

Busy Things

Getting ready to start school - A note for grown-ups

Starting school is a **big step** – for children and their grown-ups! This pack is here to help you feel more confident, more prepared – and even a little excited – with simple, playful activities to dip into over the summer. Little and often works best!

What to focus on this summer:



Self-care skills

Getting dressed, using the toilet, washing hands – these are big wins for building independence.



Name recognition

Your child will need to spot their name on trays, pegs, and clothes. It's also a great first step into letter learning.



Listening and taking turns

Good listening makes a big difference – whether it's following instructions or learning new phonics sounds.



Fine motor skills

Activities like threading, drawing or building with blocks will help to develop the muscles needed to hold a pencil.



Early number sense and literacy

Simple counting, spotting numbers, singing rhymes and recognising letters all lay strong foundations for learning.



Building curiosity!

The more curious and engaged they feel, the more they'll enjoy school. Encourage them to explore, create, ask questions and experiment!



Feeling confident and involved

Let your child help choose their uniform and pick their water bottle. Read books about starting school and practise their route to school - knowing what to expect really helps.



Explore fun, educational games together for FREE!

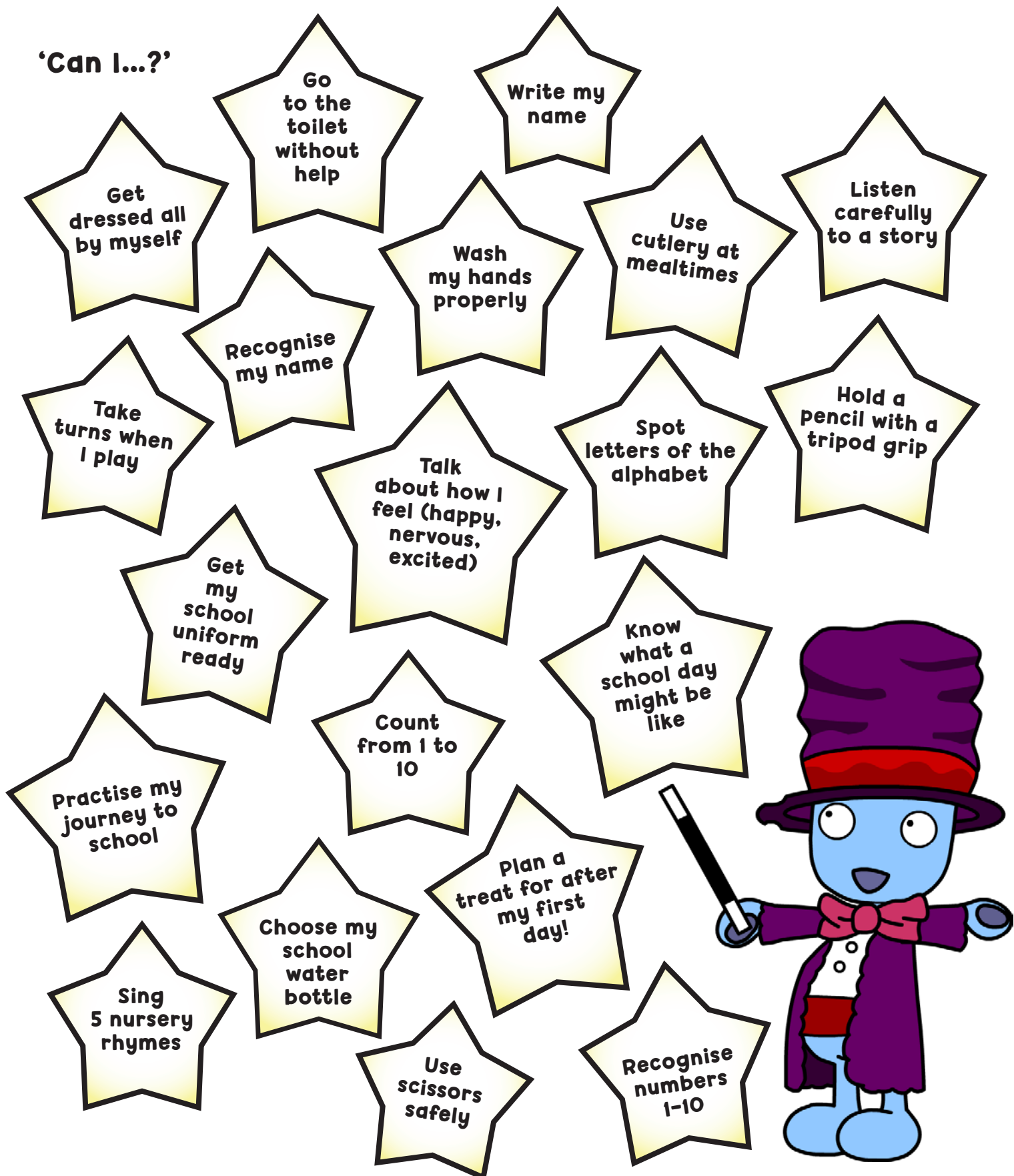
Log into Busy Things' starting school guest account free this summer to start learning through play! **Find your login details on the back page.**



My starting school progress chart

Here's a checklist of things to try before September – colour them in as you achieve them. Some skills might come easily; others might take a bit of practice. So, pop it on the fridge, keep having a go and celebrate each little win along the way!

'Can I...?'



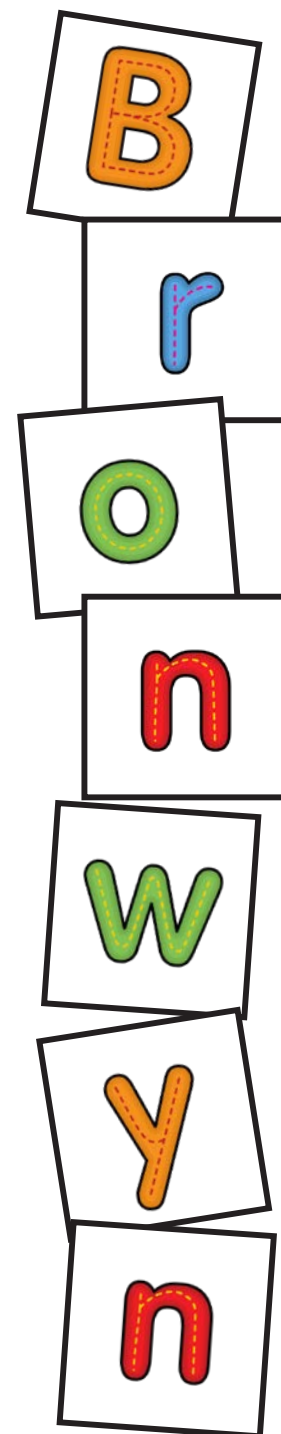
Busy Things

Let's get to know the letters in their name!

Your child's name is the perfect starting point for learning letters and sounds. Cut out the alphabet tiles on the next pages to play and practise together.

Things to try with your alphabet tiles:

- 1 Build their name**
Find the letters in their name and help them line them up in the right order. Say each one aloud together.
- 2 Jumble & rebuild**
Mix up the letters — can they put them back in the right order again? Try it fast! Try it backwards!
- 3 Make a name plaque**
Stick the letters onto a piece of paper and let your child decorate it with colour, drawings or stickers to hang on their bedroom door.
- 4 Go on a letter hunt**
Hide the letter tiles around the room. Ask your child to find all the ones in their name and build it.
- 5 Try writing their name**
Use the dotted lines to help them practise forming each letter. Get them to try copying it freehand onto paper too.
- 6 Find and make other words with the letters**
As you play, talk about the sounds each letter makes. Can they think of other words that start the same way? *"D for dog!" "M for Mummy!"*



Try Busy Things name tracing game!

