

ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK BY
EZRA JACK KEATS

THE SNOWY DAY



EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK

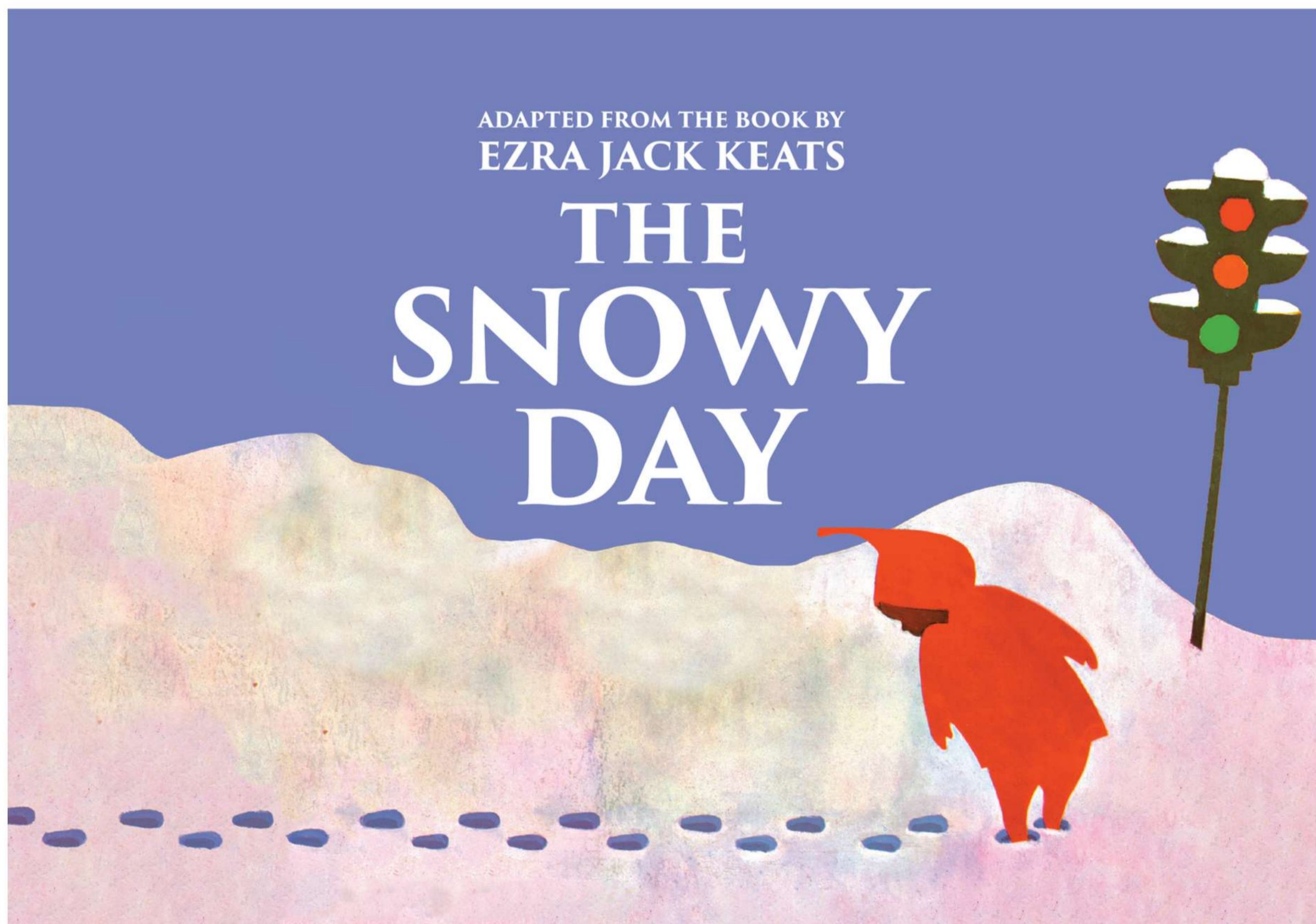
**DESIGNED TO BRING
CREATIVITY, WONDER AND JOY**
to the EYFS Curriculum



WHO WAS EZRA JACK KEATS?

Ezra Jack Keats was an award-winning author and illustrator of books for children. Many of Ezra's stories are about a group of friends growing up in the city. The neighborhood they live in looks like the streets where Ezra grew up in Brooklyn, New York.

In 1962, Ezra wrote and illustrated his own book. *The Snowy Day* featured a young African-American boy named Peter. Ezra based the character of Peter on a series of photos he had cut out of Life magazine in the early 1940s. Ezra had noticed that the main characters in the books he illustrated were always white. That didn't seem fair to other children, who deserved to see characters in books that looked like them. He decided that Peter would be the hero of his story because "he should have been there all along." *The Snowy Day* was awarded the Caldecott Medal in 1963. It was the greatest honor given for picture books at the time.



