

AN EARLY YEARS STORYPLAY GUIDE FOR HAT TRICKS BY SATOSHI KITAMURA

This guide for sharing Hat Tricks provides parents and practitioners of young children with 6 games and activities to develop not just a love of books and being read to but also to support the key features of the Early years foundation stage framework.

The following ideas have been compiled by an Early Years specialist to ensure that children are given access through fantasy play and imagination to early language and literacy skills as well as the social, emotional and physical skills necessary to develop fine and gross motor control and an appreciation for and curiosity about the world around them.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Hat Tricks is a joyous and simple celebration of anticipation and surprise that begs to be read over and over again. It opens up a myriad of opportunities for young children and adults to talk and play together in the wonderful world of “let’s pretend”, absolutely the very best way to create important and comfortable relationships.

The book introduces us to Hattie, a playful rabbit magician and her amazing hat. Hattie brings every page to life by summoning creatures of all sizes from her hat with just a wand and some magic words. Through the process we discover that she has created an imaginative world that entices and invites us to step inside the book to play.

THE BOOK TEASE

One of the ways to instil a love of books and reading is to playfully tease children into the story. There is something very powerful and enabling for children when they realise that books connect with the joyful elements of their play, ideas and experiences.

By creating a playful introduction before introducing the book we allow the children to come to the realisation that they already know the story and this recognition creates the perfect hook to draw them into the pages.

IDEAS TO TANTALISE

Downloadable resources after page 7 include:

- Star shapes and lightning flashes, Satoshi style!
- Footprints for rabbit, cat, squirrel, octopus, moose and elephant

Choose one or more of these teasing ideas. You may wish to use our downloadable resources or create your own.

*Print out and stick the lightning flashes and star shapes to walls at the children's level and sprinkle a little glitter around the space.

*print out some animal footprints and place them in various positions around the room for the children to discover.

Ask the children whether they have noticed anything strange? Questions you might ask...

- What might these glittery things mean?
- I wonder if something has been here?
- I wonder what and when and why?
- Do you recognise any of these strange shapes on the floor?
- Do you think it might be MAGIC?

Engage with the children's ideas. You could invite the children to tell you what might have happened whilst you write down their story.

THE BIG REVEAL.

Wrap up the book in sparkly paper and invite the children to help you open it.

What might it be? Why is it wrapped in special paper? Encourage lots of excited chatter.

Play pass the parcel with it. When the music stops or on the magic command

KATAKURICO ! the player holding the parcel may tear a little bit of paper until the whole book is finally revealed.

Make sure everyone gets a chance to see the book when it is fully unwrapped. Encourage the children to tell you what they think the book might be about? Do they think it might be something to do with the clues they have discovered?

Exploring the pages

Share the story with the children encouraging them to explore the illustrations, talk about what they see, search for clues and make predictions about what might happen. Encourage them to join in with the magic words *ABRACADABRA* and *KATAKURICO*.

Revisit favourite pages. Ask the children to tell you which was their favourite animal? Which pages did they like and why?

There is nothing more exciting than bringing a story to life through playful engagement with children. Now that you've set the scene, here are 6 ideas for activities to create your very own 'Hat Tricks' events.

1. CREATE A MAGIC CORNER ROLEPLAY AREA.

Suggested session time 1 hour minimum

Hang streamers and balloons and party banners in a corner of the room.

Invite children to recreate the story through imaginative roleplay. Provide cuddly toy animals, hats, wands and magician dressing up clothes, such as waistcoats, and bow ties. Print out the magic words and encourage children to help make the words sparkle with glitter, shiny things and jewels and display them in the play area.

2. WHO'S IN THE MAGIC HAT?

suggested session time 10 mins

Paint a big black hat on all 4 sides of a child sized cardboard box.

Place the "magic hat" in the middle of the circle and ask all the children to close their eyes tightly whilst you choose a willing volunteer to climb inside the box. When they are hidden ask the child to say "abracadabra". Encourage everyone to listen carefully and see if they can recognise the voice and work out who is in the magic hat. If they guess correctly the child must **POP** out of the hat as if by magic!

VARIATION. The hidden child chooses an animal they would like to be. They must then make that animal noise and the others have to guess which animal will pop up out of the box.

3. MAGIC WAND GAME

Suggested time 30 mins

Explore the outdoor environment together and encourage children to collect materials to make their own magic wands. Look for sticks, feathers, flowers and leaves and assemble wands using sparkly pipe cleaners and ribbons. They may also wish to add paint and glitter.

Meanwhile create a Magic Spell Book. Cut and stick some of the animal pictures from the downloadable sheet into the blank notebook, leaving plenty of blank pages for the children to draw and write their own spells. The spell could be to turn someone into a cat so they miaow and behave like a cat, or you can invent and draw your own.

