



Genie in the Book

40+ Fun Activities

AGES 5 AND UNDER

Letter to Parents

Dear Neighbor,

My name is Lan Nguyen Chaplin. I am a college professor who has studied child development and happiness for the last 20 years. I am also a champion for children and a mom to two kids—Thi (age 10) and Wilhelm (age 14). Their school closed on March 16, 2020 and I don't know when it will reopen.

Like you, I'm trying to find fun ways to keep my kids moving, learning, and reaching for the stars. Although I know what's good for children during these difficult times from the perspectives of an educator and a parent, my children and graduates from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) know what's fun ☺ Together, we've scoured the internet for you and developed a unique activity book that will get your children thinking, moving and laughing. Don't be shy in moving with them (I'm doing those push-ups too!) and laughing with them as you figure out the riddles together.

This book begins with a section called "Happy Me" where your children are encouraged to think about the many ways that make them special and ends with a section full of riddles to keep them (and you) guessing and giggling throughout the day. In between, you'll find brain teasers, exercise routines, snack suggestions, and links to the online resources we used to create this book.

Your children are future leaders of the world so we must not let these difficult times stifle their creativity, curb their learning, hinder their ability to move around, or forget that THERE IS A VERY BRIGHT STAR WITH THEIR NAME ON IT!

Please share this book with all your neighbors with kids at home. We're all in this together!

Stay safe. Stay healthy. Treasure this time with your kids—they grow up fast!

Warmly,



Lan Nguyen Chaplin, Ph.D.
Parent and Educator
Happiness Researcher
Champion for Your Children



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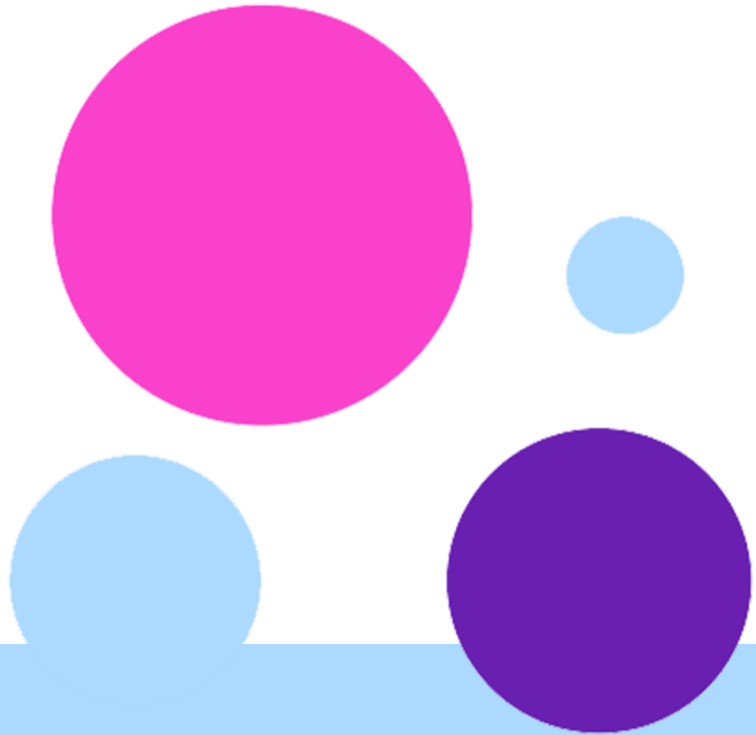
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Activities and information in this eBook are pulled from online sources. All are linked at the end of each section.

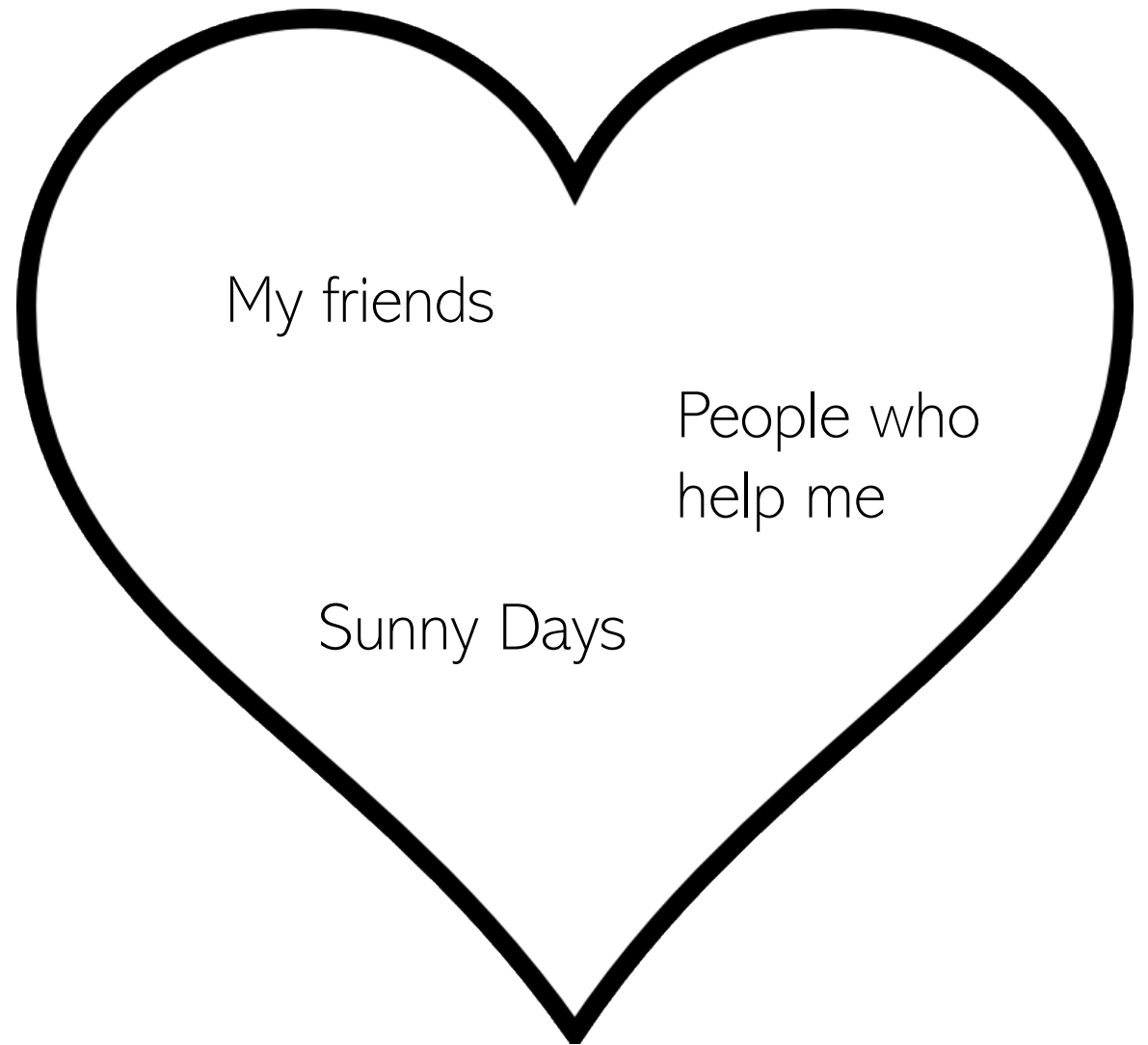




Happy Me

I am SO THANKFUL!