Scan the QR code to use our **free starting school guest account** this summer. Find your login details on the back page.



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Busy Things

Getting to know numbers

You're not expected to know any maths before school, but getting familiar with numbers now can make a big difference come September. That "Hey, I know that!" moment will give your child a real confidence boost in the classroom.

Recognising and counting numbers

On the next pages, you'll find number tiles from 1–10. Just get familiar with them! **Cut the numbers out** and try these:

1. Use them as flashcards – "What number is this?"
2. Mix them up and put them back in order.
3. Match them to toys (e.g. put the number 4 next to four toy cars).
4. Count out the numbers using the dots, then fingers, bricks or snacks!
5. Stick them on the stairs and count as you go.
6. Have a go at writing the numbers using the dotted line guides, then try freehand.

What is subitising?

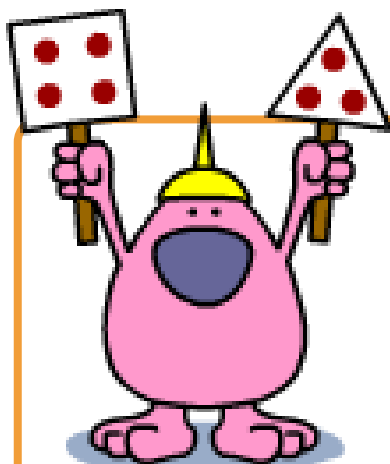
Subitising is just a fancy word for recognising **how many things there are without counting**.

It's a skill that builds with practice. Think about when you roll a dice and instantly know it's a 6 - you don't have to count the dots, you just know. That's subitising!

Now have a go...

1. Try the **subitising sheets** in this pack.
2. Roll a dice and quickly shout out the number.
3. Line up snacks, toys or anything and seeing if they can 'see' how many.
4. Play games like **Quantity Street** on Busy Things.

Just a few minutes of playful practice now and then will really help!



Want more number fun?

Busy Things is full of early maths games that help children learn by playing. **Log into the guest account to try them all free!** Find your login details on the back page.

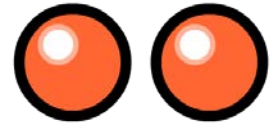


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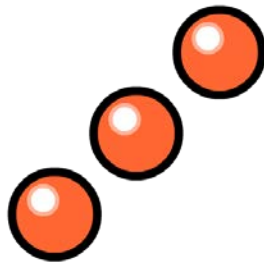
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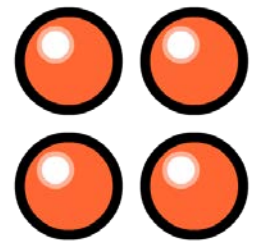
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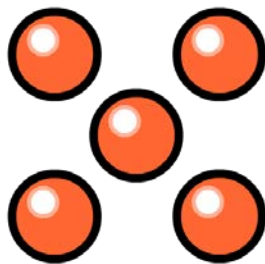
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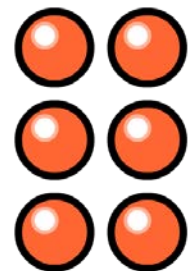
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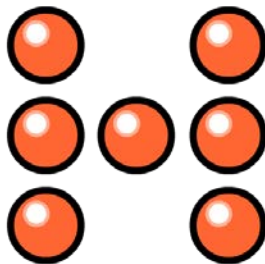
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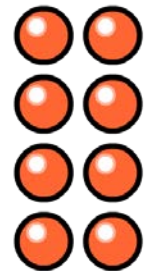
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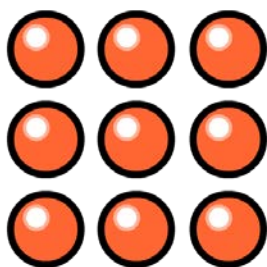
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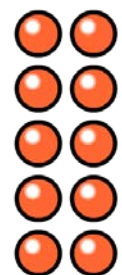
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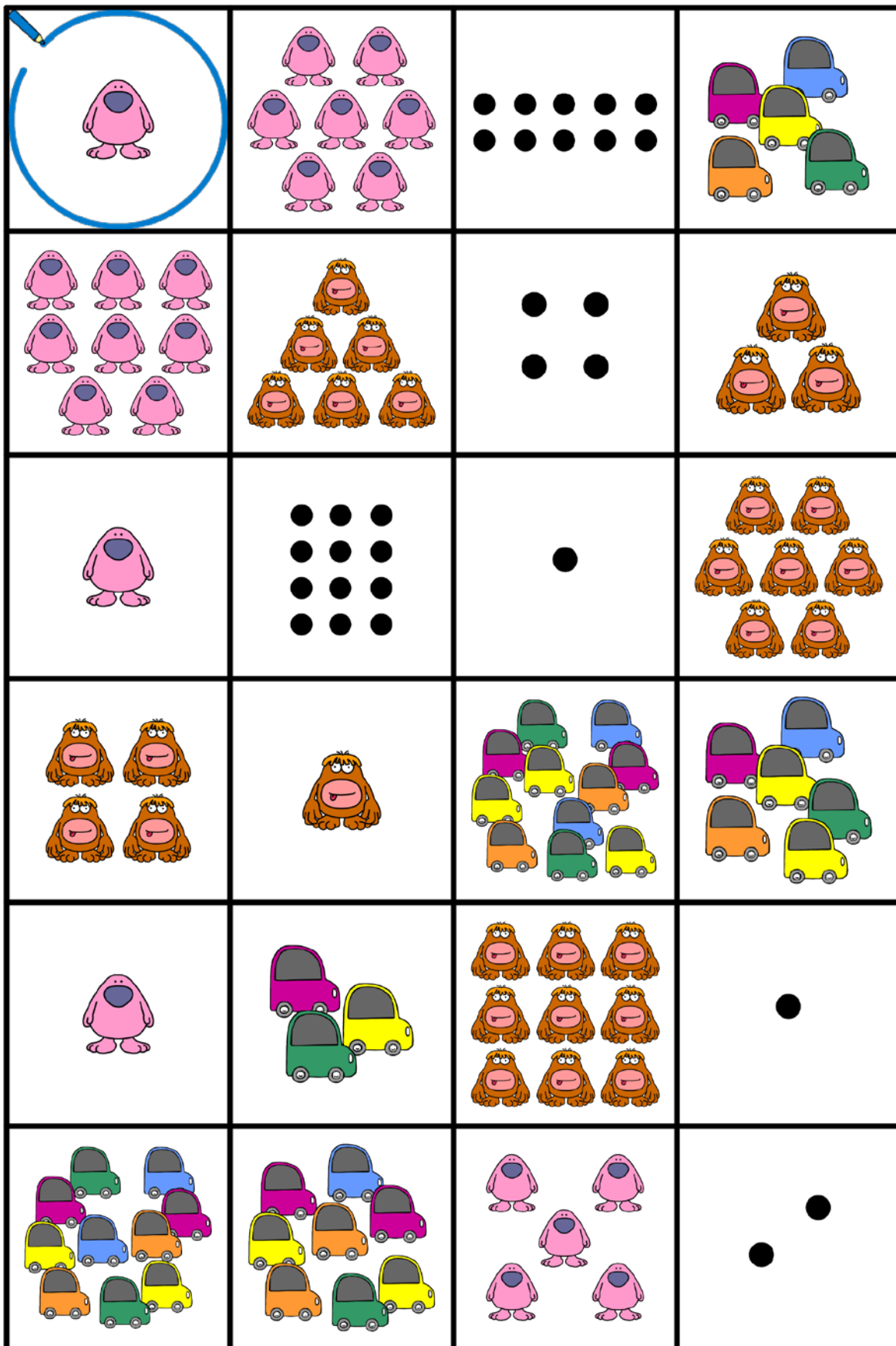


