

NOTES and ACTIVITIES

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Revised 2019

with Australian Curriculum Alignment and NAPLAN-style activities

BUTTERNUT

Sylvia's Itch

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Sylvia's Itch

Contents

Notes (with references to Activities)	Page
Discussion Ideas	
Knowledge and Literal Understanding	1
Inferential and Critical Thinking	1-2
Literacy Skills	
Vocabulary	2
Grammar	2
Comprehension	2
Writing	3
Literature/Media	3
Cross Curricular	
Maths	3
Science	3
Social Science	3
Art/Craft	3-4
Music	4
Drama	5
Answers to NAPLAN-style activities	5
Alignment of <i>Sylvia's Itch</i> to the Australian Curriculum	6 to 10
Activity No.	
1. Wordsearch	11
2. Mystery Word	12
3. Using Speech Bubbles	13
4. Language Conventions - Annabelle's House - NAPLAN-style text with questions	14
5-6. Sequencing Order of Events - sentences to match illustrations	15-16
7-8. Reading/Comprehension - <i>Facts about Sugar Gliders</i> - NAPLAN-style text with questions ..	17-18
9. Cloze Comprehension - use <i>Facts about Sugar Gliders</i>	19
10. True or False Comprehension	20
11-12. Dot Point Comprehension - <i>What's That Animal?</i> - NAPLAN-style text with questions ..	21-22
13. Creating an Animal Character	23
14. Dot to Dot -1 to 50	24
15. Number Pattern Maze	25
16. Grid References - find the small picture in the grid and questions	26
17. Jigsaw Puzzle	27
18. Sugar Glider Mask	28
19-20. Sugar Glider Kite	29-30
21-22. Sugar Glider Ears	31-32
23. Pin the Tail on the Sugar Glider Game	33
24. Creating Caterpillars	34
25-26. Stick Puppets	35-36
27. Colouring-in - Why do the creatures look so happy?	37
28. Colouring-in - Colour the hairy caterpillar	38
29. <i>Sylvia's Itch</i> - The Play - four pages	39 to 42

Note: Some of these activities require adult supervision.

Discussion Ideas

Knowledge and Literal Understanding

- Facts about sugar gliders
- Caring for our native Australian animals and management of their environment
- Facts about hairy caterpillars
- Facts about allergies
- The qualities of problem solving, tenacity and team work
- Personalities of the characters and how they evolve
- Friendships, roles and relationships between the characters
- The author creates characters with human qualities. (see Writing and Literature/Media)
- What decisions did they make to solve the problem?
- Page 4: Where did the sugar gliders live?
- Page 6: Name the three things Sylvia did to try and stop the itch. Did it stop or get worse?
- Pages 11 and 12: What did Annabelle suggest could be causing the itch?
- Page 13: Did Sylvia know what an allergy was?
- Page 14: What did Penelope suggest could be causing the itch?
- Pages 15 and 16: What did Sylvia stop eating?
- Pages 19 and 20: What did Annabelle need from Penelope for the potion?
- Page 25: What items of clothing did Penelope remove? (elimination process)
- Page 26: What did Sylvia notice on the jacket?
- On what pages can you find the hairy caterpillar? (on pages 4, 5, 10 (in blue), 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 23, 26, 27 and the back page)

Inferential and Critical Thinking

- What makes friendship strong?
- How did Sylvia feel when she had the itch?
- How did Penelope feel when her friend had the itch?
- How did Penelope feel when she thought she was the cause of the itch?
- How did Sylvia feel when she thought Penelope was sad?
- Why did Penelope think Sylvia was allergic to her?
- What did Sylvia do?
- What are allergies? What can animals be allergic to?
- Why do the sugar gliders live in trees?
- Who do you think Annabelle is? Why do they think she can help?
- What pages do not feature the hairy caterpillar character? Where do you think the caterpillar is hiding on these pages?

- Page 7: Why has the illustrator drawn the gliders hanging with their feet and tails? (Sugar gliders cannot hang by their tails alone.)
- Page 11: What does Annabelle mean when she says *elimination*? Where do they use the process of elimination? (Pages 11 and 12 – prickles and fleas are eliminated. Pages 15 and 16 – gum from the acacia trees, sap from the eucalyptus trees, lizards and insects are eliminated. Page 25 – Penelope's hat and scarf are eliminated.)
- Page 16: Why are the creatures smiling?
- Page 21: Why is the caterpillar covering his eyes?
- Page 22: Why did the author say that the colours were like a fresh morning sky, the sun on a hot summer's afternoon and the colours of the Australian bush. (It creates a vivid visual image.) (see Art/Craft)
- Pages 26 and 27: Why did Annabelle say: '*Quick! Shake it off.*'? Why did she want to make sure all the hairs had gone?
- Page 27: How does the caterpillar feel after he is discovered?
- Page 28: Why are the three sugar gliders looking so happy?
- Page 29: How do the characters feel and how does it make you feel?
- Page 29: Sylvia asks a rhetorical question at the end. '*How could anyone be allergic to a best friend?*' What is a rhetorical question? (A question that does not necessarily require an answer. Often asked to produce effect.)

Literacy Skills

Vocabulary

- Interest Words – *sugar glider, itch, hollowed-out-tree, wrinkliest, cure, elimination, prickle, fleas, allergy, leech, spiders, scratchy mites, stinging tree, acacias, eucalyptus trees, insects, lizards, potion, toenails, hairs, lotion, hairy caterpillar*
- Text Vocabulary – wordsearch (**activity 1**)
- Make lists of other Australian marsupials and native trees.

Grammar

- Naming words – nouns – Mystery Word (**activity 2**)
- Contractions – *couldn't, what's, there's, don't, let's, she'll, can't, you're, it's, doesn't, I'm, I'll, I've, how's, wasn't*. The author uses 15 contractions in the book. What are contractions? (Contractions are abbreviations – two words shortened into one using an apostrophe.) Why did the author use contractions when the sugar gliders were speaking to each other? (Contractions better reflect everyday speech.)
- Examine the connection between direct speech using inverted commas and speech bubbles. (**activity 3**)
- Language Conventions - Annabelle's House (**activity 4 - NAPLAN-style**)

Comprehension

- Sequence order of events – Cut and paste sentences and/or pictures. (**activities 5 and 6**)
- Comprehension – *Facts about Sugar Gliders* - (**activities 7 and 8 - NAPLAN-style**)
- Cloze Comprehension - Use *Facts about Sugar Gliders* - (activity 7) to complete (**activity 9**)
- True or False Comprehension - (**activity 10**)
- Dot Point Comprehension - *What's That Animal?* - (**activities 11 and 12 - NAPLAN-style**)

Writing

- Write questions that you can ask the characters in an interview. (see Drama)
- Analyse the characters in the book using the headings on activity 13 as a guide. Then create your own animal character with human qualities. **(activity 13)** (see Literature/Media)
- Design a poster that sets out the importance of protection for sugar gliders and the conservation of their habitats.
- Write a persuasive article outlining the reasons for sugar glider protection.
- Write a poem about a sugar glider or another Australian marsupial.

Literature/Media

- Compare and contrast other Australian stories about possums or marsupials. e.g. *Possum Magic* by Mem Fox, *Possum in the House* by Kiersten Jensen and Tony Oliver, *Possum Goes to School* by Melanie Carter and Nicola Oram, *Wombat Stew* by Marcia Vaughan
- Many children's book authors use animals with human qualities in their stories. Make a list of some that you know. (See Writing)
- Read non-fiction texts and research sugar gliders.

Cross Curricular

Maths

- Dot to Dot – numbers 1 to 50 **(activity 14)**
- Number Pattern Maze – counting in twos to 30 using even and odd numbers. **(activity 15)**
- Using Grid References. **(activity 16)**
- Jigsaw Puzzle **(activity 17)**
- Draw a map of what you think the bushland habitat in the book looks like. Include Annabelle's house.

Science

- **Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland** – www.wildlife.org.au Visit this website for interesting information about sugar gliders. It can help to answer many of the questions below.
- Go on a nocturnal excursion - **Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland** has information about excursions on their website.
- Read facts about sugar gliders. (see activity 7)
- Examine the life cycle of the sugar glider.
- What noises do sugar gliders make?
- Examine the sugar glider tail. It is not strong enough for the sugar glider to hang only by its tail.
- Examine the size, weight, diet and habitat of the sugar glider.
- What predators do sugar gliders have? How do sugar gliders in your area protect themselves?
- The sugar glider is possibly the most commonly known of the six gliders. What are the other five? Compare the gliders.
- Sugar gliders are marsupials. How many other marsupials do you know about?

- Investigate glider poles. (Poles are placed in areas where roads have fragmented sugar glider habitat to allow them to glide from one area to another.)
- Examine the aerodynamics of gliding. What other animals can glide? – e.g. birds
Make a sugar glider kite and see how far it will glide. (see Art/Craft - activities 19 and 20)
- What are hairy caterpillars? Examine the life cycle of a caterpillar.
- Create a hairy caterpillar with sprouted grass seeds. There are many websites with instructions for this activity. (see Art/Craft - activity 24)
- What plants and animals have prickles or spines? Why do they have them?
- Examine things that make you itchy. Why is it making you itchy?
- Use a 'feely bag' (Sylvia's Pouch) to identify bush items or items mentioned in the story.
- Build a simple nesting box for sugar gliders. Research websites or do an image search for ideas.

Social Science

- Examine living habits/society of sugar gliders.
- Investigate environmental management of sugar glider habitats.

History

- Investigate the historical numbers of sugar gliders and how they compare to the present.

Art/Craft

- Examine the illustrator's work and how he uses soft watercolour to convey a mood for the story.
- Make a mask of a sugar glider. **(activity 18)**
- Sugar Glider Kite - **(activities 19 and 20)** (see Science)
- Make sugar glider ears. **(activities 21 and 22)** Match them with some face painting.
- Create a *Pin the Tail on the Sugar Glider* game. **(activity 23)**
- Paper folded sugar glider. Free internet downloads are available.
- Collage a hairy caterpillar using natural materials.
- Creating Caterpillars – Use sprouted seeds, egg cartons, folded paper, paper chains or paper plates. An image or web search will produce lots of ideas. **(activity 24)**
- Examine the colours of the Australian bush and paint a bush scene.
- Rubbings – Use leaf and bark from different trees and compare.
- Construct a diorama of Annabelle's house.
- Stick Puppets - Present the story as a stick puppet play. (see Drama) **(activities 25 and 26)**
- Mobile – Use the pictures from the stick puppet activity sheet or make your own. Use natural sticks in your construction.
- Colouring-in - Why do the creatures look so happy? **(activity 27)**
- Colouring-in - Colour the hairy caterpillar. **(activity 28)**

Music

- Play possum songs. e.g. *Sh sh Sugar Glider* by Don Spencer – This song and a sugar glider video is available at splash.abc.net.au His CD with this song and other Australian animal songs, *Don Spencer – The Ultimate Collection*, is available at ABC music online)

Drama

- Dramatize the story. The story has been written as a play script. (**activity 29 – pages 1 to 4**)
Dress up as the characters or use the stick puppets. (see Art/Craft)
- Conduct a TV/newspaper interview with the characters, asking about their experience.
(see Writing)

Answers NAPLAN-style Activities

The NAPLAN-style activities are not an officially endorsed publication of the Australian Government.

Activity 4 - Annabelle's House

1. **candles** 2. **glasses** 3. **shelf** 4. **apron** 5. **dress** 6. **tail** 7. **walking stick**
8. How could anyone be allergic to their best friend.
9. Sylvia could have eaten something her body doesn't like.
10. Penelope took off her cap and threw it out the door.
11. Maybe Sylvia was allergic to something Penelope was wearing.
12. Annabelle used the lotion from three, colourful, glass jars.

Activities 7 and 8 - Facts about Sugar Gliders

1. How many known species of sugar glider are there? ✓ 6
2. What kind of animal is a sugar glider? ✓ *marsupial*
3. The sugar glider is native to _____ Australia. ✓ *eastern and northern*
4. They are called sugar gliders because ____ ✓ *they like to eat native plants that are sweet.*
5. What allows the sugar glider to glide long distances? ✓ *a membrane that stretches along its body*
6. Which sentence is NOT true? ✓ *Their predators include kookaburras, snakes, owls and emus.*

Activities 11 and 12 - What's That Animal?