Draw a GIANT heart.
Fill your heart with what and
who you are thankful for
inside your heart. Put it by
your bed to remind yourself
that your heart is full.



Create your own story!

Hi! My name is _____ and I am _____ years old. I am the greatest
(your name) (your age)

thing since _____. My favorite things to do outside are _____,
(your favorite food) (verb)

_____, and _____. I am _____ and love to hang out with
(verb) (verb) (positive adjective)

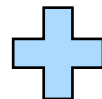
_____. When I grow up, I want to be a _____. I am thankful for my
(name of someone you love) (dream job)

_____ and have so much love to give! I promise to be the best
(noun)

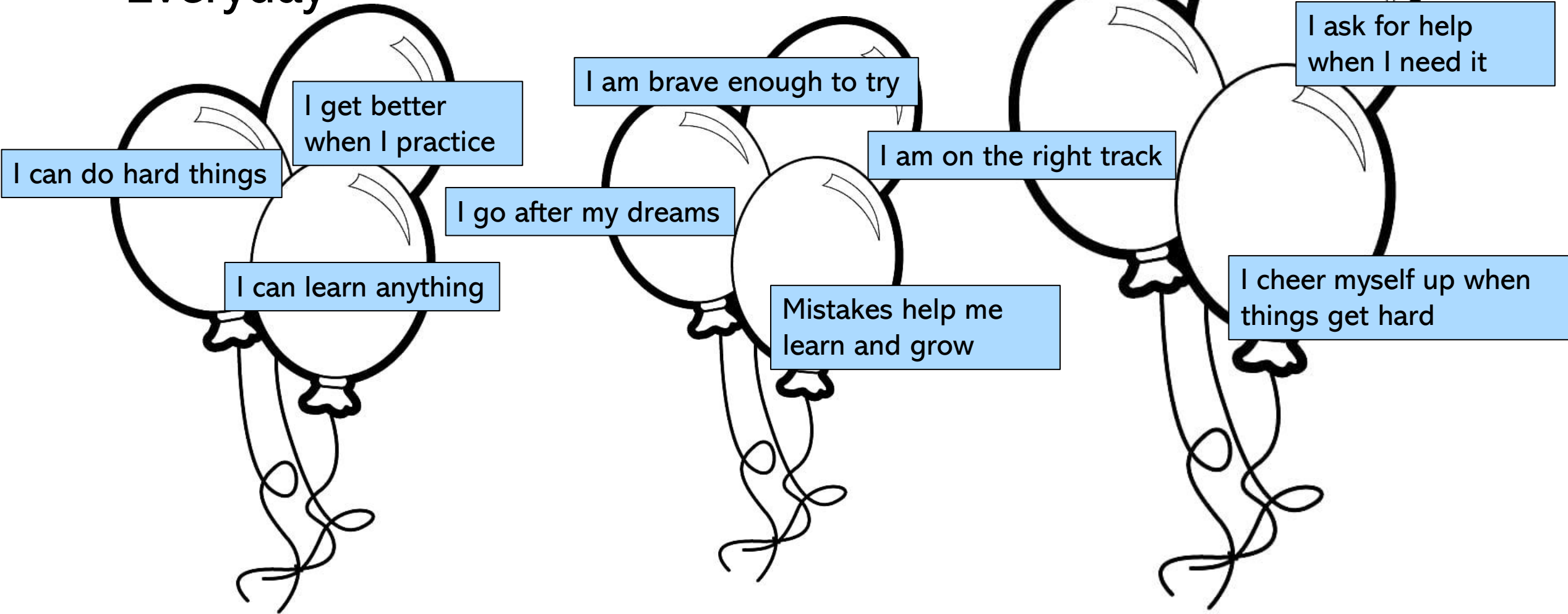
_____ I can be!
(your name)

Draw your favorite animal eating your favorite food sitting in your favorite place in the world!

Example) A panda eating ice cream in your backyard. What would that look like?



Grow Your Mind By Reading These Statements Everyday



Have Positive Thoughts Everyday

Say these thoughts out loud – They're about you!

I am enough



I am perfect just the way I am



I will always be honest

I can make a difference

If I fail, I will always try again

I get better every day

I am strong



I can get through anything



My challenges help me grow



All my problems have solutions

Good things will come to me

I can control my own happiness

Every day is a fresh start




Everything will be ok



My confidence grows when I step out of my comfort zone

Write the word LOVE 200 times.

Be as creative as you want 

I Spy with My Little Eye Something...

- Round
- Squishy
- Metal
- Fluffy
- Salty
- Long
- Clean
- With 4 corners
- Fragile
- Broken



Dear Future Me,

Write a letter to yourself to open in 5 years! How old will you be? What do you want to do when you grow up? What are your favorite foods, songs, and animals? Who is your best friend?



5 Things I Love About Me!



My Happiness Journal

Write your answers on a piece of paper!

Something positive someone said about me:

A compliment I would give myself today is:

I made someone else feel good when I:

Positive feelings I experienced today (list 4):

I felt like I could improve myself today when:

A different action I can do next time is:

What Can I Say Instead?

Instead of:

I'm not good at this. —————>

I'm not awesome at this. —————>

I quit. —————>

This is too hard. —————>

I can't make this any better. —————>

I'm not good at this. —————>

Try thinking:

What am I missing?

I'm on the right track.

I'll use some of the strategies we've learned.

