

**Judy Sierra's**

PDF download  
Printable patterns

# **Favorite Flannel Boards**



**For artists,  
crafters and  
storytellers**

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## Introduction

Many years ago, when I first saw a librarian tell a flannel board story, I was intrigued by how flannel boards occupied a space in between storytelling and puppetry. I didn't have much experience with flannel boards, but I'd been a puppeteer and storyteller for several years. I looked for a good book about flannel boards, with stories and patterns, but found that there wasn't one. So I wrote my own, adapting many of the rhymes and songs and folktales I'd already used with young audiences and in workshops.

My *Flannel Board Storytelling Book* book was a success, and it stayed in print for more than twenty years until the publishing company was sold. The new owner, Ebsco, generously reverted rights to me. I made a Kindle ebook version of *The Flannel Board Storytelling Book*, containing fifty songs, rhymes, and stories. I updated instructions and added new materials, tips, and techniques. I also created this free download, which contains ten of my favorite flannel board entertainments for children.

The instructions that follow are written for teachers and librarians who share stories with groups of children. The materials I recommend for making flannel board figures are store-bought. But everything can easily be adapted for storytelling at home, using ingredients that are already at hand. Telling flannel board stories at home holds special delights: children can participate in making the flannel board figures, and also learn to tell the stories themselves.

Enjoy!

## Storytelling illustrated

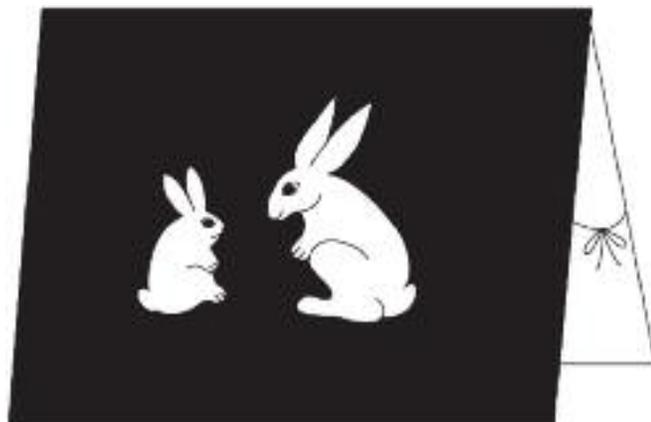
*A storyteller I once saw in a Caspian village . . . sat on a street corner beside a tray. Around his feet were a number of tin cans filled with colored sand. As he told a story, he illustrated it by sprinkling the colored sands upon the surface of the tray, his hands moving deftly while his lips continued to spin his tale.*

*Anne Sinclair Mehdevi, Persian Folk and Fairy Tales*

It seems that storytellers have always found creative ways to illustrate their tales. Painted story scrolls were unrolled for audiences in India and Indonesia. In Alaska, young Inuit women sketched story maps with a special story knife. Some of the aboriginal people of Australia placed natural objects on the ground and traced symbols in the sand to represent characters and events in their stories. Flannel board storytelling is in the same tradition. The changing pattern of the figures captivates children, especially those who can't quite yet follow the words. In busy places like parks and shopping malls, where there are many distractions, a flannel board draws an audience. Librarians, teachers, and professional storytellers agree that flannel board storytelling allows them to tell more stories to more children in more situations than would otherwise be possible.

The rhymes, songs and stories in this download come from the folk tradition. They are rhythmic, repetitious, and predictable. These are qualities that help a storyteller spin a tale easily from just a few elements stored in memory, without painful word-for-word memorization. Folktales invite improvisation and participation. They allow you, the storyteller, to tailor a story to a particular audience, to express your opinions of the narrative goings-on, and make a tale truly your own.

## The flannel board



DIY flannel board made from an artist portfolio

School supply stores and web sites sell flannel boards with tabletop stands, but I recommend you create your own from an artist portfolio. A homemade board takes time to make, but it is more portable and more versatile.. You can cover your flannel board with fabric that is fuzzier or loopier than a store-bought one. For our purposes, fuzzier and loopier mean stickier, and that is important. Because the fabric isn't glued to the board, you can pin items to it. Also, you can adjust the tilt of your storytelling surface, making it less likely that figures will slide down or fall off.

The best color for a flannel board is black. Light and bright colored figures “pop” against a black background. This helps young children recognize them from a distance.

If you are telling stories to one or two children—at home, for example, or in a therapeutic or hospital situation, a cardboard rectangle or a pillow draped with plain fuzzy fabric make fine flannel boards.

## Artist portfolio

Art supply stores sell rigid cardboard portfolios that artists use to protect their work and keep it flat. There are a variety of sizes available. Choose one that has ribbon ties on three sides. If your portfolio has flaps, you will need to cut them off before adding a layer of black fuzzy fabric to the inside of the portfolio.

Find black, fuzzy, non-stretchy fabric such as robe velour, enough to cover the inside of the portfolio as one large piece. The fabric doesn't need to be super fuzzy. Anything with a good bit of nap or pile will do. When you set up the portfolio for storytelling, you will flip it inside out. Both the front and back of the inside (which is now the outside) are upholstered in black, fuzzy cloth.

Purchase enough cloth to include an extra four inches on all sides, which you will later trim down to an inch and a half. If you're in doubt about how much fabric to buy, take the portfolio with you to the fabric store and measure the amount you will need directly on the cutting table. While you are there, buy a bottle of fabric glue such as Sobo or Tacky and supplies for making the flannel board figures.

### **Directions for an artist portfolio flannel board**

1. Place the black cloth, fuzzy side down, on a flat surface.
2. Make a two-inch wide line of glue along the inside fold of the portfolio, from edge to edge, and center the open portfolio onto the fabric so that the strip of glue makes contact with the reverse side of the fabric. Turn the board and fabric over carefully. Smooth and press the fabric onto that glue strip.

3. Once the glue is dry, turn the portfolio and cloth over again so that the cloth rests on the flat surface with the portfolio on top. Pull and smooth the edges of the cloth carefully.
4. Trim the fabric so that it extends 1-1/2 inches beyond the edges of the portfolio.
5. Clip the four corners of the cloth diagonally to within 1/2 inch of the corners of the portfolio.
6. Make six slits perpendicular to the edge of the cloth so that it can fit around the ribbon ties.
7. Apply a 1 inch wide strip of glue along all four of the outer (black cardboard) edges of the portfolio. The glue can be squeezed out in zig-zap pattern, then spread with fingertips. This strip of glued cloth doesn't need to be perfect. No one will see it during storytelling.
8. Lap the cloth up and over the edges and press it down firmly into the glue, making sure the slits go around the ribbon ties. Sobo or Tacky glue is strong enough to hold the cloth in place as it dries.

When the glue has dried, set up the flannel board on a tabletop, cloth side out. Tie the two side sets of ribbons into little half-bows so that the board sits solidly, the two sides slanted. When you tell stories, you can use the tabletop space in between front and back to hide story figures from the audience until you are ready to use them. The back side of the flannel board is a good place to store small figures that might otherwise get lost.

An artist portfolio flannel board can also be folded flat and set into the tray of an easel or a marker board. When you carry or store this flannel board, fold it with the cloth to the inside and tie all the ribbon ties.

## Flannel board figures

Characters and scenery that cling to the angled surface of the flannel board can be made quickly and easily using colored felt, lightweight woven fabric, and interfacing.

—colored felt by itself or with a backing of nonwoven **fusible** interfacing

—quilt fabric with a backing of nonwoven **fusible** interfacing

—or, if you wish to color or paint the figures, from heavy-weight white nonwoven **nonfusible** interfacing

If the following instructions seem too daunting, ask an experienced artist or crafter for help.

I've drawn patterns for figures that are very simple to color and cut out. They are designed so that young children can recognize them easily, even from a distance—in a classroom or at a library story hour, for example. Most of the characters are shown in side view. Young children find it easiest to recognize animals in profile. Also, characters that face one another look as if they are having a conversation.

If you decide to design your own figures, be sure to use the patterns in this book as guides to their relative size and shape, and whether the characters face left or right. If you create intricate, detailed characters, you'll probably need to glue them to a base of black felt cut to the general outline of the figure. That way, parts won't get tangled or flop over during storytelling.

## Fabrics

### Felt squares

Synthetic fiber felt is sold at fabric, craft, and variety stores, and also online. It comes in 9 by 12-inch rectangles called felt “squares.” The quality of felt varies a lot. Thin or limp felt should be reinforced with fusible interfacing (see below). Higher quality wool felt is available online and in some fabric stores

Avoid dark-colored felt. It will be difficult for children to see against the black flannel board. The range of felt colors is limited. You can follow the example of picture book illustrators and use fantasy colors for animals—a lavender goat or an orange cow, for example. If you want to use a full palette of colors, try heavyweight nonwoven, nonfusible interfacing colored with artists’ crayons.

### Interfacing for making hand-colored figures

Heavyweight nonwoven, nonfusible interfacing combines the best features of felt (it doesn’t ravel or tear) and paper (you can trace through it and color it with crayons, colored pencils, markers, and paint). When cut into 8-1/2 by 11 inch sheets, it can be printed in an inkjet printer, making copying patterns quick and easy.

In fabric stores, bolts of interfacing usually sit on a shelf near the cutting counter. Sewists use interfacing to stiffen parts of clothing such as collars and cuffs. The exact product you want is made of white fibers that have been pressed together like felt or paper, not woven or knitted. It should feel somewhat like lightweight construction paper, crinkly but flexible.

## Interfacing for reinforcing felt and fabric

Choose a fusible nonwoven interfacing that feels like a paper napkin. It will have tiny dots of heat-activated glue on one side. Interfacing provides a fuzzy, clingy backing to woven fabrics which, by themselves, would curl up or slide off the flannel board.

Using a black pen, trace your pattern onto the interfacing. Make a rough cut around the figure, then fuse it to a larger piece of fabric, then make a final cut around the figure. Protect your iron and ironing board! Make sure the clerk at the fabric store gives you the manufacturer's instruction sheet (or find them online), and follow these instructions carefully.

## Cotton quilt fabrics

The best woven fabrics for flannel board figures are cotton quilt fabrics. These are available in a wide range of colors and small patterns. You can purchase packages of smallish pre-cut squares at most fabric stores. Use fusible interfacing (above) to make the figures stiffer and prevent raveling.

# Tools and art supplies

## Printer

You will need a printer to make paper patterns for flannel board figures. You can also use an inkjet printer to print patterns directly onto heavyweight nonwoven, **nonfusible** interfacing. The interfacing you choose should be as crisp as printer paper, and carefully cut to size.

## Scissors

Good sharp fabric scissors are a necessity.

## Glue

Choose a glue that is recommended for fabric.

## Permanent markers

Use permanent markers to trace patterns onto cloth and also to outline and add details to the figures. I recommend fine point and ultra fine point Sharpies. To my mind, the line made by a fine point Sharpie doesn't qualify as fine. It is four or five times wider than a standard rollerball pen line. An ultra fine point Sharpie makes a line about the width of a regular roller-ball pen line. You will need a black fine point Sharpie for outlining figures made from interfacing, and black and colored ultra fine point Sharpies tracing cut-out paper patterns onto felt.

## Fabric paint

Dimensional fabric paint sits on top of felt or other fabric like icing on a cake. Fabric paint is required in order to make a light-colored line on a darker color of felt. It takes practice to make a good, solid line. I recommend learning firsthand from a pro or watching an instructional video online.

## Artists' crayons

Heavyweight nonfusible, nonwoven interfacing can be colored with artists' crayons like Caran d'Ache Neocolor II, which offer rich colors. They blend well, and hold a point nicely when sharpened. Caran d'Ache Neocolor II come in boxed sets of 30 and more, but since you will want only light, bright, and pastel colors for flannel board figures, it is less expensive to buy crayons individually, either at a large art supply store or online.

**\*Always color before you cut out.\***

## Coloring flannel board figures



From top left, clockwise: Caran d'Ache crayons, sharpener, dimensional fabric paints, Ultra Fine Point Sharpie markers, black fine point Sharpie marker, Caran d'Ache crayons again, felt squares.

Trace or photocopy figures onto heavyweight nonfusible, nonwoven white interfacing, then color. When covering large areas with artists' crayons, you can avoid a coloring-book look by filling areas with short, overlapping strokes or zig-zags in one direction, using medium pressure, then coloring over the same area with the same color, or a slightly different shade or color, working at a right angle to the first layer. Experiment making flowing lines for hair, or creating patterns and texture with dots or stippling, stripes or plaids. Markers can be used for crosshatching or dotting.



This pattern page has been printed directly onto heavy-weight nonwoven, nonfusible interfacing and colored with Caran d'Ache Neocolor II crayons. No need to stay inside the lines.



Before you cut out the figures, go over all lines on the pattern with a black fine point Sharpie marker. Cut along the outer edge of your black outline.

## Telling stories, singing songs

### Learning the words

Favorite nursery songs and rhymes, are easy to learn. You probably know many of them already. Tunes for the folk-songs can be found in audio format online.

With stories, learn these parts carefully:

Opening and closing sentences

Names of characters

Sequence of events

Chants or rhymes

Sharing stories with children is much more fun once you leave the printed word behind and allow yourself to improvise and elaborate. To set a tale in your memory, record yourself telling it and listen to it several times. Tell the story to a nonjudgmental audience—a dog, a cat, a baby.

### Rehearsing with the flannel board

Be sure to rehearse every new story, song, or rhyme with flannel board and figures. For many stories, it is important to place the first figure in just the right spot on the board in order to leave room for figures you will add later on. Try to make placing the figures an effortless part of your storytelling. Give each one a little pat after you put it in place, to help it stick.

### Setting up for storytelling

Position the flannel board above and beyond the reach of wandering toddlers, so that no little hands grab the figures, and everyone will be able to see. Adjust the angle of the board so that the figures adhere easily.

Arrange the storytelling figures in a stack in the order you will use them, first one on top. While you are telling the story, keep this stack of figures out of sight so that it doesn't distract the children.

## Audience participation

Young children love to join in reciting the rhymes, singing the songs, and chanting the chants. This kind of participation makes storytelling more fun for everyone. Most three-to five-year-olds need only a smile and a nod of approval to encourage them to say something along with you. Use the type and amount of audience participation that you are comfortable with. Of course, audience participation can sometimes lead to minor chaos. Regain control by leaning forward, lowering your voice and proceeding. If that doesn't work, bring the rhyme or song to a quick end and begin something new.

Usually, though, once is never enough when presenting nursery rhymes and songs with the flannel board. In fact twice is seldom enough. I nearly always use a single rhyme or song three times during a storytelling session. With each repetition, I try to have children and parents participate more, and to vary the ways they participate.

You can also encourage participation by placing a character on the flannel board, then pausing a second or two to give the children time to say its name.

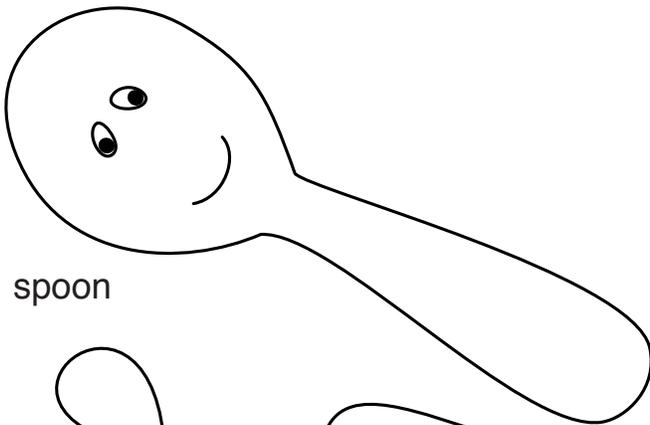
## Hey, Diddle Diddle

Hey, diddle diddle,  
The cat and the fiddle,  
The cow jumped over the moon.  
The little dog laughed  
To see such sport,  
And the dish ran away with the spoon.



These figures were made from heavyweight nonwoven, nonfusible interfacing and colored with Caran d’Ache Neo-color II crayons.

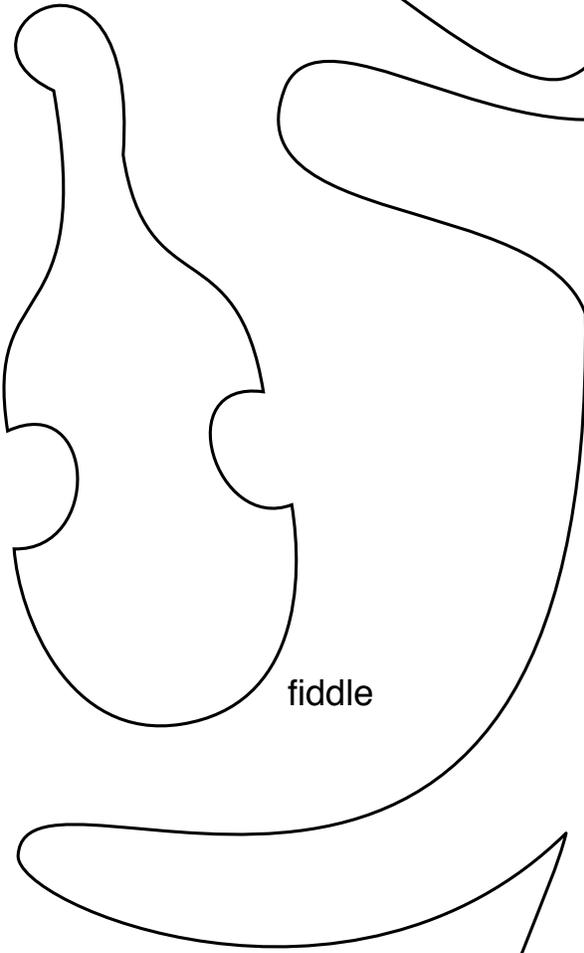
Place the figures on the flannel board as you mention them. For a theatrical effect, you can make the cow into a stick puppet. Attach a cardboard cow figure to a rod, such as a chopstick. Position the moon at the top of the flannel board and begin the rhyme. When it is time for the cow to appear, move the puppet in an arc over the moon from behind the flannel board. End the story with a flourish by whisking the dish and spoon off the board and out of sight.