1. Which animals are reptiles? ✓ *crocodiles and lizards*
2. Which animals are arachnids? ✓ *spiders, ticks and scorpions*
3. Which two animals are in the same animal group ✓ *ladybirds and caterpillars*
4. All marsupials have _____ ✓ *a pouch for their young.*
5. What is the early stage of a butterfly or moth called? ✓ *larva*
6. Which animal has two body parts and eight legs ✓ *spider*
7. Which sentence is NOT true? ✓ *Sugar gliders are reptiles*
8. Emus have wings but they cannot fly. Which sentence is NOT true? ✓ *All birds can fly.*

Alignment of *Sylvia's Itch* to the Australian Curriculum

Australian Curriculum: English: Language, Literature and Literacy

Year 2

Literature:

Literature and context:

Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the context in which they were created. (ACELT1587)

Responding to Literature:

Compare opinions about characters, events and settings in and between texts. (ACELT1589)

Examining Literature:

Discuss the characters and settings of different texts to explore how language is used to present these features in different ways. (ACELT1591)

Year 3

Language:

Language for interaction:

Understand that successful cooperation with others depends on shared use of social conventions, including turn-taking patterns, and forms of address that vary according to the degree of formality in social situations. (ACEL1476)

Text Structure and Organisation:

Know that word contractions are a feature of formal language and that apostrophes of contraction are used to signal missing letters. (ACELA1480)

Expressing and Developing Ideas:

Understand that verbs represent different processes, for example, doing, thinking, saying and relating and that these processes are anchored in time. (ACELA1482)

Identify the effect on audiences of techniques, for example, shot size, vertical 'camera angle' and 'layout' in picture books, advertisements and film segments. (ACLEA1483)

Learn extended and technical vocabulary and ways of expressing opinion including modal verbs and adverbs. (ACELA1484)

Literature:

Literature and Context:

Discuss texts in which characters, events and settings are portrayed in different ways, and speculate on the author's reasons. (ACELT1594)

Responding to Literature:

Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts and share responses with others. (ACELT1596)

Examining Literature:

Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts and explore how settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative. (ACELT1599)

Discuss the nature and effects of some language devices used to enhance meaning and shape the reader's reaction, including rhythm, onomatopoeia in poetry and prose. (ACELT1600)

Literacy:

Texts in Context:

Identify the point of view in a text and suggest alternative points of view. (ACELY1675)

Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating:

Identify the audience and purpose of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts. (ACELY1678)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features. (ACELY1680)

Year 4

Language:

Language Variation and Change:

Understand that standard Australian English is one of many social dialects in Australia, and that while it originated in England it has been influenced by many other languages. (ACELA1487)

Language for Interaction:

Understand that social interactions influence the way people engage with ideas and respond to others, for example, when exploring and clarifying the ideas of others, summarising their own views and reporting them to a larger group. (ACELA1488)

Understand the differences between language of opinion and feeling and the language of factual reporting and recording. (ACELA1489)

Text Structure and Organisation:

Understand how texts vary in complexity and technicality depending on the approach to the topic, the purpose and the intended audience. (ACELA1490)

Recognise how quotation marks are used in texts to signal dialogue, titles and quoted (direct) speech. (ACELA1492)

Expressing and Developing Ideas:

Investigate how quoted (direct) and reported (indirect) speech work in different types of texts. (ACELA1494)

Understand how adverb groups/phrases and prepositional phrases work in different ways to provide circumstantial details about an activity. (ACELA1495)

Incorporate new vocabulary from a range of sources into students' own texts including vocabulary encountered in research. (ACELA1498)

Literature:

Examining Literature:

Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension. (ACELT1605)

Literacy:

Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating:

Identify the characteristic features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text. (ACELY1690)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts. (ACELY1692)

Year 5

Language:

Language Variation and Change:

Understand that the pronunciation, spelling and meanings of words have histories and change over time. (ACELA1500)

Language for Interaction:

Understand that patterns of language interactions vary across social contexts and types of texts, and that they help to signal social roles and relationships. (ACELA1501)

Text Structure and Organisation:

Understand that the starting point of a sentence gives prominence to the message in the text and allows for prediction of how the text will unfold. (ACELA1505)

Understand how the grammatical category of possessives is signalled through apostrophes and how to use apostrophes with common and proper nouns. (ACELA1506)

Expressing and Developing Ideas:

Understand the use of vocabulary to express greater precision of meaning, and know that words can have different meanings in different contexts. (ACELA1512)

Literature:

Literature and Context:

Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details of information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts. (ACELT1608)

Responding to Literature:

Use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features on particular audiences. (ACELT1795)

Examining Literature:

Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives, shape poetry, songs, anthems and odes. (ACELT1611)

Literacy:

Texts in Context:

Show how ideas and points of view in texts are conveyed through the use of vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions, objective and subjective language and that those can change according to context. (ACELY1698)

Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating:

Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text. (ACELY1701)

Australian Curriculum: Science

Year 1 Achievement Standards

Biological Sciences:

Living things have a variety of external features. (ACSSU017)

Living things live in different places where their needs are met. (ACSSU211)

Year 2 Achievement Standards

Biological Sciences:

Living things grow, change and have offspring similar to themselves. (ACSSU030)

Year 3 Achievement Standards

Biological Sciences:

Living things can be grouped on the basis of observable features and can be distinguished by them. (ACSSU044)

Year 5 Achievement Standards

Biological Sciences:

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment. (ACSSU043)

Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship

Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 Achievement Standards

Problem Solving and Decision Making:

Interaction with others with respect, share views and recognise there are different points of view. (ACHCS007 -Year 3), (ACHCS018 -Year 4), (ACHCS031 -Year 5)

Work in groups to identify issues, possible solutions and a plan of action. (ACHCS008 -Year 3), (ACHCS019 -Year 4)

Work in groups to identify issues, possible solutions and a plan of action using decision making processes. (ACHCS032 -Year 5)

Analysis, Synthesis and Interpretation:

Distinguish facts from opinions in relation to civics and citizenship topics and issues. (ACHCS005 -Year 3), (ACHCS016 -Year 4)

Use of information to develop a point of view. (ACHCS006 -Year 3), (ACHCS017 -Year 4)

Use and evaluate a range of information to develop a point of view. (ACHCS030 -Year 5)

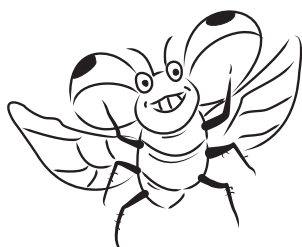
Sylvia's Itch Notes and Activities available at www.robinadolphs.com include:

Alignment to the Australian Curriculum

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Wordsearch



ACACIAS
ALLERGY
ANNABELLE
BUSH
CATERPILLAR
COLOUR
CURE
EUCALYPTUS
FLEAS
HAIRS

INSECTS
ITCH
LEECH
LIZARDS
MITES
OLDEST
PENELOPE
POTION
PRICKLE
SCRATCH

SHIMMERED
SHONE
SPIDERS
STICK
STINGING TREE
SUGAR GLIDER
SYLVIA
TOENAILS
WRINKLIEST



Q	E	S	T	I	C	K	M	A	I	N	S	E	C	T	S
S	U	C	O	L	O	U	R	L	V	P	K	H	P	Z	U
H	C	A	N	N	A	B	E	L	L	E	S	A	O	W	G
I	A	T	T	X	B	U	S	E	P	N	P	I	T	R	A
M	L	E	E	C	H	S	H	R	F	E	I	R	I	I	R
M	Y	R	I	A	U	H	O	G	C	L	D	S	O	N	G
E	P	P	X	Q	U	R	N	Y	O	O	E	G	N	K	L
R	T	I	Y	M	I	T	E	S	T	P	R	A	L	L	I
E	U	L	I	Z	A	R	D	S	D	E	S	W	S	I	D
D	S	L	Z	S	T	I	N	G	I	N	G	T	R	E	E
A	C	A	C	I	A	S	T	O	E	N	A	I	L	S	R
S	C	R	A	T	C	H	K	C	O	L	D	E	S	T	M
R	P	R	I	C	K	L	E	T	H	S	Y	L	V	I	A

Easy Wordsearch



BACK
CAP
COSY
FLEAS
GIANT
GUM
HAIRS
HOLLOW

ITCH
JACKET
MEAT
NEST
SAP
SCARF
TREE

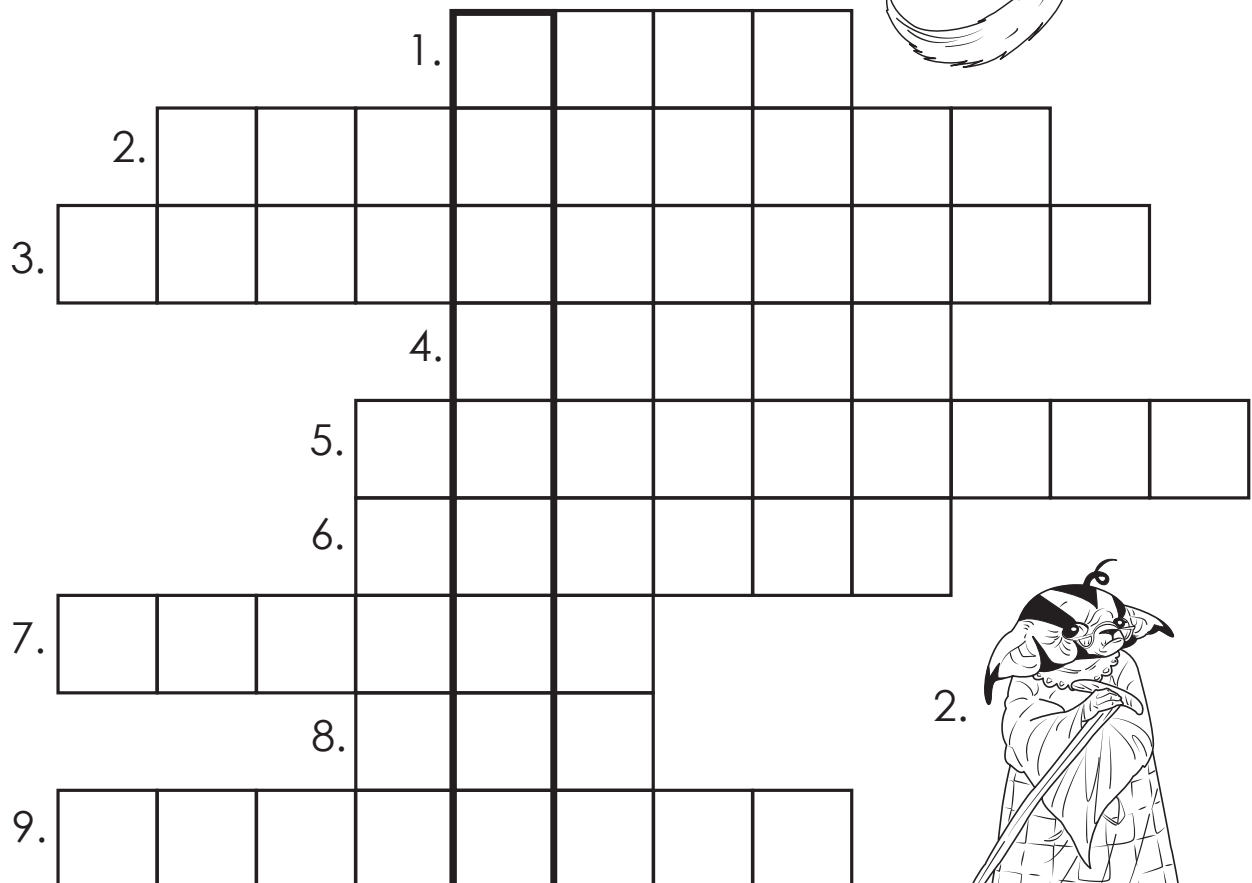
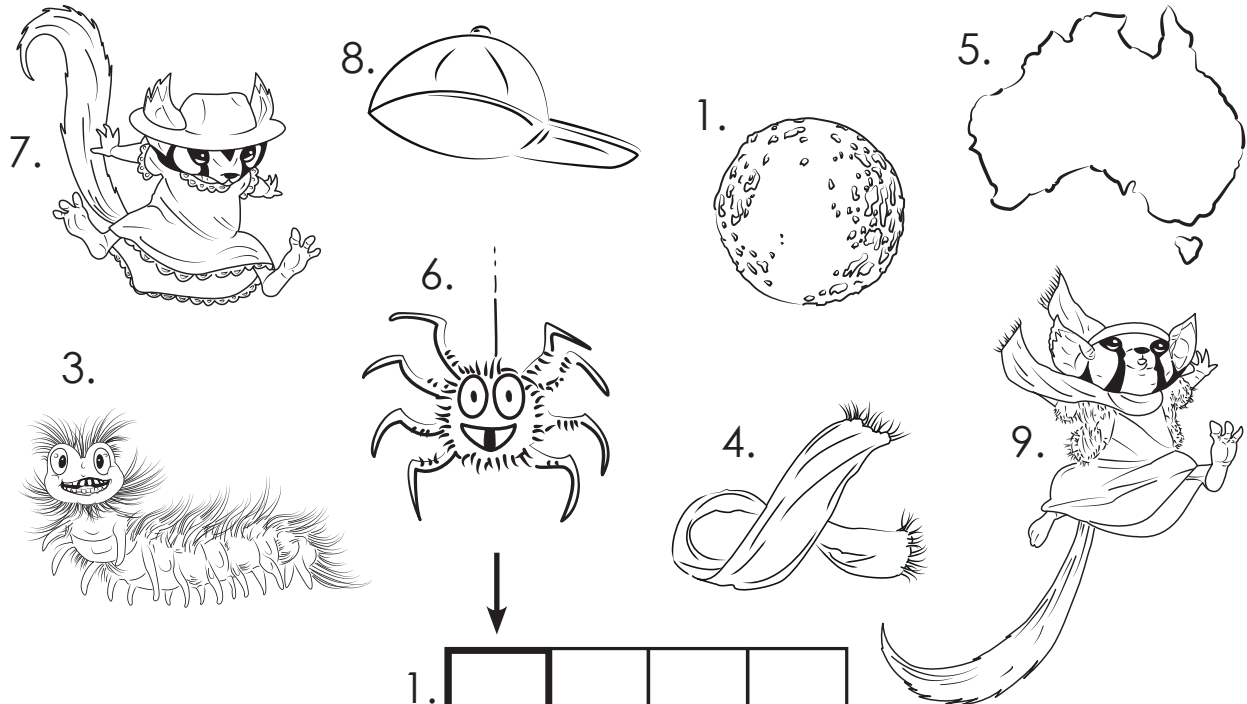
G	I	A	N	T	J	V	S
U	S	F	L	E	A	S	A
M	C	A	P	F	C	W	P
X	A	B	A	C	K	H	G
I	R	L	M	M	E	A	T
T	F	N	E	S	T	I	R
C	O	S	Y	Z	G	R	E
H	O	L	L	O	W	S	E