CAN'T SIT STILL

Can't Sit Still devise performances and projects using physical theatre, circus, and live music. We make work with and for unusual audiences*, often in unusual locations**, turning ideas, systems and even people*** upside down.

* Anyone who is labelled as having special needs (PMLD, SLD, MLD), who identify as being on the Autistic Spectrum, is Deaf, deaf and hard of hearing, new mothers/birth parents with babies, people who use English as a second language, and anyone who, for any reason, might not believe that the Arts are for them.

** Libraries, children's centres, outdoors, doorsteps, village & town halls, screens and everywhere in-between.

*** May contain handstands.

You can discover more of their work, and get involved by searching CantSitStill.org or [@Cant_Sit_Still_theatre](https://www.instagram.com/Cant_Sit_Still_theatre) on Instagram.



POLKA THEATRE

Polka is one of just a handful of dedicated children's venues in the UK. It underwent a major renovation, re-opening in 2021, and continues to present a year-round programme of new work made at Polka, visiting shows, and Creative Learning activities for 0–12-year-olds.

Polka continues to pioneer developments in children's theatre, nurture artistic talent in the sector, and maintain an international reputation while serving local communities. Children are involved at every stage of the creative process and lead the way in Early Years theatre. Creative Learning is central to Polka's mission - with shows being supported by tailored community and schools initiatives.

Over the past year Polka has worked with 143 schools through creative learning projects and has distributed over 6,000 free tickets to schools through their Curtain Up! scheme.

@PolkaTheatre

PolkaTheatre.com



HOW TO USE THIS EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK

You'll find this resource jam-packed full of creative ways to explore 'The Snowy Day' at home, at nursery, or at school. This has been designed and inspired by the theatre production of Ezra Jack Keats' book, but **you can do any of the activities before or after seeing the show.**

The activities you'll find are **designed with children in Nursery, Pre-School and Reception** in mind, by Lucy Kingsley, a teacher who specialises in the Early Years. You'll see we've highlighted where these activities meet the **Statutory Requirements of the EYFS**. You might find that by following the children's interests and lines of enquiry, you'll be able to meet even more curriculum requirements than we've listed here, so please do let the children take control of their learning and show you where their curiosities take them.

On each activity page, you'll find a list of **WHAT YOU NEED**, an **INVITATION**, and a list of **QUESTIONS**.

WHAT YOU NEED: We share with you the minimal amount of equipment required to complete the activity, but you might find that you want to supplement this.

INVITATION: This is the "what to do" part, presented as an invitation. This is because we want you to feel confident to **take this idea and tweak it according to your needs and interests**, and the needs and interests of the magnificent children you're working with. You might find our invitation is a perfect fit, or you might find that it's a good starting point from which to develop an activity.

QUESTIONS: These are things that **you might like to ask the children** as you're beginning the activity or once they've begun their brilliant work. These are just a starting point; we anticipate **you and your children will find many more important questions to wonder about together.**

Once he heads outside, Peter has a wonderful adventure playing in the snow. He notices how the snow has fallen on the street where he lives. He notices what happens when he moves himself and different objects in the snow.



WHAT YOU NEED



Paper

Mark makers



INVITATION



Imagine you wake up to find it's a snowy day. What would you take with you to explore the snow? Think about the things you would wear and the things you'd like to take with you to play with in the snow. You can use the drawing frame on the next page to organise your objects.



QUESTIONS



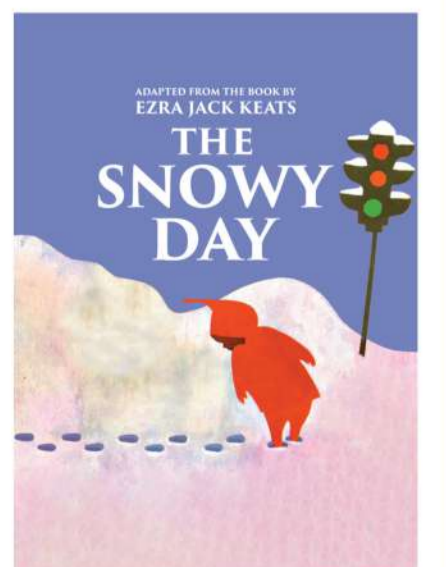
What would you do if you got hungry on your adventure?

Would you prefer to take a tiny bag or an enormous bag with you?

What would it feel like to make a snow angel?

Have you ever played with snow?

Draw all of the things you'd take with you on a snowy adventure.



Peter finds a fantastic stick in the snow, which he uses to give himself a snowy shower! He had a great big snowball land on his head with a PLOP!