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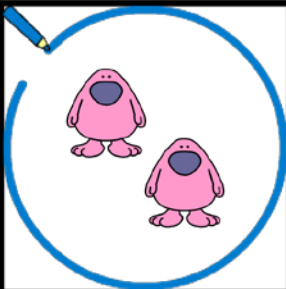
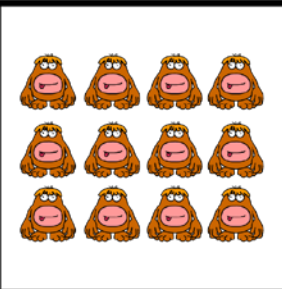


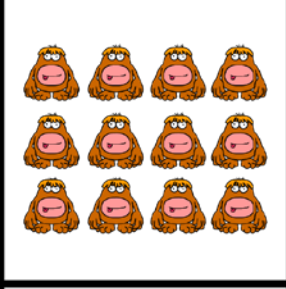
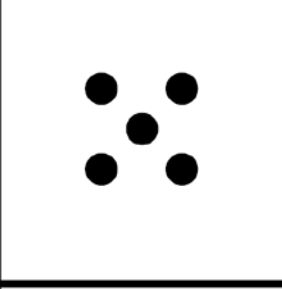


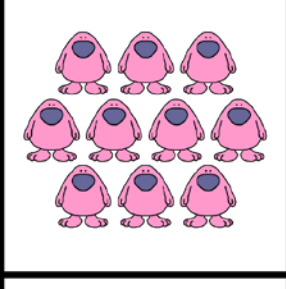
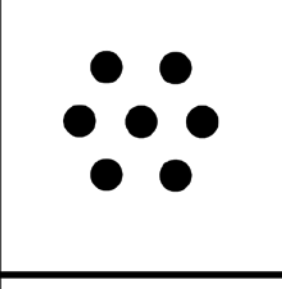
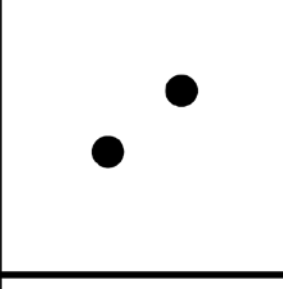
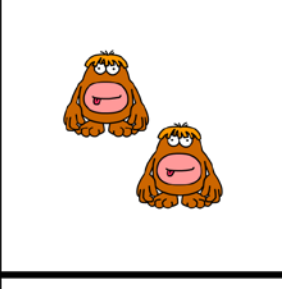
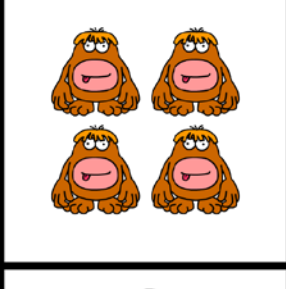
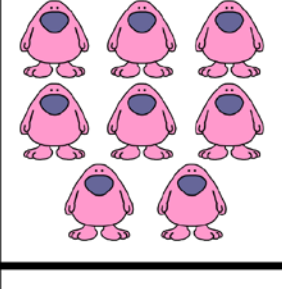
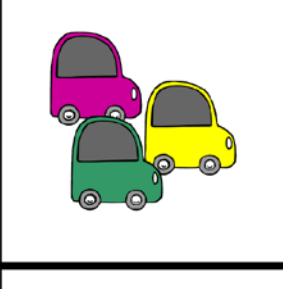
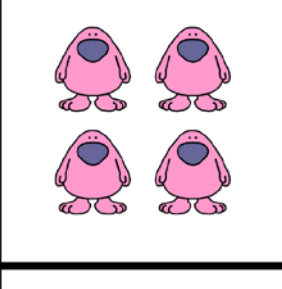
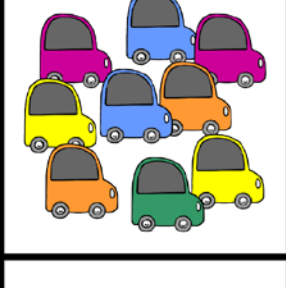
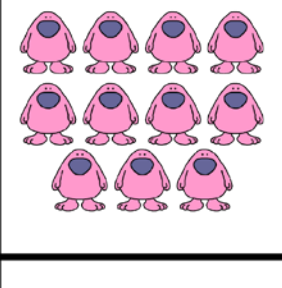
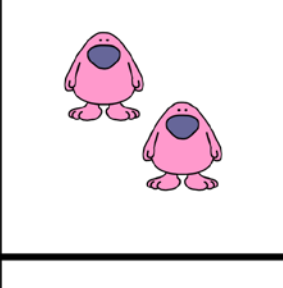
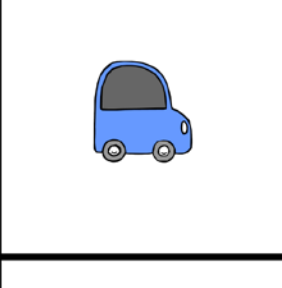
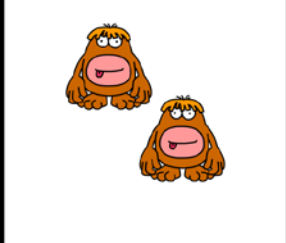
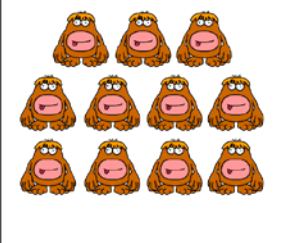
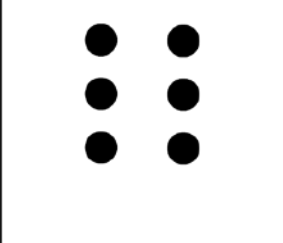

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Find all the ones.



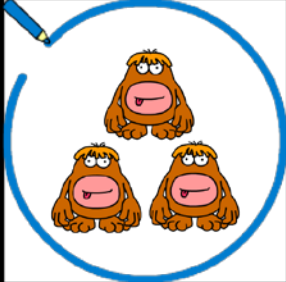

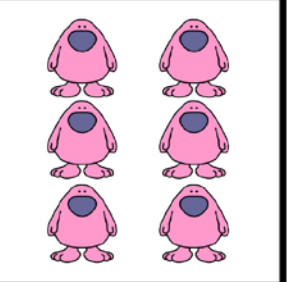


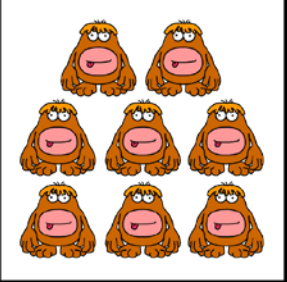
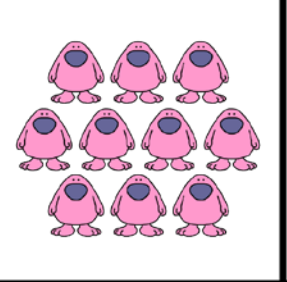
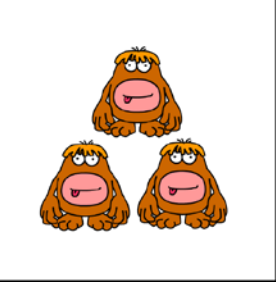