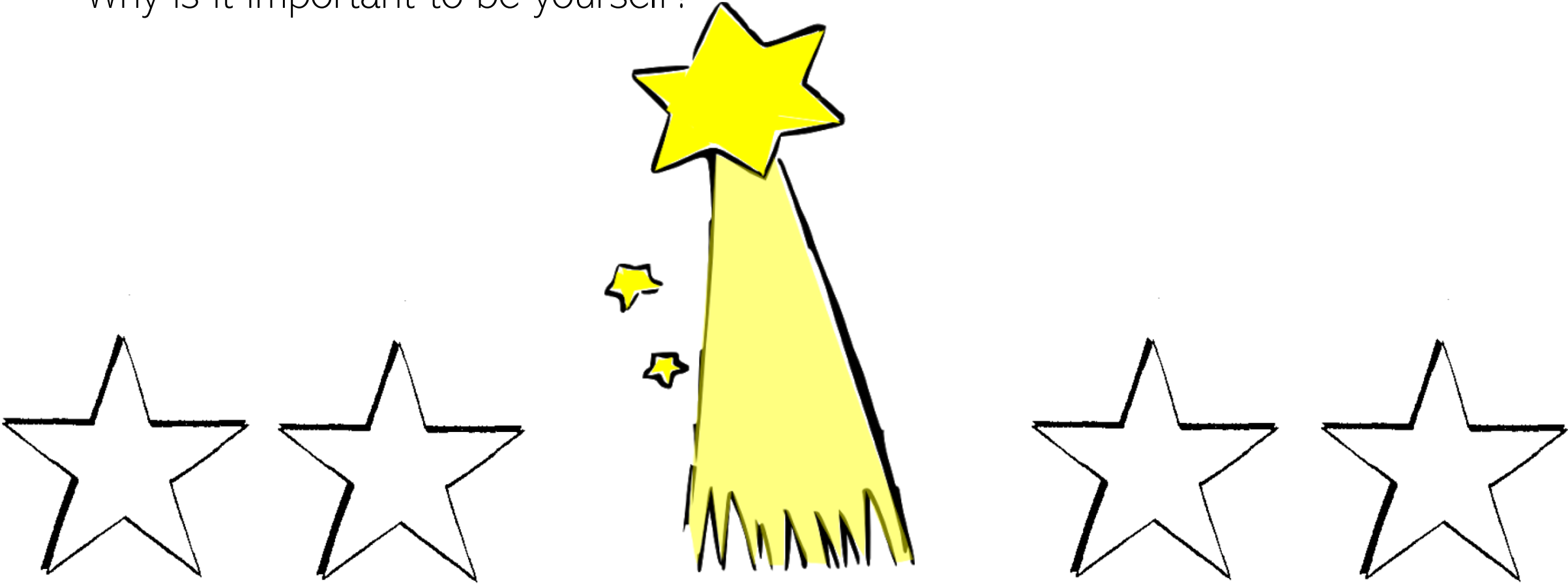
What can you write for the rest?

Positive Thoughts Journaling

I feel good when:	I am proud of myself because:	I had fun when:
This makes me unique:	I learned from this mistake:	I feel strong when:
I look up to:	The best part of today was:	A good quality I am learning is:
This was interesting today:	Something I am grateful for is:	A way I was kind today was:
An accomplishment I made this week was:	I like this about myself:	Something I love about my life is:

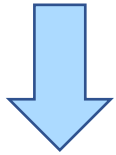
Think About What Makes You Different Than Others

Why is it important to be yourself?



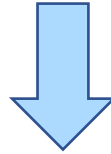
Write down 5 examples for each section on a piece of paper! I love that I.....

Can



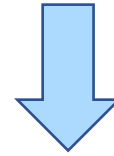
Example: Dance

Am



Example: Confident

Have



Example:
People that
care about me

All Your Feelings!

Think of a time you had these feelings and write down the example.

A time I felt **HAPPY** was when:

A time I felt **CHALLENGED** was when:

A time I felt **NERVOUS** was when:

A time I felt **EXCITED** was when:

How to Make an Origami Heart:

Click this [link](#) to learn!



Sing this every single morning!

Click this [link](#) to sing your positivity song!





Brain Teasers

Brain Teasers Questions

Q1: What gets wetter the more it dries?

Q2: What can you catch but cannot throw?

Q3: How many months have 28 days?

Q4: What is full of holes but can still hold water?

Q5: What goes up but never goes down?

Answers: 1. A towel 2. A cold 3. All of them 4. A sponge 5. Age

Brain Teasers Questions

Q1: What has to be broken before you can use it?

Q2: What has three feet but cannot walk?

Q3: What gets sharper the more you use it?

Q4: What belongs to you but is used more by others?

Q5: What has a face and two hands but no arms or legs?

Answers: 1. An egg 2. A yardstick 3. Your brain 4. Your name 5. A clock

Brain Teasers Questions

Q1: What is the one thing you can never eat for breakfast?

Q2: What can fly without wings and cry without eyes?

Q3: What can you break without touching it?

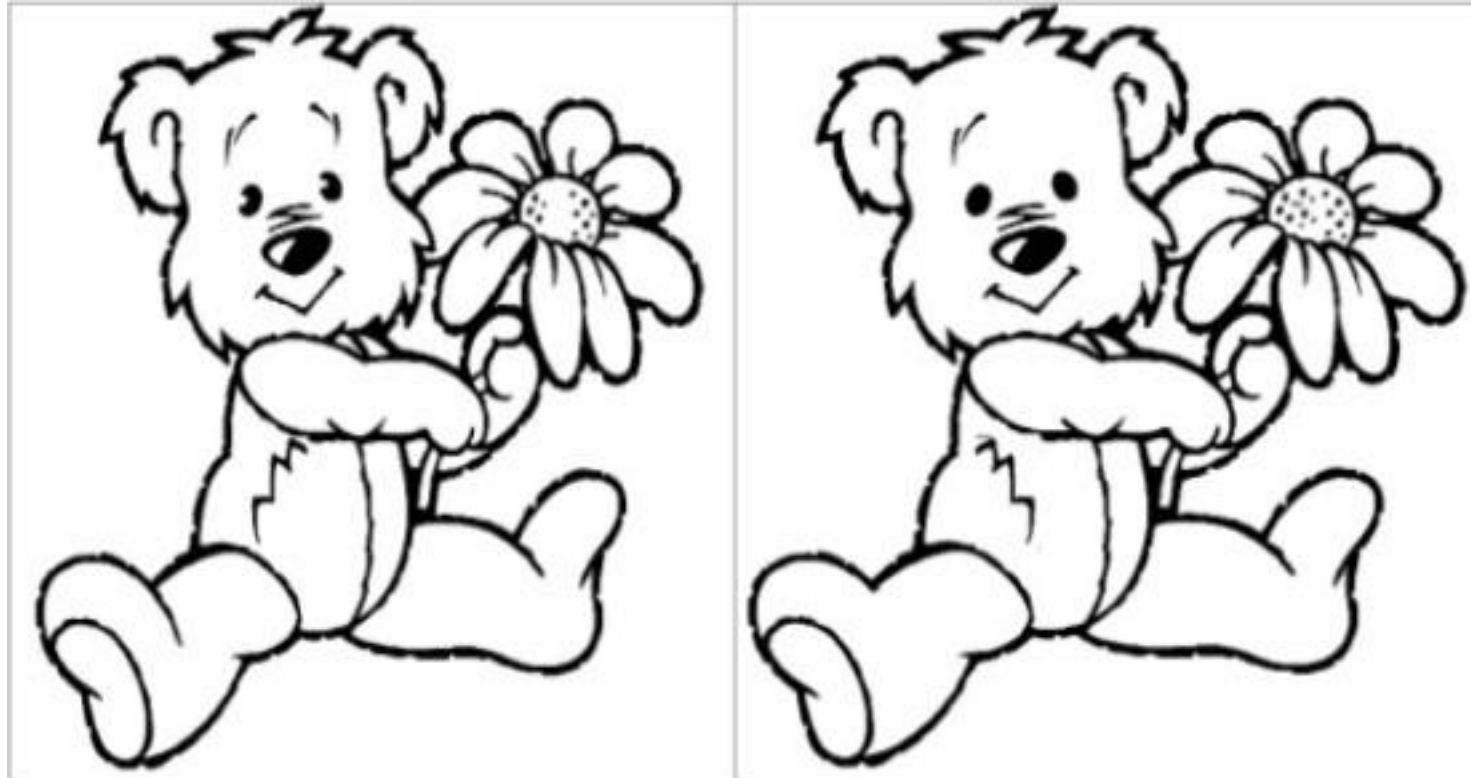
Q4: What do you get when you put a radio in the fridge?