Mystery Word

What kind of animal is a sugar glider? Write the words in the boxes to find the answer. Write the mystery word in the sentence.

A sugar glider is a _____.



Speech Bubbles and Dialogue

Read the three lines of dialogue (conversation) from page 28 of the story and write them in the correct speech bubble for each character. **Remember** you don't need the inverted commas when using speech bubbles.



1. 'I'm not itchy!'
2. 'It was the caterpillar making you itchy.'
3. 'It wasn't me after all.'

Language Conventions - Annabelle's House Write the correct spelling for the labels on the illustration in the boxes. Shade one circle to show the correct answer for each question. (Answers in Notes)



1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

8. Which word correctly completes this sentence?

How could anyone be allergic to _____ best friend?

- ☐ there ☐ they're ☐ their ☐ thair

9. Which word correctly completes this sentence?

Sylvia could have eaten something her body _____ like.

- ☐ don't ☐ doe'snt ☐ dosn't ☐ doesn't

10. Which word correctly completes this sentence?

Penelope took off her cap and _____ it out the door.

- ☐ throw ☐ through ☐ threw ☐ thru

11. Which word correctly completes this sentence?

Maybe Sylvia was allergic to something Penelope was _____.

- ☐ wearing ☐ whereing ☐ wareing ☐ wearing

12. Which is the correct order for the three missing words?

Annabelle used the lotion from _____ jars.

- ☐ colourful, glass, three ☐ glass, three, colourful
☐ colourful, three, glass ☐ three, colourful, glass

Sequencing Order of Events Cut and paste these sentences onto a larger piece of paper so they are in the same order as the events in the story. Match the sentences to the pictures on activity 6.



*There was a hairy caterpillar on Penelope's jacket.
'Quick! Shake it off.' said Annabelle.*

Annabelle thought Sylvia might have an allergy to something in the forest or to the food she was eating.

When the very last star appeared in the sky, Sylvia and Penelope set off to see Annabelle to find a cure.

Maybe Sylvia was allergic to something Penelope was wearing, so Penelope took off her hat and scarf.

'How could anyone be allergic to a best friend?' said Sylvia.

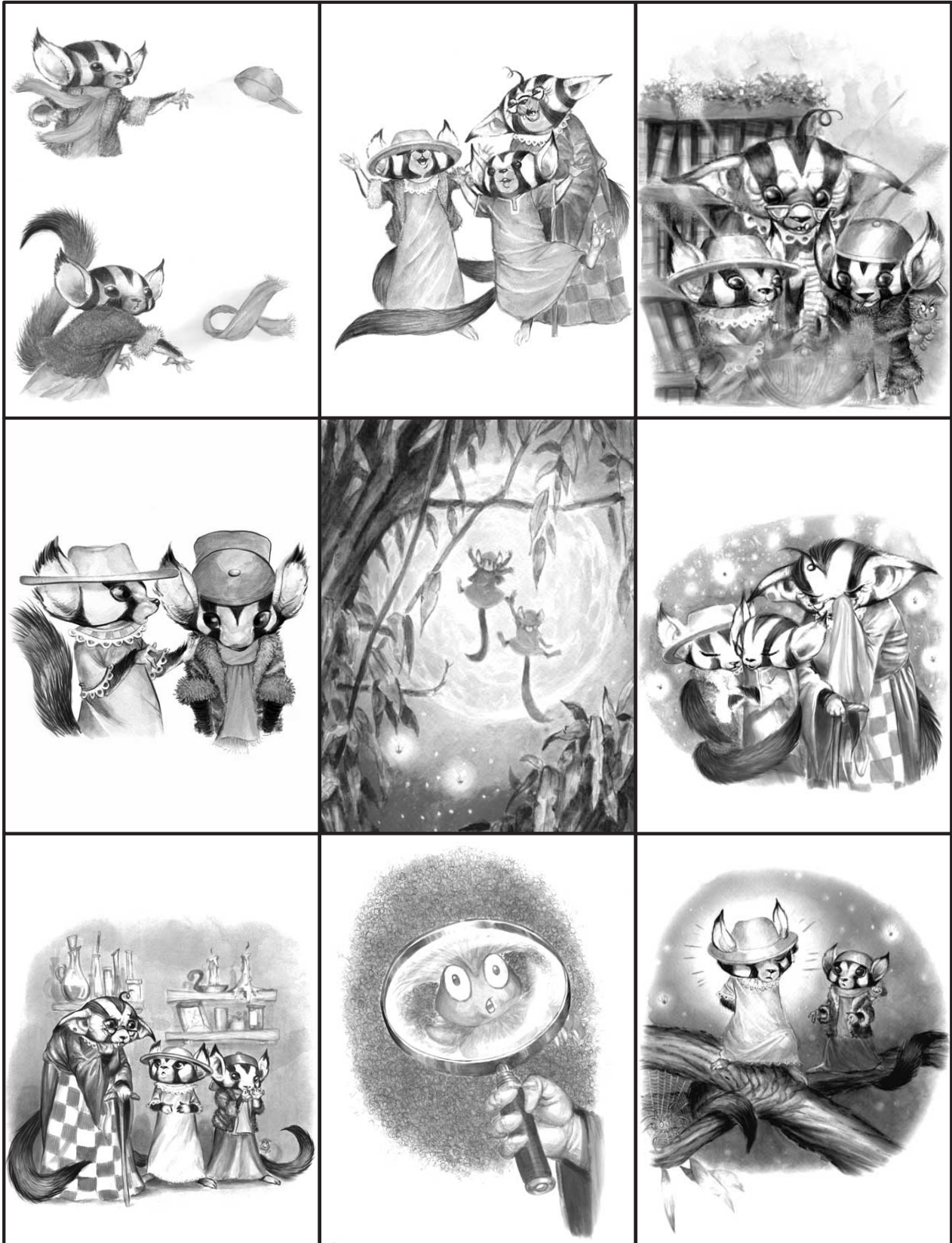
Sylvia had an itch in the middle of her back that she couldn't scratch.

Sylvia and Penelope helped Annabelle mix up a potion that shimmered and shone.

*'I'm not itchy!' said Sylvia.
'It was the caterpillar making you itchy,' said Annabelle.*

'Maybe you're allergic to me. I'll have to go away to see if you stop itching,' said Penelope.






Sequencing Order of Events Cut and paste these pictures onto a larger piece of paper so they are in the same order as the events in the story. Match them with the cut and paste sentences from activity 5.



Reading/Comprehension - Read *Facts about Sugar Gliders* and shade one circle to show the correct answer for each question - activities 7 and 8. (Answers in Notes)

FaCts about Sugar Gliders



-  There are six known species of glider and the sugar glider is the most commonly known. It is native to eastern and northern Australia and was introduced to Tasmania.
-  The sugar glider is a marsupial like a kangaroo.
-  Sugar gliders spend most of their lives living in trees.
-  They earned their name because they like to eat nectar, sap, pollen and flowers. They also eat insects and small lizards.
-  They live in social groups sharing one common nest in the hollow of a tree. Often they disband during the hot summer months. The younger members of the group usually leave the nest before twelve months of age.
-  A sugar glider is relatively small and is about the size of a rat.
-  Their fur is blue-grey to brown-grey on top with a dark stripe that extends from the middle of the head to the mid-back.
-  They have a loud cry like a yip - yip - yip sound.
-  Their predators include kookaburras, snakes, owls and goannas.
-  The sugar glider has a membrane that stretches from its front feet to its back feet. This allows it to glide quite long distances.
-  The sugar glider is nocturnal and its large eyes help it to see at night.
-  The main threats to sugar gliders are cats, foxes, dogs and habitat clearing.

Reading/Comprehension - Read *Facts about Sugar Gliders* and shade one circle to show the correct answer for each question - activities 7 and 8. (Answers in Notes)

1. **How many known species of sugar glider are there?**
 - ☐ 16
 - ☐ 5
 - ☐ 6
 - ☐ 60
2. **What kind of animal is the sugar glider?**
 - ☐ kangaroo
 - ☐ monotreme
 - ☐ bird
 - ☐ marsupial
3. **The sugar glider is native to _____ Australia.**
 - ☐ eastern and southern
 - ☐ northern and western
 - ☐ eastern and northern
 - ☐ southern and western
4. **They are called sugar gliders because _____**
 - ☐ they like to eat native plants that are sweet.
 - ☐ they like to eat insects and small lizards.
 - ☐ they are so tiny and cute.
 - ☐ they find sugar in the hollow of a tree.
5. **What allows the sugar glider to glide long distances?**
 - ☐ large flapping wings
 - ☐ large eyes
 - ☐ its small size
 - ☐ a membrane that stretches along its body
6. **Which sentence is NOT true?**
 - ☐ The sugar glider is about the size of a rat.
 - ☐ Their predators include kookaburras, snakes, owls and emus.
 - ☐ Their fur is blue-grey to brown-grey.
 - ☐ The sugar gliders live in social groups.

Comprehension: What do you know about sugar gliders? Use the Facts about Sugar Gliders sheet (activity 7) to fill in the missing words in these sentences.



Sugar gliders are native to _____ and like kangaroos, they are _____. They are about the _____ of a rat and live in a _____ in the hollow of a _____ with other sugar gliders. _____, _____, _____ and _____ are some of the things they like to eat.



They have a number of predators including kookaburras, _____, _____ and _____. Their loud cry is like a _____ sound.





















One of the most striking things about a sugar glider is the membrane that stretches between its _____ feet and back feet that allows it to _____ from tree to tree.

Because they are _____ they have large _____ to help them see at night. Their _____ is blue-grey to brown-grey with a _____ running along their back.

_____, _____, _____ and _____ are the main threats to sugar gliders.

True or False Comprehension

Colour **true** or **false**.