WHAT YOU NEED



Paper, paint and sticks



INVITATION



Go on a walk in your local area and find 3 sticks to take back with you. Make sure your 3 sticks are different to one another. They might be different because of their length, their thickness or the way they feel in your hand. Use these sticks as paint brushes as you make a picture. You might discover the most wonderful painting stick!



QUESTIONS



- What happens when you change the amount of paint on your stick?
- Do you prefer drawing with the sticks, or letting paint plop off them?
- What happens if you break your stick in half, can you still use it?
- What's the difference between a stick and a paintbrush?

ICE CUBE EXPERIMENTS

EYFS: Understanding the World

Near the end of the story, Peter fetches his coat to look for the snowball he left in his pocket. When he reaches inside, he finds it's disappeared!



 **WHAT YOU NEED** 
Ice cubes and curiosity



INVITATION



Explore snow and melting with ice cubes. Prepare a tray of ice cubes and once frozen, carefully peel them out and place them in different places. You might put them in places where the melting slows down, or it speeds up!



QUESTIONS

What happens when you put something on top of the ice cube?

Can you think of a very warm place for the ice cube to be?

If the ice cube melts, are there any clues left behind that it was there?

Can you guess which ice cubes will melt the quickest?

ICY PRINTMAKING

EYFS: Expressive Arts & Design

Although you might expect a story about snow to be white, Keat's story is incredibly bright and colourful. We think you'll find every colour of the rainbow in the book if you look carefully!



WHAT YOU NEED



Paper, felt tip pens and ice cubes



INVITATION

Colour in a sheet of paper with felt tips, use as many different colours as you like and try and fill the page as much as possible. Then, get an ice cube and let it slide over your page. You could do this by guiding it with a pen around your page, or by placing your paper and ice cube in a tray, which you can tip around. Then with your soggy paper, place it on top of a new piece of paper (felt tip side down) and peel back to reveal your print!

QUESTIONS

What happens when the ice cube stays in one place for a while?

What's the difference between the felt tip paper and the print?

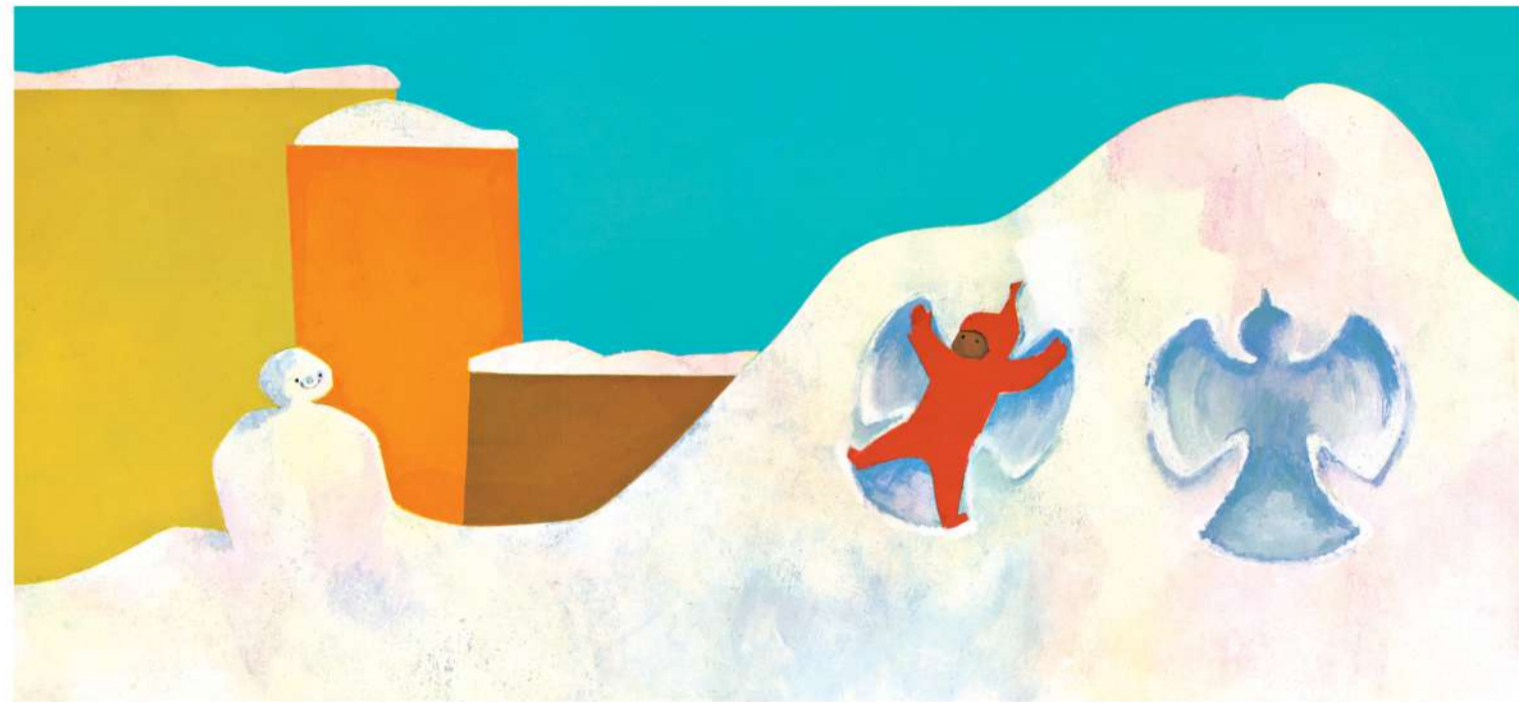
How does the texture of the paper change ?