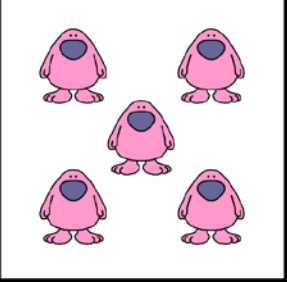
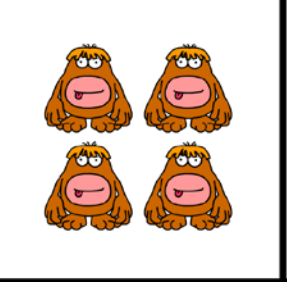
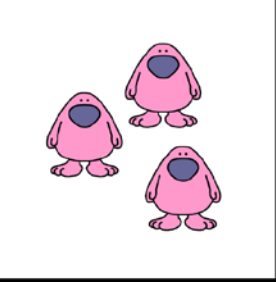
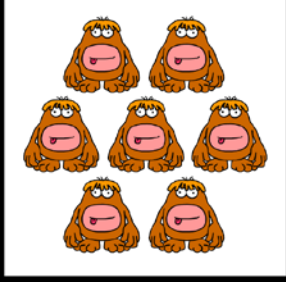
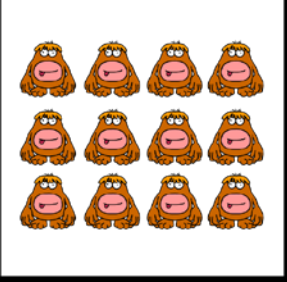
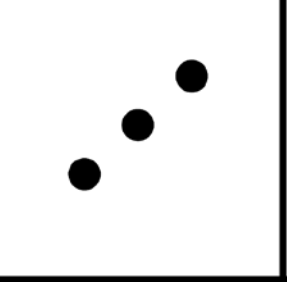

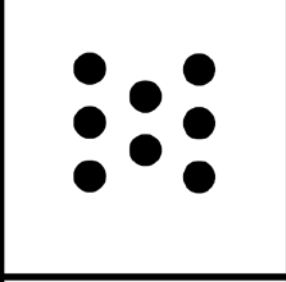
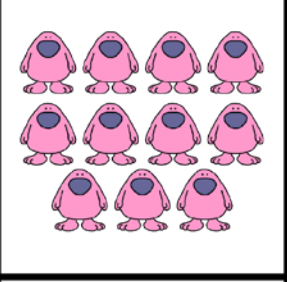

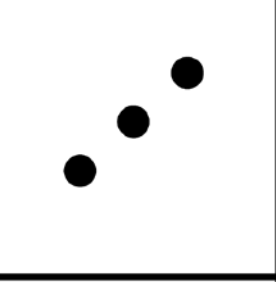




Busy Things

Find all the twos.

Busy Things

Find all the threes.

Busy Things

Find all the fours.

Busy Things

Find all the fives.

Busy Things

It's story time (with a twist...)!

Can your children listen and follow instructions? Let's see!

How to play:

Before you read the story below, teach children what to do each time they hear these words:

Elephant Stomp your feet and trumpet like an elephant.

Jump Do a big jump on the spot.

Splash Pretend to splash with your hands.

Sleep Lay your head on your hands and snore, loudly!

Roar Do your best lion roar! (with hands as paws).

"Ellie the Elephant's Busy Day"

Once upon a time in the jungle, there lived a young **elephant** named Ellie. Ellie the **elephant** loved three things: **jump-ing**, **splash-ing**, and **sleep-ing**!

One morning, Ellie woke up with a **sleep-y** yawn. She rubbed her eyes and gave a little **roar**—not because she was scary, just because she liked the sound!

After her stretch, the **elephant** did a big **jump** out of bed! Then she ran to the river and made the biggest **SPLASH** you've ever seen. "Wheee!" shouted the **elephant**, **splash-ing** everyone nearby.

Suddenly, she heard a **roar** behind her! Was it a lion? No, it was just her friend Gertrude giraffe, pretending again.

"Let's play!" said Gertrude. So the **elephant** and the giraffe played "**jump**, **splash**, and **roar**" all morning long.

After a while, Ellie felt **sleep-y** again. She lay under a tree, curled her trunk, and fell fast **a-sleep**. But just then - **SPLASH!** A cheeky monkey had dropped a coconut in the water! Ellie woke up, did a **roar**, then a big **jump**, and then... another enormous **splash!**

At the end of the day, the tired little **elephant** climbed into her bed, gave one last **jump** onto her pillow... and went back to **sleep**.

THE END.

Follow-up listening activity ideas:

1. **What did Ellie love doing?** (Let children recall: Jumping, splashing, sleeping.)
2. **What happened in the story?** (See if children can retell it.)
3. **Who did Ellie meet?** (Talk about the character Gertrude giraffe and the monkey.)
4. **Make up your own version** (What would you do if you were an elephant? What if Ellie met a crocodile or a real lion?)



Want more storytelling fun?

Busy Things includes lots of traditional tale activities! **Login to the guest account to try them all free!**

Find your login details on the back page.



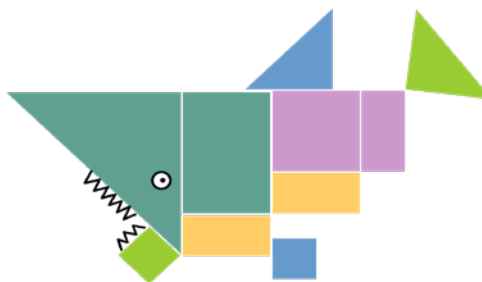
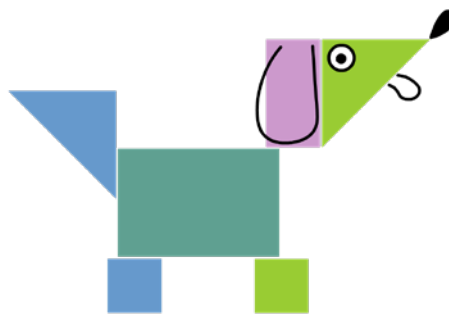
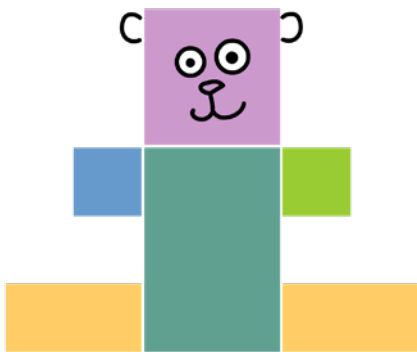
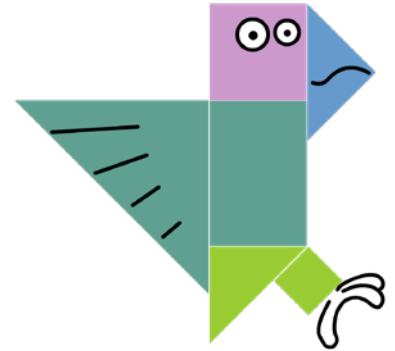
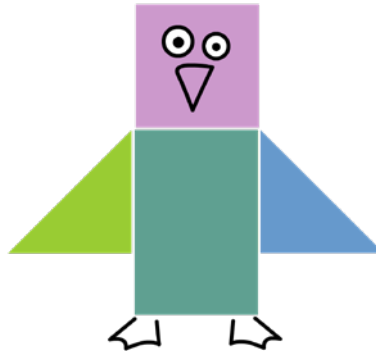
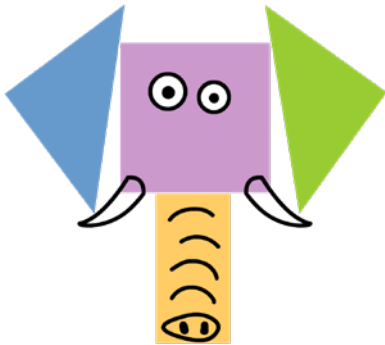
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Shape challenge!

