



Mill House
Day Nursery

Mini-Beasts – Home Learning Resource April 2020



About this resource

This resource has been produced as a 'home learning resource' for Mill House parents to use during this period of 'lock-down' brought about by the Coronavirus.

These resources will also be used in nursery to support children who are being cared for under the 'critical carer' scheme.

Where resources have been included from an external source every effort has been made to acknowledge these sources, however, some may be older sources which we are no longer able to identify.

Using this resource

We had planned to commence supporting children in pre-school to learn about their natural environment and mini-beasts. This topic was inspired by children's growing interest in worms.

Use resources as you see fit. They can be used in any order and they can be adapted to meet the needs of your child. Go with the flow and see where a particular activity or interest leads.

Mind Map

The mind map on the first page simply shows the topic with ideas radiating from it. It's just an idea page which may or may not be of interest or use.

Have fun and keep us updated with photos and observations!



Move like a Mini-beast!

Make 12 number tags (1 – 12), fold them up and put them in a bowl. Pull one out at a time and move like the mini-beast on the corresponding tile below!

1



Spin like a spider!

2



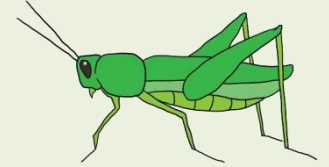
Flutter like a butterfly!

3



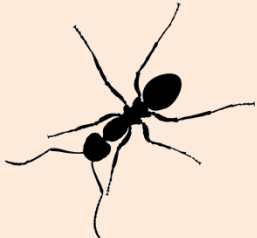
Buzz like a bee!

4



Hop like a grasshopper!

5



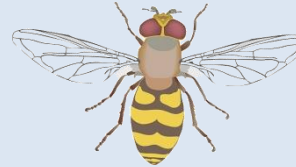
March like an ant!

6



Scuttle like a woodlouse!

7



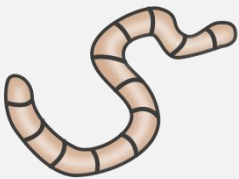
Hover like a hoverfly!

8



Slither like a snail!

9



Wriggle like a worm!

10



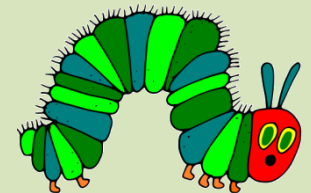
Fly quickly like a fly!

11



Crawl like a ladybird!

12



Move slowly like a caterpillar!

All About Earthworms

Fact Cards

twinkl

All About Earthworms

Earthworms are long, wiggly animals that like to live in soil.



Photo courtesy of seanpants (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

All About Earthworms

Earthworms breathe through their skin – they don't have lungs.



Photo courtesy of jchapiewsky (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

All About Earthworms

Worms don't have any legs! Instead they move by wriggling along. Their long bodies are covered with tiny hairs that help them to move.



Photo courtesy of schizoform (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

All About Earthworms

Earthworms need to stay moist. In sunny hot weather they go deep underground where it is cooler and damp. You can sometimes see worms on the ground when it has been raining, as the soil gets too wet for the worms to breathe.



Photo courtesy of anthonyfalla (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

All About Earthworms

Earthworms dig tunnels under the soil. This helps move the soil around and also helps plants to grow.



All About Earthworms

Earthworms like to eat soil and dead leaves and plants. They also eat old food scraps, like fruit and vegetable peels.



Photo courtesy of PrettyUgly Design (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

All About Earthworms

Some people keep earthworms as pets in a wormery. A wormery is a worm house! Food for the worms can be placed into the wormery and the worms will help to make the soil and food scraps into compost.



Photo courtesy of crabchick (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

All About Earthworms

Wormeries can be made with different layers of food for the worms. If the walls of the wormery are clear you can see the worms moving around! Wormeries should be kept cool, dark and moist, as these are the conditions worms like best.



Learn more about worms

Learn more about worms by taking a quick look at this clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7O40A-6Jmt4>



Make your own Mini Wormery

There are not many Mill House children who dislike worms (one little girl comes to mind – sorry JP!) and we have some great (or sad) stories about the unfortunate demise of worms who have dried out in pockets, been put in boots and squished, or been accidentally chopped in two by eager diggers! That's how we can be sure that this activity will be a great hit. Find full instructions by clicking on this link:

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Activity/Mini-wormery>

Enjoy!

Mini wormery

Learn where a worm likes to live and understand their importance for healthy soil and healthy plants.

