



TalkforWriting™

Talk for Writing Home-school booklet

# Bertie and the Dragonfly

by Jane Ralphs



© Copyright of Jane Ralphs and Talk for Writing 2021.  
Permissions: Sharing the web link / URL to where this booklet sits on the Talk for Writing website with colleagues and parents is encouraged, but no part of this publication should be re-uploaded elsewhere online, reproduced or altered without permission.  
[www.talk4writing.com](http://www.talk4writing.com)



**Dear Parent/Carer**

**Thank you for taking the time to support your child with their learning. This booklet is designed to inspire and support your child to develop skills and confidence in speaking, reading and writing.**

**Through the world of Bertie the puppy, your child will be invited to explore a number of engaging, fun and purposeful activities. In this booklet, you will see 10 different types of learning activities:**

- **Let's read together**
- **Let's talk**
- **Let's retell**
- **Rhyme time**
- **Ladybird words**
- **Let's pretend**
- **Ready, steady, write**
- **Let's create**
- **Out and about**
- **Let's make up a story**



**Each activity is explained by Bertie and has been designed so that you can support your child. For example, there will be shared reading, discussion and writing. On some of the pages you will see a box like this:**



**Information boxes like this will give you some tips on supporting the activity.**

**At the end of the booklet, please support your child to rate and comment on how they got on with their learning and add your comments too.**

**ENJOY!**



Let's read together



You can listen to an audio version of the story here.

<https://soundcloud.com/talkforwriting/bertie/s-lzSCfQHixBR>

## Bertie and the Dragonfly

Once upon a time, there was a puppy called Bertie who lived with a girl called Georgie. Bertie had curly ginger fur, a cold wet nose and black button eyes. He was very cute but he was also very nosy!



One frosty morning, Georgie and Bertie set off for a walk in Dingle Dangle Woods. Bertie loved the woods because there were so many things to sniff and he was just old enough to run around without his lead.



"Off you go, Bertie," said Georgie. "Be good!" So, off Bertie went, sniffing and snuffling and snuffling and sniffing. Just then, he spotted a flash of the brightest blue and green and he scampered off into the bushes to see what it was. Unfortunately, the bushes were covered in scratchy, scratchy prickles.



"Ouch!" yelped Bertie. Luckily, Georgie was right there to pick him up and give him a big cuddle.

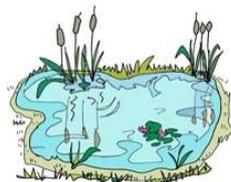
"Nosy boy, Bertie," Georgie chuckled. "Leave the dragonfly alone!"



A *dragon fly*, thought Bertie. Now that sounds very interesting.

Next, Bertie, sniffed and snuffled his way along the path until, all of a sudden, he spotted another flash of blue and green. The dragon fly, thought Bertie, and he scampered off into the bushes to find it.

Unfortunately, the bushes were right beside Dingle Dangle Pond and Bertie's paws were soon covered in squishy, squelchy mud.



"Yeuch!" cried Bertie.

Luckily, Georgie was right there to pick him up and wipe his paws.



"Nosy boy, Bertie," Georgie chuckled. "Leave the dragonfly alone!"

But a *dragon* fly just sounds so interesting, thought Bertie.

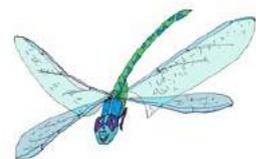
After that, Bertie, sniffed and snuffled his way along the path until he came to the old weeping willow tree. He looked up,  down,  left,  right  and all around  but there was no blue and green to be seen. I really wanted to see a dragon fly, thought Bertie sadly, and he sat down beside the tree. Unfortunately, the frost on the leaves was melting in the morning sun and soon Bertie felt a drip, then a drop, then a splish, then a splash right on his nose!



Luckily, Georgie was right there to pick him up and dry his nose.

"Look, Bertie," said Georgie, pointing at one of the willow's leaves. "There's the dragonfly!"

Bertie looked over but he did not see what he was expecting! Hmmm, he thought, so a dragon fly does not look like a dragon after all. He crept a bit closer and took a deep sniff.



Suddenly, the dragonfly took off and hovered right in front of his nose. Bertie watched the glistening emerald green and peacock blue. He gazed at the delicate, quivering wings in amazement. It may not have been a fly that looked like a dragon but it was still one of the most interesting things he had ever seen.

That night, Bertie snuggled down in his comfy dog bed and dreamed of beautiful flying creatures with bodies of blue and green and wings like fairies.



Let's talk

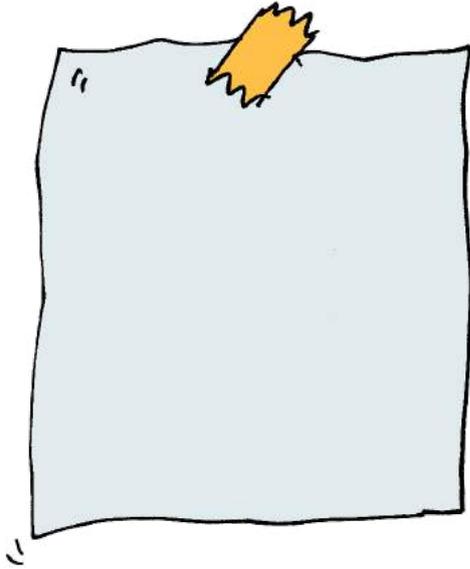


**A**

Talk with your child about what happened in the story. Help them to talk about:

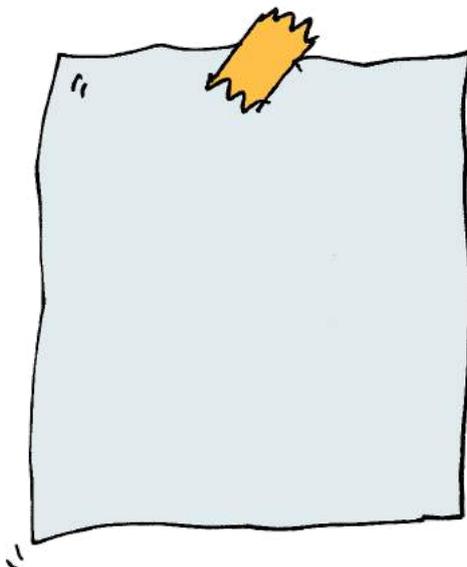
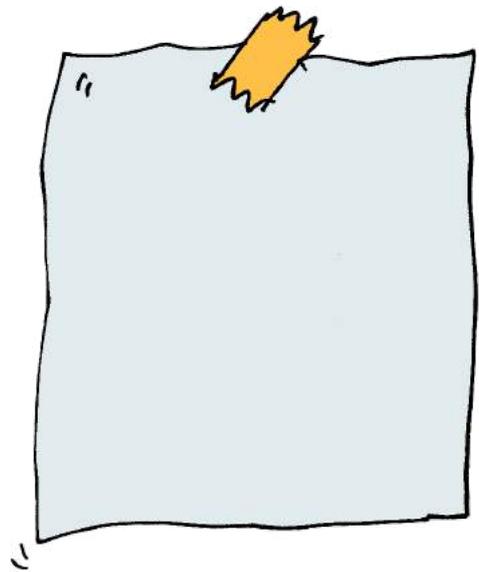
- what they liked
- did anything surprise them?
- do they have any questions?

Jot down what they say so that you can come back to it another day.



What parts of the story did you like the most?

Did anything about the story surprise you?



Do you have any questions?

LADYBIRD  
WORDS

★ Ladybird loves words! She has chosen some words from the story.  
Can you say each word together and match it to the right picture?

emerald



melting



peacock



glistening



frost



Let's pretend



**A** Read the parts of story below to your child. Encourage your child to understand the story better by entering into the story world, by pretending that they are Bertie.

- ★ Could you pretend to be me? Listen while a little bit of the story is read to you. Can you remember what I was doing? What sort of faces would I be making?

So, off Bertie went, sniffing and snuffling and snuffling and sniffing.

He scampered off into the bushes to see what it was.

Unfortunately, the bushes were covered in scritch, scratchy prickles.

He looked up, down, left, right and all around but there was no blue and green to be seen.

Unfortunately, the bushes were right beside Dingle Dangle Pond and Bertie's paws were soon covered in squishy, squelchy mud.

Unfortunately, the frost on the leaves was melting in the morning sun and soon Bertie felt a drip, then a drop, then a splish, then a splash right on his nose!

That night, Bertie snuggled down in his comfy dog bed and dreamed of beautiful flying creatures with bodies of blue and green and wings like fairies.

Rhyme  
time



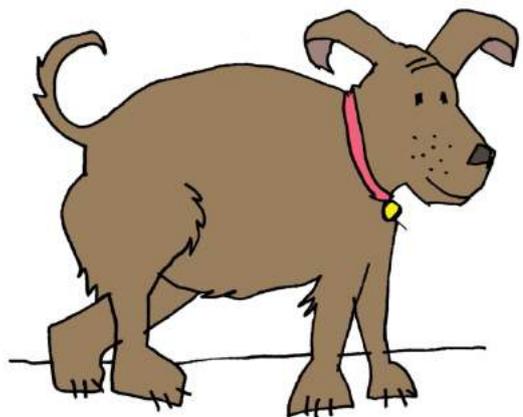
**A** Rhymes are an important part of early learning. Keep the learning fun - chant together, sing together, do the actions together, clap the rhythm together.

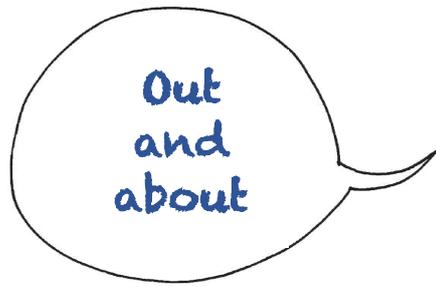
I have a dog and his name is Rags,  
He eats so much his tummy sags,  
His ears flip-flop, and his tail wig-wags,  
And when he walks, he goes zig-zag.

*He goes flip-flop, wig-wag, zig-zag,  
He goes flip-flop, wig-wag, zig-zag,  
He goes flip-flop, wig-wag, zig-zag,  
I love Rags and he loves me,  
I love Rags and he loves me.*

My dog Rags he loves to play,  
He rolls around in the mud all day,  
I whistle but he won't obey,  
He always runs the other way.

*Anonymous*





- ★ I love watching birds from our kitchen window.
- ★ See how many of these birds you can spot - you could go for a walk to spot them or look out of your window.



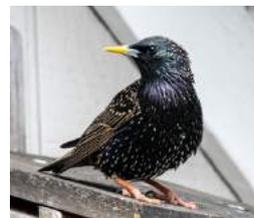
I saw \_\_\_\_\_ robins.



I saw \_\_\_\_\_ sparrows.



I saw \_\_\_\_\_ blackbirds.



I saw \_\_\_\_\_ starlings.



I saw \_\_\_\_\_ blue tits.



I saw \_\_\_\_\_ goldfinches.

Let's  
retell



**A** Sequencing things in the right order is an important skill. Help your child to draw pictures and retell the story of Bertie and the Dragonfly in their own words using the story path.

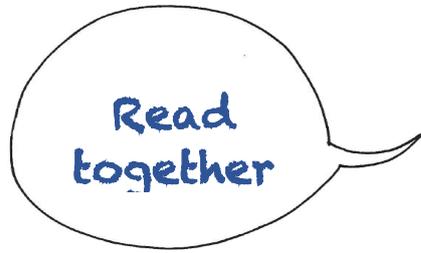
Once upon a time, there was a puppy called Bertie who went for a walk in the woods.

First,

Next,

After that,

Finally,



I was a bit disappointed that I didn't see a fly that looked like a dragon and it got me thinking about other creatures and monsters I would like to see. Here is one of my favourite poems about monsters.

