# SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH CHILDREN BEREAVED OF A PARENT COMPARING TWO MODELS OF INTERVENTION 8 VOLS

VOL. 3

PHEMMINGS

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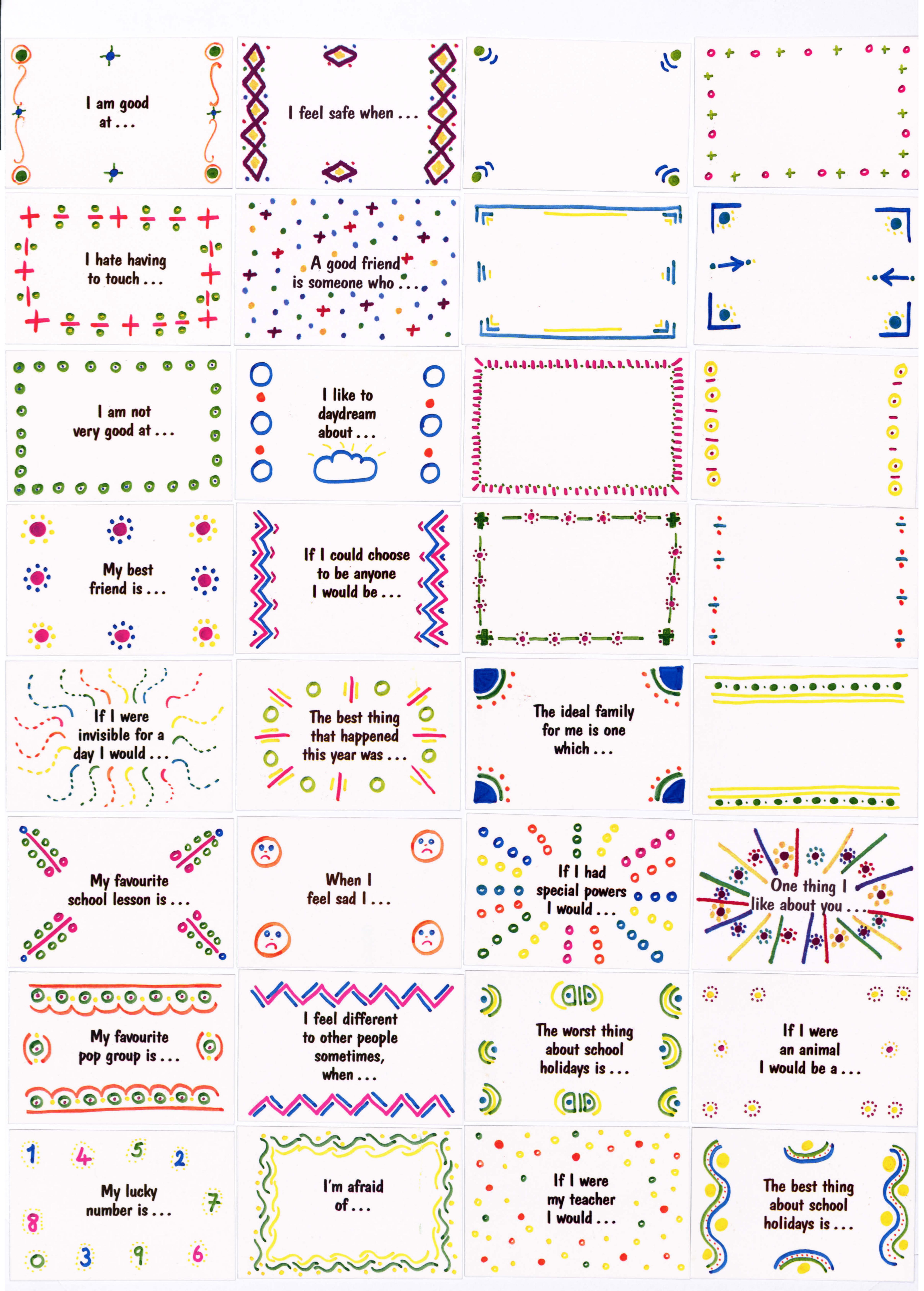
1997















# USERS GUIDELINES



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#### The Development of All About Me

To establish and develop a therapeutic relationship with a child presents us with many challenges. Each child is unique and requires us to be creatively alert and sensitive to their individual ways of communicating with themselves and with the outside world.

It was whilst I was employed by Barnardo's as a hospice counsellor, that I met and began to work with a young girl, who was experiencing considerable difficulties following the death of her mother. Through my work with her, I was presented with the challenge of finding a new way of making contact with a child. The problem for me was that, although this little girl clearly welcomed and enjoyed our times together, as soon as I began to approach those areas of her emotional life that caused her concern, she deflected or resisted any further conversation or activity connected with them. My usual techniques were not working, so, there had to be a change.

The idea of a game sprang from this challenge. Through the medium of the game we could approach, gently and obliquely, painful and worrying areas of this little girl's life at her pace, so maintaining her control over the shared exchanges. It worked very successfully, and we were able, in subsequent sessions, to explore fully the more uncomfortable thoughts and feelings she had, and resolve them.

I subsequently used the game with other children, as did colleagues in other agencies as part of a research study. It proved to be a highly successful resource in work with children in care, children who were seriously ill or their siblings, children who were experiencing their parents' separation or divorce, children who had been physically and/or sexually abused, and, interestingly, adults who were in long-term residential settings. The study showed that *All About Me* was a very useful vehicle for initiating previously difficult conversations, about highly sensitive subjects, for a wide range of people. In many respects it is only limited by the perspective of the practitioner.

After various adaptations had been made to the original board, and the number of cards was increased, Barnardo's and I entered into a partnership to produce the game for purchase by other agencies. It is through Barnardo's financial and organisational support and encouragement that *All About Me* has been developed to this point, and I am grateful to the agency for all their help in this venture.

#### Why a Game?

A board game of the format of *All About Me* is instantly recognisable to any child - it needs little if any explanation. The rules concerning taking turns and moving pieces along the path are understood automatically. These factors are very important when using it as a therapeutic medium, as the child's anxiety level is lowered, because the medium is known, and this aids the establishment of a relaxed atmosphere for the session, conducive to productive conversation.

This mood is further helped by the colourful appearance of the board and the cards, both of which children enjoy. Children also enjoy exploring the variety of animal characters and humorous messages, all of which engages their attention and generates enthusiasm to play. And what better or more natural way can there be than play for a child?

All these incentives to play are triggered by the practitioner's enthusiasm and confidence in using the game, so some preparatory practice sessions are recommended before an actual therapeutic session.



#### The Purpose Of All About Me

Children who experience traumatic, protracted or recurring crises in their lives typically feel isolated from their peer group and known adults by it. Such experiences as bereavement, divorce and family breakdown change the emotional life of a child. Their feelings are often confused and intensified simultaneously. Those people to whom they have turned in the past for support, explanation and comfort are often the main characters in the general turmoil and so are no longer available to the child in the same way as they were before.

It is at these times in a child's life that they may need the help of an outsider, either a friend or professional helper, who can stand back from the melee and help them sort it all out. There are many ways in which we can reach out to children and encourage them to explore difficult and painful areas in their lives. We can use play, activity and conversation. There are many more but they all have one thing in common, that we, the practitioner, give our undivided attention to that child to enable them to have the confidence to see the task through.

This is crystallised in the activity of playing *All About Me*, in that we spend one-to-one time with the child, we share our feelings and experiences with them, in such a way that we can help them to see that, although they may feel lost or deeply troubled by their past experience, or current situation, they are not alone, either physically or emotionally. Through playing the game we let the child see that we too, even as adults, still have feelings of fearfulness, sadness and joy - that they are universal feelings: and so it is all right not only to own up to them, but also to talk about them.

Playing the game allows this conversation in the safe environment of the therapeutic relationship, and, most importantly, at the child's pace.

It may well be that by hearing somebody else's expression of a shared emotion, the child feels able openly to acknowledge their own. It may be that merely hearing that other people feel the same things they do, a child will be comforted and no longer alone with that often uncomfortable emotion.

There are many levels of meaningful communication in our work with children.

#### Preparation of the game session

All About Me is designed to be used within a trusting therapeutic relationship, not as an introduction or short-cut to that.

#### Introduction

I am concerned about the equality of such a working relationship, and prefer to ask a child if they would like to play the game in advance of the actual session. Whether children can ever give informed consent is arguable, but asking the child emphasises the theme of equality within the game. It quickly becomes apparent to the child that during the play you, the practitioner, respond to as many cards as the child, and the value of that mutuality is greatly appreciated.

Admittedly, because you need to have control over the order of the cards initially, there will never be complete equality between you, but, the element of mutual disclosure will encourage the child to feel part of a safely shared conversation generated by the cards.

#### Worksheet

Before you start playing the game you may want to present the child with a copy of the worksheet. This can be done either the time before the game session, and completed together then, or independently by the child in the intervening period, or presented at the beginning of the actual game session and completed together then.

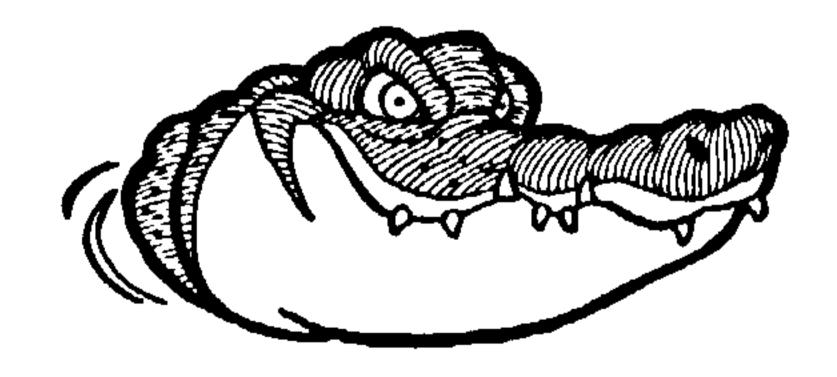
The purpose of the worksheet is to focus the child's thinking on basic, safe details about themself. Children usually enjoy filling in this sheet, and colouring in the flowers and animals illustrating it. In this way the child begins to play the game itself.

#### **Time and Space**

It is essential that you provide uninterrupted and relatively open-ended time for the game session, to enable the child to explore freely those issues that arise.

It is advisable to arrange the room and seating so that you are close together, and on the same level. Physical proximity is something you clearly need to assess for each child and respond to accordingly. However, it is not helpful to construct a face-to-face setting for the activity, nor is it normal to play a board game in such a way, so, the format of the game actually gives permission for relative closeness without it being threatening.

You will find that you will need a large flat space around the board during the play, so playing on the floor may be easiest, or a large table.



#### Preparation of the game

#### The Cards

The full pack consists of 112 cards all individually hand drawn. No two cards are the same and children usually delight in the variety of decoration, which assists in the enjoyment of the game. .

It is obviously impossible and inappropriate to use the whole pack in any one session. It is anticipated that you will sort through the packs and select those cards which are most suitable for your purposes. In this way you will be presenting the child with a prepared range of issues to contemplate.

It is also important within this preparation to arrange the cards in a particular order: to start with relatively 'safe' cards (e.g. My favourite colour/clothes/TV programme) has been found to be the best intoduction, and serves as an extension of the worksheet. However, there may well be sensitive issues among these seemingly innocuous statements, and they should be chosen carefully.

The rest of the pack falls into sections that approach issues pertaining to self-esteem, affectional responses, hopes and wishes, authority and control, illness and incapacity, and finally fantasy. Although they are listed here in that order that is not neccesarily how they should be used. The needs of each child will determine the optimim use of the cards. It may be that one child can only usefully address 'safe' issues in a session, and all the other cards are not used.

There is no reason why this should not be so, and still be good use of the game.

Should you find that there are particular questions you would like to ask, but they are not included in the pack, there are a number of blank cards which you can use to supplement the pack. As the type face will obviously be different to that of the original pack, it may be advisable openly to acknowledge your concern about the child which has led you to create an additional card.

You may prefer to make additional cards with the child and use that exercise as a constructive means to open discussion.

The prepared pack should be placed, face down, between the two players. This means you need to stack the pack so that the 'safe' cards are on the top of the up-turned pack, and the rest of the pack is graded accordingly.

Thirty cards are usually enough for a session.

In addition, I would recommend that you engineer reasonably comfortable statements for the end of the session, so the child is not left with any acutely uncomfortable feelings.

#### The Board

Just a few points. The board is a classic path format, starting with the lion and ending with the monkey, but, there is no reason why you have to end there. You may want to double back if the pack is unfinished, or go back to a particular part of the path again - it is up to you and the child how you choose to use the board. In many respects the board is an incidental feature, a vehicle for the cards and for the communication they facilitate.

We have provided a choice of playing pieces, but these are only a starter-pack. You may well prefer to use other pieces or objects chosen by the child e.g. chessmen, shells, small toy animals etc.

#### The Game



Having arranged the pack, presented the board to the child and chosen your playing pieces you are finally ready to play.

In arranging the pack you may have considered which cards you will have, and which cards the child will turn over, therefore it is important to know who is going first.

The first player rolls the die, moves their piece that number of spaces along the path, and then turns over the top card. Once that card has been considered it can be placed, face up, on that player's side of the board. In this way a progressive record of the conversation is kept and this may be useful for reflection. I sometimes use this as the basis of my own more permanent written record of the session, and it's useful as a starting point for the subsequent session.

The cards are also very colourful and enhance the play setting. The second player then has their turn, and so on.

Research and use of *All About Me* has produced some interesting responses in children. Quite commonly children start playing a little apprehensively and then warm to the activity, to the point where they not only answer their own cards, but yours as well. Also it has been found that children who become so engrossed in the conversation begin to disregard the board, rolling the die but not bothering to move their piece along the path - and that's fine. In fact, that is the essence of *All About Me*.