Estimated time: 30 minutes

Location: Outdoors

School term: All year round

Level of experience: No experience needed

Subject(s): Science

Learning objectives

- ✔ Identify and name worms and have knowledge of their habitat
- ✔ Understand how worms are adapted to their environment

Step by step

- 1** Collect some worms from the garden. Look in the compost heap, under stones in damp places or dig a hole.
- 2** Cut the top ¼ off the bottle, to make a lid. Make a slit in the side of the lid so that the top can close over the bottom part.
- 3** Fill the bottle with alternating layers of sand, soil, sand, compost, sand etc. Spray each layer with water so that it is damp.
- 4** Add a few worms to the top of the bottle and watch them burrow down. Then add the 'food' to the top. Wash hands well after handling worms and compost.
- 5** Wrap the black cardboard around the bottle to make it dark. Worms do not like light and it will encourage them to burrow around the outside of the bottle so they can be observed.
- 6** Place the wormery in a warm place. Remove the cardboard for observation periods and record findings. Check that the contents are damp and that there is food available for the worms.
- 7** After 1 week, release the worms back into the garden.

Essential background information

[Worm fact sheet >](#)

[Hunt for worms >](#)



Preparation

Cut the top off the bottles if pupils are too young to do this. Use a sharp pencil to pierce a hole near top of bottle to make cutting easier.

Equipment needed

- 2 litre clear, plastic bottles
- Safety scissors
- Compost or soil or a mixture of both
- Sharp sand
- A few worms per bottle
- Water sprayer to dampen layers
- Worm food – grated carrot, vegetable peelings, dead leaves, shredded newspaper

Hints & tips

- 💡 The layers disappear as the sand and soil mix together and channels appear where the worms have burrowed
- 💡 The food from the top may be dragged downwards
- 💡 Do not feed the worms citrus fruits or onions
- 💡 Use this activity as part of the Earth Matters class growing topic

Wiggly Woo Song

This is a fun song to learn!

Take a look at this YouTube clip of Mr Tumble singing and signing along to the song using Makaton. Click on the image or on the web address to access the clip.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqchPrhezxQ>

Looping the clip

If you feel brave enough you can right click in the video and select 'loop'. This will enable you and your child to fully learn the Makaton signs without having to re-play the clip.

Go on, be brave!!

Wiggly Woo

There's a worm at the bottom of
the garden

And his name is wiggly woo!

There's a worm at the bottom of
the garden!

And all that he can do

Is wiggle all night

And wiggle all day

Whatever else the people say

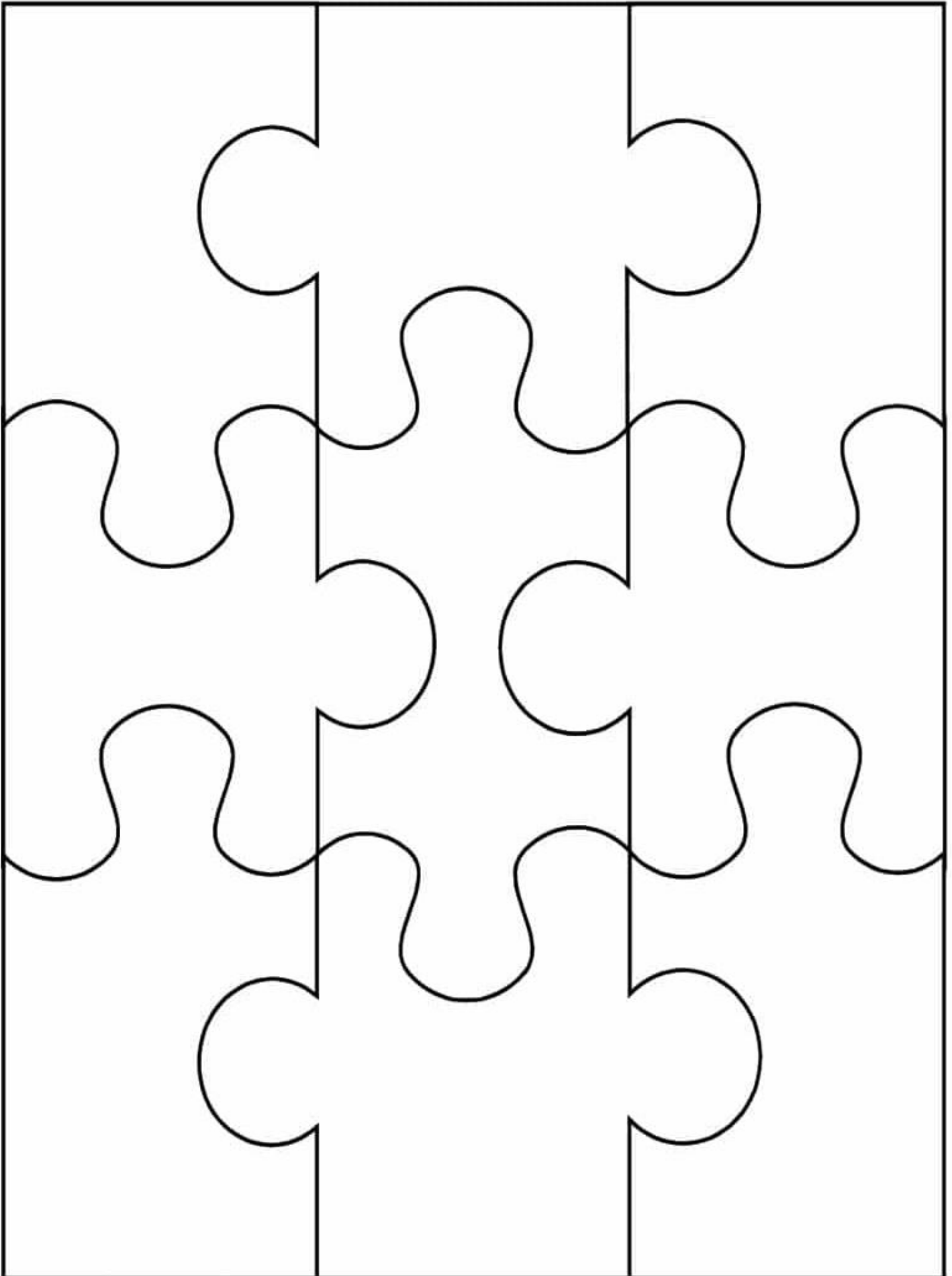
There's a worm at the bottom of
the garden