### The Monstrous Alphabet

A is for alligator, loose in the sewer.

B is for boggart, clutching a skewer.

C is for cat burglar, chasing a cat.

D is for dragon, now how about that.

E is for elf, stealing the hour.

F is for fairies, hidden in flowers.

G is for ghost, almost unseen.

H is for hag, queen of the scene.

I is for ice bear, roaring aloud.

J is for jealousy, spoiling the crowd.

K is for King Kong, climbing a tower.

L is for lost soul, draining your power.

M is for minotaur, prowling the maze.

N is for nuisance, lost in a haze.

O is for ogre, up with the lark.

P is for prince, lost to the dark.

Q is for queen, holding a comb.

R is for robber, inside your home.

S is for sprite, alone in the night.

T is for troll, afraid of the light.

U is for unicorn, prowling the city.

V is for vampire, without any pity.

W is for werewolf, all hair and teeth.

X is for X-ray, unveiling the grief.

Y is for youth, too long ago.

Z is for zealot, the deadliest foe.

© Pie Corbett



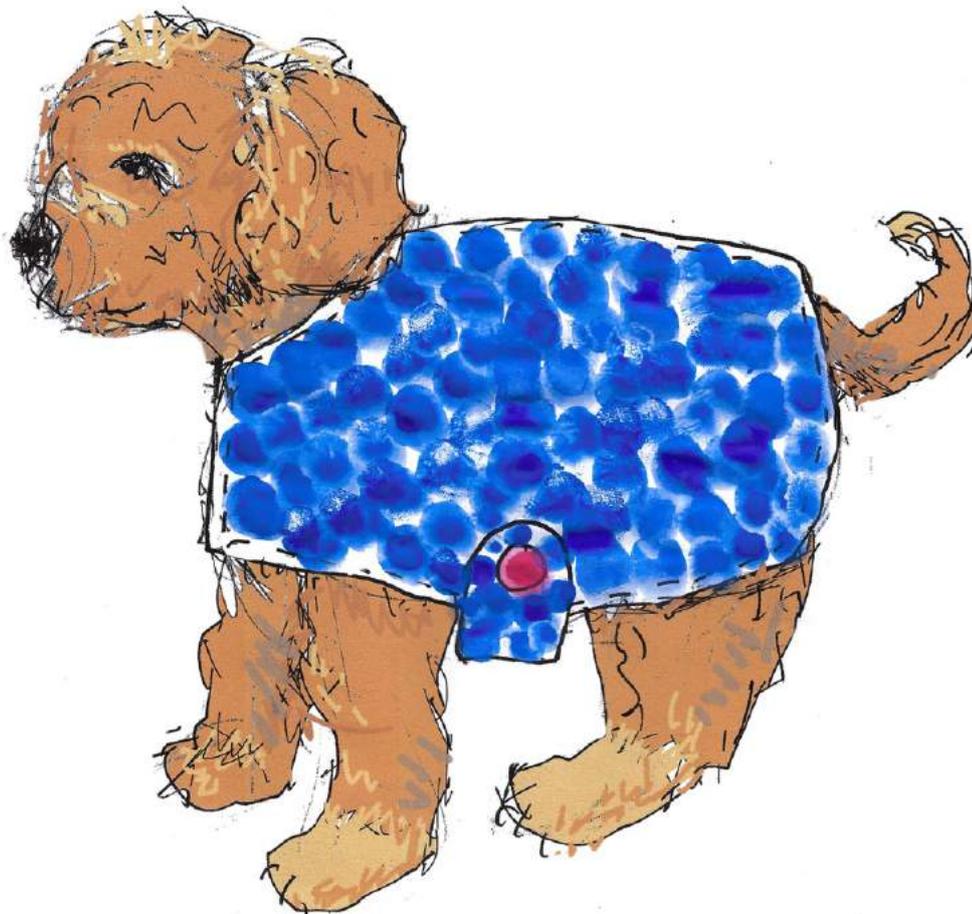
- ★ I wonder if you can make an animal alphabet for me.
- ★ If you cannot think of a real animal, you can make one up.
- ★ Make sure I am in there as D for dog or P for puppy!

A \_\_\_\_\_  
B \_\_\_\_\_  
C \_\_\_\_\_  
D \_\_\_\_\_  
E \_\_\_\_\_  
F \_\_\_\_\_  
G \_\_\_\_\_  
H \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_  
J \_\_\_\_\_  
K \_\_\_\_\_  
L \_\_\_\_\_  
M \_\_\_\_\_

N \_\_\_\_\_  
O \_\_\_\_\_  
P \_\_\_\_\_  
Q \_\_\_\_\_  
R \_\_\_\_\_  
S \_\_\_\_\_  
T \_\_\_\_\_  
U \_\_\_\_\_  
V \_\_\_\_\_  
W \_\_\_\_\_  
X \_\_\_\_\_  
Y \_\_\_\_\_  
Z \_\_\_\_\_