This activity packs in a lot of learning! Recognising shapes, problem solving and creativity.

Use the shape tiles on the next page to build the creatures below. Can your child spot which shapes go where?

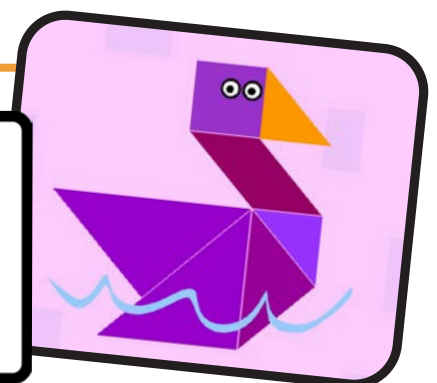
Can your child name each of the shapes?
Ask them to describe the shapes – pointy? straight?
Count how many sides they have.



Can you create your own creature?

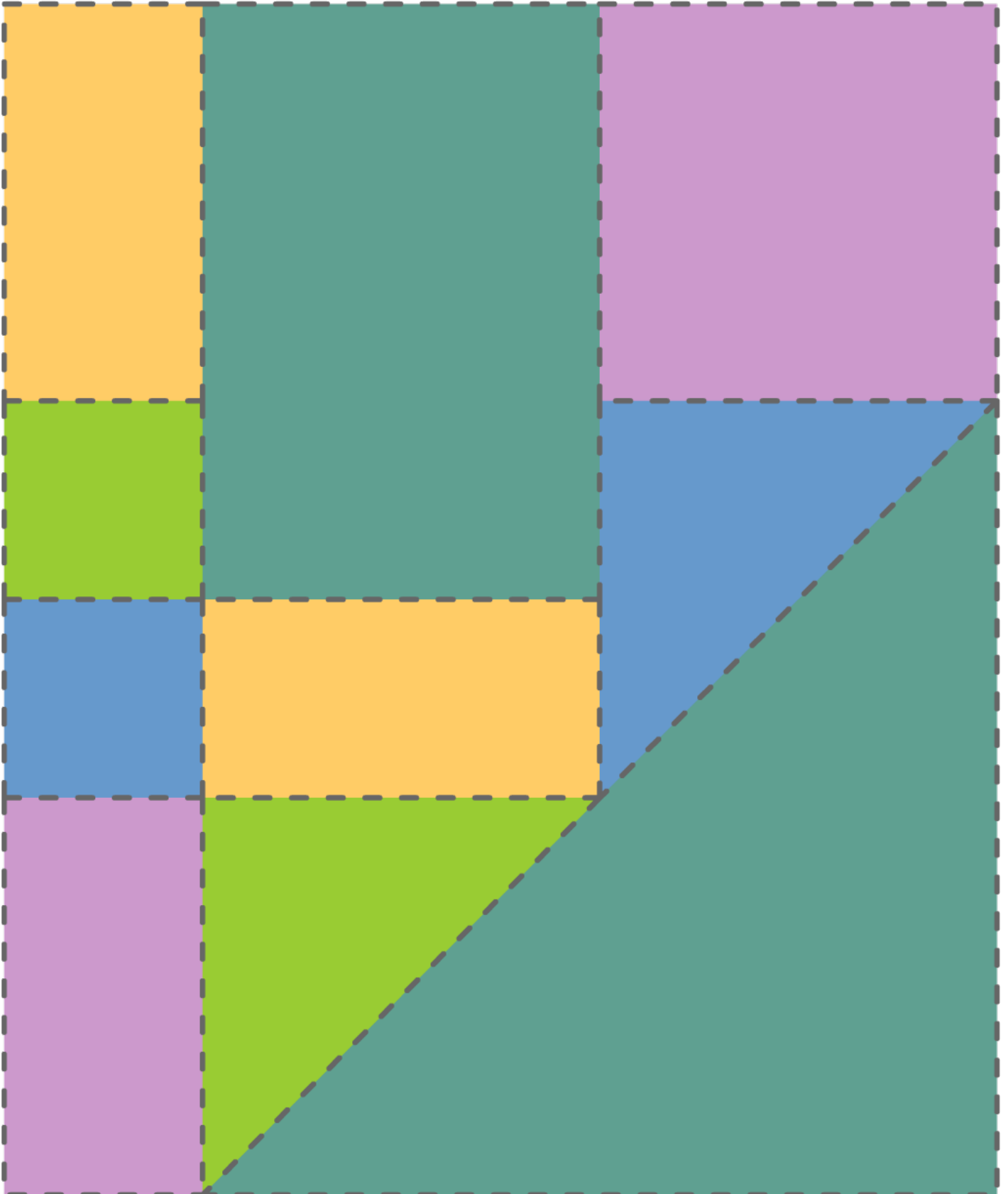
Want to watch shapes come to life?

Play **Shape up!** Or **Tangranimals** on Busy Things. Scan the QR code to use our **free guest account** this summer. Find your login details on the back page.



Shape challenge!

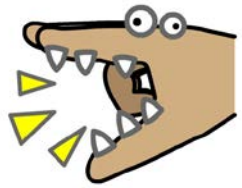
Cut out the shapes, and try to make the creatures on the previous page with your child. Can they name the shapes?



Busy Things

Pencil grip: Let's get ready to write!

A good pencil grip helps children write with ease and comfort - something they'll be doing lots of at school! The tripod grip is the one to aim for. So, try the **Crocodile Snap, Flick and Rest!**



1 Show me your crocodile! Curl the back fingers under. Use the first and middle finger as the top jaw and eye, and the thumb as the bottom jaw. Snap snap!



2 Lay the pencil flat on the table, with the writing end pointing towards your child.



3 Time to snap! Pinch the tip of the pencil with the crocodile's jaws (thumb and first finger).



4 "Now... flick it up!" - flip the back of the pencil up so it rests on the web between thumb and finger.

5 That's heavy work! Now bring the middle finger underneath to act like a comfy seat to rest.

Done! This is the tripod grip.



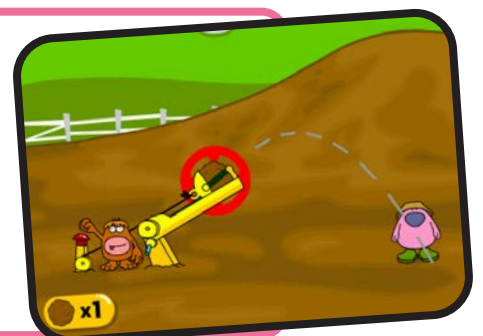
Top tip: Build those hand muscles!

To get a great pencil grip, children need strong hands and fingers. Try these fun activities to build grip strength:

1. Pick up peas with tweezers.
2. Thread beads or pasta onto string.
3. Build something tricky with Lego.
4. Squeeze playdough into shapes.
5. Use clothes pegs to pick up pom-poms.
6. Draw on a vertical surface (like a chalkboard or easel).