And his name is wiggly woo!



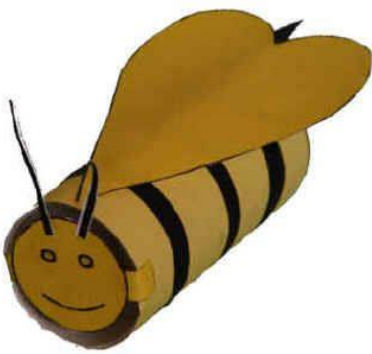
Make your own puzzle!

Draw a picture of a mini-beast (or anything you like) and make your own puzzle!



Make your own 3D Mini-beast

1. Find some resources and make your own 3D mini-beast. What might you make? A worm? A spider? A beetle? (Don't let the grown-ups take over! Tell them to make their own beast!)
2. Decorate your mini-beast
3. Give your mini-beast a name (maybe a rhyming name)
4. Learn some facts about the mini-beast you have chosen to make, e.g., how many legs does it have? Where does it live? What does it eat?
5. Where does your mini-beast live in the real world? Can you make somewhere in your own house or garden for your mini-beast to live?
6. Care for your mini-beast. Take photos of your lovely creation to share with your friends!



Make a Bug Hotel

It can be hard for insects to find safe places to hide and hibernate in our busy towns and cities. Insects are incredibly important to our ecosystem – they are our pollinators which means that they are important to our food chain. Without pollinators we wouldn't have fruit and flowers.

Building a bug hotel provides a place for insects stay safe from the weather and from predators.

Build your own bug hotel and see who arrives for a visit!

The image below shows a very easy structure to create and instructions are available from 'Super Simple'

<https://supersimple.com/article/bug-hotel/>. If you'd like to embark on a more ambitious project take a look at the RSPB website for inspiration <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>



The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Story

Read the story (printed on the next page) or watch the animated film <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75NQK-Sm1YY&t=79s>.

Discuss

Talk about the days of the week. Ask 'what did the caterpillar eat on Monday/Tuesday etc.

Ask what might have made his tummy ache. He did eat rather a lot of junk food!

What made him feel better? Vegetables of course!

Fictional character

The Very Hungry Caterpillar isn't a real caterpillar. Watch a clip on the lifecycle of a real butterfly (Monarch Butterfly)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AUeM8Mbalk>.

What is the first thing the caterpillar eats? What does it feed on thereafter?

Talk about the different stages the creature goes through as it changes from an egg to a butterfly.

Challenge older children

Take a look at the YouTube clip entitled 'Metamorphosis – The Great Transformation' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lm-s168rW4s&t=4s>. This is a video of the metamorphosis of the Painted Lady butterfly from egg to adult butterfly.

Children who were with us last year may recall that we hatched Painted Ladies in our pre-school.

Other animated stories linked to our mini-beasts theme

The Very Quiet Cricket: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdiGEjz5b0Q&t=4s>

The Very Busy Spider: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfL0g-XRxnA>

STORY - The Very Hungry Caterpillar, by Eric Carle

In the light of the moon a little egg lay on a leaf.

