

Itchy Bear

The fun has just begun!

Teacher/Librarian resources



Neil Griffiths

Illustrated by
Judith Blake



Itchy Bear – Teacher/Librarian resources

The following set of free downloadable resources for teachers and library staff will guarantee your storytimes are fun from start to finish! Designed to support storytelling at its best, we offer ideas on ways to introduce the story and how to involve the children in it. We have also provided suggestions on how to exploit the story, helping you assess the children's understanding of the storyline, and how to read the story aloud to ensure the children are fully engaged. But storytime shouldn't just end with the story. With this in mind, we have provided a set of role-play and curriculum starting points and highly enjoyable craft and game activities to ensure the fun really has just begun!

Introducing the story

- Ask the children to bring in their own teddy bears to show and talk about before the story begins.
- Use a back scratcher.
- Begin scratching in front of the children uncontrollably!
- Play Copy me! to warm everyone up. You scratch a part of your body and they follow!

Questions to ask before the story begins

- *What makes you itchy?*
- *Can anyone tell me anything about bears?*
- *Has anyone seen a real bear?*
- *Who is the author of this story?*

Some read-aloud ideas

- Scratch every time you read *itchy, itch* or *scratch!*
- Snore on the page beginning *Bear was enjoying a nice long sleep.*
- Ask everyone to join in with the scratching. *It started between his toes, ... , etc.*
- Really make the most of saying *Oooh, lovely.* Encourage the children to say it.
- Scratch bottoms on the floor when Itchy Bear scratches his.
- Look really sad each time you say *Oh dear* throughout the story.
- Emphasise the words *Mmm, wonderful.*
- Keep adding twitawoo owl sounds amongst the owl's words, or use a whistle.

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- Ask the children to push their tummies out as far as they can and sway them as if scratching when Itchy Bear scratches his tummy.
- Emphasise the words *Ahhh, heavenly*.
- Use a tiny high voice for the millipede!
- The children could patter their hands or feet, like apples falling.
- Peep over the top of the book, or under it, as if you are Itchy Bear under the pile of apples.
- Munch an apple on the last page and try and say *Delicious* with a mouthful of apple.
- Let the children try!

Questions to ask as you read the story

(to encourage prediction, careful listening and to hold attention)

- *Why is Itchy Bear itchy?*
- *Where do you think Itchy Bear will find to do some scratching? What could he scratch on?*
- *Where do moles live?*
- *Oh no! Who might Itchy Bear disturb by scratching his ear on that branch?*
- *What do we call creatures who like to sleep in the day and come out at night?*
- *Do you know any other creatures that do this?*
- *Is anyone hiding in the log? Who?*
- *Who is hiding in the twigs?*
- *How many legs does a millipede have?*
- *Will Itchy Bear be able to scratch his back without more trouble?*

If re-reading the story

- Encourage the children to do all the 'itching'.
- Let each child say *Oh dear!* with a sigh.
- Choose a different child to say *Oooh, lovely, Mmm, wonderful, Ahhh, heavenly*.
- The children could also speak the animal parts.
- Give a child some sandpaper to rub together each time Itchy Bear scratches.
- Let a child munch an apple on the last page loudly!

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Questions to ask after you have read the story

(to assess understanding and memory)

Ask some of the following questions in any order:

- *What disturbed Itchy Bear's sleep?*
- *Who lived under the rock?*
- *What part of Itchy Bear's body gets scratched by a log?*
- *How did Itchy Bear scratch his back?*
- *Who lived under a pile of twigs?*
- *How did the apples taste?*

Additional questions (for extension)

- *Why do you think Itchy Bear was itchy in the first place? What made him itchy?*
- *Can you remember, in the correct order, the creatures Itchy Bear met?*
- *Have you ever been itchy? Why?*
- *If Itchy Bear had an itchy nose, where might he have scratched it?*
- *What do you know about moles, owls, squirrels and millipedes?*

Enjoying the illustrations

Let the children look carefully at the inside front cover. Now ask these questions:

- *Where was the caterpillar?*
- *How many bees did you see?*
- *What other insects were there?*
- *What was flying above a daisy?*
- Now go on a bug hunt throughout the story!
- Turn to the penultimate page: *This just isn't my day*. Let the children look carefully. Close the book. Can they now guess how many apples there were?

Imaginative role-play

Ideas for instant role-play:

- Go on a bear hunt! Use **ITCH 1**.
- Go on a bug hunt!
- Take torches and go on a night adventure to look for nocturnal creatures.
- Find places to hibernate!
- Have a pretend apple shop to play in.

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- Act out the story, taking the parts of the creatures. The children could also be the rock, branch, log, twig pile and tree! Use the mask set **ITCH 2**.

Role-play areas to create

- Create a woodland full of homes for woodland creatures and read a range of woodland-based stories, e.g. *Farthing Wood*, *What's the time, Grandma Wolf?*
- Create a bug environment and read a range of bug stories, e.g. *If Only*, *Who'd be a fly?*, *There's a spider in the bath!* (Neil Griffiths, Red Robin Books).
- Create an animal/pet Rescue Centre or Treatment Centre (especially for animals with an itch!).
- Set up a fruit shop and have apple-tasting.
- Design a house for bears, e.g. a cave, a cottage. Enjoy bear stories.

Small world areas to create

- Act out the story using small world animals.
- Create an adventure playground for Itchy Bear to play in!
- Make paw prints in the sand.
- Create a bug environment and hide bugs!
- Make tunnels and mole hills for Mole.

Outdoor play

- Set up an Itchy Bear trail just like the one in the story (rock, mound, log, twig pile, tree) and let's go itch!
- Go on a bear hunt! (Leave paw prints on a trail.) Use **ITCH 1**.
- Make a home for a bear.
- Make a home for a millipede to live in.
- Go on a millipede hunt. Look under stones and twigs, etc.
- Draw symmetrical butterflies with chalk on a playground surface. You design one wing and the children try to match it.
- Using wooden blocks, etc., design a butterfly on a hard surface outside.
- Put up bird boxes to attract birds and bird feeders. You won't see an owl, but other birds will visit!
- Go out on a bug hunt.
- Set up a 'woodland vet' outdoors. The vets can treat the creatures for their itchy problems.
- Leave a paper paw trail for the children to follow! Use **ITCH 1**.
- 'Apple bob' with apples in bowls of water (with adult supervision).
- The apples bounced on Itchy Bear's head. Explore outside things that bounce!

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Visits and visitors

- A zoo.
- A wildlife park.
- A woodland centre.
- Woods (to look for signs of wildlife and places to scratch).
- A park (to look for mole hills).
- A butterfly world or an insect house.
- A shop to buy a back scratcher.
- A fruit shop to buy a selection of apples.
- An insect expert.
- A tree specialist.
- A park keeper to talk about mole hills and the creatures that live in the park.
- A farmer with an orchard.
- A nurse or doctor to talk about things that cause an 'itch'!
- A vet to talk about animal itches.

Other similar stories to enjoy

Can't You Sleep, Little Bear? – Martin Waddell, Barbara Firth (Walker Books)

We're going on a Bear Hunt – Michael Rosen, Helen Oxenbury (Walker Books)

Sneezy Bear – Neil Griffiths (Red Robin Books)

Peace at Last – Jill Murphy (Macmillan)

Rhymes to enjoy

Round and round the garden

Teddy bear, Teddy bear, touch your nose

Non-fiction themes

- Bears
- Woodland creatures and woodland life
- A visit to the doctor
- Mini-beasts
- Trees
- Fruit

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- Habitats
- Nocturnal life
- Life underground
- Hibernation
- Life-cycles
- Canada, China, U.S.A (and other places where bears live!)

Communication, language and literacy

Word fun

Enjoy saying these words and phrases:

Dear, dear!	Oooh, lovely!	Do you mind!	Mmm, wonderful
Excuse me!	Ahhh, heavenly!	Oi!	This just isn't my day!

Talk about the meaning of these words together:

ordinary perfect mound shrieked peering yelled pile
demanded discovered cautiously delicious

Now make a list of vocabulary associated with being hungry, e.g. **delicious, starving, scrummy**, etc.

Finally, create a dictionary of **said** alternatives, e.g. **asked, bellowed, cried, exclaimed**, etc.

Rhyme

What words rhyme with the following: **bear, tree, mole, log, dear**?

Emergent writing / Mark-making / Writing

- Make up potions to stop itching.
- Write a 'Sorry letter' from Itchy Bear to all the animals he disturbed!
- Write to Itchy Bear telling him where to find lovely places for a scratch!
- Write to Neil Griffiths at neil@cornertolearn.co.uk. (He will always reply.)

Discussion time

Talk about:

- Nocturnal creatures and hibernation.
- Zoos (good and bad points).
- *When did you last get itchy?*
- *Why did all the creatures get cross? Should they have got cross?*

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Mathematical development

- Design on paper an Itchy Bear scratching trail and explore position and routes.
- Bring in teddy bears from home and have a Teddy Bear Maths Day! Count, sort, compare, sequence, match, weigh and measure.
- Explore halves and quarters, cutting apples.
- Explore symmetry in butterfly wings. Make a butterfly puppet using **ITCH 3**.
- Create an Itchy Bear trail outdoors and go on a journey, exploring direction and position.
- Count and estimate piles of apples.
- Discuss positional language: *under, behind, on top*, etc.
- Use piles of twigs to introduce tallying.
- Look up at trees (height, shadow lengths).

Other cross-curricular themes

- Design back scratchers.
- Go on a 'night walk'.
- Have an apple-tasting investigation.
- Find out where bears live, what they eat and what they do all day!
- Find out about moles, owls, squirrels and millipedes!

Creative development

- Make paw prints in mud and sand.
- Create a mole hill with mud!
- Print with apples and other fruit.
- Paint or create giant butterflies.
- Create a mini-beast collage.
- Take bark rubbings.
- Make millipedes from egg boxes.

Story crafts

- Make a butterfly puppet using **ITCH 3**.
- Make an Itchy Bear puppet using **ITCH 4**.
- Make a set of finger puppets for role-play using **ITCH 5**.

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Book games

- Play **Super sequencers!** using **ITCH 6**. Can you sequence the characters in the correct order they appeared in the story? Who can do it the quickest? Time each other.
- Play **Magic matchers!** using **ITCH 6** and **ITCH 7**. Who can sequence the characters to their homes the quickest?
- Play **Perfect pairs!** using **ITCH 6** and **ITCH 7**.
- Play **Jigsaw race!** using **ITCH 8**. Who can complete any of the jigsaws the quickest?

Book fun!

- Make your own bookmark and badge using **ITCH 9**.

Physical development

- Invent an 'Itching Dance'.
- Move like a millipede with several other children.
- Find places around the school to have 'a jolly good scratch'!

Song and dance time!

Sing to the tune of *Head, shoulders, knees and toes*. It can be printed off using **ITCH 10**.

Chin and tummy

Chin, tummy,

Ears and toes,

Ears and toes.

Chin, tummy,

Ears and toes,

Ears and toes.

Arm and bottom, knees and eyes,

Chin, tummy,

Ears and toes,

Ears and toes.

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Sing to the tune of *If you're happy and you know it*. It can be printed off using **ITCH 11**. Repeat for *bottom/rock, tummy/log* and *toes/twig*.

If you're itchy and you know it!

V1

*If you're itchy and you know it, itch your ears,
If you're itchy and you know it, itch your ears,
If you're itchy and you know it, and you really want to show it,
If you're itchy and you know it, itch your ears.*

V2

*If you're itchy and you know it, find a branch,
If you're itchy and you know it, find a branch,
If you're itchy and you know it, and you really want to scratch it,
If you're itchy and you know it, find a branch.*

Sing to the tune of *Old MacDonald had a farm*. It can be printed off using **ITCH 12**.

Itchy Bear had an itch!

*Itchy Bear, he had an itch and he found a rock.
And on that rock he placed his bottom, ready for a scratch.
With a scratch, scratch here and a scratch, scratch there.
Here a scratch, there a scratch, everywhere a scratch, scratch.
Itchy Bear, he had an itch, but it now has gone!*

Snack time

- Eat apples cut into halves and quarters.
- Eat butterfly cakes (made by the children).
- Decorate a digestive biscuit to make it look like a butterfly. Use icing and iced and jelly shapes.
- Drink apple juice.

Dear Parents / Carers,

Today we have been reading a book called *Itchy Bear* by Neil Griffiths (Red Robin Books). It is a story about a bear with an itch. He finds lovely places where he can scratch himself, but he keeps disturbing other creatures.

If you have time, it would be wonderful if you could do some of the activities listed as a follow-up:

- Ask your child to tell you what they can remember about the story.
- Talk together about 'itching' and what makes us itch!
- Visit a woodland or park and look for signs of wildlife. Especially search for millipedes under stones and leaves.
- During winter, when it gets dark early, stand outside and listen to night sounds. Itchy Bear woke up an owl who was asleep during the day. Talk about the meaning of *nocturnal*.
- Visit a supermarket and buy a selection of apples. How are they different? Which is your favourite?
- Use the Internet or borrow books from the library and find out about bears.
- Find places around the house or garden where you can have a good scratch.
- Read other 'bear' stories together.

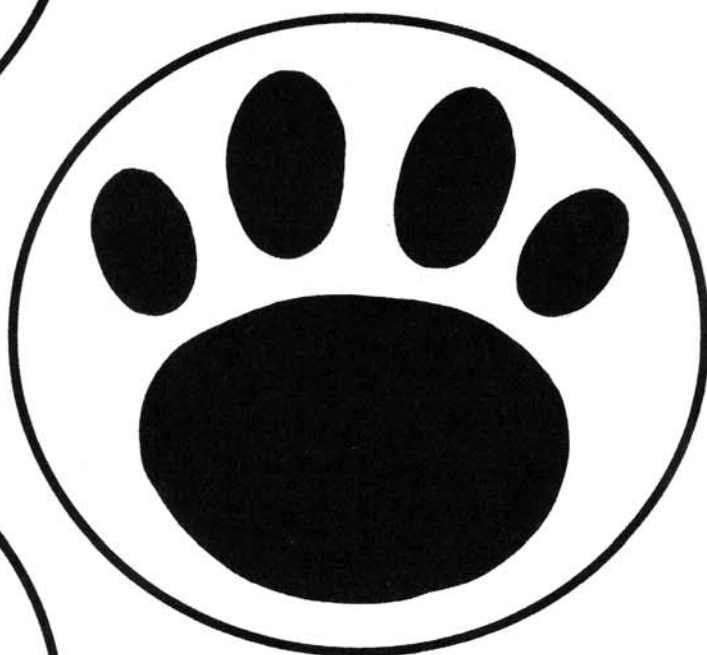
Thank you so much for your support!

The FUN has just begun!

