make an indentation. Don't remove the shapes from the dough—they will make up the pieces of the puzzle.
7. Bake the cookie according to the recipe or directions on the packaging, then remove it from the oven and let it cool completely.
8. Slide the cookie onto a flat surface, and press the cookie cutters into their corresponding shapes again so the puzzle pieces will come out easily when the cookie is ready to serve.
9. Let your child decorate the cookie to his heart's content! He can squeeze colored icing around each shape, and fill shapes in by spreading icing around with a paintbrush. Sprinkle sugar and other candies on it to create a beautiful snow globe.

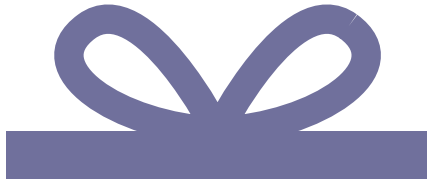


The best way to serve this cookie is to ask friends if they can spot the puzzle pieces, and lift them out of the snow globe!

FEATHER PIN



By Beth Levin



This pretty homemade feather pin will tickle your child's fashion fancy! Make this fluffy, fun jewelry as a unique fashion statement or a trendy gift for a lucky recipient.

What You Need:

- 2-4 colorful feathers
- Invisible tape
- Jewelry pin backing
- Fabric pieces
- Scissors
- Sewing needle and thread

What You Do:

1. Let your child choose some craft feathers in any colors she likes. She should also choose a small piece of fabric to match the feathers.
2. Help her group the feathers together so that the bases of the feathers are touching. The tops should fan out from one another.
3. Next, have her wrap a piece of invisible tape around the bases of the feathers to hold them together.
4. Have her cut a rectangular piece from the fabric, long enough to wrap around the feather base one or more times, but not so wide so that it covers the feathers. A piece around 8 inches long and 1 inch wide may work best.
5. Next, she should wrap the fabric around the feather base until the end of the fabric meets at the back of the base. She can use invisible tape to secure the fabric while she prepares a needle and thread.
6. You may wish to help your child prepare the needle and thread, and then she can sew the loose end of fabric to the base.
7. If her jewelry pin backing has a sticker attachment, she can peel the sticker and attach it to the back of the piece of fabric. If not, she can sew the pin directly to the fabric through holes in the back of the pin. Help her knot the thread and cut off any loose ends.
8. Now, she can wear and enjoy her feathery festive pin. She can also make pins in various feather and fabric colors for herself or to give to friends!



FROGS IN WINTER



By Suzanne Johnson

Have you ever wondered what happens to frogs in winter? Where do they go when the temperatures drop and the snow flies? In late autumn, frogs will settle into the mud at the bottom of a pond. They don't freeze solid because frogs have a way to increase the amount of glucose in their bodies. Glucose is a form of sugar, and it creates a sort of antifreeze that keeps the frogs' cells from freezing while they hibernate. Frogs also change the way they breathe! They take in oxygen from the pond water right through their skin, so they never need to come to the surface until spring. In this activity, you and your child will create a tasty treat that will illustrate exactly how frogs survive a freezing season.

What You Need:

- A clear plastic cup
- A gummy frog (the edible candy kind)
- Instant chocolate pudding, made according to pudding box instructions
- Blue or green gelatin, made according to gelatin box instructions
- Spoon
- Whipped topping



What You Do:

1. Begin by talking with your child about how different animals survive during the coldest months. Some animals, like dogs and wolves, grow thicker fur. Birds fly away to warmer climates. Bears find a cozy cave to hibernate the winter months away. People add layers of clothing to stay warm. But frogs have no fur, and cannot fly away or put on a coat. They hibernate instead!
2. Add about 3-4 spoonfuls of chocolate pudding to your clear plastic cup to represent the mud.

3. Place the gummy frog on the pudding. Don't push it too deep; frogs like to stay mostly on top of the mud!
4. Spoon the gelatin on top of the frog and the mud, until the plastic cup is $\frac{3}{4}$ full. This represents the pond water.
5. Add the whipped topping, which represents snow on top of the gelatin.