One Sunday morning the warm sun came up and pop! Out of the egg came a tiny and very hungry caterpillar. He started to look for some food.

On Monday he ate through 1 apple, but he was still hungry.

On Tuesday he ate through 2 pears, but he was still hungry.

On Wednesday he ate through 3 plums, but he was still hungry.

On Thursday he ate through 4 strawberries, but he was still hungry.

On Friday he ate through 5 oranges, but he was still hungry.

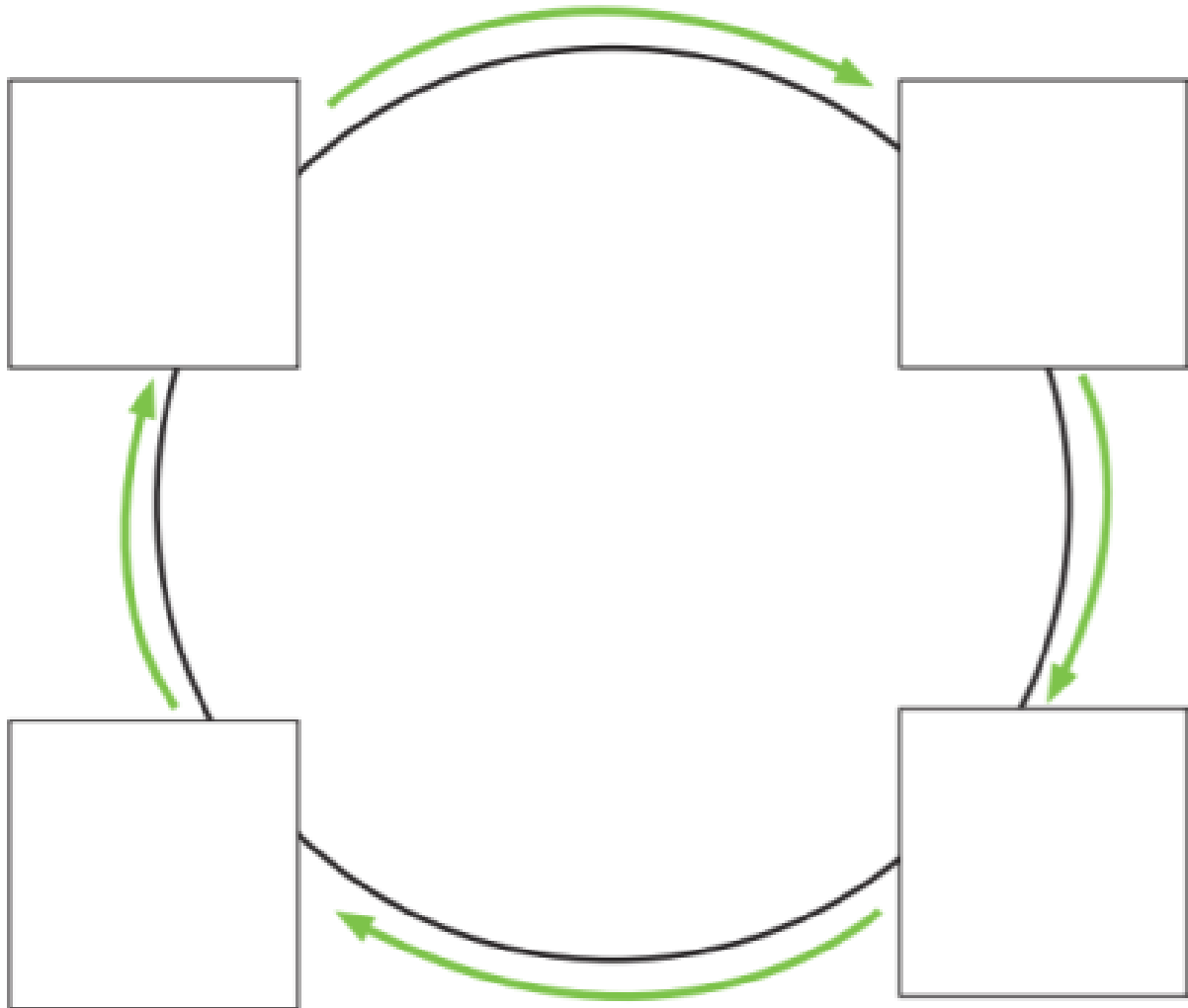
On Saturday he ate through 1 piece of chocolate cake, 1 ice cream cone, 1 pickle, 1 slice of Swiss cheese, 1 slice of salami, 1 lollipop, 1 piece of cherry pie, 1 sausage, 1 cup cake and 1 slice of water melon. That night he had a stomach ache.