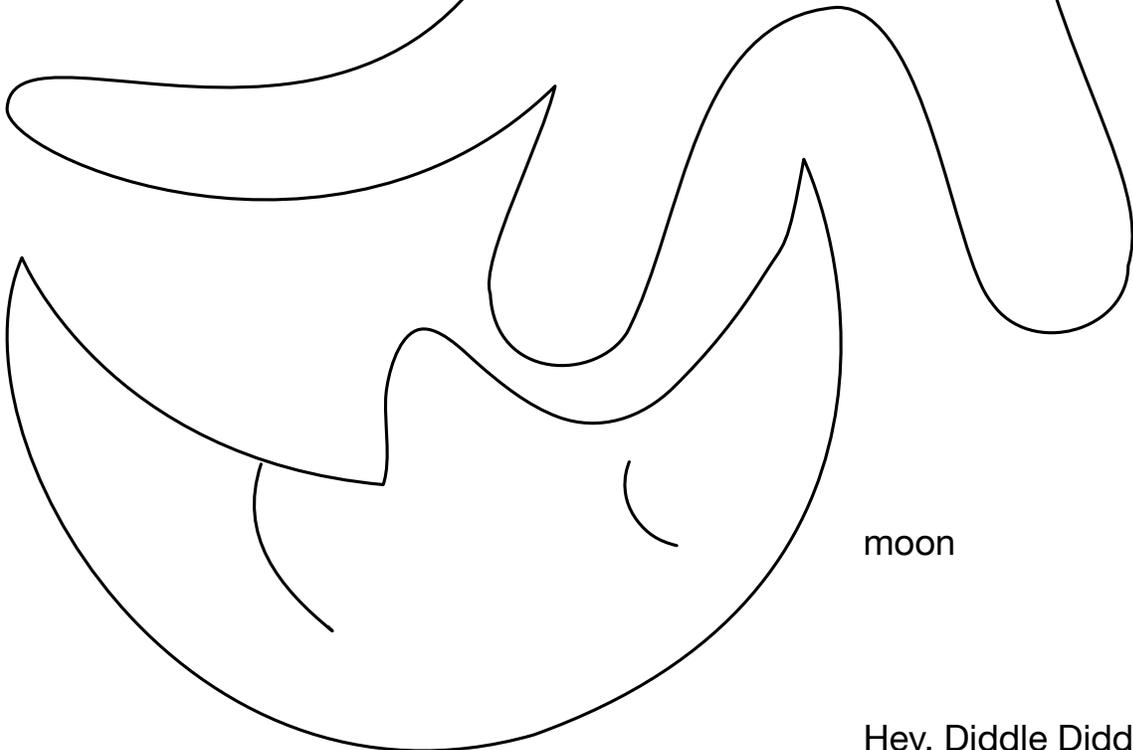
spoon



cat

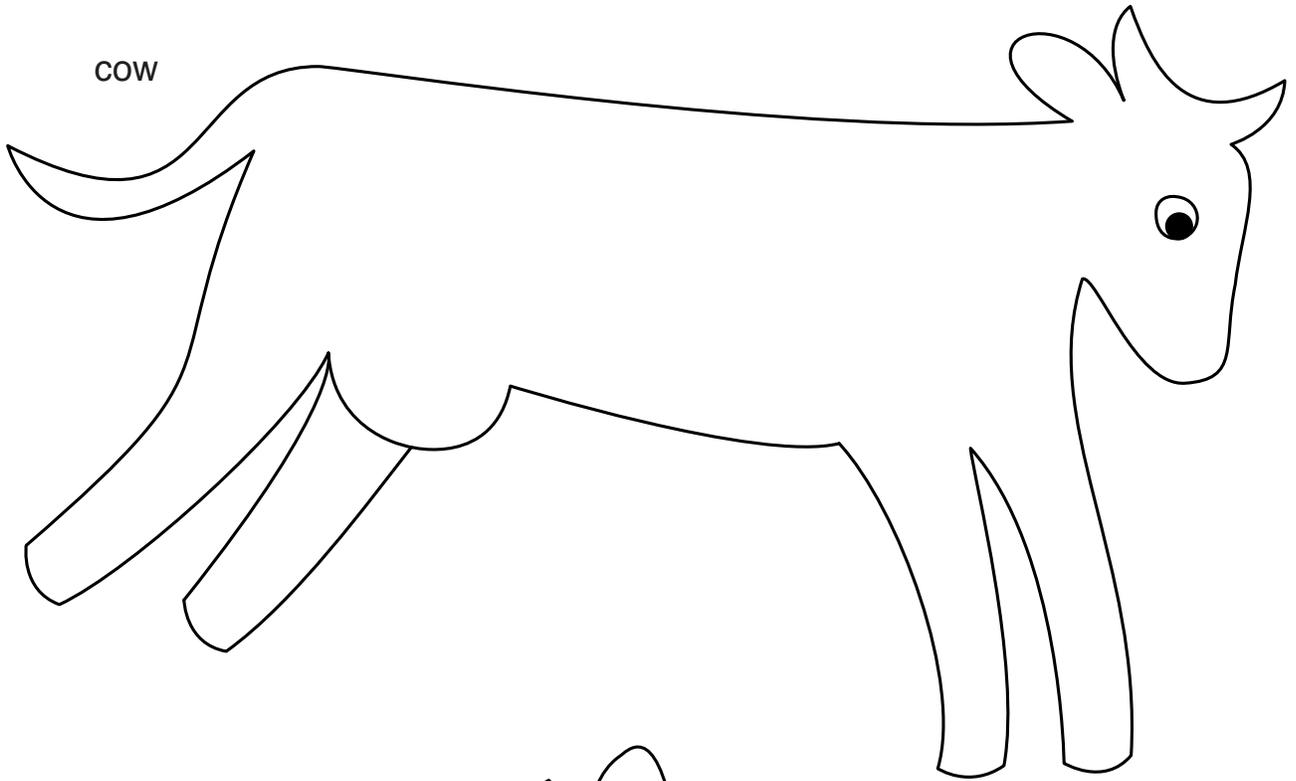


fiddle

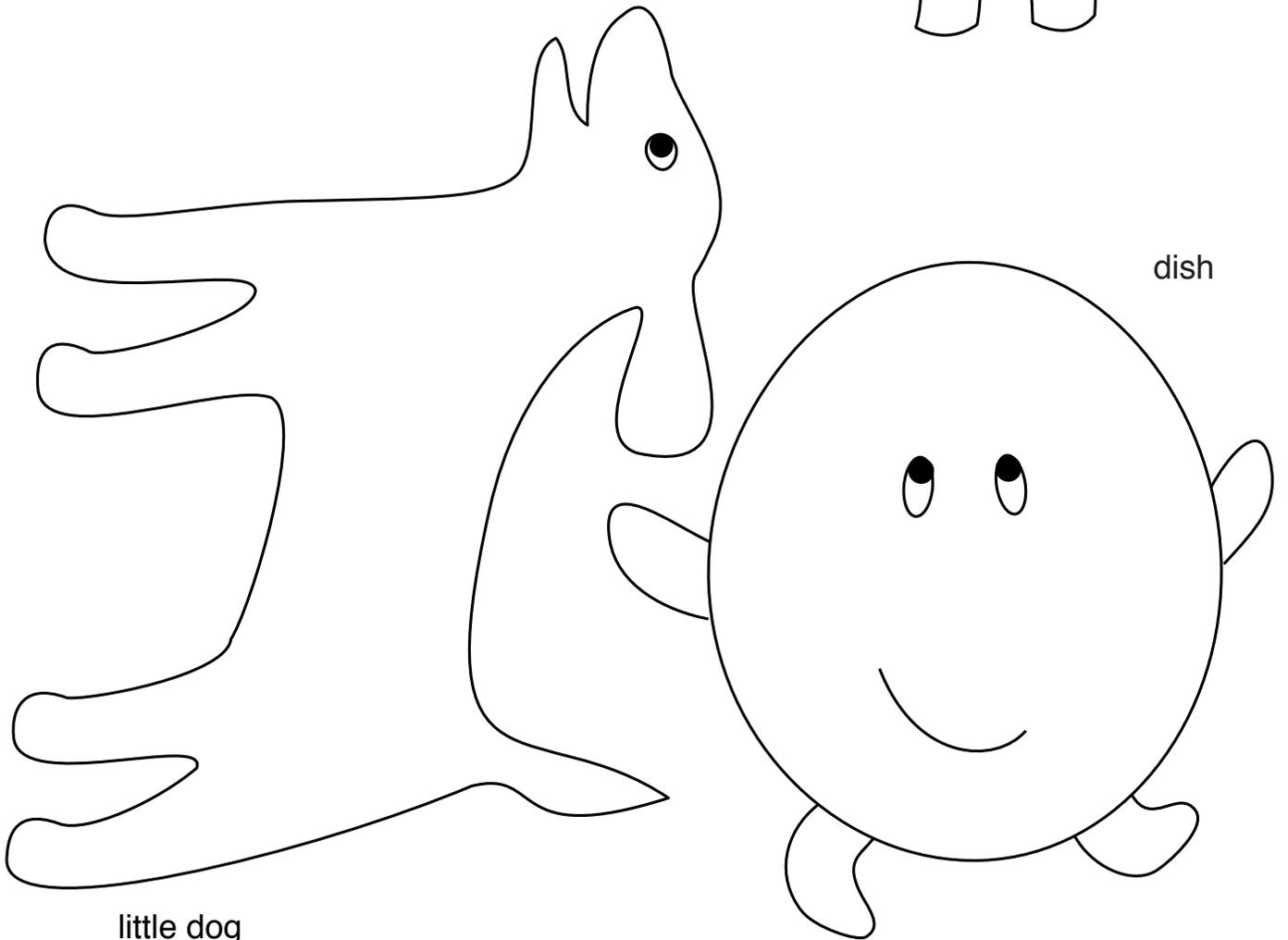


moon

COW



dish



little dog

## Hickory, Dickory, Dock

Hickory, dickory, dock.

The mouse ran up the clock.

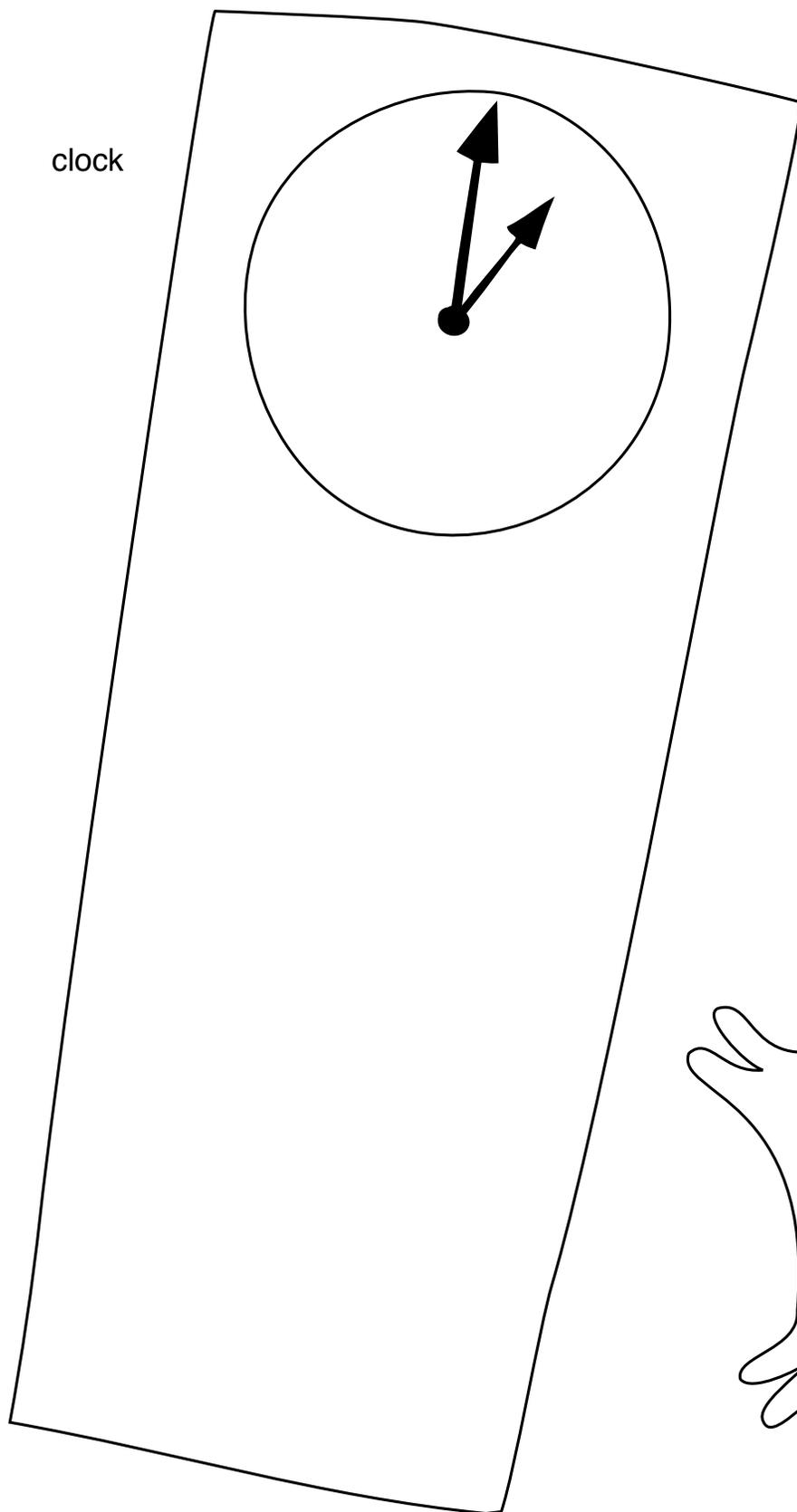
The clock struck one,

The mouse ran down.

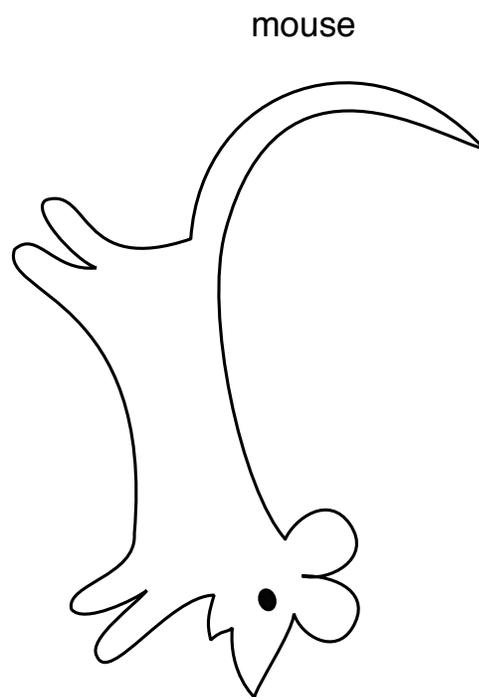
Hickory, dickory, dock.



Place the clock on the flannel board before you begin. Hold the mouse's back with just the tips of your fingers so that the children can see it as you move it up and down the clock. Pause when the mouse reaches the top of the clock, pause after the word "one" and have the children join you in chiming one o'clock—*Ding-dong!*



clock



mouse

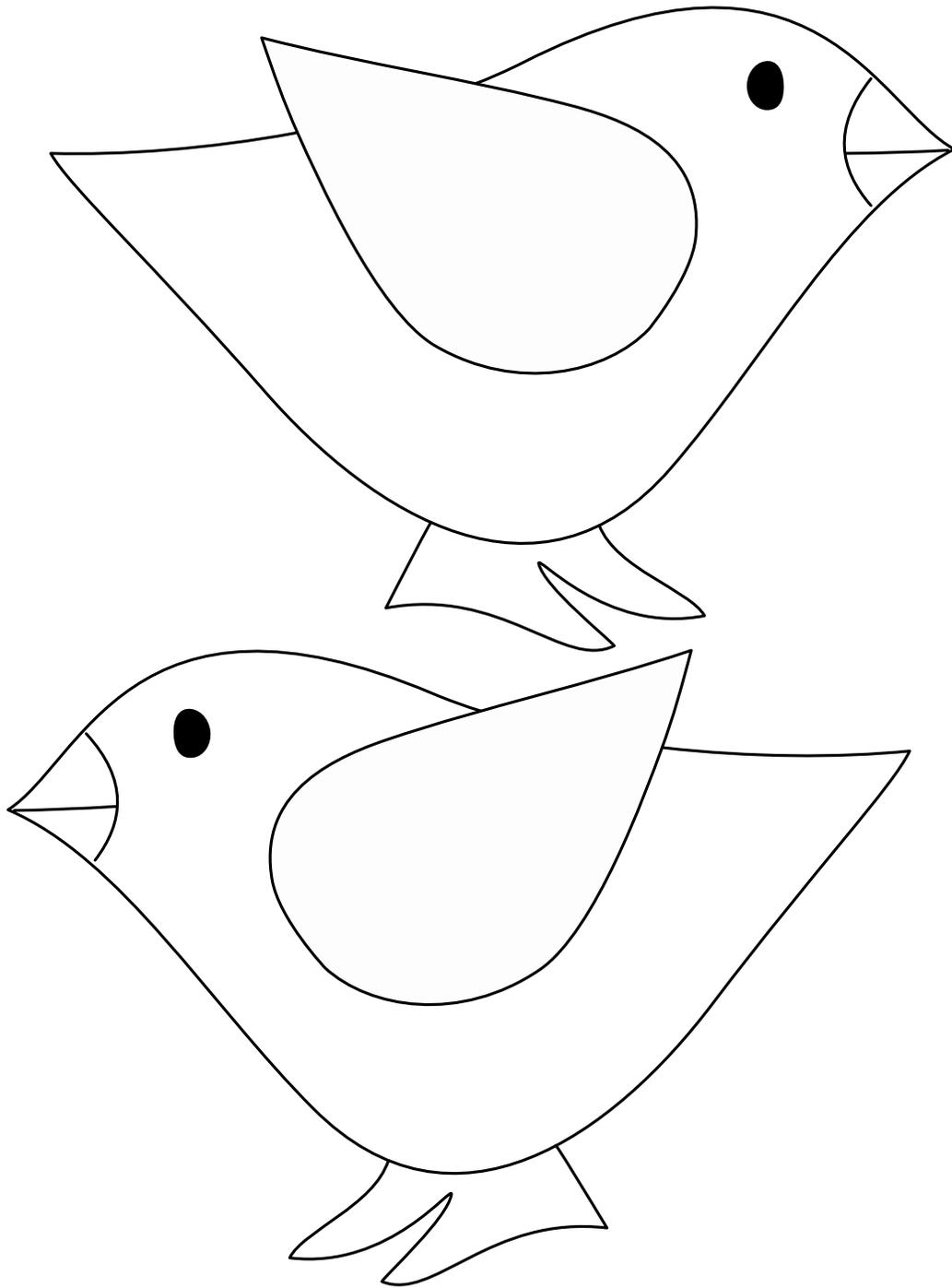
## Two Little Bluebirds

Two little bluebirds sitting on a hill,  
One named Jack, one named Jill.  
Fly away, Jack! Fly away, Jill!  
Come back, Jack! Come back, Jill!



From green felt, cut a hill. The bluebirds can be made from collaged felt or interfacing.

This rhyme is usually known as “Two Little Blackbirds.” Because blackbirds would disappear on a black flannel board, I have made them blue. Begin this rhyme with just the hill on the flannel board. Place each bird atop the hill as you say its name. On “Fly away, Jack!” and “Fly away, Jill!” remove each bird from the board and place them out of sight until it is time for each one to return.