1. Sylvia had eight older brothers and sisters and they shared a nest in the hollow of a tree.  
2. Sylvia had a best friend called Annabelle.  
3. Sylvia had an itch in the middle of her back that she couldn't scratch. 
4. Sylvia and Penelope visited Annabelle to see if they could find a cure.  
5. Annabelle thought the problem could be prickles or fleas or something that Sylvia had eaten. 
6. Sylvia stopped eating the bark from the acacias. 
7. Sylvia started eating insects and lizards.  
8. Penelope said, 'Maybe you're allergic to me.' 
9. Annabelle mixed up a potion using Sylvia's toenails and hairs from the top of her head.  
10. Penelope took off her cap, her apron and her jacket. 
11. It was a hairy caterpillar in Penelope's jacket that was making Sylvia itchy.  
12. Sylvia said, 'How could anyone be allergic to a best friend?' 

Which sentence matches this picture? Write it on the lines.



Dot Point Comprehension Here are some of the animals in the illustrations of *Sylvia's Itch*. Read *What's That Animal?* and shade one circle to show the correct answer for each question - activities 11 and 12. (Answers in Notes)



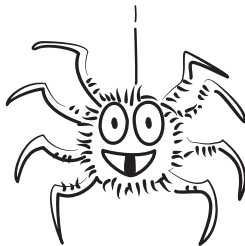
Sugar Glider

- Marsupial
- They have a pouch for their young.
- Some other Australian marsupials: kangaroos, koalas and wombats



Ladybird

- Insect
- They have three body parts and six legs.
- Some other Australian insects: native bees, ants and termites



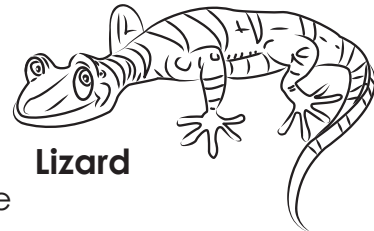
Spider

- Arachnid
- They have two body parts and eight legs.
- Some other Australian arachnids: ticks, redback spiders and scorpions



Owl

- Bird
- They have feathers and wings.
- Some other Australian birds: kookaburras, emus and parrots



Lizard

- Reptile
- They are cold blooded and have scaly skin.
- Some other Australian reptiles: crocodiles, snakes and turtles



Caterpillar

- Insect
- They are the early stage (larva) of a butterfly or moth.
- Like adult insects, caterpillars have three body parts and six true legs. The other legs are called prolegs.

1. Which animals are reptiles?

- ☐ termites and snakes
- ☐ crocodiles and lizards
- ☐ turtles and koalas
- ☐ scorpions and snakes

2. Which animals are arachnids?

- ☐ ticks, spiders and caterpillars
- ☐ spiders, ants and scorpions
- ☐ snakes, parrots and ticks
- ☐ spiders, ticks and scorpions

Dot Point Comprehension Read *What's That Animal?* It tells you about some of the animals in the illustrations of *Sylvia's itch*. Shade one circle to show the correct answer for each question - activities 11 and 12. (Answers in Notes)

3. **Which two animals are in the same animal group?**

- ☐ ladybirds and caterpillars
- ☐ lizards and owls
- ☐ spiders and ladybirds
- ☐ sugar gliders and owls

4. **All marsupials have _____**

- ☐ scaly skin.
- ☐ eight legs.
- ☐ feathers and wings.
- ☐ a pouch for their young.

5. **What is the early stage of a butterfly or moth called?**

- ☐ young
- ☐ baby
- ☐ larva
- ☐ ant

6. **Which animal has two body parts and eight legs?**

- ☐ spider
- ☐ bird
- ☐ insect
- ☐ reptile

7. **Which sentence is NOT true?**

- ☐ Wombats are marsupials.
- ☐ Kookaburras are birds.
- ☐ Termites are insects.
- ☐ Sugar Gliders are reptiles.

8. **Emus have wings but they cannot fly. Which sentence is NOT true.**

- ☐ All birds have feathers.
- ☐ All birds have wings.
- ☐ All birds can fly.
- ☐ Emus are birds.



My Animal Character



What my character looks like

Where my character lives

What my character eats

My character's family and friends

My character's likes and dislikes

A picture of my character



Dot to Dot - Numbers 1 to 50



Number Pattern Maze - (Using numbers 1 to 30)

Sylvia and Penelope needed to glide from tree to tree through the forest to see Annabelle.

1. Show the trail they took the first time by counting in **twos** and joining the **even numbers** with a coloured line.
2. Show the trail they took the second time by counting in **twos** and joining the **odd numbers** with a different coloured line.



Grid References Use the picture grid to answer the questions below.

1. Write the grid references for these creatures. Most have more than one. Use the letter first.

2



B1

2



2



2



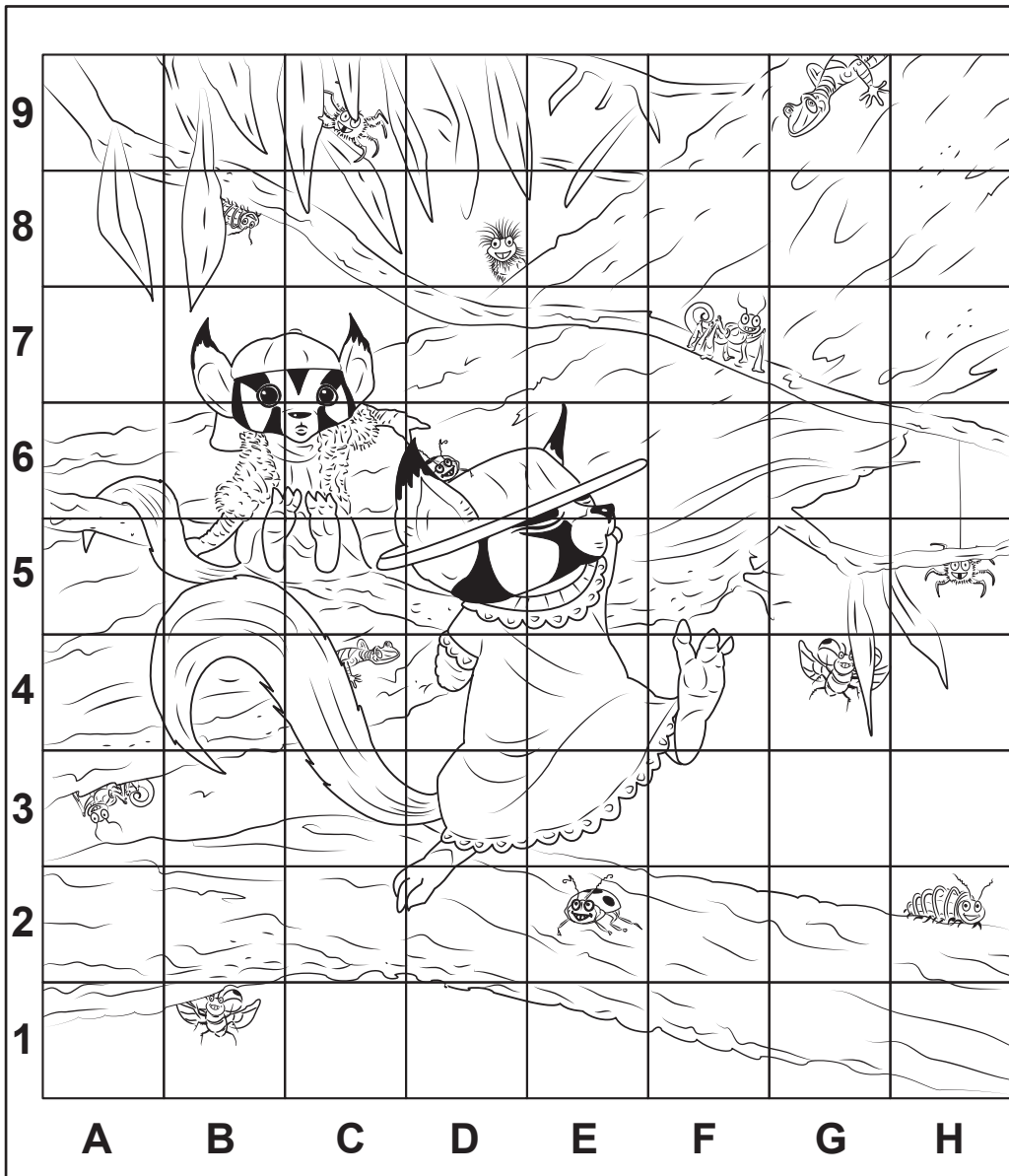
2



2



1



2. Penelope's cap is sitting in three squares. Write the three grid references.

3. What is the grid reference for the tip of Sylvia's tail? _____

4. Draw a butterfly in **A7** and an ant in **H1**.

5. Draw one leaf in **F9** and another leaf in **G5**.

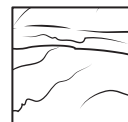
6. Find these five squares in the grid and write the grid references.