Once the wands are dry ask the children to form a circle. Ask for a volunteer to stand in the middle holding the wand. This person is the magician and must choose a magic spell from the spell book to perform on the rest of the group. You might initially like to help them decide which spell to try. The magician should announce out loud what the spell is and on the command “Abracadabra” the other children must pretend they have been put under that spell. The magician can then undo the spell with the magic word “Katakurico” and pass the wand to another player. When the children are familiar with these spells encourage them to invent their own spells and draw them in the spell book.

4. AN EDIBLE MAGIC FEAST

SUGGESTED SESSION TIME 1 HOUR MINIMUM

Mix up a batch of biscuit dough in advance or with the children. If you do not have access to cooking facilities you may wish to prebake the biscuits and let the children ice and decorate them. If you need a biscuit recipe you will find one in the resources after page 7.

Use animal shaped biscuit cutters to create a “hatful” of biscuit characters.

Make some edible wands. Provide long bread sticks and help the children mix up some different coloured icing to a “coating” consistency. Provide little bowls of sprinkles and edible glitter for the children to dip their breadstick into and create their very own magic wand.

Encourage the children to help lay a magical table. Spread the tables with large sheets of plain paper and ask the children to create their own magical designs on it using felt pens or wax crayons.

Give each child a paper plate and ask them to draw a hat shape on it.

Provide tea sets and real cups and saucers, milk jugs, sugar bowls and teapots and make luke warm tea using decaffeinated flavoured teas, milk, coloured water or juices. Invite the children to sit at the table and serve each other drinks and biscuits whilst you re-visit the story. Washing up and clearing the table after tea is just as fun. Provide bowls of warm bubbly water (or use the water tray if you have one) and tea towels for children to wash and dry up.

5. HATTIE'S MAGIC HAT

Suggested session time 10-15 mins

Use the resource cards or find some toy animals to use in this memory game.

Place a magic hat and the cards /objects in the middle of the circle and look at them all together. What can we see? How many objects are there?

Now ask the children to close their eyes whilst you choose a magician to put one of the cards or objects into the hat where no one can see it.

Now challenge the children to look at the remaining objects and work out which one is missing. The magician should then reveal the missing object from the hat and choose a new magician.

Variation...who stole the magic item. Ask for a volunteer magician to sit in the middle of the circle and pretend to be fast asleep. Choose one child to creep up quietly and take something out of the magic hat. All children must hide their hands behind their back and shout for the Magician to wake up. The magician must now try and guess who has the object by asking 3 children "did you take my magic thing?" when the object is found it can be returned to the hat for the next turn.

RESOURCE CARDS – cat, squirrel, octopus, moose, elephant, rabbit

6. KAMISHIBAI THEATRE

suggested session time 1 hour minimum

The author, Satoshi Kitamura, performs Kamishibai theatre which is a traditional Japanese way of storytelling using paper pictures. Some years ago, it used to be performed in the streets in Japan and is now popular in schools there. You can find a link to the kamishibai box he has made to use with his audience here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kibhlkn9CQc>

You might like to create your own version of a moving picturebook. See the downloadable Kamishibai guidelines.

Involve the children in helping to decorate and add curtains to the theatre box. Cut out the shadow objects and help the children attach them to sticks.