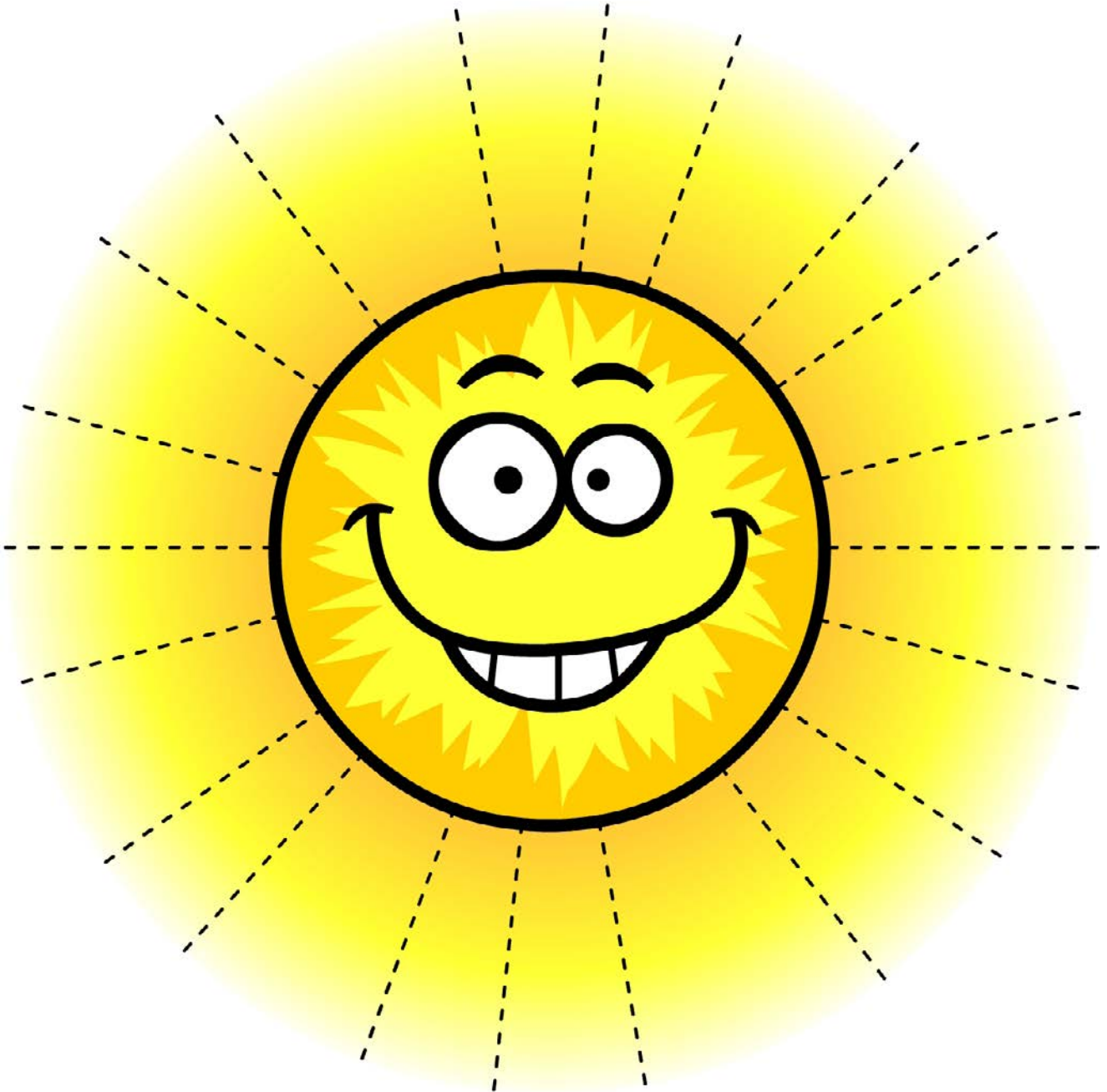
Practise fine-motor skills with **Mudball Shootout** on a tablet!

Scan the QR code to use our **free guest account** this summer. Find your login details on the back page.



Scissor skills: Snip, snip, snip!

Cutting helps children build hand strength, focus and control. Have a go at cutting along the dotted lines to bring the pictures to life!



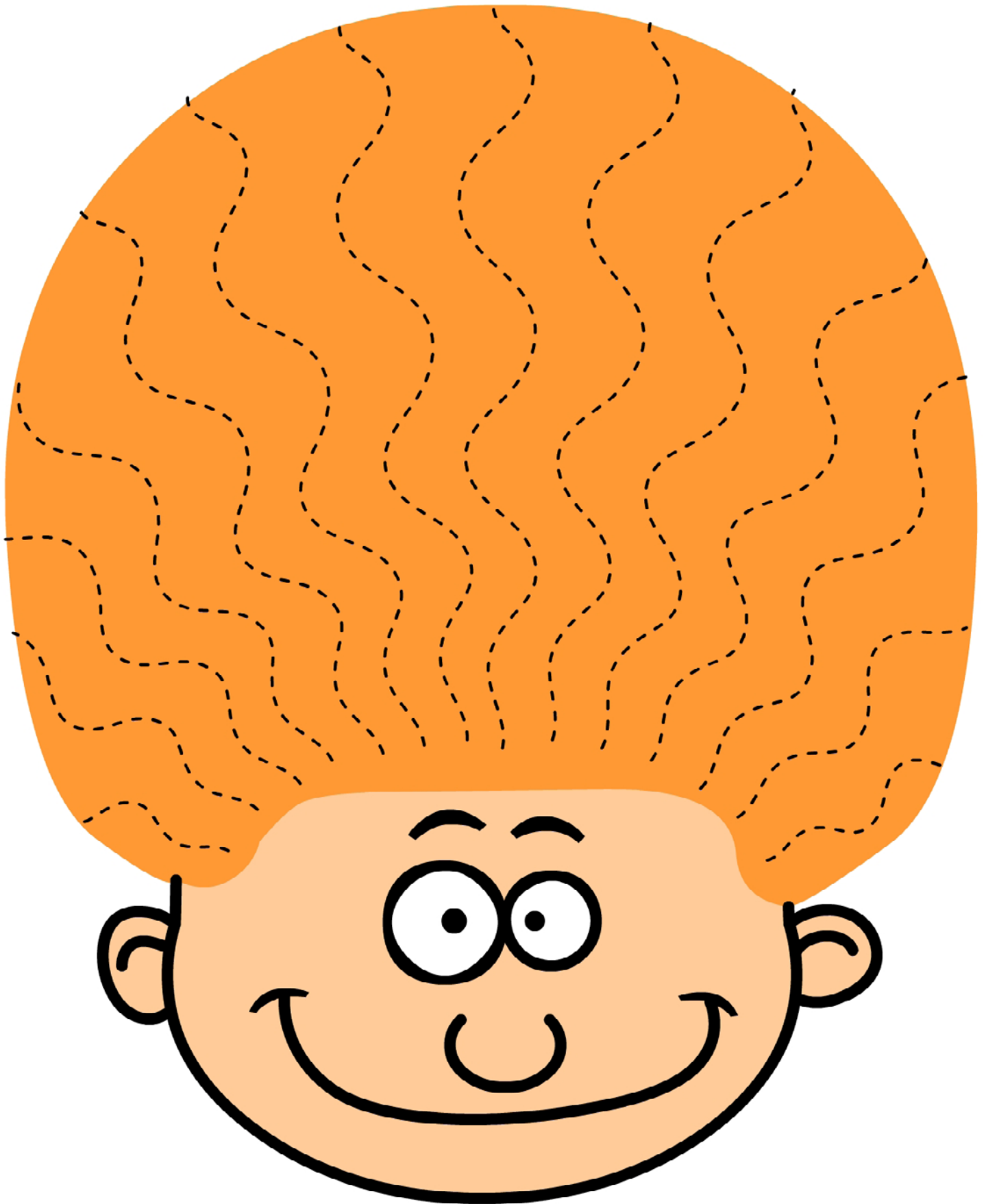
More cutting practice

Busy Things has loads of printable activities to keep practising with those scissors! [Log into the free guest account](#). Details on the back page.