Q5: What is at the end of a rainbow?

Answers: 1. Lunch and Dinner 2. A cloud 3. A promise 4. Cool music 5. The letter W

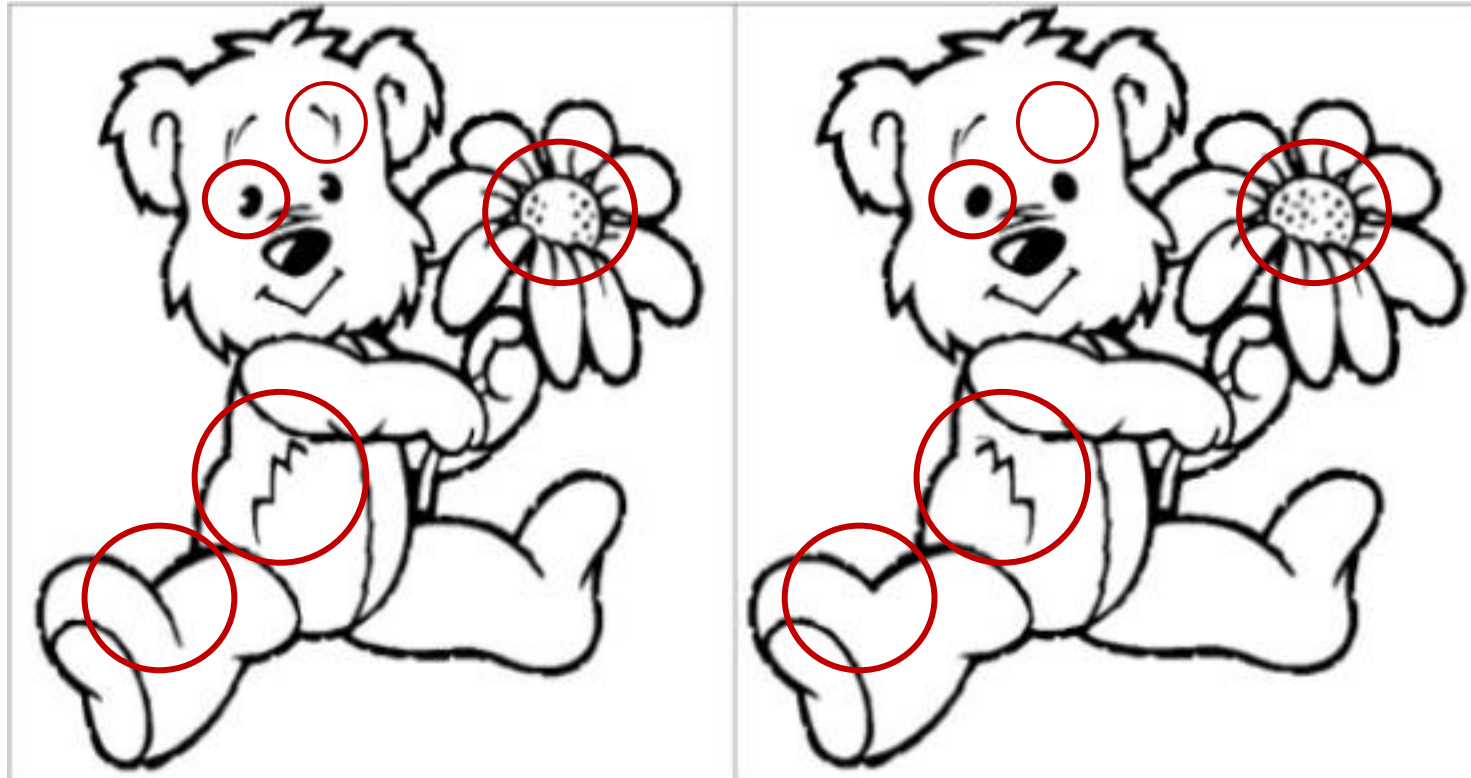
Spot the Difference

Find 5 differences in the pictures below:



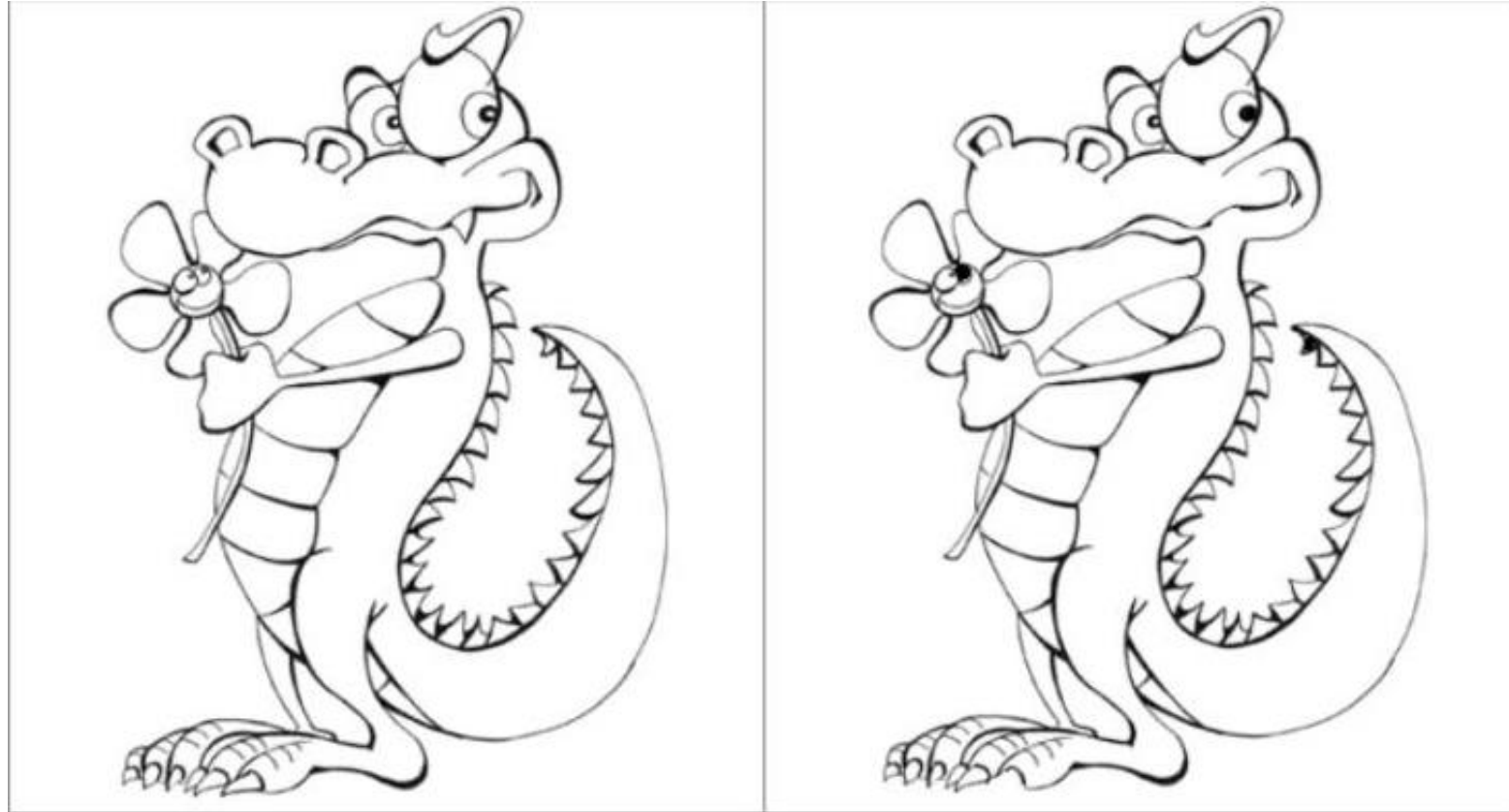
Spot the Difference Answer

Did you get them all?



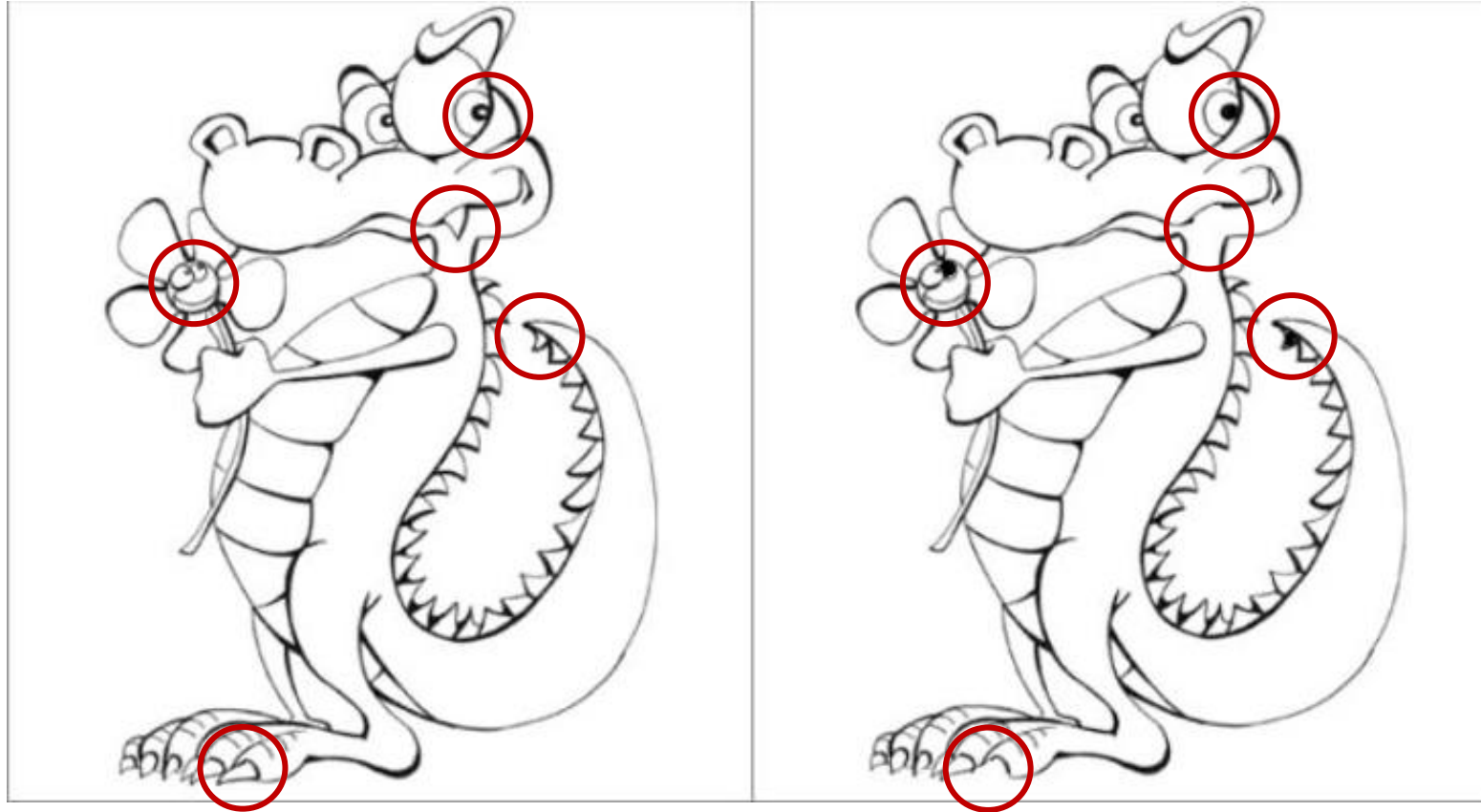
Spot the Difference

Find 5 differences in the pictures below:



Spot the Difference Answer

Did you get them all?



Unscramble the Words

1. ILSME

2. UGHLA

3. YLPA

4. PPAHY

5. NFU

6. YOT

7. TGA

8. NUR

9. SNIG

10. EICN

11. HGU

12. FUNYN

13. JYO

14. MPUJ

15. TRA

Answers: 1. srawsu 2. smile 3. laugh 4. play 5. happy 6. fun 7. tag 8. run 9. sing 10. nice 11. hug 12. funny 13. joy 14. jump 15. art

Unscramble the Words

1. KOBO

2. NSU

3. DNCAY

4. LABL

5. KECAPUC

6. DUDLPE

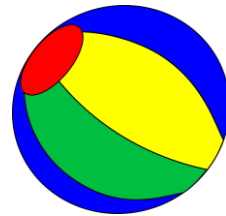
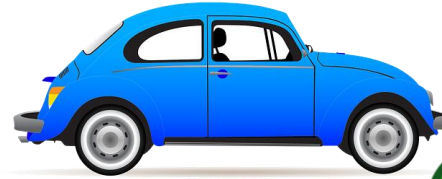
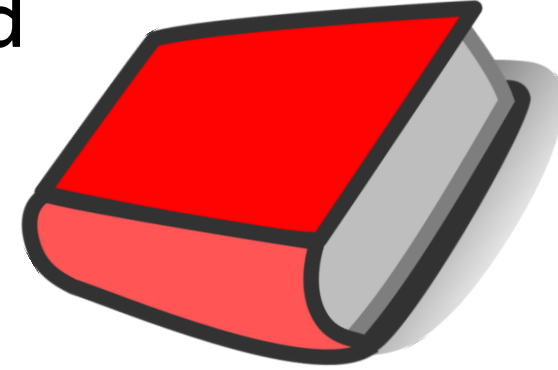
7. RCA

8. REET

9. CTA

10. TERWA

Hints if Needed



Answers: 1. Book 2. Sun 3. Candy 4. Ball 5. Cupcake 6. Puddle 7. Car 8. Tree 9. Cat 10. Water

Which Word Doesn't Belong?

