



*not suitable for grown-ups!



an post

For your world

Overall editor and production: **Jenny Murray (Children's Books Ireland)**

Overall design: **fintanwall.com**  **@WallHello**

Cover design: **Fintan Wall (fintanwall.com)** and **Erik Ryan (An Post)**



About An Post

Here at An Post, we know that the personal benefits of being able to read and write are undeniably good. That is why we have always wanted more people reading and writing. It's why we sponsor the An Post Irish Book Awards and why we have launched our **#ReadersWanted** campaign to help recruit more readers across Ireland and to showcase the work of writers across the island.

As a next step in our **#ReadersWanted** campaign we are delighted, in conjunction with Children's Books Ireland, to bring ImagineNation to you. ImagineNation is full of great activities and we hope it will inspire new adventures in reading and writing for you and your family as well as many hours of fun.

Enjoy!

www.anpost.com/About/Irish-Book-Awards

www.anpostirishbookawards.ie

#ReadersWanted

 **@PostVox**

 **@anpostofficial**

 **@AnPost**

 **An Post**

About Children's Books Ireland

At Children's Books Ireland, we believe that every child should have access to the joy of reading, regardless of their circumstances. Our mission is to make books central to every child's life on the island of Ireland. We work with families, teachers, libraries, publishers and communities all across the island to get books into children's hands and to inform adults who can make a big impact on their reading. We advocate for the changes Ireland needs to grow a new generation of readers, and we support artists so that they can make excellent work for children and young people. Sign up to our newsletter to stay in touch!

www.childrensbooksireland.ie

#EveryChildAReader

 **@KidsBooksIrel**

 **@kidsbooksirel**

 **@childrensbooksireland**

 **Children's Books Ireland**

Share your projects on social media using

#ImagineNation

Extraordinary thanks to all of our partners



#ImagineNation

At An Post and Children's Books Ireland we believe that everyone can be creative – no one more so than children – and that every child can be a reader. Right now, so much is being asked of families who are staying home and staying safe. We want to help alleviate some of the boredom and to encourage you all to take some time to draw, read, write and create! In this gorgeously illustrated playbook, you'll find activities, puzzles, poems and short stories from some of Ireland's best children's writers and illustrators that we hope will delight, entertain and spark creativity. This playbook is YOURS to read, colour and create! We're all in this together and we're so proud of Ireland's positivity during one of the toughest times many of us have lived through. We are delighted to share this fantastic playbook with you to help make time for a little family fun, creativity and togetherness.

Both of our organisations love books. A book can be a great escape, a door to another world, an inspiring world of discovery and learning. If you need recommendations for a great book, check out childrensbooksireland.ie for recommended reads, including the An Post Bedtime Books Reading Guide and other themed reading lists.

Each of the artists we have brought together to create this playbook is a writer or illustrator whose work you can go and discover for yourself. Did you know you can join the library for free at librariesireland.ie and immediately access free ebooks and audiobooks in your home? We invite you to open up your imaginations and get reading!


So now it's time to get creative using your ImagineNation playbook. Using **#ImagineNation**, post your creations on social media and tag An Post and Children's Books Ireland (see opposite page for our social media details) to show us your creativity and all the fun you're having together in homes across Ireland.

Debbie Byrne, Managing Director An Post Retail, and **Elaina Ryan**, CEO Children's Books Ireland

Featured artists

Niall Breslin

niallbreslin.com

 @nbrez

Fatti Burke

fattiburke.com


 @fattiburke

John Burke

gillbooks.ie


Don Conroy

donconroy.ie

 @donconroy


Sarah Crossan

childrenslaureate.ie

 @SarahCrossan

Sheena Dempsey

sheenadempsey.com

 @sheenadempsey

Jennifer Farley

jenfarley.com

 @Laughing_Lion

Chris Haughton

chrishaughton.com


 @chrishaughton

Shane Hegarty

 @shanehegarty

Yasmeen Ismail

yasmeenismail.co.uk

 @yasmeeniy

Oliver Jeffers

oliverjeffers.com

 @oliverjeffers

Chris Judge

chrisjudge.com

 @chrisjudge

Tarsila Krüse

tarsilakruse.com

 @tarsilakruse


Steve McCarthy

mrstevemccarthy.com

 @mrstevemccarthy


Oisín McGann

oisinmcgann.com

 @OisinMcGann

Mary Murphy

marymurphy.ie

 @marymurphykidsbooks

Áine Ní Ghlinn

Alan Nolan

alannolan.ie

 @AlNolan

David O'Doherty

davidodoherty.com

 @phlaimeaux

Lauren O'Neill

laurenipsum.ie

 @oneillustration

Dave Rudden

daverudden.com

 @d_ruddenwrites


Niamh Sharkey

niamhsharkey.com

 @sharkeytweets

Sarah Webb

sarahwebb.ie

 @sarahwebbishere

Fintan Wall

fintanwall.com

 @WallHello

Máire Zepf

mairezepf.com

 @MyraZepf

DECODE THE COUNTY

WITH JOHN AND FATTI BURKE



Using the key, decode the five facts about Irish counties below!



DRAW in WHATEVER GIANT THING
is about to RAMPAGE the TOWN
and the CARNAGE that Follows.



OLIVER JEFFERS

an
post



THE MAGIC MOMENT TRICK

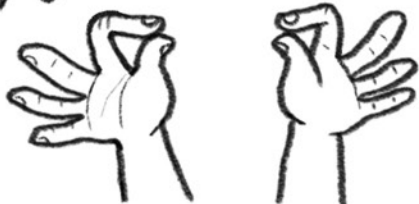


When you're scared
 or feeling sad,
 a little bit angry,
 a little bit mad,
 just slow down and
 start to breathe
 in and out
 ten times with ease,
 think of something
 that makes you smile
 and hold that thought
 for a little while,
 then squeeze your fingers
 really tight
 and your magic moment
 will shine so bright!

1...2...3...



SQUEEZE



FIRE YOUR IMAGINATION

BY MÁIRE ZEPF & TARSILA KRÜSE

LASRACH THE DRAGON BREATHES HOT BLAZING FIRE

DRAW THE FLAMES AND COLOUR THEM IN

BUT THIS DRAGON BREATHES SOMETHING ELSE INSTEAD OF FIRE

WHAT IS IT? CAN YOU DRAW IT?