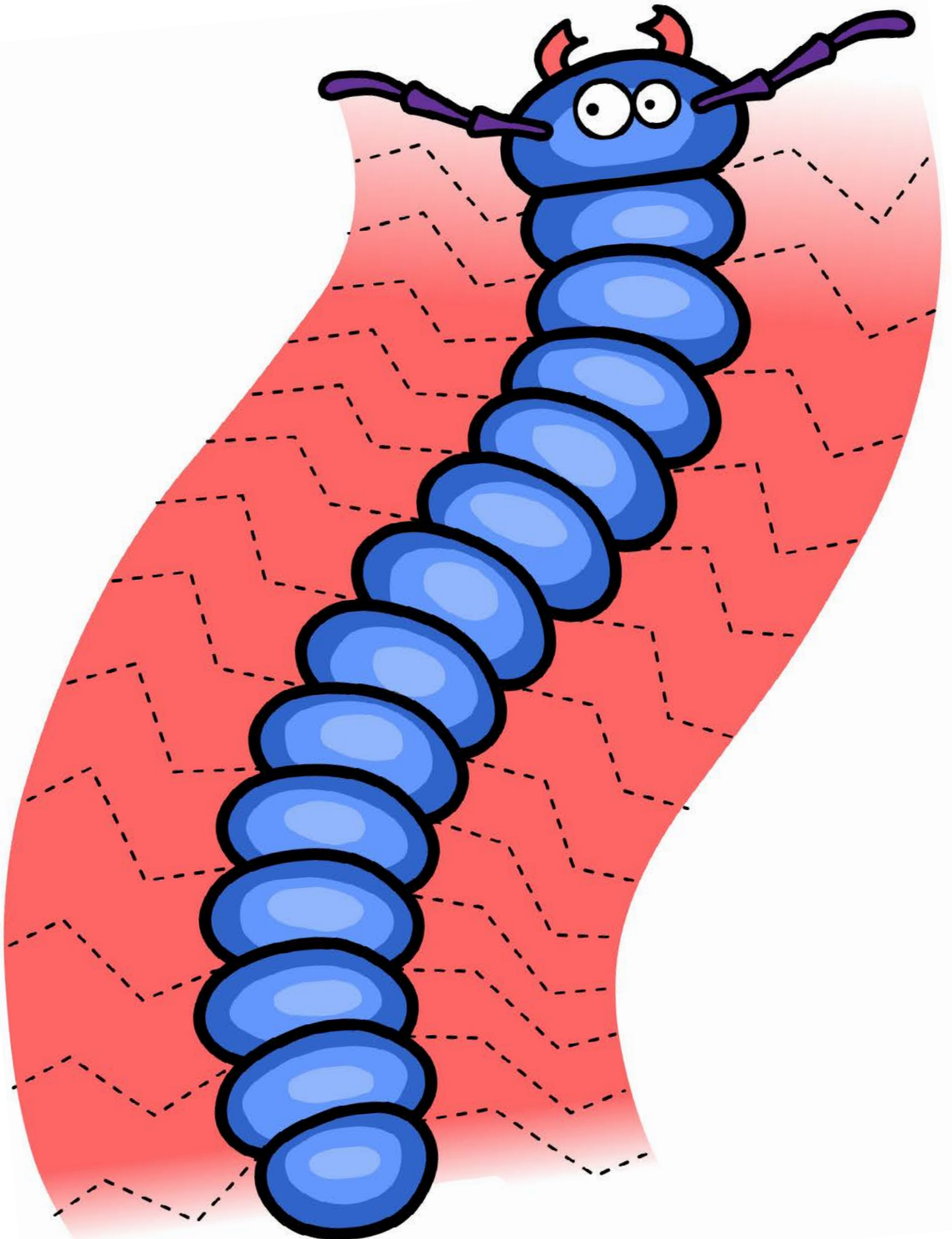
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Scissor skills: Snip, snip, snip!



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Scissor skills: Snip, snip, snip!



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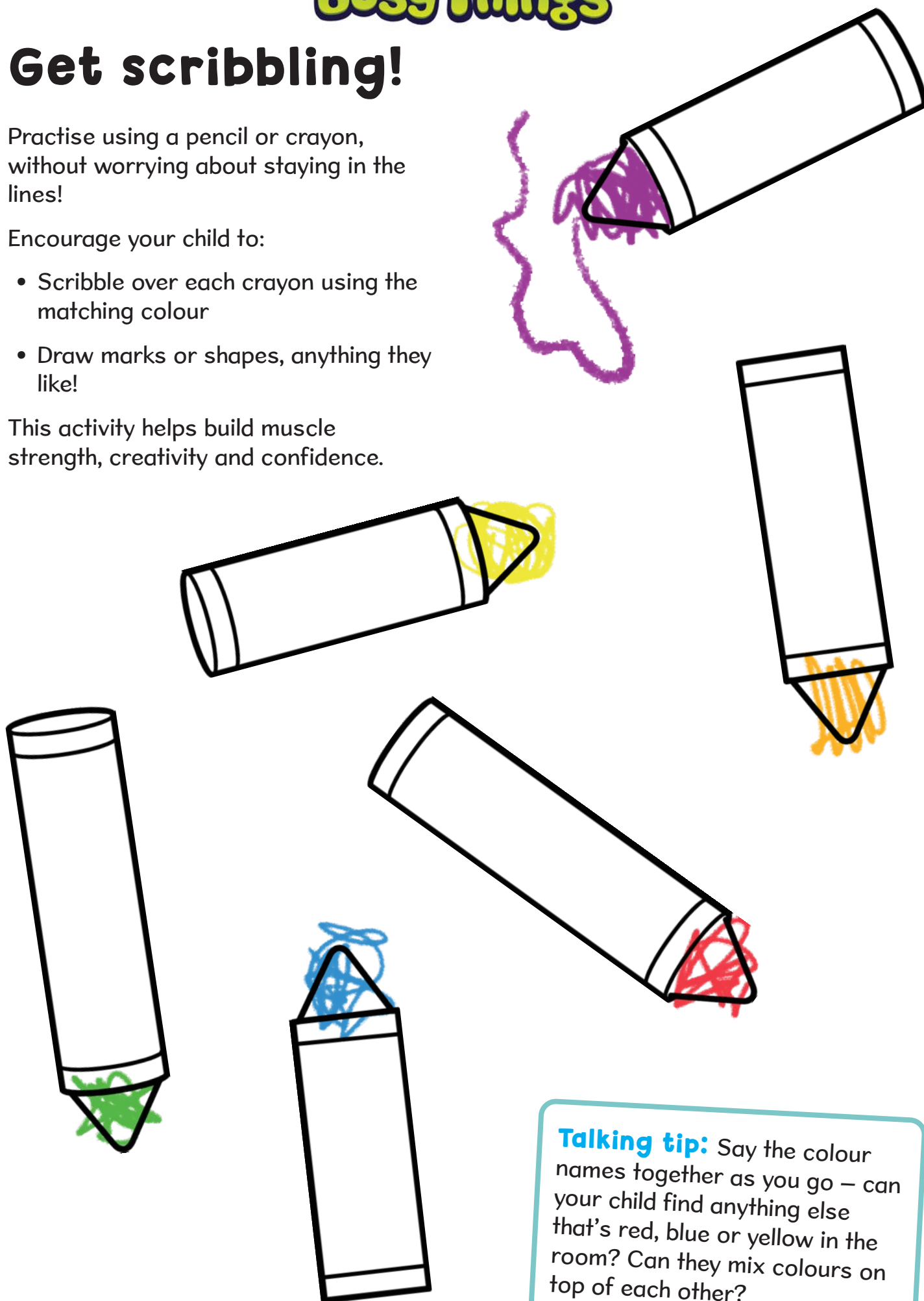
Get scribbling!