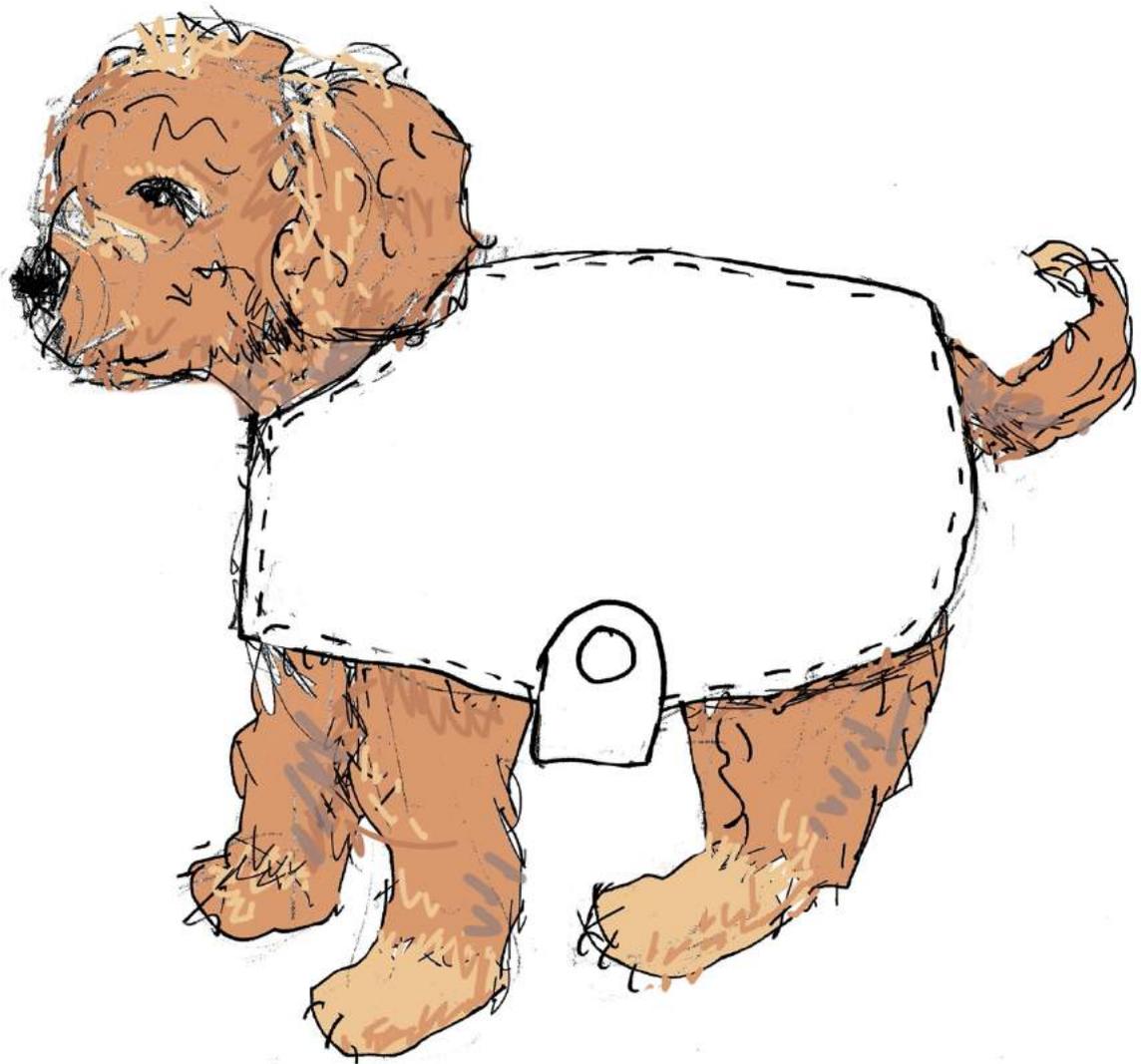


- ★ I have a lovely blue coat that I wear when it is cold outside.
- ★ I have done a fingerprint painting of my coat!





I would love to have a different coat to wear.  
Do you think you could design one for me using fingerprint painting just like I did?





**A**

Making your feely tray

The best things to use in the tray are sand or flour as these leave a clear pathway of the letter as your child forms it.

★ Ladybird picked three action words from our story. Can you write these words with your finger in a feely tray?

sniffing



watching



dreaming





★ Now have a go at writing the words.

**sniffing**

---

**watching**

---

**dreaming**

---

Read  
together



★ Today I had a postcard from my friend Bobby. He lives in Australia. Read the postcard with your helper.

Dear Bertie

I had a fantastic time out on a walk with Harry and Theo yesterday. We went into the woods (we mostly have gum trees over here) and I got to sniff lots of new smells.

My favourite smells were animal smells! Have a look on the front of my postcard and you will see all the animals that I sniffed! Do you know what they are?

Lots of love from your friend  
Bobby



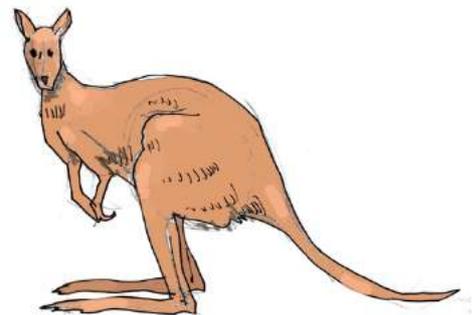
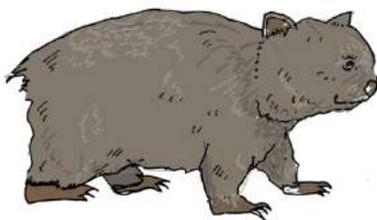
Bertie  
Georgie's House  
England  
UK

- ★ These are the animals that were on the front of Bobby's postcard.
- ★ Can you help me find out what each of these animals is?



---

---



---

---

Let's get  
creative



- ★ I love doggie treats, especially dog biscuits.
- ★ Georgie loves biscuits too. This is a picture of some biscuits she made.
- ★ They look just like my paw prints!



Here is the recipe for Georgie's paw print biscuits.

I thought you might like to have a go at making some.



## Paw Print Biscuits

### What you need

- ★ 150g soft butter
- ★ 150g caster sugar
- ★ 1 egg yolk
- ★ 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ★ 300g plain flour
- ★ chocolate chips
- ★ chocolate buttons

### What you do

- Ask an adult to help you turn the oven on to 180°C/160°C fan/gas 4.
- Mix the butter and sugar in a large bowl with a wooden spoon.
- Add the egg yolk and vanilla extract and mix.
- Add the flour and stir until everything is mixed together into a dough.
- Use your hands to press the dough together.
- Chill in the fridge for 20-30 minutes.
- Roll out the dough and cut out some circles.
- Bake the biscuits on a non-stick tray for 10-12 minutes until they are a pale golden colour.
- When the biscuits are cool, use some icing to stick the chocolate chips and buttons on to make a paw print pattern.
- ENJOY!

Rhyme  
time



A

Rhymes are an important part of early learning. Keep the learning fun - chant together, sing together, do the actions together, clap the rhythm together.