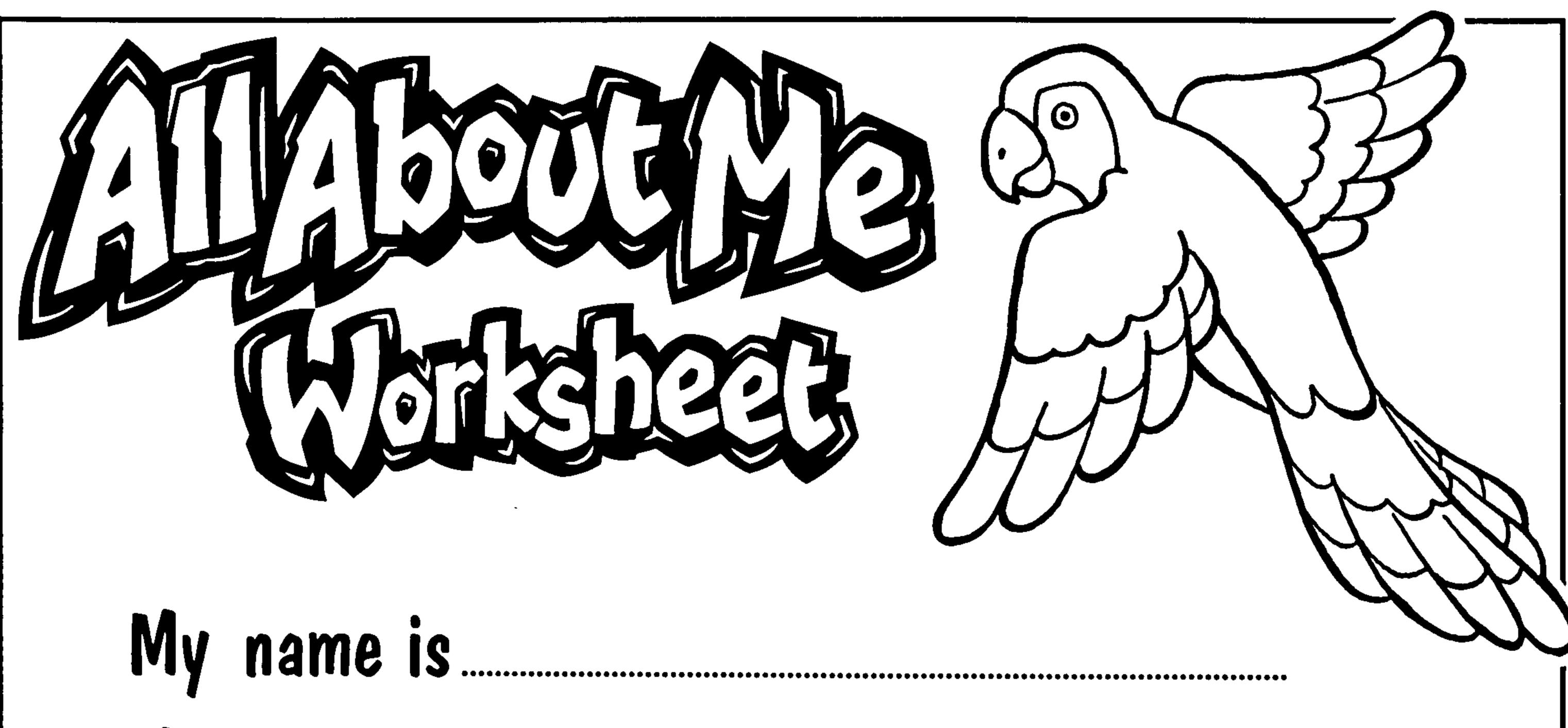
#### Conclusion

All About Me is essentially a board game, but there is one major difference between this and other board games: there are no winners and no losers in All About Me. It is a non-competitive activity, with the board providing a focus for initial attention, but subsequently playing a secondary role to that of the cards and the conversation.

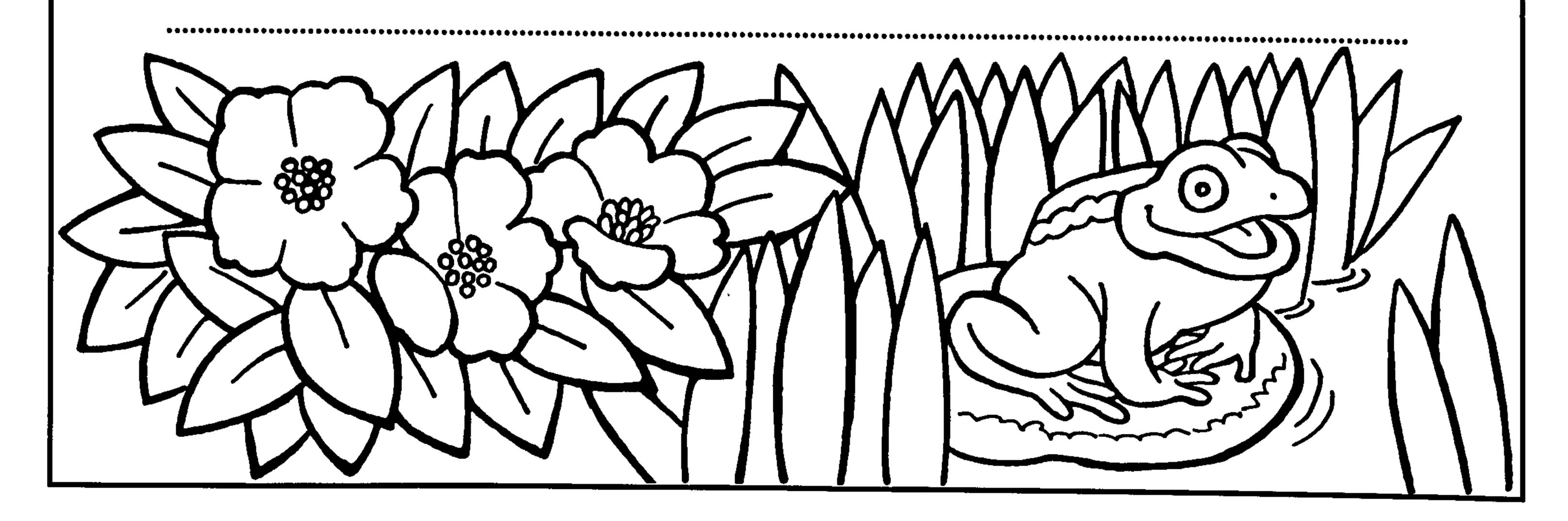
Playing the game should afford both you and the child an opportunity to have an enjoyable time together, as well as giving the child the special time that the therapeutic relationship provides. Allowing the child to respond to the cards at their own pace encourages feelings of safety, control and trust which are essential for open communication.

All About Me is a path of discovery for the child, a trail along which you can accompany the child, offering support and reassurance along the way.





| 1414 Hallie 15           |
|--------------------------|
| My age is                |
| My birthday is on        |
| The colour of my hair is |
| The colour of my eyes is |
| My height is             |
| My teacher is called.    |
| l am special because     |
|                          |





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My fanniest joke is...

My most special memory is of ...

My favourite school lesson is...

The best present I could get is...

The best time of the day for me is...

My favourite food is...

My favourite clothes are...

My favourite video is...

I love the weather when it is...

The best holiday I've had was...

My most treasured possession is...

The best programme on TV is ...

The sport / like to play most is...

My favourite animalis...

My favourite hobby is...

My favourite time of year is...

The best book lever read was...

My favourite pop group is...

My lacky number is...

I saw a great film, it was called...

The pet I would most like to have is ...

It is easy for me to do some things like ...

lam good at...

People say I look like...

The most exciting thing lever did was ...

The hardest thing lever did ever did was...

I am the world's greatest...

The bravest thing lever did was...

lam not very good at...

If I could choose to be anyone I would be...

It is a real treat for me to ...

If I could change one thing about myself, it would be...

I won a prize for...

My best feature is...

My best friend is...

When I need a hug I go to...

I hate looking at...

The best thing about school holidays is...

The worst thing about being ill is ...

When I'm ill I like to...

The best thing about being ill is ...

The worst thing about school holidays is...

The worst thing that happened this year was ...

The best thing that happened this year was ...

The happiest day of my life was...

One thing I hate having to do is ...

I hate having to eat...

I hate having to touch...

My ideal room would be...

The ideal family for me is one which ...

I get really cross when...

I feel so lonely sometimes when ...

Sometimes it is hard to keep my temper when...

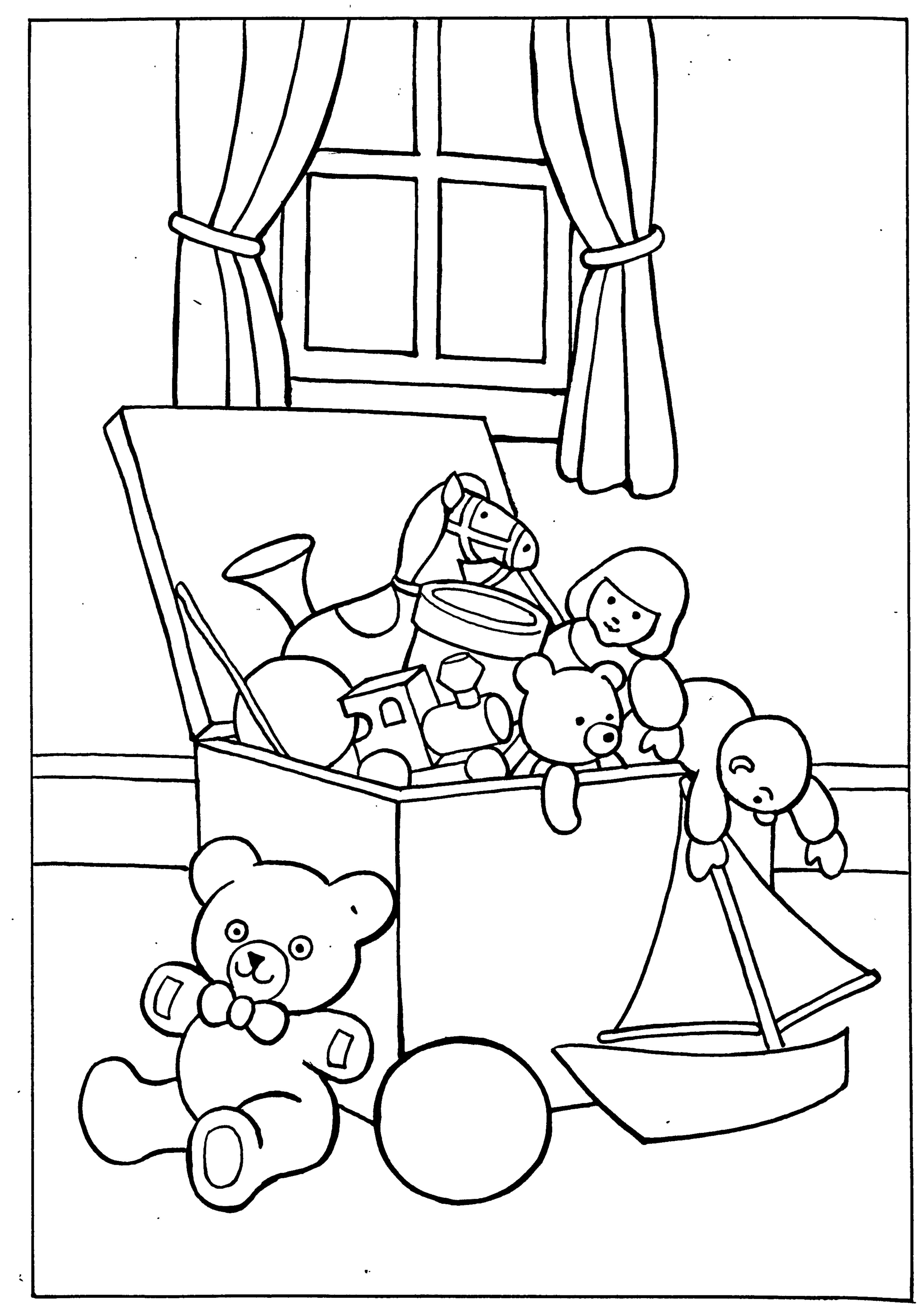
I feel really sad when...

The saddest day of my life was...

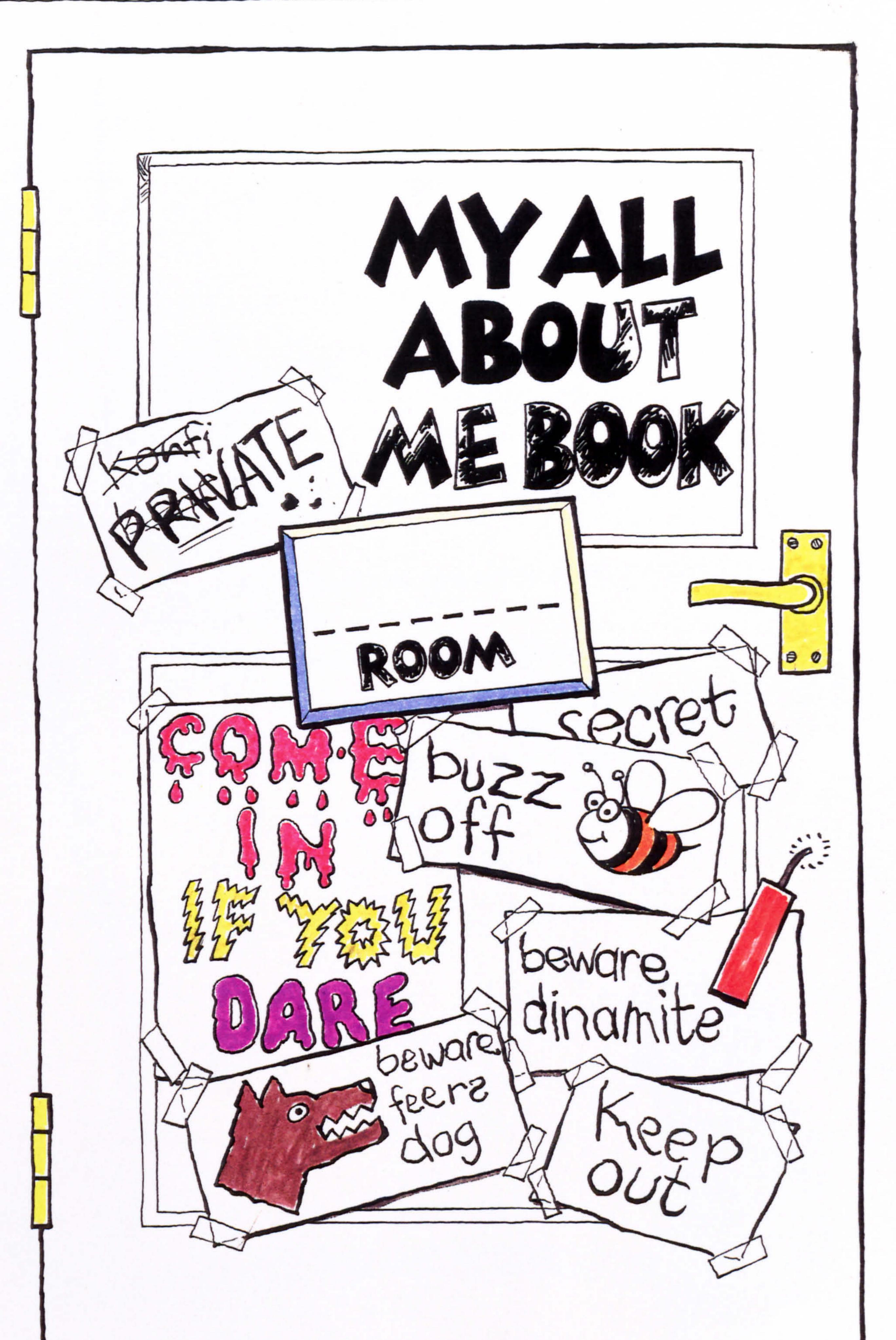
I feel so angry about...