The next day was Sunday again. The caterpillar ate through 1 nice green leaf and after that he felt much better. Now he wasn't hungry anymore and he wasn't a little caterpillar anymore. He was a big fat caterpillar.

He built a small house called a cocoon around himself. He stayed inside for more than two weeks, then he nibbled a hole in the cocoon, pushed his way out and he was a beautiful butterfly!

Lifecycle of a Butterfly

Cut the tiles out and place them in the correct order in the cycle (Twinkl resource)



Activities

Symmetrical Butterfly Painting



<https://artfulparent.com/butterfly-symmetry-paintings/>

Ask your child to cut out the butterfly template, assist if necessary. Fold the butterfly in half to create a line down the centre



Make a painted pattern on one side of the butterfly, fold and press the two sides together to create a symmetrical pattern.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar Sequencing

Ask your child to cut out the pictures on the 'sequencing' sheet and then sequence them correctly. Can they recall the story?

The Very Hungry Caterpillar Lotto Game – Memory game

Cut out the 2 boards and 12 playing cards.

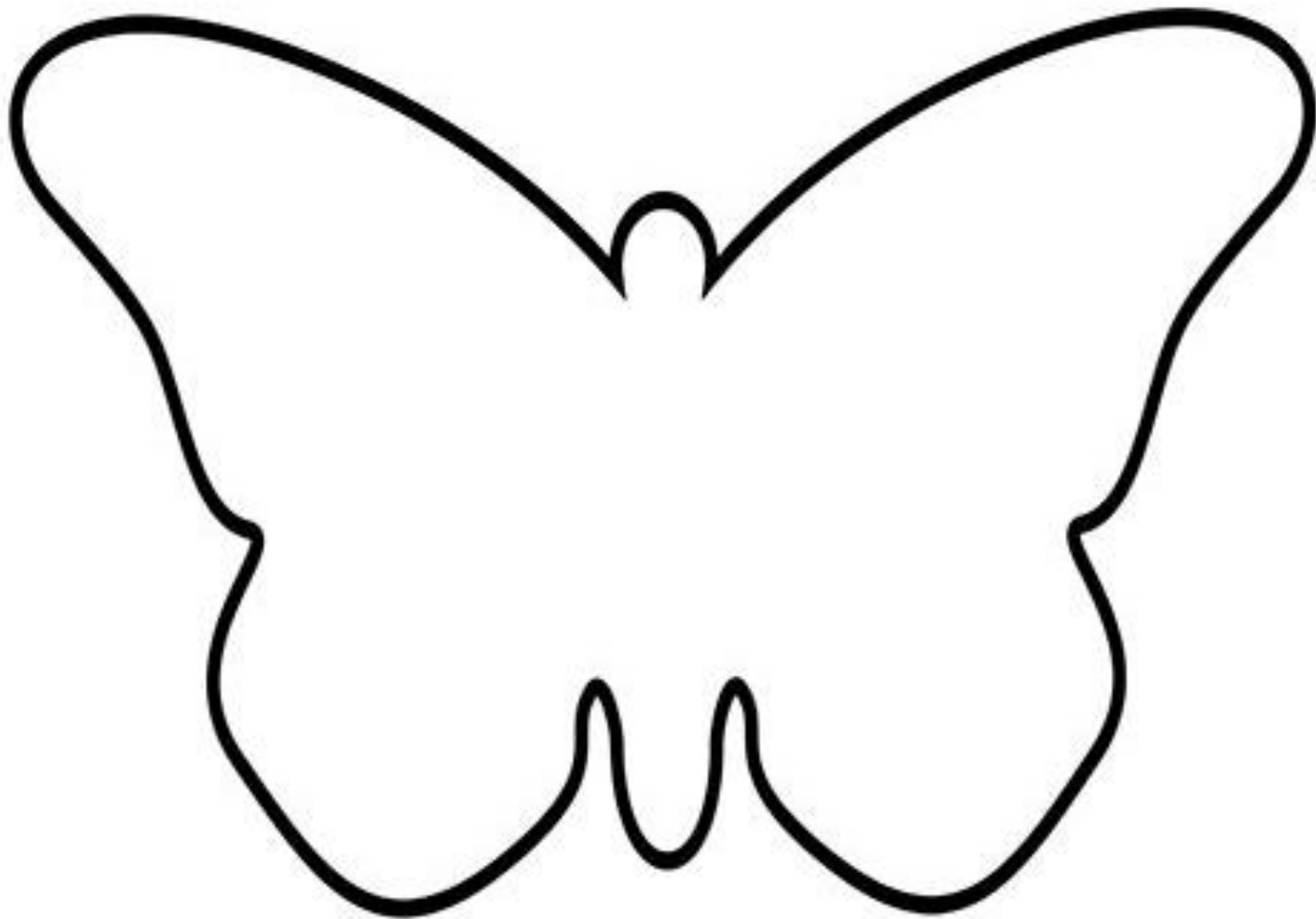
Place the playing cards face down. Take it in turns to turn over the cards – if you select a card which is on your board you get to keep it, if not, turn it over and try to remember where it is so you don't turn it over again. The first to gather all 6 cards on their board is the winner.