I went to the animal fair,

The birds and the beasts were there,

The big baboon by the light of the moon  
Was combing his golden hair.



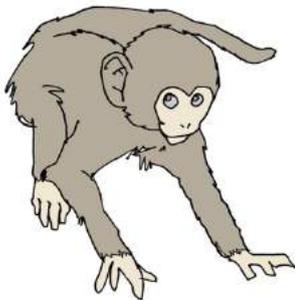
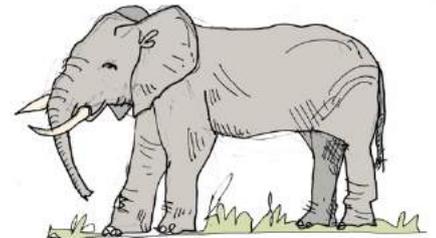
The monkey fell out of his bunk

And slid down the elephant's trunk.

The elephant sneezed

And fell on his knees

But what became of the monkey,



Monkey, monkey,

Monkey, monkey,

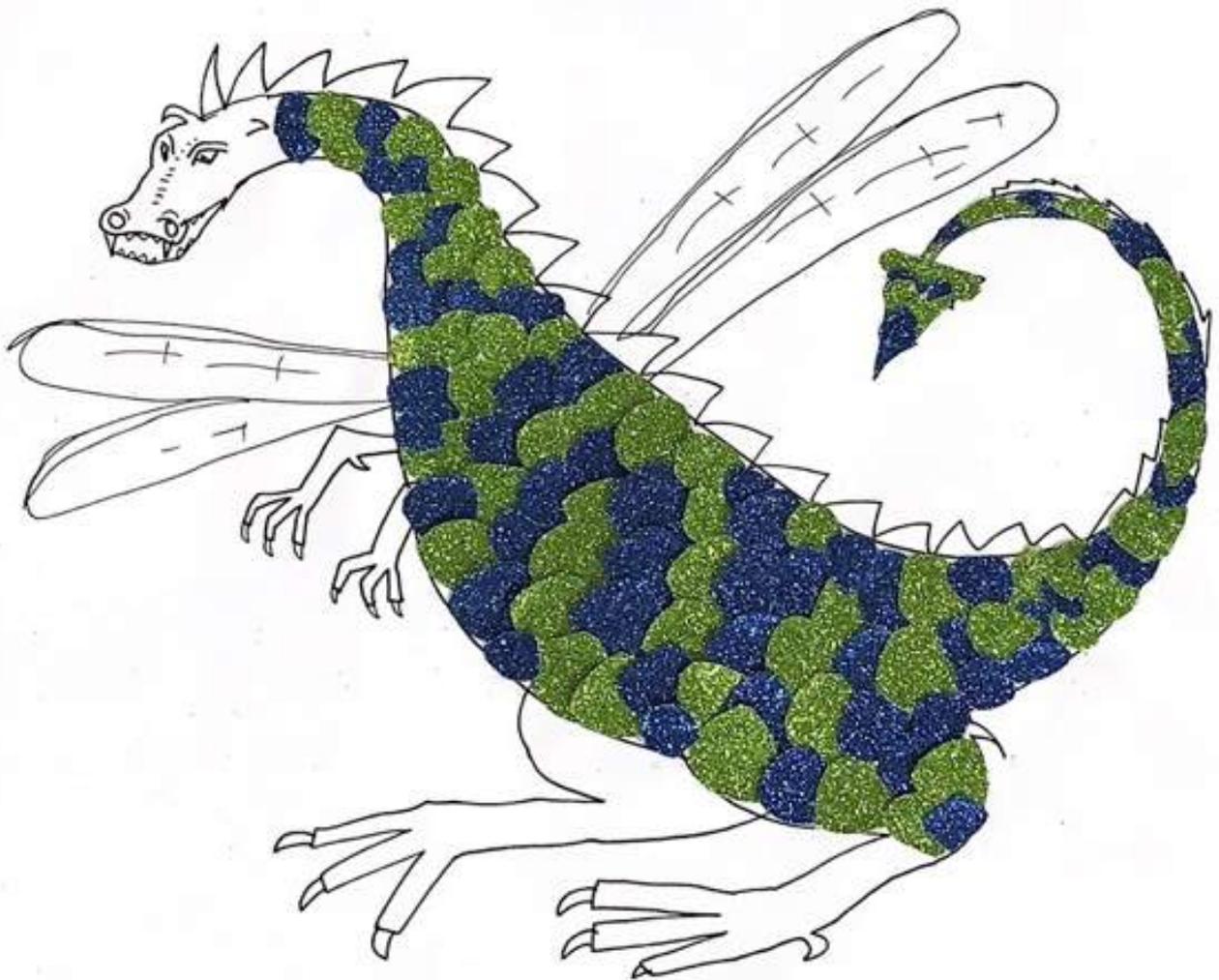
Monkey, monk!

Anonymous

Let's get creative



- ★ I really wanted the dragonfly to be a fly that looked like a dragon.
- ★ I had a go at designing my own dragon fly. What do you think?

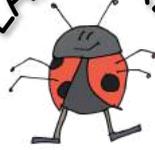


Have a go at making your own dragon fly.

I used shiny paper to make my dragon fly scales but you could use a different sort of paper, coloured pencils, crayons, felt tip pens or paint. It's up to you!