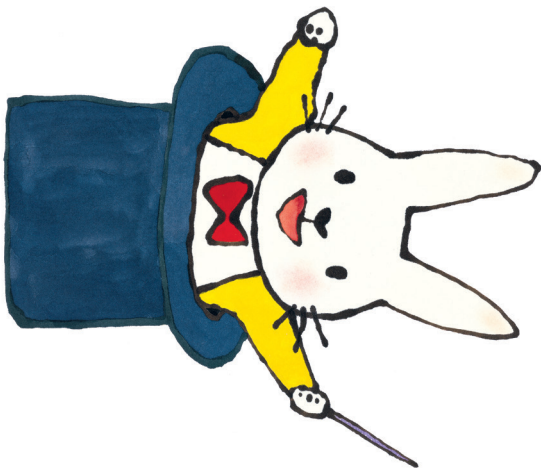
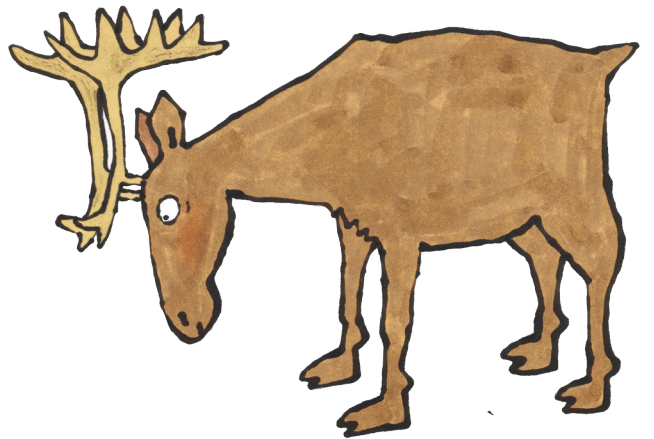
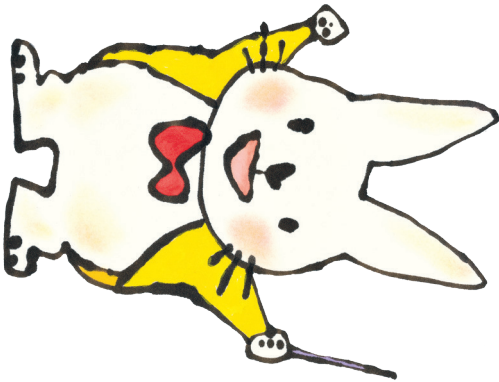
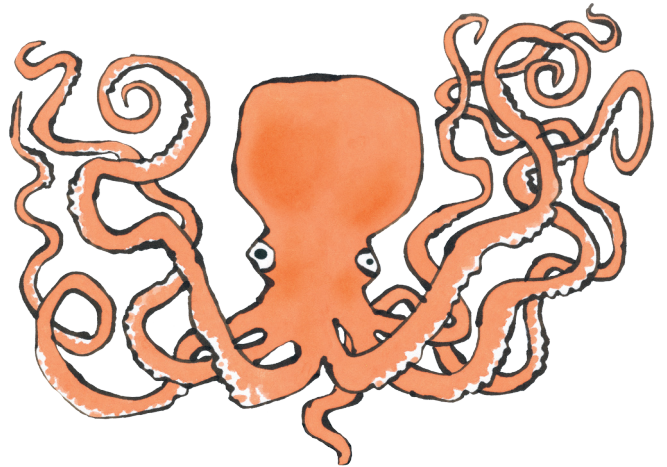
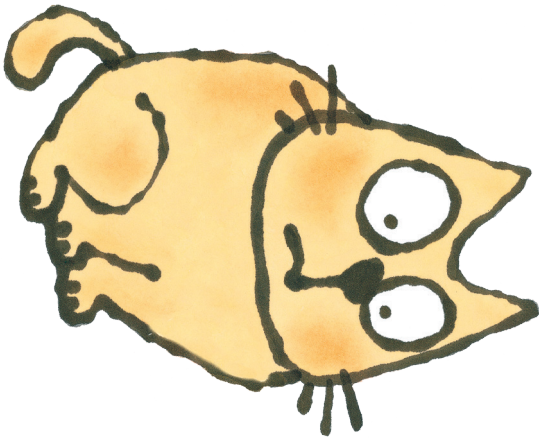
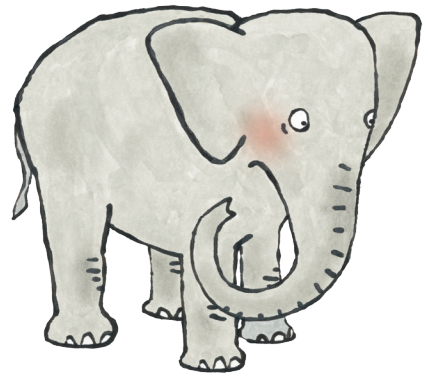
Ask the children to think of ways they could prepare for a show. Have any of them ever been to the theatre or cinema before, have they ever seen any street performers? Encourage them to share their memories and experiences.