Your frog in winter treat is ready to enjoy! Here are some questions to discuss with your child as you are eating:

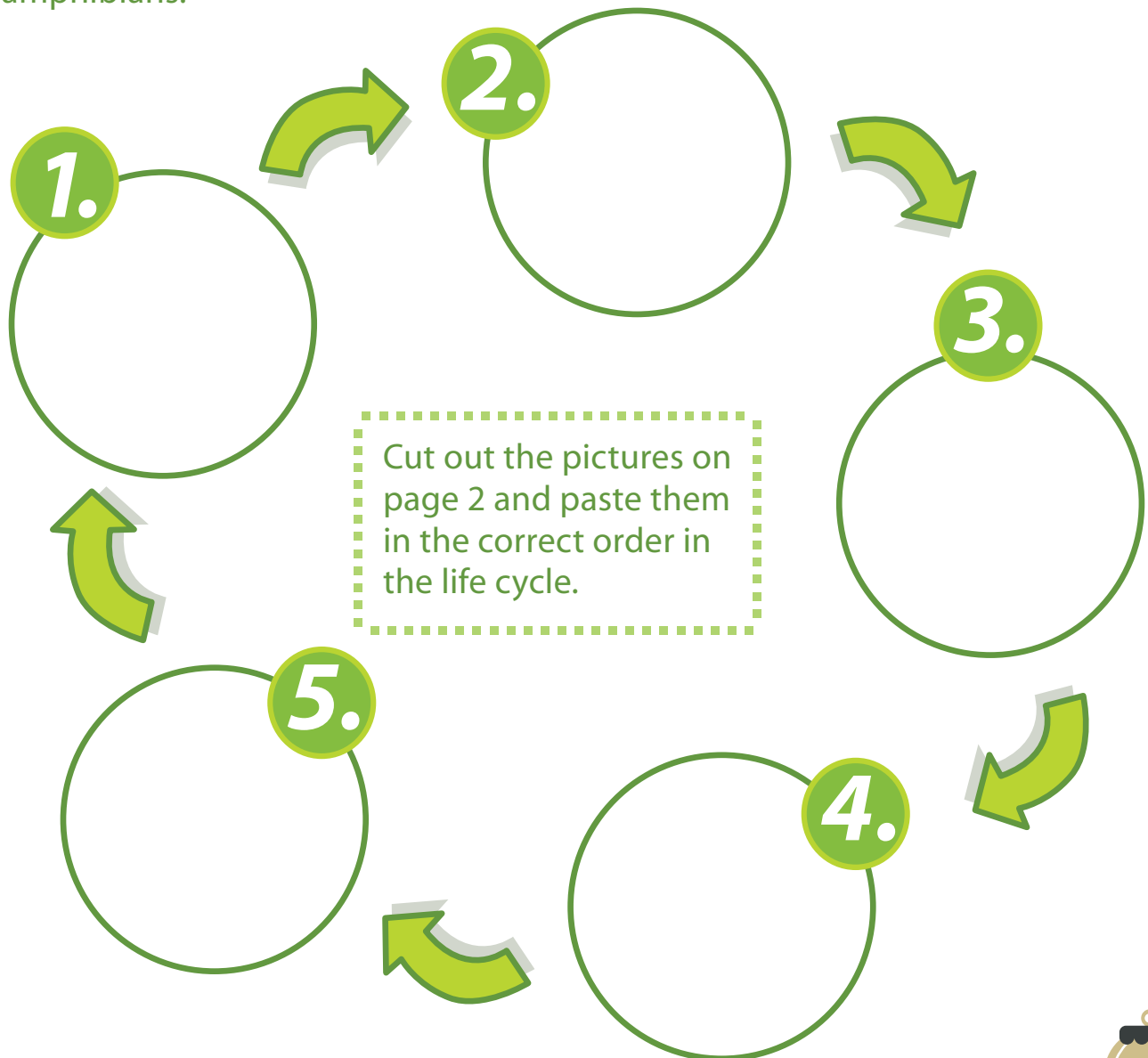
- How would the bottom of a muddy pond be a safe place for the frog to spend the winter? Think about animals that might hunt the frogs, or how the weather might change above the pond surface.
- Not all frogs live near ponds. Where do you think these frogs might go to spend the winter?
- How do you think frogs know when to "wake up" in the spring? What might be a signal that winter is over?



FOR EXTRA FROG FACTS, CHECK OUT THE LIFE CYCLE OF A FROG ON THE NEXT PAGE.

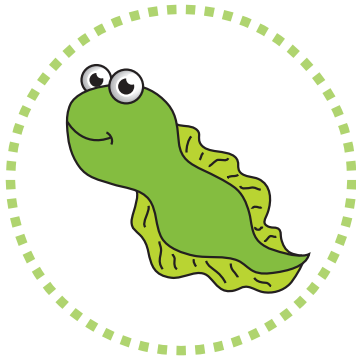
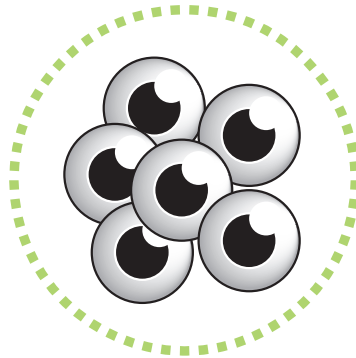
Life Cycle of a Frog

Amphibians are animals that live on both land and water. They are cold-blooded, and have mostly smooth skin with no hair or fur. Amphibians are usually born in the water breathing with gills, but then they change into air-breathing adults. Frogs, toads and salamanders are examples of amphibians.