How is the picture different when it's dry?

SNOWY COLLAGE

EYFS: Physical Development

One of the techniques used in *The Snowy Day* is collage. Collaging involves cutting pieces of paper to make new shapes. Sometimes collaging can be used to illustrate the landscape of a scene, and sometimes it can be used to illustrate people and objects. If you look carefully at the story, you might be able to notice where Keats used different papers and cut different shapes.



WHAT YOU NEED



Paper for collaging. You could use plain paper, magazines, or the textured and patterned designs on the following pages.



INVITATION



Cut or rip shapes from the paper you have for collaging. You might like to organise your shapes randomly, or make a pattern. You could make something that looks like somewhere or something you know or you could make something more abstract. You could even collage a self portrait!



QUESTIONS

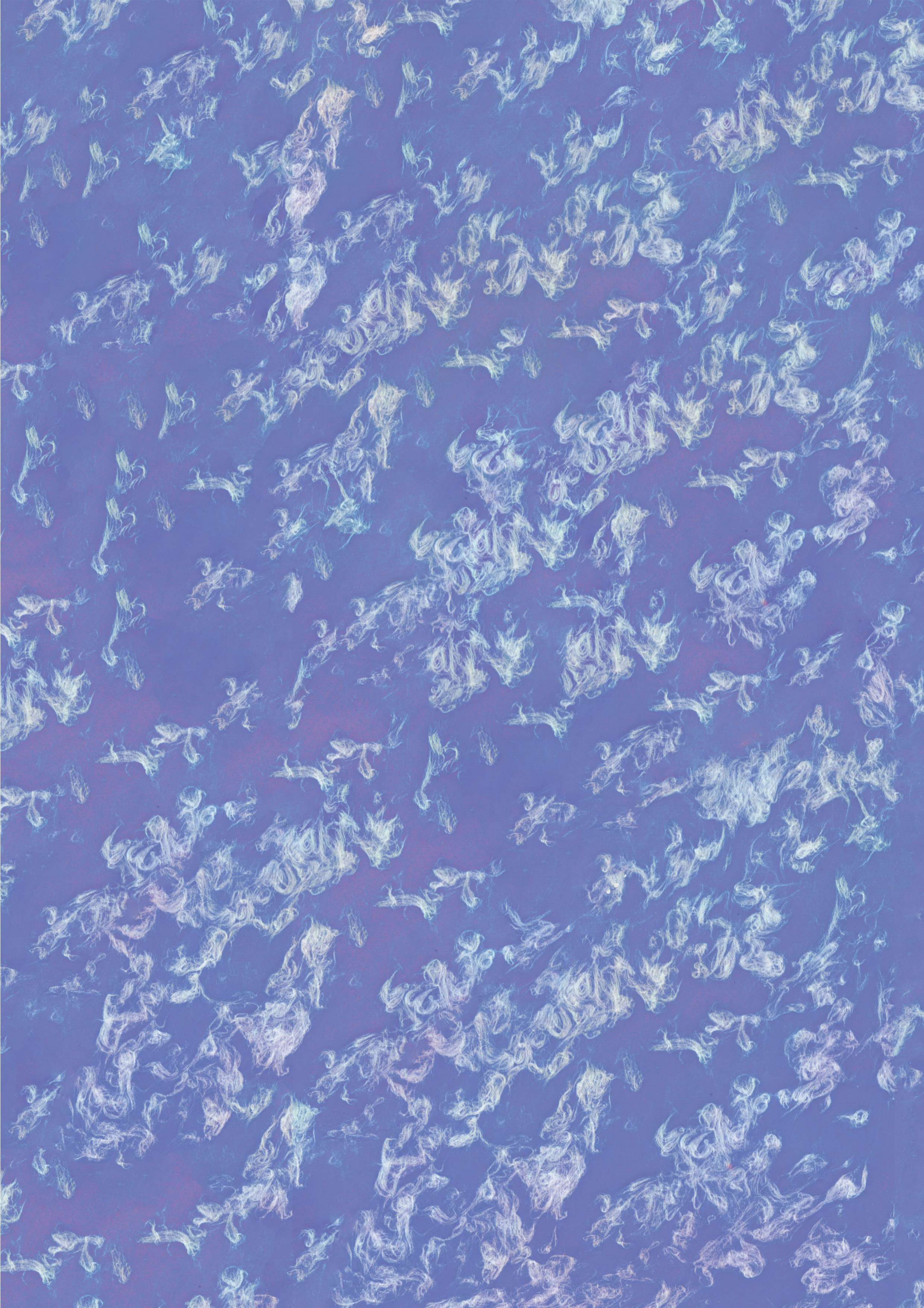


How will you make the shapes you need?