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Paw print trail

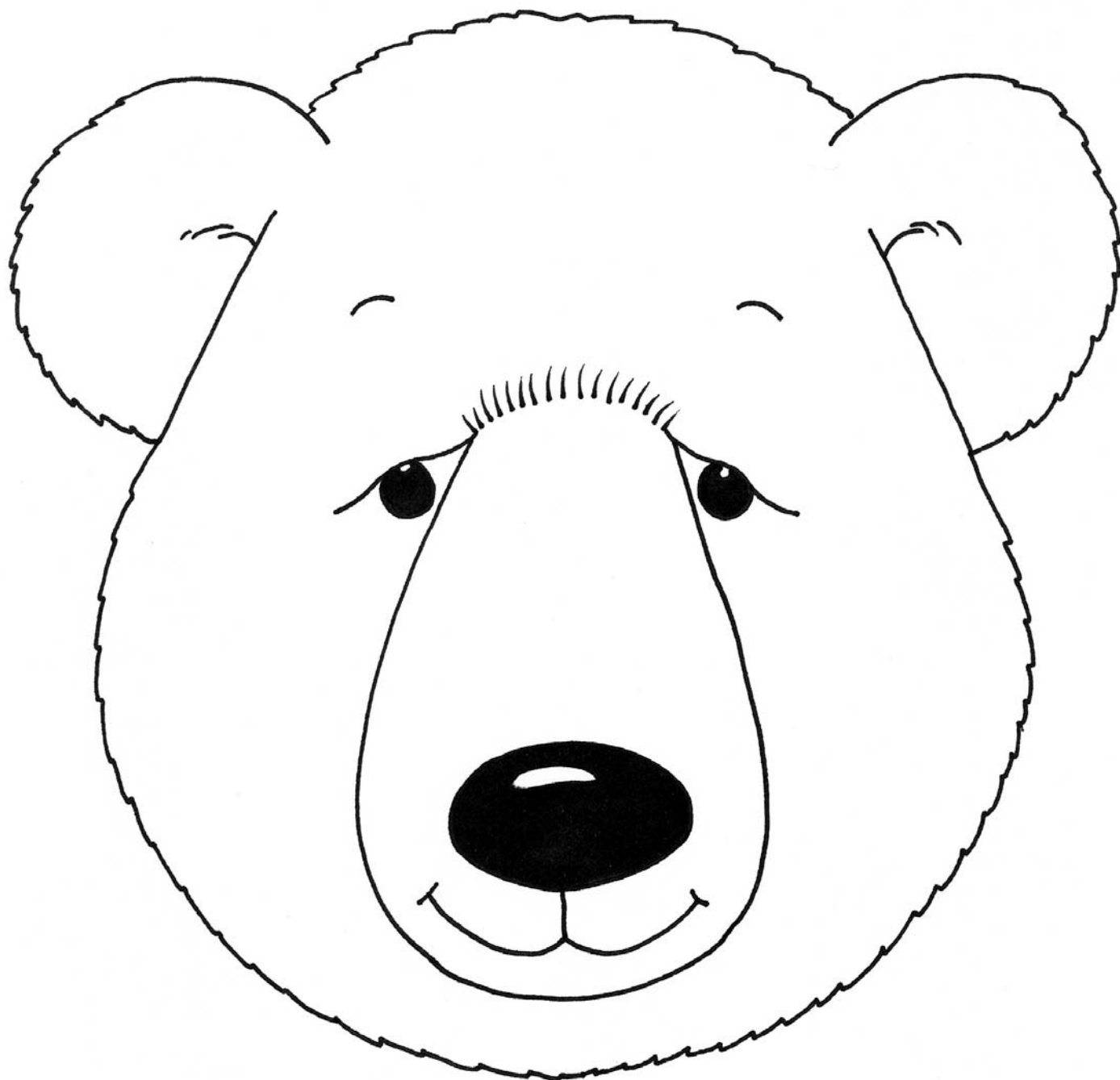
Copy and cut out the paw prints, then lay a trail to follow.



Role-play masks

Itch 2

Colour in and cut out the masks, then re-enact the story.

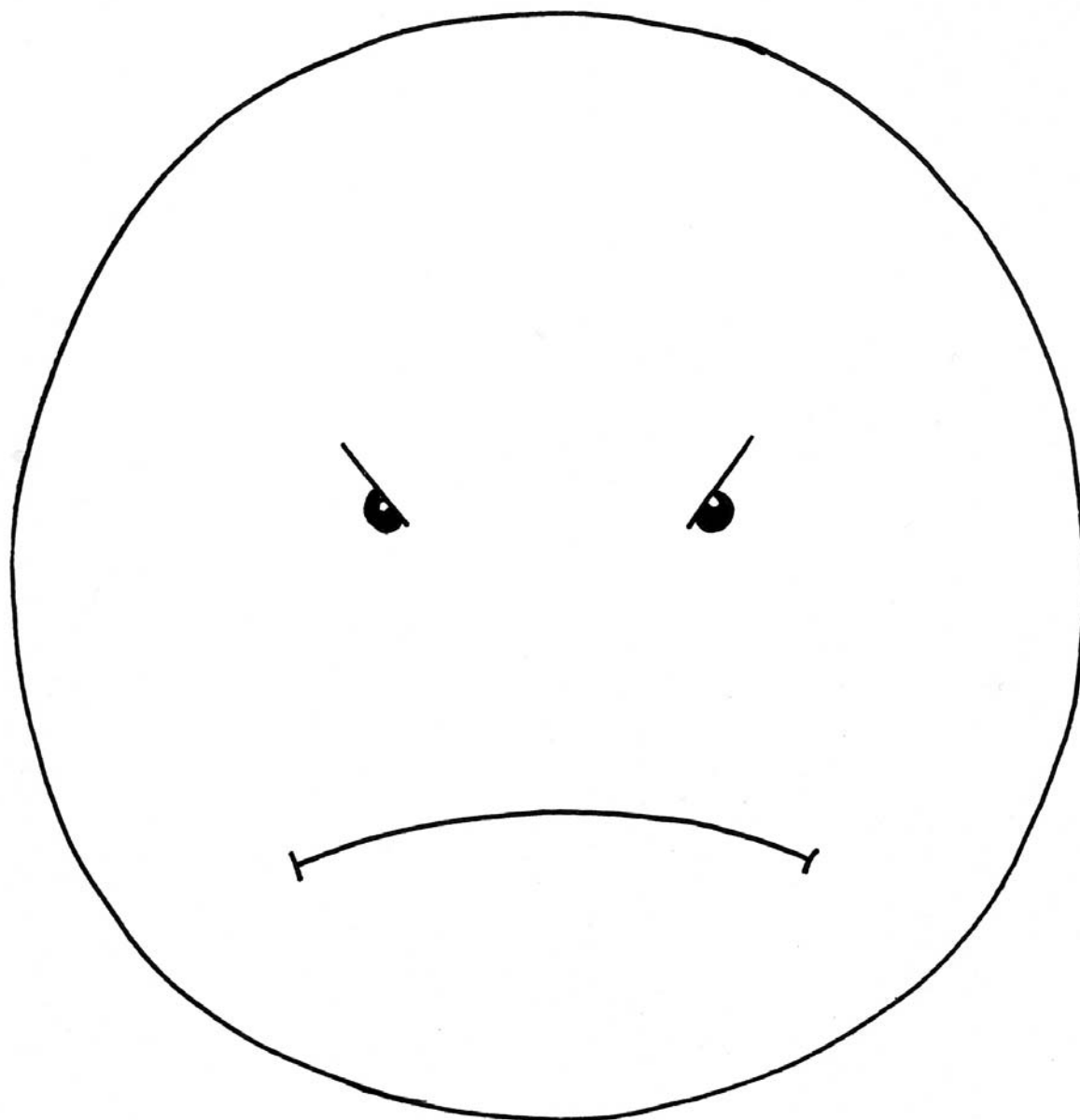


Itchy Bear

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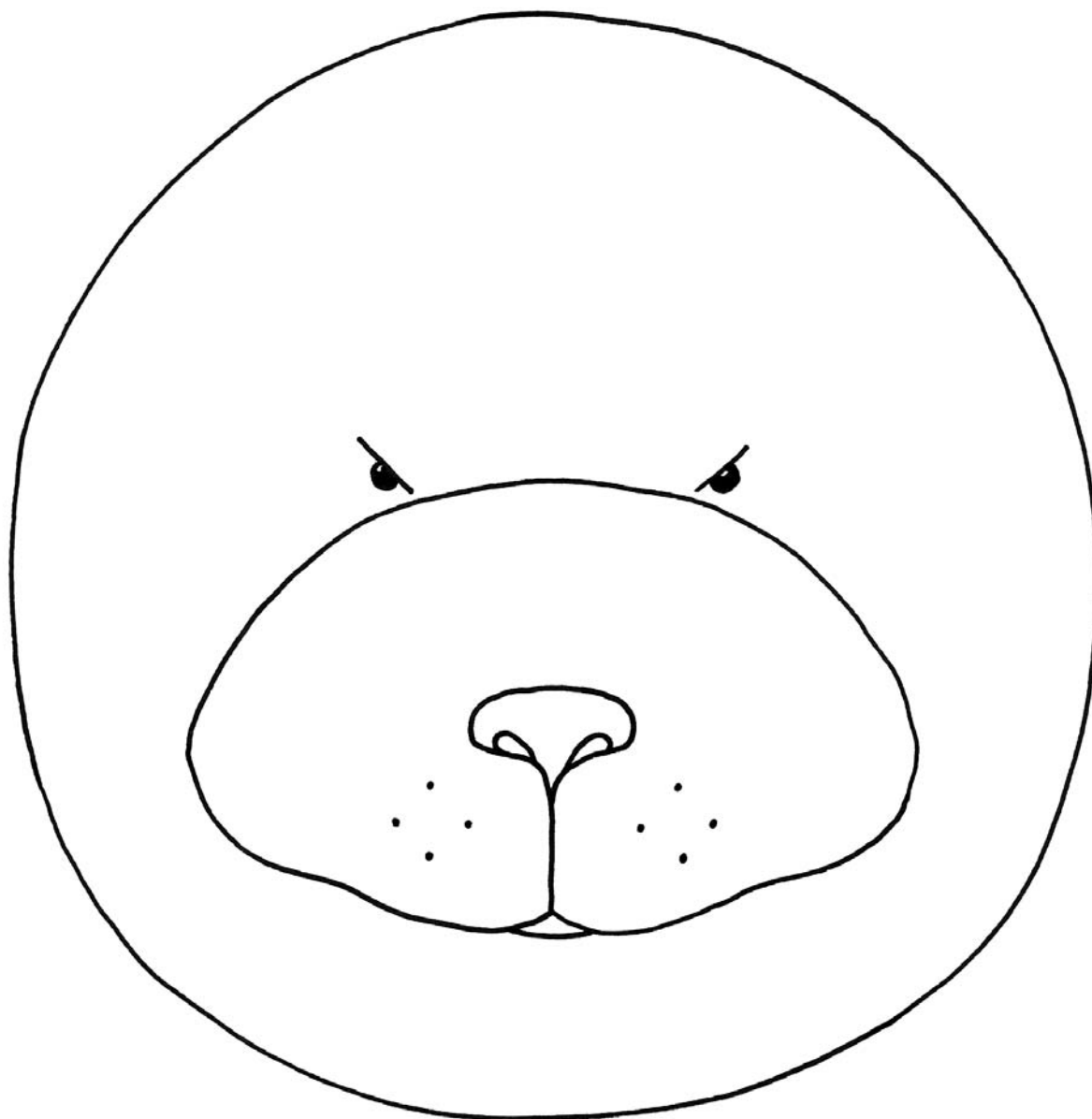


Millipede

Role-play masks

Itch 2

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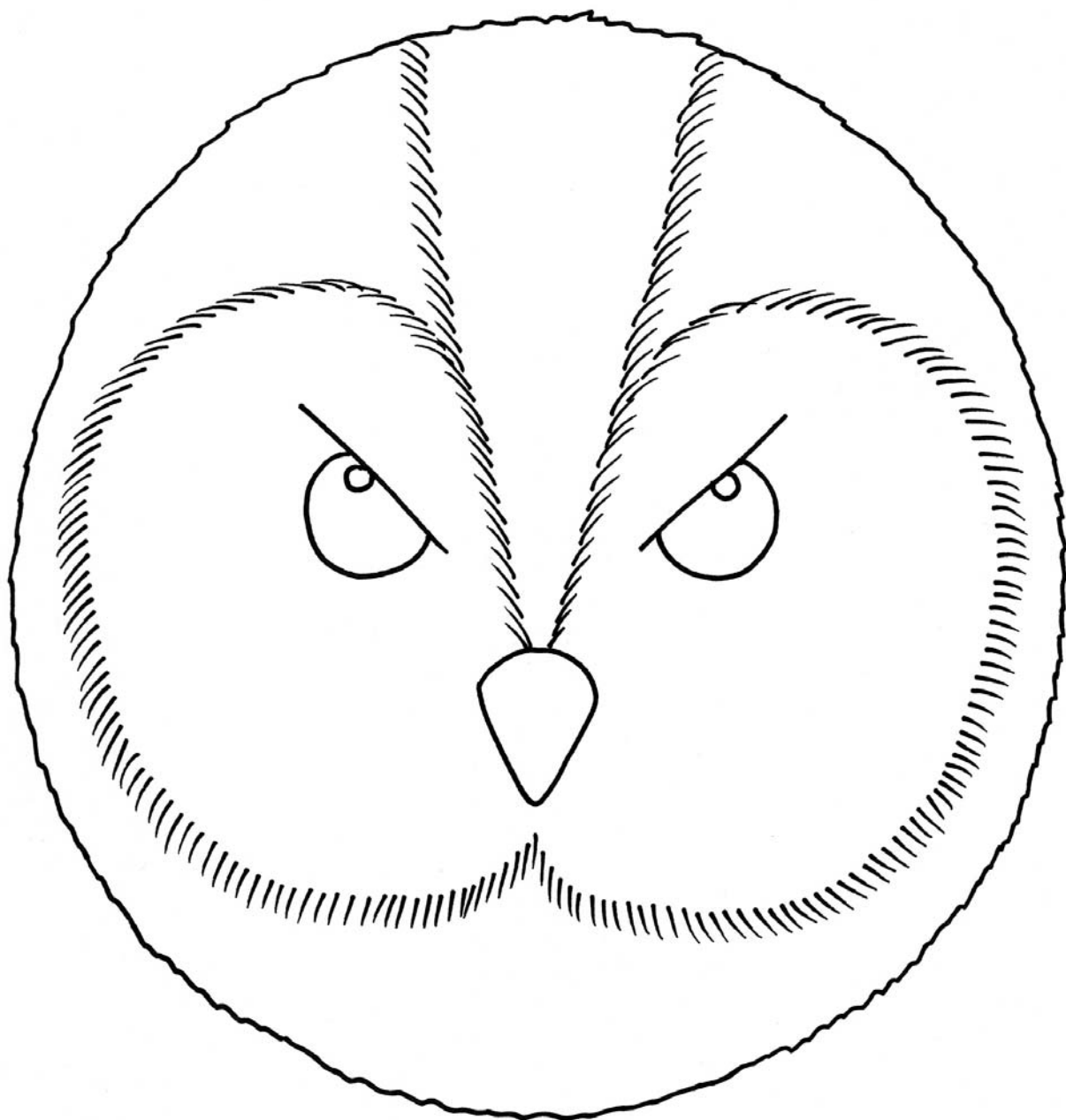


Mole

Role-play masks

Itch 2

Colour in and cut out the masks, then re-enact the story.

