

Early Learning Classroom Package

Michif French





Michif Language Development Labels

How to Use the Labels

1. Label Placement:

- For larger items, place the label directly on or near the object to create a visual connection between the item and its Michif name. For example, attach the label “chair” to a chair in the classroom.
- For smaller or abstract items, use the image-based labels to reinforce recognition. These can be placed on posters, in learning centers, or on flashcards.

2. Interactive Language Practice:

- Educators and caregivers can reference the labels during daily routines, introducing the Michif term naturally. For instance, while setting up for snack time, point to the labeled “plate” and say the word in Michif.
- Begin with just a few key labels in your space, and slowly add more as children become familiar and confident with the Michif words.
- Use online recordings and Michif dictionaries to support accurate pronunciation and model the words confidently for children.

3. Language Games:

- Use the labels for matching games where children pair objects with their Michif labels or images.
- Create a scavenger hunt where children find items with their matching labels around the classroom.

4. Routine Integration:

- Incorporate the labels into daily songs, stories, or discussions to foster familiarity and repetition.
- Encourage children to repeat the Michif words and use them in sentences during play and structured activities.



About Michif Language

Métis people have been multilingual since the birth of the Métis Nation, speaking the languages of their neighbours and trading partners in addition to their own. This multilingualism allowed the Métis to prosper during the fur trade era, and language remains an important part of Métis identity in contemporary times. You may have heard of Michif, a language spoken among some Métis throughout the homeland; in fact, “Michif” has come to refer to any of three unique languages that formed alongside Métis culture: Heritage Michif, Northern Michif, and Michif French.

Heritage (Southern) Michif: Heritage Michif, also known as Southern Michif, or Michif, is spoken mainly from western Manitoba all the way to central Alberta, in addition to Northern North Dakota and Montana. It originated among the bison-hunting Métis who lived on the plains. Today in Saskatchewan, it is spoken especially in the Yorkton, Cypress Hills, Qu’Appelle Valley, Regina, and Round Prairie/Saskatoon areas.

Linguistically, it is considered to be one of the most unique languages in the world – described somewhat simplistically – as a blend of French nouns and Cree verbs. The French element of Heritage Michif mostly comes from Michif French, with the majority of the Algonquian element coming from the Plains Cree (Y dialect) and a small Western Ojibwe (Saulteaux) influence. That said, Heritage Michif has solidified into its own language: it contains elements from its source languages, but also has characteristics that are unique to it alone. A good example of this is the way in which some French elements are “sandwiched” in Cree grammar, like the French noun *le vieux* (‘old man’) becoming a verb in phrases like *ni maachi li vyeu-iwin* (‘I am getting old’). It is important to note that for the majority of its existence Heritage Michif has been an oral language passed down through oral transmission. Today, there is no universal standardized spelling system in Heritage Michif. Spelling systems can vary from speaker to speaker, or province to province. At MN-S we have adopted the double vowel spelling system used by mother tongue speaker Norman Fleury and linguist Peter Bakker. Other examples of spelling systems exist, with different variations of the double vowel system being used, as well as a phonetic spelling system used by some speakers.

Northern Michif: Northern Michif is primarily spoken throughout North-Western Saskatchewan and parts of Northern Alberta. Notable communities in Saskatchewan include Green Lake, Meadow Lake, Beauval, Île-à-la-Crosse, and Buffalo Narrows. Many consider it a dialect of Cree, but with a noticeable French influence. Northern Michif is a historic language that holds stories and cultural teachings. It is likely that as Métis began moving north in greater numbers, they began to speak Cree to easily communicate with their First Nations kin and neighbours. Speakers say that the French vocabulary in Northern Michif was introduced by the clergy and school system, rather than coming from Michif French, and the Cree (Plains Cree Y-Dialect), came from First Nations neighbours. As missionaries and voyageurs followed the river systems from Red River to Northern Saskatchewan, Cree was the language they heard. It is through this connection to the land that Northern Michif gives identity to those who speak it, a connection to where they come from. In terms of a writing system, Northern Michif follows the Standard Roman Orthography (SRO). SRO is a system for writing the Cree language that uses a modified form of the Latin alphabet. It provides a consistent way to represent Cree sounds, assigning one letter to each distinct sound or phoneme.