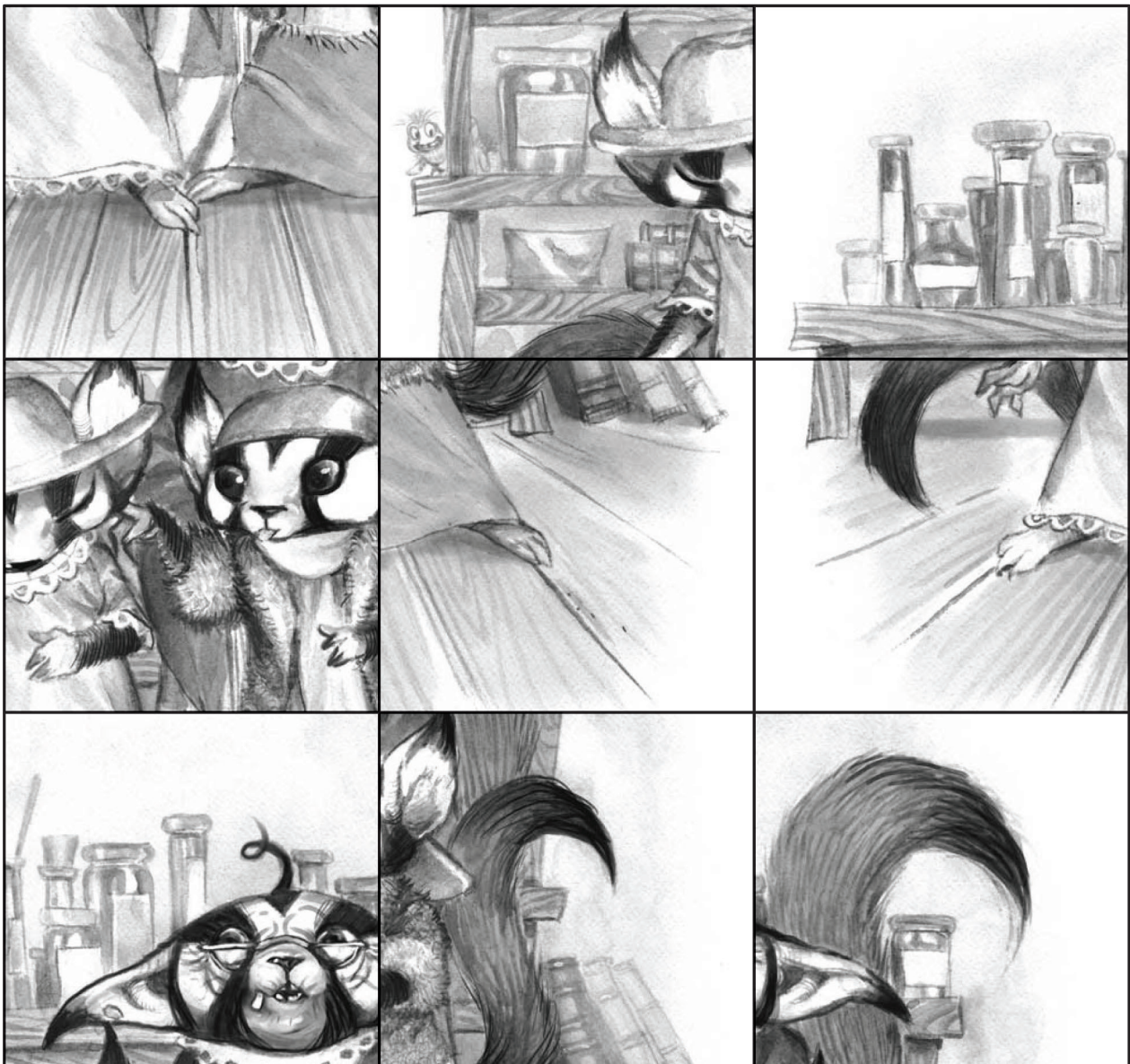






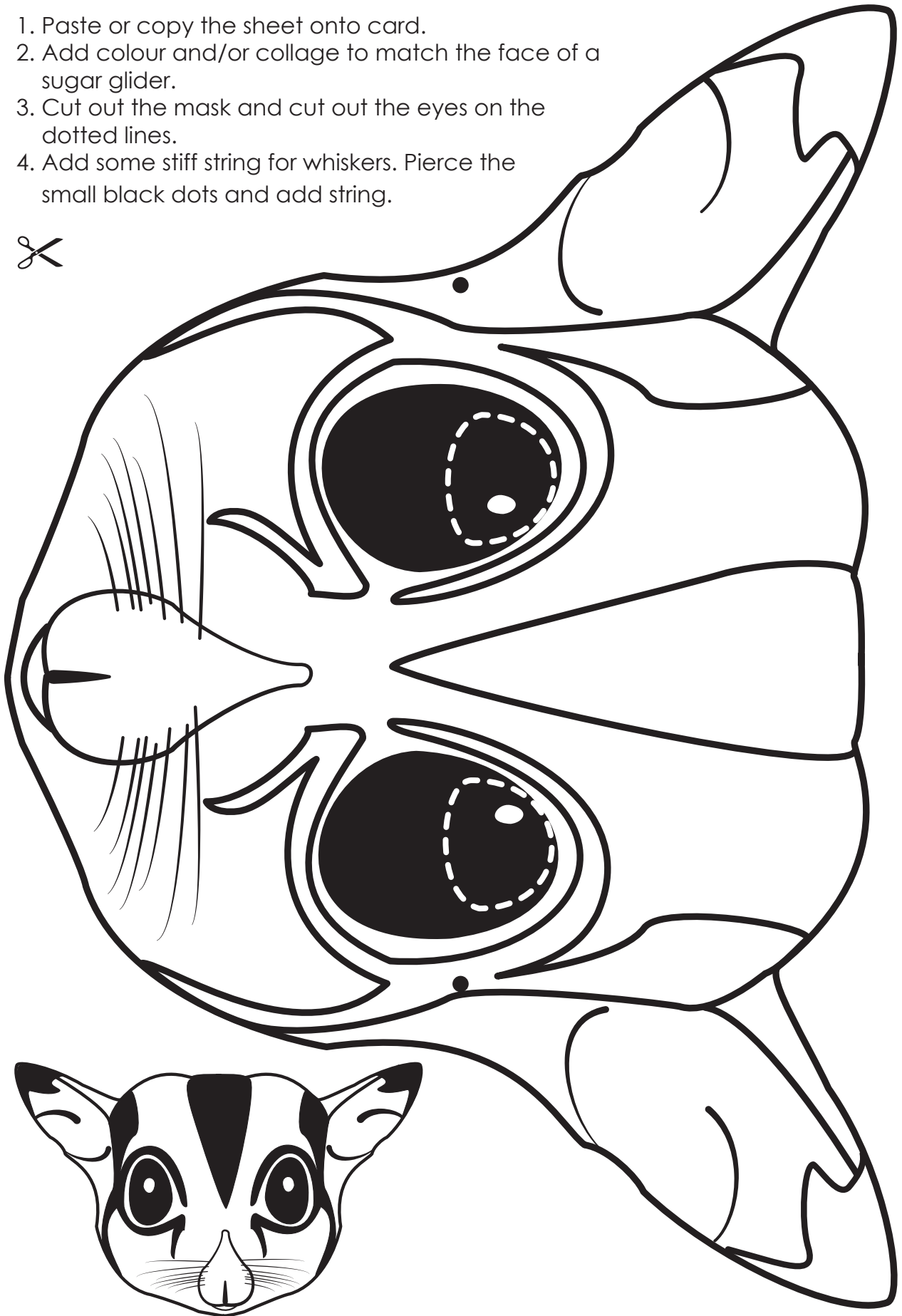
Jigsaw Puzzle

Cut out the pieces in the grid. Glue them together on another piece of paper to make a picture of Sylvia, Penelope and Annabelle.



Sugar Glider Mask

1. Paste or copy the sheet onto card.
2. Add colour and/or collage to match the face of a sugar glider.
3. Cut out the mask and cut out the eyes on the dotted lines.
4. Add some stiff string for whiskers. Pierce the small black dots and add string.



Sugar Glider Kite

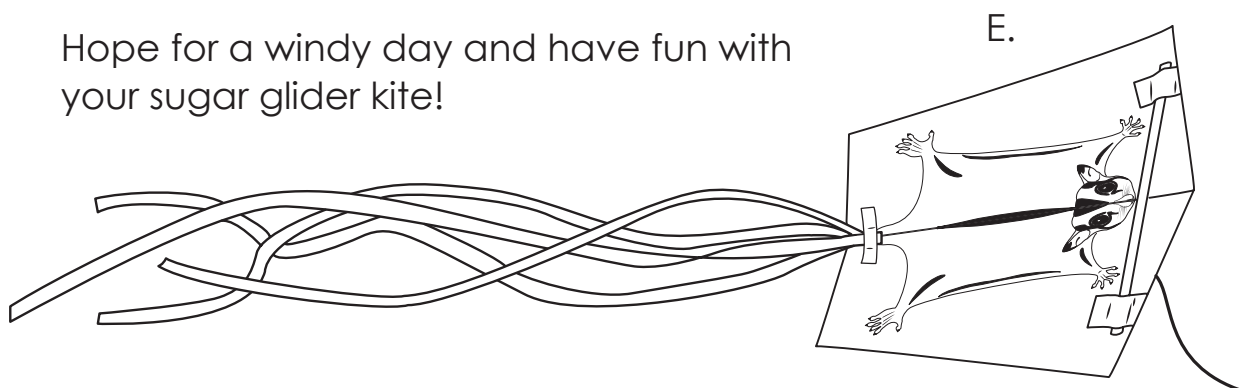


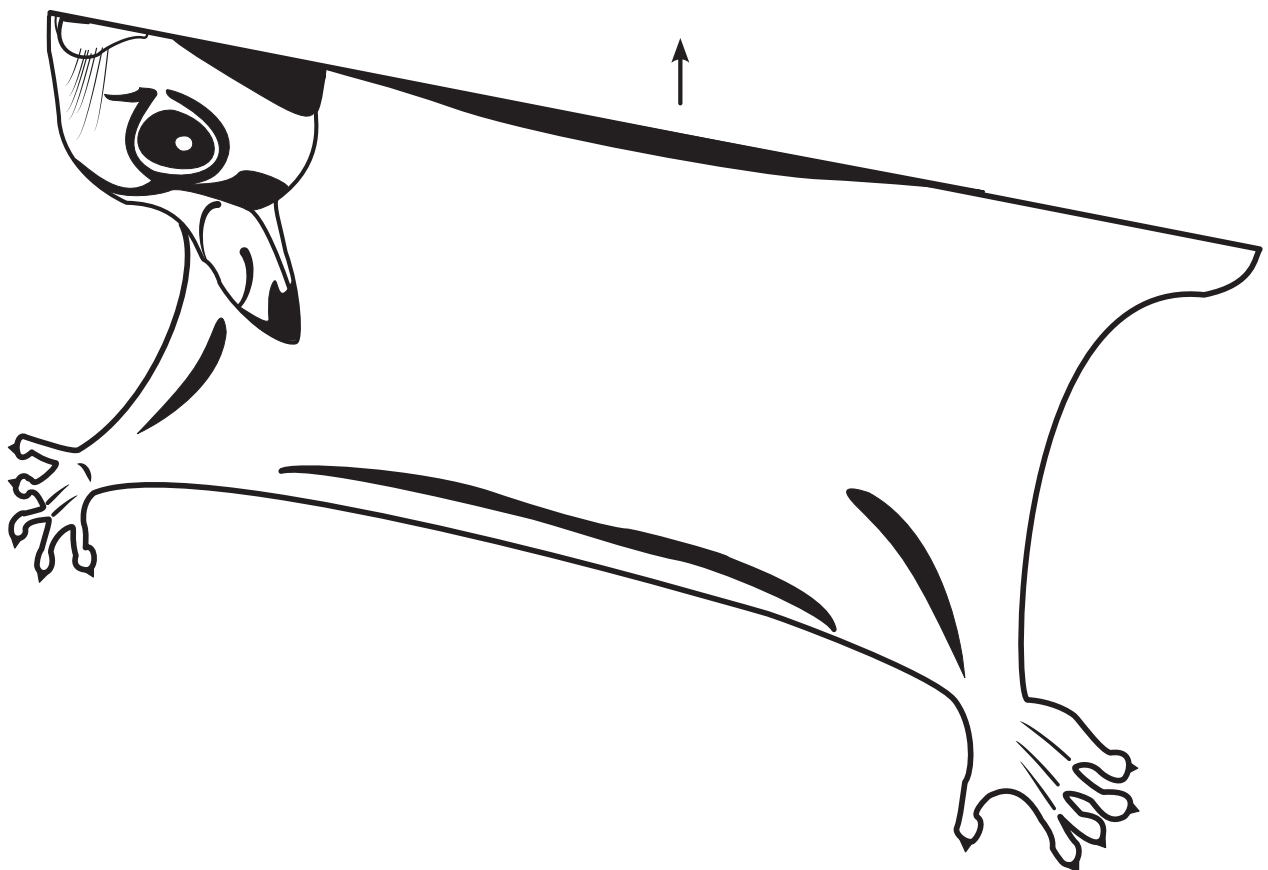
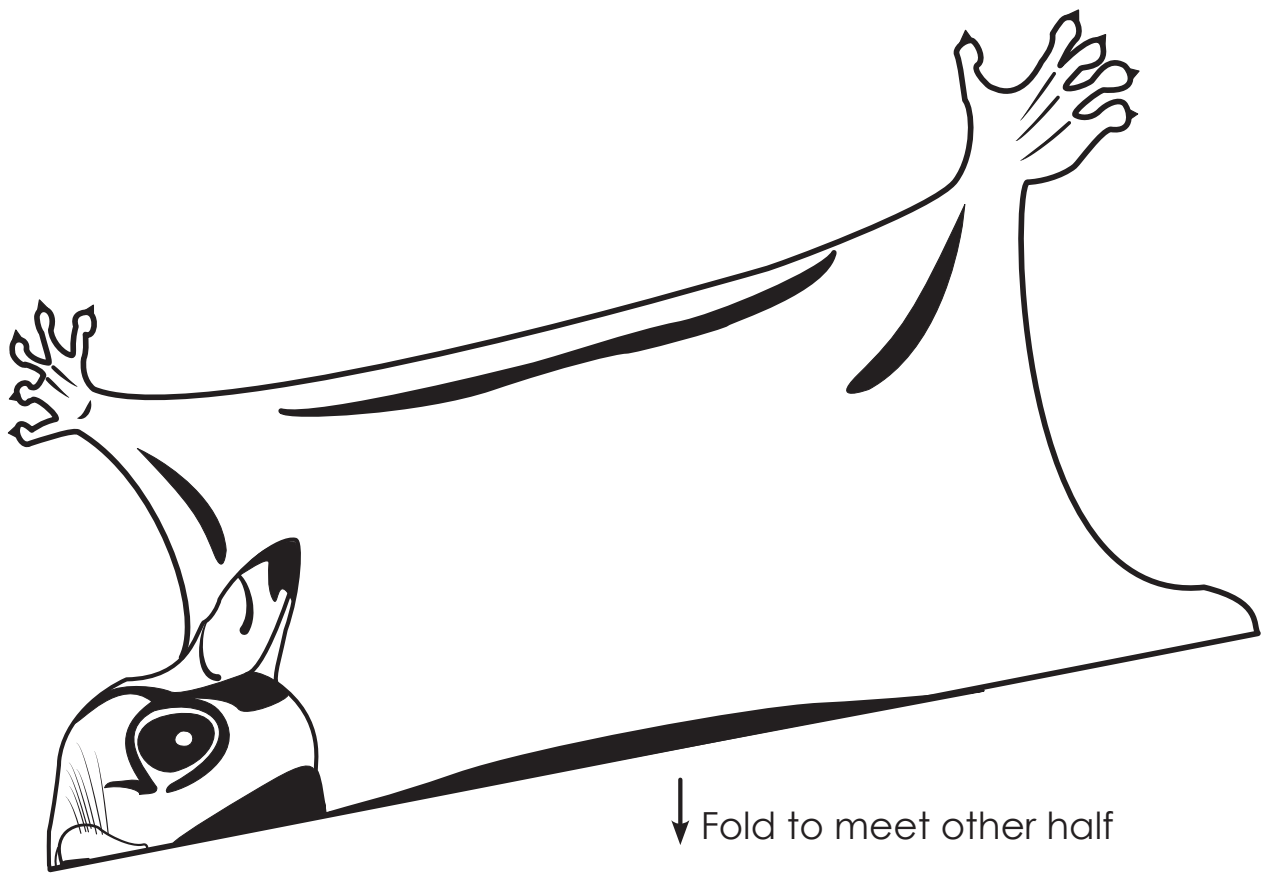
You will need

- Copy of the sugar glider kite (activity 20)
- Colouring tools
- Drinking straw or stick
- Scissors
- Masking tape
- String - 3 to 4 metres
- Streamers
- Stapler or glue

1. Colour the sugar glider.
2. Fold the kite pattern. (A)
3. Glue or staple along the back flap near the fold. (B)
4. Tape a drinking straw across the top near the head and tape down at the sides. This helps keep the sides up. (C)
5. Use scissors to cut a small hole through the back flap about a third of the way along the flap. Tie the length of string through the hole and wind the other end around a stick. (D)
6. Turn the kite over and tape 3 to 5 streamers, 1½ metres in length, to make a tail. For small children, a shorter tail works well too. (E)

Hope for a windy day and have fun with your sugar glider kite!