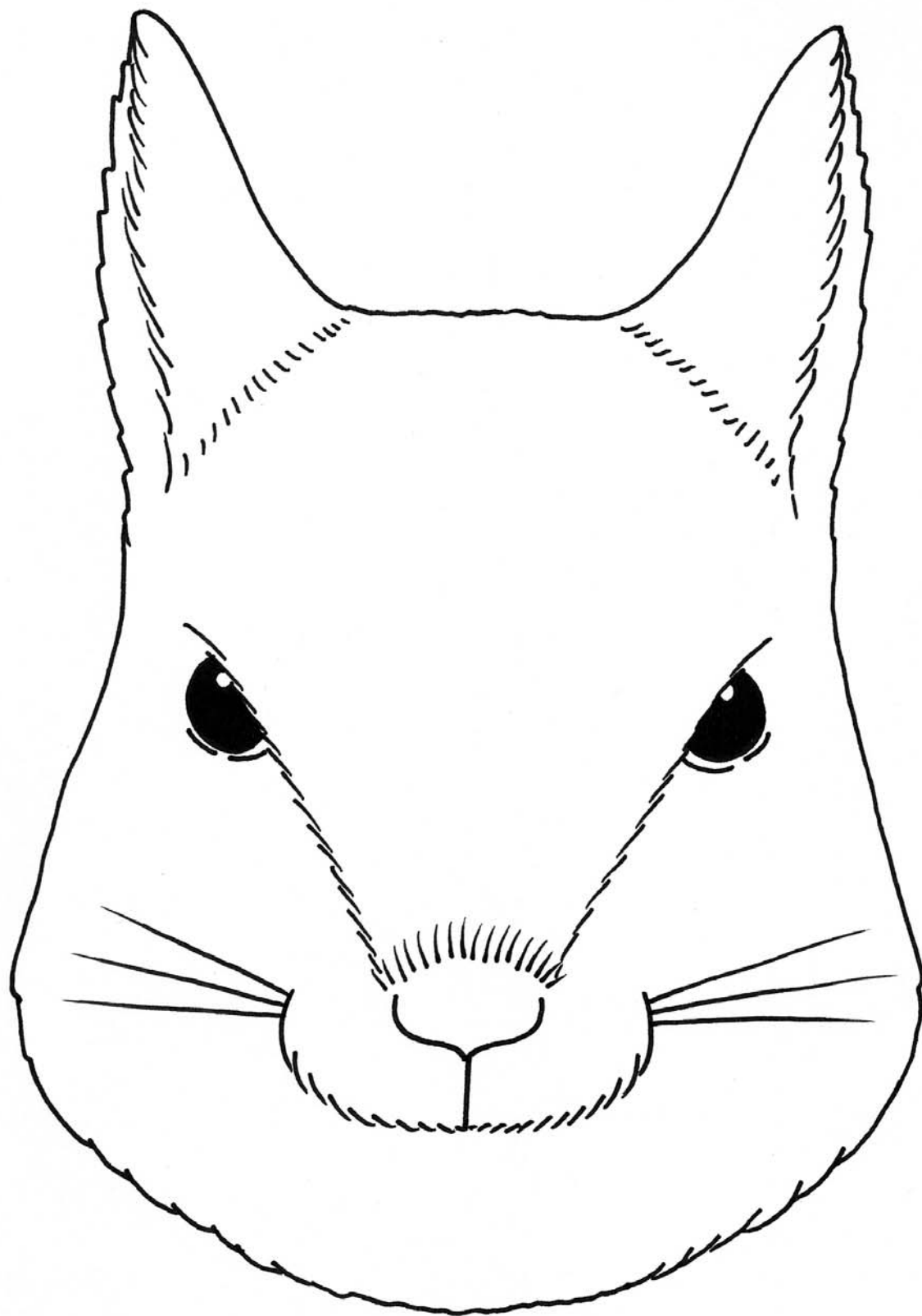


Owl

Role-play masks

Itch 2

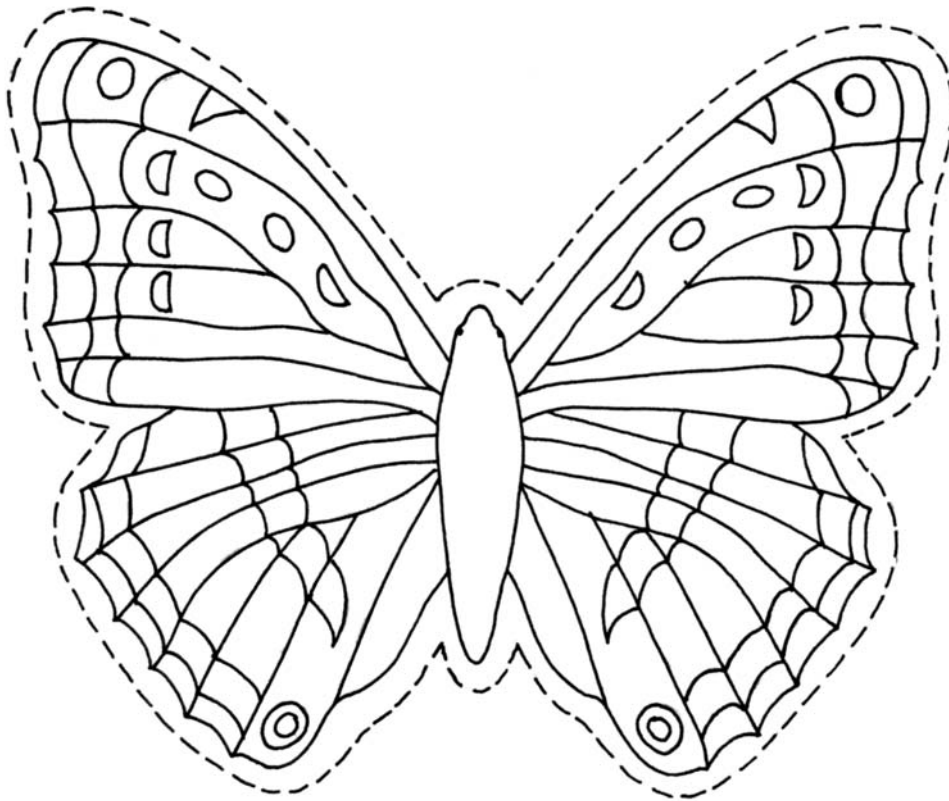
Colour in and cut out the masks, then re-enact the story.



Squirrel

Butterfly puppet

Make your own butterfly puppet to go with your masks!



Finger loop

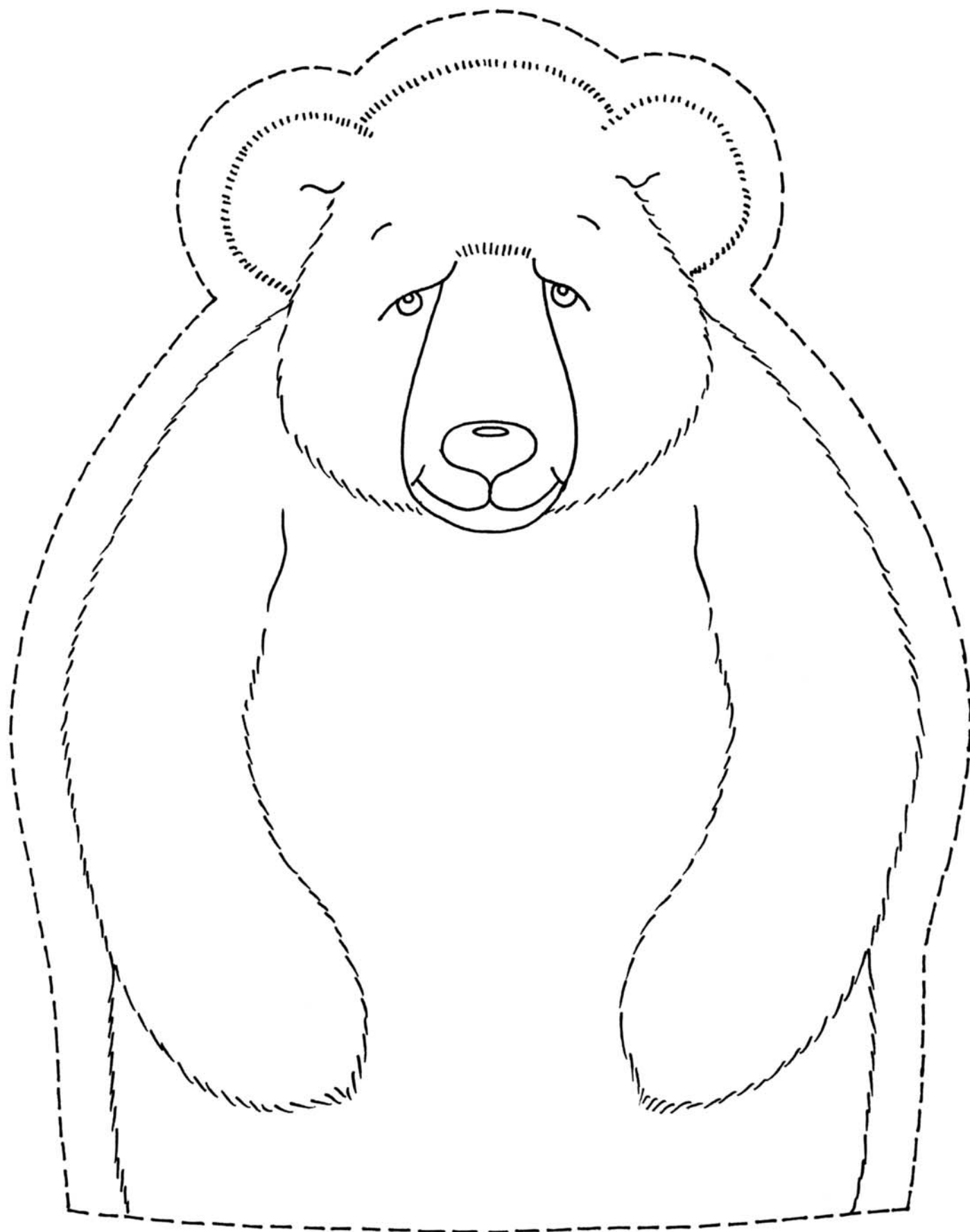
- 1 Cut out butterfly and finger loop.
- 2 Curl finger loop round finger and stick ends together.
- 3 Stick finger loop to underside of butterfly.



Itchy Bear hand puppet

Itch 4

Cut out the front and back of Itchy Bear along the dotted lines and stick together. Remember to leave an opening at the base for your hand!



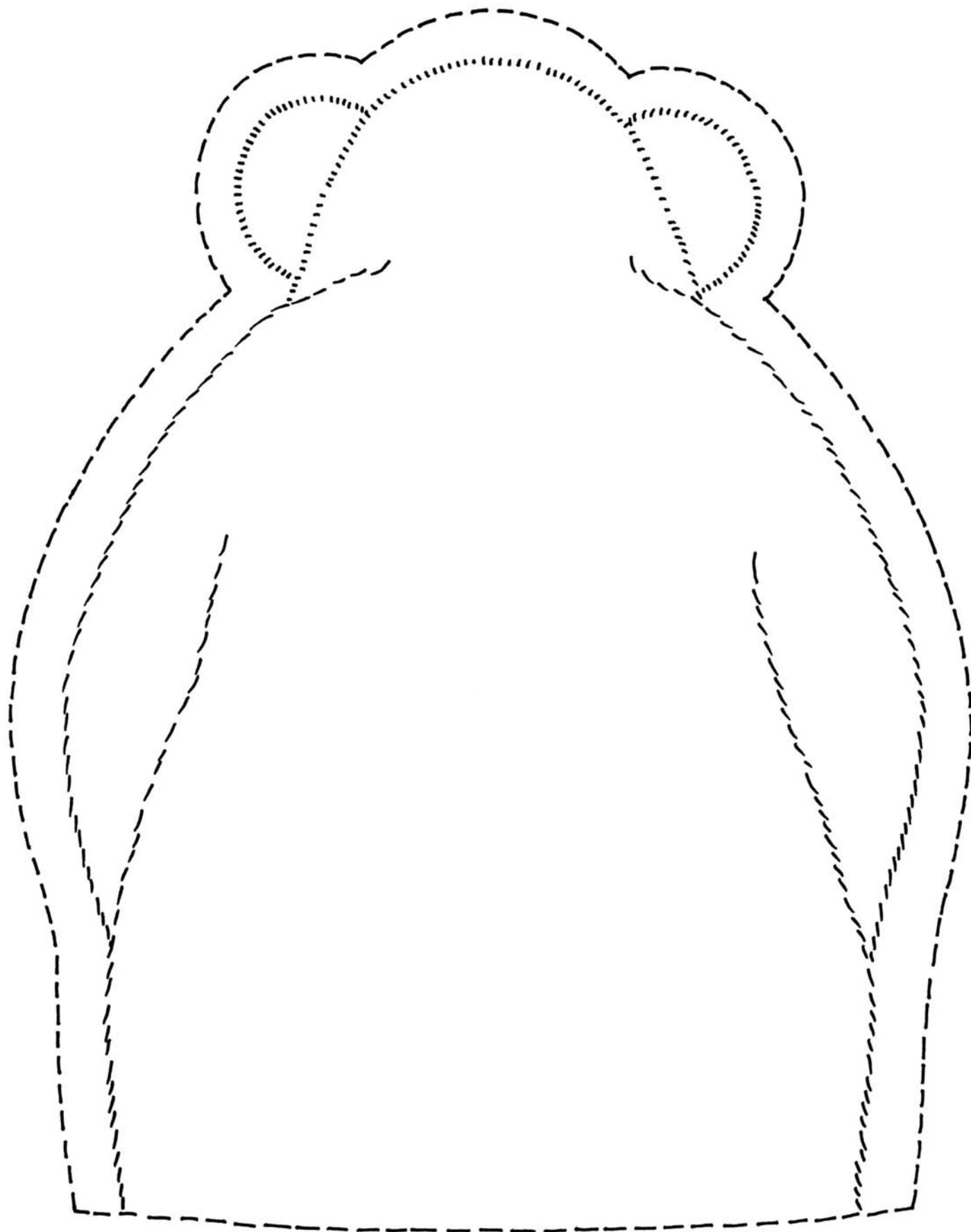
Leave open at base

Front

Itchy Bear hand puppet

Itch 4

Cut out the front and back of Itchy Bear along the dotted lines and stick together. Remember to leave an opening at the base for your hand!