Life Cycle of a Frog

Frogs are born as **eggs** in the water. When the egg hatches it turns into a **tadpole** that has gills to breathe. After 6-9 weeks the tadpole's **legs** start to sprout. After 12 weeks the little tadpole becomes a **froglet** -- its legs get bigger and it begins to breathe with lungs instead of gills. The froglet becomes an adult frog when its **tail disappears** completely. Soon the frog will be ready to lay eggs of its own.



WINDOW PAINTING

By Korey Marquez

Who says walls are the only places to display your child's art? Try windows! Here's an activity to help your child create his own window mural. This activity is sure to brighten any season.

What You Need:

- Washable paint, window markers, or window crayons
- Paintbrushes
- Jar of water
- Rags
- Blue painter's tape
- Old newspapers

What You Do:

1. Before you begin, choose a window to paint, making sure it is clean and easily accessible for your child. You may need a step stool so he can reach the upper part of the window.
2. Protect the window frame with painter's tape. You may also want to secure a thick layer of paper around the sill and on the floor to protect them from any accidental drips or smudges. Make sure you have wet rags to mop up spills, and a jar of water if using paintbrushes.
3. Brainstorm with your child things you can paint in the mural, like winter and holiday images (snow, reindeer, stars, trees, candles, etc.), or a tropical island, or any kind of scene.



4. Set out the paint and paintbrushes, and invite him to start painting.
5. If he wants to paint a new color on top of the first one, have him wait until the first color is dry before he starts the new color.



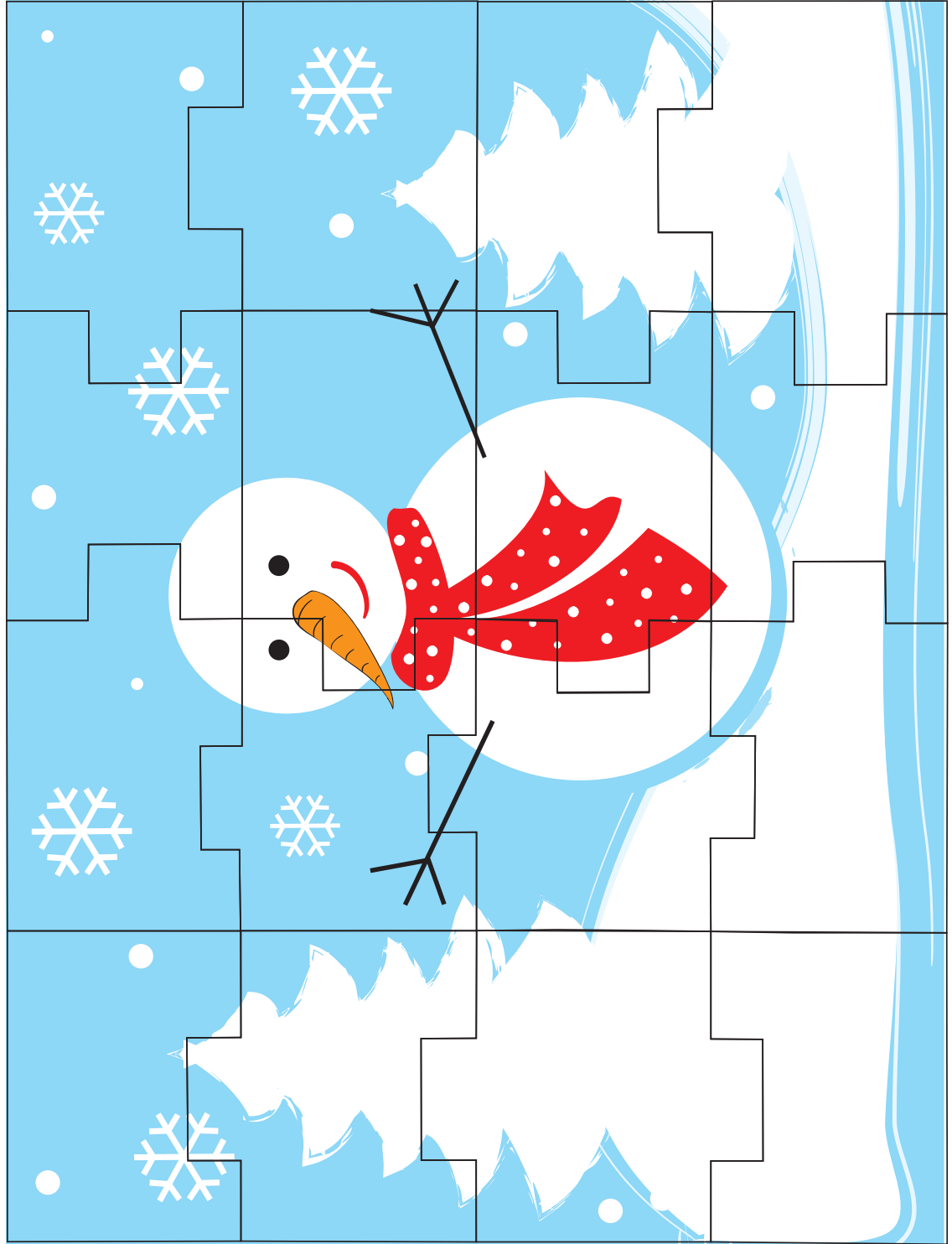
When your child is finished painting, step outside and admire his handiwork from the other side!