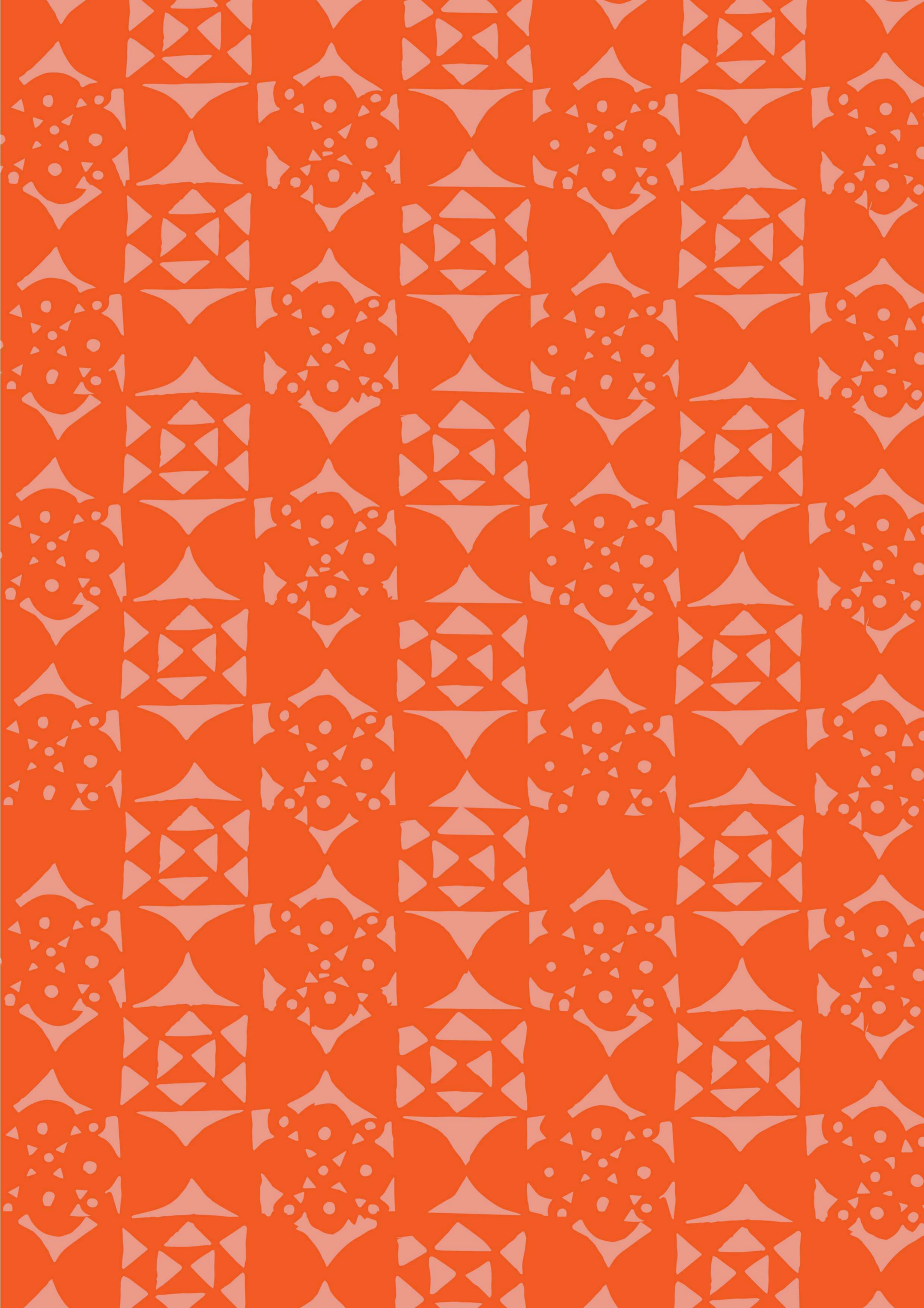
Do you prefer using small pieces or large pieces?

Will your shapes overlap each other, or do they need more space?

How can you make shapes in your pattern similar to each other?







GROUP SNOWY

EYFS: PSED

SCENE

In *The Snowy Day*, Keats uses printing to include snowflakes in the illustrations. Can you find them in the story? Although snow is white, he's used a variety of different colours when printing the snowflakes to make them really stand out on top of the snowy background.