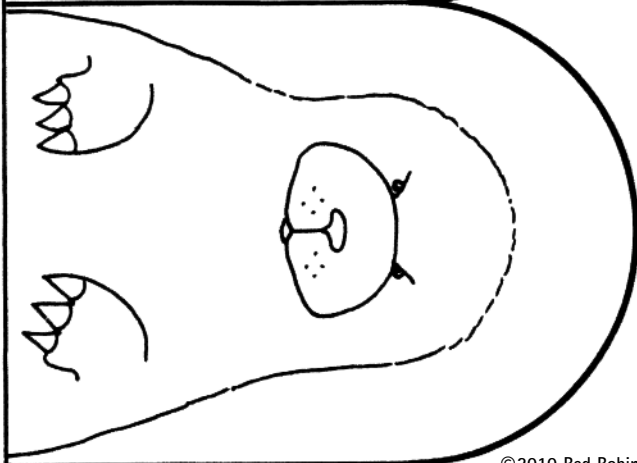
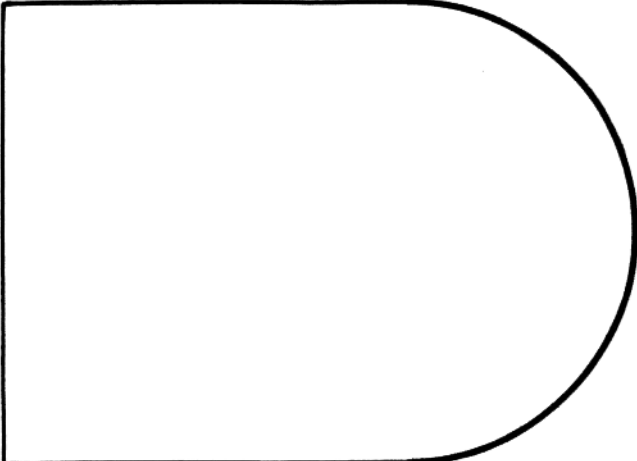
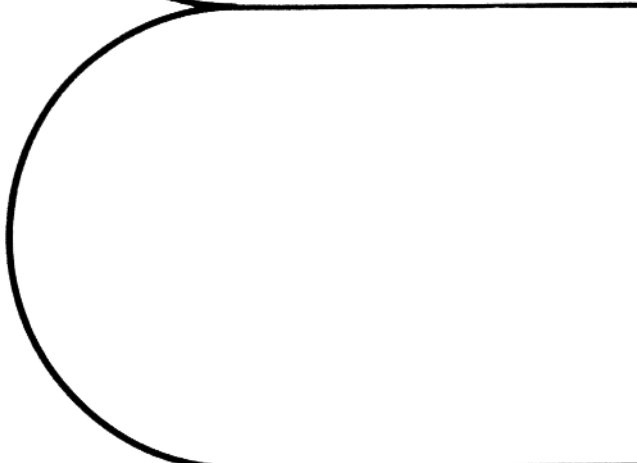
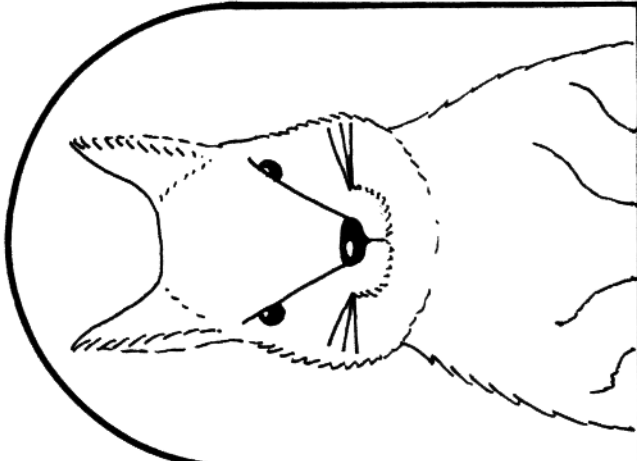
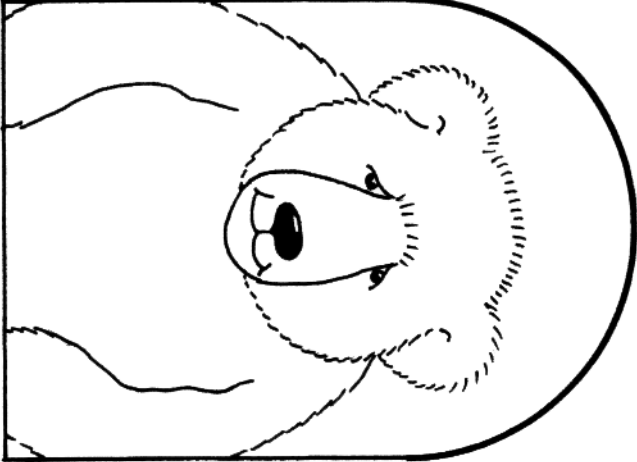
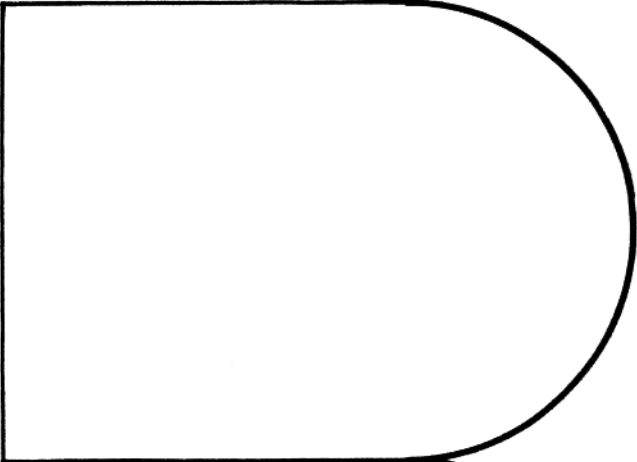
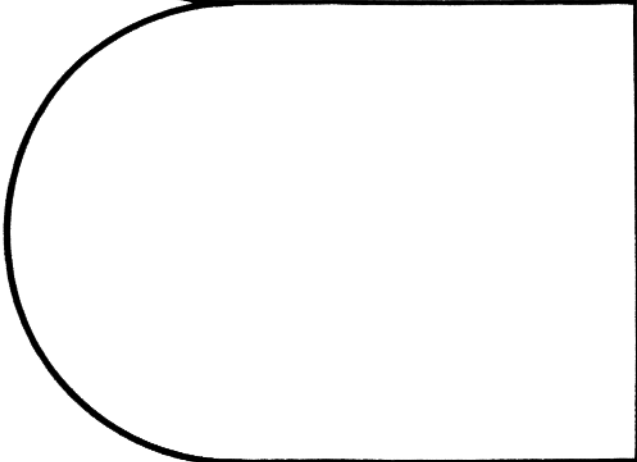
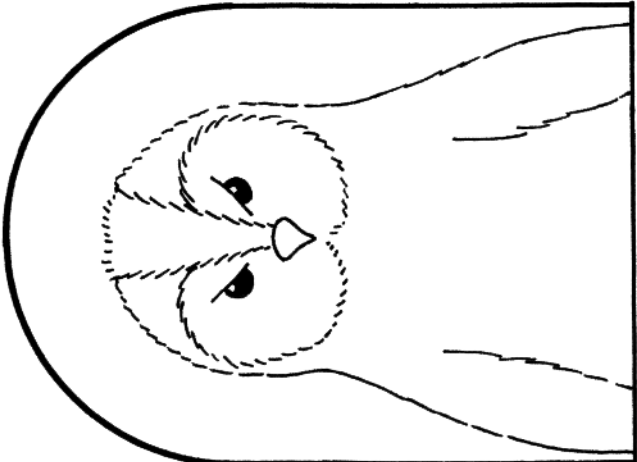


Leave open at base

Back

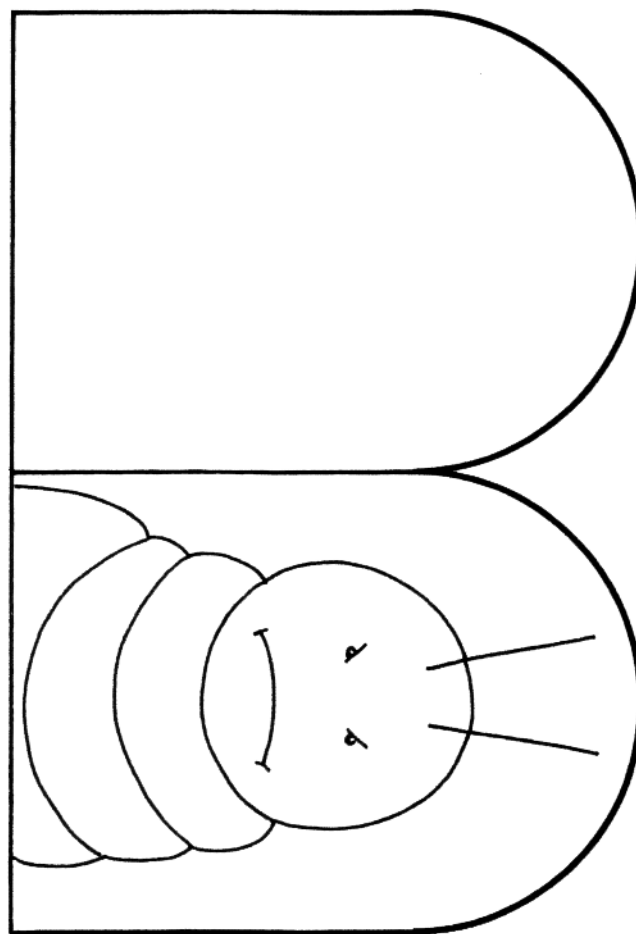
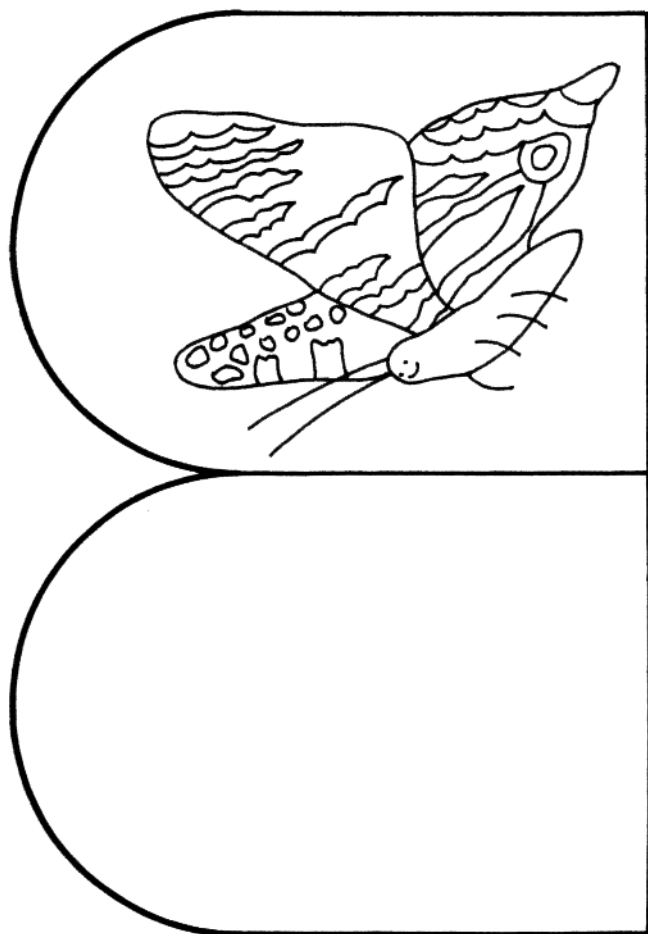
Finger puppets

Cut out and colour in the finger puppet templates. Fold them in half and stick together, leaving the base open so you can get your finger in.



Finger puppets

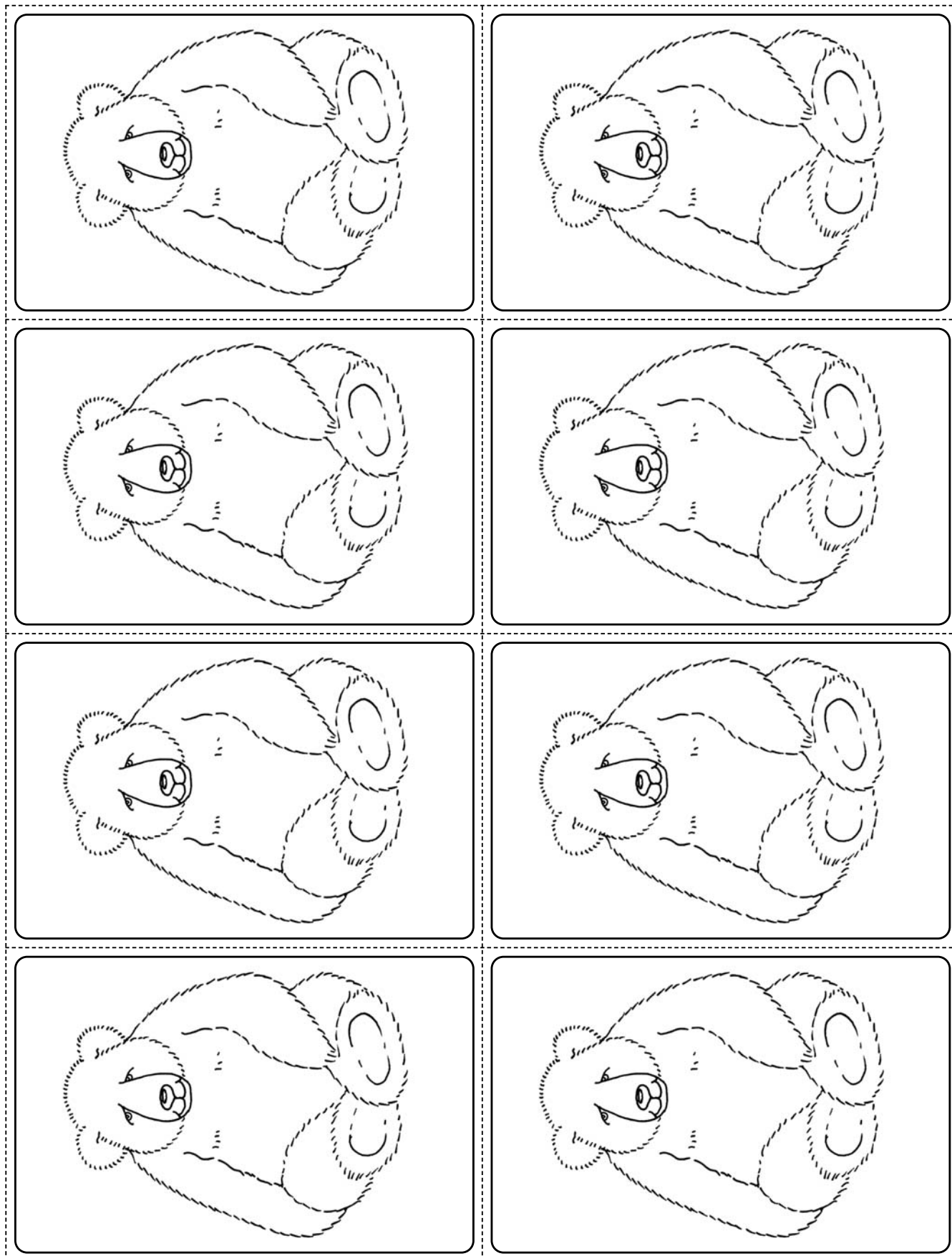
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Super sequencers, Magic matchers and Perfect pairs