1. DOG

MOUSE

APPLE

KITTEN

2. SCHOOL

BOOKS

TEACHER

BED

3. TV

FRIES

PIZZA

HOTDOGS

4. PENCIL

GUM

PEN

MARKER

5. MILK

CHEESE

YOGURT

SOCKS

Answers: 1. Apple 2. Bed 3. TV 4. Gum 5. Socks

Which Word Doesn't Belong?

1. SHIRT

PANTS

SOCKS

FLOOR

2. EYES

TOY

NOSE

MOUTH

3. SUN

RED

BLUE

GREEN

4. BED

PILLOW

SHEETS

KETCHUP

5. MOON

STARS

MIRROR

EARTH

Answers: 1. Floor 2. Toy 3. Sun 4. Ketchup 5. Mirror

Which Word Doesn't Belong?

1. BIKE

CAR

BUS

PAPER

2. DOG

PIANO

GUITAR

DRUMS

3. SHELLS

OCEAN

TV

SAND

4. TABLE

BOOK

CHAIR

COUCH

5. LAKE

OCEAN

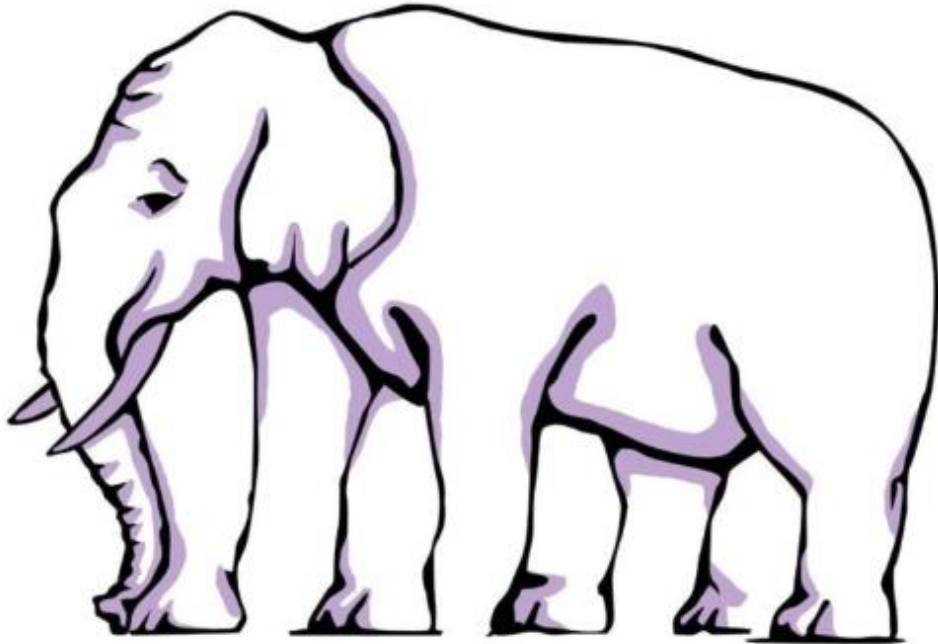
RIVER

SHOE

Answers: 1. Paper 2. Dog 3. TV 4. Book 5. Shoe

What Do You See?

How many legs does the elephant have?



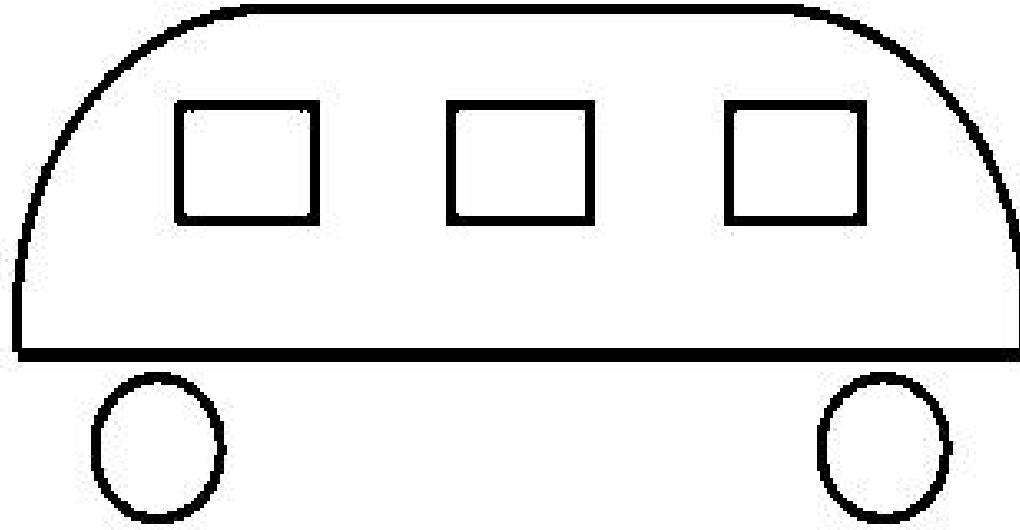
Answer: 1. 4 legs 2. A gorilla and a lion

What two animals do you see?



What Do You See?

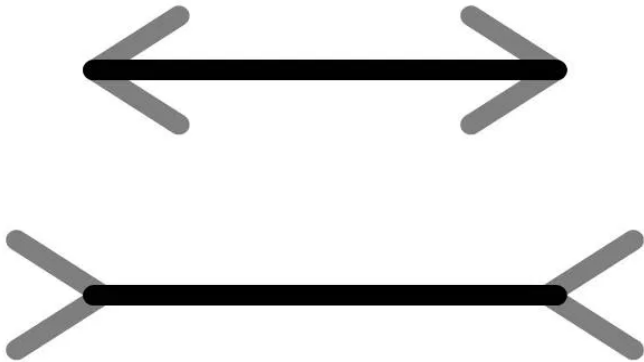
Which way is the bus moving, left or right?



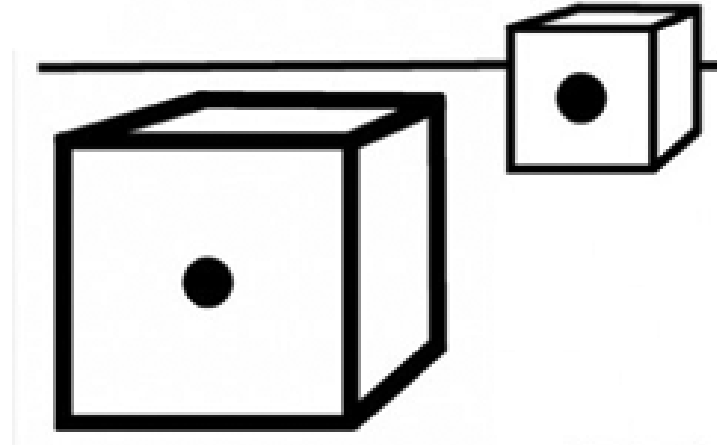
Answer: Left. Why? Because you can't see the door to get on the bus!