Challenging Variation – Shuffle the cards and keep them in a pile in front of you. Give your child both playing boards. Select a card and describe what you see, don't let your child see the card. For example 'I have something beginning with a-a-a' – remember not to name the letter but to make the

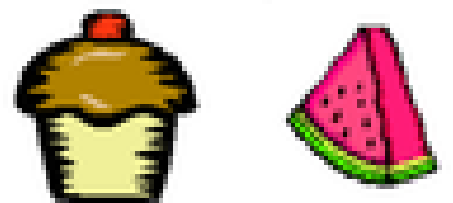
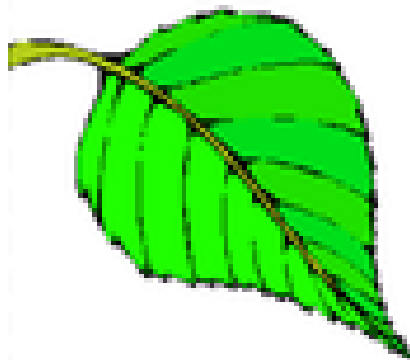
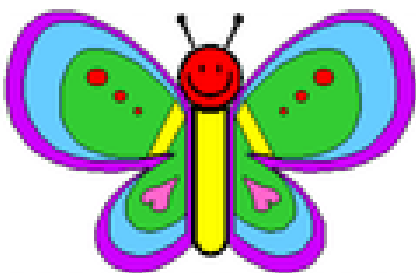
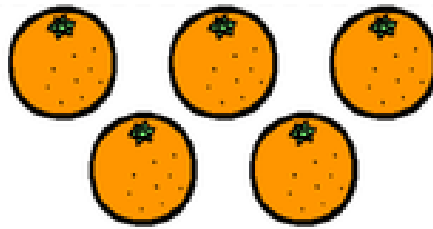
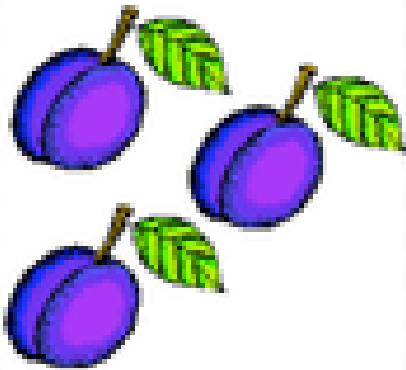
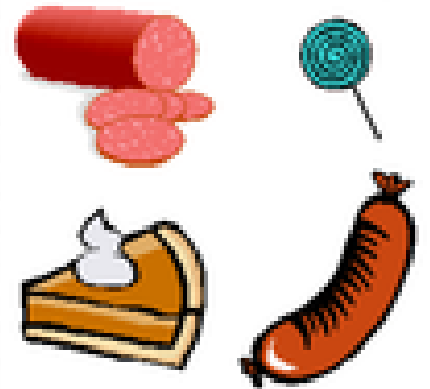
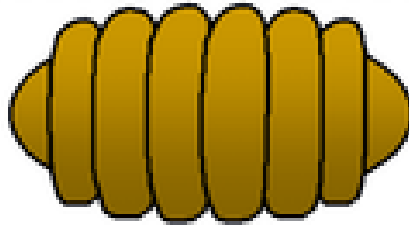
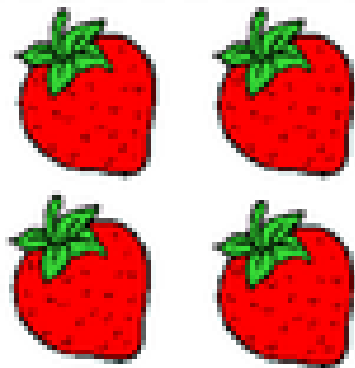
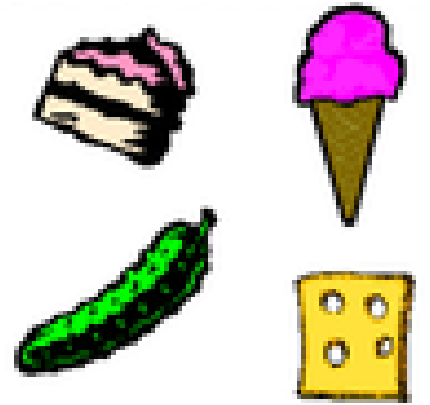
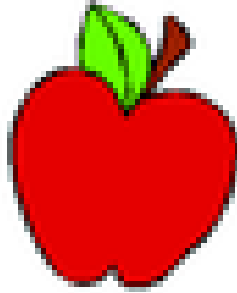
sound of the letter. Or 'This card has 5 pieces of fruit on it.' Or 'This card has something on it which is the same colour as your jumper.'