CAN YOU THINK OF A STORY ABOUT YOUR _____-BREATHING DRAGON?
DON'T FORGET TO GIVE THEM A NAME!

DANGER IS EVERYWHERE

with
Docter Noel Zone

by
David O'Doherty (words)
& Chris Judge (pictures)



Docter Noel Zone is the world's leading (and only) **DANGEROLOGIST**.

He believes that **DANGER IS EVERYWHERE** and he's **ALWAYS** much too worried about **EVERYTHING**.



He worries about a shark coming up out of the toilet,



about a volcano erupting under his home,



about whether his granny is a robot.



But he is **ESPECIALLY** worried at the moment.

He takes his wheelie bin everywhere he goes, and jumps into it if he feels a cough might be coming.



No, Noel! You just need to cough into your elbow.

He washes his hands for at least an hour, every hour.



You only need to wash your hands for twenty seconds each time, and you can sing while you do it!

He thinks that staying two metres away from each other when we are outside isn't enough, so he opts for two kilometres. This makes shopping very difficult.



Finally, when you are staying at home, you don't need to lie in a bath filled with hand sanitiser while wearing a space helmet and boxing gloves. You can have fun, reading and playing games like dress-up!



**STOP WORRYING SO MUCH,
DOCTER NOEL!**

Féach Amach an Fhuinneog Look Out Your Window

Cad a fheiceann tú? What do you see?

Déan liosta Make a list of everything you see. Can you name some of the things you see as Gaeilge or in any other language you speak? If someone you live with speaks another language ask them for help.

Choose one item from your list - in any language you like. An spéir, a flower, an ghrian, the wind. Or something imaginary - a balloon floating in the sky.

NOW ... it's time to **BRAINSTORM!** You can brainstorm in any language you like - I'm going to brainstorm as Gaeilge agus as Béarla ...

To help you get started: let's suppose we have chosen **crann/a tree**.

Write down as **many words** as possible about a **tree**

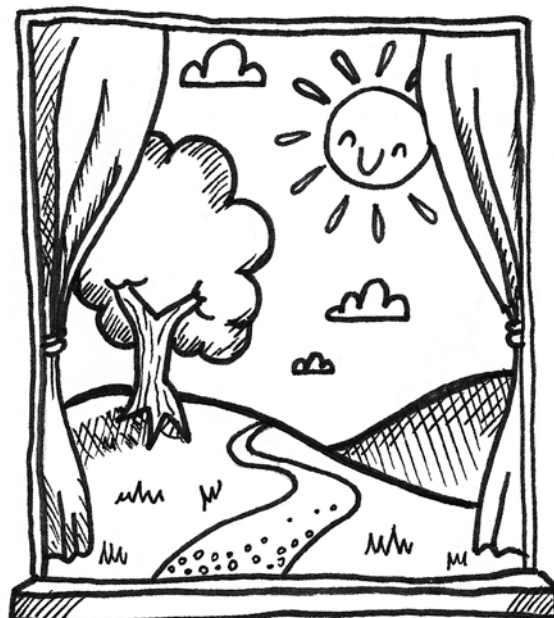
**Sean/uaigneach/maorga/
clóca glas/duilleoga ag
titim/fathach mór ...**

**Cuir ceisteanna ort féin le
cur le do liosta.**

An bhfuil an crann sona?
Cén fáth? An bhfuil
uaigneas air? Cén fáth?



(You can invent as many questions as you like.)



**Alone/lonely/majestic/leaves
falling/arms outstretched/
green cloak/old ...**

**Ask yourself some questions
to add to your list.**

Is this a happy tree? A sad
tree? Why? Is it lonely? Why?

Now we are going to turn our brainstorming into a poem called a cinquain.

The rules are simple - and you can break them or change them in any way you like.

Rialacha: a cinquain has 5 lines and is shaped like a diamond.

Line 1: 2 syllables (usually the title of the poem)

Line 2: 4 syllables (usually describes the title)

Line 3: 6 syllables (usually has some form of action involved)

Line 4: 4 syllables (usually captures a feeling or emotion)

Line 5: 2 syllables (usually links back to Line 1)

*Seanchrann
Uasal, maorga
Seasann leis féin sa pháirc
Faoi bhraí uaignis
Fathach*

*Treetime
Tall, majestic
Swinging from your strong arms
In my safe place
Metime*

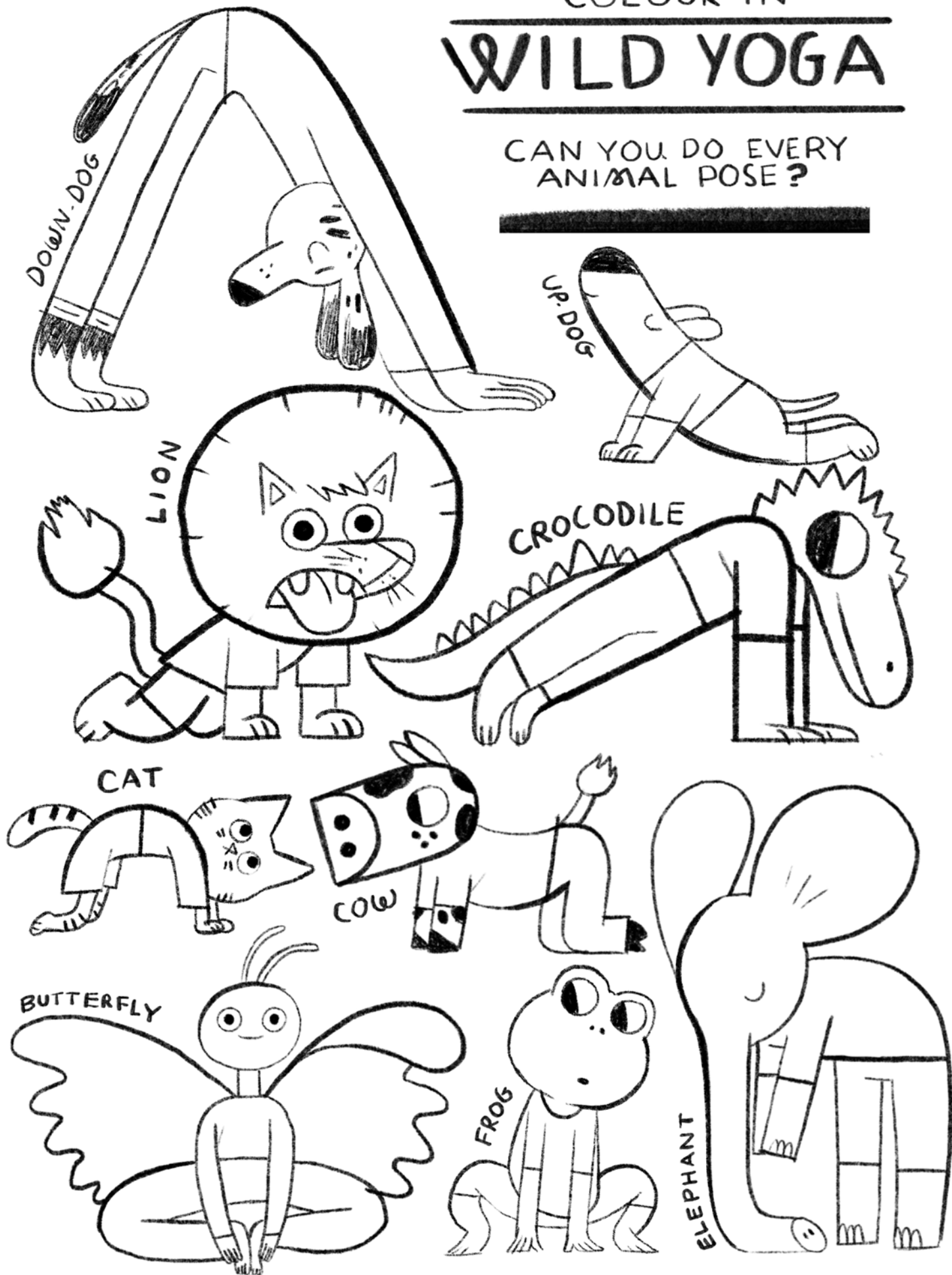
Now choose something else from your list and try your own cinquain.