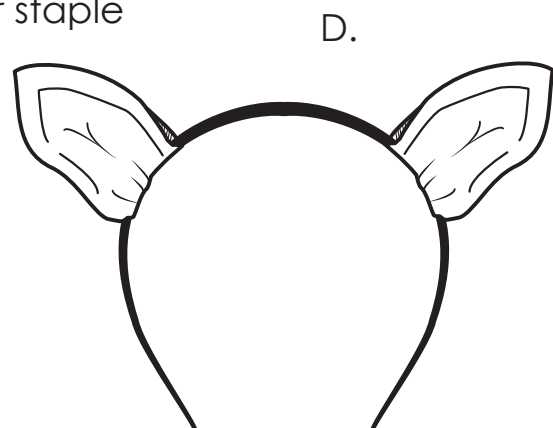
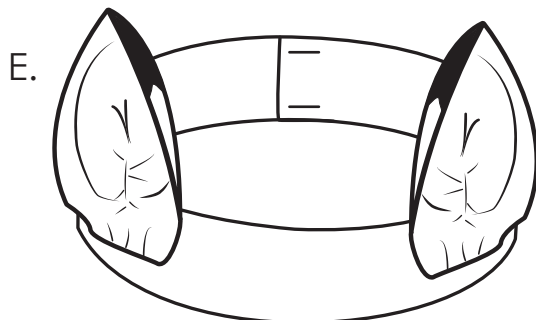
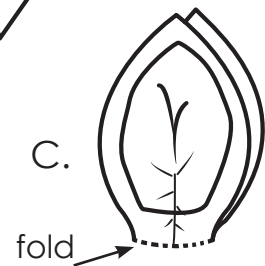
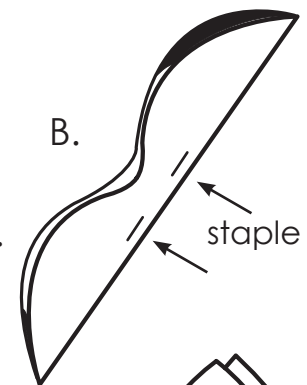
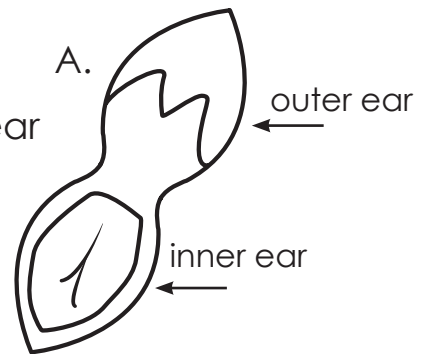
Sugar Glider Ears



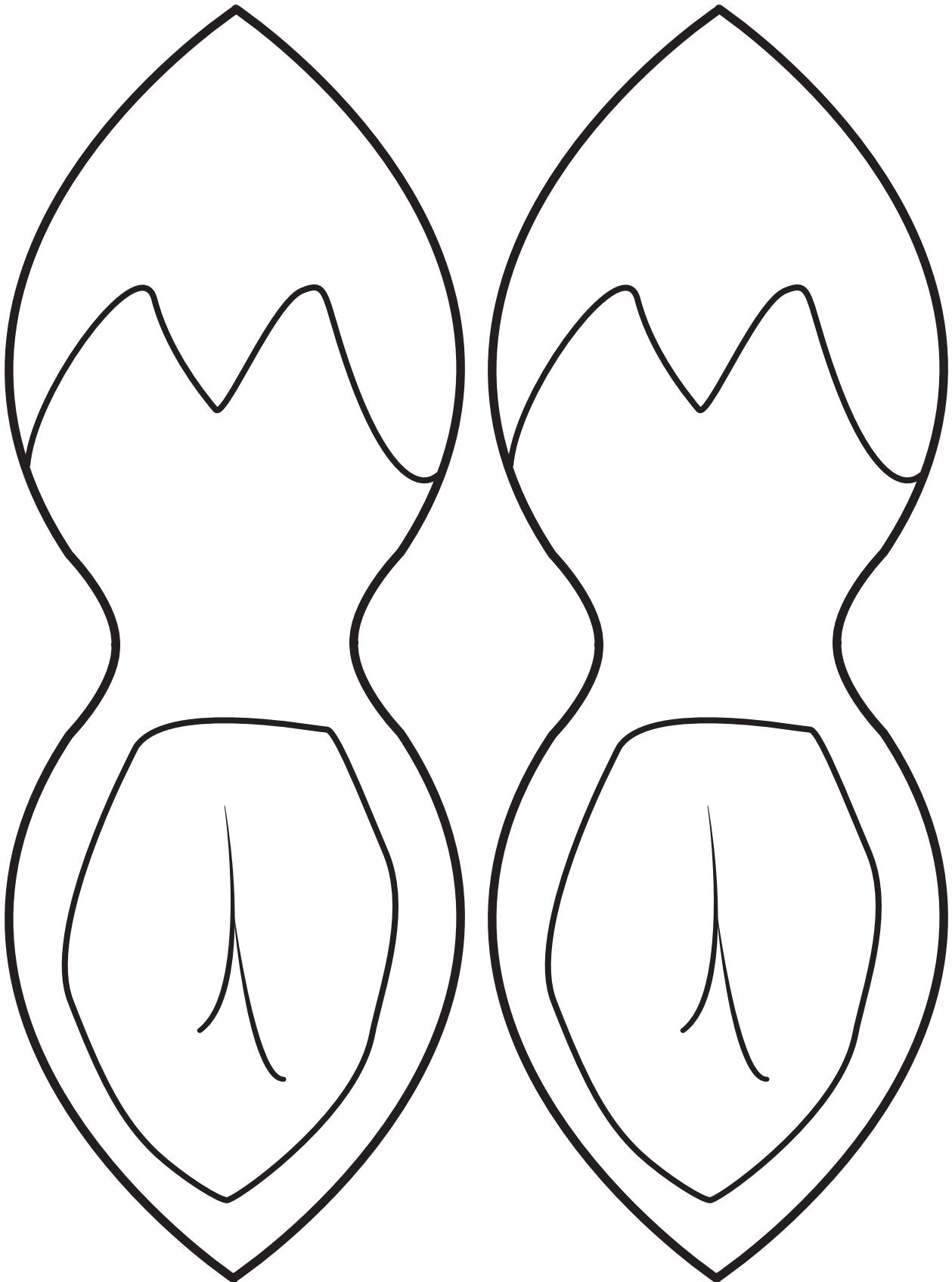
You will need

- Copy of the ears - one right ear, one left ear (activity 22)
- A headband **or** a cardboard strip
- Scissors
- Masking tape
- PVA glue
- Coloured pencils, felt pens, paint or furry collage materials
- Stapler

1. Cut out the two ear patterns. One side is the inner ear and the other side is the outer ear (A).
2. Colour or collage the two ears to match those on a sugar glider. Use the characters in *Sylvia's Itch* as a guide.
3. Fold the ear in half (B) and staple on the back as shown. This puts a hollow in the ear when folded.
4. Fold the two halves of the ear onto each other, pressing the inner ear into the outer ear (C).
5. Open up and fold the ears over the headband (D) so they sit to the side of the head like a sugar glider.
6. Glue or staple the inner ear to the outer ear.
7. If using a cardboard strip, glue or staple as shown. (E)



Sugar Glider Ears Instructions on Activity 21

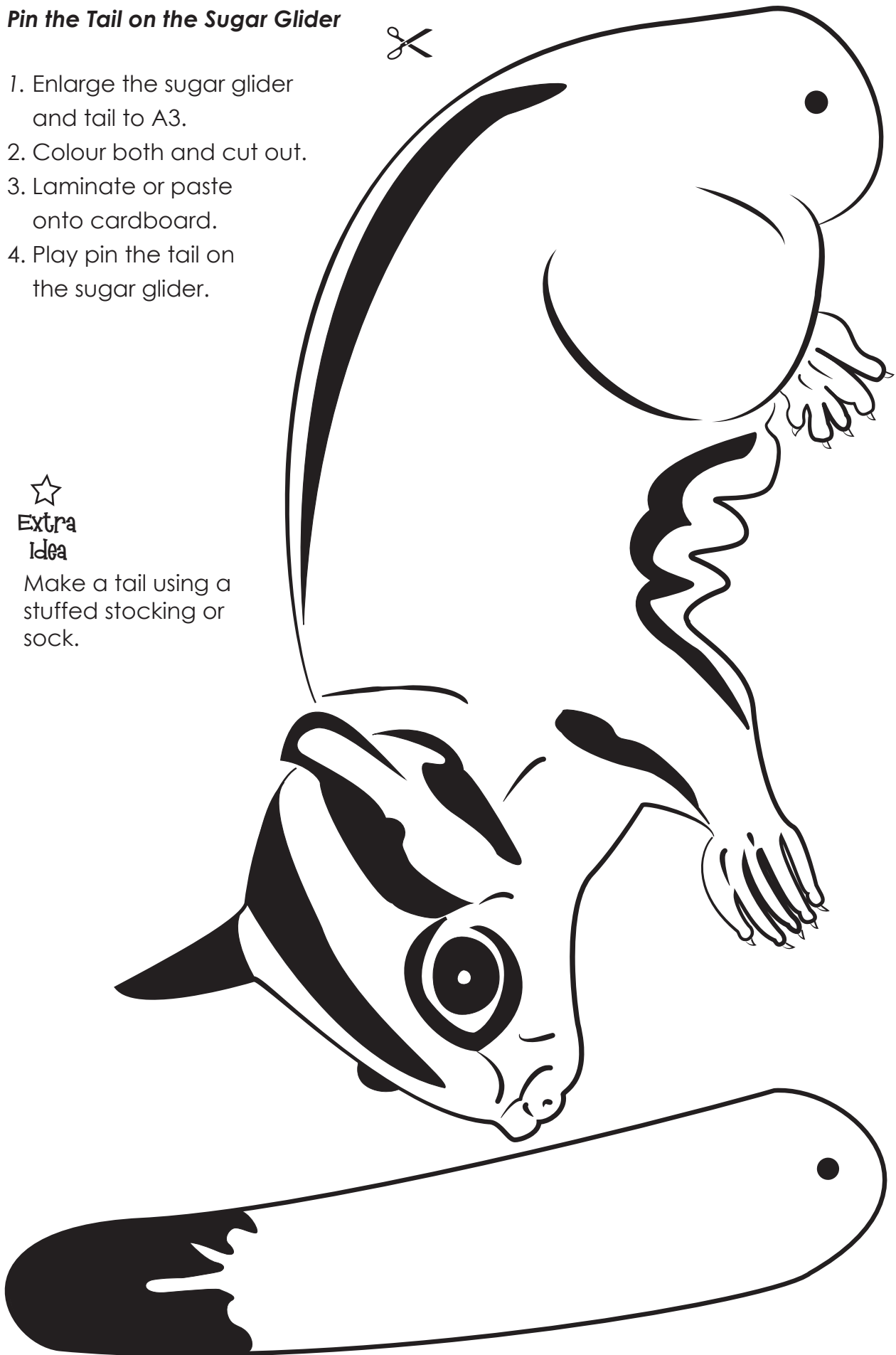


Pin the Tail on the Sugar Glider

1. Enlarge the sugar glider and tail to A3.
2. Colour both and cut out.
3. Laminate or paste onto cardboard.
4. Play pin the tail on the sugar glider.