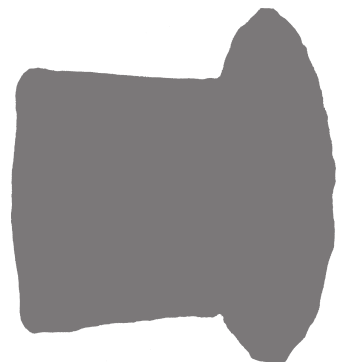
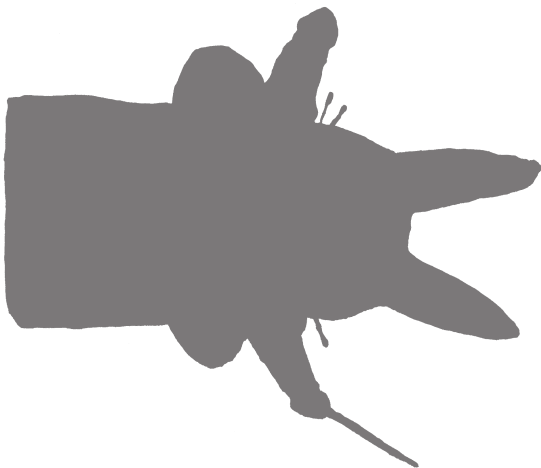
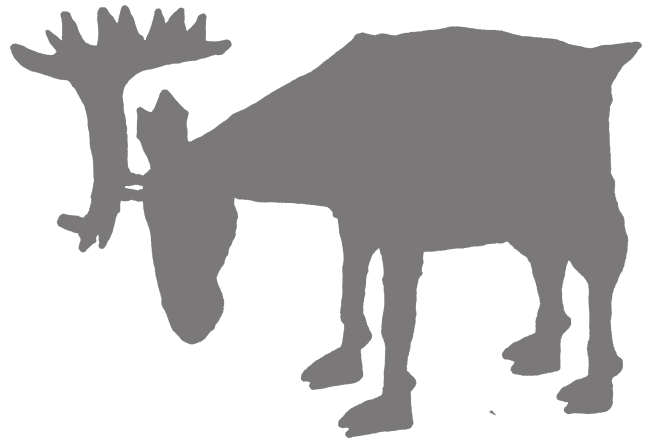
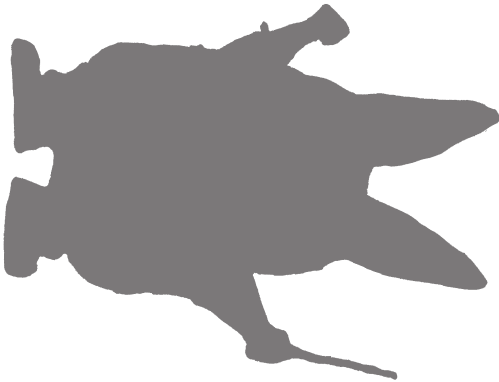
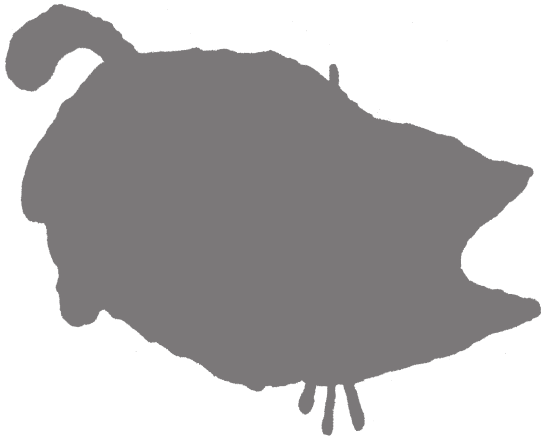
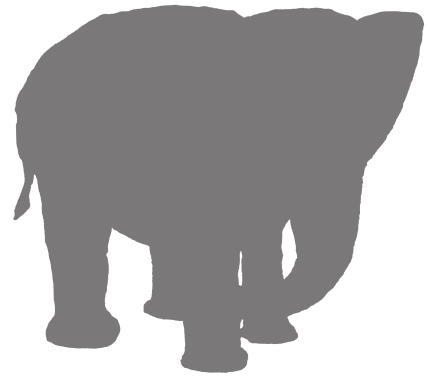
Make a list with the children of all the things they might need to put on a show.

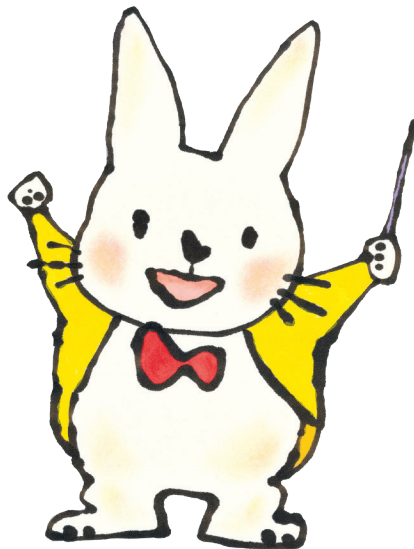
They could help bag up popcorn, make posters, tickets, play money, design programmes and create seating areas.

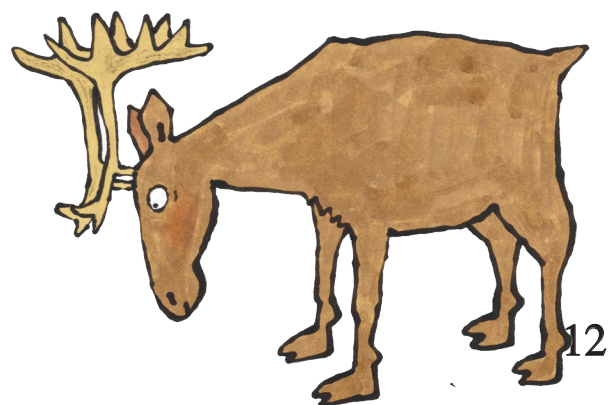
Allow the children to play at being performers, storytellers, ticket sellers and audience members. You may initially wish to read the story for the children to act out with you and then encourage them to create their own shows and stories using the shadow shapes or creating their own.