WHAT YOU NEED



Paper, paint and sticks



INVITATION



Gather a small group of children to make a piece of artwork together. Give each child a pot of paint and a paintbrush and place a large piece of paper on a table which is easily accessible for them and ask them to spread out around the paper.

Then give them these instructions ...

1. Draw a line, anywhere, any size
2. Walk to a line someone else painted, and draw a line through it to make an X shape
3. Walk to find a different X shape and draw another line through it to make a star
4. Find a different star and paint a dot at the end of each line, you should find 6!

Repeat this as many times as you like, notice what the children paint and invite them to try things differently for the next round e.g. think about scale and the texture of the lines (could they be wiggly lines or dotted lines?)



QUESTIONS



How does it feel to make one picture together, instead of one alone?

PRINTING A SNOWBALL

EYFS: Expressive Arts & Design

Printing is something that lots of artists do to make beautiful effects. Keats uses printing in lots of his books. Printing can be exciting and also quite unpredictable, you can't be sure how it will turn out!



WHAT YOU NEED



Paper and paint



INVITATION



Use a plain piece of paper and scrunch it up into a snowball. You can use this to make your snowball prints! Decide if you'd like to print white snowballs, or use more unusual colours. Dip your paper snowball in the paint and press it onto your paper to make your print.



QUESTIONS



What happens if you dab or scrape or roll the snowball?

What does it sound like when you make the print?

Do you like overlapping the printing, or leaving space between the shapes?

Can you make a different sized snowball?

The Snowy Day story gives us the opportunity to imagine and feel part of a snowy world. It's hard to find a page of the story without any snow!



WHAT YOU NEED

Sticks, toilet rolls and materials for covering them. This could be paints, pens, paper, rice, bottle tops, or anything else interesting you can find.

INVITATION

Take a toilet roll and make it snowy! Cover the roll in white things. You could do this by colouring or sticking things on to the roll. You can use one method, or a variety on your roll. Once you've finished, slide your toilet roll on to a stick to make it look like there's snow on the branch. The snowy sticks look really beautiful, you might like to hang them up in the space you share.