NOTE

If you're nervous about painting on glass, paint a test square and let it dry completely, then clean it off to see how easy or hard it is to remove. Try first to remove the paint or window crayon with a dry cloth. Later, when you want to clean the mural off the window use warm soapy water and lay down a towel on the floor just in case. The cleaning up can be just as colorful and fun as the painting, so make sure the kids get in on this part, too.

JIGSAW PUZZLE

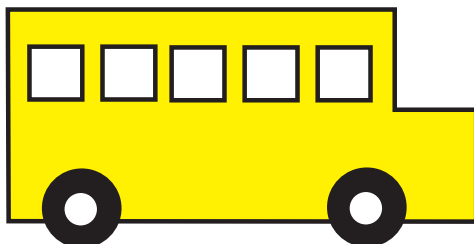
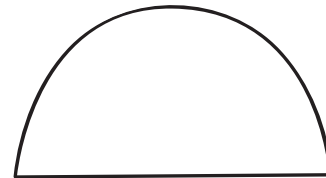
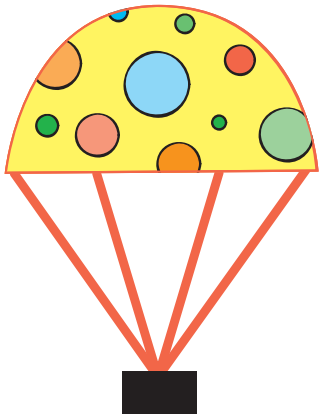
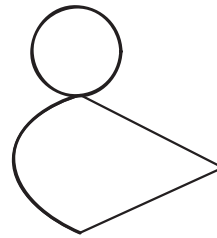
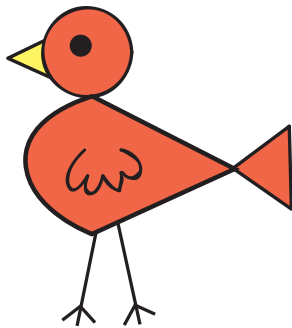
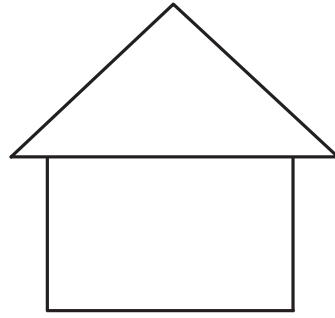
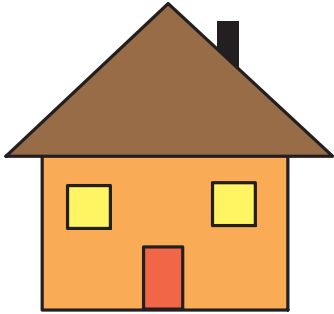
Cut along the black lines of this picture with the help of a parent to create your very own jigsaw puzzle pieces. Then mix the pieces and try to put them together to form the picture.



Tip: Puzzle pieces work better when printed on thicker paper.