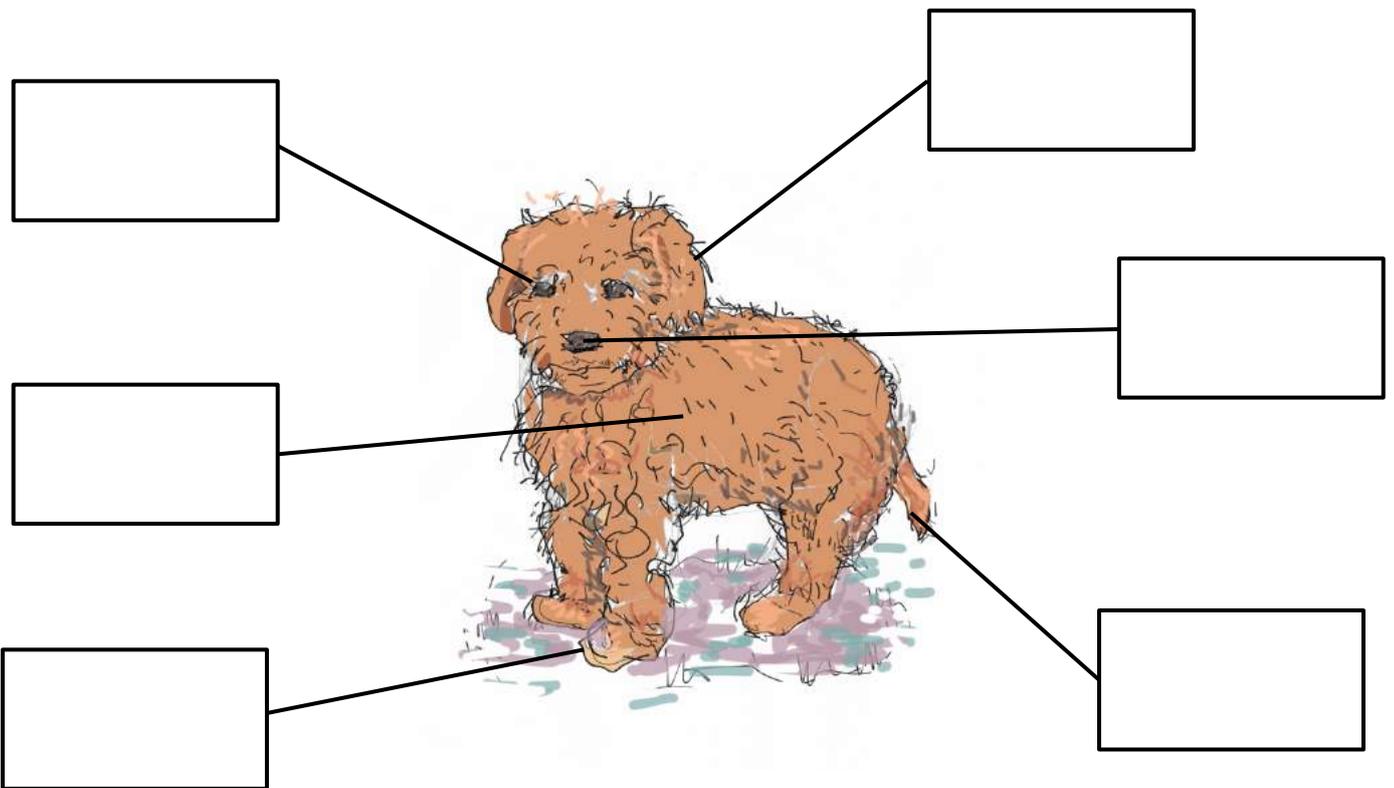


# LADYBIRD



## WORDS

- ★ Ladybird has been thinking about the different parts of my body.
- ★ Can you label me with the right words? She has written all the words at the bottom of the page to help you.



ears

nose

paw

fur

tail

eye

Ready  
steady  
write



**A**

- ★ Read the word with your child.
- ★ Say each sound in the word - the boxes are there to help you e.g.

"d"

"o"

"g"

- ★ Help them to write the word.

- ★ Here are some words for you to read and write that are all to do with me.
- ★ See if you can sound out each box and then write the word.

dog

d

o

g

---

wag

w

a

g

---

yap

y

a

p

---

vet

v

e

t

---



- ★ Here are some of my best animal friends.
- ★ See if you can sound out each box to read the word and then write the word.

cat

c

a

t

\_\_\_\_\_

pig

p

i

g

\_\_\_\_\_

duck

d

u

ck

\_\_\_\_\_

fish

f

i

sh

\_\_\_\_\_

Let's read together



**A** Sequencing things in the right order is an important skill. Read the text with your child and then help them draw a line from one character to the next in the right order.

- ★ I went on a lovely walk yesterday and saw quite a few different things.
- ★ You can see pictures of friends I saw on this page.
- ★ Read about my walk and then see if you can join them up in the right order.