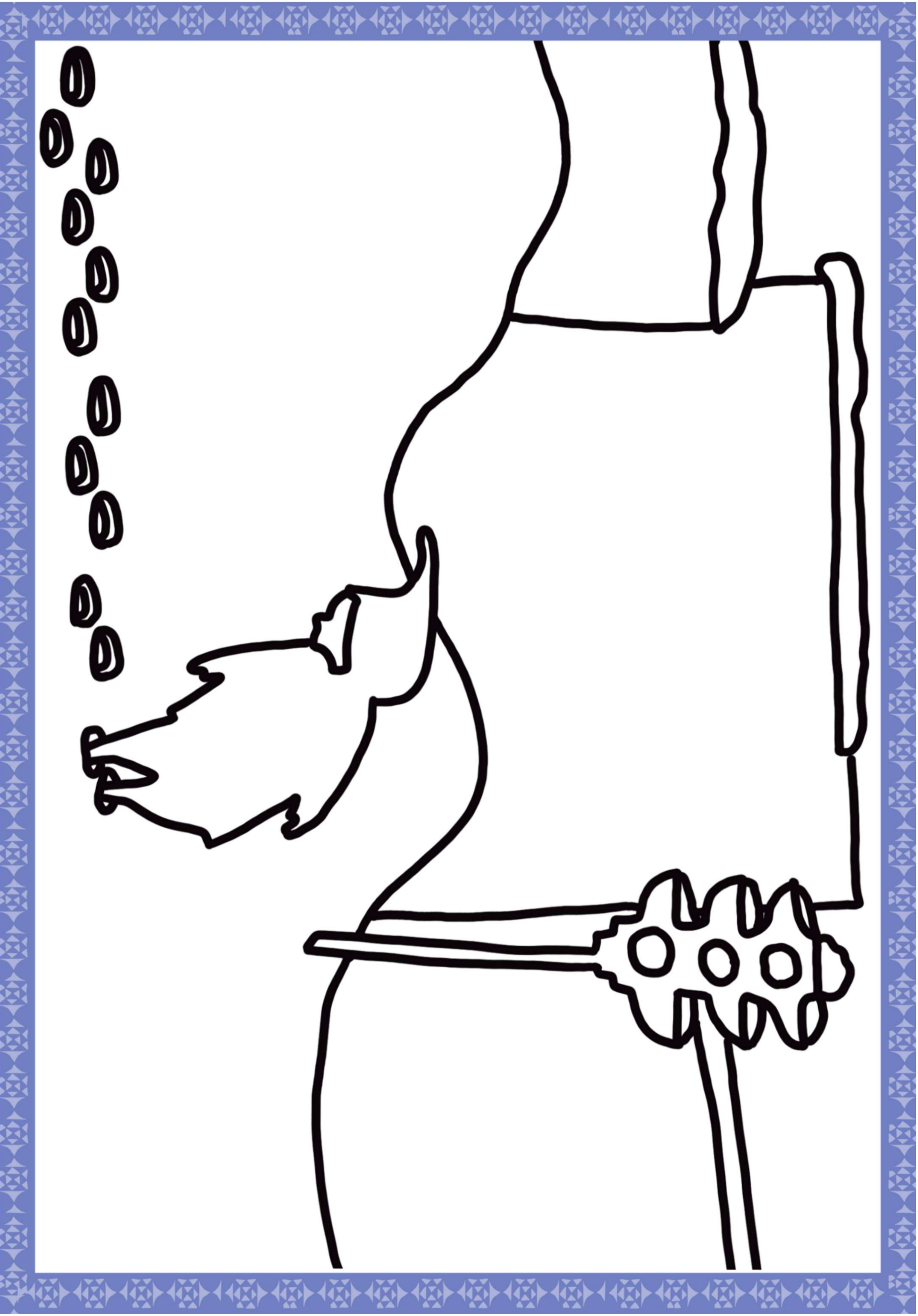
QUESTIONS

How does it feel to draw on something that isn't flat?

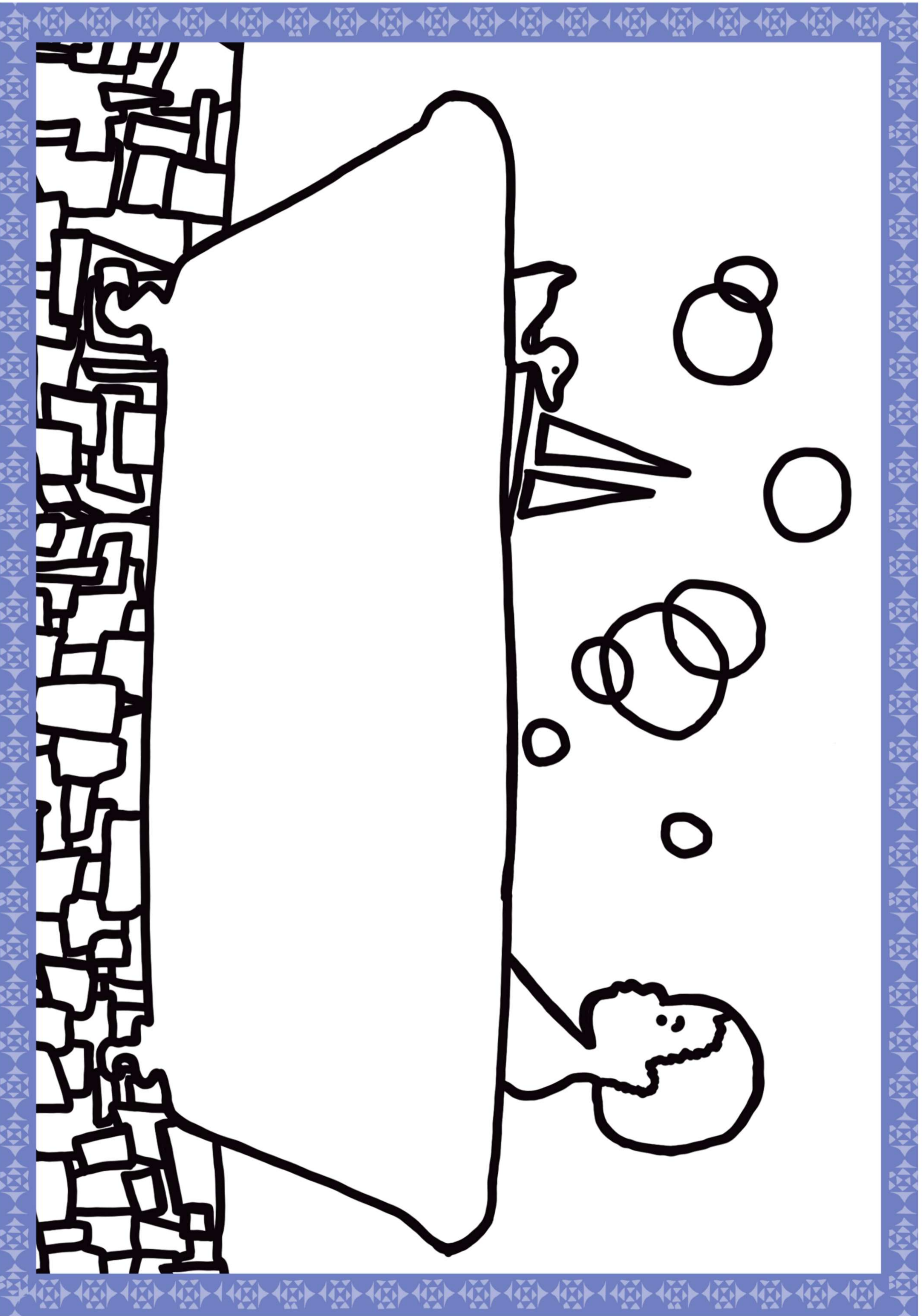
How would snow get onto branches of a tree?