Michif French: Michif French, sometimes referred to as French Michif and Michif, is known to be spoken in regions such as St. Laurent, St. Eustache and Saint Ambroise in Manitoba, St. Louis, Batoche, St. Laurent, Duck Lake areas in Saskatchewan, and the Lac la Biche, St. Paul, St. Albert and Bonnyville areas in Alberta, with slight variations in the language within regions. It is said to have been the language primarily spoken in the Red River area in the 1870s. Linguists often refer to Michif French as a dialect of French; however, traditional speakers of the language refer to it as Michif, the language of their Red River Métis families. It is said to have been influenced by the phonological and syntactic features of Algonquian languages, as noted in examples such as the word 'window' in French, which is 'fenêtre' but is shaasii or vett in Michif French, and the term 'skunk' in French is 'moufette' but is shiikawk in Michif French.

For more information on the Michif languages, please visit: [Three distinct languages | Metis Gathering](#)

*If your classroom or center is interested in using this resource in a different Michif language, please contact metisgathering@mns.ca

Special Thanks

This important cultural resource was created in cooperation with several Michif language speakers in Saskatchewan. Métis Nation–Saskatchewan would like to give thanks to these contributors. We are grateful to have their expertise during the creation process.

A special thank you goes out to the people listed below:

Heritage Michif Contributors:

Dr. Elder Norman Fleury
Koohkum Rita Ducharme

Northern Michif Contributors:

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Sandra Laliberte
Leda Corrigan
Laura Burnouf
Maureen Belanger

Michif French Contributors:

Mataant Ang
Pawpaw Sonny
Maymair Phyllis

Use these apps for pronunciation:



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language, & culture
resources!