What Do You See?

Which black line is longer?



Which black dot is bigger?



Answer: Both lines are the same size and both dots are the same size!

Want more Brain Teasers?

Click [here](#) for more questions

Click [here](#) for more Spot the Difference

Click [here](#) for more tricky pictures



Exercises & Snacks



EXERCISING IS IMPORTANT

MOVE CAREFULLY!

When you exercise, you will achieve:

1

MORE
ENERGY



2

FOCUS WHEN
YOU LEARN



3

BETTER
MOOD



4

BETTER
SLEEP



WHO'S WORKING OUT?

Build your exercise team!

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

WARMING UP

Warming up before an exercise is a VERY important way to stay away from injuries. It is important for kids and adults of all ages to make sure to wake up their muscles with a few movements that will make sure you will be able to move with ease and control during your exercise. To make sure you are ready for a successful exercise, remember the things below:



1

MOVE WITH
CONTROL



2

MAKE SPACE
TO MOVE



3

DRINK
WATER



4

LOVE YOUR BODY

For the purpose of this book, most of the exercise moves listed can be used as warmups. The important piece to keep in mind is that you are making sure to get some blood flow in the areas that you are about to move so your muscles are ready for more advanced/weighted movements if this is part of your exercise routine. Always speak to a health professional before starting any movements you may be unsure about

STRETCHING/COOL-DOWN MOVEMENTS

1. Toe Touch

[Hamstrings+Legs]

Bend at the waist and see how close you can bring your chest to your knees. Don't forget to keep your knees straight!



2. Butterfly Stretch

[Hips + Lower Back]

Sit down and put the bottoms of your feet together. Push your feet together while using your hands to push your knees to the floor. If you want an extra challenge, see how far you can bring your chest to your feet - don't push yourself if it feels uncomfortable.



3. Child's Pose

[Hips + Back]

Kneel on floor with toes touching and knees spread apart. Stretch your hands forward above your head and rest your head on the floor.



4. Reach for the Stars

[Full Body]

Reach your hands over your head bringing your shoulders up high. Keeping your elbows close to your head and stretch all the way through your toes.



5. Cobra Pose

[Lower Back+Hips]

Lie on your belly with your palms on the floor next to your shoulders. Gently push your hands into the floor and bring your chest up, pushing your shoulders down away from your ears. Keep your hips on the floor and make sure to keep pushing them into the floor while remembering to breathe!



6. Downward Facing Dog

[Calves+Hamstrings+Lower Back]

Get on your hands and knees like a dog. Push up (straighten your arms and your knees as much as you can) make sure your hands and feet are strong and you are bringing your hips to the sky. See how close you can bring your heels to the ground and breathe.





THE EXERCISE ALPHABET LIST (A-N)

(1 - 2 - 3)
EASY → HARD

A Bear Crawl (2)

Hands and feet on the floor arching your back to look like a big bear. Now walk around the room (*Roaring like a bear is optional)

B Crab Walk (3)

Sit on the floor with your feet spread apart. Lift your hips from the floor pushing your palms and feet down, while bringing your hips high and keeping your belly tight. Start "walking" with your right hand + left foot & left foot + right hand.

C March In Place (1)

Stand tall. Bring one knee up high and back down, switch legs.

D Take 5 Steps Backwards (1)

Move slow and breathe!

E Jump in a Full Circle (2)

Twist as fast as you can. Don't hit anything around you!

F Jumping Jacks (3)

Stand with your legs together and hands at your sides. Bend your knees slightly and jump while bringing your feet as wide as your shoulders and your hands above your head. Jump back to standing and try to land as quietly as possible.

G Frog Jumps (2)

Stand with your feet wide apart. Squat down and keep your knees pointing out while bringing your fingertips to the floor. Jump up and back down to the squat like a frog. (*Frog noises are optional)

H Dance Party! (1)

Dance like nobody's watching!

I Run in Place (2)

Focus on your breathing while keeping your arms close to your body and landing quietly on your toes.

J Jump in Place (2)

Keep your arms close to your body, your legs strong, and land quietly on your toes. Don't forget to breathe!

K Skips (3)

Lift one knee to waist height and keep your other leg straight as you hop from your toe. Switch legs and use your arms to help bring you up as high as you can while landing quietly on your toes.

L Calf Raises (3)

Stand in place and raise up and down on your toes, gently lowering down.

M Make a Silly Face (1)

Work your face muscles!

N Clap 5 Times (1)

How fast can you clap?...



(1 - 2 - 3)

EASY → HARD

THE EXERCISE ALPHABET LIST (O-Z)

O Side Leg Raises (1)
 Standing straight (next to a chair or a wall for support) lift one leg straight out to the side while keeping your other foot planted on the floor. Try to keep your hips and belly tight. Switch legs.

P Backpack Squats (3)
 Grab your backpack and put it on the front of your chest with the straps on (feel free to put a book or 2 inside!). Stand with your feet wide. Squat down and keep your knees pointing out. Push through your feet, keep your belly tight, and squeeze your cheeks. Avoid bouncing up, try to stay in control through the entire move.

Q Star Jumps (3)
 Squat down low touching your fingers to the floor. EXPLODE up bringing your hands and legs into an "X". Stretch your fingers to the sky and toes to the floor. Try to land quietly.

R Touch your Toes 2 Times (2)
 Bend at your hips and stretch. Don't forget to breathe!

S Superman (2)
 Lay on your belly with your arms stretched out in front of you. Raise your legs and arms off the ground keeping them straight and tight. Push your hips into the ground and keep your belly tight. Slowly lower back down with control.

T Bicycle Kicks (3)
 Lay on your back with your legs straight. Bring your hands behind your head for support. Bring one knee to your chest, while keeping the other leg straight. Bring the opposite elbow to knee and switch. Keep your belly tight and focus on bringing your chest up (not just your neck!).

U Stand on One Leg (2)
 Stand straight and raise one leg. Push your standing foot in the floor and see how still you can be! Switch legs.

V Object Jump Over (2)
 Find any light object around the room (Pencil, Toilet Paper Roll, Foam Ball, Stuffed Animal) and place it on the floor next to you. Jump side to side over the object and try to land as quietly as possible.

W Touch the Wall (3)
 Find the closest wall to you. How fast can you run over and touch it?

X Sit with Feet Above the Floor (2)
 Sit down on the floor and raise both feet. Keep your belly tight, back straight and breathe.

Y Superkid (same as Superman, just cooler if you're a kid) (2)
 Lay on your belly with arms stretched out in front of you. Raise your legs and arms off the ground keeping them straight and tight. Push your hips into the ground and keep your belly tight. Slowly lower down with control.

Z Make Up Your Own Move! (1)
 Get creative!



EXERCISE WORDS

Match each letter to the moves in the Exercise Alphabet List – there are unlimited combinations!