Three things I would change at home are... It is very irritating when... if I had a magic bus I would take... I laugh when... When I am happy I... Three things I would change at school are... The best present to give someone is... When I'm angry I like to... If I had a treasure chest I would put these things in it... I get very embarrassed when... My New Year's resolution will be... When I feel sad I... The best dream lever had was... I am a little worried about... I feel disappointed when... If I were a colour I would be ... If I were an animal I would be a ... I feel frustrated when... If I were a flower I would be a... l get frightened when... If I were a bird I would be a... I am afraid of ... If I had special powers I would... Adults say confusing things sometimes like... When I am really upset I... If I were a musical instrument I would be a ... I feel like singing when... If I were invisible for a day I would... If I were a plant or tree I would be a ... When I get confused I... A brother is someone who... I feel different to other people sometimes when... When I feel left out of things !... A sister is someone who... I would like to get a letter from... A dad is someone who... Something I wish I had done but did not was ... A mam is someone who ... I would like to get a call from... A grandma is someone who... I wish I could tell dad this ... A granddad is someone who... I wish I could tell mam this... One thing I like about you... When I have a secret I can always trust... I would like to spend a day with... I like to daydream about ... l feel safe when... If I were my teacher I would ... A teacher is someone who... If I were a parent I would... When I need help I can go to... If I raled this country I would ... When I am at school sometimes I feel... If I could change my life Iwould... A good friend is someone who ... If I had a time machine I would go to a time when... When I was a baby I used to ... One thing I would like to find is... The worst thing that happened last year was ...

If I could change one thing it would be...









# PLAYING TOGETHER

We agree to the following:

- 1. Everything that is said or done in our play-times is private to us, unless you tell me someone is harming you, then I must do everything I can to protect you.
  - 2. We will use a special play book and toys and can play together in any way that does not harm either of us.
    - 3. Each session will last one hour, unless we want it to end sooner.
    - 4. We will meet six times, once every two weeks
    - 5. When our six play sessions are finished, we can still keep in touch with each other and go on being special friends, but in a different way.

Is there anything else we should add?

Signed .....



# ALL ABOUT ME

| My name is  |
|---|
| I amyears old and my birthday is on                                 |
| The colour of my hair isand it isand it is                          |
| The colour of my eyes is  |
| I amtall and I weigh  |
| I live in a house/flat/bungalow/caravan/tent/castle/cave/igloo/tree |
| I live there with my  |
| (family and pets)   |
| Their names are   |
|   |
| I go to school at   |
| My teacher is called  |
| My favourite lesson is  |
| My worst lesson is  |
| My friends at school are called                                     |
| My best friend is called  |
| I am special because  |

# ALL ABOUT ME

| My name is  |
|---|
| I amyears old and my birthday is on                                 |
| The colour of my hair isand it isand                                |
| The colour of my eyes is  |
| I amtall and I weigh  |
| I live in a house/flat/bungalow/caravan/tent/castle/cave/igloo/tree |
| I live there with my  |
| (family and pets)   |
| Their names are   |
| ***************************************                             |
| I went to school at   |
| My teacher was called   |
| My favourite lesson was   |
| My worst lesson was   |
| My friends at school were called                                    |
| My best friend is called  |
| I am special because  |

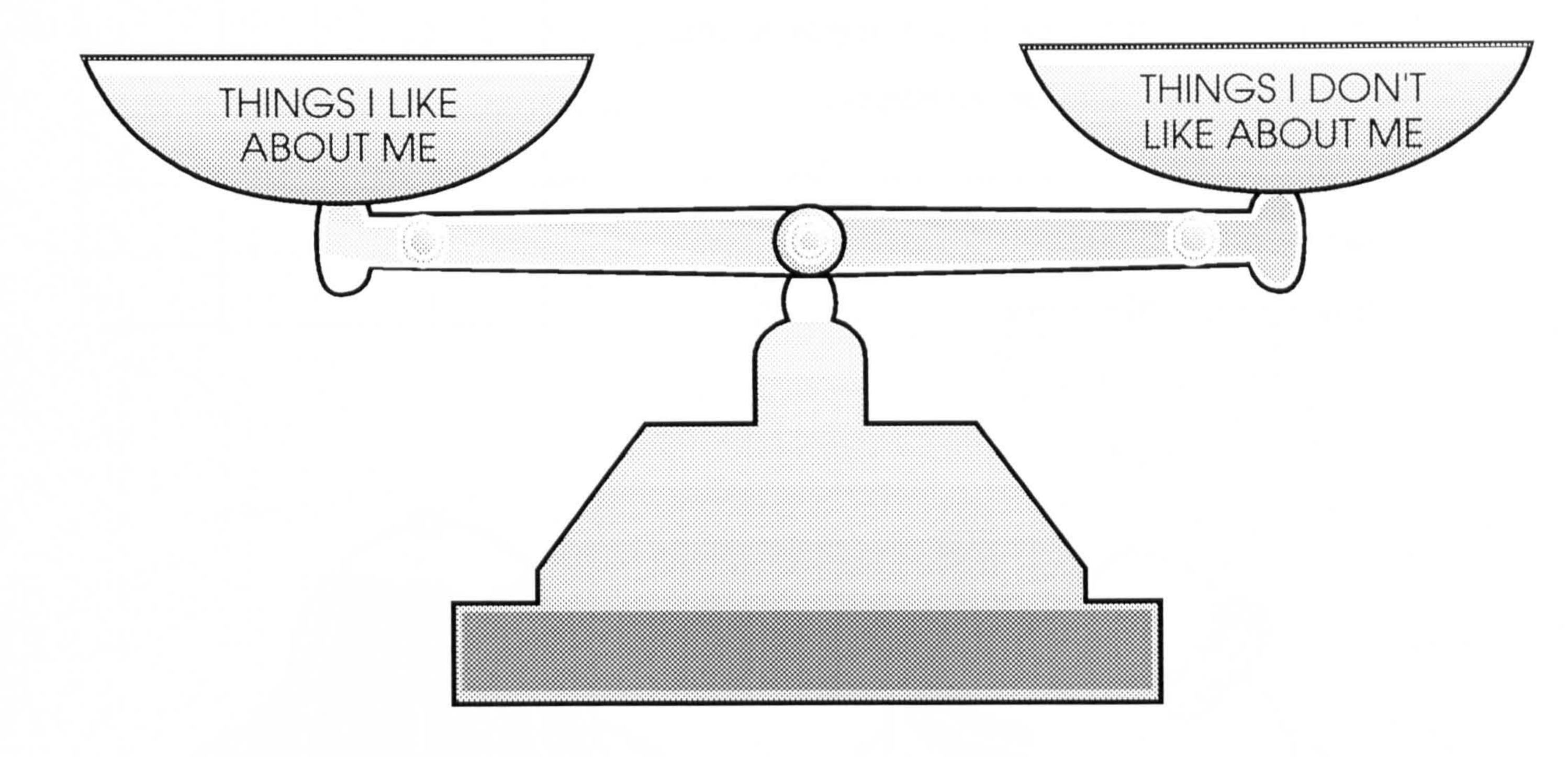
# MORE ABOUT ME

|  | Hardly | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of<br>the time |
|--|--------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| I feel safe at home                                |        |                |                |                     |
| I make new friends at home easily                  |        |                |                |                     |
| I have trouble making up my mind                   |        |                |                |                     |
| I worry when I go to bed                           |        |                |                |                     |
| I enjoy my food at home                            |        |                |                |                     |
| I tell myabout my worries                          |        |                |                |                     |
| I think other children are happier than me         |        |                |                |                     |
| I am afraid something bad will happen to my family |        |                |                |                     |
| I daydream when I am at school                     |        |                |                |                     |
|  |        |                |                |                     |

My daydream

|   | Hardly<br>ever | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of<br>the time |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| I make new friends at school easily                           |                |                |                |                     |
| I have bad dreams   |                |                |                |                     |
| I wake up scared  |                |                |                |                     |
| I enjoy trying new activities                                 |                |                |                |                     |
| I feel lonely at school                                       |                |                |                |                     |
| I tell my teacher when I am upset                             |                |                |                |                     |
| I worry about going to the toilet                             |                |                |                |                     |
| I feel safe at school   |                |                |                |                     |
| At school others seem to be able to do things easier than me. |                |                |                |                     |

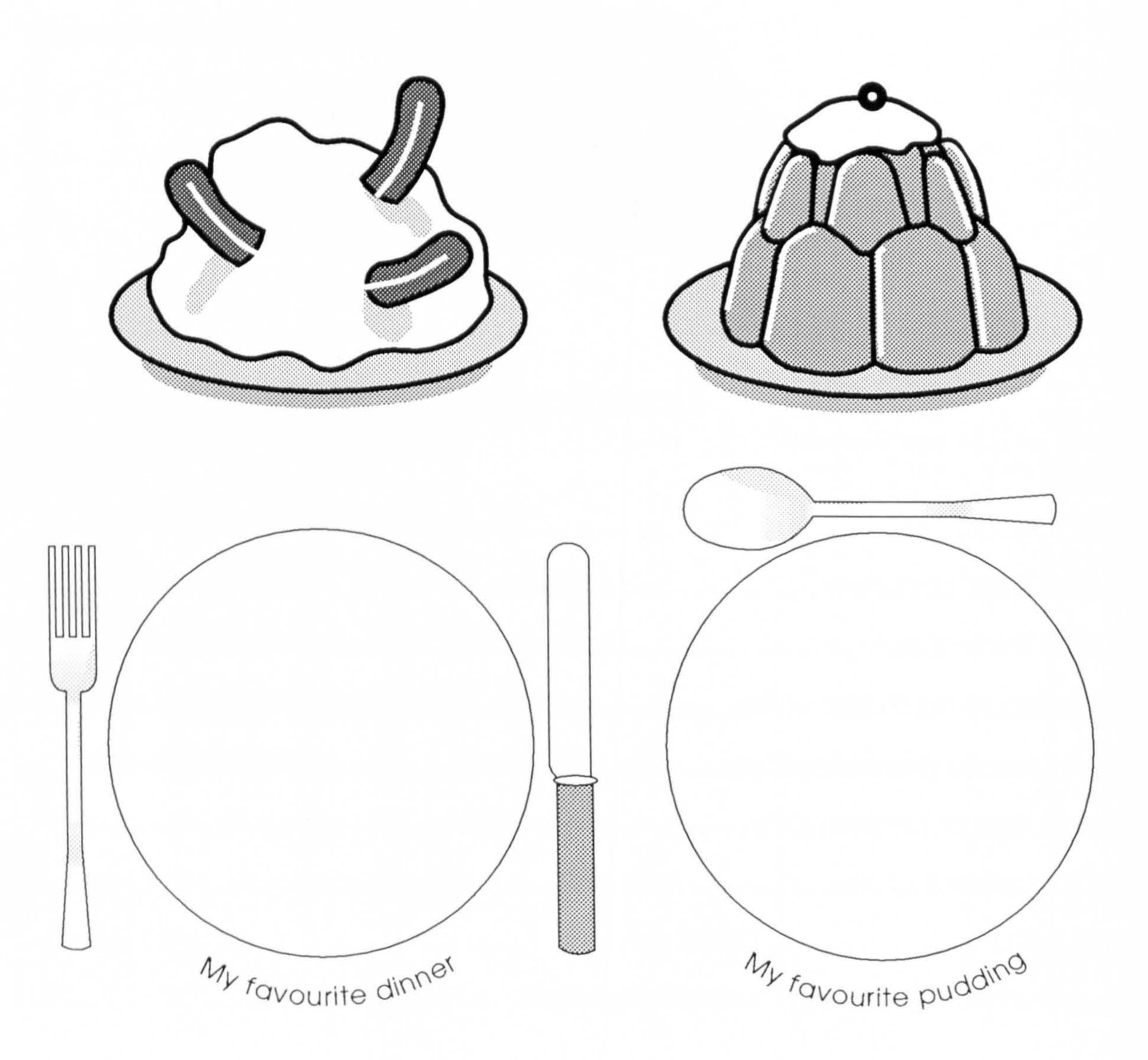
## SOME MORE ABOUT ME



|   | Hardly | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of<br>the time |
|---|--------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| I think about my                              |        |                |                |                     |
| When I think about my I feel sad I feel sad   |        |                |                |                     |
| When I think about my I feel worried          |        |                |                |                     |
| I have good memories of my                    |        |                |                |                     |
| I have painful memories of my                 |        |                |                |                     |
| I like to look at photos of my                |        |                |                |                     |
| I look at photos of mywith my                 |        |                |                |                     |
| I talk with myabout my                        |        |                |                |                     |
| I can trust my friends with my feelings about |        |                |                |                     |

# EVEN MORE ABOUT ME

|   | Hardly<br>ever | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of<br>the time |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| It is hard for me to get to sleep at night          |                |                |                |                     |
| It is hard for me to keep my mind on my school work |                |                |                |                     |
| I can trust my friends with my secrets              |                |                |                |                     |
| I am afraid something bad will happen to me         |                |                |                |                     |
| I easily get angry with other children              |                |                |                |                     |
| I feel tired  |                |                |                |                     |
| I feel lonely at home                               |                |                |                |                     |
| I enjoy my food at school                           |                |                |                |                     |