★
**Extra
Idea**

Make a tail using a
stuffed stocking or
sock.

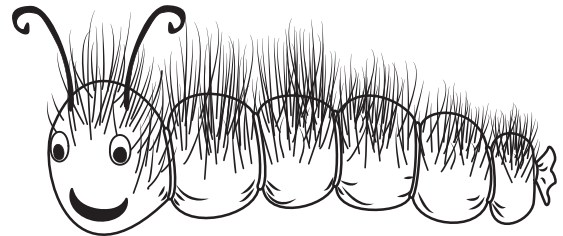


Creating Caterpillars There are many ways to create caterpillars - hairy and not so hairy! Here are some ideas to get you started.

The full instructions for these ideas and many more are available on the web. Search for 'Making Caterpillars' or if you want to see them first, try an image search and see what you can find.

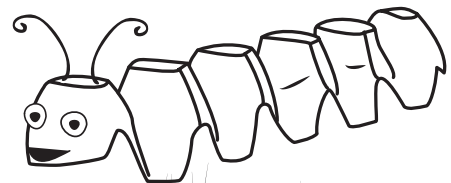
Grass Seed Hairy Caterpillar

Fill a nylon stocking with potting mix mixed with grass seed. Cut the stocking to desired length, tie off and segment with rubber bands. Soak the stocking in water and keep moist in a sunny spot. Add googly eyes and pipe cleaners for antennae. Watch as your 'caterpillar' sprouts hair!



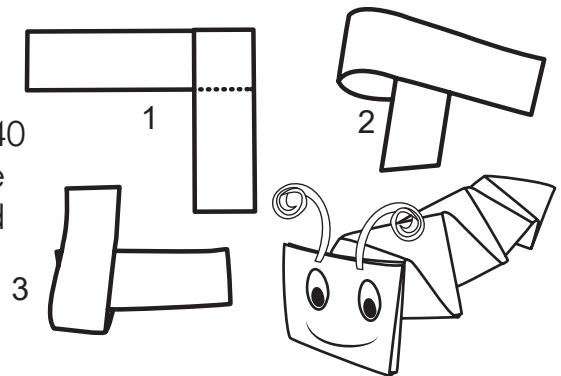
Egg Carton Caterpillar

Use half an egg carton, adding googly eyes and pipe cleaners **OR** fill the egg sections with cotton wool and sprinkle on top with either grass seed or bird seed. Water and keep moist in a sunny spot.



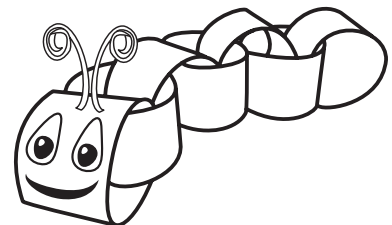
Concertina Caterpillar

This simple caterpillar is made from two strips of different coloured paper about 40 cm in length and 2 cm wide. Box fold the two strips and draw eyes and add curled paper for the antennae.



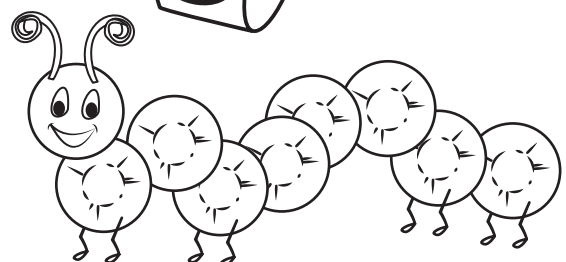
Paper Ring Caterpillar

Join together paper rings made from different coloured paper strips about 20 cm in length and 2cm wide. Add a face and curled paper for the antennae.



Paper Plate Caterpillar

This is a great group activity. Each child colours a small paper plate and all sections are added together to make a wall display.

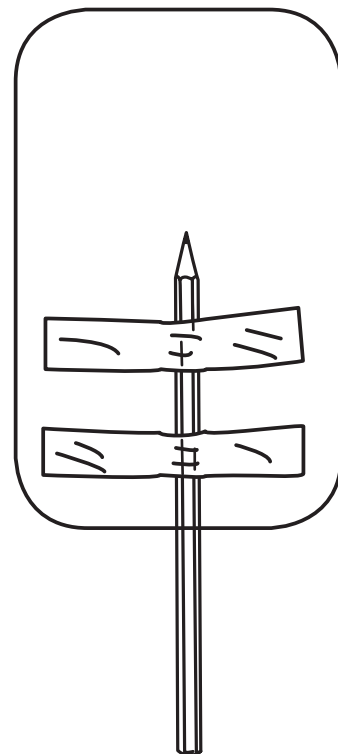


'Sylvia's Itch' Stick Puppets**You will need**

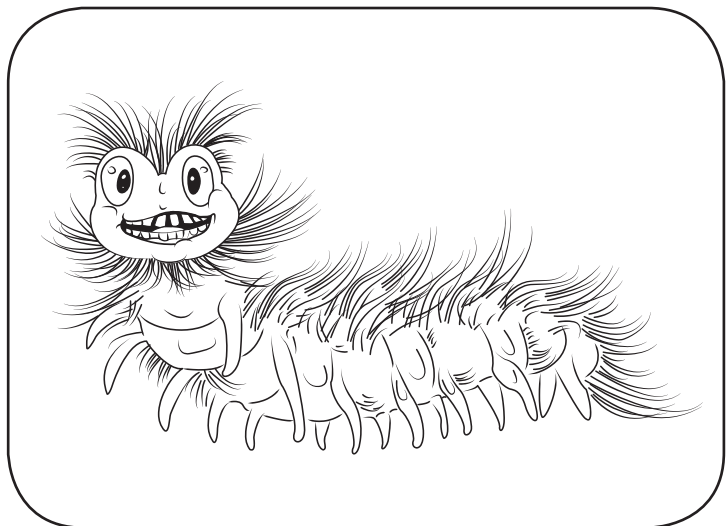
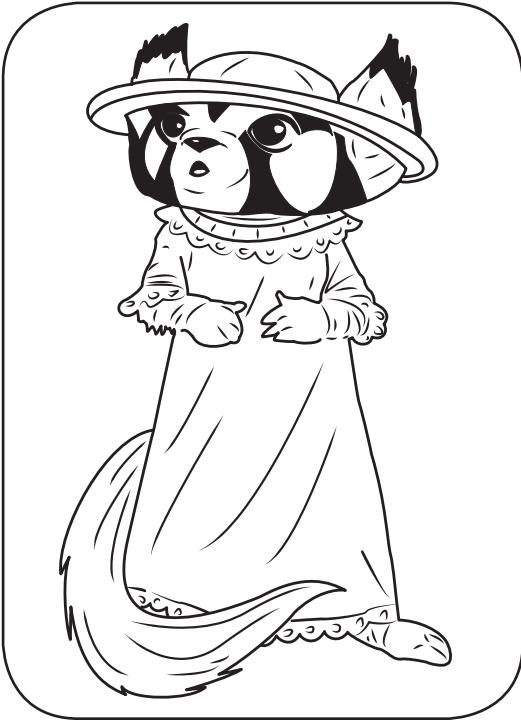
- *Sylvia's Itch* character pictures (activity 26) - or draw your own
- Cardboard - or photocopy the activity sheet onto card
- Googly eyes / PVA glue (optional)
- Felt pens, coloured pencils, crayons or paint
- Ice block sticks or pencils
- Sticky tape
- Scissors

1. Glue the picture sheet onto the cardboard and cut out each character (or use the copy on card).
2. Colour or paint each card so they look like the characters in the story.
3. If you are using googly eyes, glue them onto the characters.
4. Tape an ice block stick or pencil to the back of the card.
5. Use your stick puppets to perform a puppet play of the story.

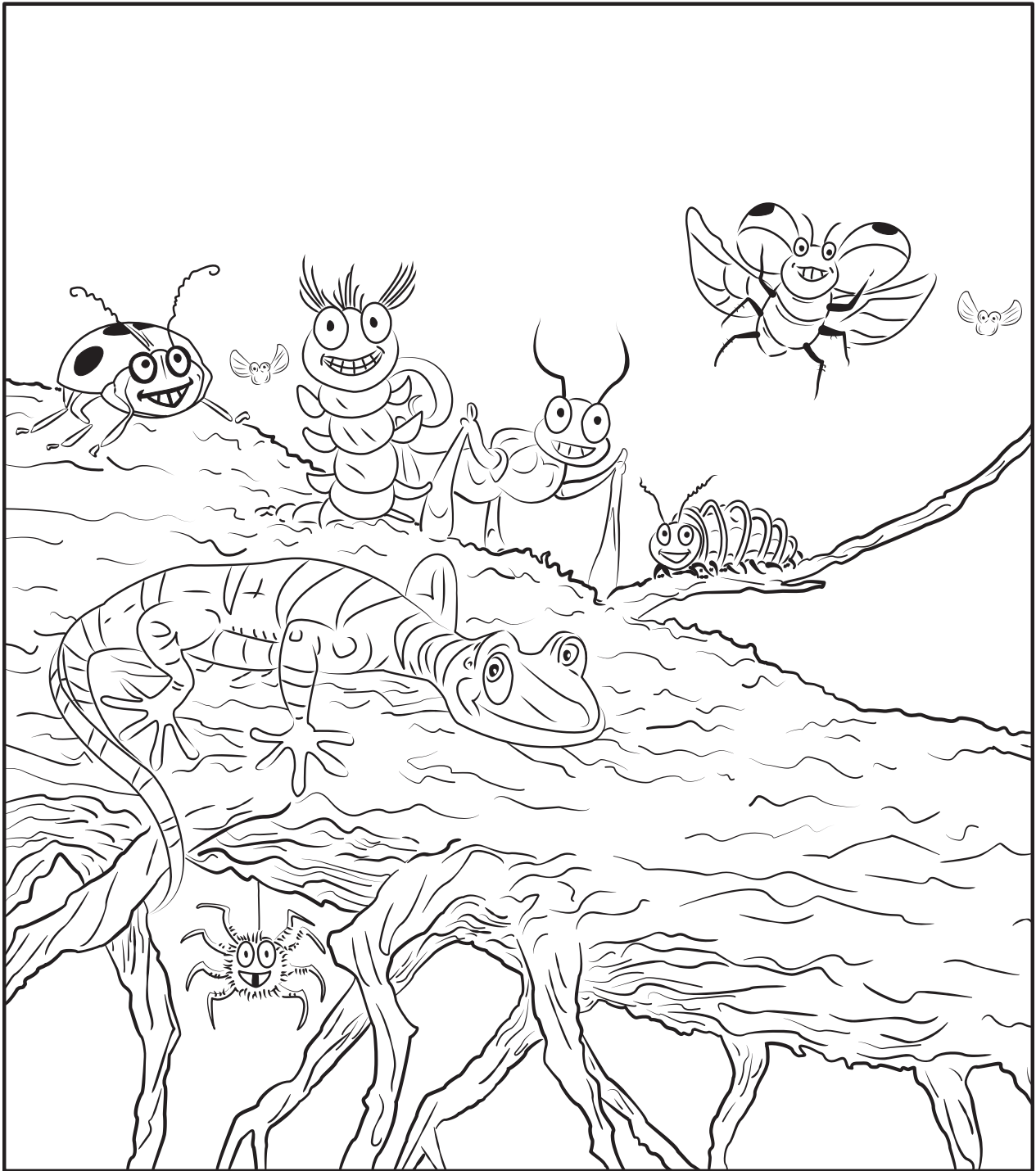
Have fun!