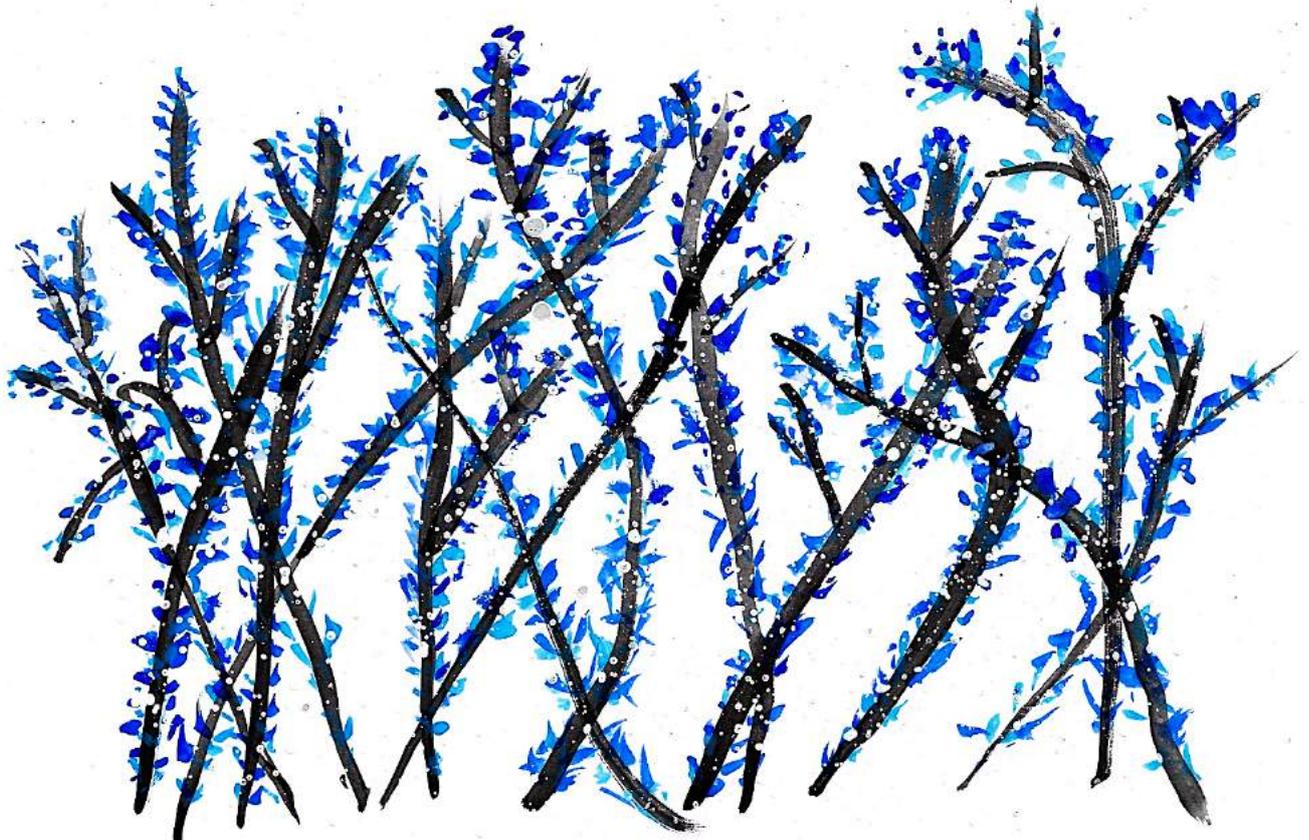
Yesterday, I went for a lovely walk with Georgie. First, we met my doggie friend Buster. We had a lovely sniff together. After that, we met Mavis the cat but she didn't stay to chat! Next, we spotted a tiny green frog near the pond. Then, we watched a butterfly fluttering from plant to plant. Finally, we met the friendly robin who visits our garden. We had a quick chat with him and then went home for a welcome snack.



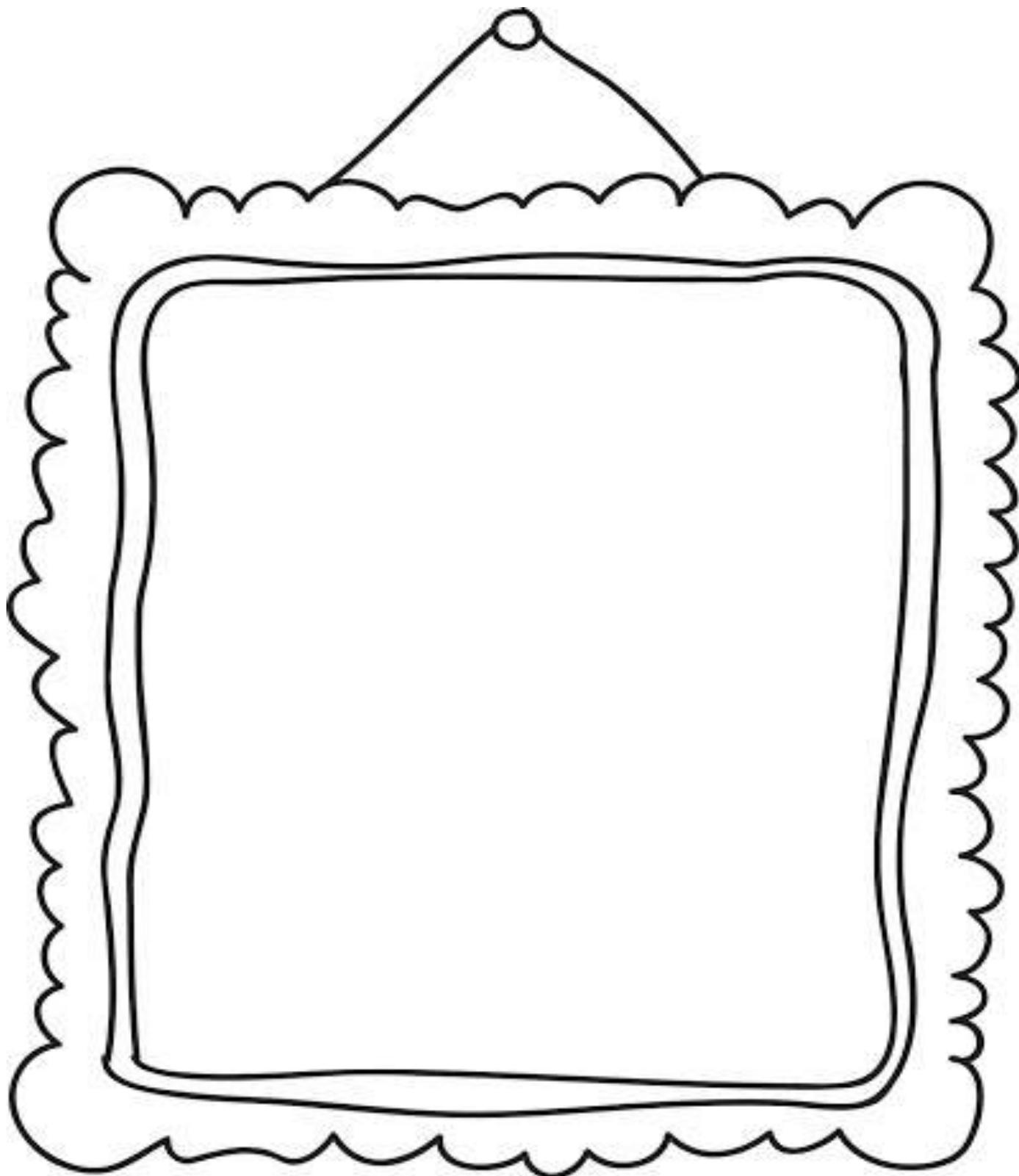
Let's get creative



- ★ In the story, it was a really frosty morning.
- ★ The frost made some lovely patterns on the tree branches and plants just like the one you can see here.
- ★ I looked at the shapes and painted some frost patterns of my own.