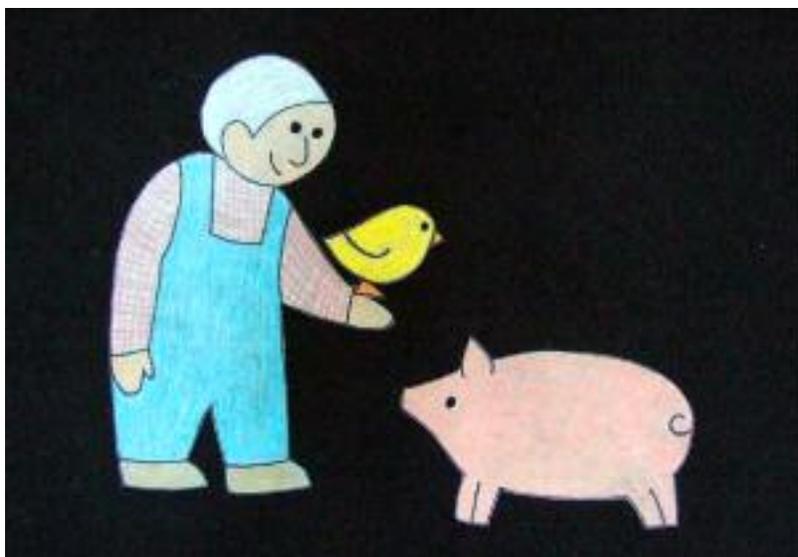
## Old Macdonald

Old McDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!  
And on this farm he had a chick, E-I-E-I-O!  
With a *peep-peep* here, and a *peep-peep* there,  
Here a *peep*, there a *peep*, everywhere a *peep-peep!*  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!

Old McDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!  
And on this farm he had a duck, E-I-E-I-O!  
With a *quack-quack* here, and a *quack-quack* there,  
Here a *quack*, there a *quack*, everywhere a *quack-quack!*  
A *peep-peep* here, and a *peep-peep* there,  
Here a *peep*, there a *peep*, everywhere a *peep-peep!*

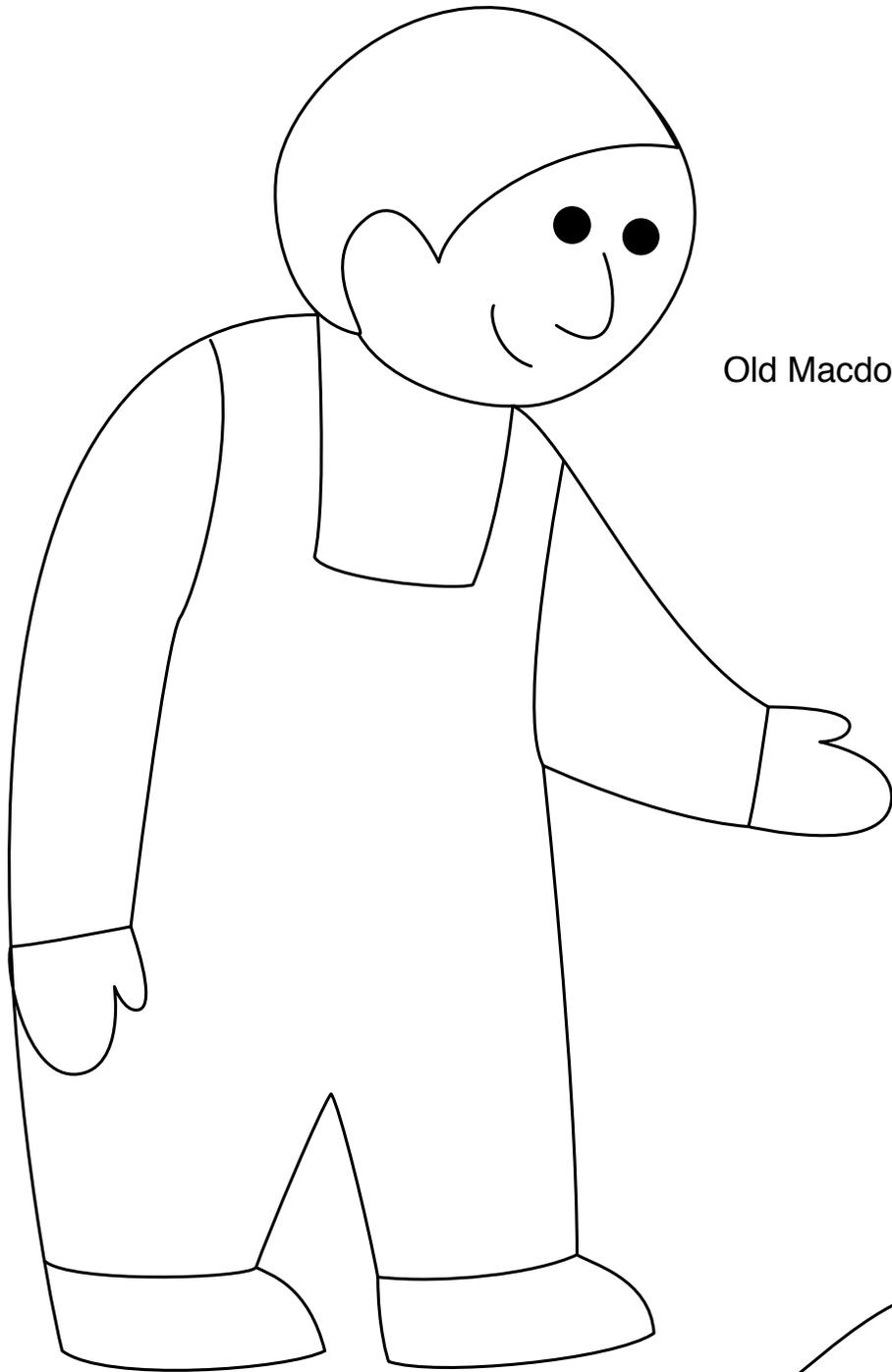
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!  
Old McDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!  
And on this farm he had a sheep, E-I-E-I-O!  
With a *baa-baa* here, and a *baa-baa* there,  
Here a *baa*, there a *baa*, everywhere a *baa-baa!*  
A *quack-quack* here, and a *quack-quack* there,  
Here a *quack*, there a *quack*, everywhere a *quack-quack!*  
A *peep-peep* here, and a *peep-peep* there,  
Here a *peep*, there a *peep*, everywhere a *peep-peep!*  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!

Old McDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!  
And on this farm he had a pig, E-I-E-I-O!  
With an *oink-oink* here, and an *oink-oink* there,  
Here an *oink*, there an *oink*, everywhere an *oink-oink*!  
A *baa-baa* here, and a *baa-baa* there,  
Here a *baa*, there a *baa*, everywhere a *baa-baa*!  
A *quack-quack* here, and a *quack-quack* there,  
Here a *quack*, there a *quack*, everywhere a *quack-quack*!  
A *peep-peep* here, and a *peep-peep* there,  
Here a *peep*, there a *peep*, everywhere a *peep-peep*!  
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O!

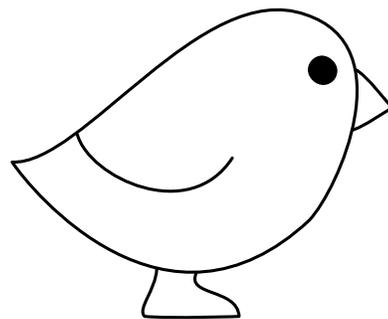


These figures were made from heavyweight nonwoven, nonfusible interfacing and colored with Caran d'Ache Neocolor II crayons.

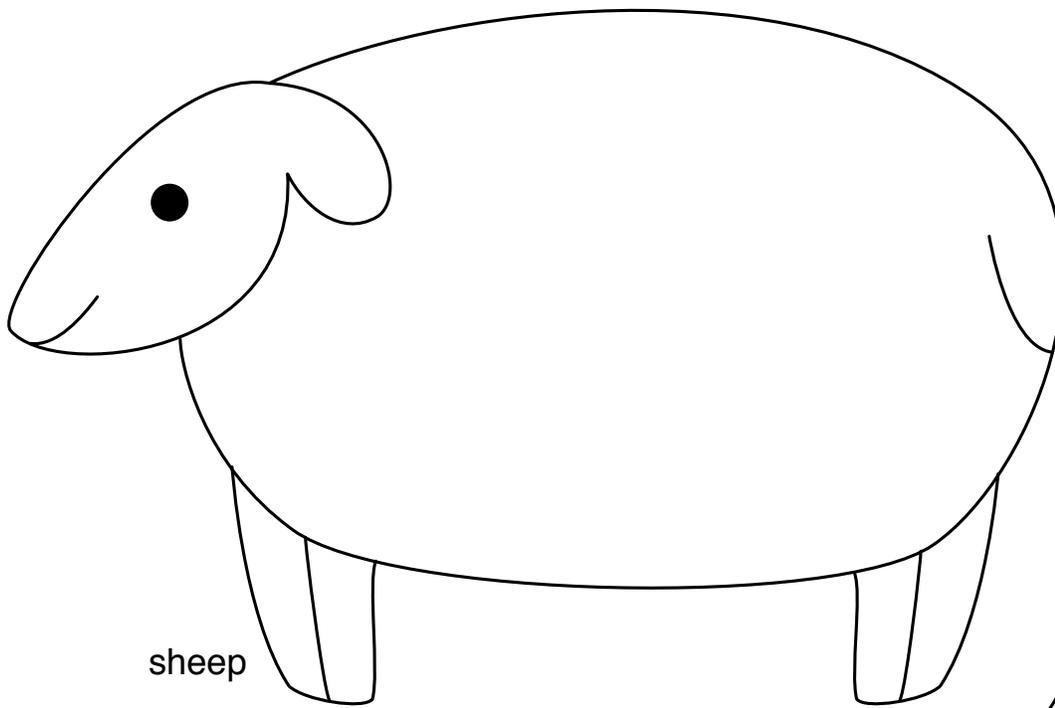
The flannel board makes it easy for even young children to sing the song in a cumulative fashion. Place each new animal on the board when you say its name, then point to each previous animal when it is time to make its sound.



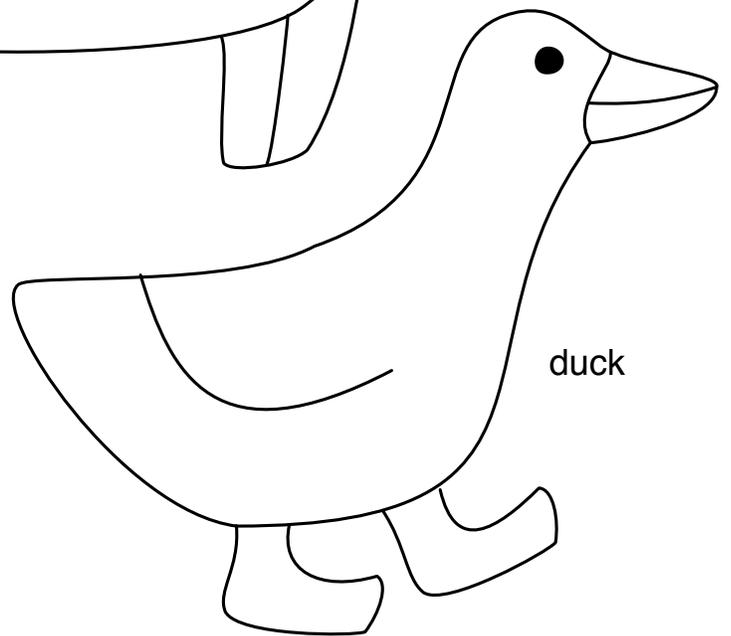
Old Macdonald



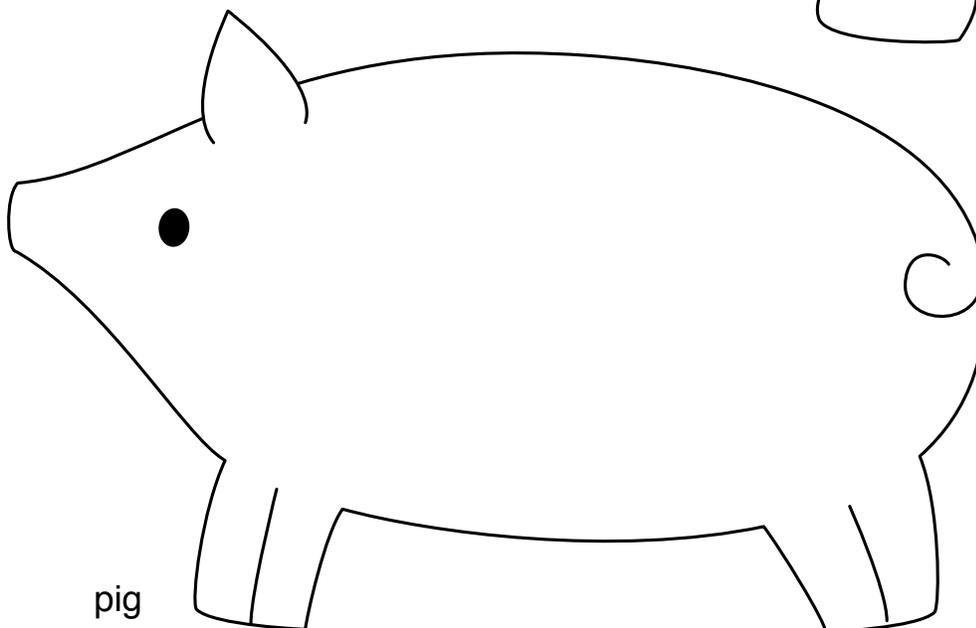
chick



sheep



duck



pig

## A-Hunting We Will Go

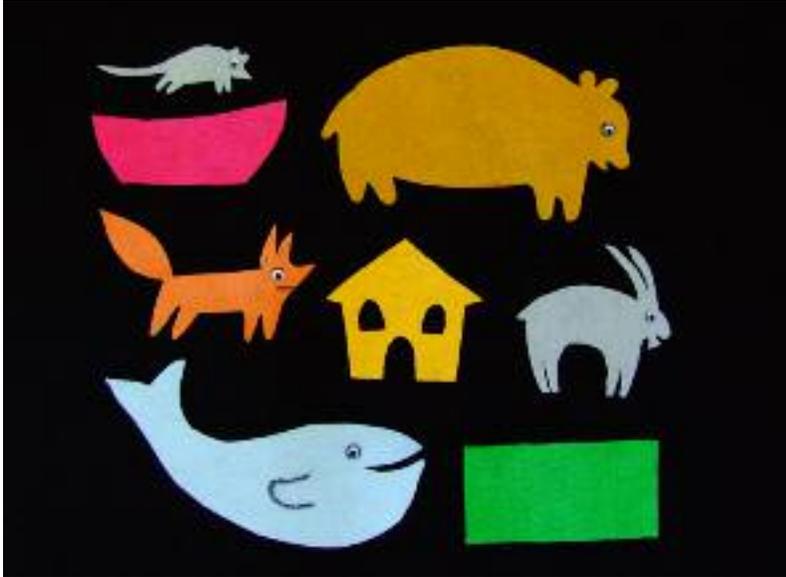
A-hunting we will go,  
A-hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a fox,  
And put him in a box,  
And then we'll let him go.

A-hunting we will go,  
A-hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a mouse,  
And put her in a house,  
And then we'll let her go.

A-hunting we will go,  
A-hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a goat,  
And put him in a boat,  
And then we'll let him go.

A-hunting we will go,  
A-hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a bear,  
And comb her hair,  
And then we'll let her go.

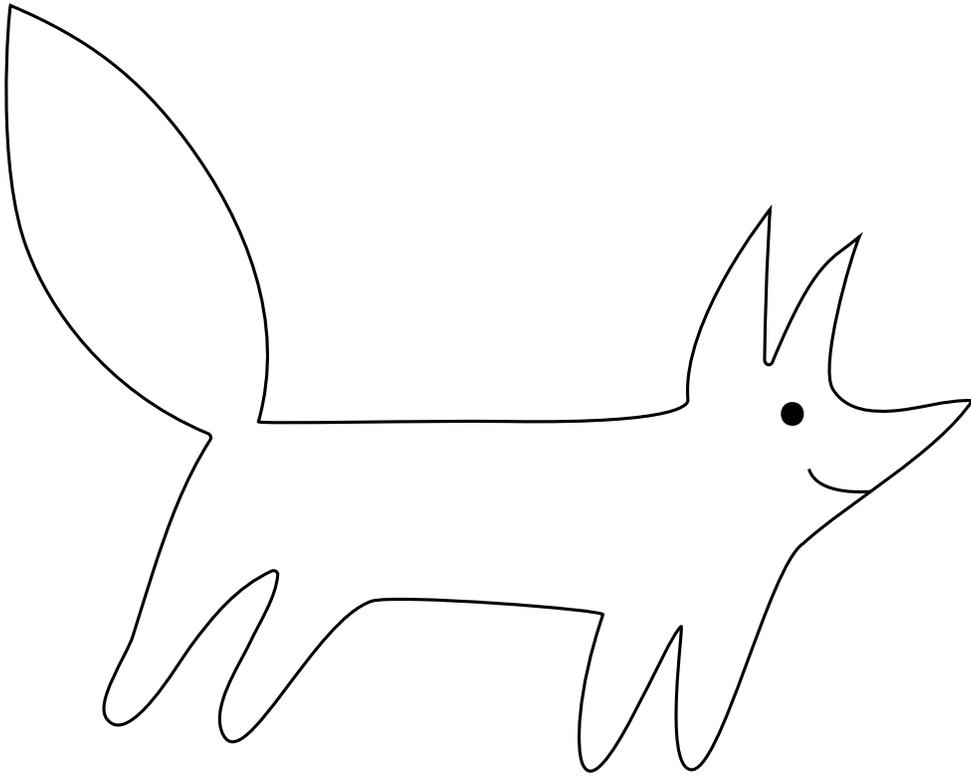
A-hunting we will go,  
A-hunting we will go,  
We'll catch a whale,  
And tickle her tail,  
And then we'll let her go.



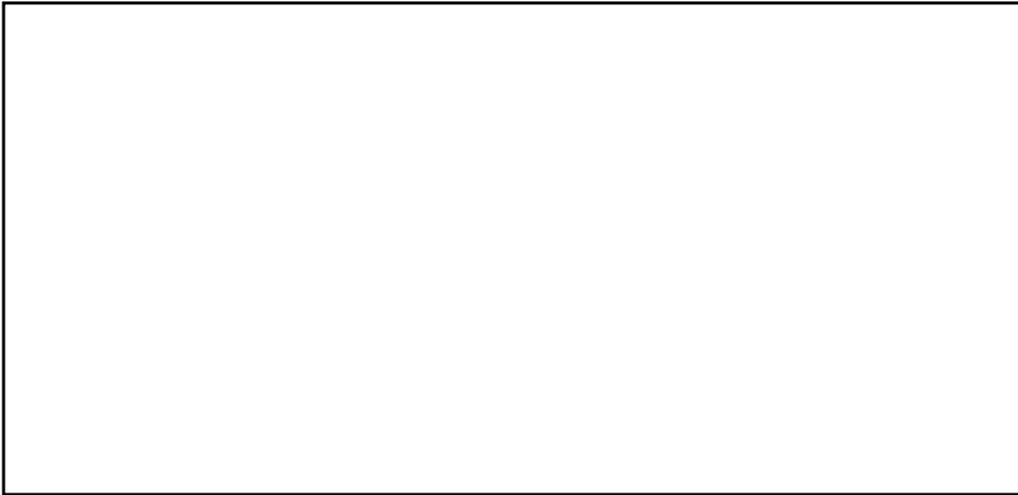
These figures were made of felt with plastic wiggle eyes glued on, and lines drawn with Sharpie marker. Mouths of the goat, bear, and whale were snipped away, so that the black of the flannel board shows through. The animals are not in proportion to one another because they are not all on the flannel board at the same time.