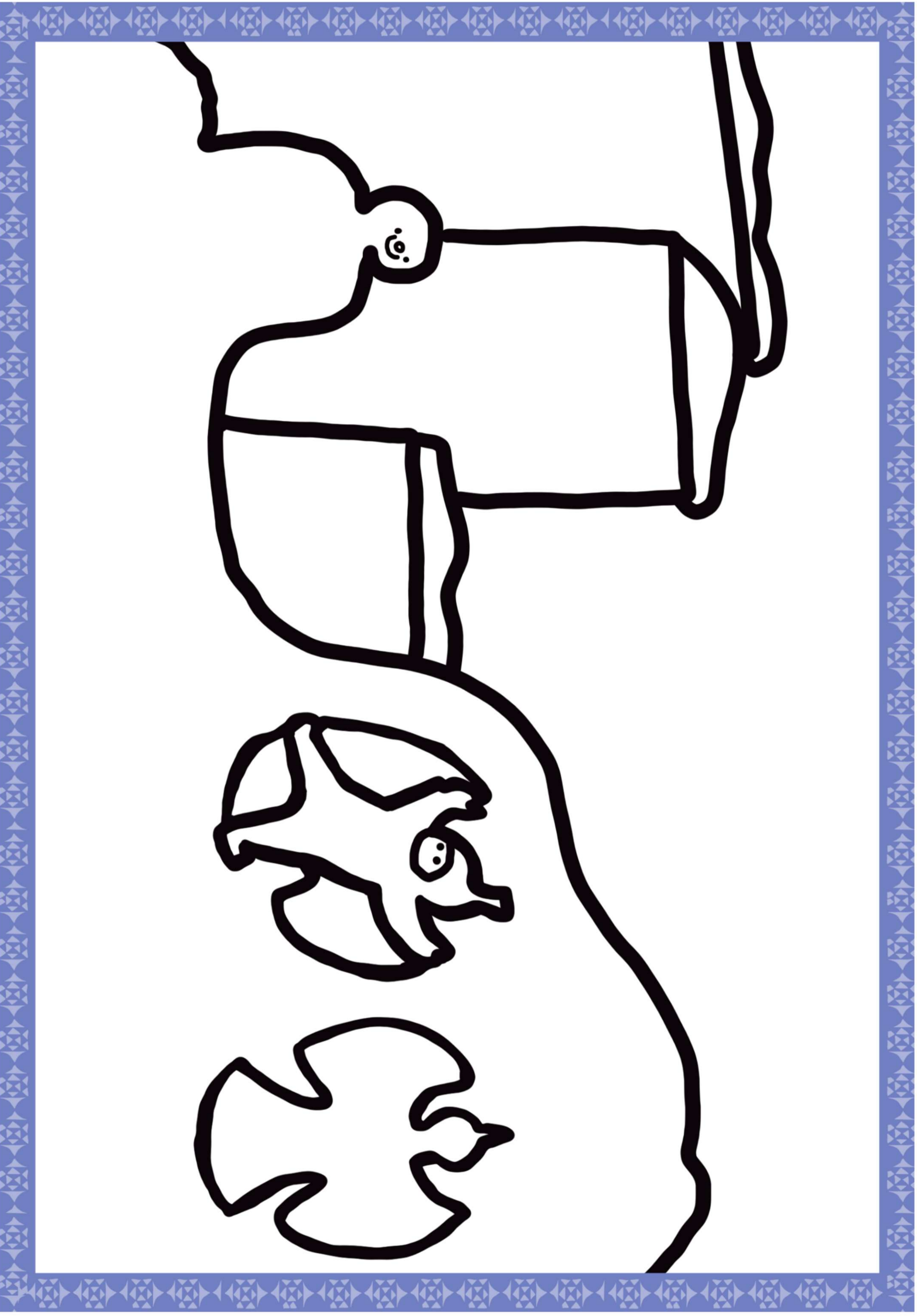
Does it matter if you don't cover every part of your toilet roll?

How could you get the toilet roll to sit on the branch if it's wonky?



From *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats, with permission from the EJK Foundation.





HAVE YOU MADE SOMETHING SPECTACULAR?

We'd absolutely **love** to see it!

Take a picture or video of what you've been making,
and share with us on Instagram
@Cant_Sit_Still_Theatre for a chance to win tickets to
one of our shows.



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