metisgathering.ca



Classroom Labels





la taab



the table



la shayzh

a chair



laarlozh

clock



lii zarmwayr

the cabinets



le sink

the sink



la taablet

the shelf



le fridge

the fridge



lililumyayr

the lights



aen pwel

a stove



le plaanshii



the floor



le mmeur

the wall



la twaalet

the bathroom



la kaan poor
le garbaazh

the garbage can



aen shaasii

a window



aen port

a door



aen balay

a broom

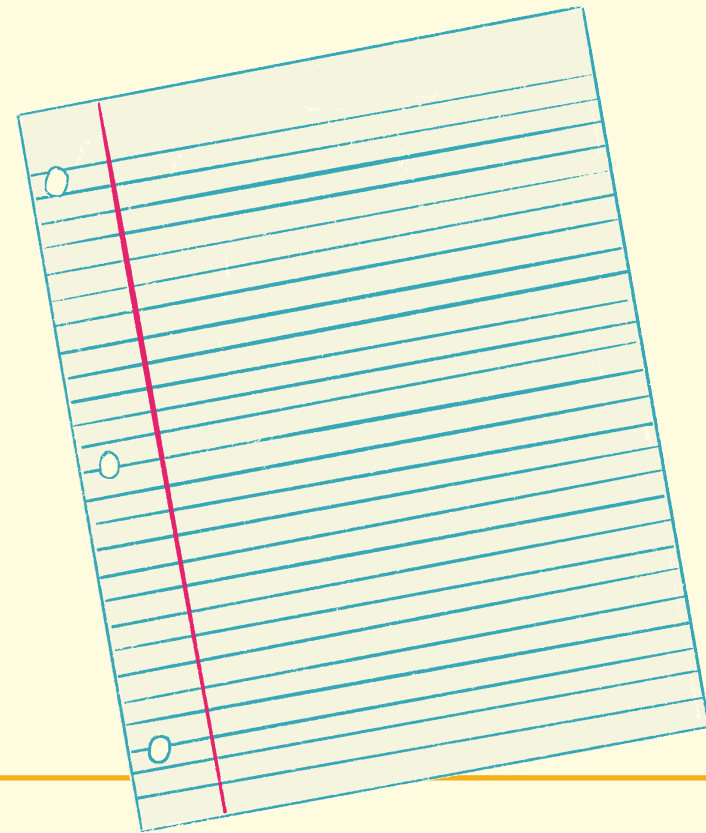


le savoon

the soap

le paapyii

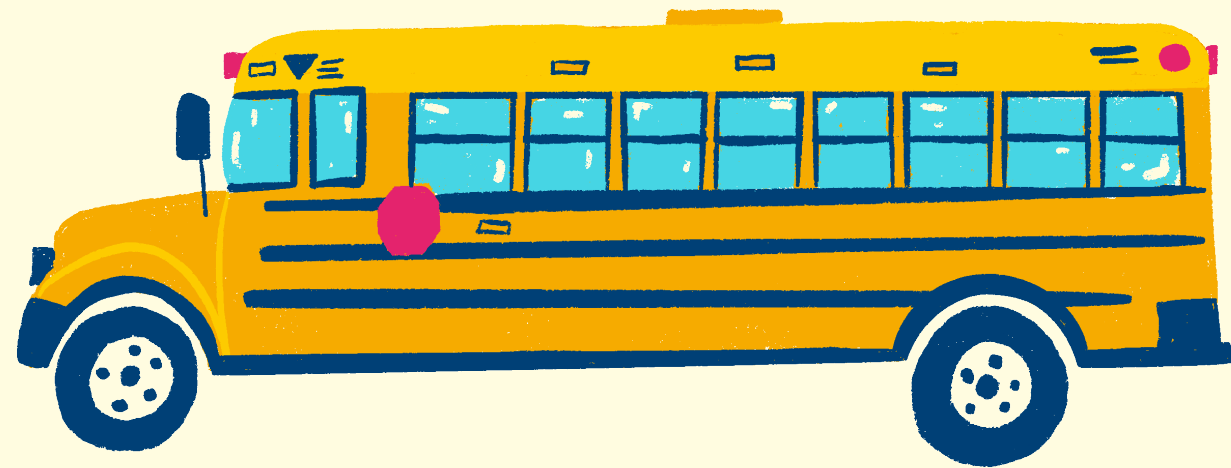