If you don't know the traditional melody for this song, you can find it online. It can also be sung to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell." You will need to sing the words at a slow tempo to give yourself time to place and remove figures.

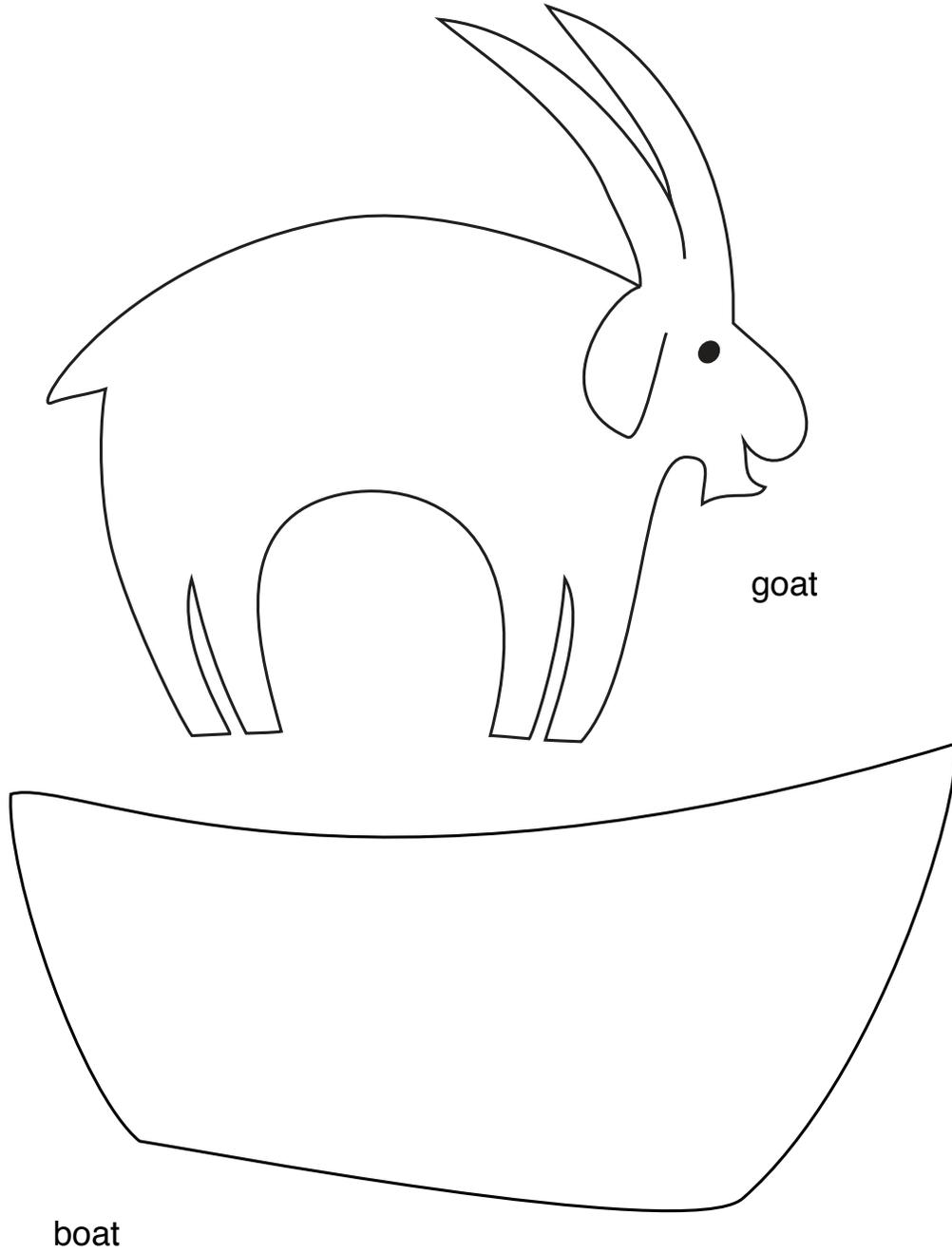
Place each figure or pair of figures on the flannel board as they are mentioned, then whisk them off to make way for the next verse of the song. Comb the bear's hair with a big, bright plastic comb. Tickle the whale with your fingers or with a colorful feather.



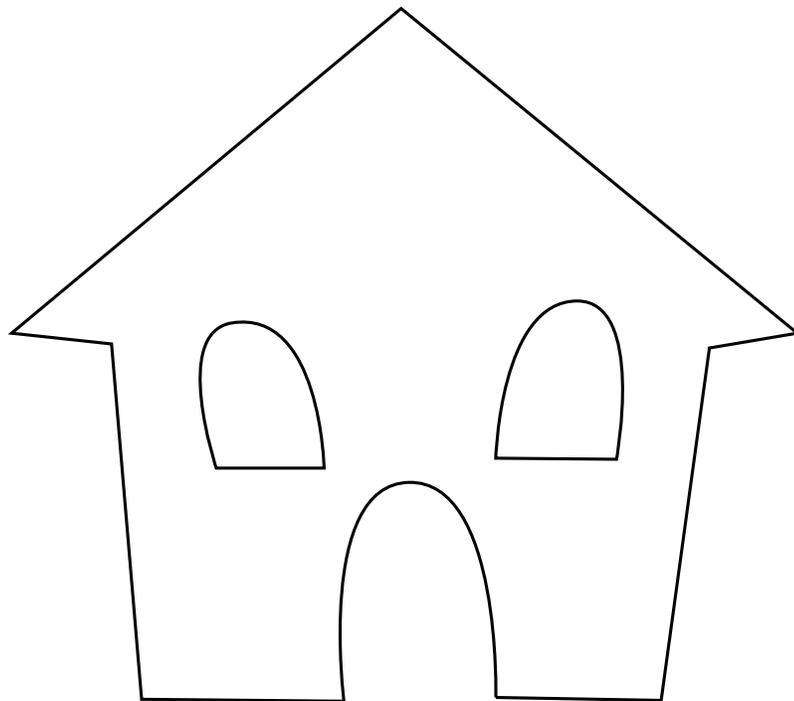
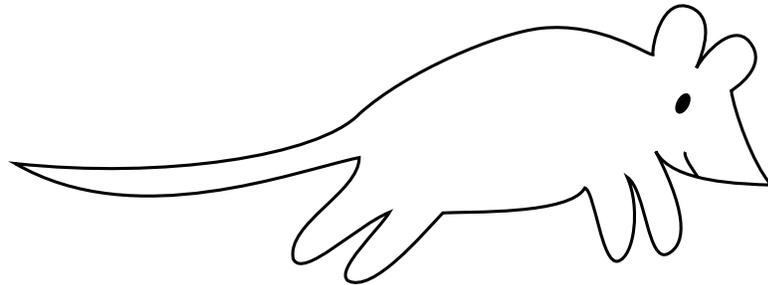
fox



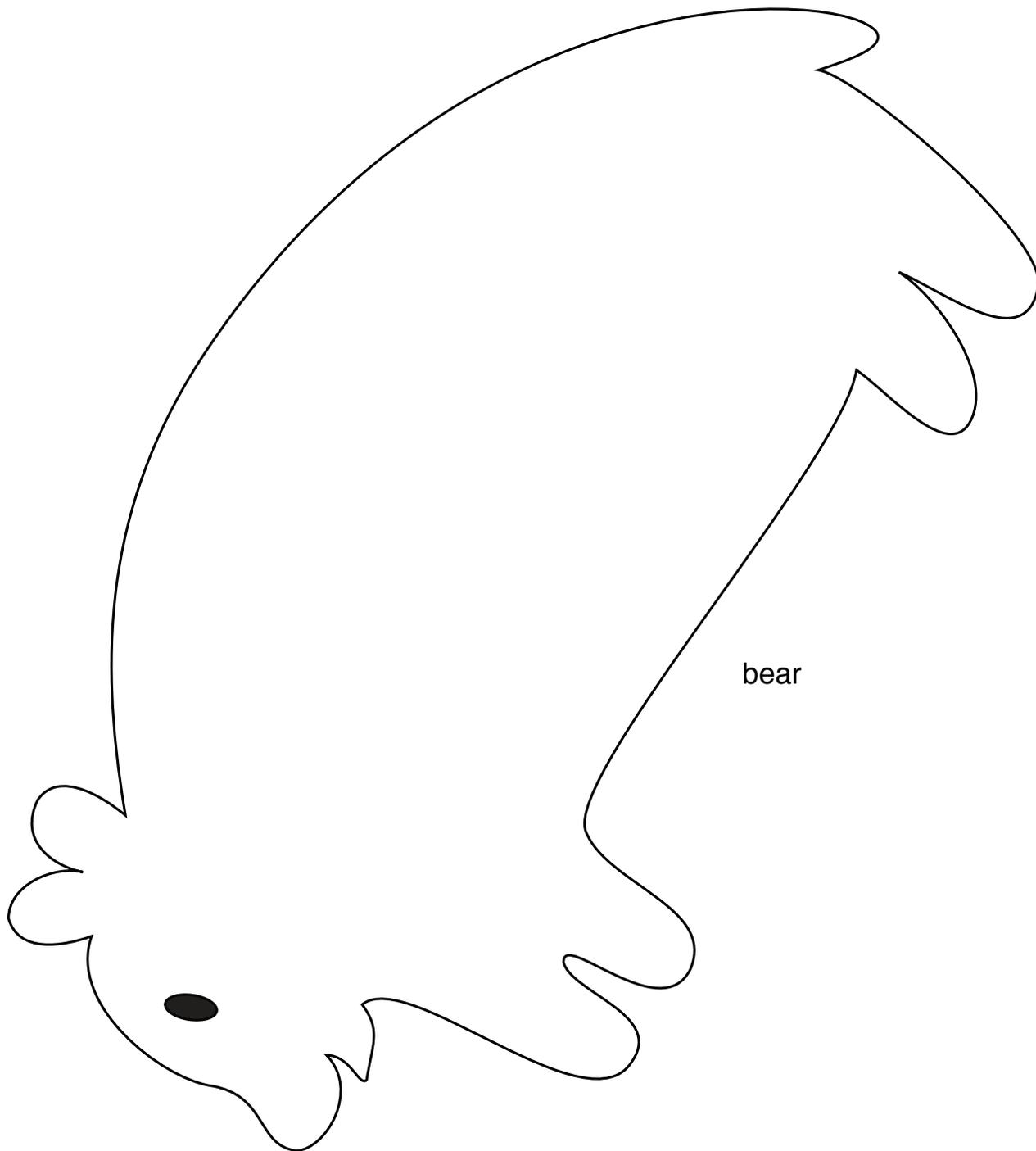
box

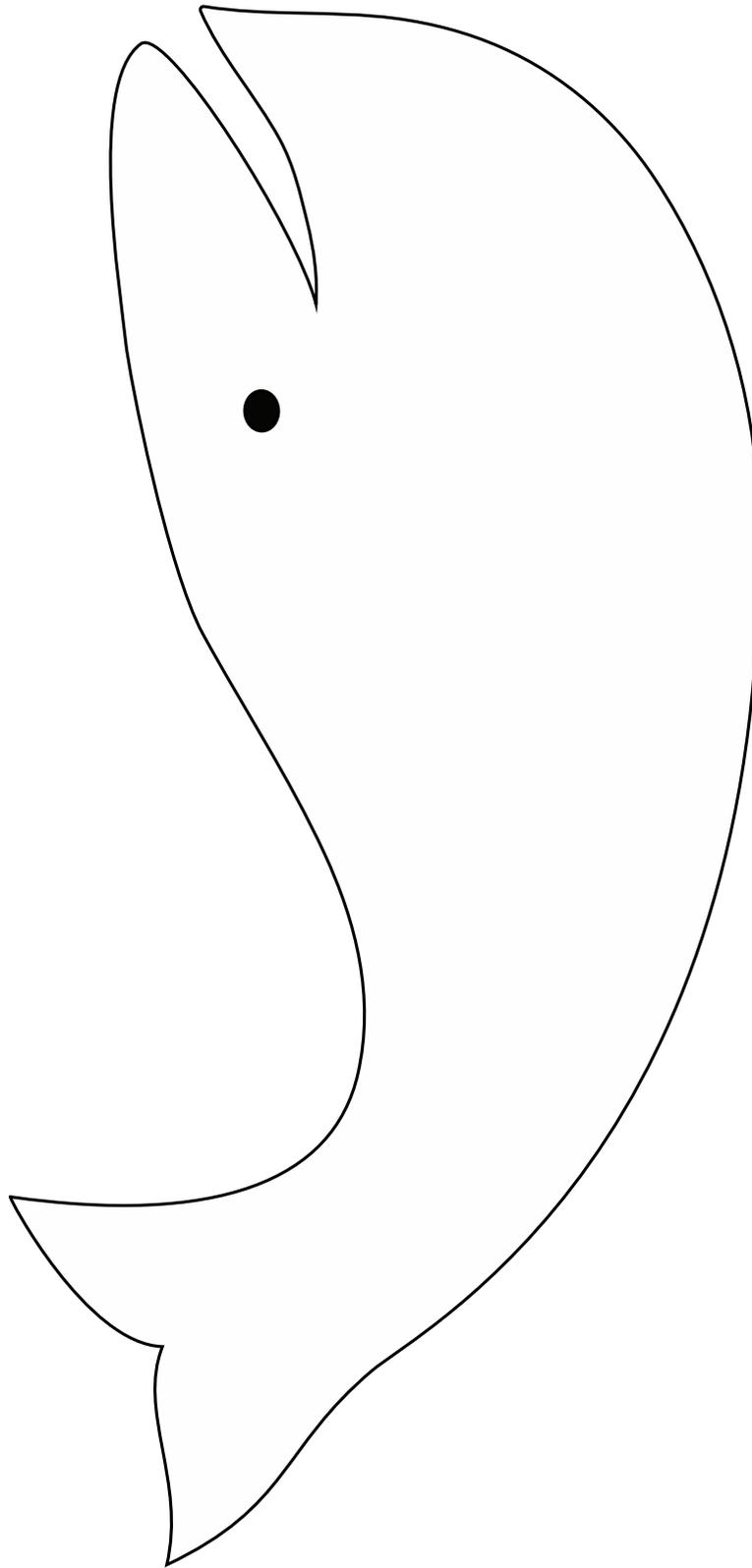


mouse



house (cut out windows)





whale

## The Gingerbread Man

Once there lived an old man and an old woman who were so lonely that they decided to make a little man out of gingerbread to keep them company.

The old woman put the gingerbread man into the oven to bake.

"Watch the gingerbread man for me," said the old woman to the old man. She only meant that he should watch it so that it didn't burn.

The old man said to himself, "Why should I watch the gingerbread man? The gingerbread man won't run away." So he didn't watch the gingerbread man, and then, all of a sudden, the gingerbread man jumped out of the oven and ran out the door. The old man and the old woman ran as fast as they could, but the gingerbread man ran faster.

"Come back here, gingerbread man!" they cried as they chased after him, but it was no use. They had to give up and go home.

On and on ran the gingerbread man, and by and by he met a pig. "Where are you going, dear little gingerbread man?" asked the pig, and the gingerbread man answered,

I ran and ran  
From an old woman,  
And an old man.  
I can run away from you, too.  
I can! I can!

The pig trotted after the gingerbread man, but the gingerbread man was much too fast for him. Finally, the pig had to give up and go home.

On and on ran the gingerbread man. By and by he met a bear.

"Where are you going, dear, sweet little gingerbread man?" asked the bear.

The gingerbread man sang,

I ran and ran  
From an old woman,  
And an old man,  
And a pig.  
I can run away from you, too.  
I can! I can!

The bear lumbered after the gingerbread man, but the gingerbread man ran faster, never stopping to look behind him. The bear had to give up and go home.

On and on ran the gingerbread man, and by and by he met a wolf.

"Where are you going, dear, sweet, plump little gingerbread man?" asked the wolf.

The gingerbread man sang,

I ran and ran  
From an old woman,  
And an old man,  
And a pig,  
And a bear.  
I can run away from you, too.  
I can! I can!

"Oh you can, can you?" snarled the wolf, and he loped after gingerbread man, who ran and ran without ever looking back. The wolf had to give up and go home.

On and on ran the gingerbread man, and by and by he came to a fox who was sitting by the side of the road.

"Where are you going, gingerbread man?" asked fox.

The gingerbread man sang,

I ran and ran  
From an old woman,  
And an old man, And a pig,  
And a bear, And a wolf.  
I can run away from you, too.  
I can! I can!

"What did you say, gingerbread man? I can't hear you," said the fox. "Please come a little bit closer."

The gingerbread man moved a tiny bit closer to the fox and sang,

I ran and ran  
From an old woman,  
And an old man,  
And a pig,  
And a bear,  
And a wolf.  
I can run away from you, too.  
I can! I can!

"Oh, my poor old ears," said the fox. "I still can't hear a single word. Please come a little bit closer."

The gingerbread man marched right up to the fox's left ear and shouted,

I ran and ran  
From an old woman,  
And an old man,  
And a pig,  
And a bear,  
And a wolf!  
I can run away from you, too.  
I can! I can!

But he said no more, for the fox snapped him up and swallowed him in the twinkling of an eye, and that was the end of the gingerbread man.