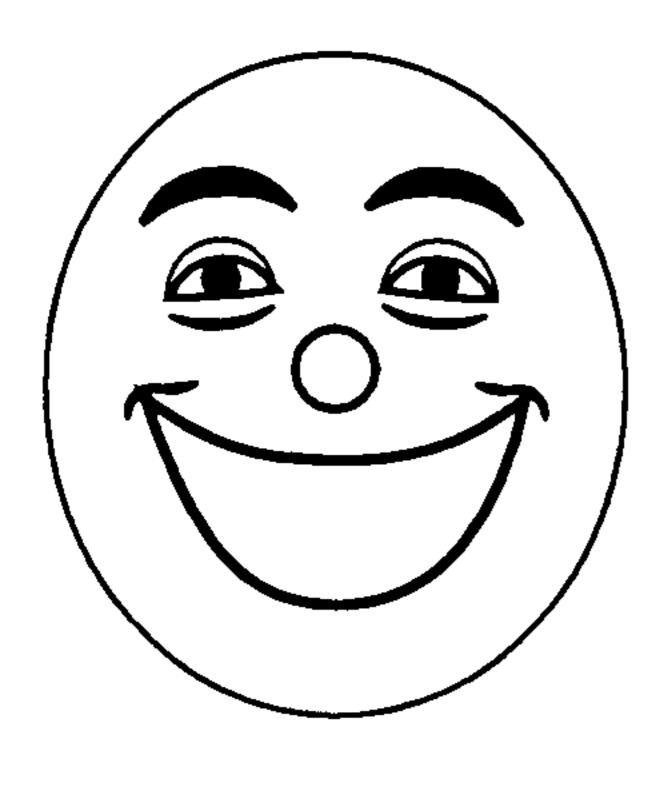


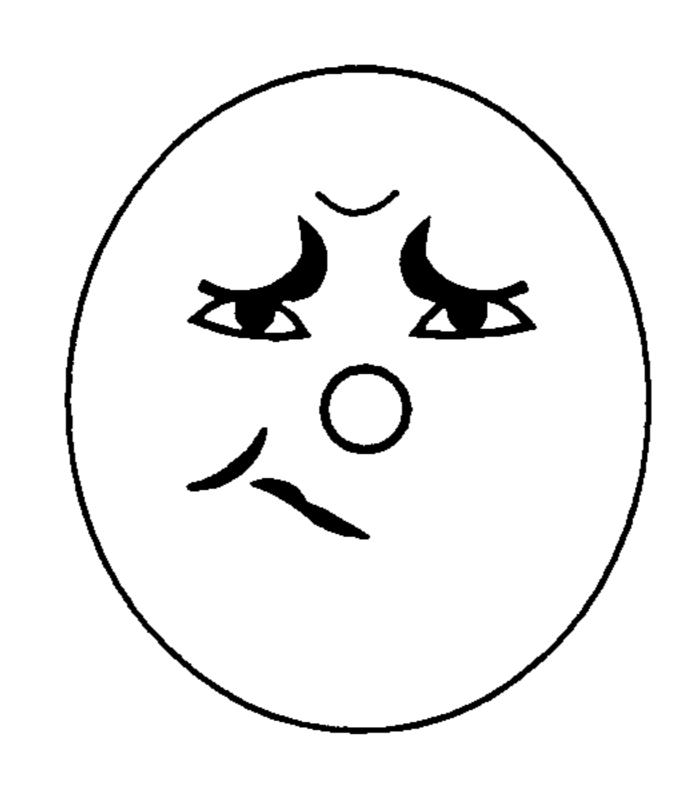
# WHAT I KNOW ABOUT LIFE AND DEATH

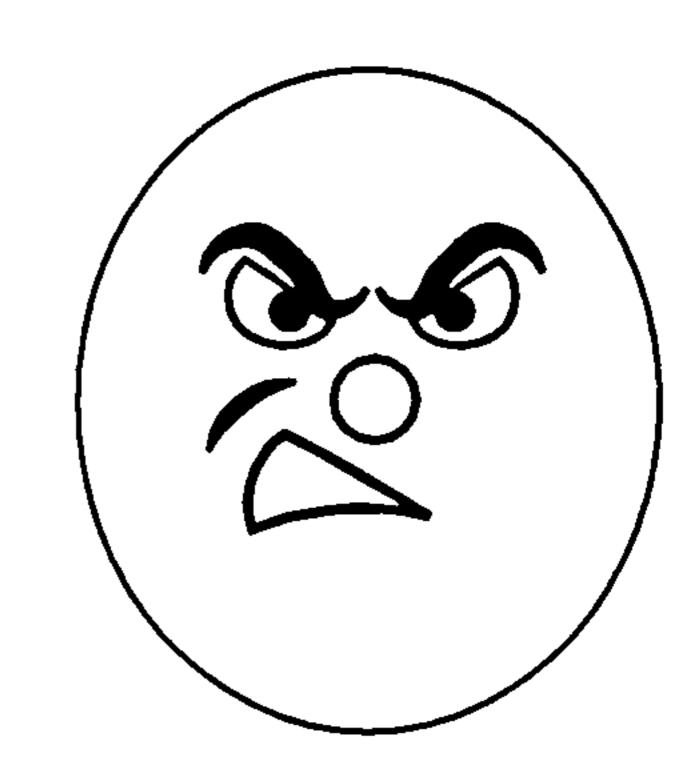
|   | No          | Yes      | Some-<br>times |
|---|-------------|----------|----------------|
| Is a stone alive?                             | <u></u>     |          |                |
| Is a tree alive?                              | <u> </u>    |          |                |
| is a cat alive?                               |             |          |                |
| Whon someone dies can thou                    |             |          |                |
| When someone dies can they:                   |             | }        |                |
| a) move their arms or legs?                   |             |          |                |
| b) move any part of their body?               |             |          |                |
| c) feel heat or cold?                         |             | <u> </u> |                |
| d) feel hungry?                               |             |          |                |
| e) think?                                     |             |          |                |
| f) hear any sounds?                           |             |          |                |
| g) dream?                                     |             |          |                |
| •   |             |          |                |
| People can die because:                       |             |          |                |
| a) they get very ill                          |             |          |                |
| b) they have a serious accident               |             |          |                |
| c) somebody thinks about it                   |             |          |                |
| d) they get seriously hurt                    |             |          | <u></u>        |
| e) somebody wishes it                         |             |          |                |
| f) they are very old                          |             |          |                |
|   |             |          |                |
| Will everyone die one day?                    |             |          |                |
| What do people look like when they have died? | ••••••••••• |          | •••••••        |
| What happens after someone dies?              |             |          |                |
| ***************************************       |             | •••••••  | •••••••••      |

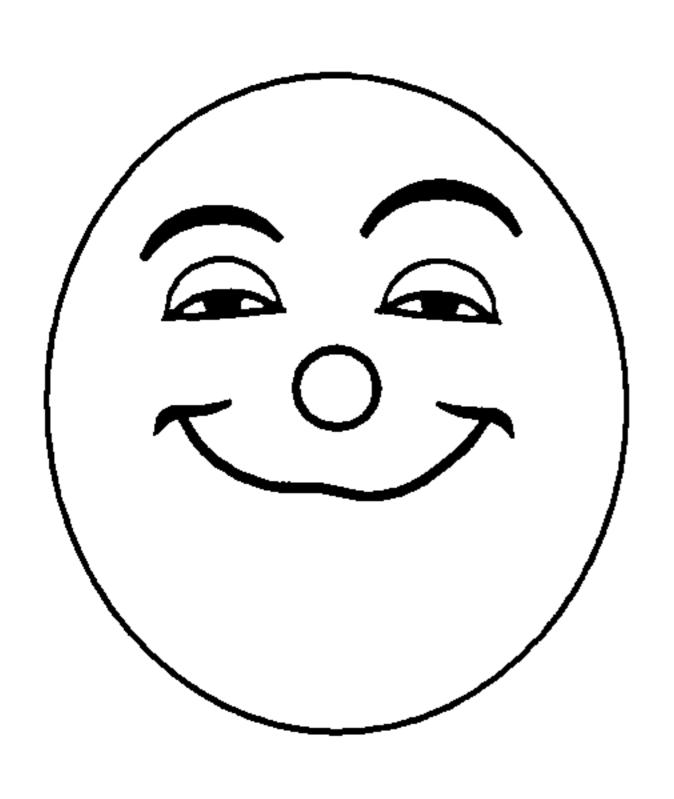
# FEELING FACES

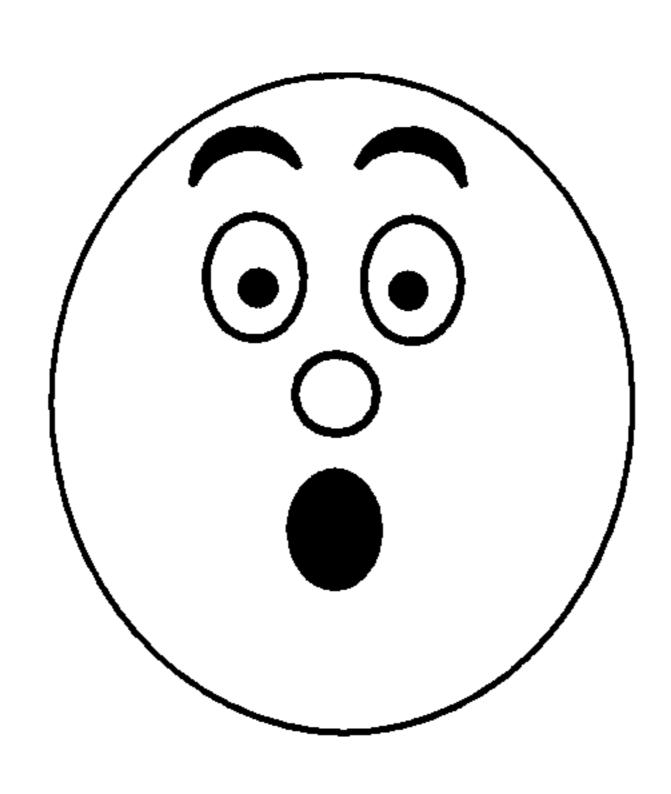
We all have lots of different feelings inside us. Can you tell what this person is feeling by their different expressions?