Itch 6

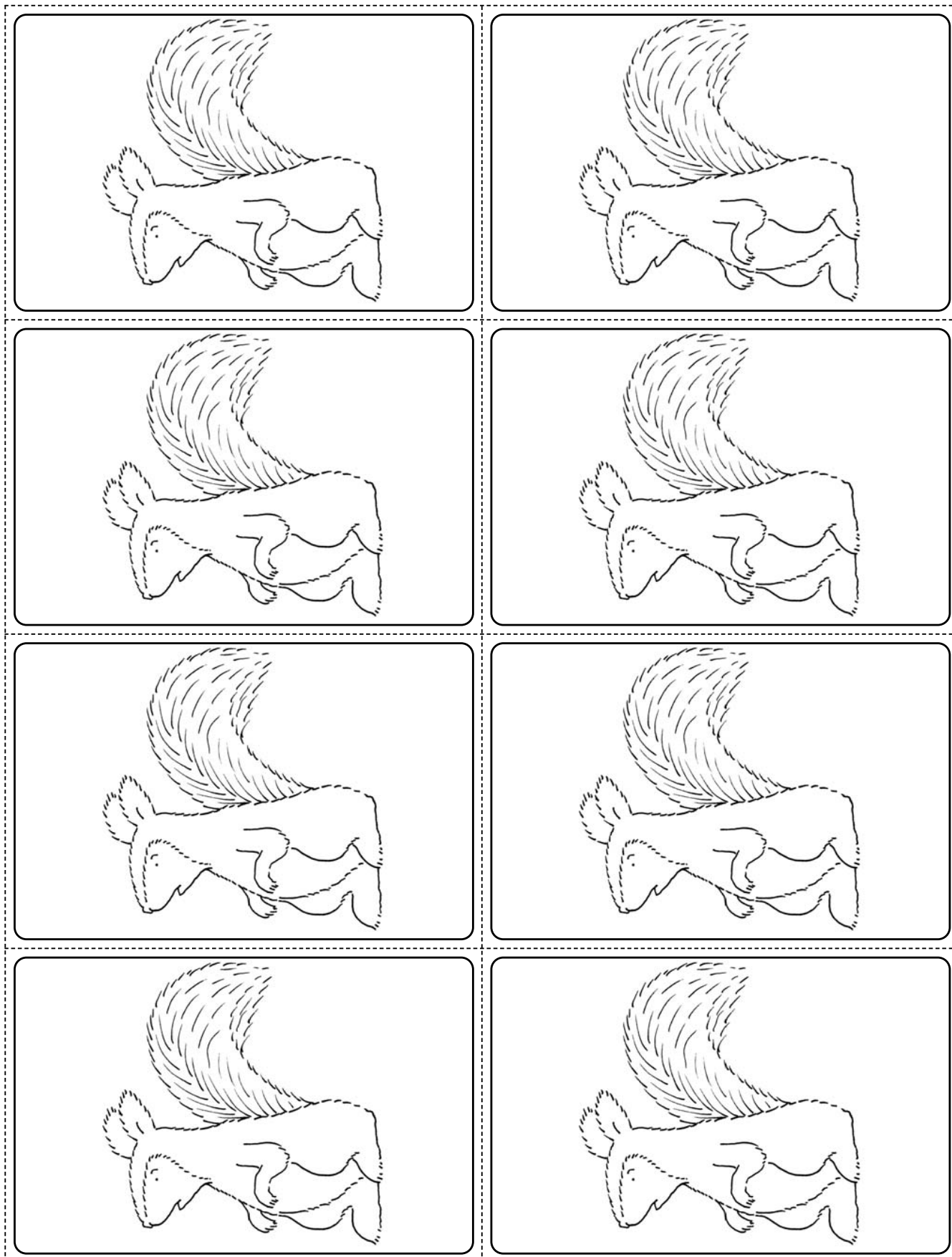
Colour in and cut out the cards to play a sequencing game. Alternatively, play Snap or Pairs with a group of friends. Use these cards with Itch 7 to play Magic matchers and Perfect pairs.