Move and stretch

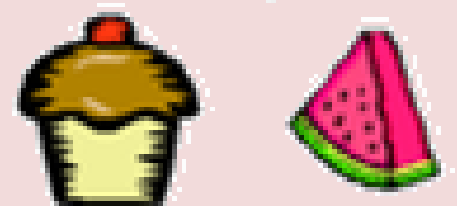
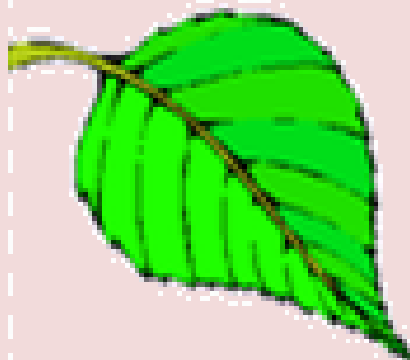
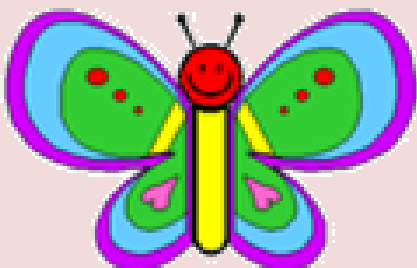
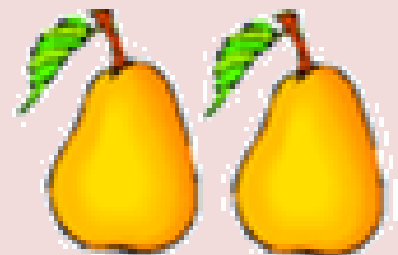
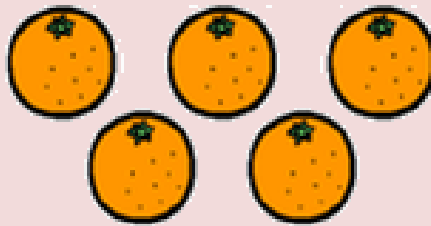
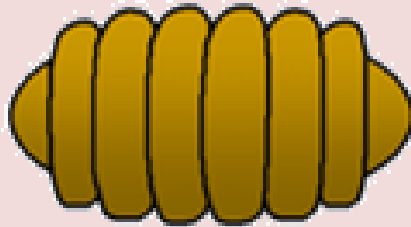
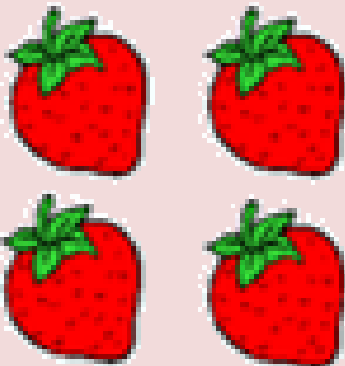
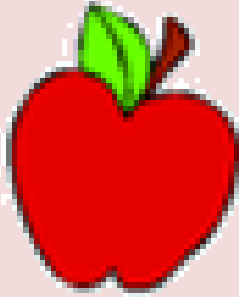
Ask your child to curl up very small like a tiny caterpillar waiting to emerge from its shell. Crawl like a caterpillar, stay completely still like a cocoon or chrysalis. Stretch and break free slowly from the chrysalis. Slowly spread arms out to make the wings of a butterfly, gently stretching and flapping them to dry them in the sun. Flutter away to find nectar for breakfast.