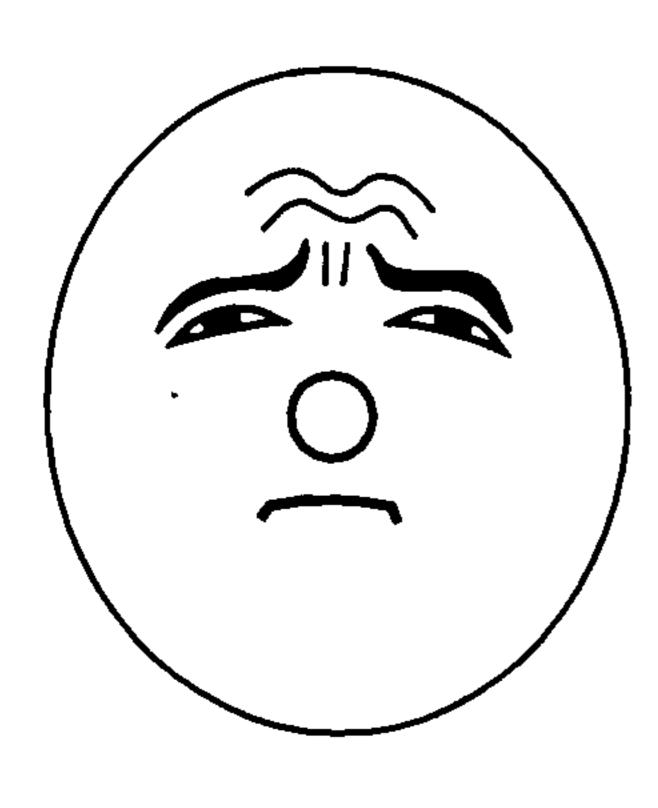




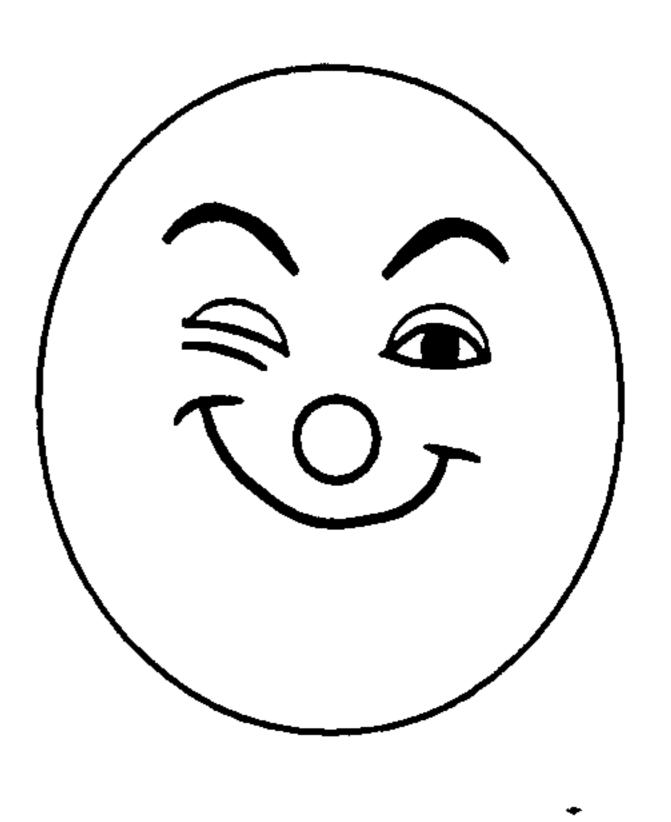






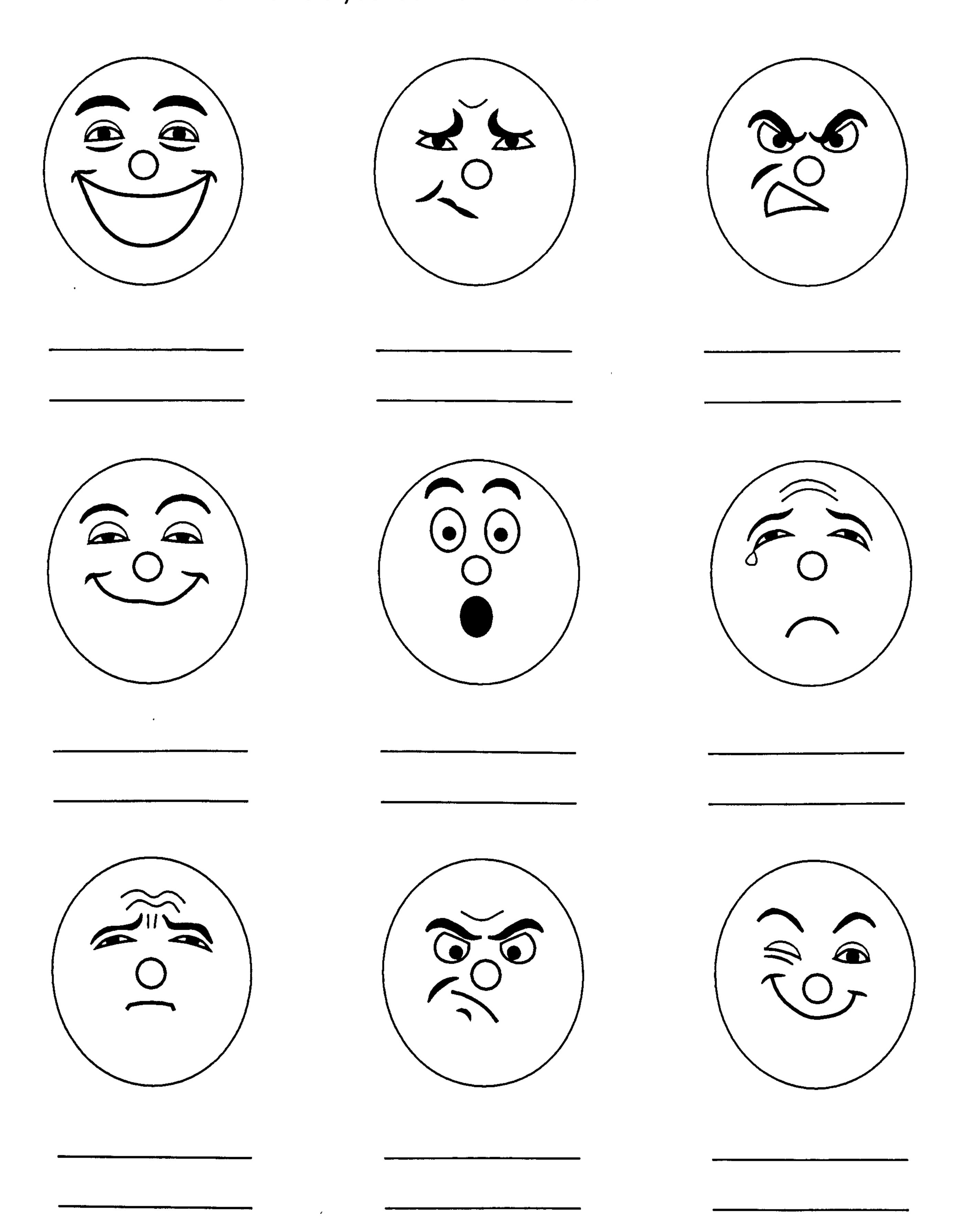






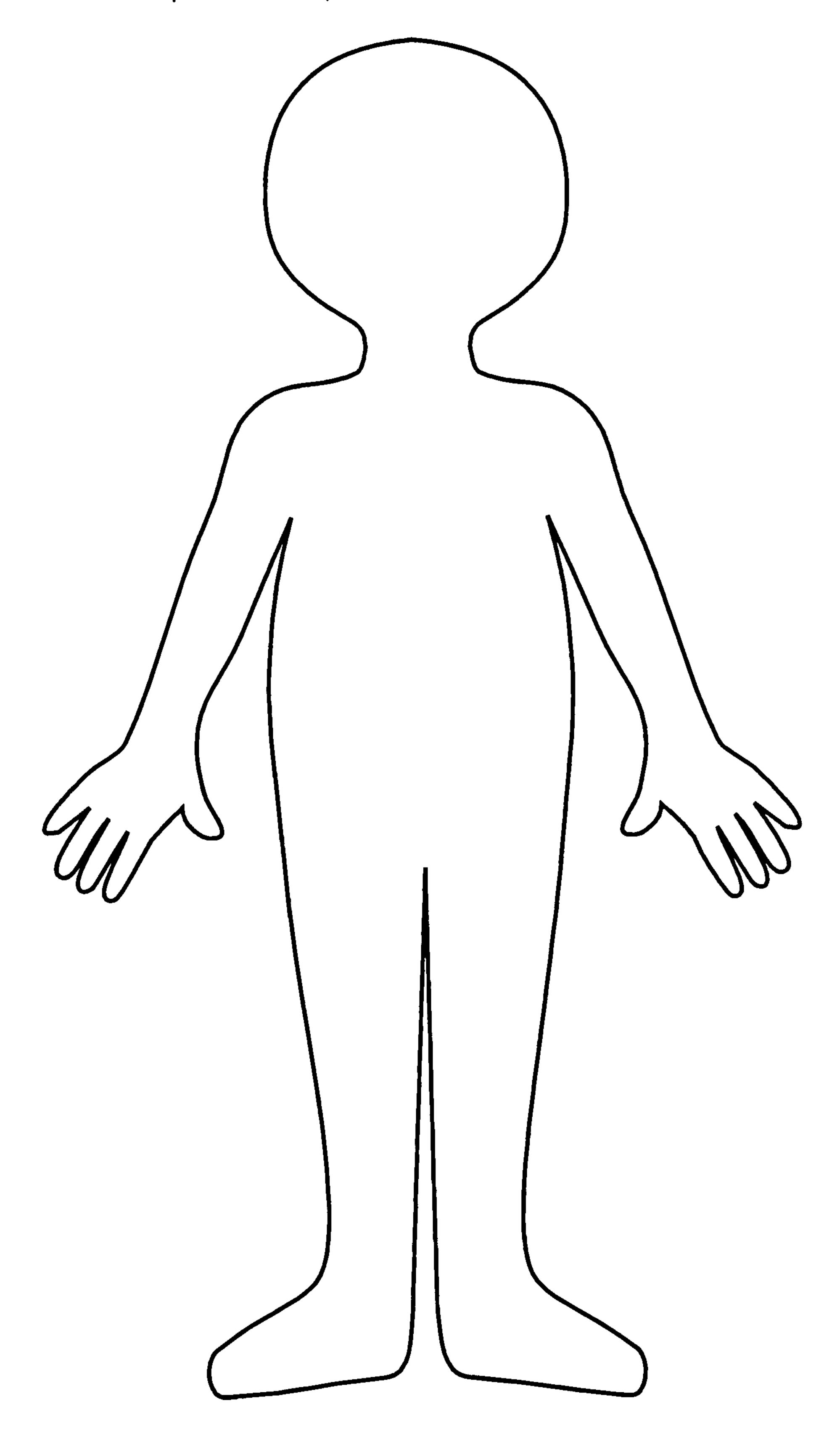
# WHERE AND WHEN

You have lots of different feelings in you, some you can show and some you don't. Where and when did you feel like these faces?



# THE COLOURS I FEEL

Where in your body do you have these feelings? What colours and shapes are they?



### FRIENDS FOREVER

Coco the clown lived in a circus which travelled round the country putting on shows in all the towns and cities along the way. He and his little dog, Molly, lived in a cosy caravan pulled by a black and white horse called Shadow. Molly and Coco were best friends and were very happy togethe, working and travelling all the year round. When they were on their way to a new town Molly would run behind the caravan enjoying all the different smells of the hedgerows. Sometimes she would disappear into a field and have adventures on her own, but she always came back to the caravan after a while, happy to be home again.

One summer morning, in the town of Applebury, there was a buzz of excitement. The children woke to find that posters had magically appeared overnight, telling them the circus was coming next day. There would be a show with lions, elephants, conjurors, acrobats, tightrope walkers and, of course, the clown. The girls and boys waited excitedly.

The following day the circus caravans and lorries came over the hill and rolled along Applebury's main street. The procession came to a stop in a field just beyond the town. The children watched as men put up a huge tent, called the Big Top, and decorated it with coloured flags and flashing lights. The circus was here and what fun they would all have at the show that night!

Molly had been following the caravans in her usual way, sniffing out the hedgerow animals and exploring the fields along the way. By the time the circus pulled into the field Coco had not seen her for quite a while. He thought that she was probably off in the surrounding fields looking for rabbits. Coco gave Shadow a drink and some hay and tethered him, with the other horses, in a corner of the field. Then he thought about the show. He was looking forward to making all the people laugh with his funny costume and antics. He had great big floppy shoes that were always tripping him up, a trick flower that squirted water and a hat that could light up. Molly took part in the act and wore a special collar and hat. She could walk on her hind legs, pushing a tiny pram with her paws and everyone would clap at her cleverness.

There was so much to do that the day flew by. Soon it was time for Coco to get ready for the show. He got his costume out and made sure the bobbles and spangles were all right. He tested his flower for squirtiness and flopped his shoes a couple of times. Yes, everything was ready. He then checked Molly's outfit and called her to come and get ready, but she didn't appear. He called again, but no Molly.

He walked all round the Big Top field calling for her. He asked all his circus friends if they had seen her, but nobody knew where she was. Coco felt a little worried and wondered what could have happened to her. It was getting close to show time and he would have to get his make-up and costume on soon. He walked round the field one more time, calling for Molly and looking in all the caravans but he couldn't find her anywhere.

Coco was beginning to feel more worried and very unhappy inside. He had never been without Molly before: it felt strange not to have her nearby. All his circus friends said they would look for her later, they were busy right then getting ready for the show. Coco too had to get ready because he was on first. The show couldn't start without him but, for the first time ever, he didn't feel like being funny.

Coco went to his caravan and dressed in his clown costume. He painted his face with his smiley clown-face but, beneath the happy-painted face, Coco was sad. He entered the circus ring and all the children roared with delight to see him but his heart was heavy. He did all his usual tricks and antics and the crowd laughed and clapped, but all the time he was thinking about Molly. Nobody in the audience knew of his sadness and worry, all they could see was the smiling clown face Coco had painted on. Nobody wanted to see his sadness, they had all come to see a happy clown and have fun.

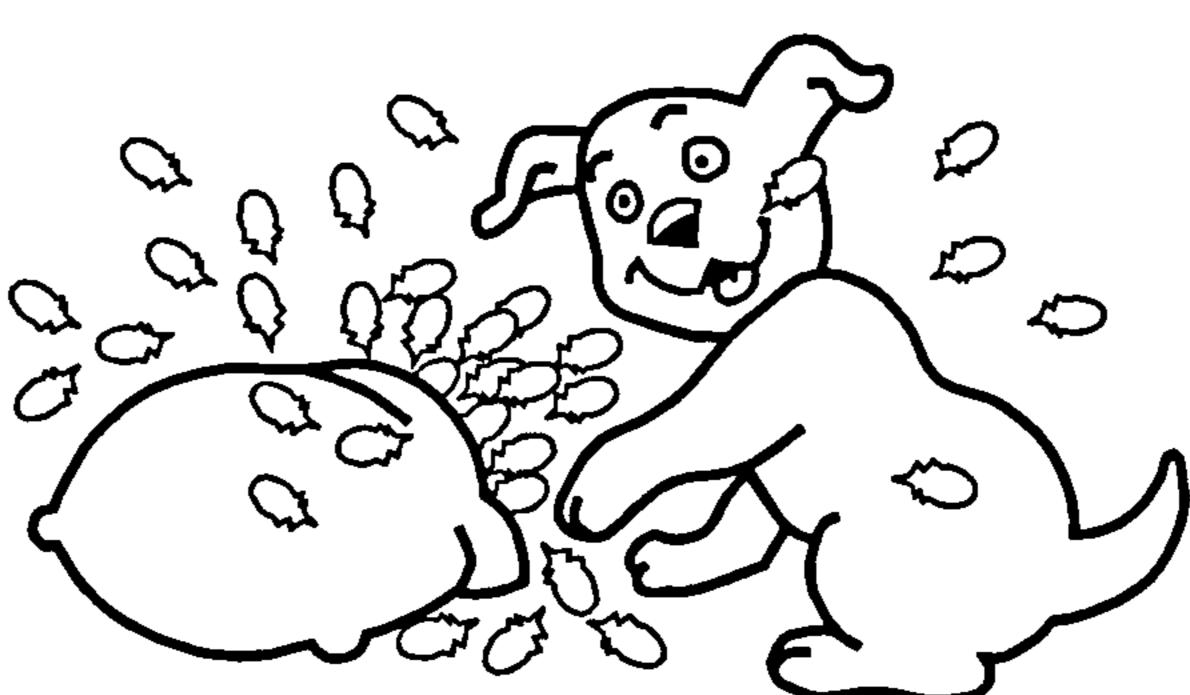
After the show had finished Coco went round the field again and along the lane calling for Molly, but she was nowhere to be found. He went back to his caravan, opened the door and went in. It seemed strangely empty without the welcoming bark and licks that Molly always used to give him when he came home. He sat silently thinking of her, wondering where she

might be. He felt a lump of sadness in his throat which he tried to swallow. His eyes filled with tears and they spilled over and trickled down his painted cheeks. That night he dreamed of her.

The next morning he woke, surprised to find no Molly curled up on his bed as she usually was. Then he remembered what had happened and his sadness-lump was there again. All that day he searched for Molly, calling for her in all the fields and lanes nearby, but still he couldn't find her. As evening approached and the shadows grew longer, he found himself in a small wood. He had looked everywhere, round all the trees and through the ferns and brambles, and was just about to go home when he heard a faint barking coming from behind a mossy log. He stumbled over some roots in his haste to see what was making the noise and almost fell upon Molly.

She was lying curled up against the log, covered with a light blanket of leaves. She had heard Coco calling for her and was calling back to him. Coco was thrilled to find her, but then he realised that something was wrong because Molly didn't get up. He picked her up, gently cradling her in his arms and carried her back to the caravan. The vet came, examined Molly and told Coco that she had been caught in a poacher's snare and, in pulling herself free, had damaged her hind leg. The wound had become infected and she was now very ill. The vet gave Coco some medicine for her and said he would call again next day.

Coco wrapped Molly in a warm blanket. She fell asleep, exhausted by her illness and her ordeal in the woods. Coco sat in a chair and watched her sleeping. Memories of her puppy days came flooding back to him. He remembered the first day he got her as a floppy-tailed ball of fur, and how she had chewed her way through all the cushions in the caravan one day, filling the caravan with a snowstorm of feathers. Although she looked very funny with a mouthful of feathers, he had not been pleased with her. He remembered how he had trained her to do the trick of pushing the pram and how quick she was to learn. So many memories of their times together.



Coco must have fallen asleep in the chair for he awoke with a start the next morning. Molly was sleeping fitfully on the bed. The vet called to see Molly as his first patient of the day. He was worried about her and, after he had examined her, told Coco that she was very ill, too ill to get better. Coco could hardly believe it. The vet made Molly comfortable with some different medicine and she slept more and more deeply.

Coco held her tenderly in his arms as her breathing became fainter and fainter; and then it stopped. The caravan was silent. Coco wondered why everything was so still and then realised; Molly had quietly died.

He sat for a long time holding and rocking her, crying big sad tears.

The next day the circus held a funeral service for Molly and she was buried in a corner of the circus field. All Coco's friends were there to say good-bye to her and to hug Coco. He felt awful and it was good to have his friends around.

There was no clown at the show for the next three nights. Coco stayed in his caravan or sat by Molly's grave talking to her and remembering all their times together. The memories were all very special now.

He worried about whether he should have done more to try to find her when she was lost, but his friends helped him see that he had done everything he could. For him it just didn't feel as though it had been enough.

The next day the Big Top was taken down. Everyone was busy packing up their caravans, getting ready to go. Coco knew he had to go with the circus but he didn't want to leave Molly. He went to her grave for the last time. He then harnessed Shadow to his caravan and followed the others out of the field, into the lane that led away from Applebury and Molly.

Coco felt sad for a long time after that, There were times when he couldn't be bothered to do anything very much, even though everyone around him seemed to be enjoying themselves as usual. These were times when he wanted to be on his own so he could think about Molly. There were other times when he enjoyed the fun going on around him and would join in with his friends. Once or twice he thought he saw Molly, but it was just a dog which looked a lot like her.