Write a cinquain in English. Scríobh cinquain as Gaeilge. Féach amach an fhuinneog arís agus arís eile.

How many cinquains - in any language you choose - can you create through your window? Have fun agus go n-éirí leat!

COLOUR IN
WILD YOGA

CAN YOU DO EVERY
ANIMAL POSE?



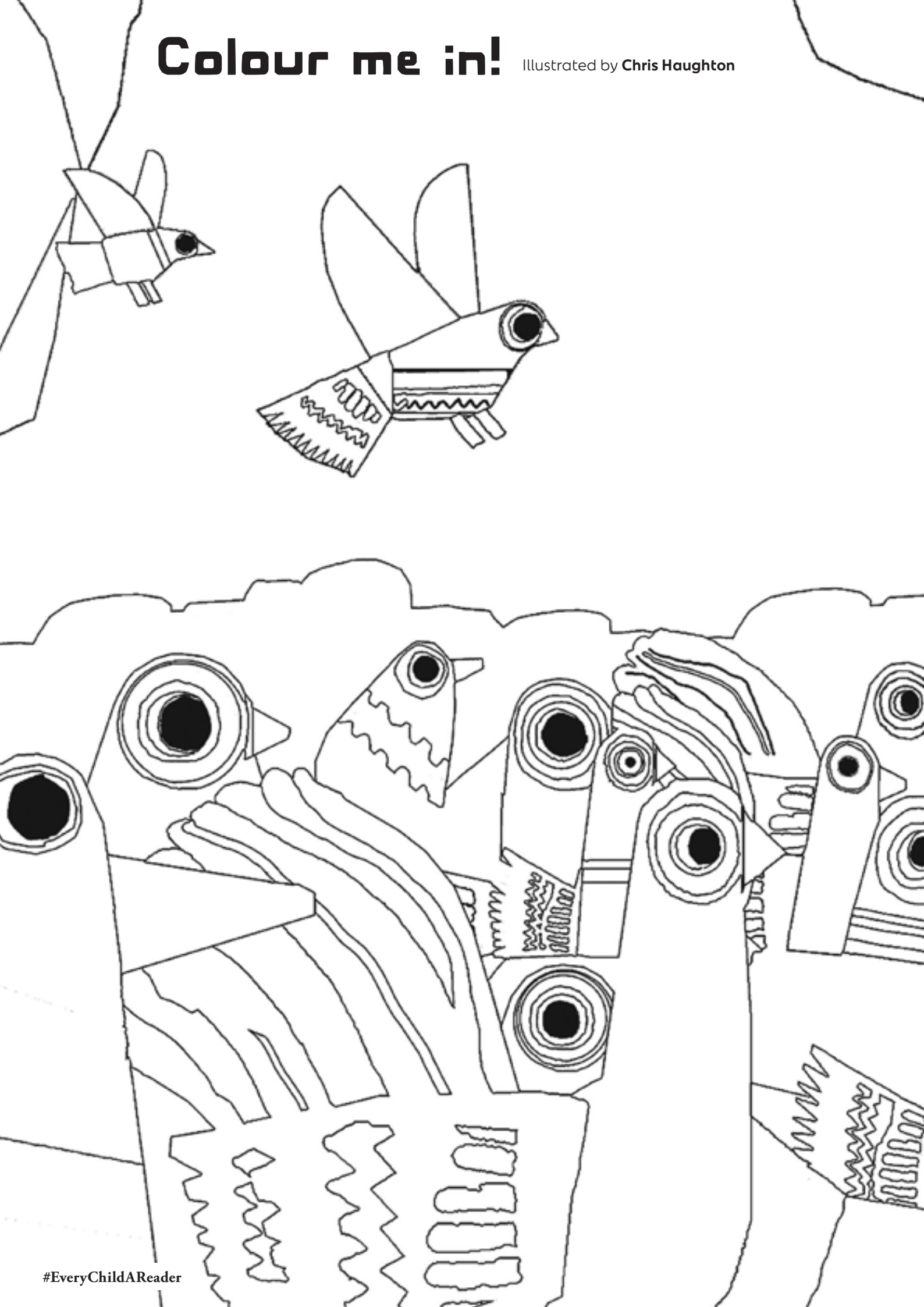
CAN YOU DRAW YOUR OWN ANIMAL POSE?