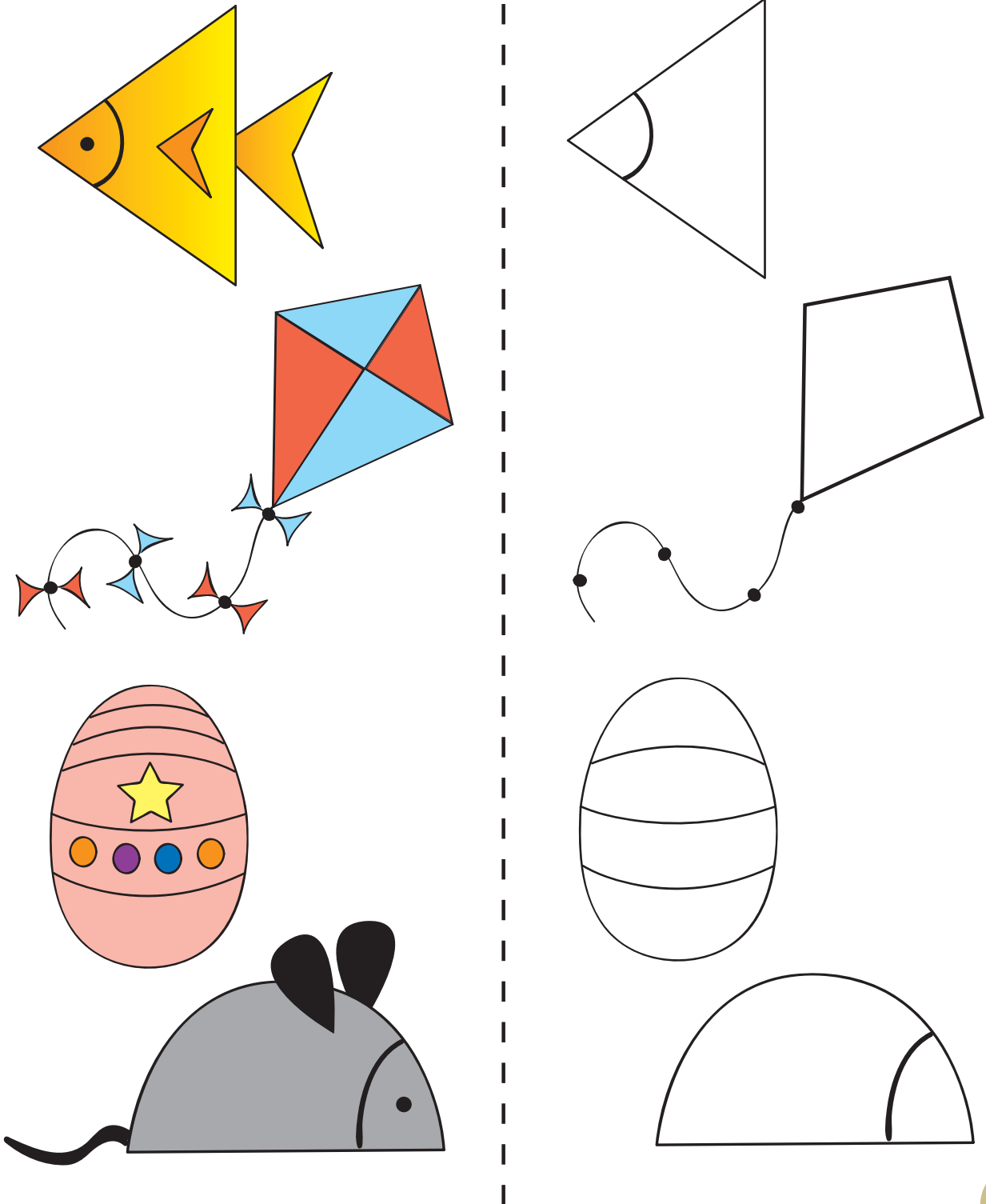
Travel Games : Remember And Draw

How to Play: Fold the paper in half or cut it on the dotted lines. Then ask the child to look at the colored pictures for a few minutes. Next ask him to complete the pictures by drawing the missing parts from memory.