Gradually the weeks and months passed. Christmas came and went; it was a strange Christmas without Molly. Coco started to get used to no welcoming barks when he came home and no warm little dog curled up on his bed when he woke. Life was not the same. He needed his friends more than ever now: they knew this and helped him with their kindness.



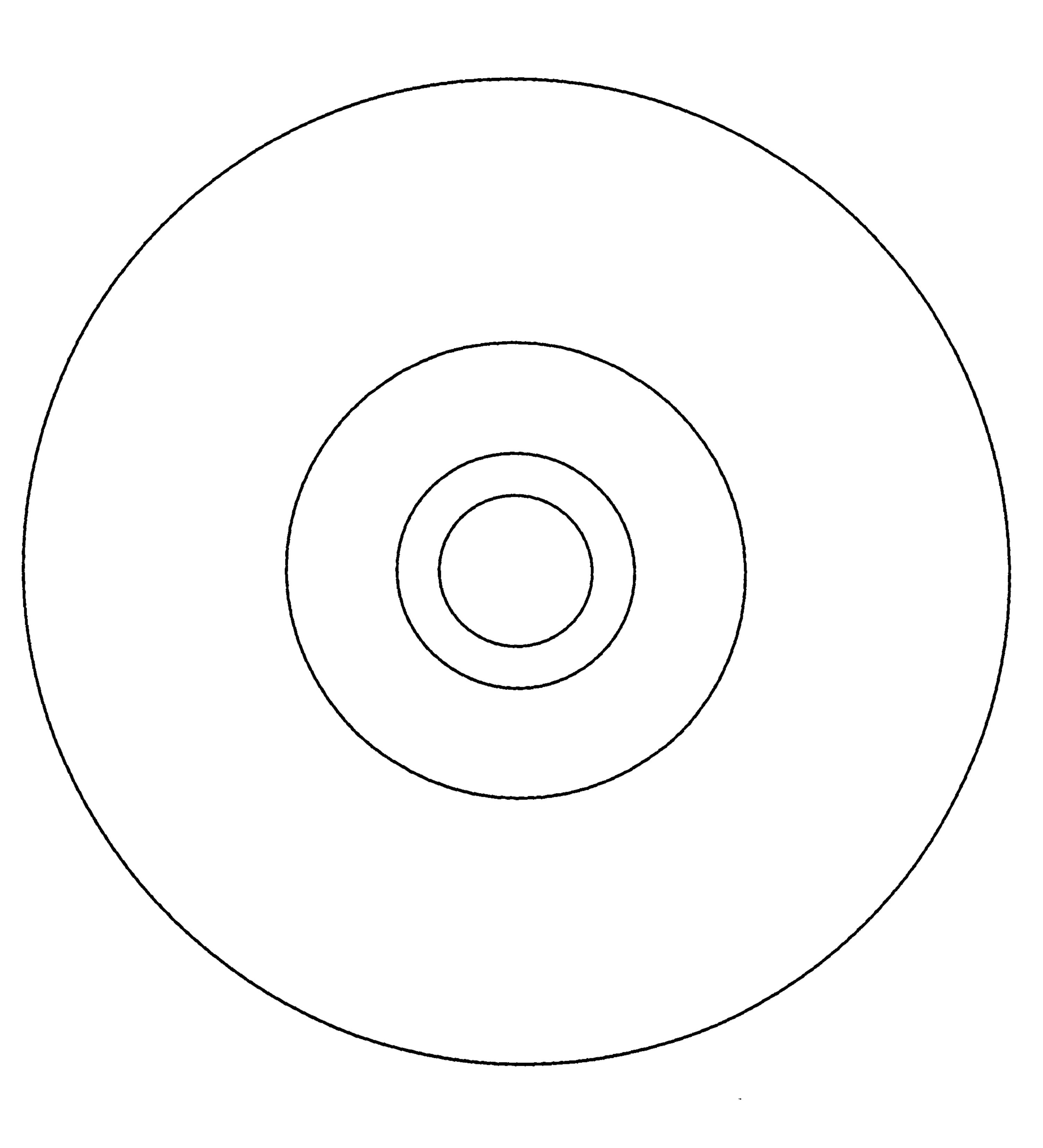
One crisp morning in late spring, Coco's acrobat friend turned up at his caravan door carrying a small bundle. It was a tiny puppy with a shiny, black nose. The acrobat had found the puppy wandering about the circus field looking very lost and forlorn. Coco said he would look after him until the owner came for him. They put up a poster to advertise that the puppy had been found.

Nobody came for him. When the circus moved on a few days later, Coco took the puppy with him and called him Sunny, because he was a happy little thing and full of mischief. Although Sunny looked very different to Molly, there were lots of things he did which reminded Coco of her. He became very fond of Sunny and knew that they would stay together. Their life together would not be the same as it had been with Molly, it was a friendship that was different and special in its own way.

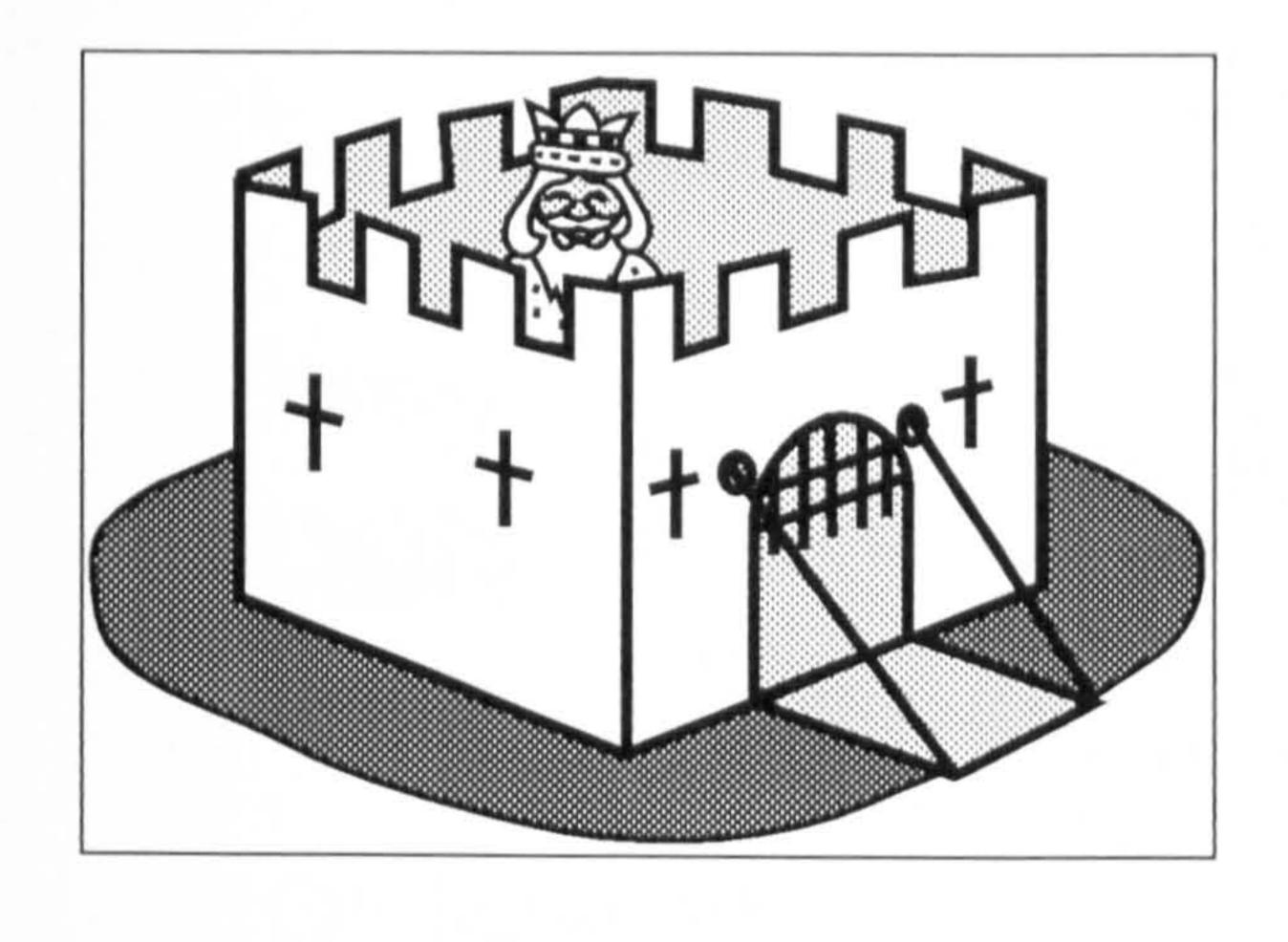
Sunny grew quickly and learnt to do tricks. He was very clever at jumping through hoops and balancing on the backs of ponies. He would bark with excitement as he rode around the ring.

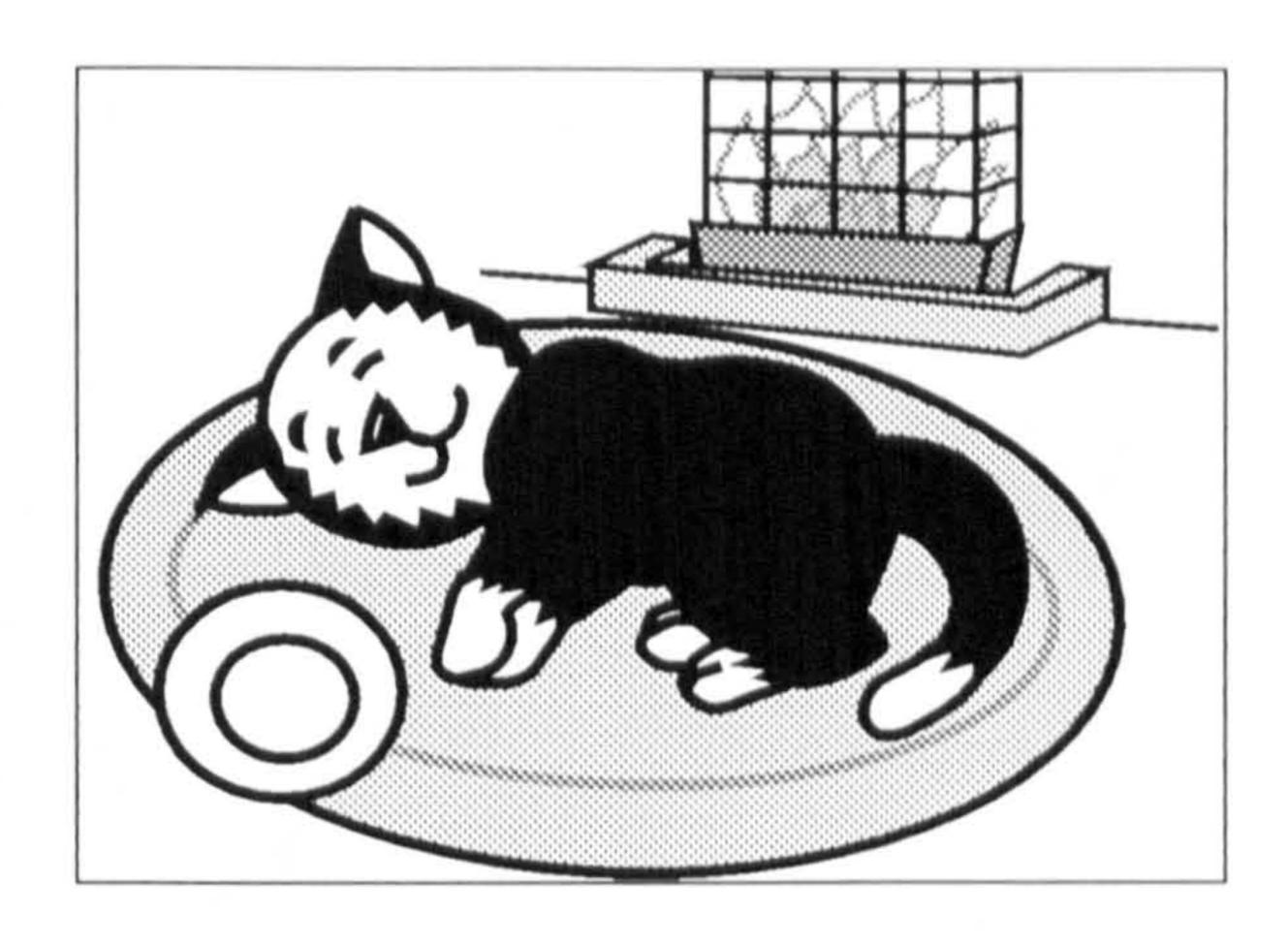
Coco grew to love Sunny and they had lots of good times together. He never forgot Molly and, every summer when they returned to Applebury, he would spend time at her grave-side giving her all the news of the past year. He knew Molly couldn't hear him but he did it all the same because, although he knew he could never get her back, thinking about her and talking to her helped him to feel closer to her. He also knew they would be friends, in this different way, forever.