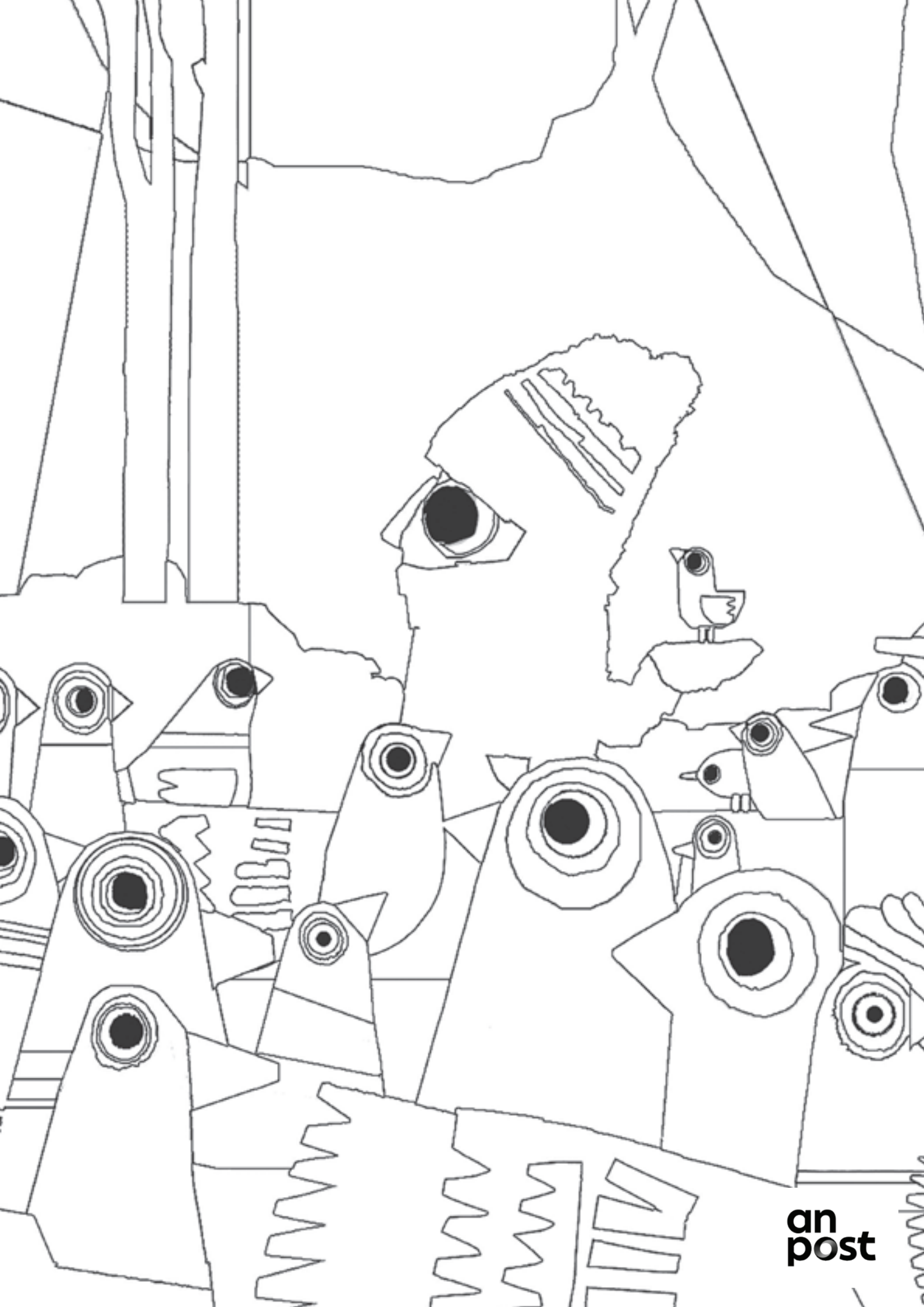
DRAWN BY MR STEVE MCCARTHY - COLOURED BY-

**an
post**

Colour me in!

Illustrated by Chris Houghton





**an
post**

ARE YOU UP FOR A

MONSTROUS CHALLENGE!

PRESENTED BY DASTARDLY DAVE RUDDEN AND AWFUL ALAN NOLAN



DAVE

WRITING SCARY STORIES IS TONS OF FUN. YOU MIGHTN'T THINK IT, BUT READING A SCARY STORY IS LIKE BEING ON A ROLLERCOASTER OR TAKING A GHOST TRAIN AT A FUNFAIR. IT'S CONTROLLED SCARINESS. SCARINESS WHERE YOU'RE IN CHARGE. I GOT INTO WRITING BECAUSE I LOVE CREATING WEIRD MONSTERS FROM THE THINGS THAT SCARE ME. IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'M IN CHARGE OF THEM INSTEAD OF THEM BEING IN CHARGE OF ME.



ALAN

THINGS I FIND SCARY:

- Dentists
- Spiders
- Spider Dentists

THINGS YOU FIND SCARY:

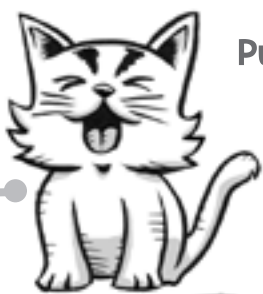
-
-
-

THE THING IS, IT'S EASY TO MAKE A MONSTER FROM SOMETHING THAT SCARES YOU. A DARK NIGHT WHERE THE WIND IS HOWLING, AND FINGER-LIKE TREE BRANCHES ARE SCRATCHING AT YOUR WINDOW? THAT'S SCARY ALL BY ITSELF - IT DOESN'T NEED ANY HELP FROM YOU. WORSE, SOMEONE WHO READS YOUR STORY IS GOING TO EXPECT SCARINESS ON A NIGHT LIKE THAT. THEY'LL BE PREPARED. THAT'S NO GOOD - YOU WANT SOME SURPRISE IN YOUR SCARINESS!

I WANT TO CHALLENGE YOU TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT **ISN'T** SCARY INTO A MONSTER.

THINGS I DON'T FIND SCARY:

Kittens



Puppies



Cupcakes



Puppies small enough to sit in cupcake wrappers with tiny cherries on their heads



THINGS YOU DON'T FIND SCARY:

I WANT YOU TO LIST OUT THE **CUTEST POSSIBLE** THINGS YOU CAN, PICK ONE, AND THEN THINK ABOUT HOW YOU WOULD WRITE A SCARY STORY WITH SOMETHING NOT SCARY AT ITS HEART.