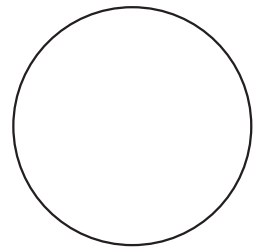
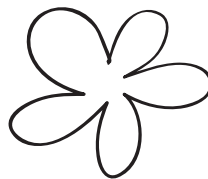
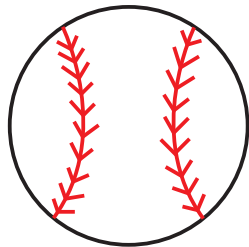
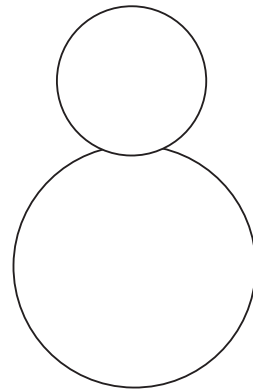
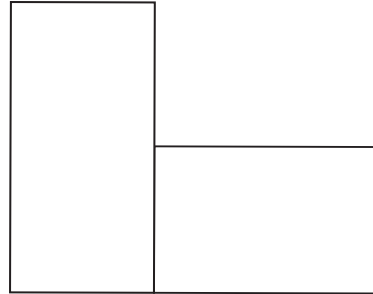
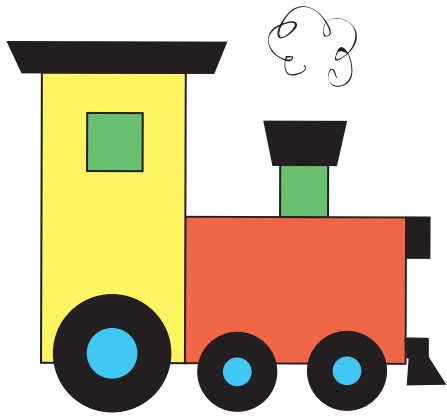
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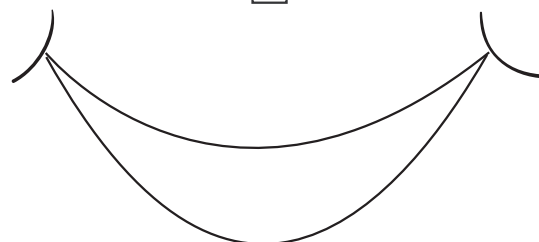
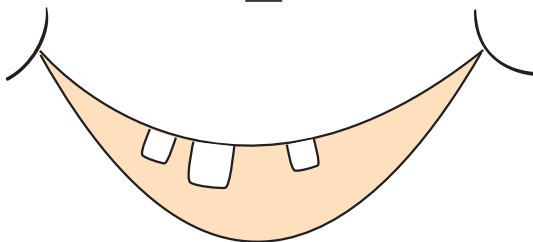
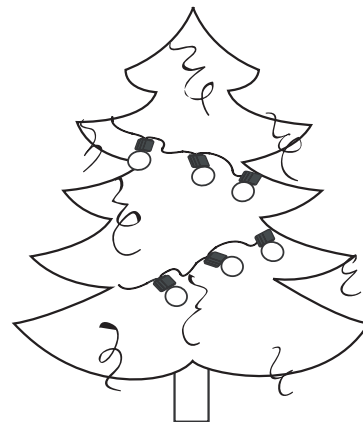
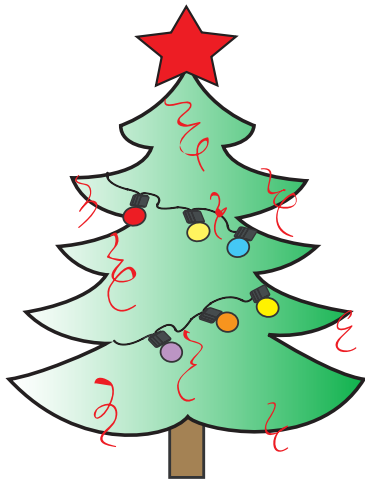
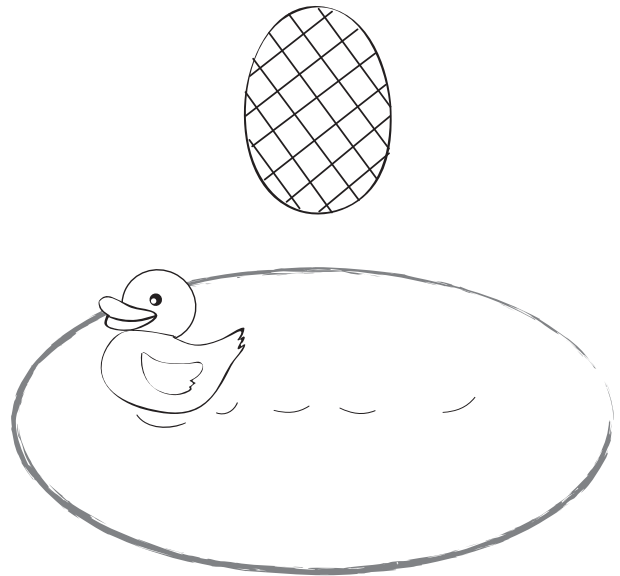
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Travel Games : Remember And Draw

How to Play: Fold the paper in half or cut it on the dotted lines. Then ask the child to look at the colored pictures for a few minutes. Next ask him to complete the pictures by drawing the missing parts from memory.



Parent Tip: If your child is playing this game for the first time, ask him to look at one picture at a time, then try from memory to find out what's missing.

How To Make A Crossword Puzzle

1. Print out two copies of the blank grid. One will be filled in, and the other will be a empty crossword puzzle ready for someone to try.

Decide on a theme. This one will be about animals.

With a pencil (there might be a lot of erasing!) begin filling in the squares with words relevant to your theme. Cross each word with another, sharing common letters. Fill in as many words as you can think of.

HINT: Use longer words first so there is plenty of room to cross over, then fill in with smaller words.