Example: **BOX** = **B** (Crab Walk) + **O** (Side Leg Raises) + **X** (Sit with Feet Above the Floor)

1. QUICK

7. KIDS

13. QUEEN

19. ORANGE

25. FAMILY

2. FOX

8. WATER

14. LAZY

20. LEARN

26. LOVE

3. JUMP

9. MOVE

15. ZEBRA

21. STRONG

27. SMILE

4. BEAR

10. CREATE

16. MUSIC

22. QUIET

28. LAUGH

5. BROWN

11. KING

17. POND

23. TRUCK

29. BRIGHT

6. BOX

12. DOG

18. FLOWER

24. BLOCK

30. DREAM

EXERCISE GAMES



WORD WARRIOR (1 OR 2)

Pick 1 word and do each move matching to each letter for 5-10 seconds each

EXERCISE YOUR NAME (1 OR 2)

Spell out your name with the Alphabet List moves and make it your own exercise!

FACE OFF! (2)

The oldest person chooses a word. Everyone playing will go through the movements of the word 2 times. Don't forget to breathe & drink water. When you finish, yell out your name! Whoever finishes first wins!

MUSIC! (1 OR 2)

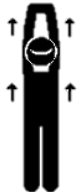
Pick 5 of your favorite moves from the Alphabet List & see how many you can complete while playing your favorite song!

BREATHE & ACHIEVE!

Time to cool down, stretch, and breathe.

You can either follow the guided cool down below or make up your own from the choices in the list!

GUIDED COOL DOWN



1. Reach For The Stars



2. Toe Touch



3. Downward Facing Dog



4. Cobra Pose



5. Child's Pose

ONLINE RESOURCES

Check out the links below for more exercise ideas and references to learn the movements from the exercise lists!

Kids Strength Training - [Click Here](#)

Explaining the Moves - [Click Here](#)

More Activities! - [Click Here](#)

Fun Dance Videos - [Dance Video #1](#) [Dance Video #2](#) [Dance Video #3](#)

Healthy Snacks

Five Easy Tasty Snacks

1. Yogurt + Granola + Raisins
2. Frozen Berries + Milk
3. Turkey + Cheese + Crackers
4. Apple Slices + Almonds (contains nuts)
5. Dried Banana Chips + Peanut Butter
(contains nuts)

Water Challenge!

- Drink 4 glasses of water per day!
- How many days in a row can you go?

Go, Slow, and Whoa Foods

GO Foods are:

1. Low in fat, sugar, and calories
2. Full of vitamins and minerals
3. Great to eat anytime

Examples include:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- Lean meat, poultry, fish
- Beans, eggs, and nuts

SLOW Foods are:

1. Higher in fat, added sugar, and calories
2. To be eaten sometimes/less often

WHOA Foods are:

1. Highest in fat, added sugar, and Calories
2. Often low in nutrients
3. To be eaten only once in a while/on special occasions, in small portions

More Info on Healthy Facts & Snacks

Nutrition Label 101 - [Click Here](#)

Kids in the Kitchen - [Click Here](#)

Nutrition Games and Activities - [Click Here](#)

Go, Slow, and Whoa Foods - [Click Here](#)

Choose Water as a Drink - [Click Here](#)



Riddles

Riddles

1. Where do books hide when they're scared?
2. What's a scarecrow's favorite fruit?
3. Why can't the elephant use the computer?

Answers:

1. Under their covers. 2. Strawberries. 3. Because he's afraid of the mouse.

Riddles

1. What do ghosts use to wash their hair?
2. What did the carrot say to the mushroom?
3. What did the hamburger name her daughter?

Answers:

1. Sham-BOO 2. You're a fungi (fun guy) 3. Patty

Riddles

1. What can go up a chimney down, but can't go down a chimney up?
2. What stays where it is when it goes off?
3. What needs an answer but doesn't ask a question?

Answers:

1. An umbrella 2. An alarm clock 3. A phone

Riddles

1. Forward I am heavy, but backward I am not
2. The more you take, the more you leave behind?
3. What goes up and down but never moves?

Answers:

1. Ton 2. Footprints 3. The temperature

Riddles

1. What can be as big as an elephant, but weighs nothing?
2. What has one head, one foot and four legs?
3. It takes one man three days to dig a whole. How many days would it take two men to dig half a hole?

Answers:

1. The temperature 2. Its shadow 3. A bed

Riddles

1. What always goes to bed with its shoes on?
2. What runs around the whole yard without moving?
3. It has a long neck, a name of a bird, feeds on cargo ships, its not alive, what is it?

1. Horse 2. The Fence 3. A Crane

Answers:

Riddles

1. What is filled with air and sometimes a gas, tied to a string and often seen on your birthday?
2. How many letters are there in the English alphabet?
3. When things go wrong, what can you always count on?

Answers: 1. Balloon 2. 18... 3 in "the", 7 in "English", and 8 in "alphabet" 3. Your Fingers

Riddles

1. A rooster lays an egg on the peak of a house. Which way will the egg fall, east or west?
2. Where can you find cities, towns, shops, and streets but no people?
3. What has a neck but no head?

Answers:

1. Neither. Roosters don't lay eggs 2. A map 3. A bottle

Riddles

1. What has hands but doesn't clap?
2. I'm tall when I'm young, and I'm short when I'm old, what am I?
3. What is so fragile that saying its name breaks it?

Answers:

1. Clock 2. Candle 3. Silence

Riddles

1. The more you take the more you leave behind. What are they?
2. Three men were in a boat. It capsized, but only two got their hair wet. Why?
3. What has 88 keys, but cannot open a single door?

Answers:

1. Footsteps 2. One was bald 3. Piano

Riddles

1. What kind of coat can only be put on when wet?
2. If I have it, I don't share it. If I share it, I don't have it. What is it?
3. Which weighs more: a pound of feathers or a pound of bricks?

Answers:

1. A coat of paint 2. A secret 3. They weight the same

Riddles

1. A girl fell off a long staircase. She wasn't hurt. Why?
2. It follows you and copies your every move. But you can't touch it or catch it. What is it?
3. What building has thousands of stories?

Answers:

1. She fell off the bottom step 2. Your shadow 3. The library

Riddles

1. What are two things you can NEVER eat for breakfast?
2. I have no eyes, no ears, and no legs, and yet I help move the earth. What am I?
3. If there are three cookies and you take away two, how many do you have?

Answers:

1. Lunch and dinner 2. An earthworm 3. If you take two, then you have two

Riddles

1. What do you call a fish with no eyes?
2. What do you call cheese that's not yours?
3. You draw a line. Without touching it, how do you make it a longer line?

Answers: 1. fshhhhhh 2. Nacho Cheese 3. Draw a short line next to it and now it's the longer line

Riddles

1. What do you call a fairy that hasn't taken a bath?
2. What has four wheels and flies?
3. What belongs to you but is used more by others?

Answers:

1. Stinker Bell 2. A garbage truck 3. Your name

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The Team Behind Genie in the Book

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