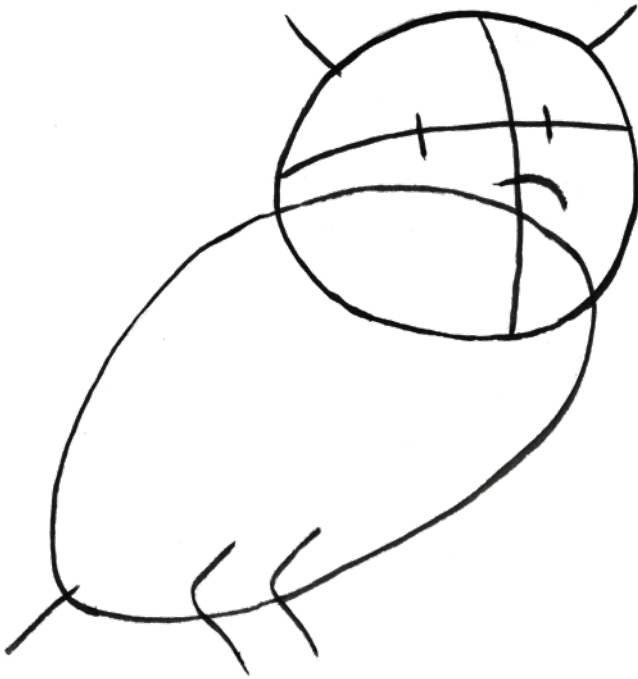
MAYBE IT'S ABOUT A CUTE LITTLE BABY WITH **MIND CONTROL POWERS**. MAYBE IT'S A STORY ABOUT A GERBIL WHO **PLANS TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD**. KITTENS WITH SNAKE-TAILS, BABY ELEPHANTS BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A CITY-DESTROYING ROBOT, A CUPCAKE THAT EATS PEOPLE - **THE CHOICE IS YOURS.**

GOOD LUCK!

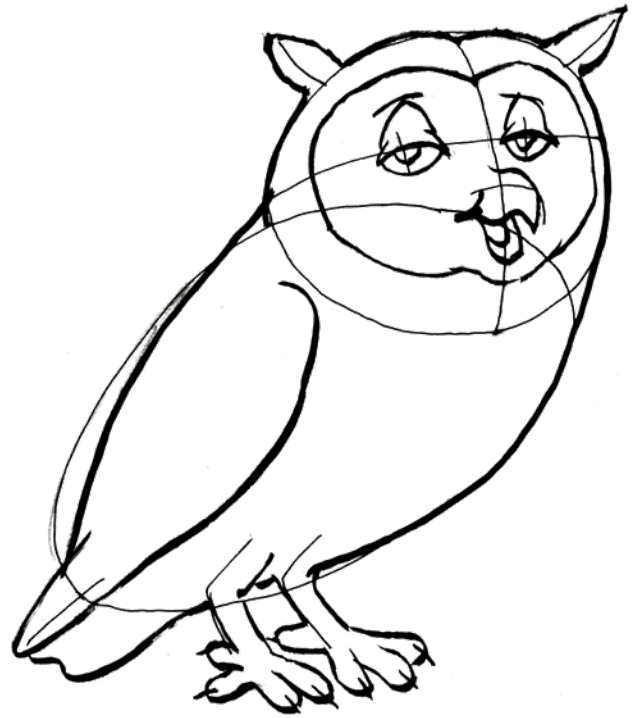
Draw with Don

Let's draw a cartoon long-eared owl.

Step 1: Using a pencil (HB or 2B) draw these simple shapes.



Step 2: Work out the shape of your owl as shown.



Step 3: When you're satisfied, go over the owl shape with a thick felt-tipped marker. When it's dry, rub out any unwanted pencil lines.



Step 4: Shade your owl in or add colour. Then give them a name and you're done!

THANK THE HEROES!

Mary
Murphy



Three cheers for the folks
Who empty our bin!
We clap you and cheer you
And make quite a din.



Yippee for the people
Who deliver our stuff!
With you guys around,
There's always enough.



Hurray for the Postie
Who brings post every day!
We think you're fantastic.
What more can we say?

You're heroes! You're friends!
You're stars in our eyes!
I'll make a big sign
to say THANKS to you guys.



Bright colours
cheer us up!

TRY THIS...

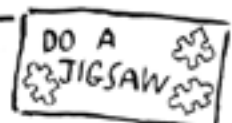
Your WINDOW IS LIKE A STAGE FOR PEOPLE GOING BY!
Make a poster for it with YOUR message.



BIG writing and SIMPLE
images work well
for posters.



PAINT or
DRAW or
cut out!



Or make signs
for passers by with
different ideas
to try at home.
And try them yourself!



Or make a
changing scene
with your toys.



MONSTER BLOBS

by Niamh Sharkey

Turn these
ink blobs
into monsters!

Blackout Poetry

Read the full page of text below. Now outline the words you want to keep. It can be one, two, more or none from each sentence. Once you are happy with your selection, blackout the rest of the words, and now you have a blackout poem! You can recreate this using old newspapers and magazines, or old books or even cereal packages!



Down the Rabbit-Hole

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, “and what is the use of a book,” thought Alice “without pictures or conversations?”

So she was considering in her own mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

There was nothing so *very* remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so *very* much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself, “Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!” (when she thought it over afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); but when the Rabbit actually *took a watch out of its waistcoat-pocket*, and looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and fortunately was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again.

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything; then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and bookshelves; here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed; it was labelled “ORANGE MARMALADE”, but to her great disappointment it was empty: she did not like to drop the jar for fear of killing somebody underneath, so managed to put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past it.

“Well!” thought Alice to herself, “after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs! How brave they’ll all think me at home! Why, I wouldn’t say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!” (Which was very likely true.)



Draw a map

Draw a map of your area, village or town. Draw in some of the landmarks that make it special. Maybe it's your favourite shop, or a beautiful old tree, or maybe it's the house where the dog barks all the time. Draw as many landmarks as you like. This map is for fun – it doesn't have to be accurate.