the paper



een

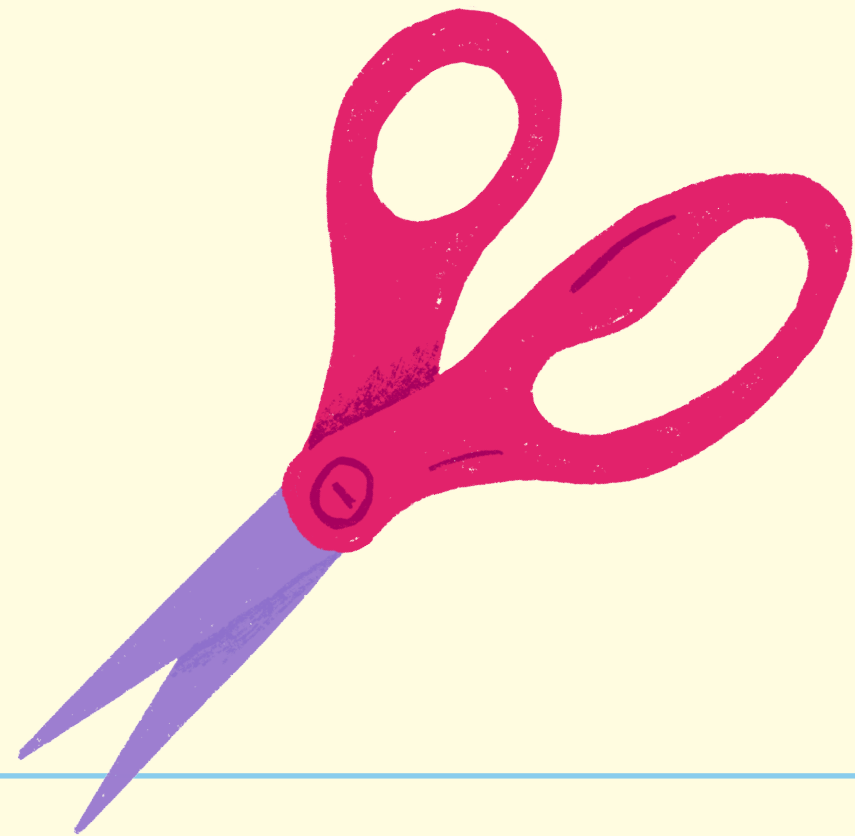
lauto**bous**

the bus



lizi sizzoo

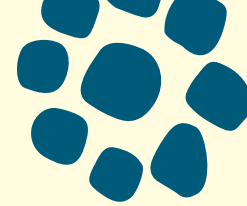
the scissors



lakoi

the glue





een fasswayr

eraser



zhoue

play



aen kriiyoon

a pencil



**aen kriiyoon de
kooleur**

a crayon





sitoot

that's it; that's all



on va twayr
plu tard

see you later



bonn zhour

hello _____



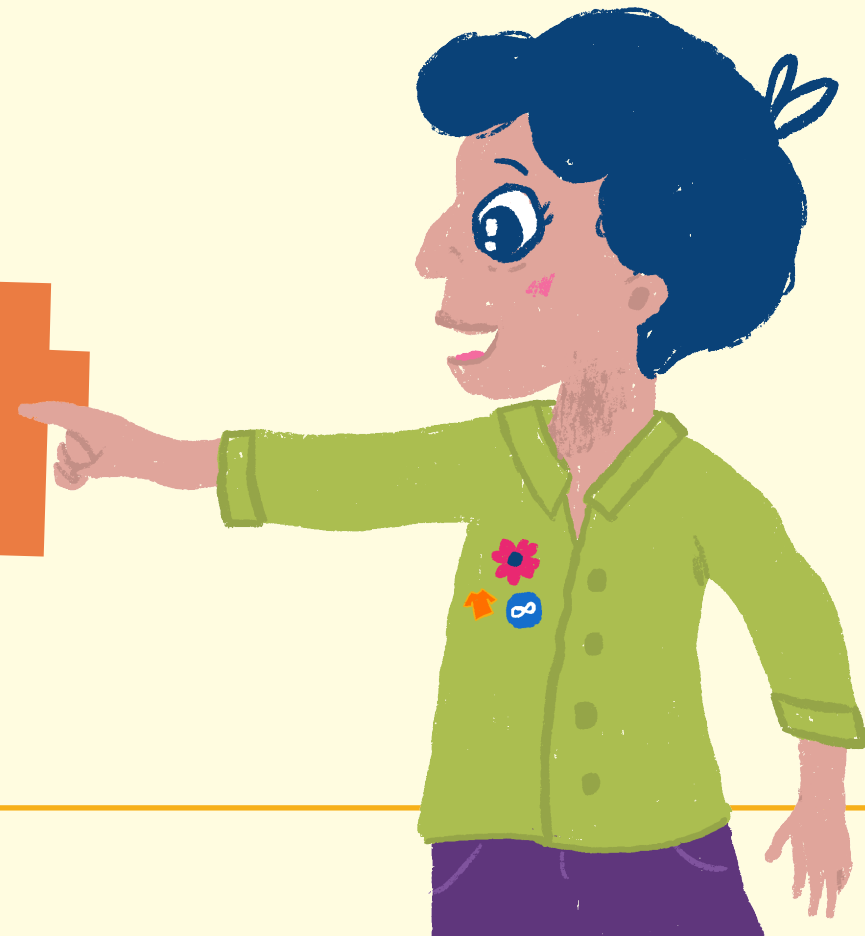
vyyen icit

come here



gawrd icit

look here



oo revv wayr

goodbye



monnom

ay...
my name is...



my name is...