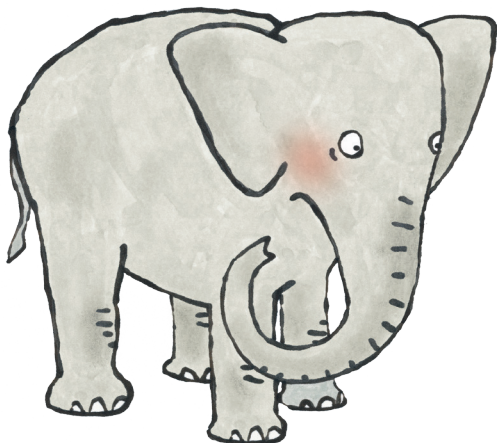




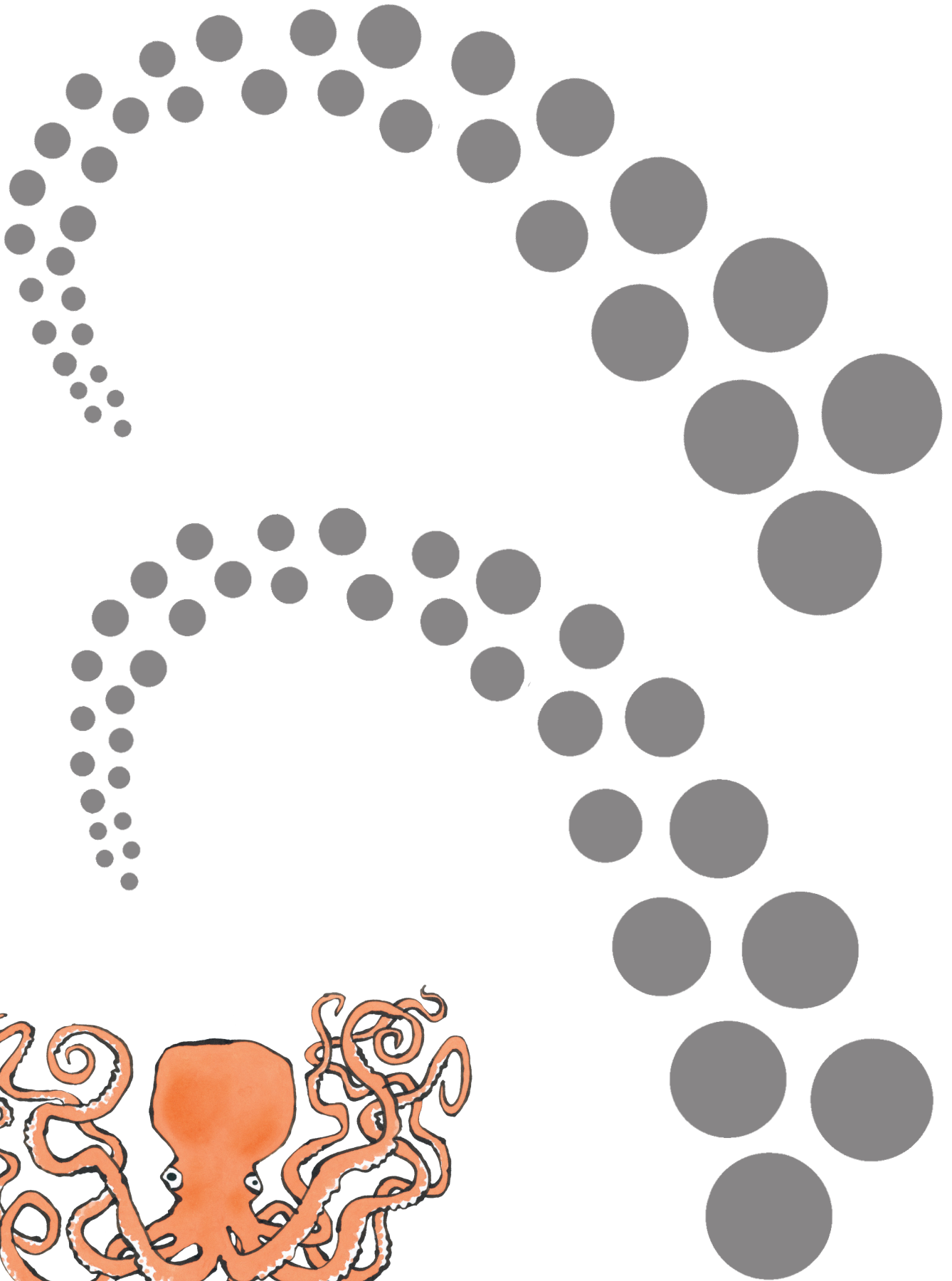












BISCUIT RECIPE

INGREDIENTS

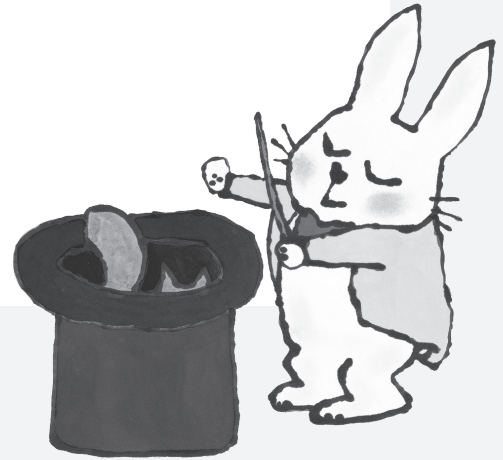
Makes: 35

225g butter, softened

110g caster sugar

275g plain flour

ground spices or finely grated zest (optional, see below)



METHOD

Prep:15min › Cook:10min › Ready in:25min

1. Preheat oven to 180 C / Gas 4.
2. Cream the butter in a large bowl or in a food mixer until soft. Add the sugar and beat until the mixture is light and fluffy.
3. Sift in the flour and spices or grated zest (if using) and bring the mixture together to form a dough.