Super sequencers, Magic matchers and Perfect pairs

Itch 6

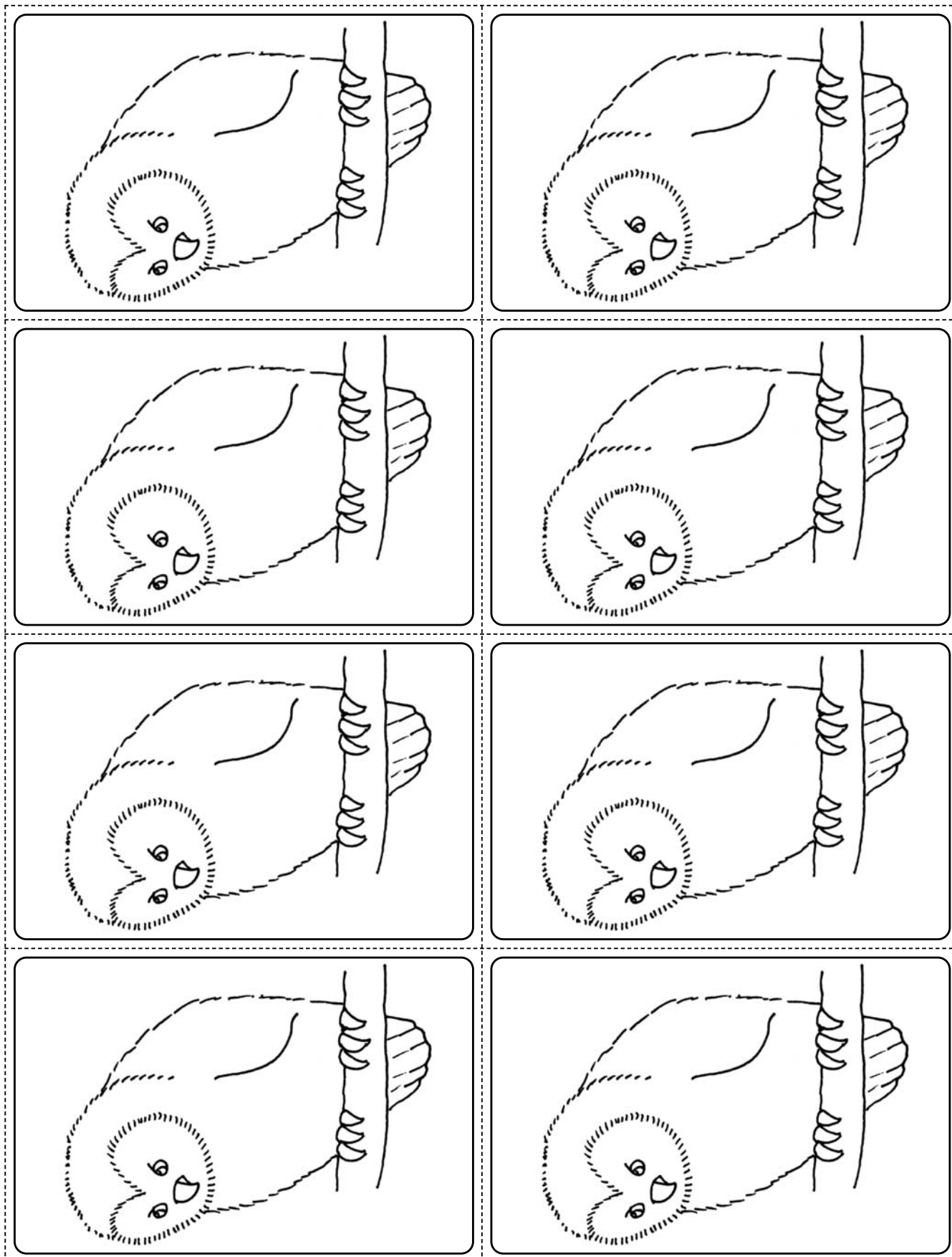
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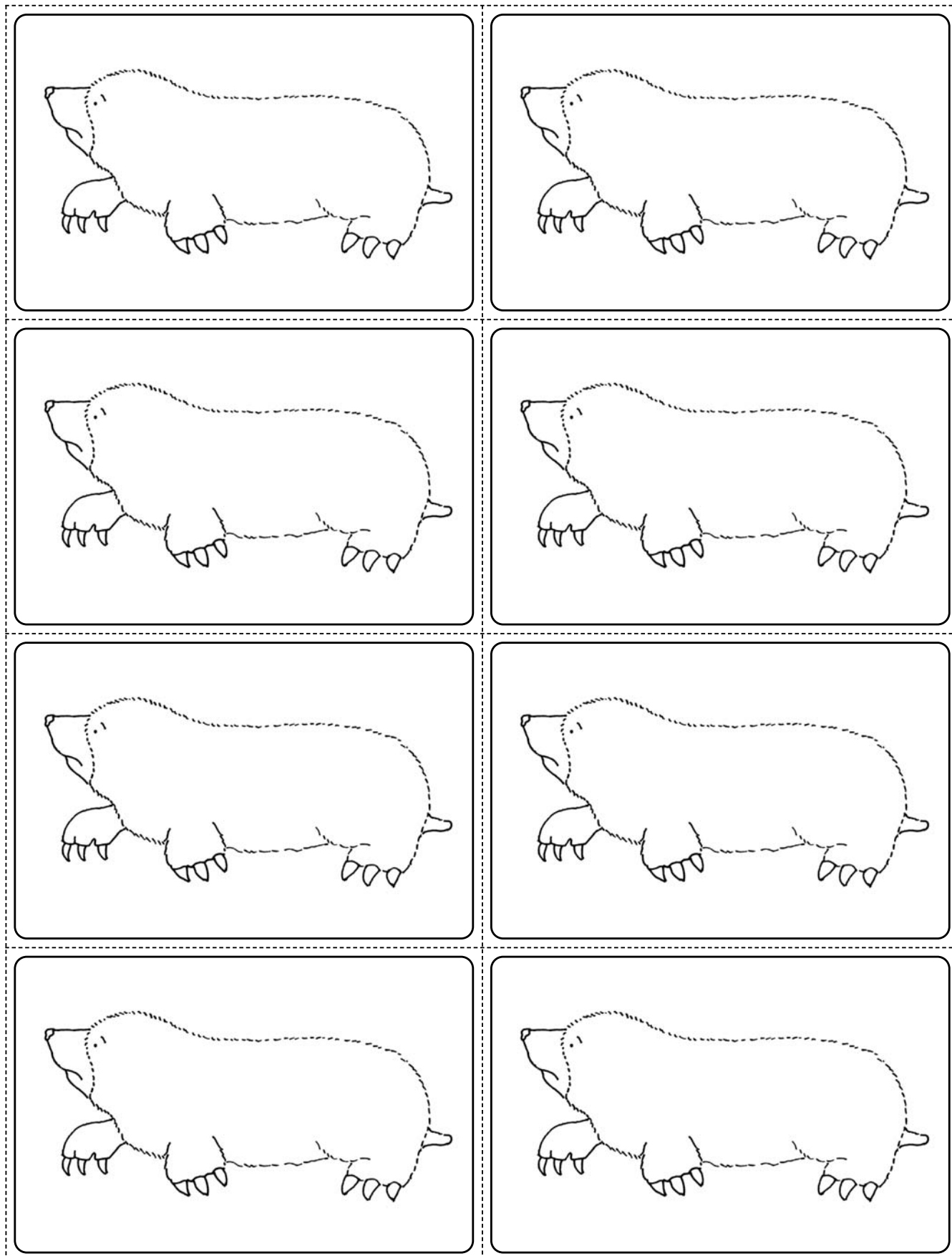
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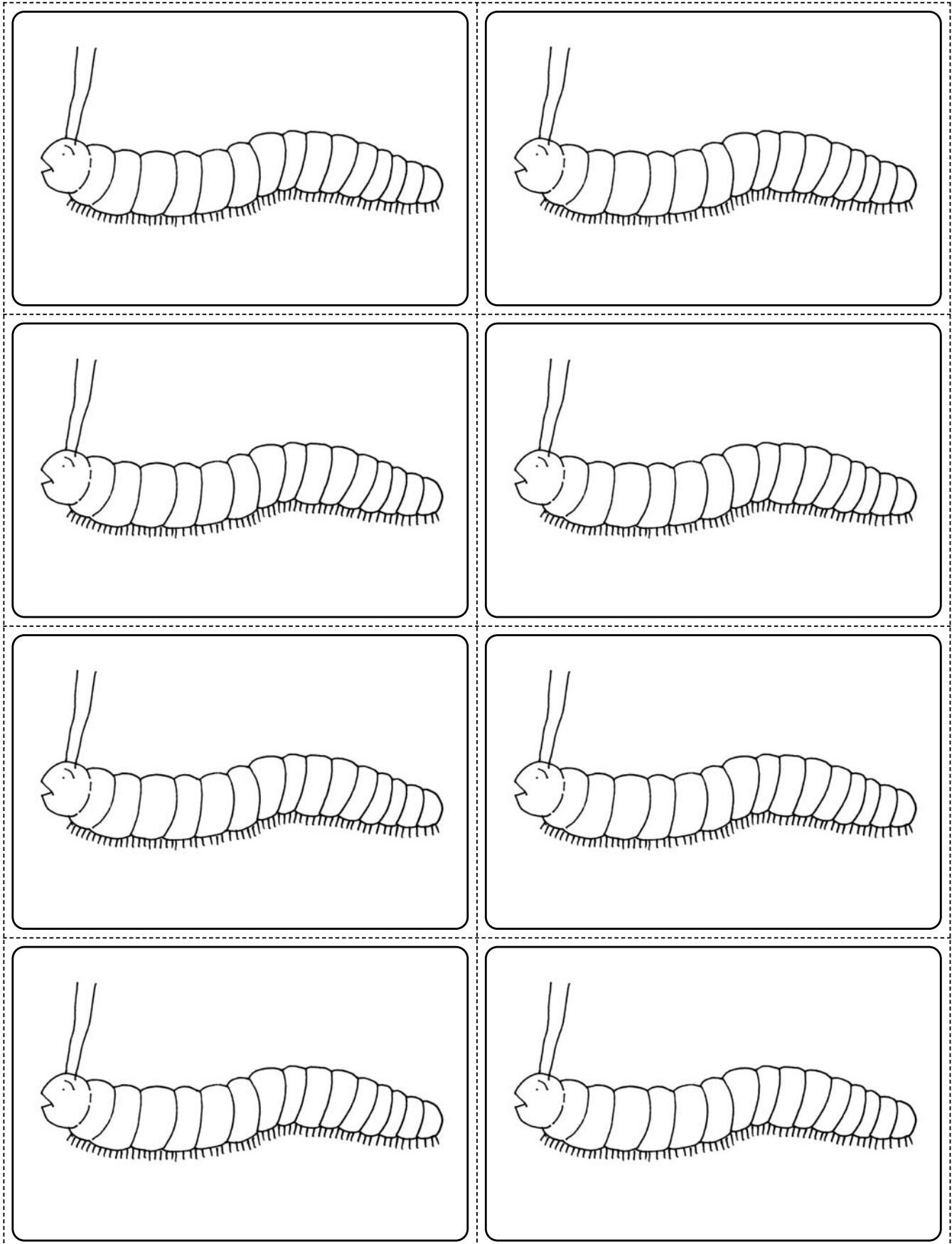
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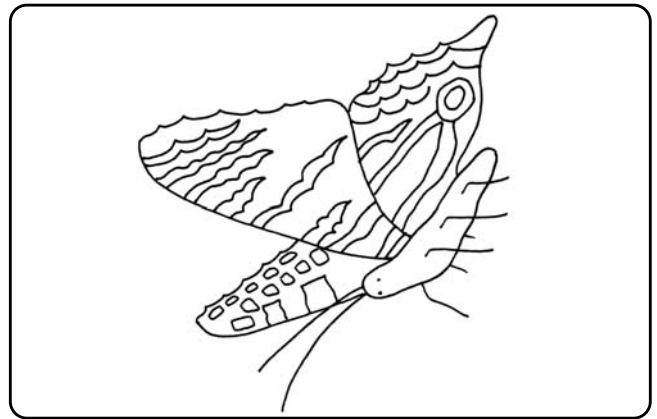
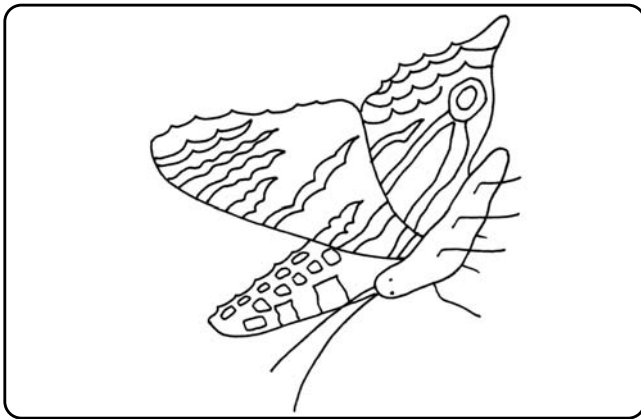
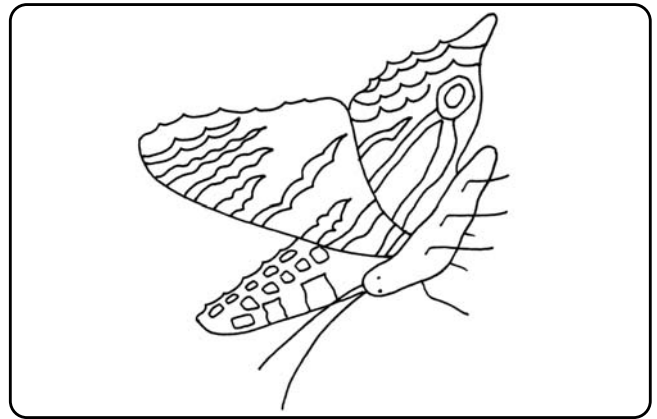
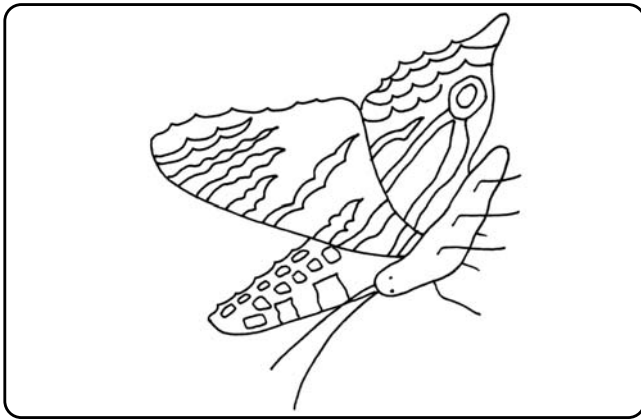
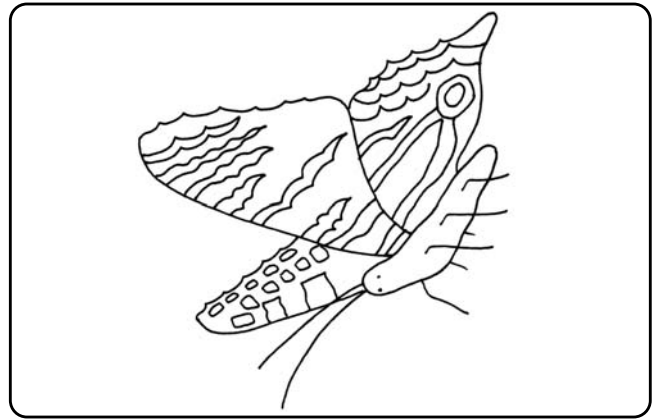
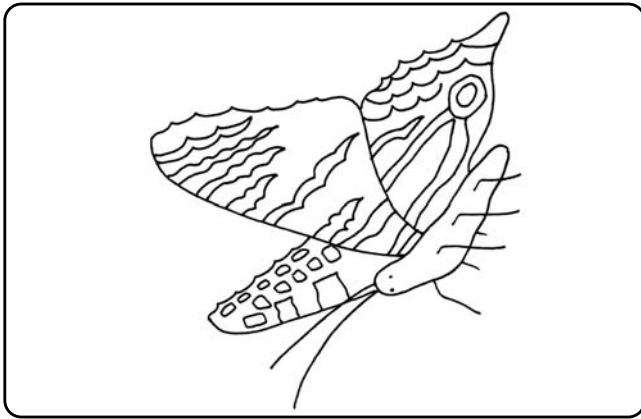
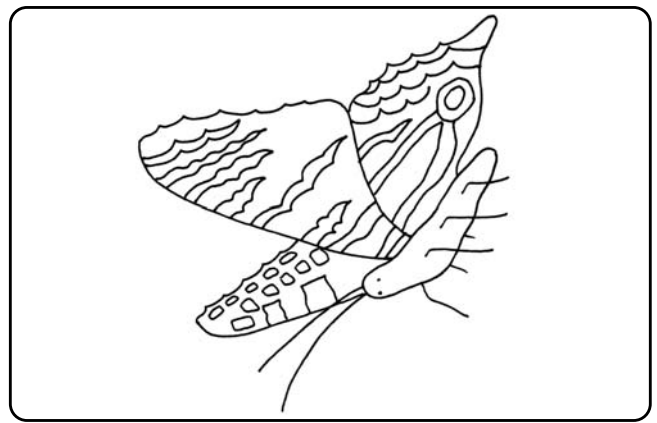
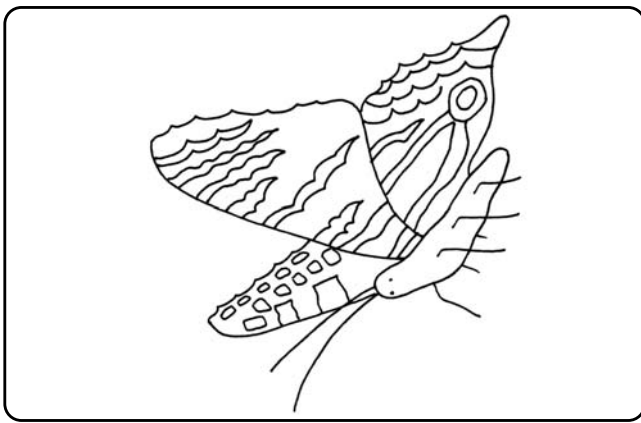
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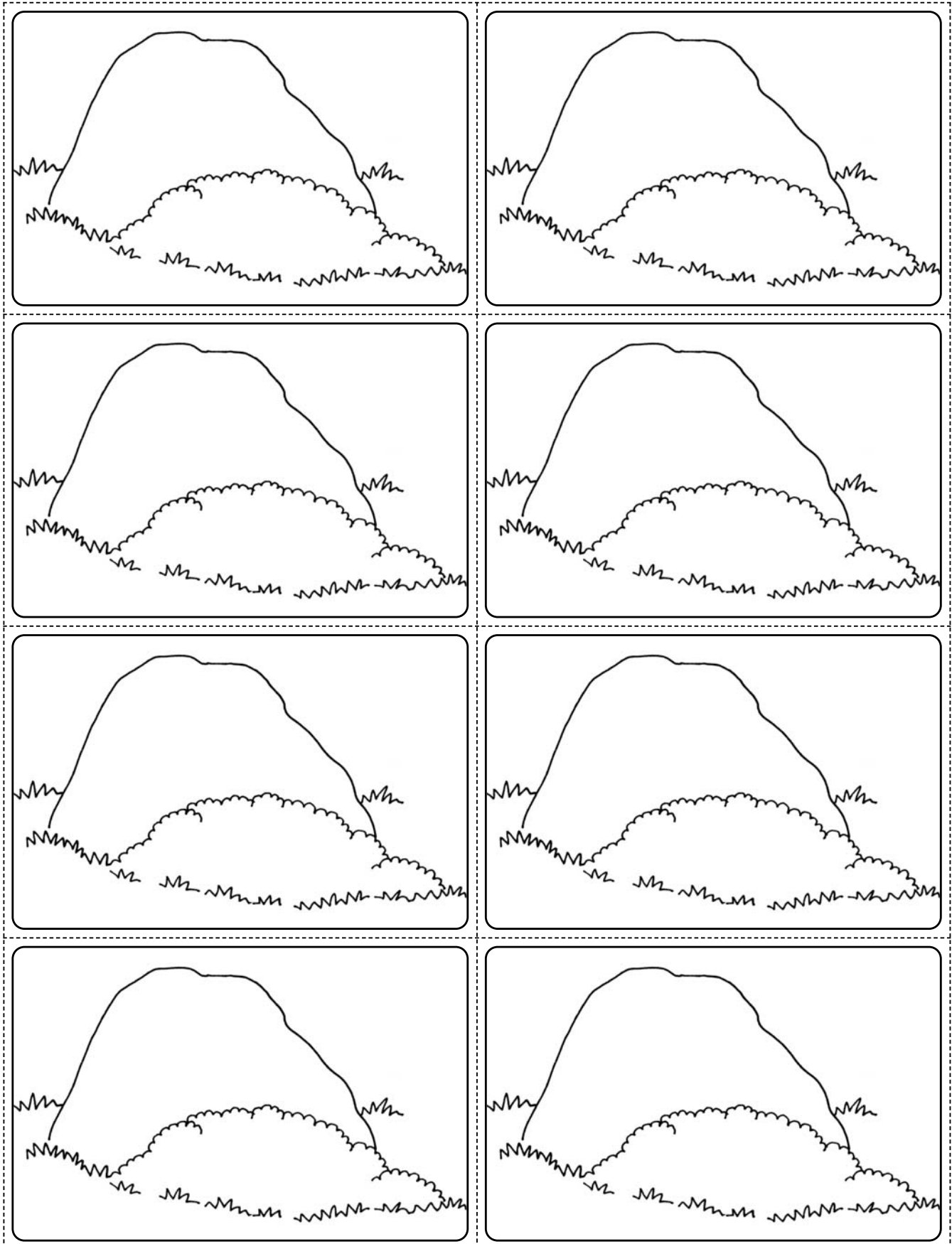
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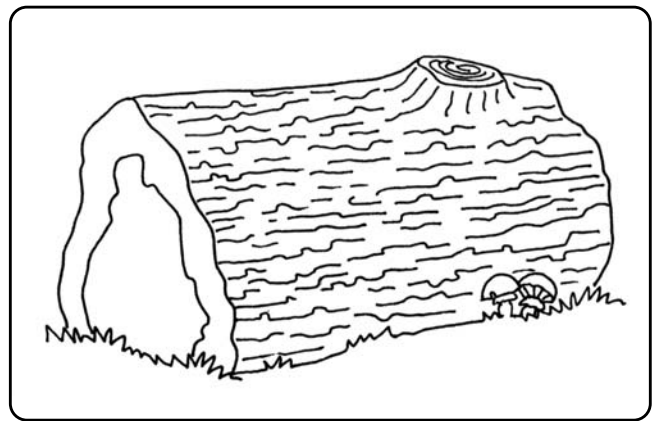
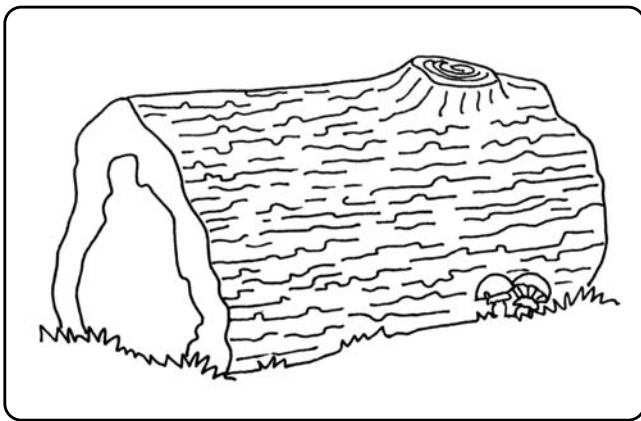
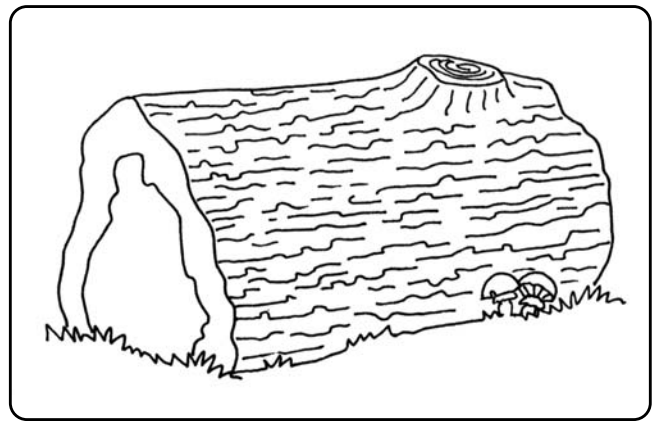
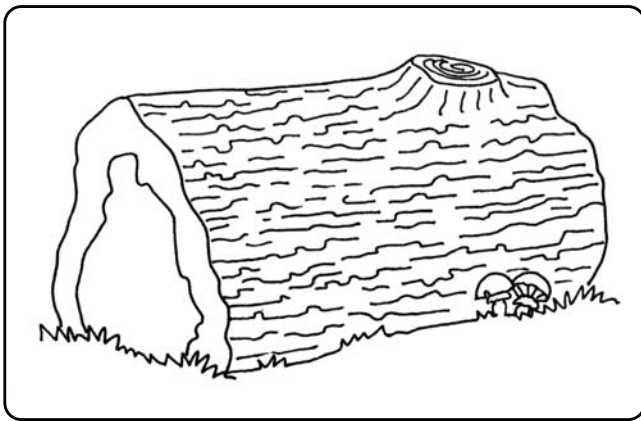
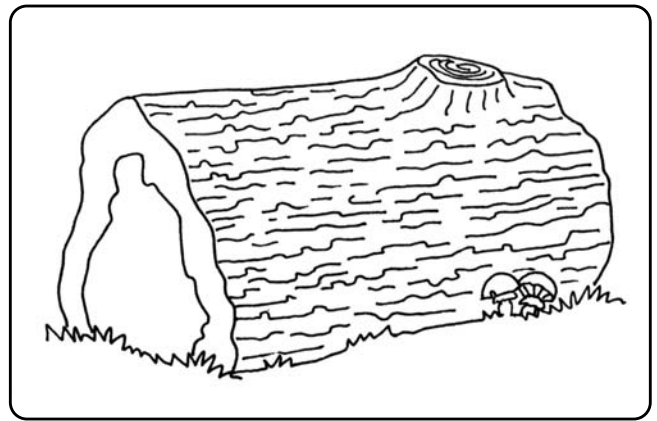
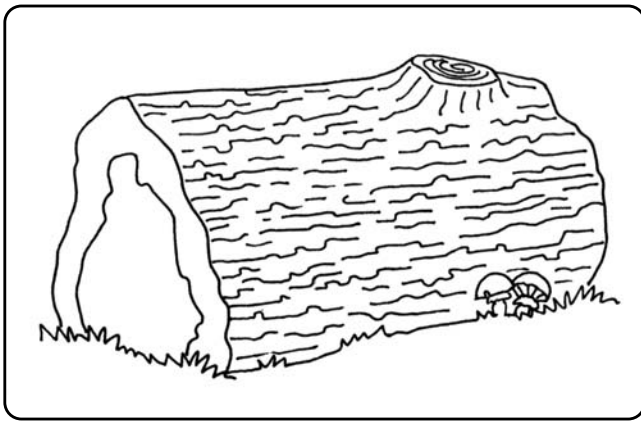
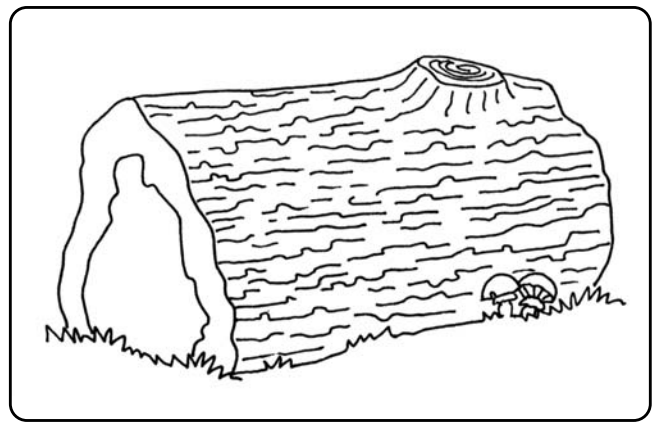
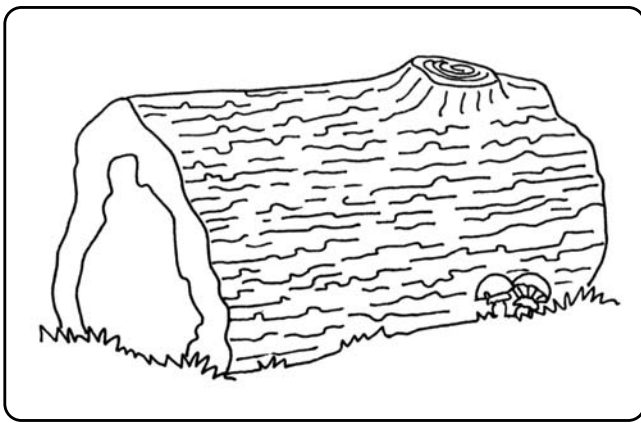
Magic matchers and Perfect pairs