Practise using a pencil or crayon, without worrying about staying in the lines!

Encourage your child to:

- Scribble over each crayon using the matching colour
- Draw marks or shapes, anything they like!

This activity helps build muscle strength, creativity and confidence.



Talking tip: Say the colour names together as you go – can your child find anything else that's red, blue or yellow in the room? Can they mix colours on top of each other?

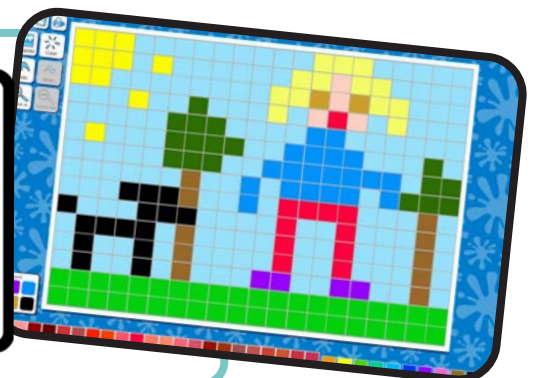
Advanced colouring

Here's one for practice keeping within the lines.



Play colouring games!

Busy Things includes lots of colouring fun! **Log into the guest account to try them all free!** Find your login details on the back page.



Busy Things

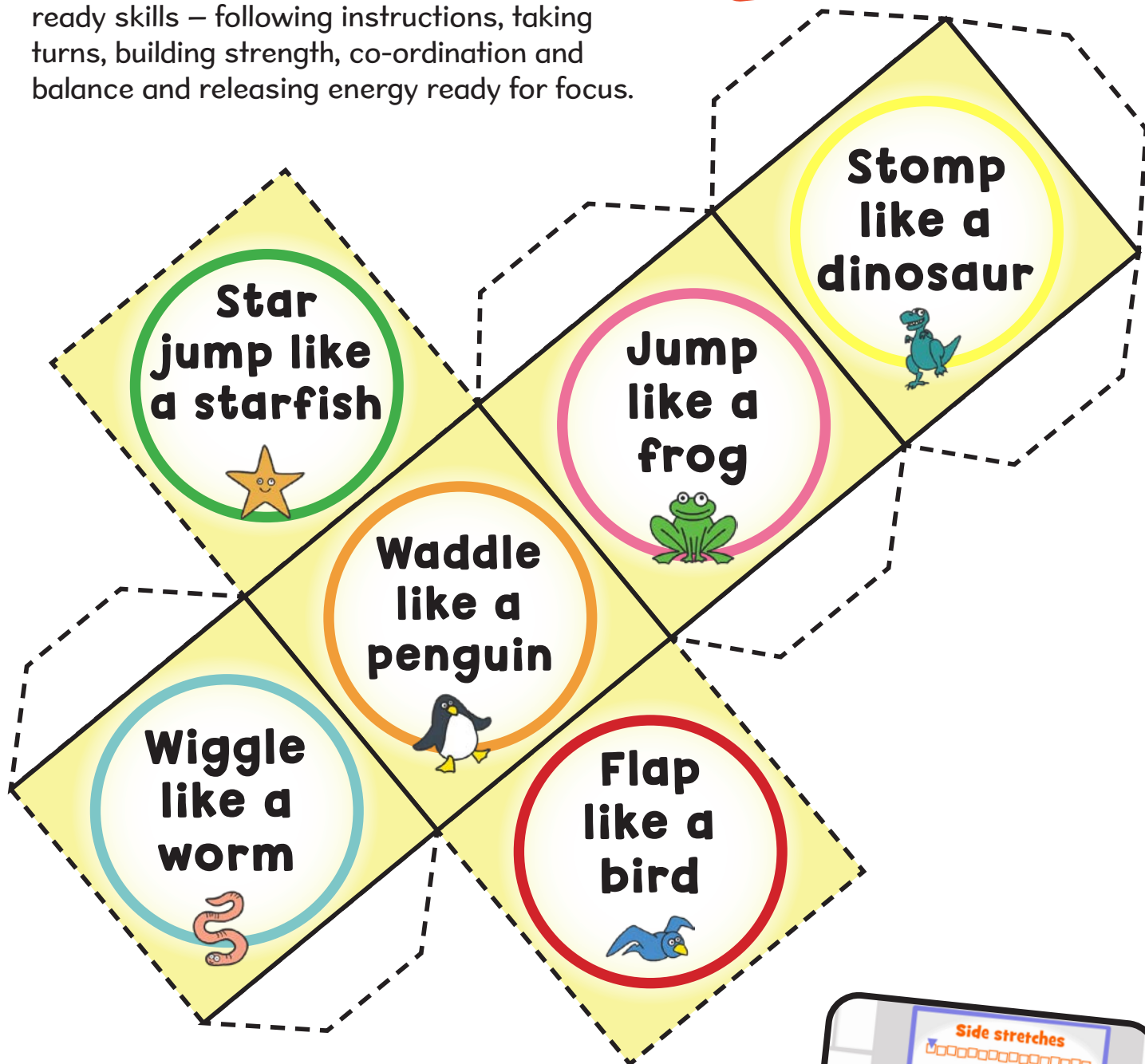
Let's get moving!

Roll the dice and do the action! Cut out and build the dice, then take turns rolling it and doing the silly movement that comes up!

This is a great way to build important school-ready skills – following instructions, taking turns, building strength, co-ordination and balance and releasing energy ready for focus.

Try this!

- Do 3 actions in a row – can you remember the order?
- Add music and turn it into a dance party!



Get moving on Busy Things!

Try the **Dogs and Cat's classroom workout** for more silly fitness fun!

Scan the QR code to use our **free guest account** this summer. Find your login details on the back page.



Busy Things










Feelings fun!

Being able to name and talk about feelings is an important skill for children to develop.

Cut out the 10 face tiles and 10 matching feeling word tiles. Mix them up and see if your child can match each face to the right emotion word.

Things to talk about:

- What makes you happy? When have you felt scared?
- Can you show me a sad face?
- What could you do if a friend looks angry?
- Who do you talk to when you're worried?
- Can you remember a time you felt excited?

			excited
			happy
			okay
			worried
			sad
			angry
			thoughtful
			confused
			shocked

Play the **Bubbles - Expressions** game on Busy Things!

Scan the QR code to use our **free guest account** this summer. Login details on the back face.



Feelings

Busy Things

Use this poster to help your child recognise and talk about how they're feeling and help to build their emotional vocabulary. Ask "Which pink man do you feel like today?" and "What do you think this pink man is feeling?"



I am ready to start school!

Name:

.....