'Making maps is a joy, both because maps are beautiful to look at and because they lead us through our histories and dreams in a way that no other art form really can.' – **Jill K. Berry**

Here are some ideas to include in your map:



School



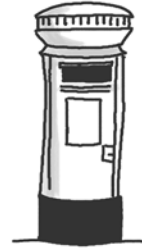
Shop



Library



Bus Stop



Post Box



Beach



Doctor



Park



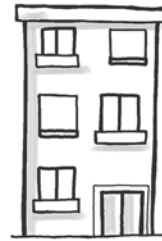
Garda



Supermarket



Church



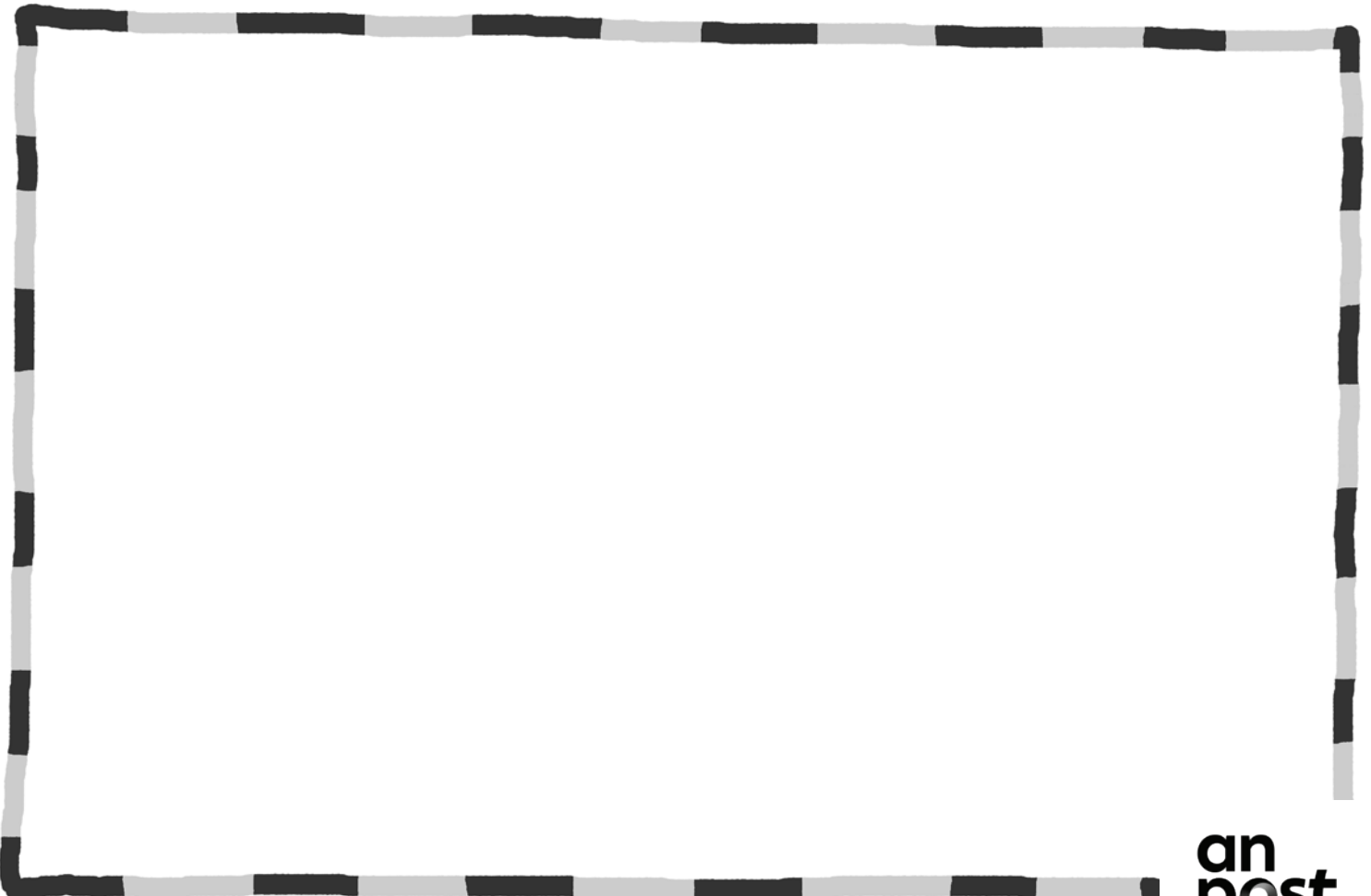
Apartment



House



Trees



Robot Games

You are a brilliant robot inventor ready to build any amazing robot you want - but where do you start? Here are three steps to a great robot character for your story or drawing.

WHAT BITS AND PIECES?

Use the bodies (1) and heads (2), legs (3) and arms (4) to make your own robot character. You can mix and match, have 4 arms and no head, or 2 heads and 3 legs. Find inspiration at home. Could your robot have a vacuum cleaner hose for a nose? Fryng pans for arms? Footballs for feet? A toilet brush for a head?

Or make up your own robot by filling in the blanks:

'My robot has _____ arms, _____ for legs, a _____ for a head, _____ for eyes and a _____ in the middle of its tummy.'

WHAT CRAZY ROBOT JOB?