Colour in and cut out the cards to play Snap or Pairs with a group of friends. Use these cards with Itch 6 to play Magic matchers and Perfect pairs.



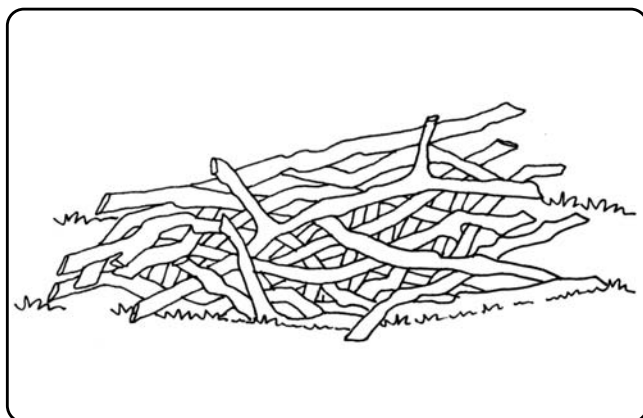
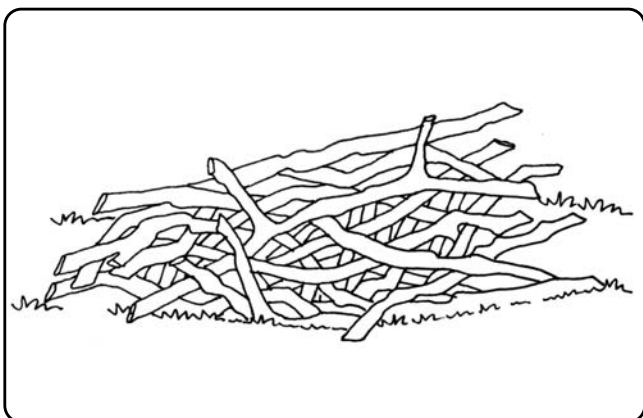
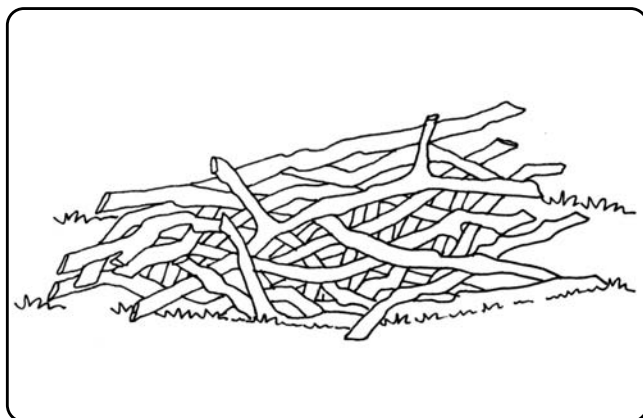
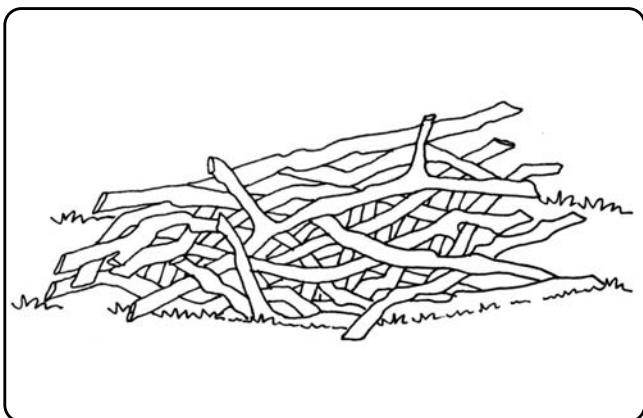
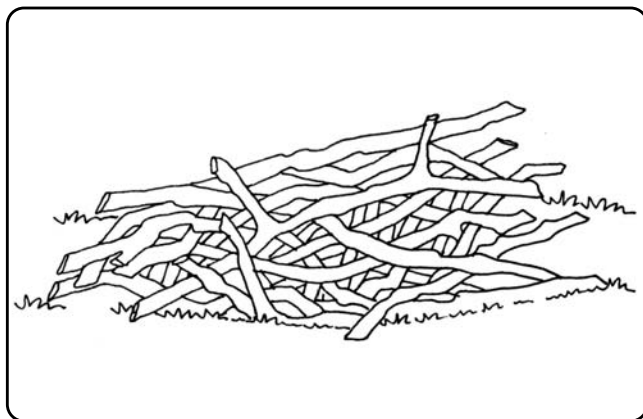
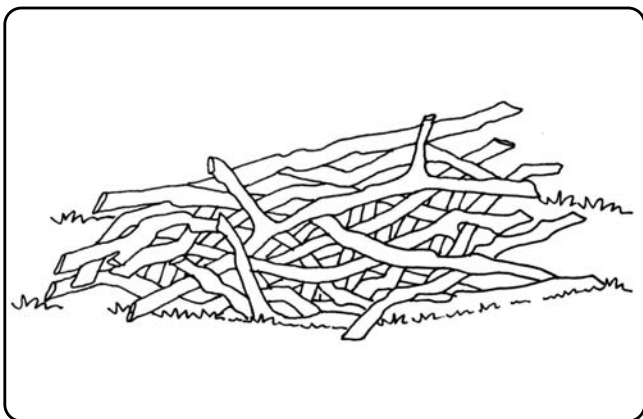
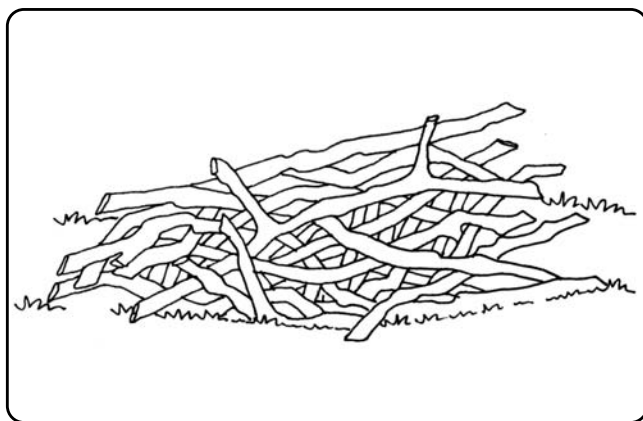
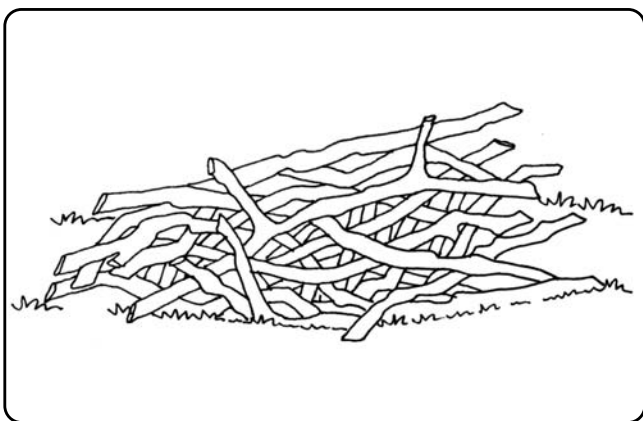
Magic matchers and Perfect pairs