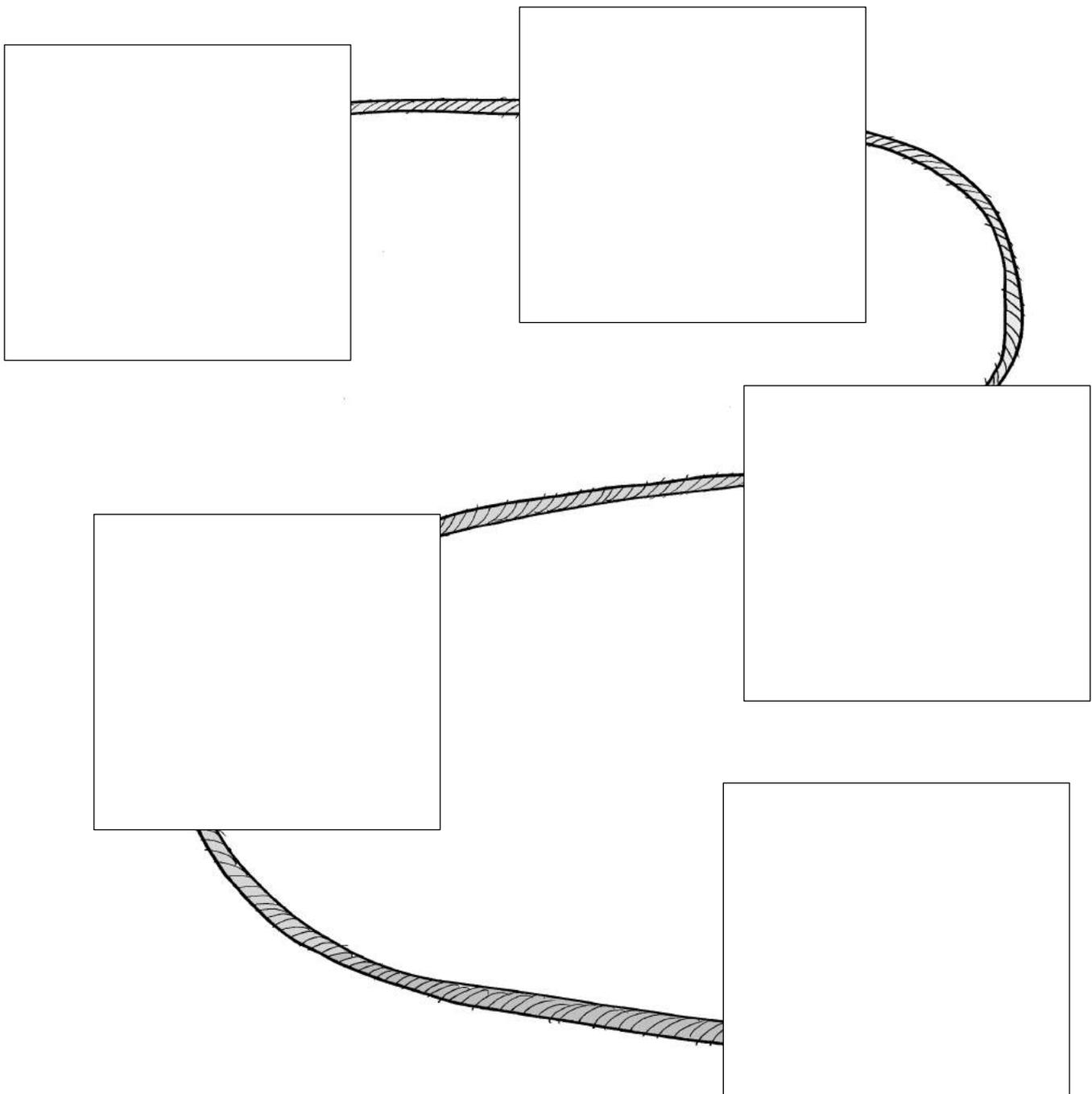
- ★ Have a go at your own frosty patterns.
- ★ Stick your picture in the frame.



Let's make  
up a story



- ★ I wonder if you have a pet or a toy pet that likes to go on walks. Are they nosy like me?
- ★ Can you draw a story map and talk about the adventures your pet gets up to?



I hope you had a  
great time  
learning with me.  
Don't forget to  
write a message  
on the next page.



So, how did you get on?  
Draw a circle round one of the faces.



The activities I liked best were \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

My helper thinks:

© Jane Ralphs for Talk for Writing

Jane Ralphs works with Talk for Writing to help schools develop the approach.

Edited by Julia Strong

Prepared for online distribution by Nick Batty

Thanks to Jon Ralphs for the cartoons: [www.jonralphs.com](http://www.jonralphs.com)

To find out more about Talk for Writing, visit [www.talk4writing.com](http://www.talk4writing.com).

### **Sharing this resource and copyright information**

This resource is subject to copyright. All materials herein, texts and supporting resources are copyright to Jane Ralphs & Talk for Writing. They are to be used to support children/staff/parents in home and school learning only and are not for commercial gain. Sharing the web link/URL to where this booklet sits on the Talk for Writing website with colleagues and parents is encouraged, but no part of this publication should be re-uploaded elsewhere online, reproduced or altered without permission.

‘The Monstrous Alphabet’ poem used with kind permission of Pie Corbett:

© Pie Corbett. First appeared in Poetry for Writing (2013) published by TTS Group Ltd.

Photography credits:

Fans Heijnsbroek; Sandra Fey; Lena Rosa; Daniele Levis Pelusi; USGS; Ricardo Frantz; Annie Spratt; Jon Asato; Patrick Hendry; Sharon Watters; Heye Jensen; Nuklas Hamann; John Yunker; Hans Veth; Andrea Lightfoot; Matthew TR Rader; at Unsplash.