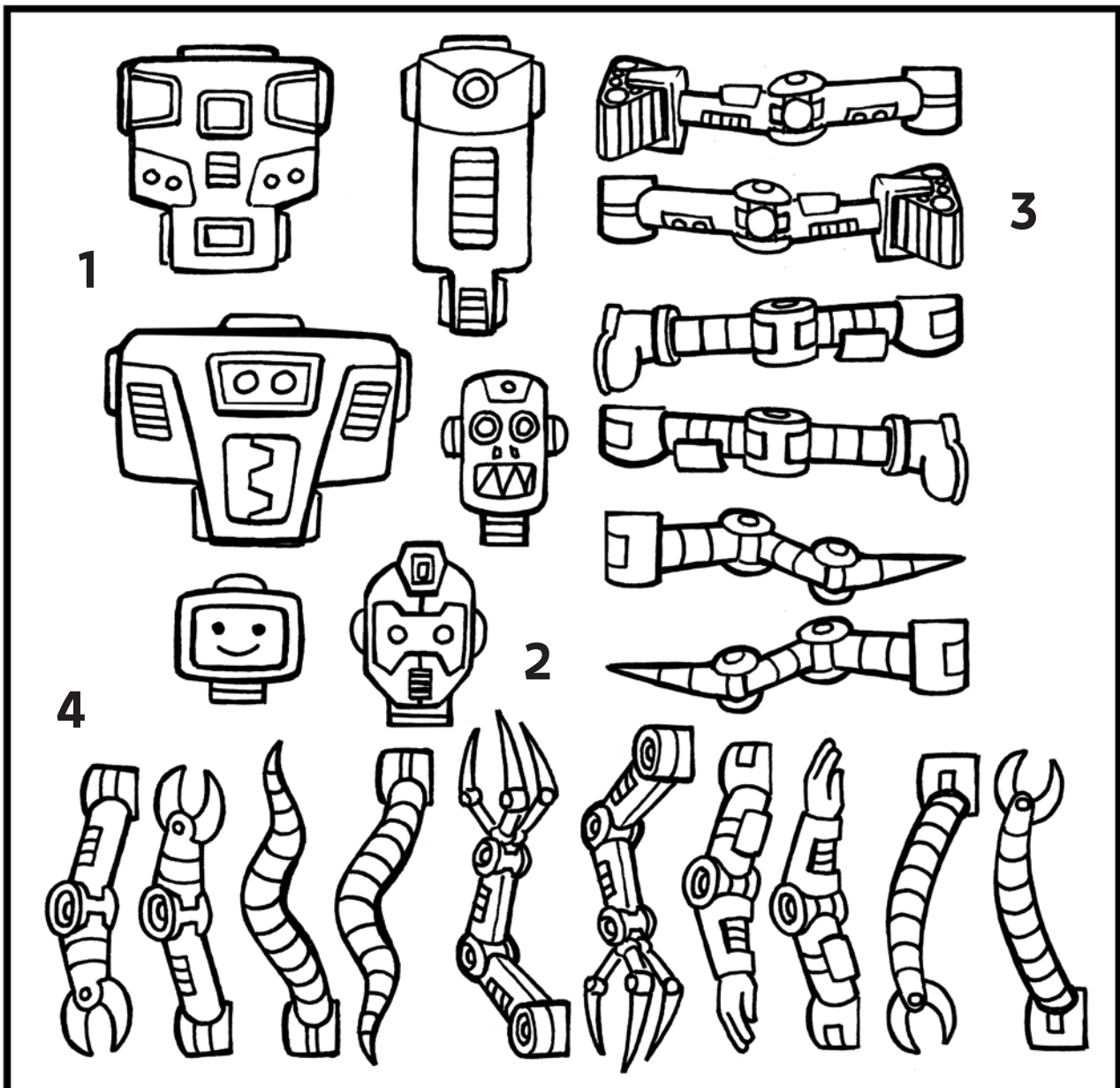
Here are some ideas to get your imagination running wild:

- A virus-busting bot – what strange contraption would it need to stamp out tiny critters?
- A dog-walking, poop-scooping robot – but where on its bionic body would it put the bags of doggy-doo?
- An ice-cream making robot – does it squirt raspberry ripple out of its nose?

START YOUR STORY WITH A BANG

Now you're ready to send your robot on an adventure. Try these story starters:

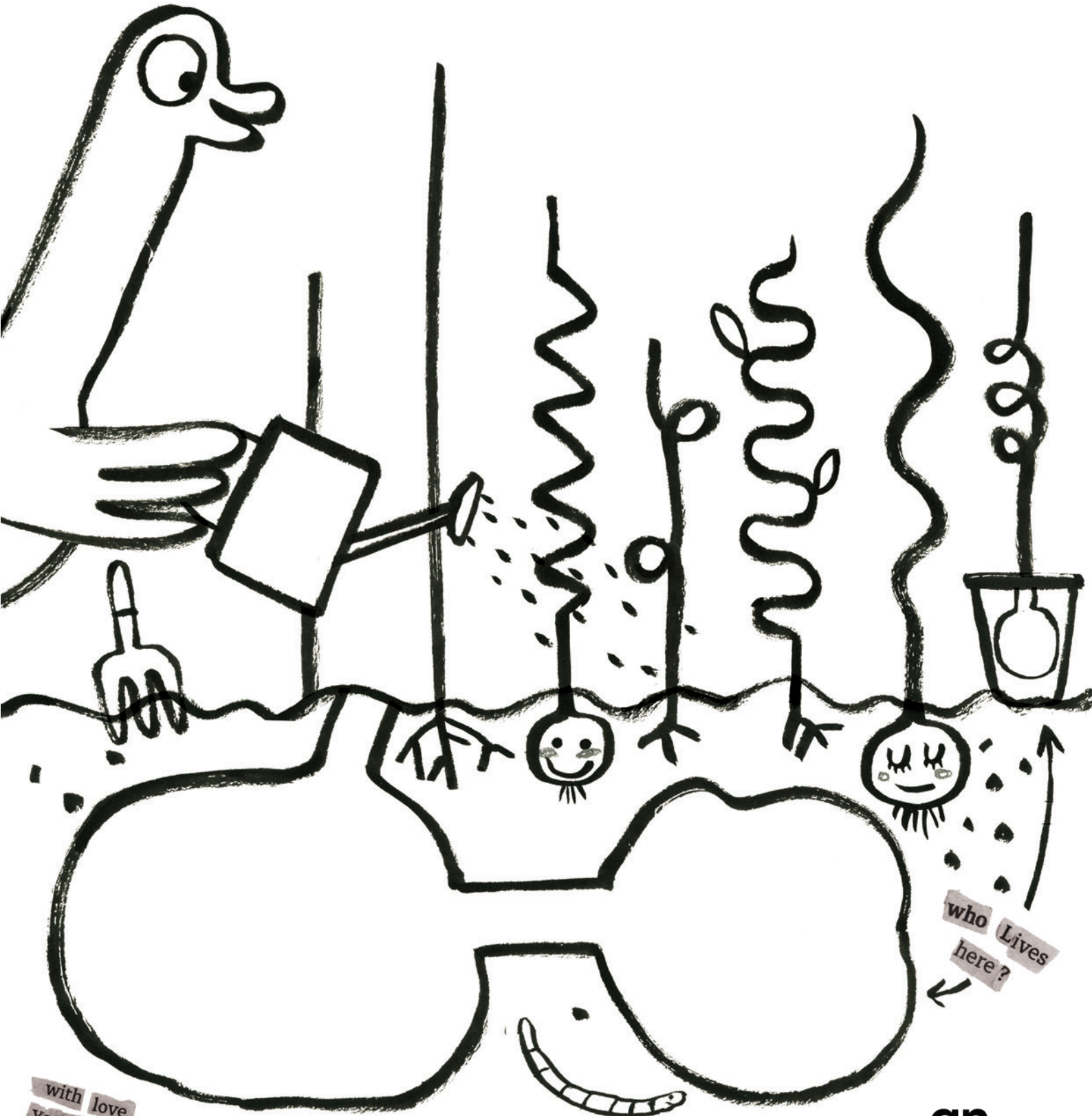
- 'OK, so maybe I shouldn't have turned my little sister into a robot.'
- 'I heard a bang! A creak! A crash! A scream! And I looked up to see a giant metal hand reaching in through my bedroom window.'
- 'My robot unicorn was the best pretend pet any kid could have – until the day it went crazy ...'