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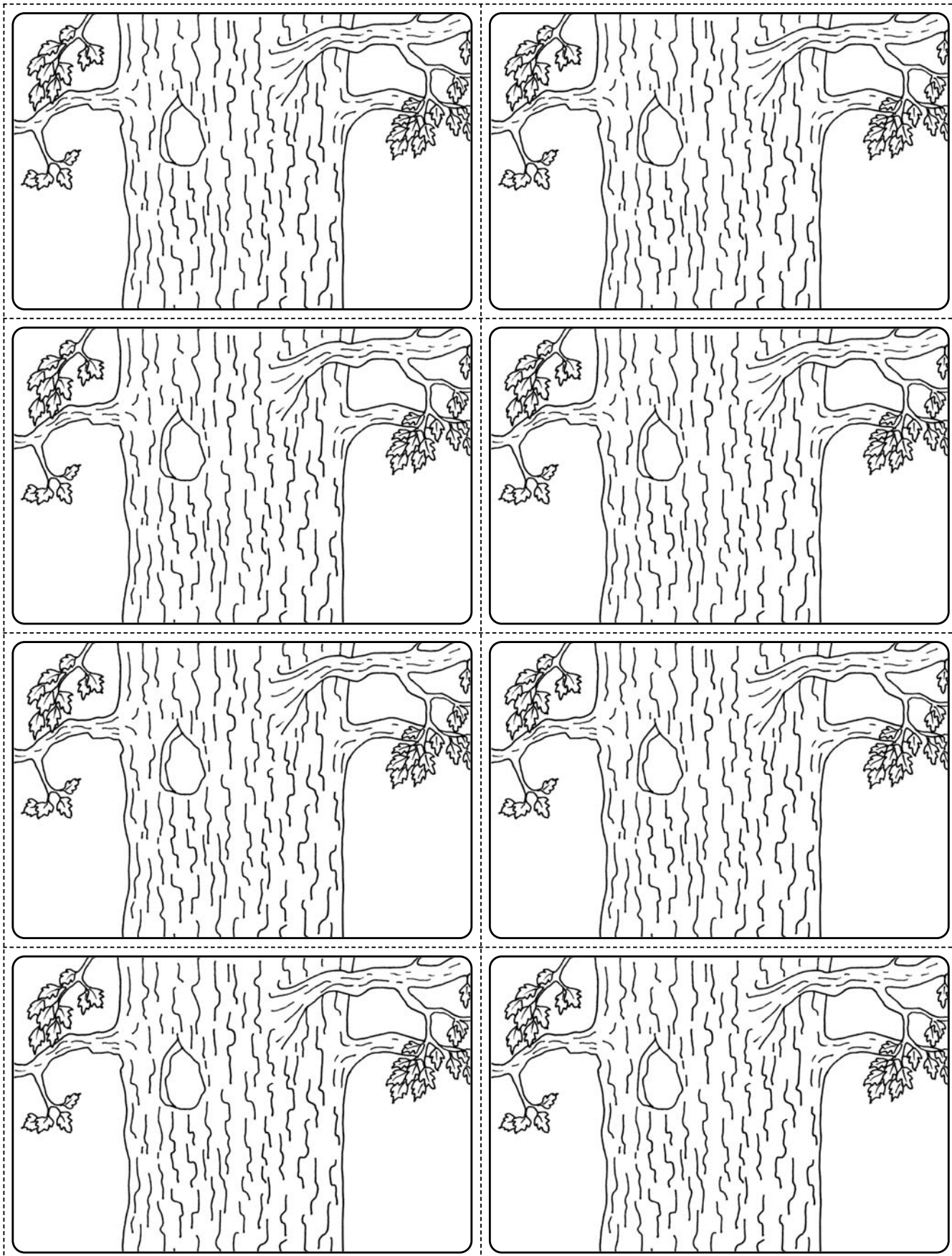
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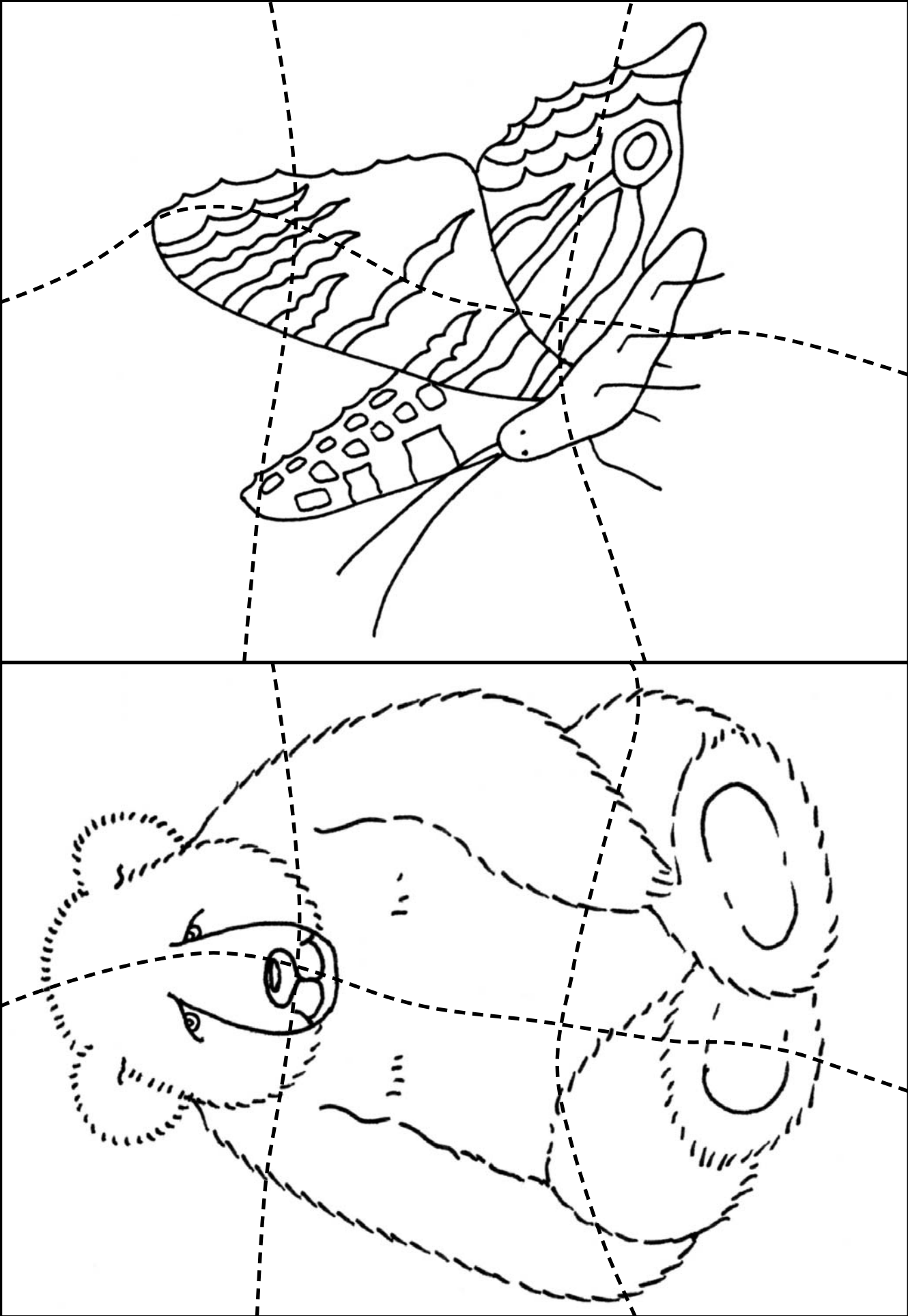
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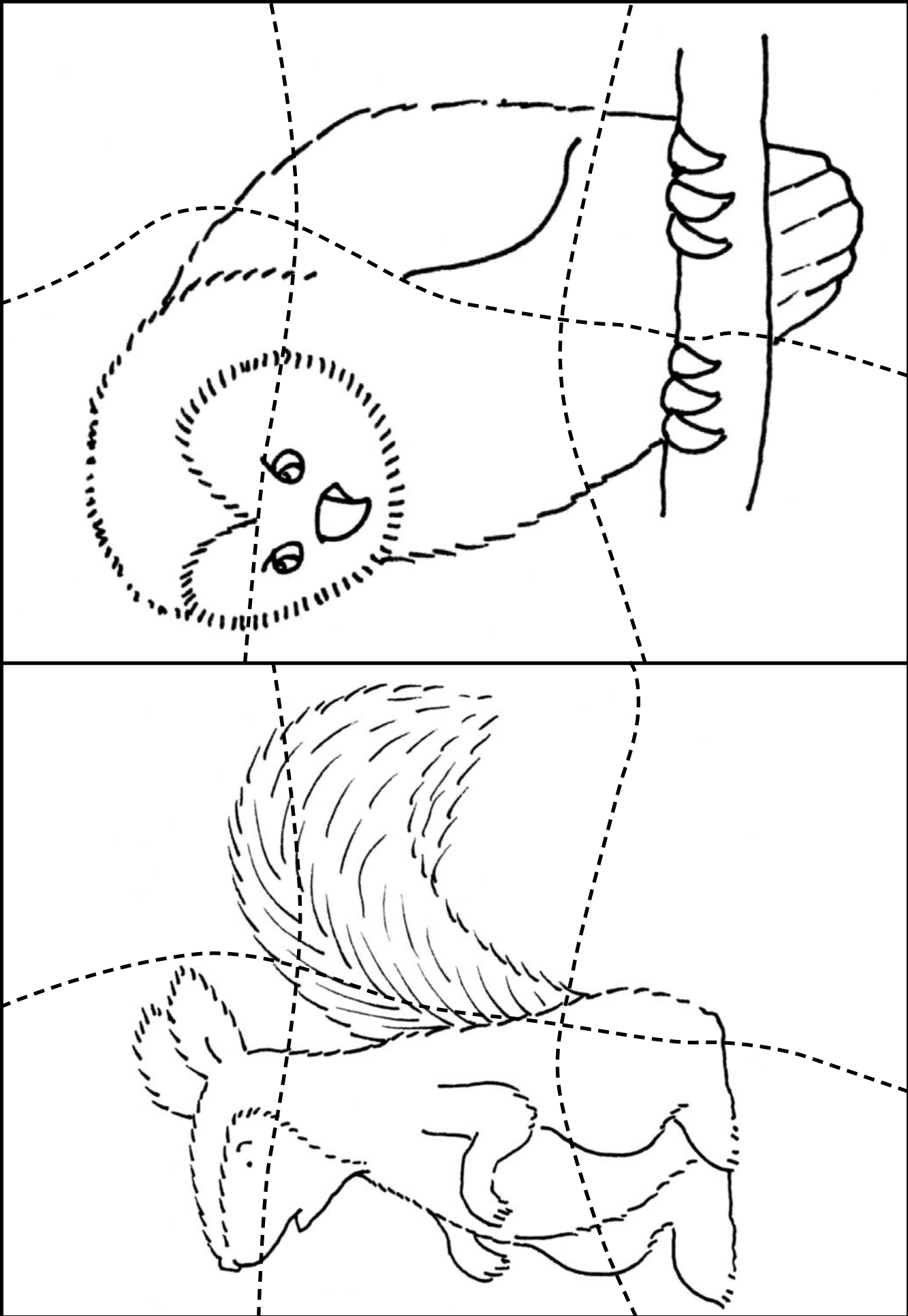
Jigsaw race

Colour in, cut out and piece back together again!



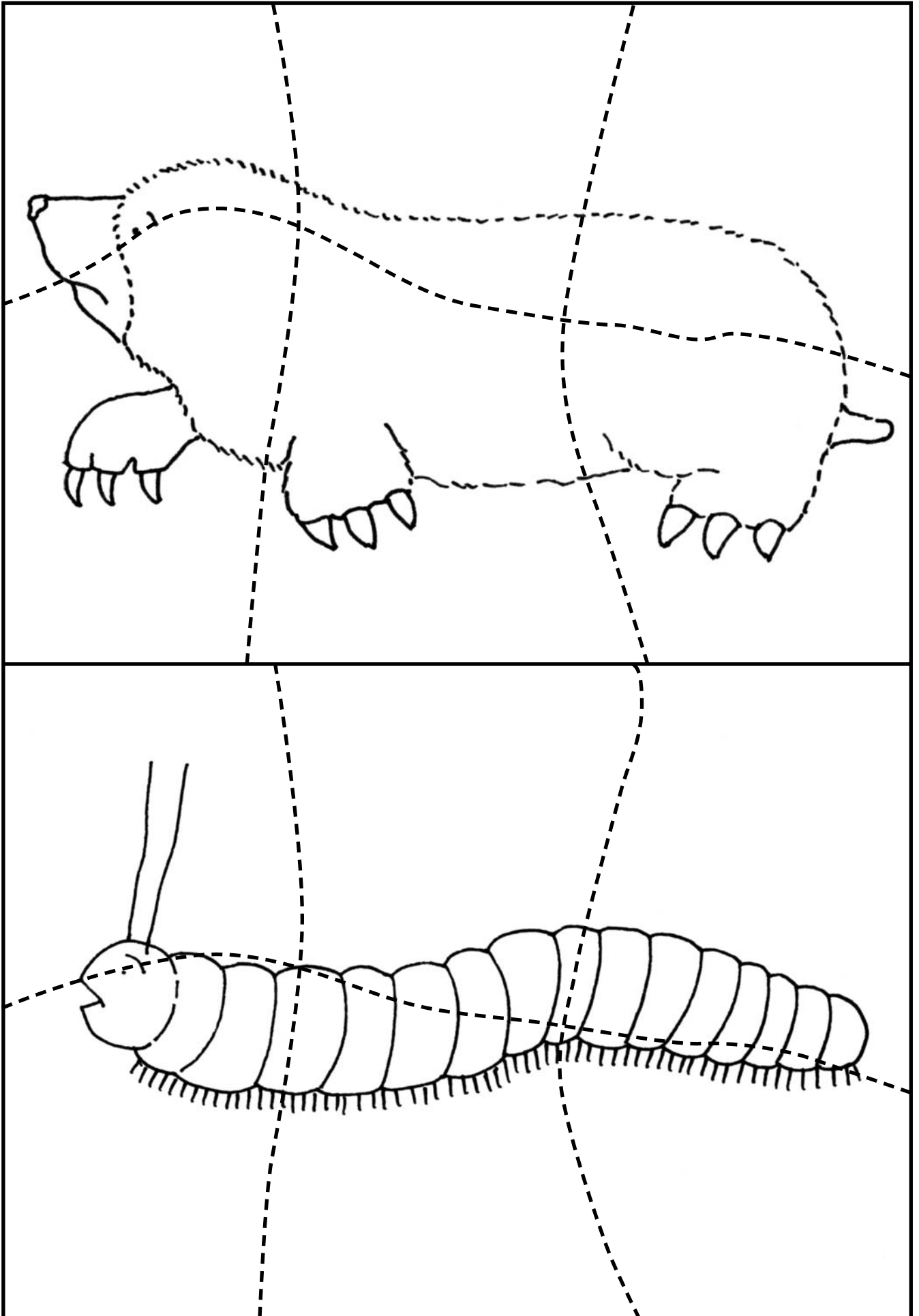
Jigsaw race

Colour in, cut out and piece back together again!



Jigsaw race

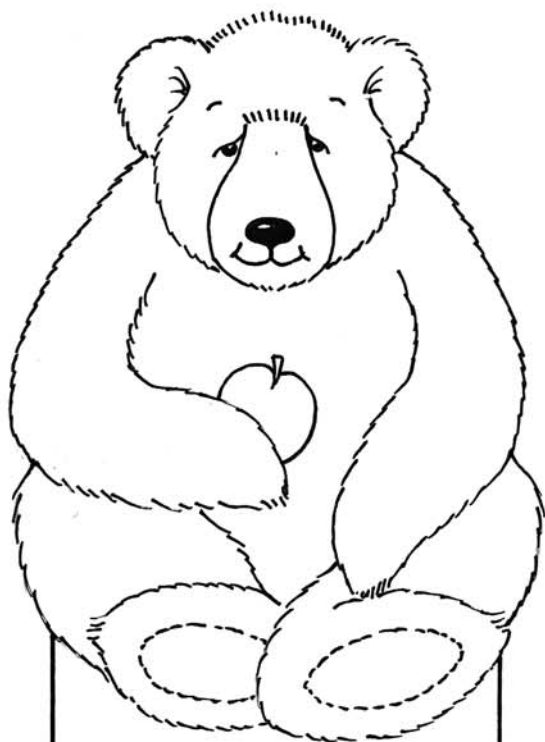
Colour in, cut out and piece back together again!



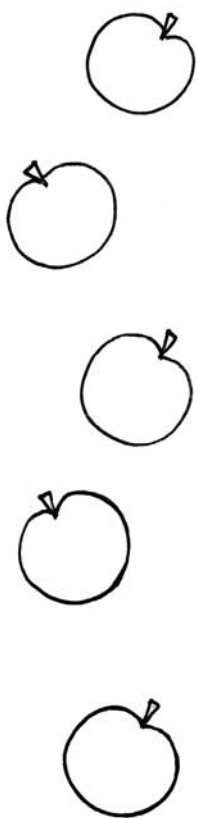
Bookmark and badge

Itch 9

Colour in and cut out!



Itchy Bear



Neil Griffiths



Chin and tummy

Chin, tummy,

Ears and toes,

Ears and toes.

Chin, tummy,

Ears and toes,

Ears and toes.

Arm and bottom, knees and eyes,

Chin, tummy,

Ears and toes,

Ears and toes.

Song sheet 2

If you're itchy and you know it!

V1

If you're itchy and you know it, itch your ears,

If you're itchy and you know it, itch your ears,

If you're itchy and you know it, and you really want to show it,

If you're itchy and you know it, itch your ears.

V2

If you're itchy and you know it, find a branch,

If you're itchy and you know it, find a branch,

If you're itchy and you know it, and you really want to scratch it,

If you're itchy and you know it, find a branch.

Song sheet 3

Itchy Bear had an itch

Itchy Bear, he had an itch and he found a rock.

And on that rock he placed his bottom, ready for a scratch.

With a scratch, scratch here and a scratch, scratch there.

Here a scratch, there a scratch, everywhere a scratch, scratch.

Itchy Bear, he had an itch, but it now has gone!