Lotto Playing Boards – 2 Players



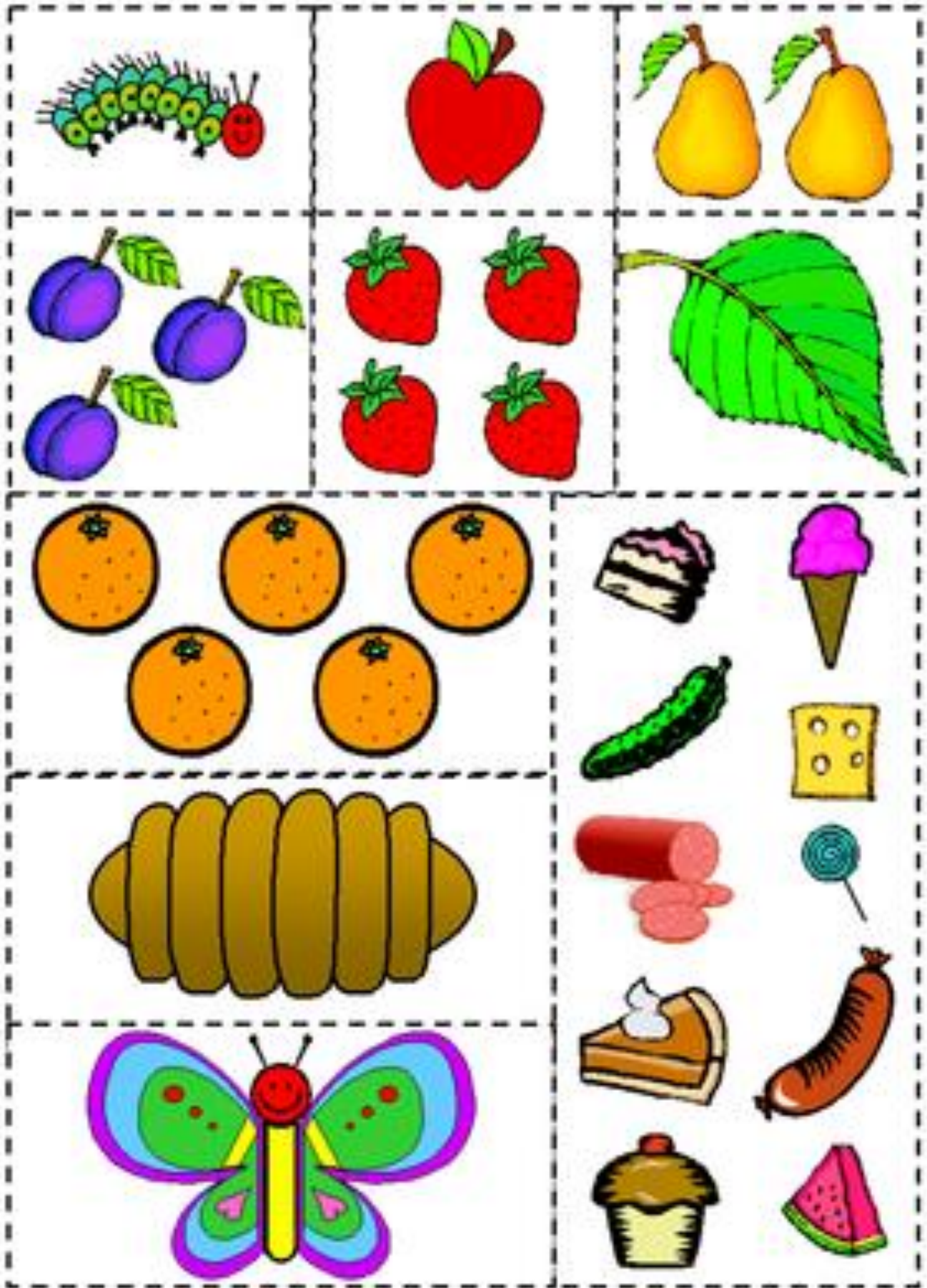
Lotto Playing Cards – Cut out for use



The Very Hungry Caterpillar Sequencing

Cut out the pictures and sequence them correctly.

Can you retell the story?



You Tube

About worms: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7O40A-6Jmt4>

Wiggly Woo Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqchPrhezxQ>

Royal Horticultural Society

Make a mini wormery <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Activity/Mini-wormery>

Build a bug hotel

RSPB: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>

Super Simple: <https://supersimple.com/article/bug-hotel/>

Animated Films = Eric Carle

The Very Hungry Caterpillar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75NQK-SmIYY&t=79s>

The Very Quiet Cricket: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdiGEjz5b0Q&t=4s>

The Very Busy Spider: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfL0g-XRxnA>

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly

The Amazing Life Cycle of the Monarch Butterfly (4 minutes 18 seconds) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AUeM8Mbalk>

Metamorphosis – The Great Transformation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lm-s168rW4s&t=4s>

Author: Mill House Day Nursery
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Mill House
44 – 46 Mill Green Road
Mitcham
Surrey
CR4 4HY

Website: www.millhousedaynursery.co.uk

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