4. Using your hands, roll the dough into walnut-size balls and place them slightly apart on a baking tray. Flatten them slightly and bake in the oven for 13-15 minutes or until they are a light golden brown and slightly firm on top.
5. Carefully transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool.

Additions:

Poppy seed: Add 2 tablespoons of poppy seeds to the flour.

Lemon: Add the finely grated zest of 1 lemon to the flour.

Orange: Add the finely grated zest of 1 orange to the flour.

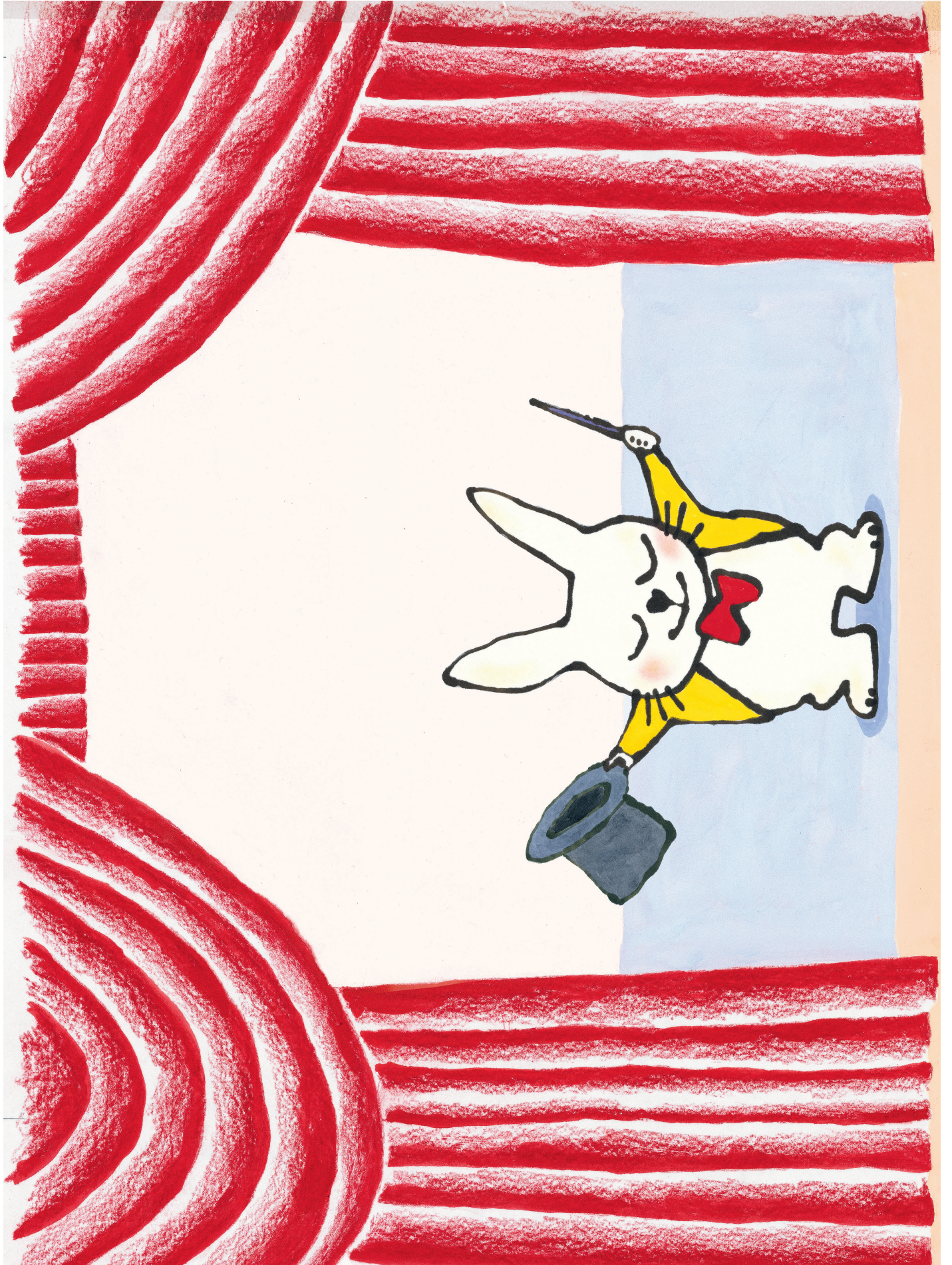
Spices (cinnamon, mixed spice, ginger): Add 1 teaspoon of a ground spice to the flour.