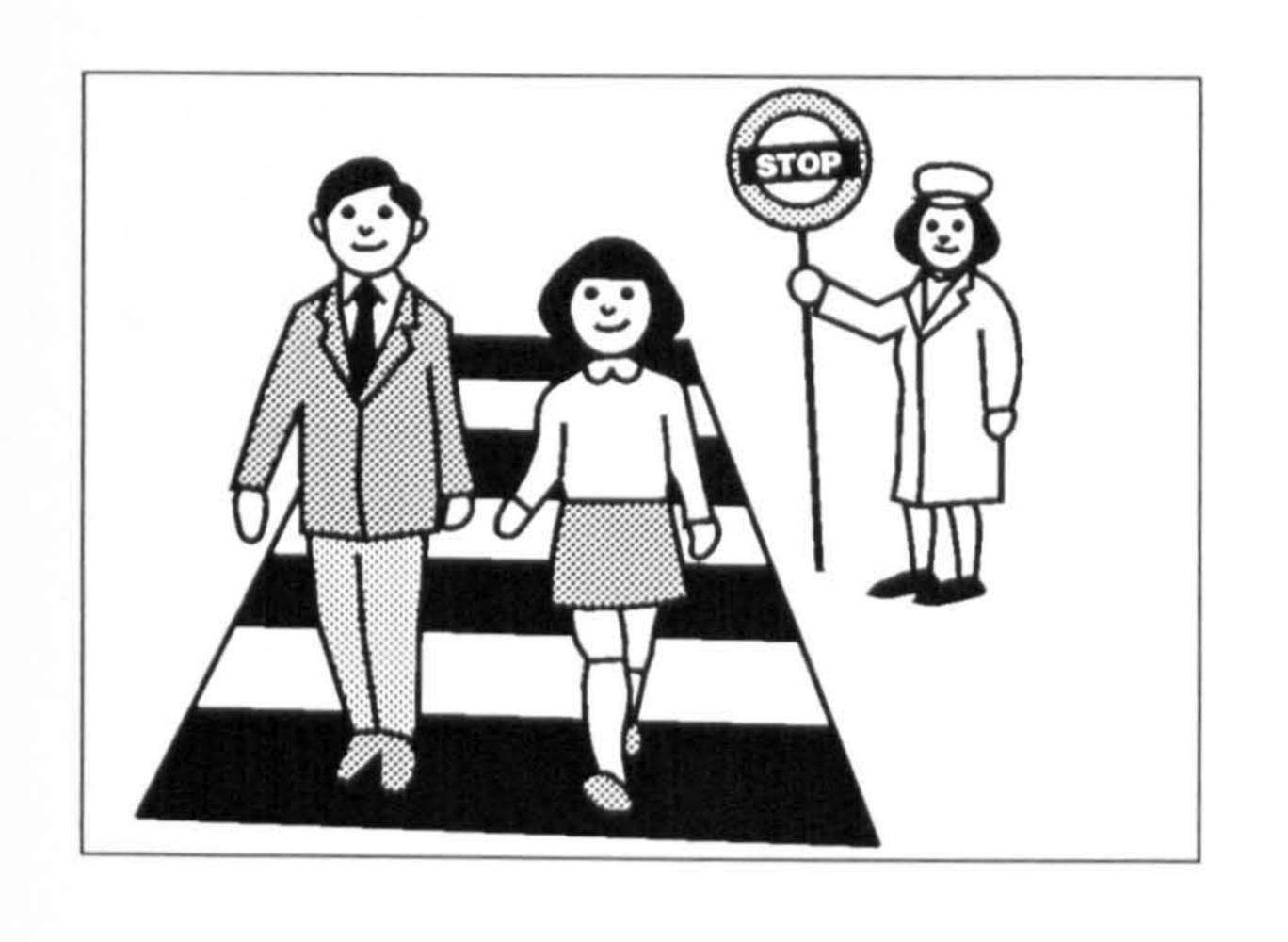
# TRUST CIRCLES

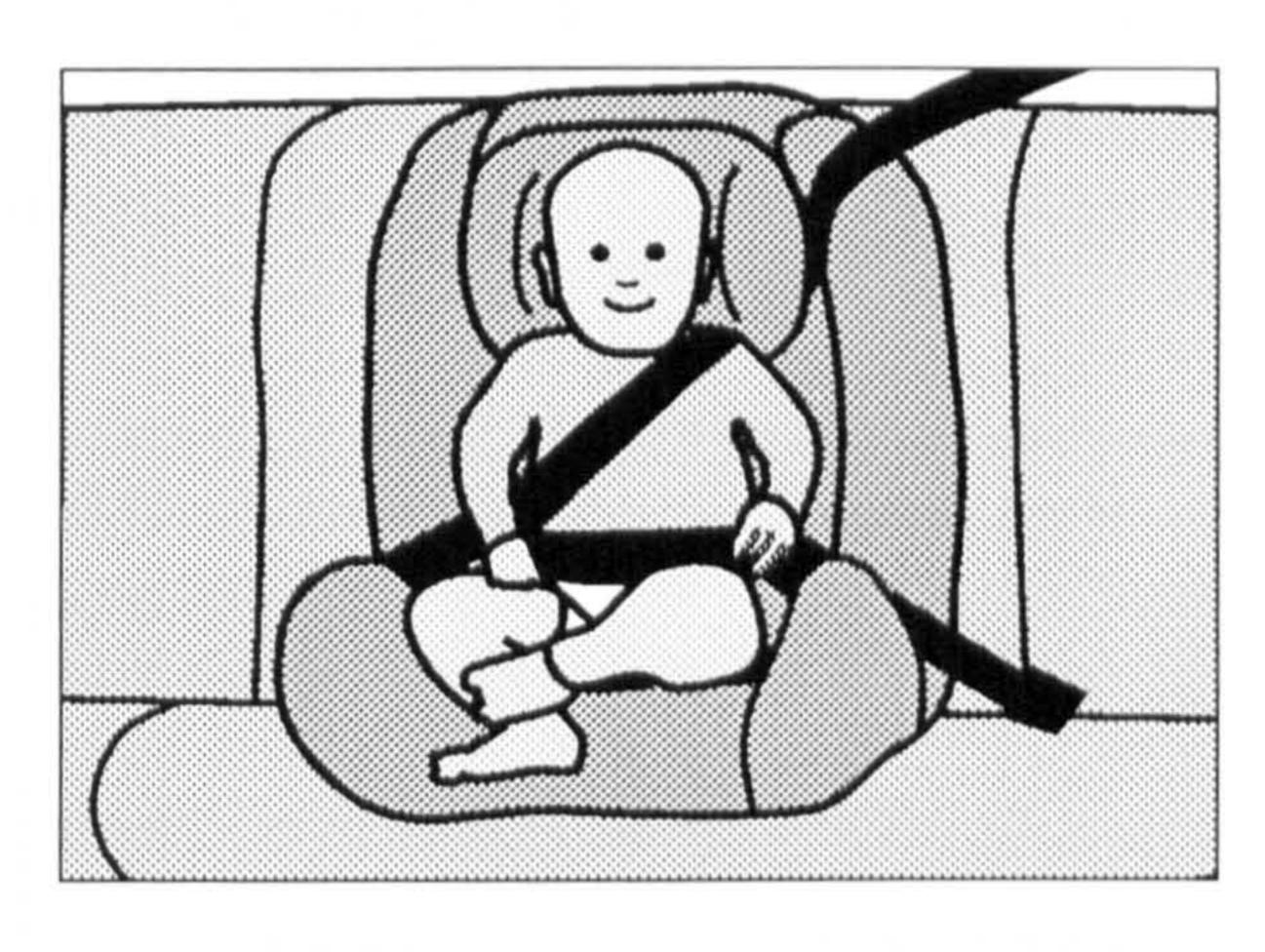


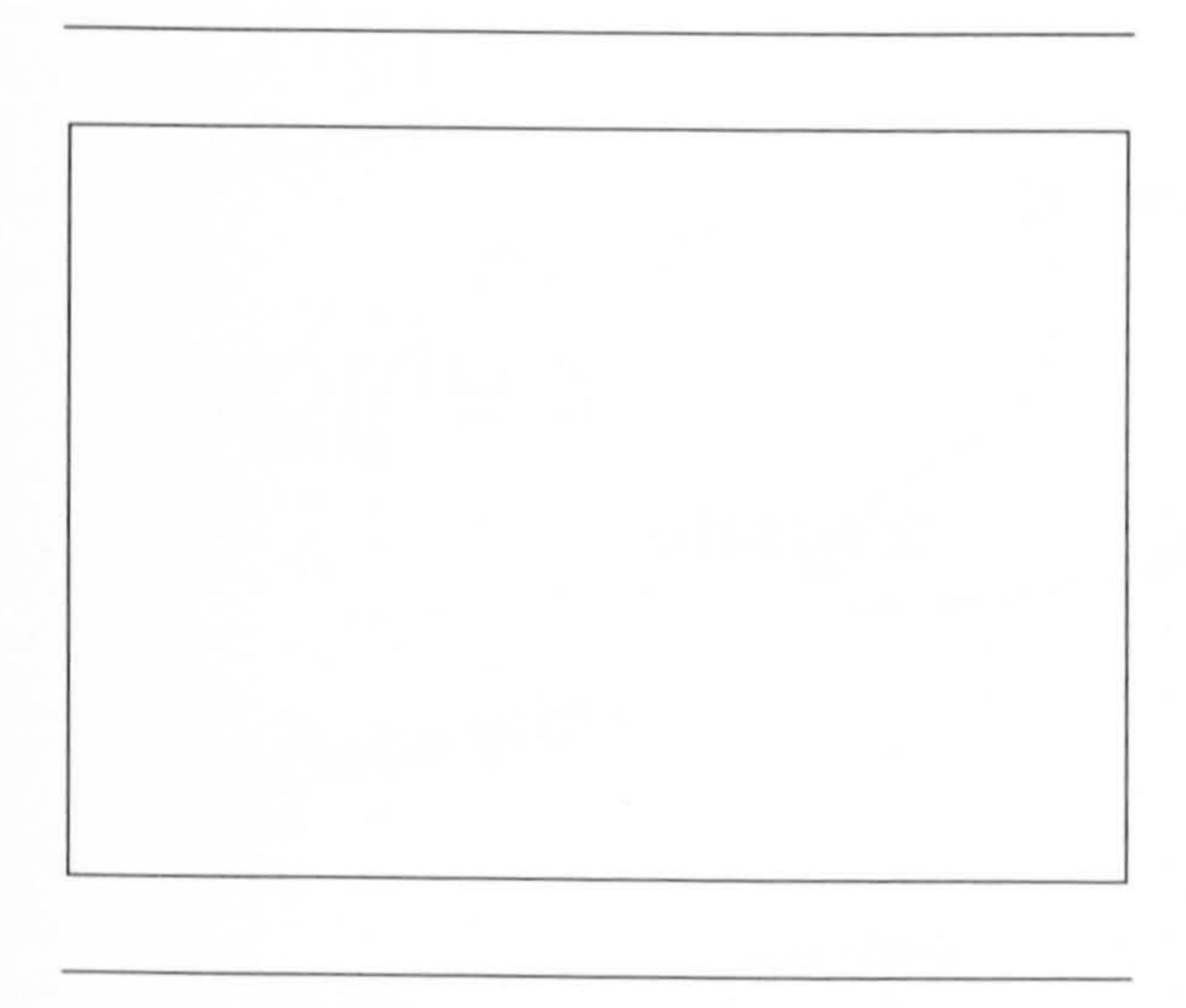
# SAFE PLACES











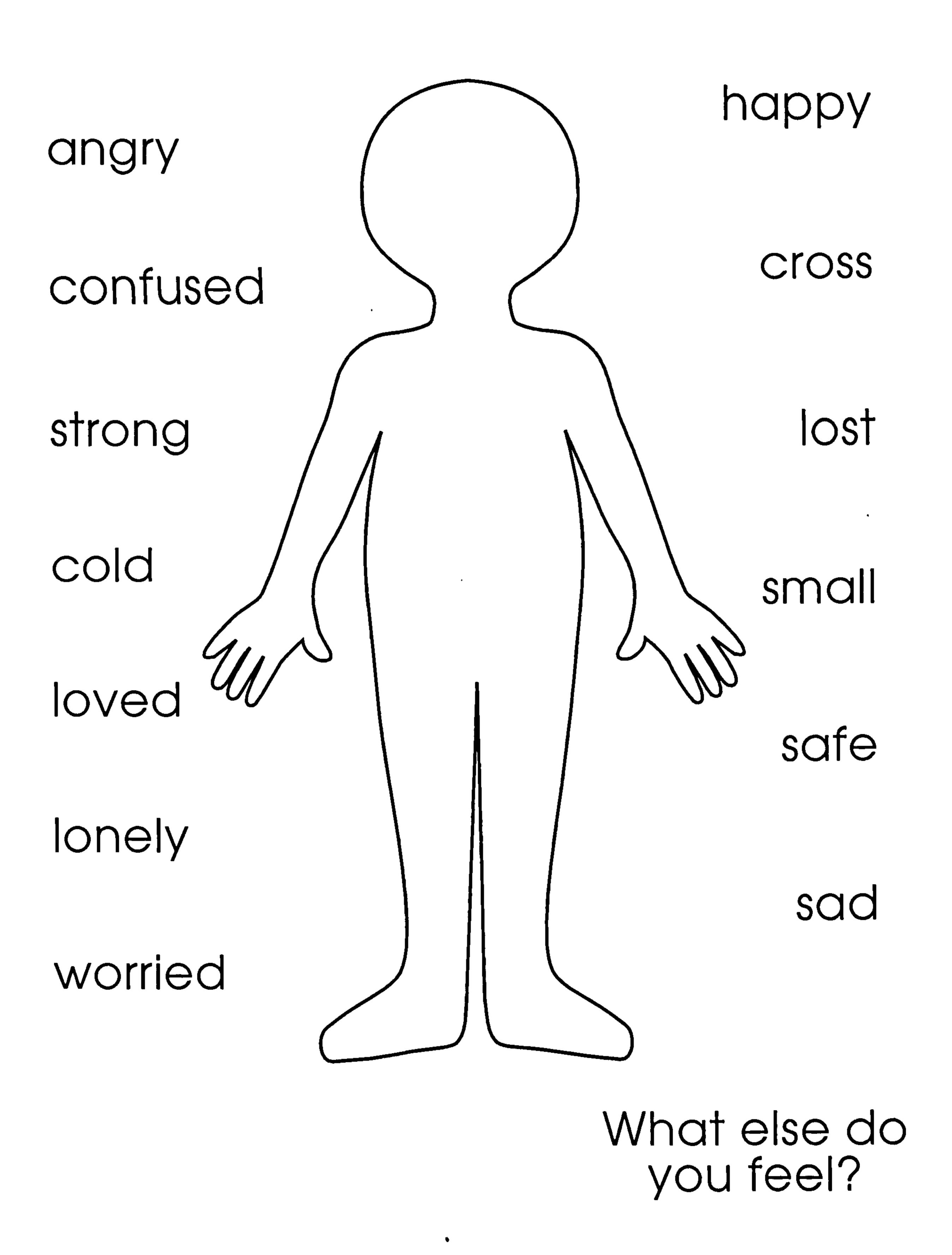


# THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES OF MY MUM

When I think about my Mum I think of her as...

| angry        | clever     | efficier       | 1           | showy      |
|--------------|------------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| rule-breaker | aama "     | aenerous       | strict      | calm       |
| untidy       | game-pla   | lyer           | trustw      | 'Orthy     |
| honest       | excitabl   | ste de         | gdy         | sociable   |
| secret-keep  | <b>Der</b> | organiser      | nxious      | rule-maker |
| confident    | busy       | helpful        | good listen | er         |
| scatterbrain |            |                | bossy       | cautious   |
| artistic     | shy        | easy-goin      | g           | noisy      |
| fault-fin    | dependab   | ole<br>worried | friend      | touchy     |
| tearful      |            | Cuddly         | forgetful   | strong     |
| reaso        | Dnable     | modest         | Stc         | )ry-reader |
| understandi  | ng<br>ger  |                | reliable    | gloomy     |