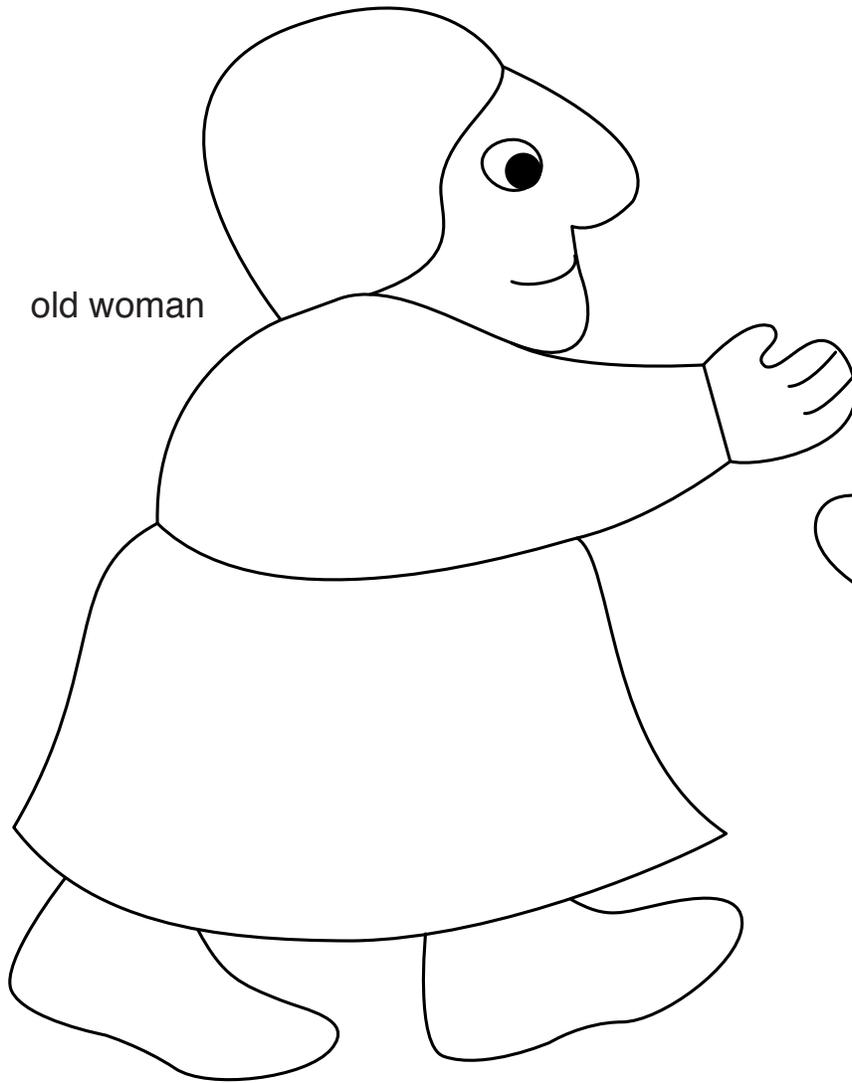


These characters were made from heavyweight non-woven, nonfusible interfacing and colored with Caran d’Ache Neocolor II crayons. Black lines were added with fine point Sharpie marker

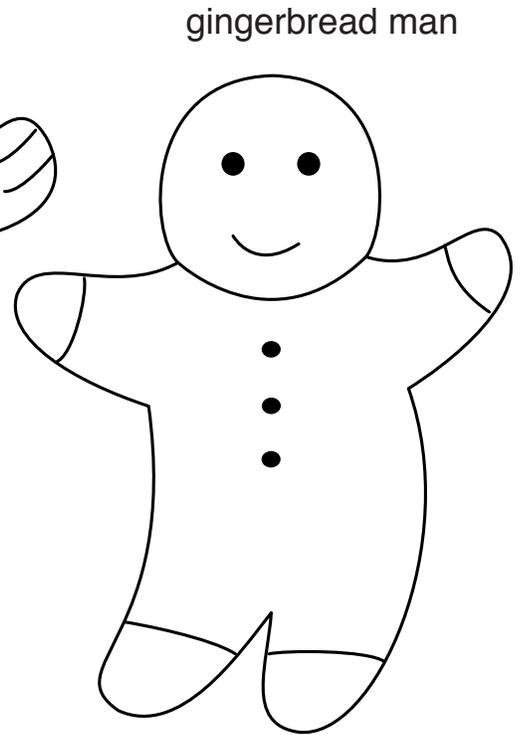
Before the children see the flannel board, set the oven at the center with the man on one side and the woman on the other. Place the gingerbread man in the oven when you introduce him into the story.

When the gingerbread man runs out the door, place him beneath the man and woman, toward the bottom left of the flannel board, then remove the man, woman and oven. The gingerbread man will not move again—except in the audience’s imagination—until he meets the fox. Position the fox a good bit away from the gingerbread man, giving the gingerbread man enough space to inch closer and closer. At the point when the fox snaps up the gingerbread man, whisk the gingerbread man into your hand and off behind flannel board.

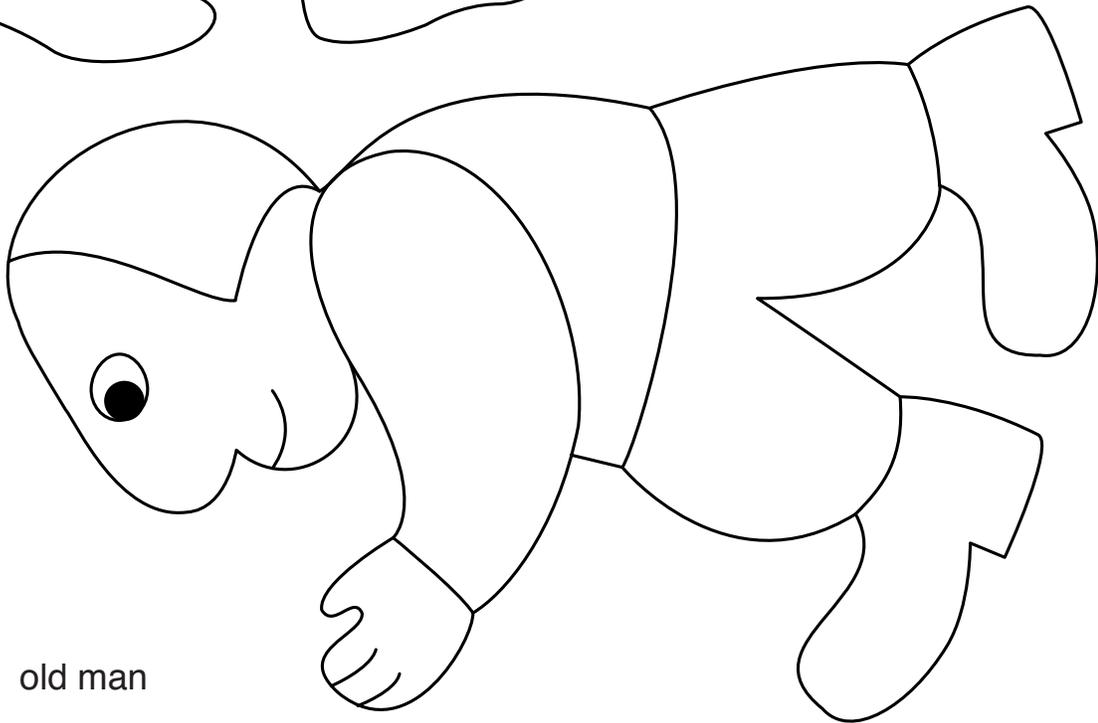
To reassure any children that it’s just a story, bring all the characters back onto the flannel board for a curtain call.



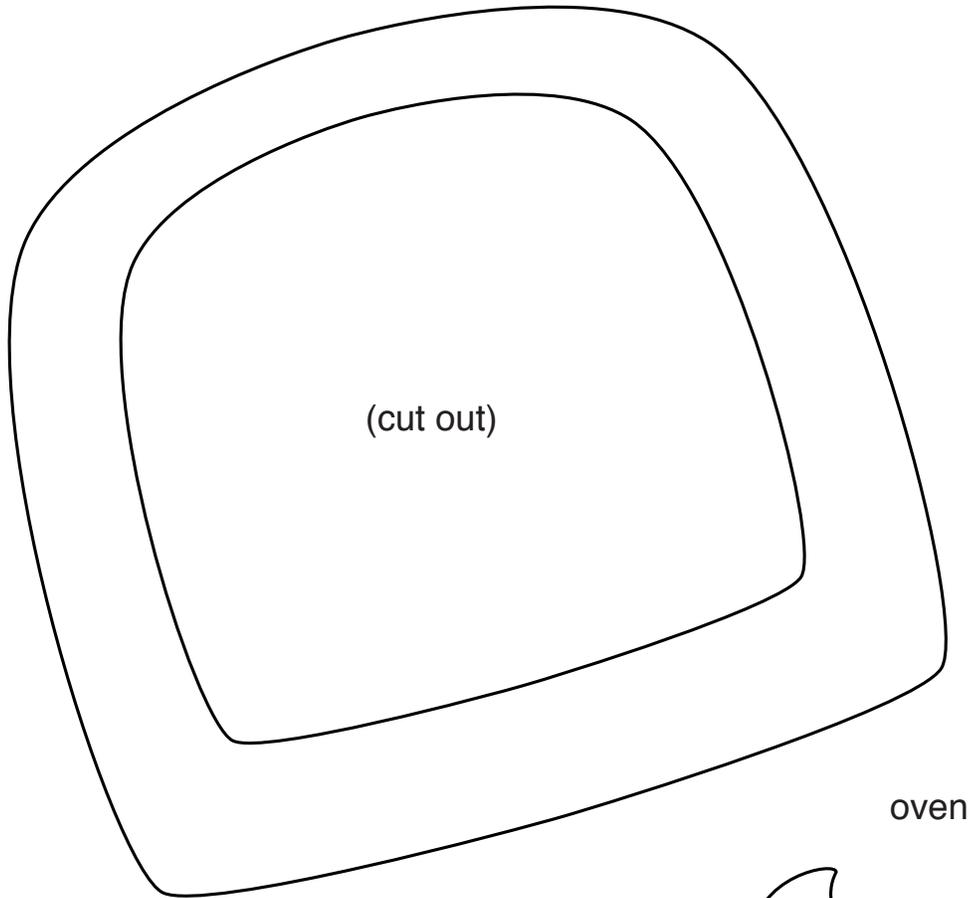
old woman



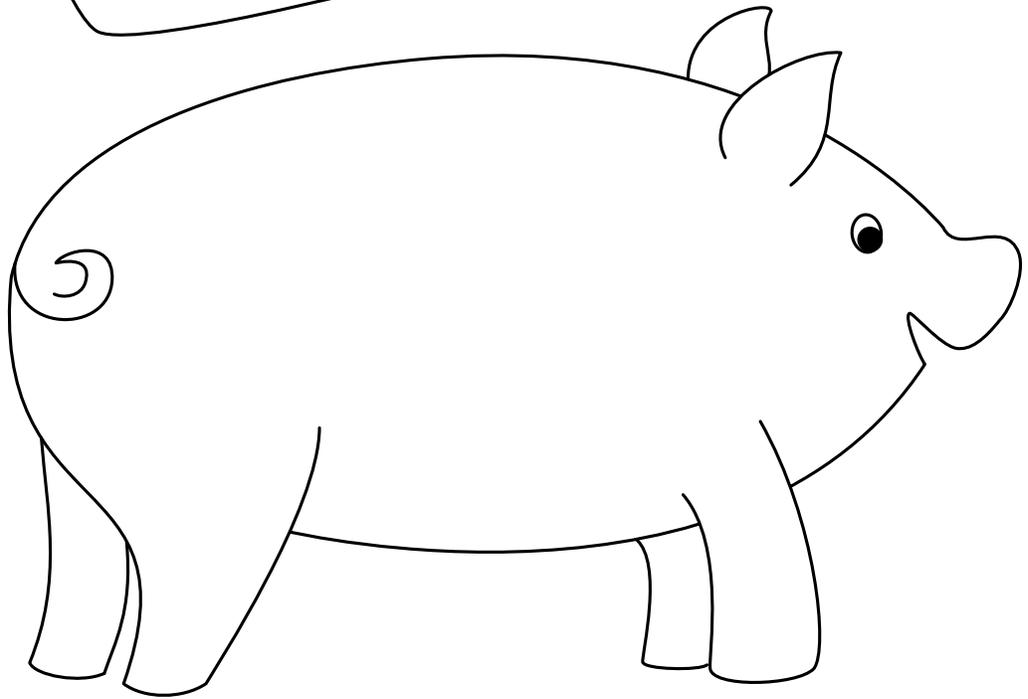
gingerbread man



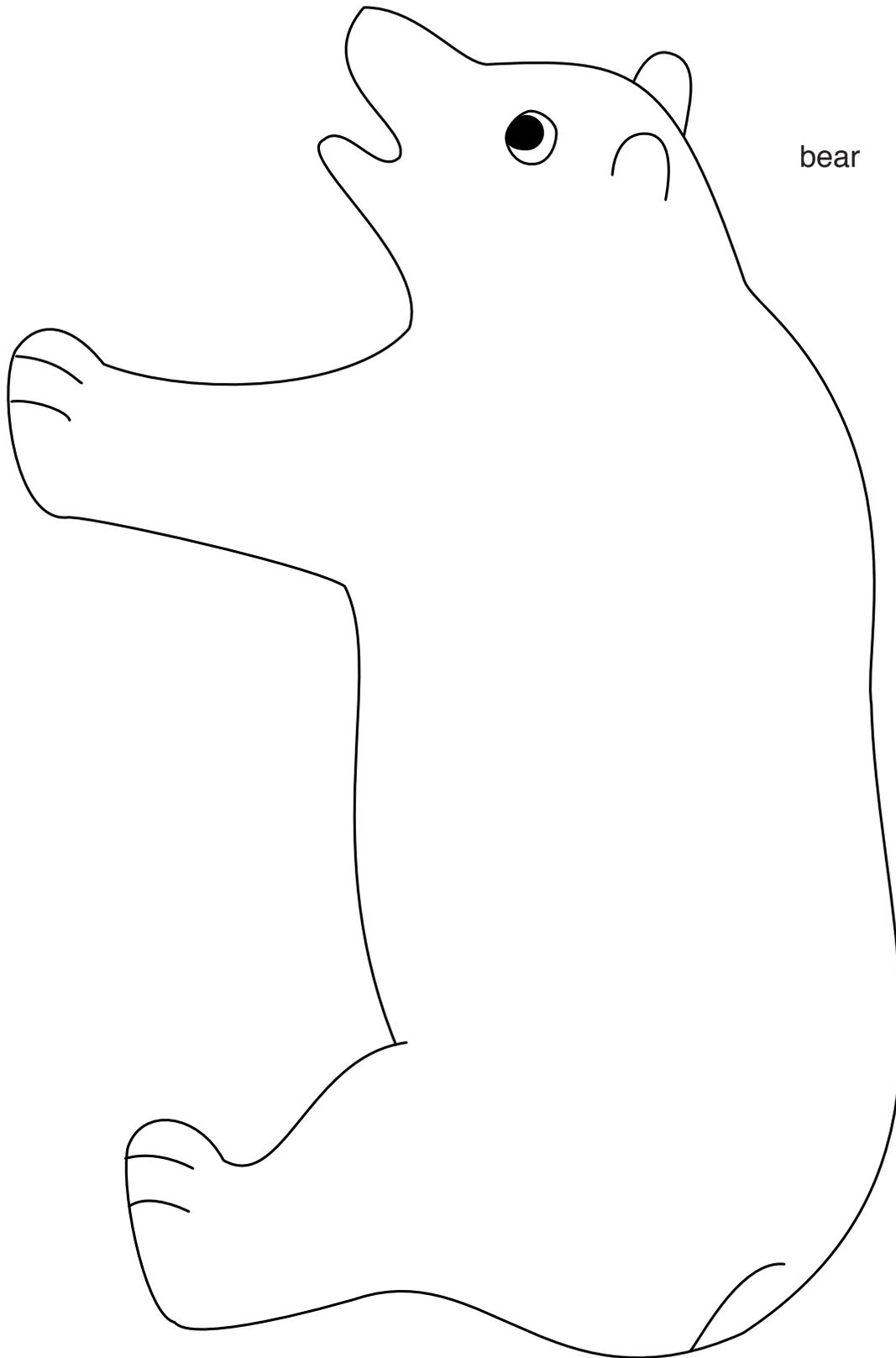
old man

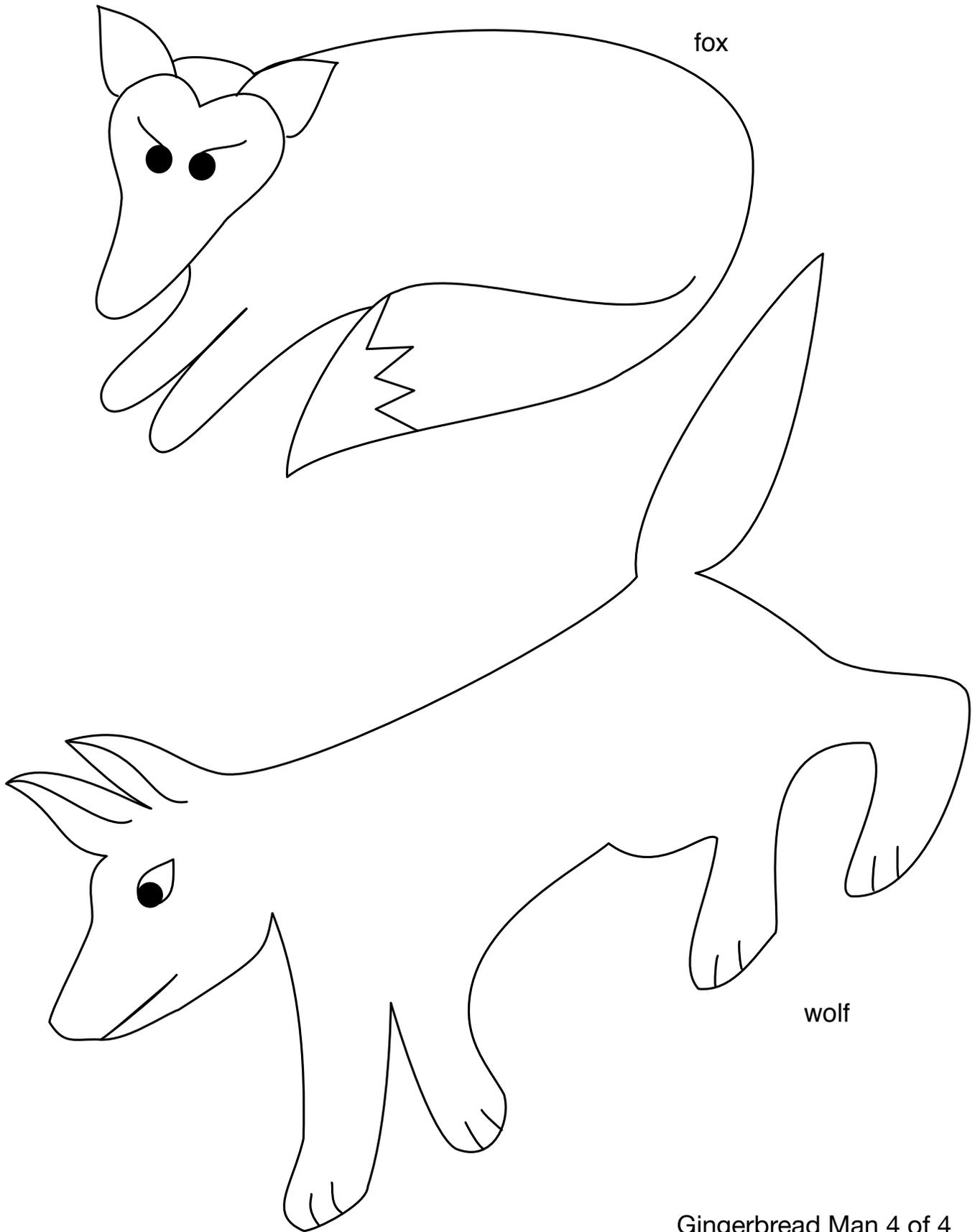


oven



pig





## The Three Billy Goats

Long ago, there lived three billy goats, and the name of all three was Gruff. These goats lived on the side of a mountain. They ate and ate the grass that grew on the mountain until they had eaten up every last bit, and so they had to look for a new home. In the distance they saw another mountain all covered with lush green grass, but on the way to that mountain there was a bridge, and under the bridge lived a horrible troll, with eyes as big as saucers, and a nose as long as a poker.