Chocolate chip: Use 250g plain flour and add 50g sifted cocoa powder to the flour.

Tip

Always remove cookies from their trays while still warm otherwise they will stick.

Roll leftover dough into a log shape, then leave in fridge for up to 2 weeks or freeze for up to a couple of months. To bake, cut off slices about 1cm thick and cool on a baking tray in a preheated oven



KAMISHIBAI (PAPER DRAMA)

A free step-by-step guide to making a kamishibai stage

(© Springboard Stories 2013) can be found at www.springboardstories.co.uk or as follows.

To make your Kamishibai stage you will need:

- 1 hardback A4 envelope
- 2 sheets of A4 card for side supports
- 1 sheet of A4 card for stage top (optional)
- Glue or sticky tape
- Paint
- Items to decorate stage.

Use the templates provided to make your card side supports and your stage top.

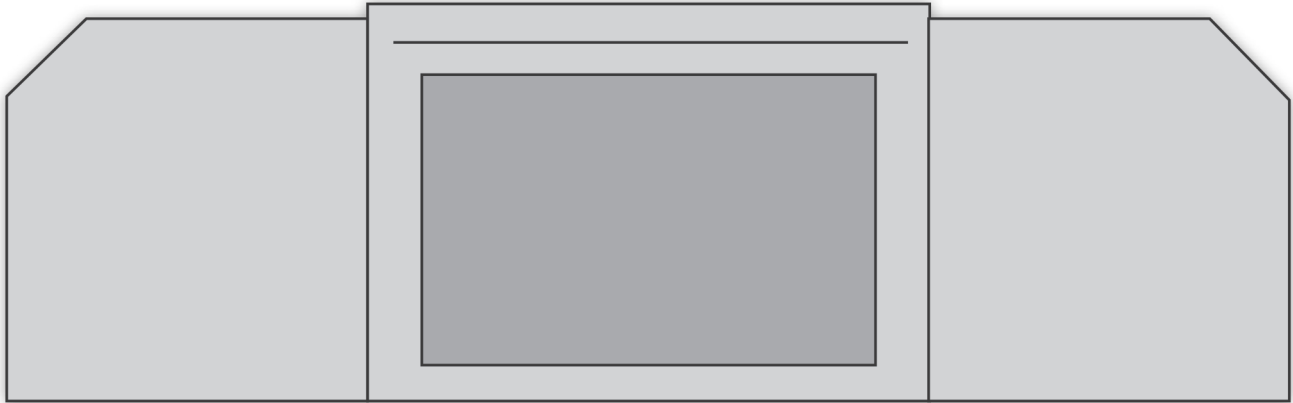
- 1 Cut a window in the A4 hardback envelope on the paper side (it may be easier for an adult to do this in advance, using a craft knife).



- 2 Cut a slot in the top all the way along from left to right. You should be able to get an A4 sheet of paper in there easily.