G	I	R	A	F	F	E														
				E		L														
S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L													
				R		P														
				E		H														
				T		A						G								
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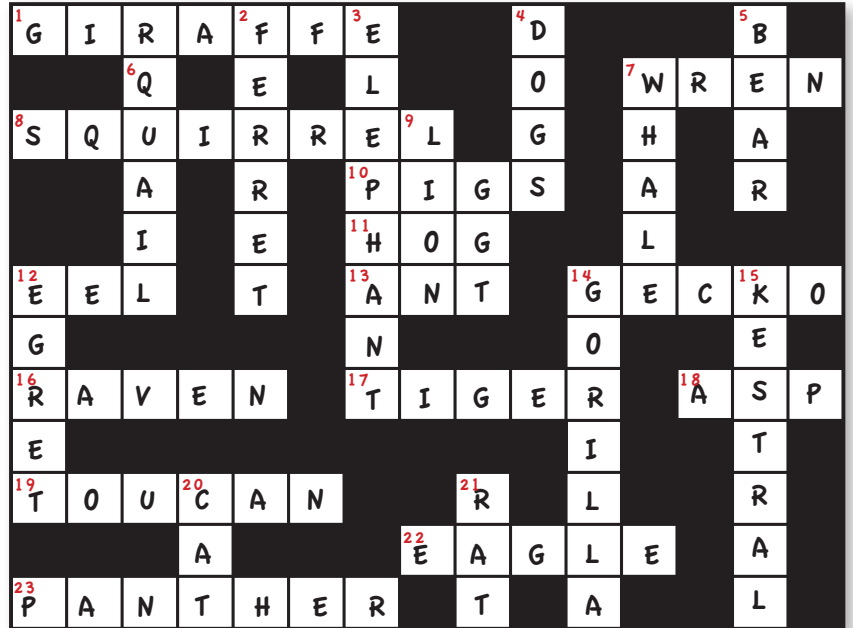
2. Once you've written in as many words as you can, color in the empty boxes with black.

G	I	R	A	F	F	E			D								B			
		Q		E		L			O			W	R	E	N					
S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L		G			H					A			
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R	A	V	E	N				T	I	G	E	R			A	S	P			
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T	O	U	C	A	N				R			L						R		
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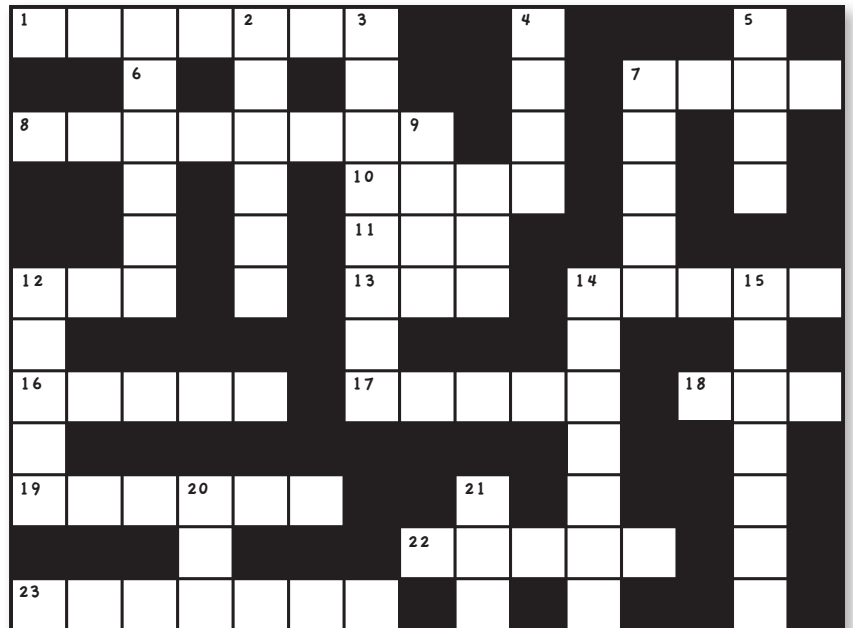
How To Make A Crossword Puzzle

3. Write numbers (1, 2, 3 and so on) right to left in the boxes of the first letter of each word.

Keep this page. It will be your answer sheet.



4. Take the second blank grid that you printed out and fill in the numbers and the black squares, but leave the white squares blank.



How To Make A Crossword Puzzle

5. Now write in the clues at the bottom of the page, matching the vertical words' numbers under "Down" and the horizontal words' numbers under "Across".

Clues can be as difficult or easy as you want them to be. They can be tricky, or silly. Have fun with them!

6. Give your crossword puzzle a name, and you're done!

Across

- 1. Long-necked African mammal.
- 7. "When" will you guess this bird?
- 10. More than one in a trough.
- 8. Nutty guy with fluffy tail.
- 12. "EEK" this fish is slimy!
- 13. Not your uncle.
- 14. Insurance lizard.