First it was the turn of the smallest billy goat to cross the bridge.

*Trip, trap, trip, trap* went his hooves on the wooden planks.

"Who's that tripping over my bridge?" roared the troll.

"It's the smallest billy goat Gruff."

"Now I am coming to eat you up!" cried the troll, and he jumped up onto the bridge.

"Oh, no, please don't eat me up! I have a brother coming along, and he is so much bigger and tastier than I am. You really should wait and eat him."

"Bigger? Tastier? Oh, very well, be off with you!" shouted the troll, and he jumped down and hid under the bridge.

The little billy goat trotted across the bridge and hurried up onto the grassy mountain.

Then it was the turn of the middle billy goat.

*Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip trap.*

"Who's that tripping over my bridge?"

"It's the middle billy goat Gruff."

"Now I'm coming to eat you up!" cried the troll, and he jumped up onto the bridge.

"Oh, no, please don't eat me up!" said the middle billy goat. "I have a bigger brother coming along, and he's so much bigger and tastier than I am. You really should wait and eat him."

"Bigger? Tastier?" said the troll. "Very well, be off with you!"

The middle billy goat trotted across the bridge and climbed the grassy mountain, while the troll jumped down and hid under the bridge.

Next it was the turn of the biggest billy goat.

*Trip, trap, trip, trap, trip, trap.*

His hooves made the wooden bridge tremble and shake.

"Who's that tripping over my bridge?" roared the troll.

"It's the big billy goat Gruff!" roared the goat in a great big voice of his own.

"Now I am coming to eat you up!" cried the troll, and he jumped up onto the bridge.

"Oh no, you won't," said the big billy goat,

"For on my head I have two spears,  
And I'll poke your eyeballs out your ears.  
On my feet I have two great stones,  
And I'll grind you to bits, body and bones."

The big billy goat lowered his head, and he came at the troll and tossed him up into the air. The troll landed—*splash!*— in the water, and disappeared, and no one ever saw him again. Then the big billy goat trotted over the bridge and up the grassy mountain to join his brothers. They ate and ate and ate, and they became very fat. If the fat hasn't rolled off them, why, they're still fat, so,

Snip-snap-snout,  
This tale is told out.

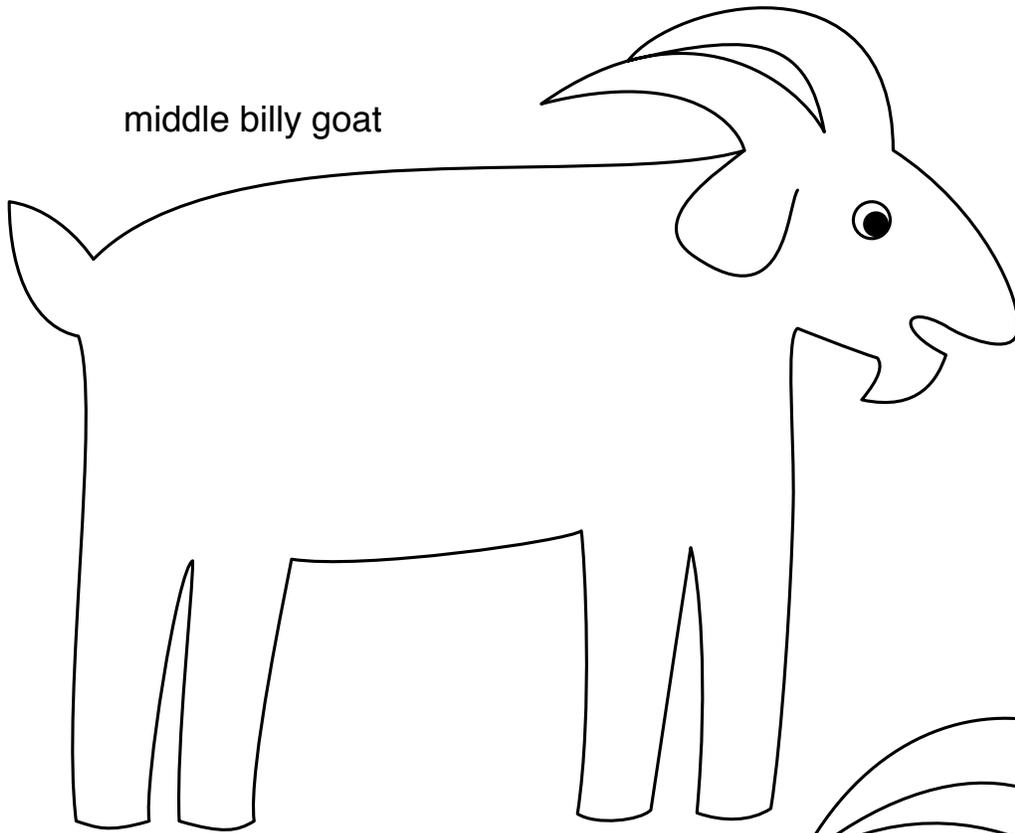


The goats and troll were cut from felt, with white fabric eyes glued on. Lines were drawn on with a fine point Sharpie marker. To make the troll's teeth, I cut away the mouth and glued yellow felt from the back side.

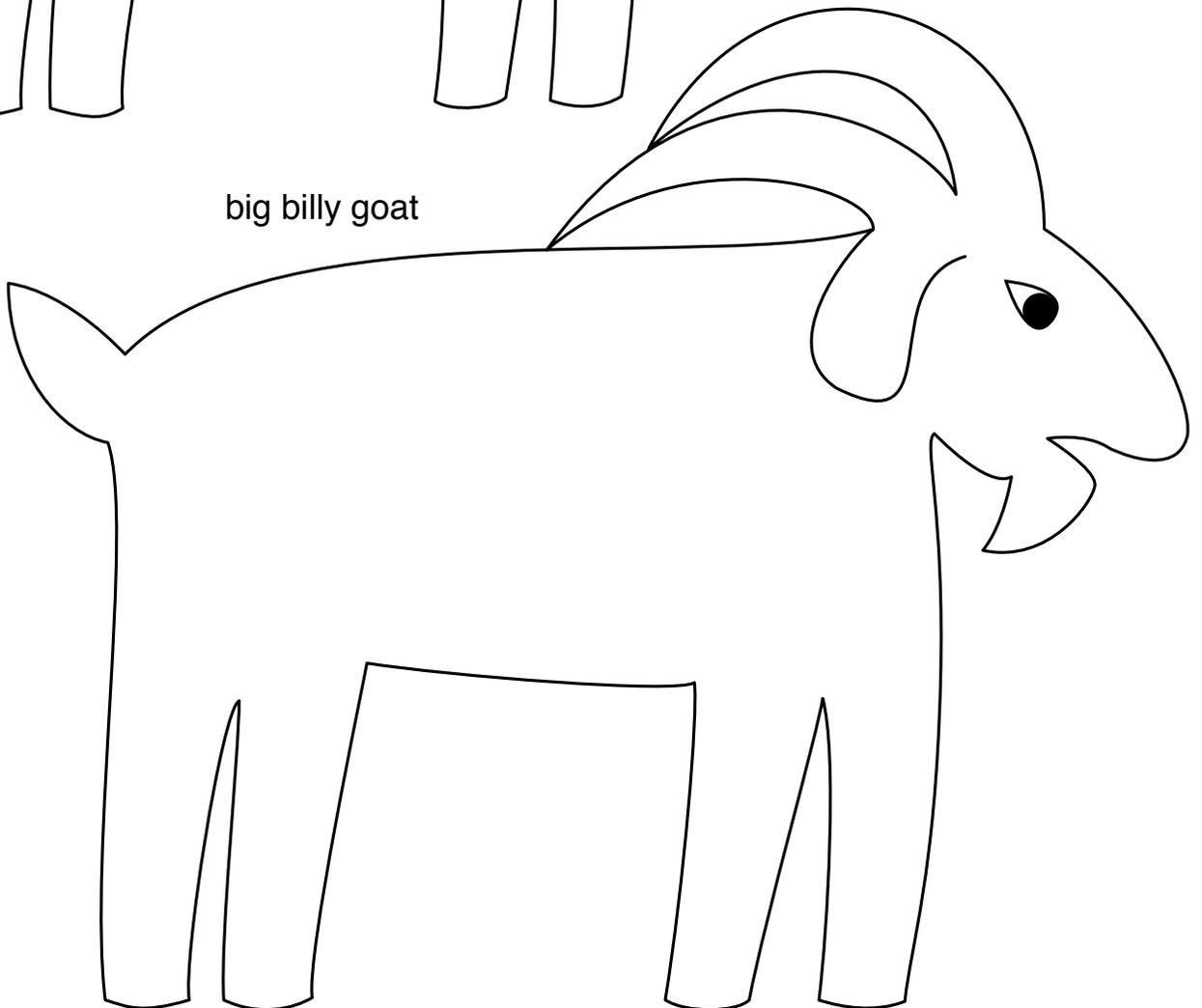
From felt or fleece fabric, make two half-mountains and cut out a simple bridge to connect them. Pin this scenery to the board. Begin the story with the scenery in place and the goats on the brown mountain. For best effect, place the troll under the bridge immediately after you describe him. Bring him up onto the bridge to face each goat, then place him back underneath as the first two goats *trip-trap* away. When the big billy goat butts the troll, take the troll in your hand and raise him high in the air, then have him disappear behind the flannel board.

The audience always enjoys adding the goats *trip-traps*, either by saying the words along with the storyteller, or by stamping their feet, clapping their knees, or all three. The bigger the goat, the louder the *trip-traps*.

middle billy goat



big billy goat





troll

little billy goat

## The Great Big Carrot

Once, a rabbit was hopping through the garden. She saw a big bushy carrot top. A very big bushy carrot top.

“Oh,” said the rabbit. “This must be the top a great big carrot.”

The rabbit decided to pull the carrot out of the ground. She held onto the carrot top, and she **PULLED**, and she *PULLED*, and she **PULLED** . . . but the carrot would not come out.

Along came a squirrel, and the squirrel asked, “What is all the fuss about?”

And the rabbit answered, “*Fee, fie, foe, fout*. This great big carrot won’t come out!”

“I can help you,” said the squirrel.

The squirrel held onto the rabbit, and the rabbit held onto the bushy carrot top, and they **PULLED** and they *PULLED*, and they **PULLED**, but the carrot would not come out.

Along came a turtle, and the turtle asked, “What is all the fuss about?”

And the squirrel answered, “*Fee, fie, foe, fout*. This great big carrot won’t come out!”

“I can help you,” said the turtle.

The turtle held onto the squirrel, and the squirrel held onto the rabbit, and the rabbit held onto the carrot top and together they **PULLED** and they *PULLED*, and they **PULLED**, but the carrot would not come out.

Along came a snail, and the snail asked, “What is all the fuss about?”

And the turtle answered, “*Fee, fie, foe, fout*. This great big carrot won’t come out!”

“I can help you,” said the snail.

“No you can’t,” said the turtle. “You are too little.”

“No you can’t,” said the squirrel. “You are too small.”

“No you can’t,” said the rabbit. “You are too tiny.”

“Just let me try,” said the snail.

So the snail held onto the turtle, and the turtle held onto the squirrel, and the squirrel held onto the rabbit, and the rabbit held onto the carrot top, and all together they **PULLED** and they *PULLED* and they **PULLED** and they *P-U-L-L-E-D* until the carrot came out, and it *was* a **GREAT BIG** carrot. The rabbit and the squirrel and the turtle all nibbled on the carrot, and they saved the leafy green carrot top for the very helpful snail.

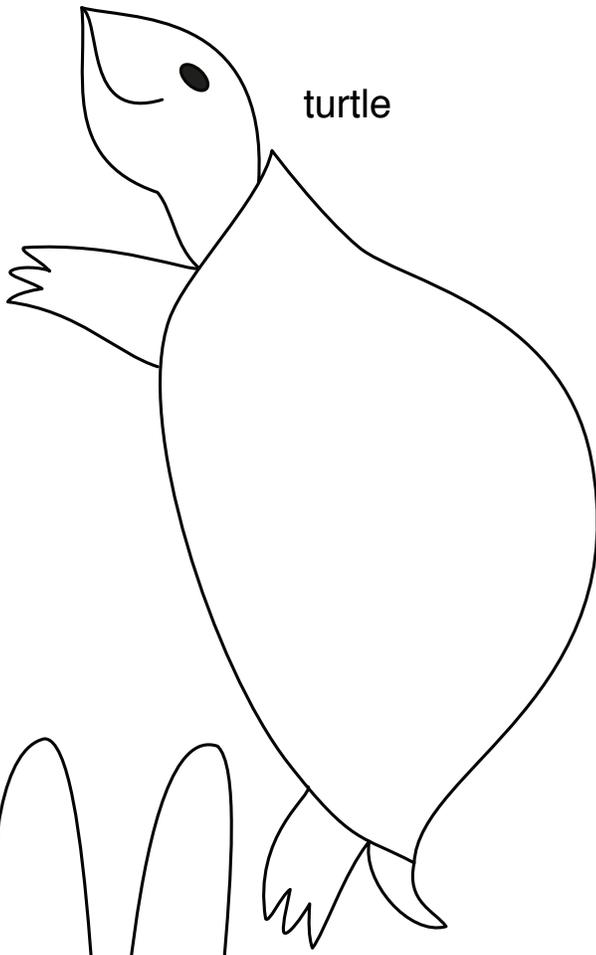


These figures were made of cotton fabric fused to interfacing (trace the patterns onto interfacing, then fuse, then cut). The bodies of the turtle and snail were cut from felt and fabric shells were glued on top of the felt. Details were added with permanent marker, and eyes were drawn onto white cloth, cut out, and glued on.

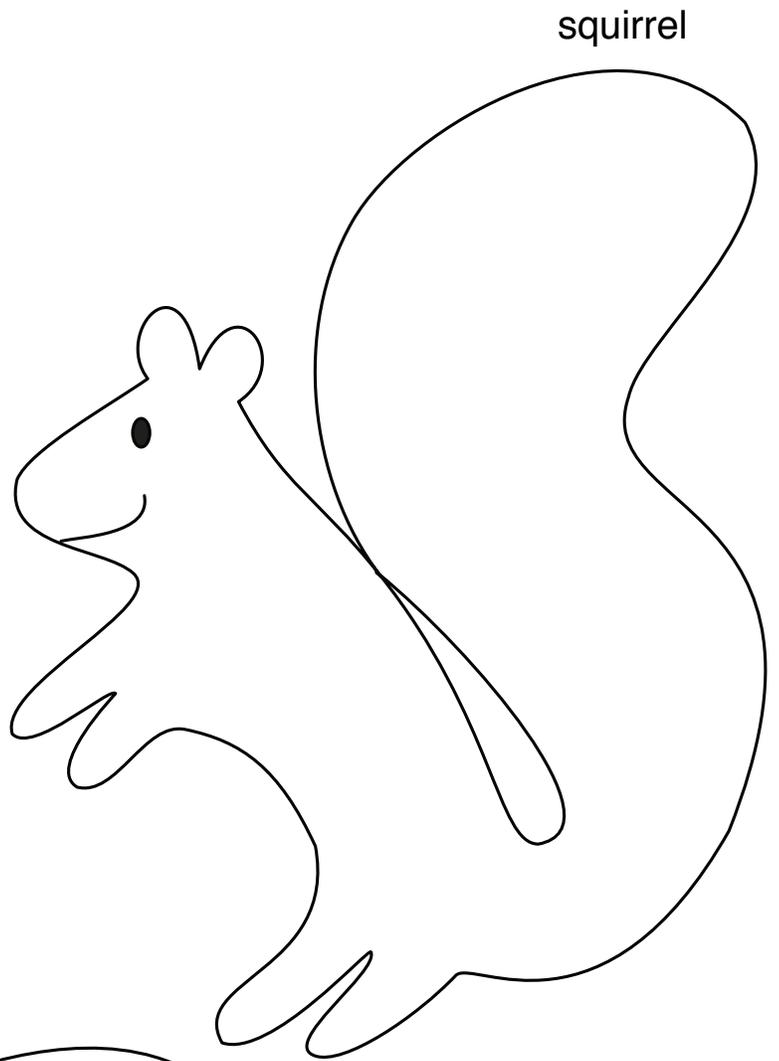
Set up the flannel board before the children see it. Use a hill shape of felt or fleece to hide the lower, orange part of the carrot plant. Pin the hill shape to the board at either side of the carrot, leaving just enough space to pull the carrot out of the ground at the end of the story.

As you tell the story, add the animals one at a time, to the right of the carrot. At first, place each one behind and a bit apart from the one before. Then, when it volunteers to help, move it so that it overlaps the previous figure, as if holding on and pulling. Mime pulling and motion children to join in.

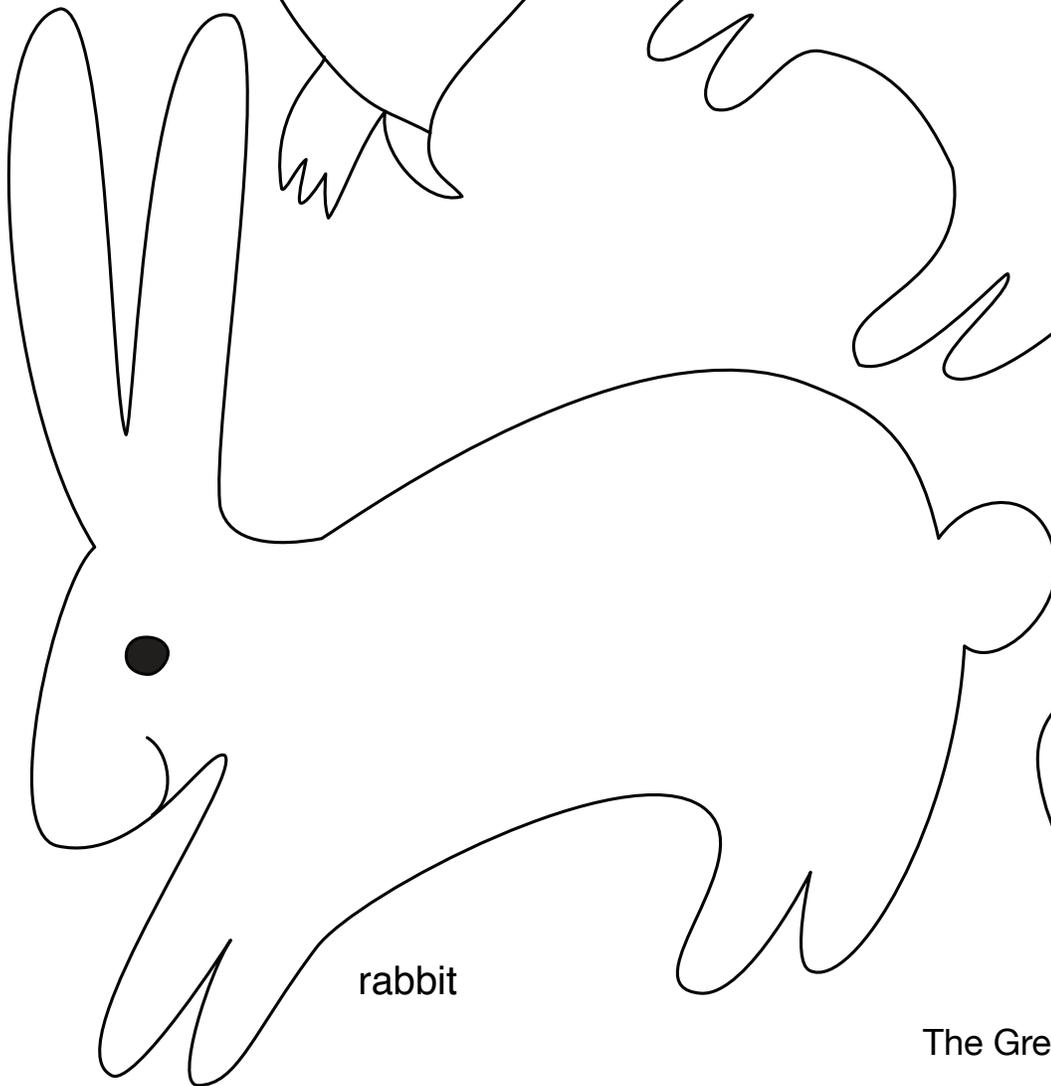
At the end of the story, pull the carrot from its hiding place and place it on the board. As you tell how the animals ate it, you can move each figure closer to the carrot and make eating sounds.