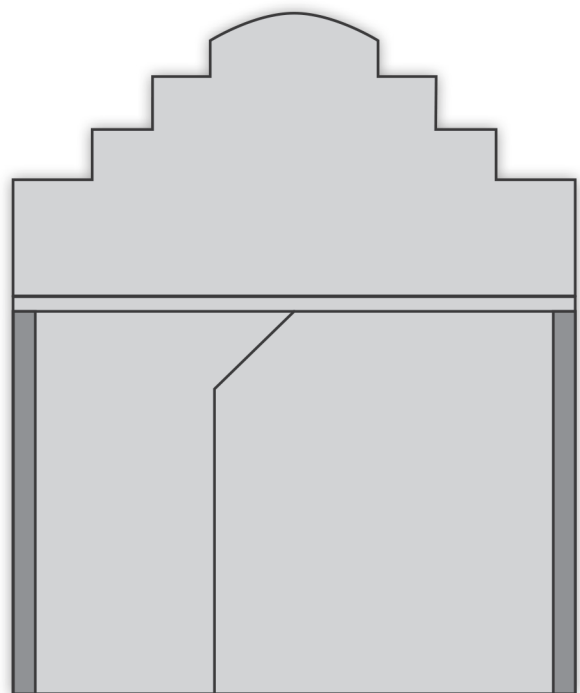
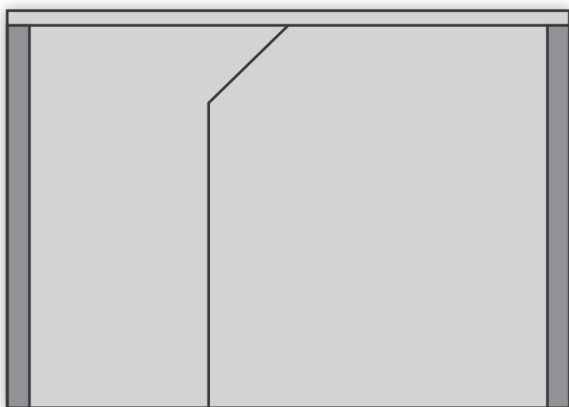


3 Make the left and right side supports out of card using the template provided.

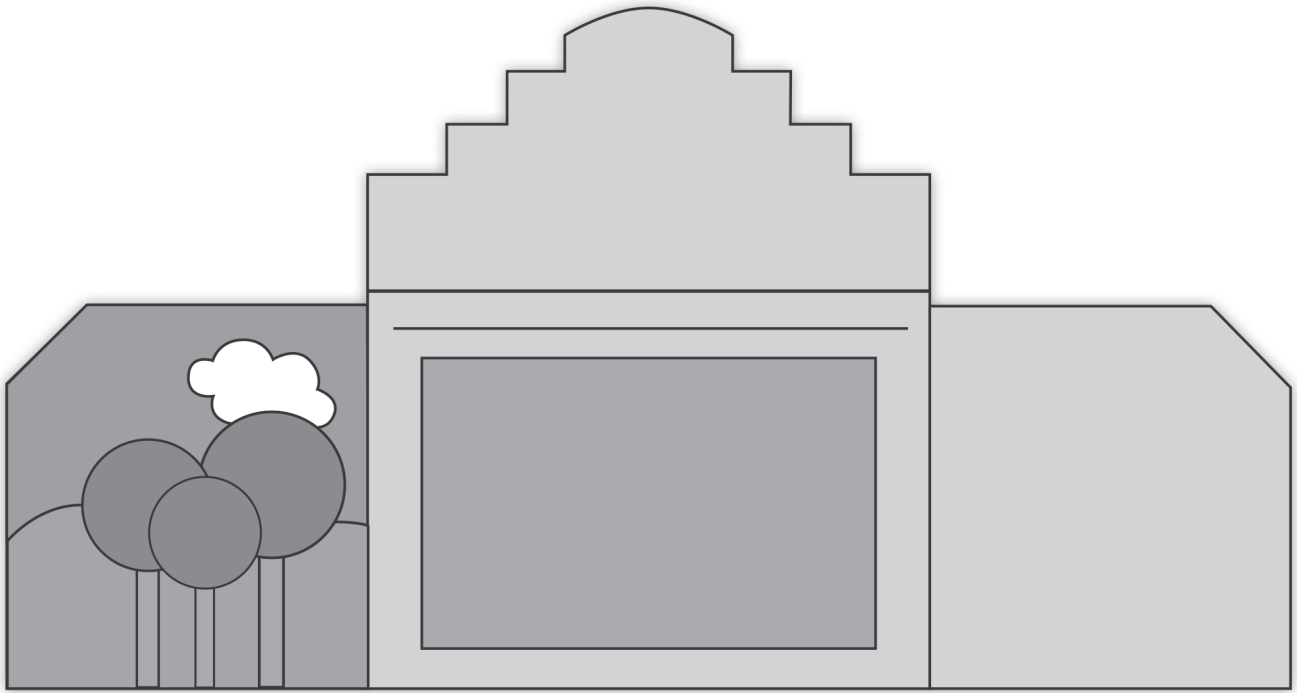


4 Lay the cardboard sides over the front of the A4 envelope, covering the window that you have cut out. Secure the sides to the back of the envelope with glue or tape. Using this method will ensure that the stage will fold away neatly.

5 Secure the top to the FRONT of the envelope, being careful not to glue over the A4-size slit.



6 Let your imagination run riot and decorate the stage.



Only the main frame, side supports and stage top need to be painted and decorated. The audience will not see the back.

Templates

Cut two for the side supports.





Templates

Cut one for the top.