#### When I think of her I feel a mixture of things...

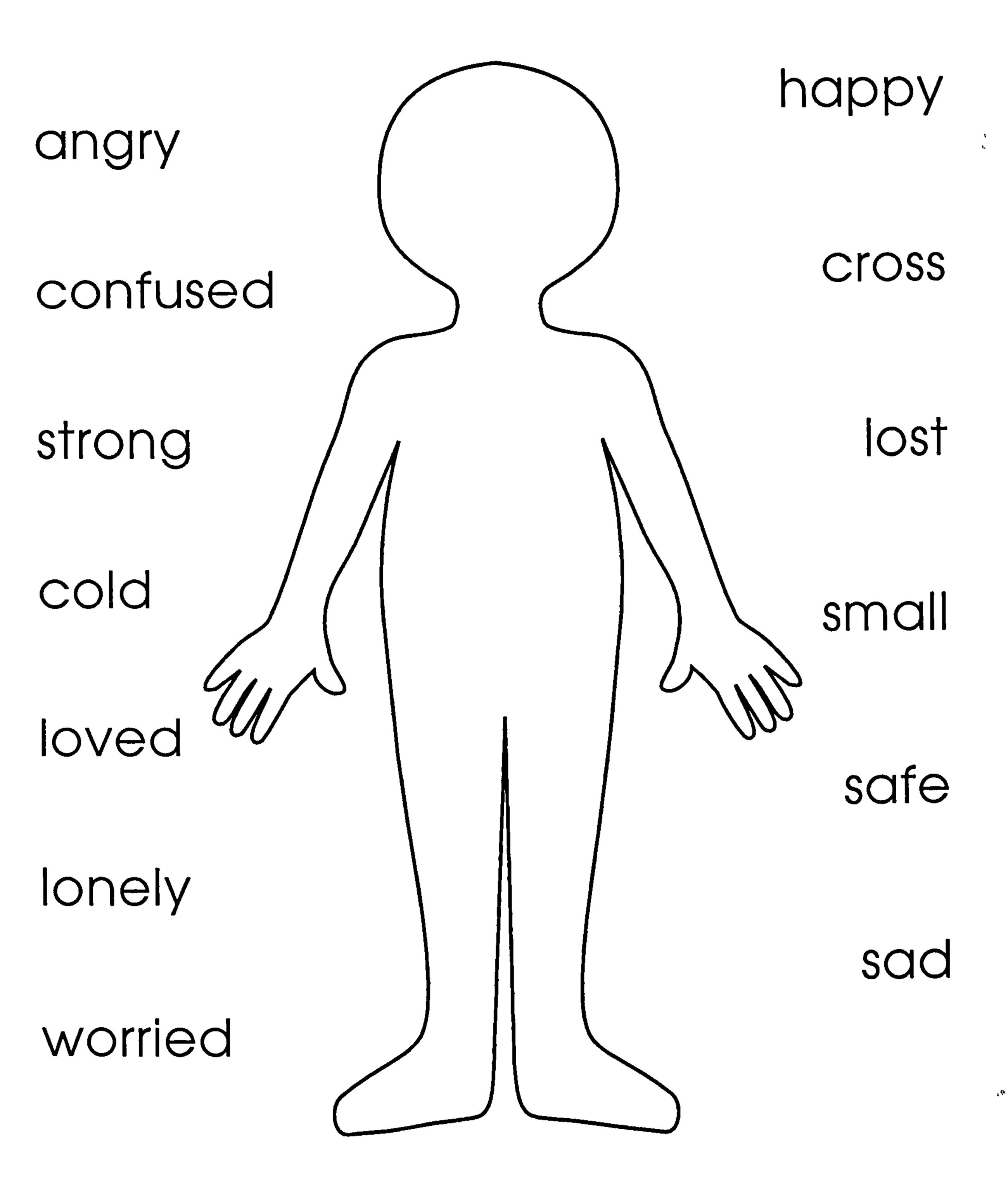


## THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES OF MY DAD

When I think about my Dad I think of him as...

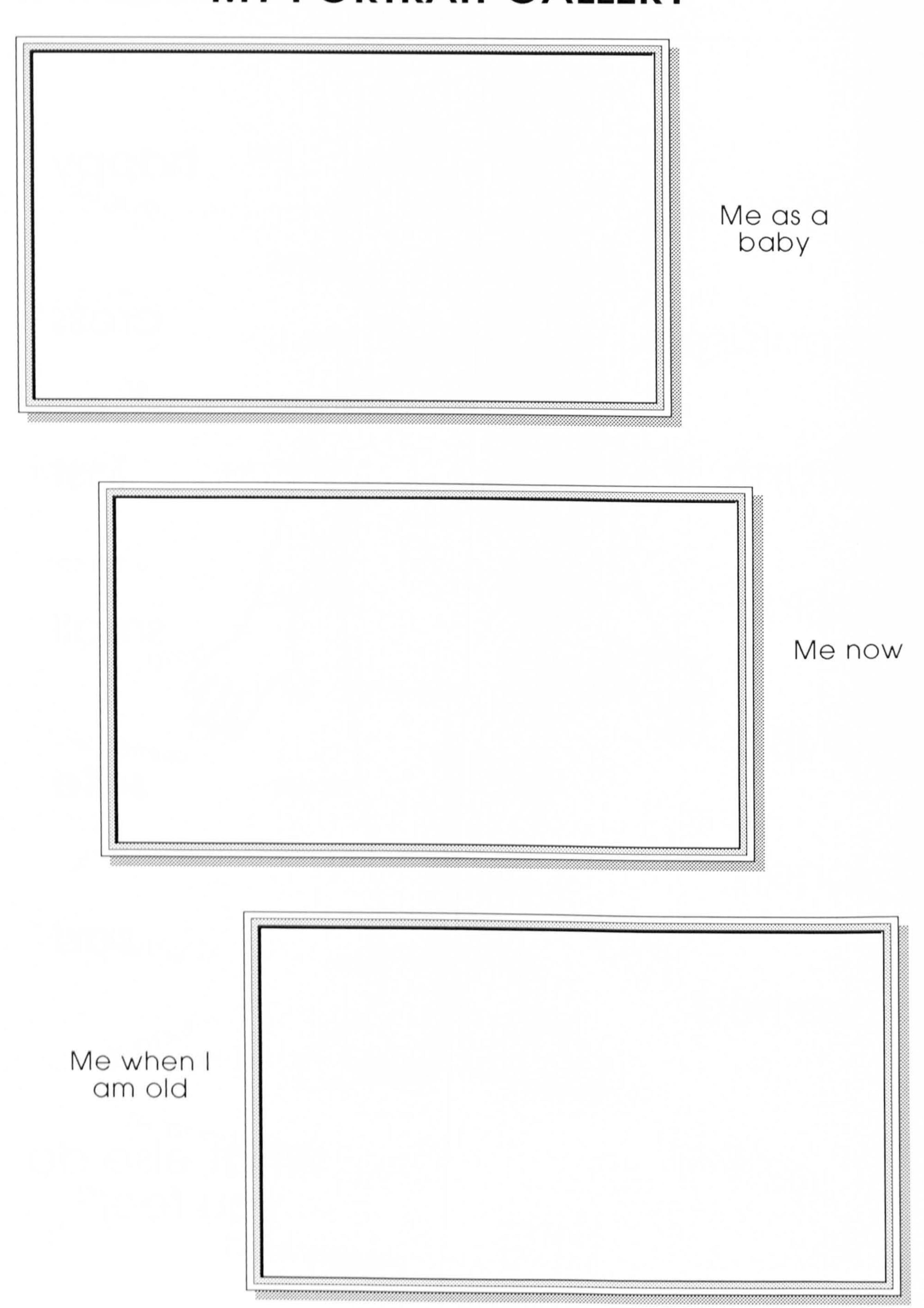
| reliable    | shy         | bossy        | understanding |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| cautious    | 9entle      | busy<br>str  | calm          |
| untidy      | steady      | fault-finder | sociable      |
| honest      | excitable   | organiser    | dependable    |
| touchy      | efficient   | anxious      | scatterbrain  |
| gloomy      | he          | Ipful goo    | d listener    |
| rule-maker  | clever      | generous     | rule-breaker  |
| artistic    | secre       | et-keeper    | confident     |
| trustworthy |             | -going       | worried       |
| tearful     | Cud         |              | strong        |
| reason      | Jable wo    | dest         | story-reader  |
| showy       | game-player | angry        | noisy         |

#### When I think of him I feel a mixture of things...



What else do you feel?

#### MY PORTRAIT GALLERY



# LETS GET TOGETHER

Can you draw a line between the things that go together?



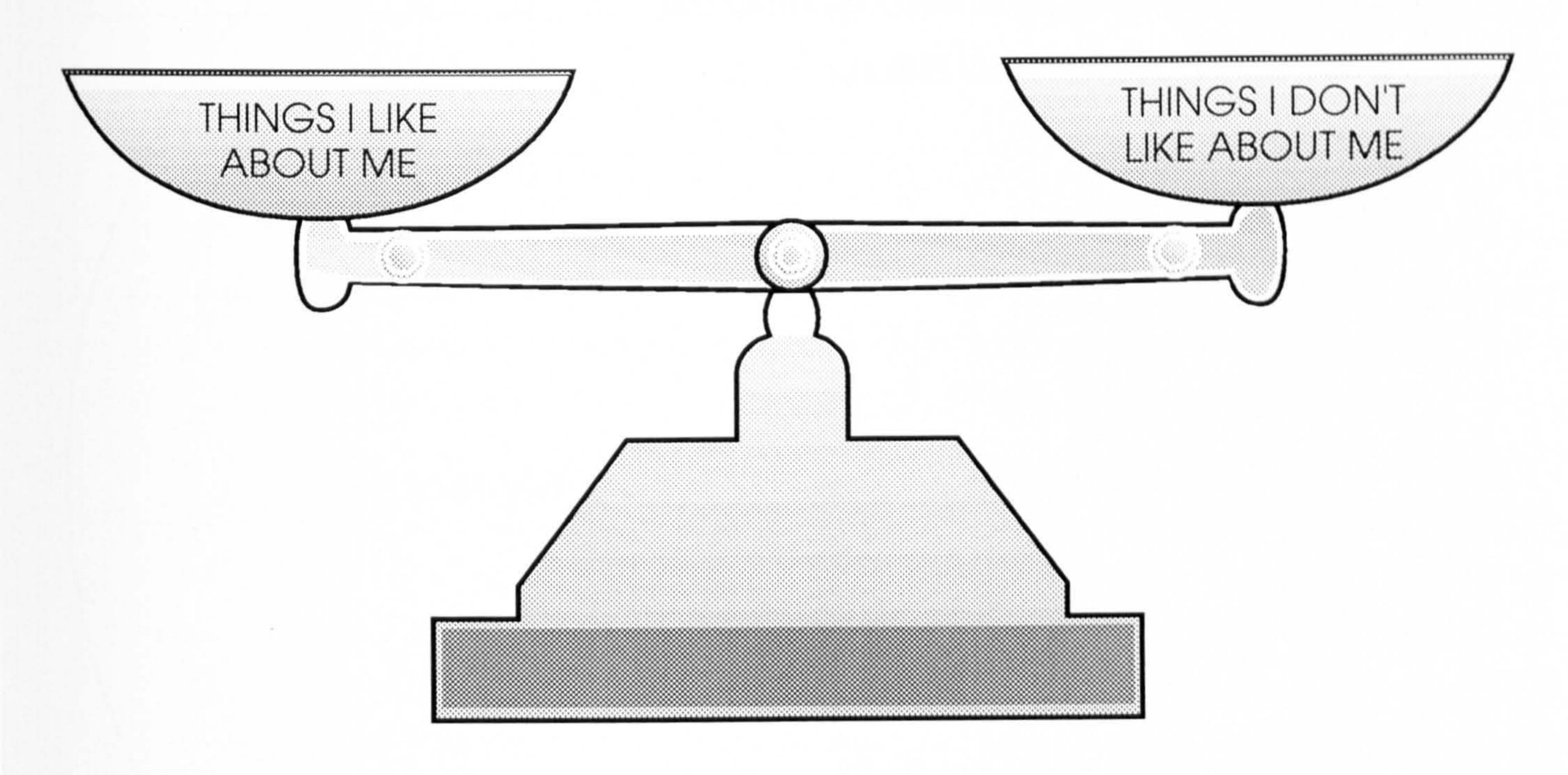
#### HOW I FEEL TODAY

|   | Hardly<br>ever | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of<br>the time |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| I feel safe at home                                 |                |                |                |                     |
| I make new friends at home easily                   |                |                |                |                     |
| I have trouble making up my mind                    |                |                |                |                     |
| I worry when I go to bed                            |                |                |                |                     |
| I enjoy my food at home                             |                |                |                |                     |
| I tell myabout my worries                           |                |                |                |                     |
| I think other children are happier than me          |                |                |                |                     |
| I am afraid something bad will happen to my family. |                |                |                |                     |
| I daydream when I am at school                      |                |                |                |                     |
|   |                |                |                |                     |

My daydream

| (0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,                       |                |                |                |                     |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
|   | Hardly<br>ever | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of<br>the time |
| I make new friends at school easily                           |                |                |                |                     |
| I have bad dreams   |                |                |                |                     |
| I wake up scared  |                |                |                |                     |
| I enjoy trying new activities                                 |                |                |                |                     |
| I feel lonely at school                                       |                |                |                |                     |
| I tell my teacher when I am upset                             |                |                |                |                     |
| I worry about going to the toilet                             |                |                |                |                     |
| I feel safe at school   |                |                |                |                     |
| At school others seem to be able to do things easier then me. |                |                |                |                     |

## HOW I FEEL TODAY



|   | Hardly | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of<br>the time |
|---|--------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| I think about my                              |        |                |                |                     |
| When I think about my I feel sad feel sad     |        |                |                |                     |
| When I think about my I feel worried          |        |                |                |                     |
| I have good memories of my                    |        |                |                |                     |
| I have painful memories of my                 |        |                |                |                     |
| I like to look at photos of my                |        |                |                |                     |
| I look at photos of mywith my                 |        |                |                |                     |
| I talk with myabout my                        |        |                |                |                     |
| I can trust my friends with my feelings about |        |                |                |                     |

#### HOW I FEEL TODAY

|   | Hardly<br>ever | Some-<br>times | Quite<br>a lot | Most of the time |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| It is hard for me to get to sleep at night          |                |                |                |                  |
| It is hard for me to keep my mind on my school work |                |                |                |                  |
| I can trust my friends with my secrets              |                |                |                |                  |
| I am afraid something bad will happen to me         |                | :              |                |                  |
| I easily get angry with other children              |                |                |                |                  |
| I feel tired  |                |                |                |                  |
| I feel lonely at home                               |                |                |                |                  |
| I enjoy my food at school                           |                |                |                |                  |

My best friend

My teacher

# HOW I SEE THE FUTURE



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