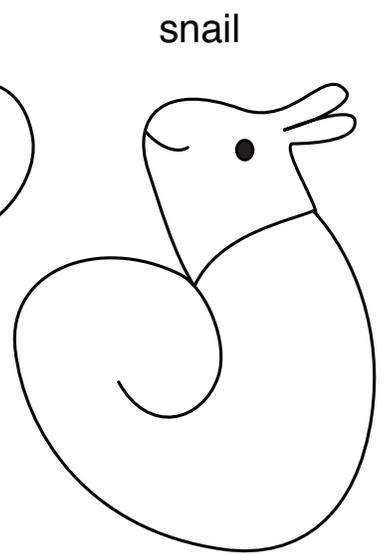
turtle



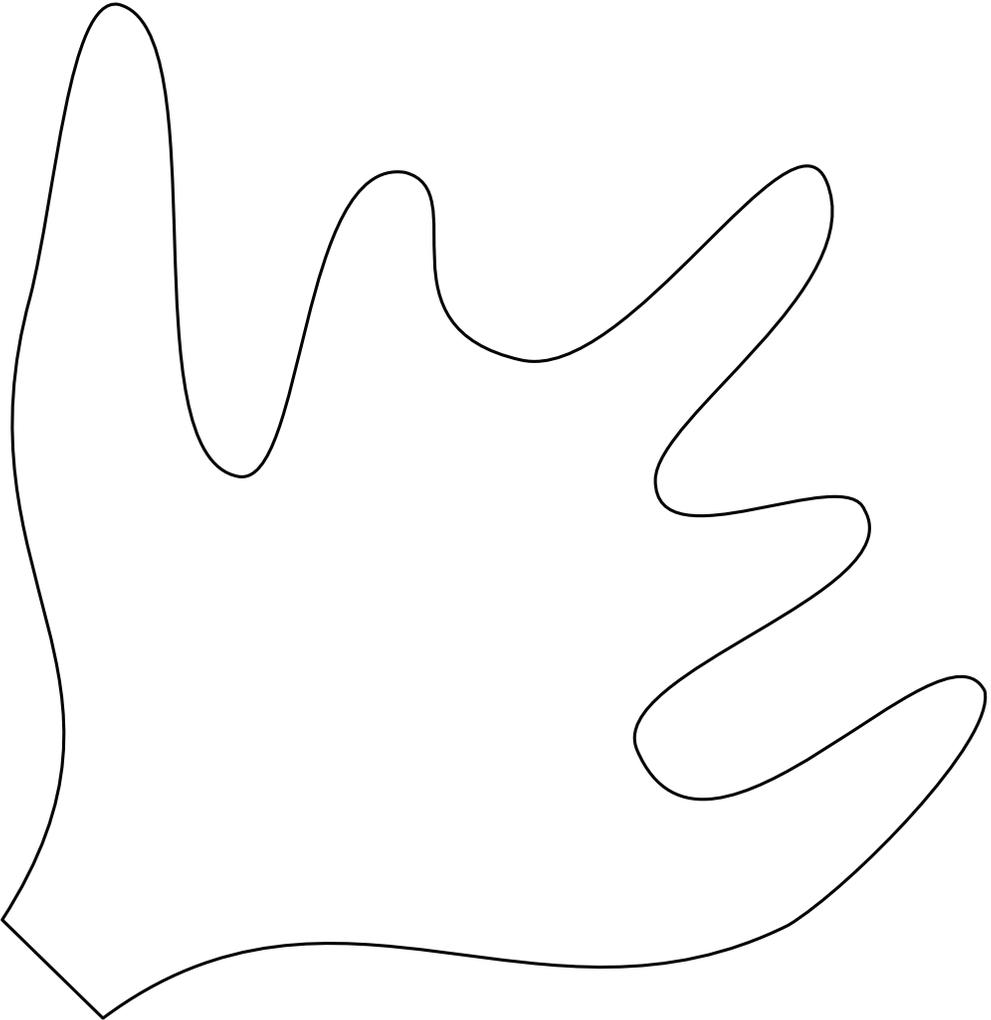
squirrel



rabbit

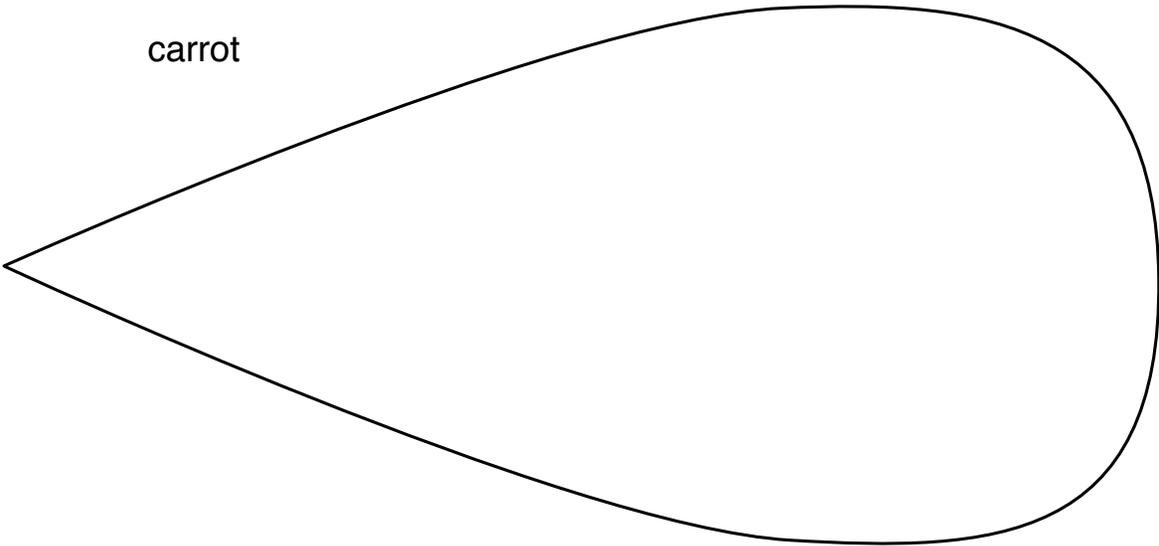


snail



carrot top

The image shows a simple black outline of a carrot top. It features a central stem that branches into several leaf-like shapes. The leaves are elongated and have rounded, slightly wavy tips. The overall shape is somewhat irregular and organic, typical of a carrot's foliage.



carrot

The image shows a simple black outline of a carrot. It is a classic teardrop shape, tapering to a point on the left side and curving smoothly to a rounded end on the right side. The outline is clean and minimalist, suitable for a flannel board.

## The Rooster and the Sun

Once upon a time there lived a rooster, and the rooster was so proud of his smooth, shiny feathers, his lovely orange feet, his big red comb and his bright yellow beak.

“How handsome I am,” said the rooster, and he crowed, *Cock-a-doodle-doo! Cock-a-doodle-doo! Cock-a-doodle-doo!*

Then one morning the rooster looked down and saw a tiny speck of dirt on his bright yellow beak. He tried to shake the dirt off, and he tried to scratch it off, but there it stayed.

Oh, no!” the rooster said. “I have a dirty beak. Now I am no longer handsome. What shall I do?”

Along came a cat.

“Please, cat,” said the rooster. “There is a speck of dirt on my bright yellow beak. Would you brush it off with your soft, soft paw?”

“No,” said the cat. “Why should I? What have you ever done for me?”

So the rooster went to see the dog and said, “Please, dog, bark at the cat. The cat won’t brush my beak with her soft, soft paw.”

“No,” said the dog. “Why should I? What have you ever done for me?”

So the rooster found some water, and he said, “Please, water, splash the dog. The dog won’t chase the cat, the cat won’t brush my beak with her soft, soft paw.”

“No,” said the water. “Why should I? What have you ever done for me?”

The rooster looked up in the sky and saw the sun.

“Please, sun, dry up this water. The water won’t splash the dog, the dog won’t chase the cat, the cat won’t brush my beak with her soft, soft paw.”

“Yes, I will,” said the sun, “but you must do something for me in return. Every morning, I want you to crow three times and wake me up.”

“I promise,” said the rooster.

Then the sun began to dry up the water, the water began to splash the dog, the dog began to bark at the cat, and the cat lifted her soft, soft paw and cleaned the rooster’s beak.

Once again, the rooster was handsome, and ever since that day, the rooster never forgets to wake up very early and crow three times:

*Cock-a-doodle-doo!*

*Cock-a-doodle-doo!*

*Cock-a-doodle-doo!*

And up comes the sun.



These figures are quick and easy to make. The rooster is felt collage on a base of dark pink felt. Ripples on the water were added with dimensional fabric paint. Lines on the sun were drawn with a fine point Sharpie marker. Eyes were drawn onto white fabric, cut out, and glued on.

Each new character is placed on the board until they form a circle. If you put the cat, dog, water and sun on the board just before you say its name, children are prompted to guess its name. As the story unwinds, remove each character:

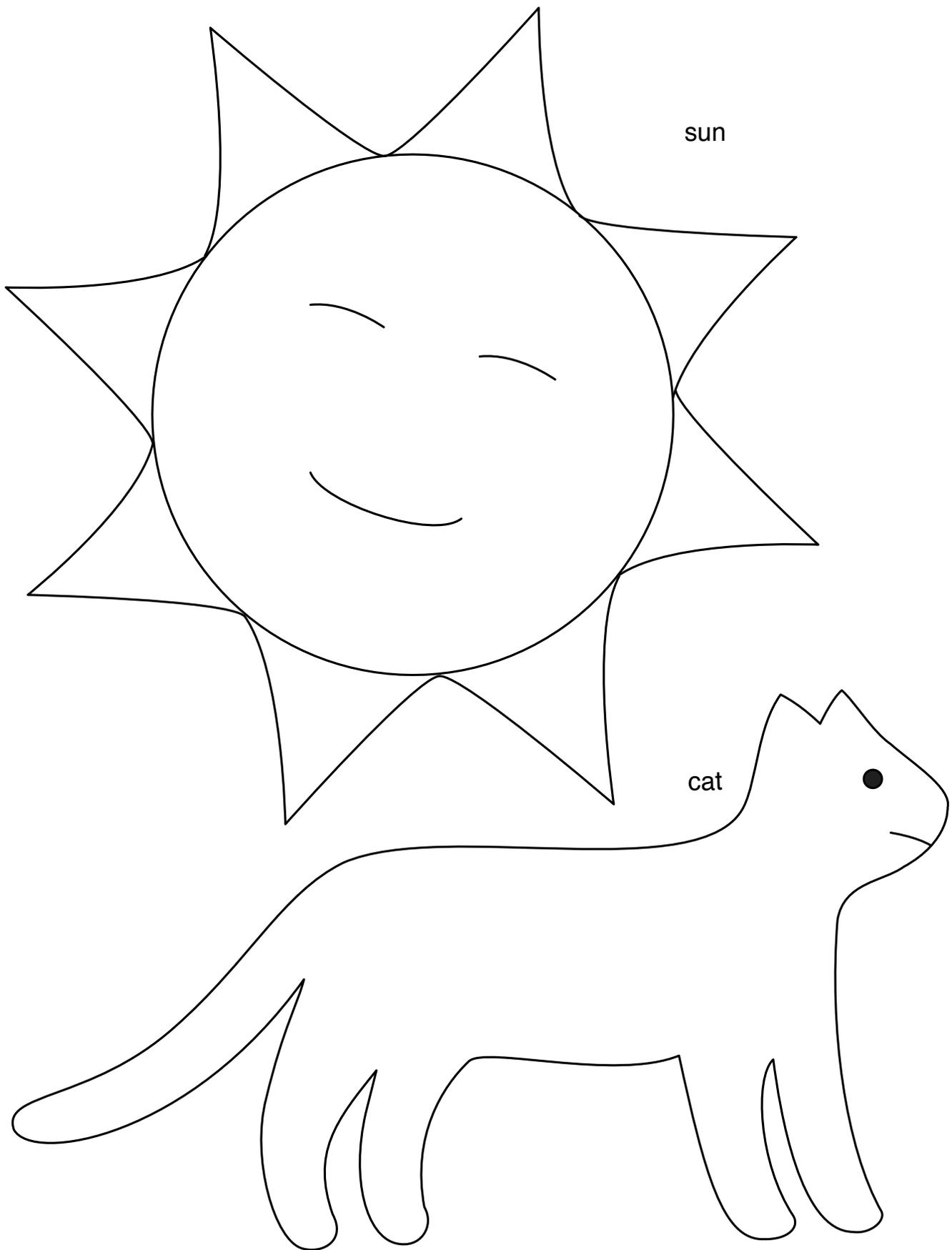
“The sun began to dry up the water” (remove sun)

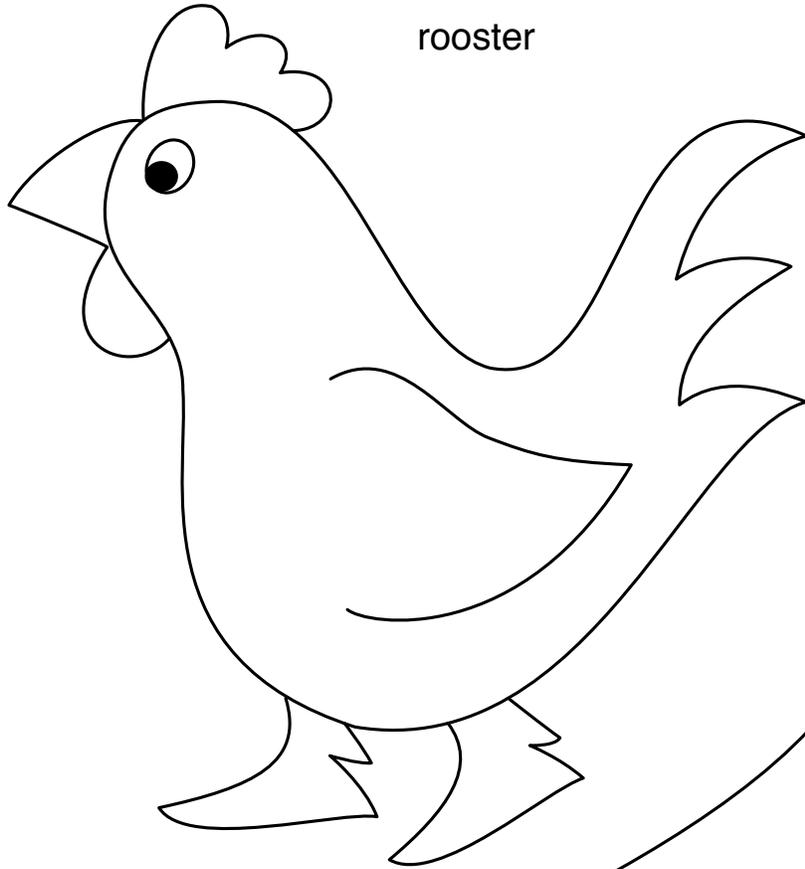
“The water began to splash the dog” (remove water)

“The dog began to bark at the cat” (remove dog)

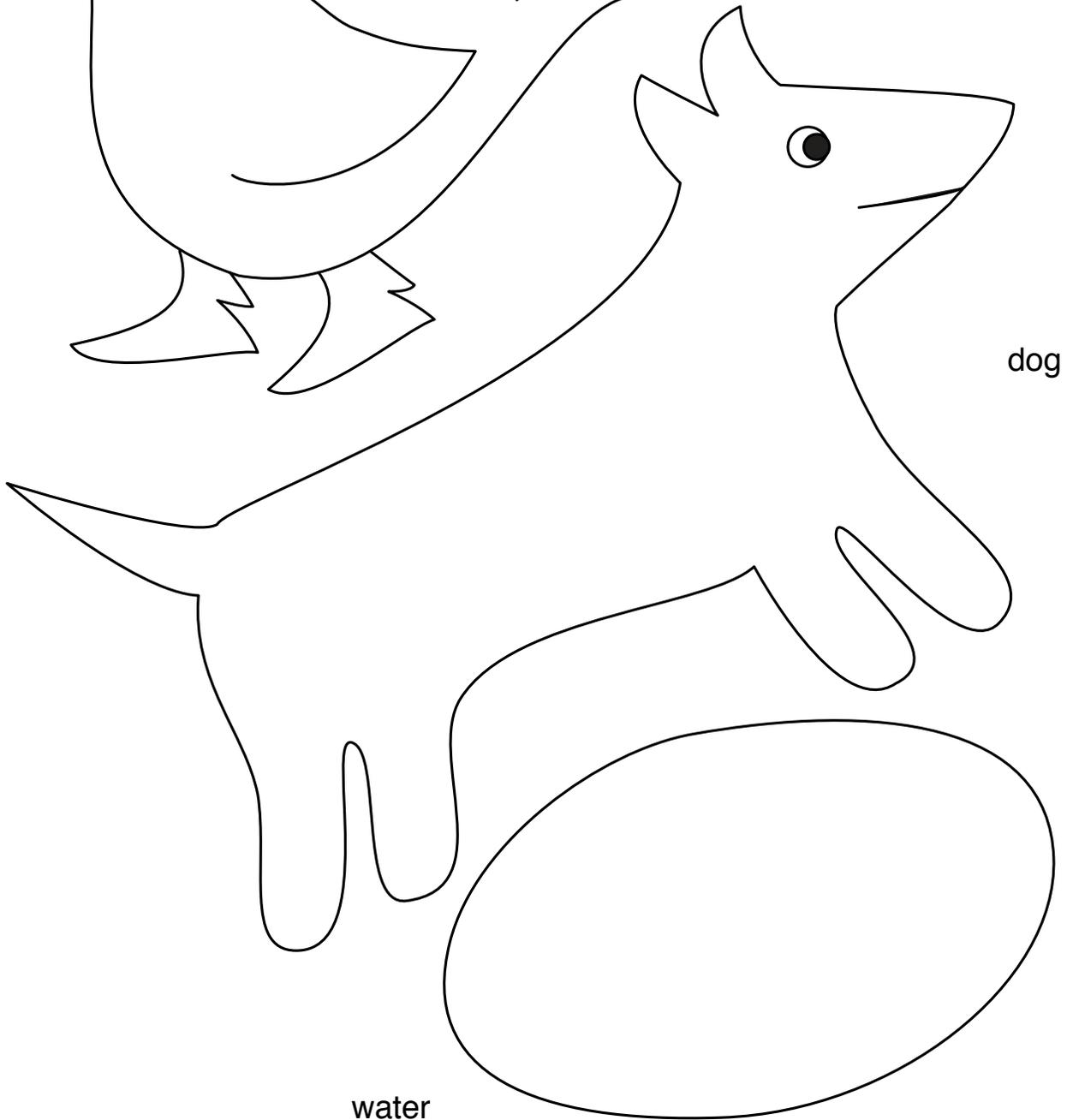
“The cat lifted her soft, soft paw . . . .” (remove cat)

After the rooster crows, replace the sun on the board.





rooster



dog

water

## The Three Pigs

Once upon a time there was a mother pig who had three little pigs. The little pigs were almost grown up, and their poor mother was nearly worn out with cooking for them and cleaning up after them, so she sent them to seek their fortunes in the wide world.