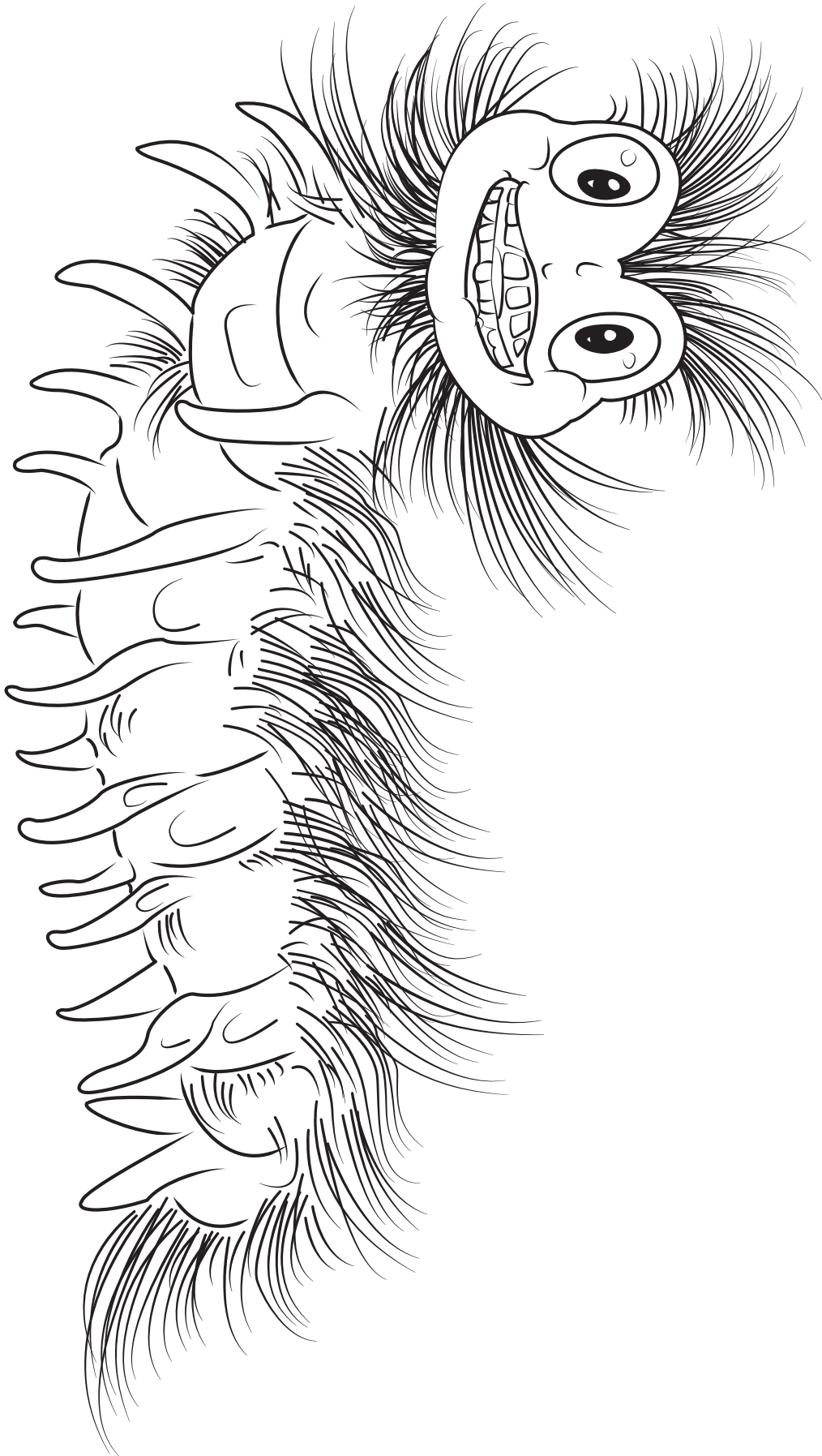
'Sylvia's Itch' Stick Puppets Instructions on Activity 25



Why do the creatures on page 16 of the story look so happy?
Colour the picture.



Colour the hairy caterpillar.





Sylvia's Itch

A play based on the original story 'Sylvia's Itch'
written by Robin Adolphs and illustrated by Aaron Pocock

Characters

Narrator - reads the narrative parts of the play.

Sylvia - a beautiful shy little sugar glider.

Penelope - a cute self-confident little sugar glider. Sylvia's best friend.

Annabelle - a very old wise sugar glider.



The hairy caterpillar - a cheeky, mischievous hairy caterpillar. (*A non-speaking role. The caterpillar follows Sylvia and Penelope around and climbs onto Penelope's jacket and hides nearby. He is in almost every scene but the others don't see him until Sylvia sees him on the jacket.*)



Scene 1 Sylvia's Tree

Narrator: Sylvia was a beautiful young sugar glider who had everything she could ever want. She had a loving mother and father, and eight older brothers and sisters. They all shared a warm, cosy nest in the hollow of a tree in the Australian bush. And she had a best friend called Penelope. But Sylvia was not happy.

Sylvia: I have an itch I can't scratch. It's right in the middle of my back, just in the spot where I can't reach.

Narrator: Sylvia tried scratching the itch with a stick. She tried rolling around on her back. She tried rubbing herself against a tree. But everything she did just made the itch worse. (*Sylvia scratches her back with a stick, rolls on her back, rubs against a tree.*)

Penelope: You should find out what's causing that itch. There's a cure for almost anything.

Sylvia: But what cures an itch?

Penelope: I don't know, but let's find Annabelle and ask her. She'll know.

Narrator: So when the very last star appeared in the sky, Sylvia and Penelope set off to find Annabelle. They only stopped to rest twice. (*Sylvia and Penelope glide off to Annabelle's.*)



Scene 2 The First Visit to Annabelle's Home

Penelope: There's Annabelle. (*Penelope points.*)

Narrator: Inside a giant hollowed-out tree was the oldest, wrinkliest sugar glider Sylvia had ever seen. (*Annabelle can be seen stirring a pot.*)

Sylvia: Excuse me, Annabelle. I have an itch I can't scratch. Do you know if there's a cure?

Annabelle: First we need to find out why you're itching. (*Annabelle looks deep in thought. Rubs her chin.*)

Penelope: Makes sense. How do we do that?

Annabelle: Elimination. It could be a prickle. **Penelope:** Nope. No prickles. (*Penelope peers at Sylvia's back.*)

Annabelle: It could be fleas. (*Penelope peers at Sylvia's back again.*)

Penelope: Nope. No fleas.

Annabelle: Well then, it must be an allergy.

Sylvia: What's that? Is it like a leech?

Narrator: Annabelle laughed until the tears ran down her face and her glasses fogged up. (*Annabelle laughs and wipes her eyes on her apron.*)

Annabelle: No, it's not like a leech. An allergy means you could have eaten something your body doesn't like.

Penelope: Or it could be something in the forest making you itchy, like spiders or scratchy mites or the stinging tree.

Annabelle: Try the food first.



Scene 3 Back at Sylvia's Tree

Narrator: So for a few days Sylvia stopped eating gum from the acacias.

Sylvia: I'm still itchy!

Narrator: She stopped eating sap from the eucalyptus trees.

Sylvia: I'm still itchy!

Penelope: Maybe you're allergic to meat.

Narrator: So Sylvia stopped eating insects and lizards.

Sylvia: I'm still itchy!

Penelope: It's very strange. When does your back itch the most?

Sylvia: Mostly when I'm with you.

Penelope: Maybe you're allergic to me.

Sylvia: Oh no!

Penelope: I'll have to go away and see if you stop itching.

Sylvia: No! We should visit Annabelle again.

Penelope: Good idea. Let's go.

Scene 4 Back at Annabelle's Home

Annabelle: But I've never heard of anyone being allergic to a best friend. Hmm, maybe a potion will work. But I'll need something special from Penelope. First I need toenails.

Sylvia & Penelope: Toenails!

Annabelle: Yes toenails. I need toenail clippings from five of your toenails.

Penelope: Ouch, ouch, ouch, ouch, ouch!

Annabelle: And I need hairs. I need five hairs from the top of your head.

Penelope: Ouch, ouch, ouch, ouch, ouch!

Narrator: Annabelle took three jars from her shelf. There was a lotion the colour of a fresh morning sky. There was a lotion the colour of the sun on a hot summer's afternoon. And there was a lotion with all the colours of the Australian bush.

Annabelle: You can help me mix everything together. (*They all mix the ingredients together with a big spoon.*)

Sylvia: Ooh, it's shimmering!

Penelope: And shining!

Narrator: Annabelle rubbed some potion onto Sylvia's itchy spot. (*Annabelle rubs some lotion on Sylvia's back.*)

Sylvia: It's still itchy!

Annabelle: Hmm, maybe you're not allergic to Penelope after all.

Penelope: Yay!

Sylvia: But I'm still itchy!

Annabelle: Wait! Maybe you're allergic to something Penelope's wearing.

Narrator: Penelope took off her cap and threw it out the door. (*Penelope throws the cap out the door.*)

Penelope: How's that?

Sylvia: Still itchy!

Narrator: Penelope took off her scarf and threw it out the door. (*Penelope throws the scarf out the door.*)

Penelope: How's that?

Sylvia: Still itchy! Look! There's something on your jacket. (*Sylvia points to Penelope's jacket. Annabelle gets out a huge magnifying glass and peers at the jacket. The caterpillar can be seen by Sylvia and Penelope for the first time.*)

Annabelle: It's a hairy caterpillar! Quick, shake it off.

Penelope: Now try on my jacket, Sylvia. Let's see if you're still itchy. *(Penelope takes off her jacket and helps Sylvia put it on. Annabelle starts brushing the jacket down with a brush. The caterpillar skulks away.)*

Annabelle: Better make sure that caterpillar has taken all his hairs with him.

Sylvia: I'm not itchy!

Annabelle: It was the caterpillar making you itchy.

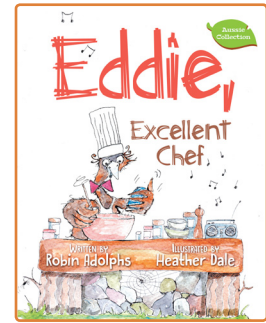
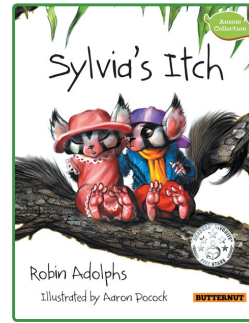
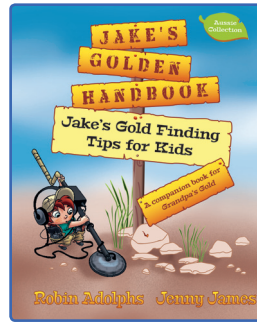
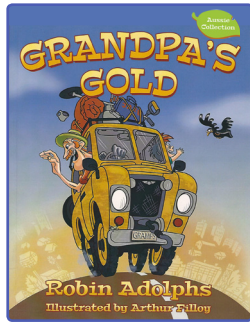
Penelope: It wasn't me after all.

Sylvia: Of course it wasn't you, Penelope. How could anyone be allergic to a best friend?

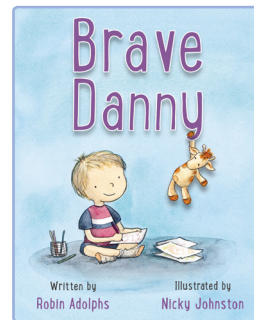
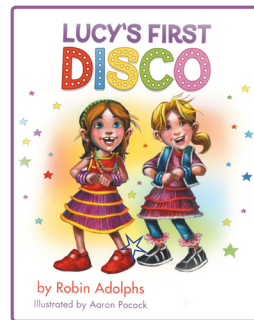


The End

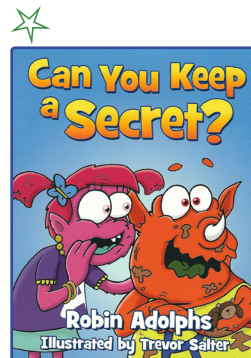
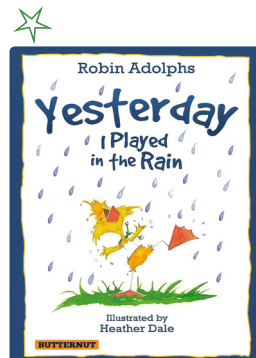
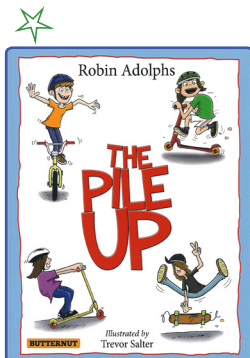
★ Aussie Collection



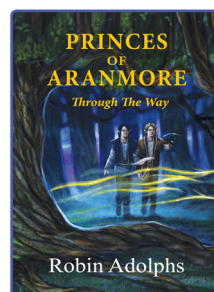
★ Social Topics



Other Titles



Middle Grade Fantasy Novel



★ with notes and activities

★ with notes, activities **AND** Australian Curriculum Alignment/NAPLAN-style activities