O V E R G R O U N D

help Duck
grow his garden.

Draw
the flowers
and insects



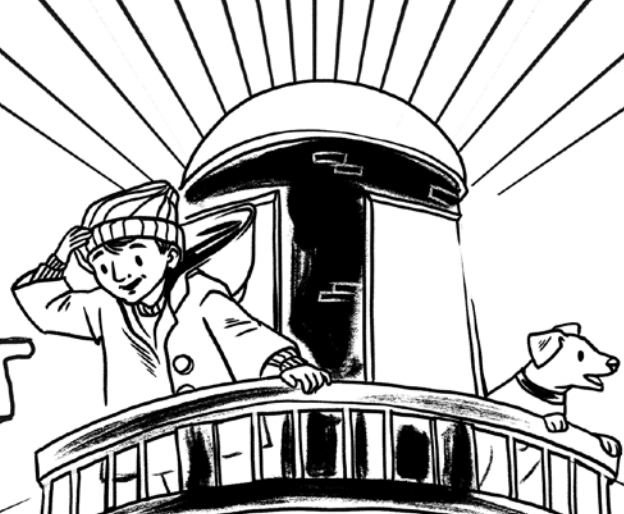
with love,
Yasmeen
I s mail
x x x

U N D E R G R O U N D

an
post

KEEP a GOOD LIGHT

Words: Sarah Webb
Illustrations: Lauren O'Neill



In the past, lighthouse keepers lived and worked in lighthouses on remote headlands, islands and rocks all around Ireland, from Tuskar Rock in County Wexford to Eagle Island in County Mayo. They must have missed their families and friends. I waved at my mum through her upstairs window yesterday and it reminded me of Ballycotton in County Cork, where it's said every evening the lighthouse keepers' children stood on the quay and waved goodnight to their dads on Ballycotton Island.

Lighthouses kept sailors safe but they also looked after their keepers, like our homes are keeping us safe right now.

Challenge 1:
Design and draw your own lighthouse

Challenge 2:
Write a story about a family who lives in a lighthouse

Challenge 3:
Draw a seagull and a seal

Challenge 4:
Write about a seagull and a seal who live beside a lighthouse

Poetry Challenge:
Write a poem or short piece called 'Staying Inside.'

The Lighthouse Keeper's Hug

by Sarah Webb

Our lighthouse,
Our white house,
Our beacon in the night house.
Safe inside your stony arms
We'll weather every storm.

Other fun activities



1. Using a mirror, draw your own self-portrait. Then draw portraits of your family (including any pets you may have). Gather up all your pictures and create a household portrait gallery. Take a look around the National Gallery of Ireland for inspiration: nationalgallery.ie/virtual-tour
2. Sometimes the most interesting and enjoyable stories are the ones people tell us. Ask a grown-up to tell you a story from when they were young. Remember, this can be done over the phone or video conferencing if you can't visit them right now. Write the story down to record it. You could add pictures and show it to them the next time you see them.
3. Getting post is fun! That's how you got this playbook - your local postman or postwoman dropped it through your letterbox. Think of someone you know who would like to receive a letter from you. You could tell them about all the things you have been getting up to since you saw them last.
4. Families come in all shapes and sizes, and we are all sharing space with one another for a lot longer at the moment! Now would be a really great time to explore your family tree. Find out everything you can and map it out.
5. We all live in Ireland, but maybe this is not the country you were born in, maybe some of your family are from a different country, or maybe you have been on holidays elsewhere. It is good to learn about other places in the world. Choose another country and find out everything you can about it: what food they eat, what language they speak, what their national sport, customs, famous landmarks and so on are.
6. At times like this, it seems that lots of people are making lots of speeches. But they are important to make sure we all feel like 'we are in this together', as An Taoiseach said. Can you write a speech about the importance of being 'in this together'?
7. Being at home for a while means you can't see your friends but you can learn new things! What about a new word a day - ask someone to teach you one or use a dictionary? Or maybe someone in the house could help you learn to bake or knit. When you do get to see your friends again, you can impress them with your new skills!
8. Do you want to be a writer or an illustrator when you grow up? Two amazing competitions are on at the moment. One is to design a book cover that will be published on a book in September (for artists aged fifteen-years or under). Closing date 1 May 2020
childrensbooksireland.ie/the-obrien-press-design-a-cover-competition.
9. The other one is a writing competition, where you get to record your very own story in the RTÉ studios (for third- to sixth-class students) Closing date 13 April 2020
rte.ie/culture/books/2020/0218/1116127-we-love-books/
10. We learn a lot about times past from what was left behind. Thousands of years ago, people painted their stories on cave walls. Now, people write letters and emails and diaries. You are living in a really important, unusual moment in time, so why not record it? Keep your own diary, and document everything that is going on. Don't forget to describe how things make you feel - sometimes writing things down makes them easier to understand. Diaries are great sources of social history - in years to come, yours might end up in a museum!
11. If you are looking for great reading suggestions, there are lots of themed book lists, reading guides and reviews to be found on: childrensbooksireland.ie/inis/ and lots of resources to download: childrensbooksireland.ie/resources/
12. If you finish all these activities, remember you can trace some of the elements with tracing paper or baking paper if you have it! This playbook and these pages are all free to download from anpost.com and childrensbooksireland.ie We'd love for you to share your creations, pictures of your posters in windows and your stories using [#ImagineNation](https://twitter.com/ImagineNation). Have fun!



#ImagineNation



children's
books
ireland
every child a reader

**an
post**

For your world