The first pig went out, and he hadn't gone far when he met a man carrying a load of straw.

"Please, sir, will you give me that straw to build a house?" asked the pig.

The man gave him some straw, and the little pig built a house with it.

Scarcely had the little pig moved in, though, when the wolf came along and knocked at that the door, saying, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

"No, no, not by the hair on my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in!" squealed the pig.

"Then I will huff, and I will puff, and I will blow your house in!"

So the wolf huffed, and he puffed, and he blew down the straw house, and that was the end of the first little pig.

The second little pig went out, and he hadn't got far before he met a man with a load of sticks.

"Please sir would you give me those sticks to build a house?" asked the second little pig.

The man gave him the sticks, and the little pig built a house with them.

Scarcely had the little pig moved in when the wolf came along and knocked at the door saying, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

"No, no, not by the hair on my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in!" squealed the pig.

"Then I will huff, and I will puff, and I will blow your house in!"

The wolf huffed, and he puffed, and he puffed, and he huffed, and he blew the house in, and that was the end of the second little pig.

The third little pig went out, and he hadn't gone far before he met a man with a load of bricks.

"Please, sir, will you give me those bricks to build a house?" asked the pig.

The man gave him the bricks, and the pig built a house.

No sooner had the pig moved in when the wolf came along and knocked at the door, saying, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

"No, no, not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in!" yelled the pig.

"Then I will huff, and I will puff, and I will blow your house in!"

The wolf huffed and he puffed, and he huffed and he puffed, and he puffed and he huffed, but he could not blow the brick house down.

"I know what I'll do," muttered the wolf. "I will climb up on the roof and go in through the chimney."

But the third little pig was watching and listening. He hurried to build a fire in the fireplace, and he put a big kettle of water on the fire, and when the wolf slid down the chimney he landed—*kerplunk!*—in the boiling water and that was the end of the big bad wolf.

***NOTE: There are several ways to tell this story. You may want to have the first two pigs escape the wolf, or have the third pig liberate his siblings from the wolf's belly at the end.***



This pig and wolf were made from heavyweight non-woven nonfusible interfacing and colored with Caran d’Ache Neocolor II artists’ crayons. The brick house is made of felt, with a glued-on felt roof. Black lines were drawn with a fine point Sharpie marker.

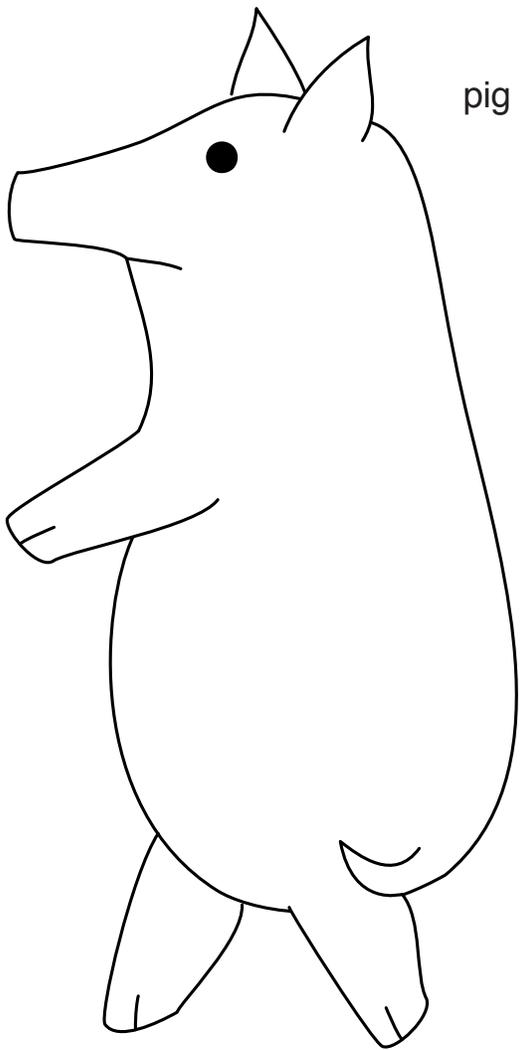
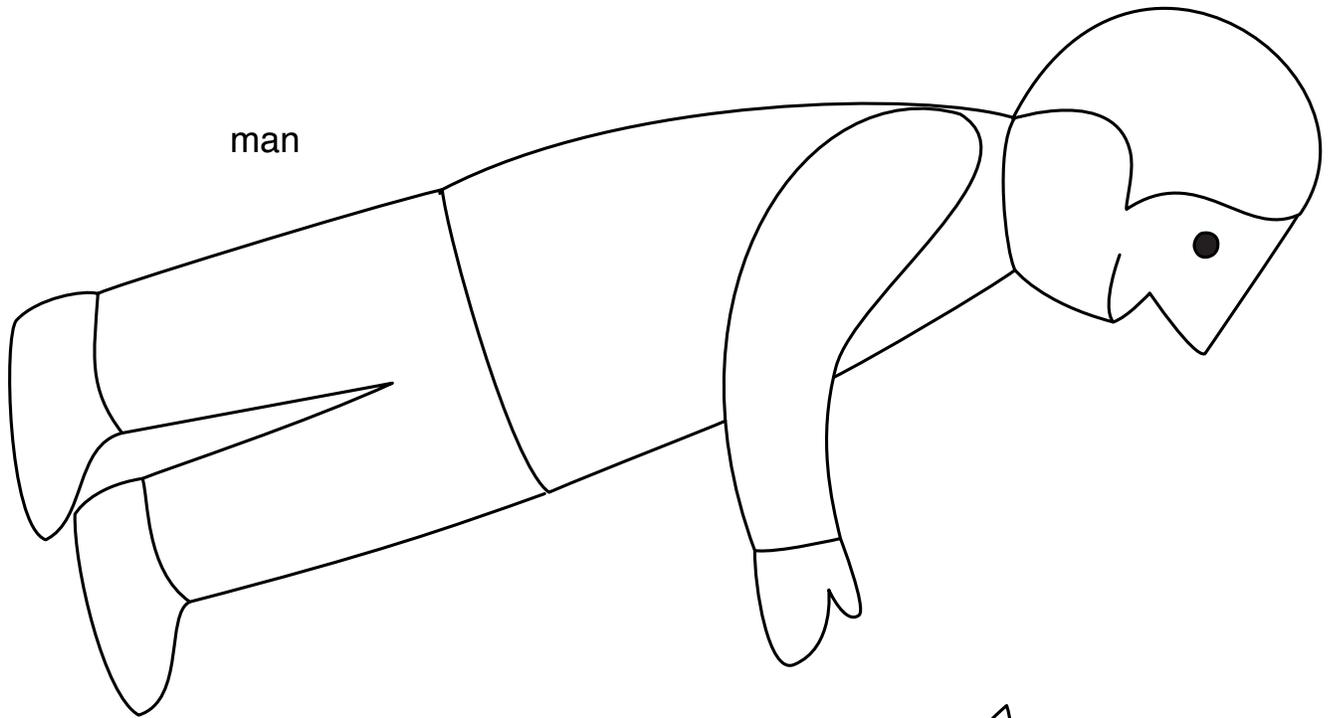
The pigs, wolf, and man can be made of hand-colored interfacing, felt, felt collage, or a combination of techniques. Cut simple houses of felt: yellow for the straw house, tan for the stick house, and red for the brick house. Make a separate roof piece for the brick house of a contrasting color of felt and glue it on. If you wish, you can decorate each house with marker or dimensional fabric paint. Cut out the windows.

As you begin, the flannel board should be empty (there is no figure for the mother pig). Place the first little pig on the board when you mention him in the story.

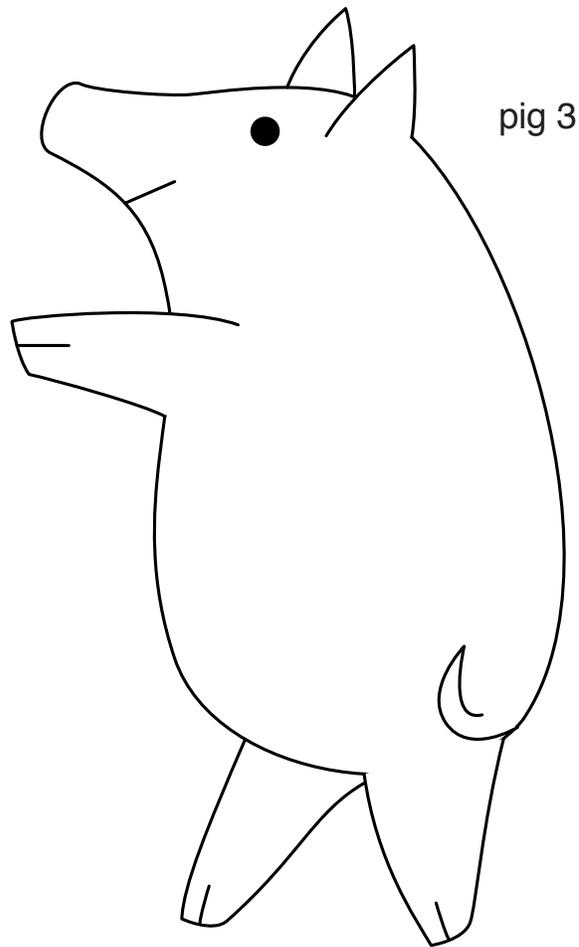
Here is a fast-action way to show the pigs building their houses. Roll or fold each house with the right side in. When you put the man on the board, hold the rolled or folded house on top of him, as if he is carrying a load of straw, sticks, or bricks. Remove the man from the board when the man gives the straw, sticks or bricks to the pig, then unroll the house on top of that pig so that his head shows through the cut-out window. This will take a bit of practice, but it should make children laugh to see a house unroll like a window shade.

When the wolf blows down the first two pigs' houses, quickly lift both the house and the pig off the flannel board and place them out of sight. Likewise, whisk the wolf off the board when he goes down the chimney of the house of the third pig.

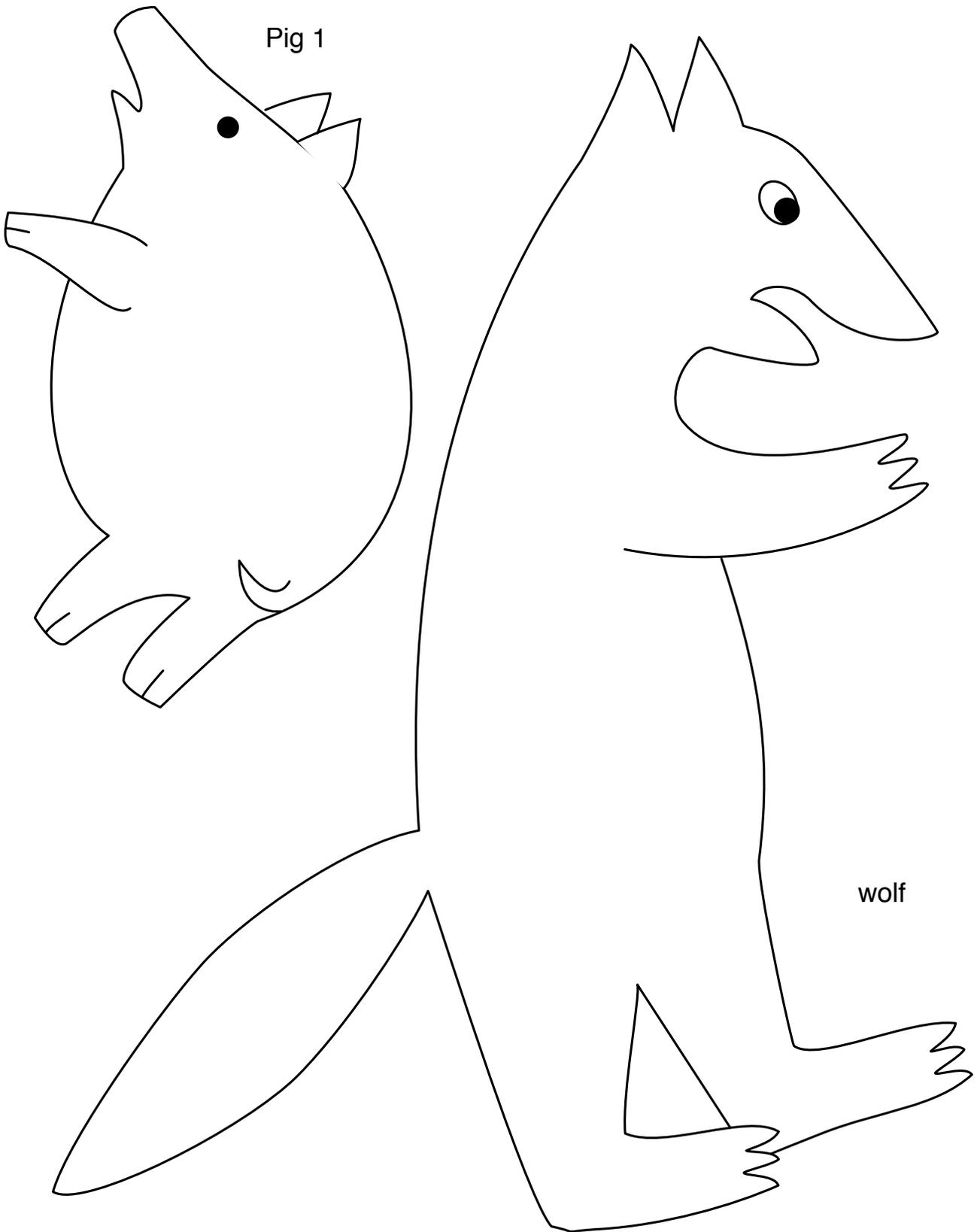
Children love joining in, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in!" and, "Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin," They also like to help with the wolf's huffing and puffing.



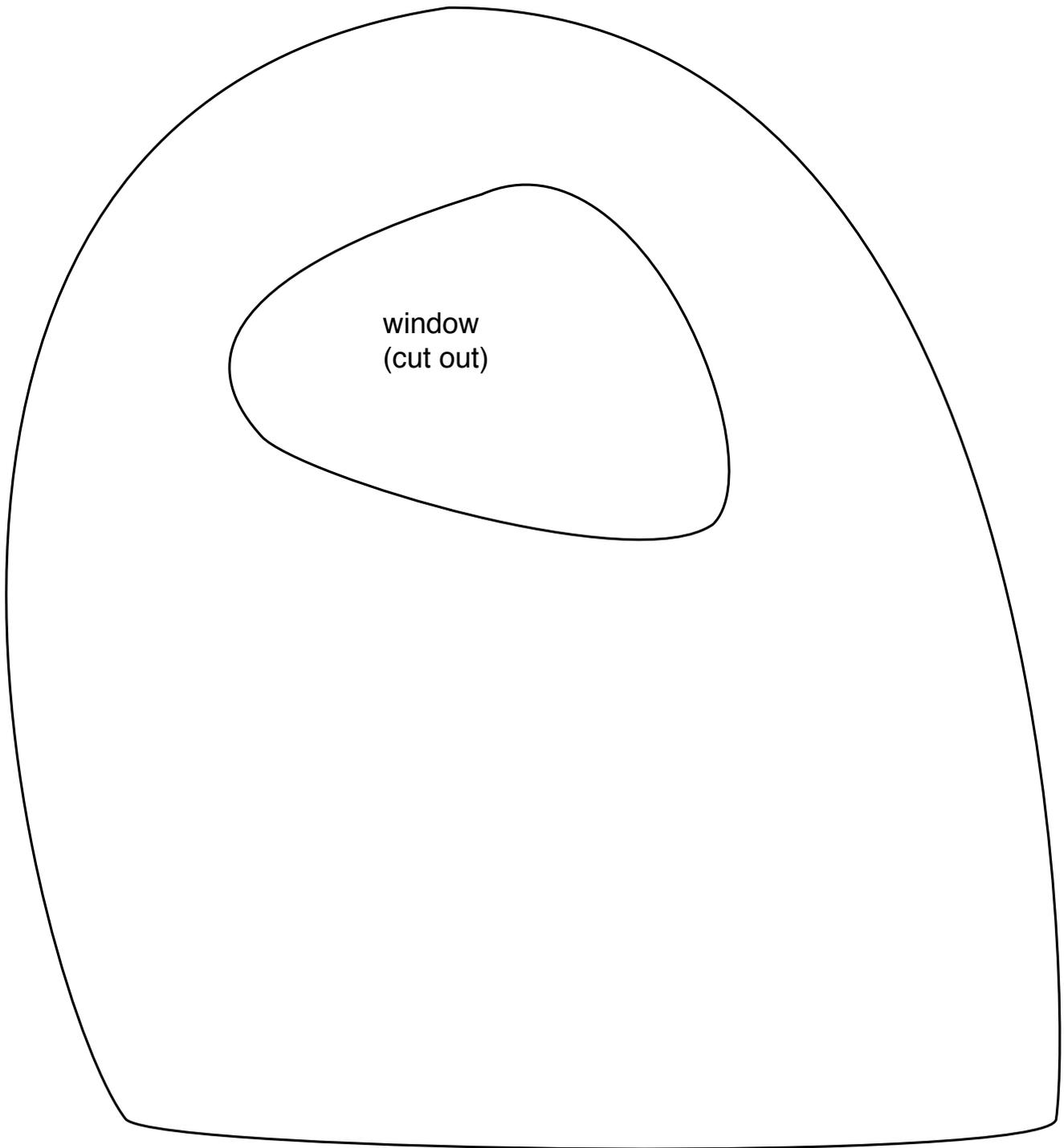
pig 2



pig 3



straw house  
stick house



brick house