Down

- 2. Weasly mammal.
- 3. Never forgets.
- 4. Man's best friends.
- 5. Grizzly or polar.

Wonderful World of Animals!

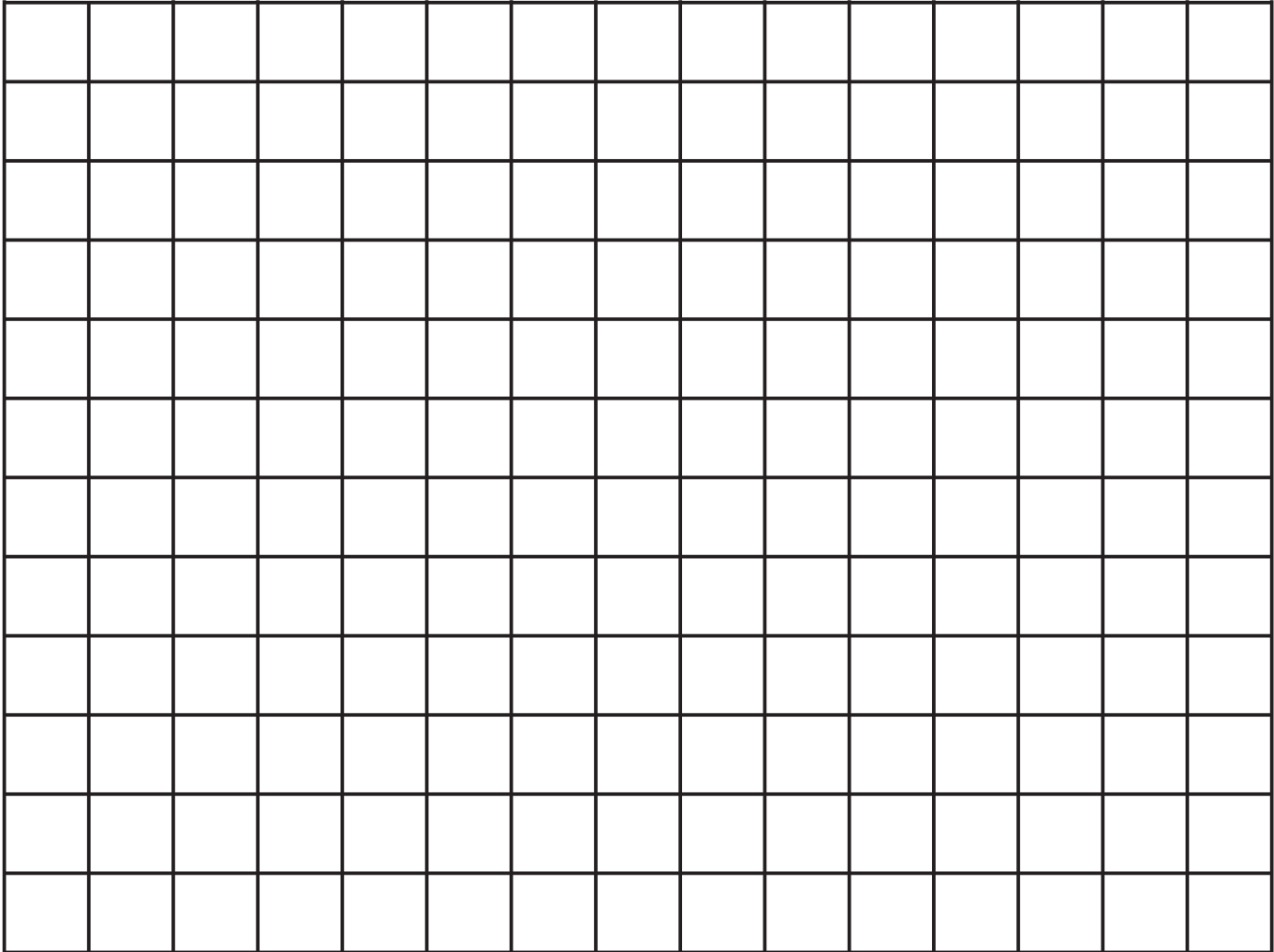
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Down

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- 13. Not your uncle.
- 14. Insurance lizard.
- 16. Poe's bird.
- 17. Striped feline
- 18. Poisoned Cleopatra.
- 19. Colorful tropical bird.
- 22. America's symbol
- 23. Can be black. Predatory wild cat.

Across

- 2. Weasly mammal.
- 3. Never forgets.
- 4. Man's best friends.
- 5. Grizzly or polar.
- 6. Similar to partridge.
- 7. Largest sea animal.
- 9. Part of a pride.
- 12. White shore bird.
- 14. Largest primate.
- 15. Small hawk.
- 20. House pet.
- 2. You dirty ___!



Down

Across