ji kontaan

I'm happy



jui trist

I'm sad



aen shaarzh

leader

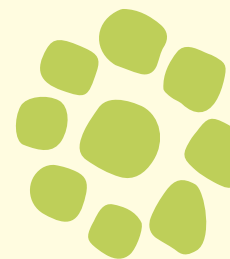
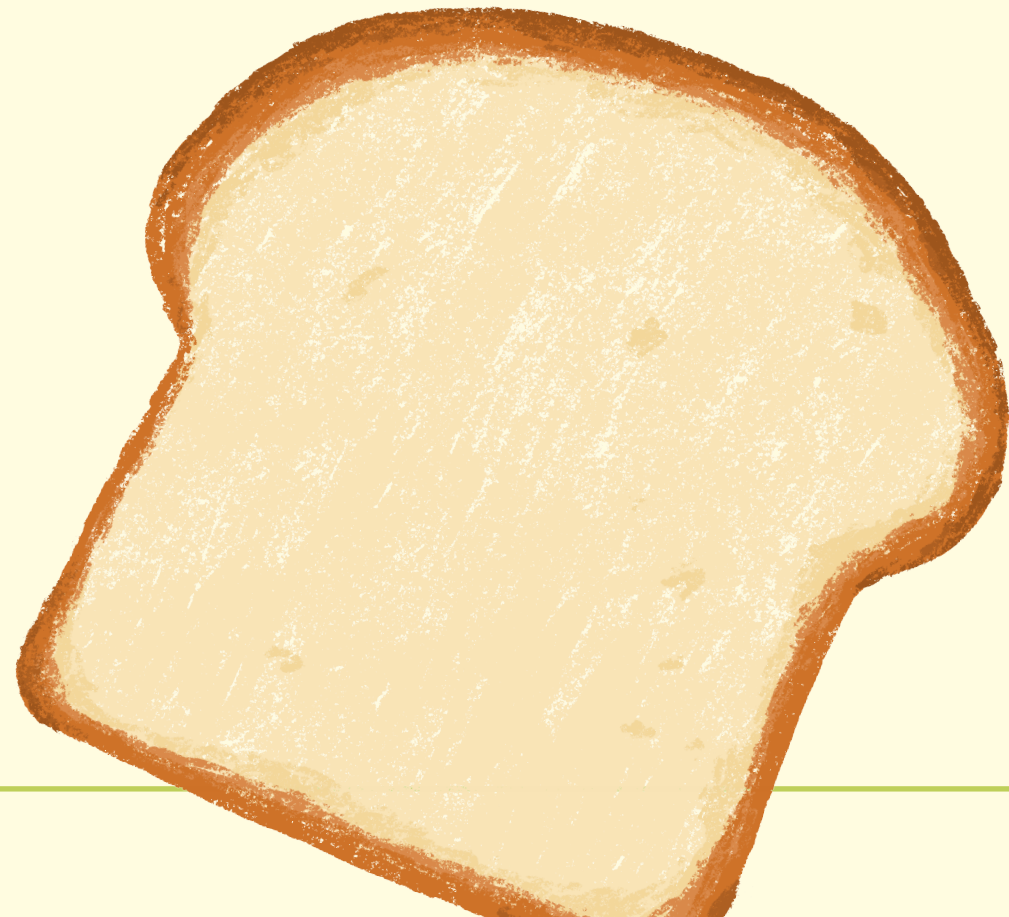




le paen



bread



met'd ikol,

maytress
teacher



kwiiizin

kitchen



met'd ikol

teacher



la soup

soup



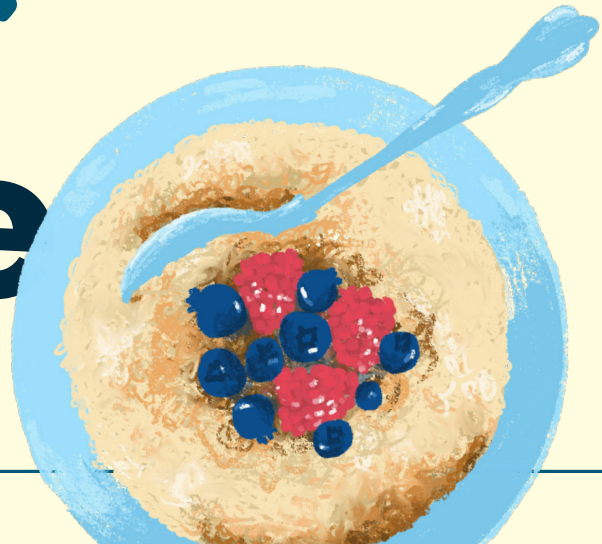


read



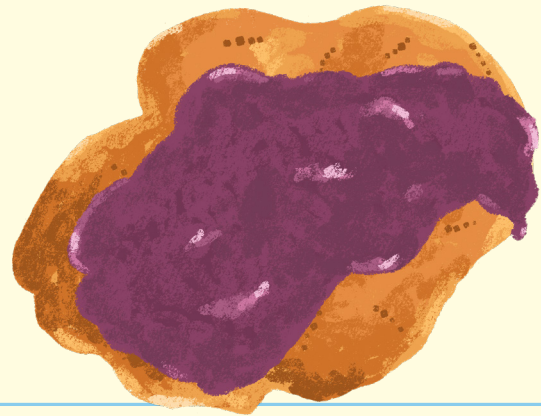
le porridge

oatmeal



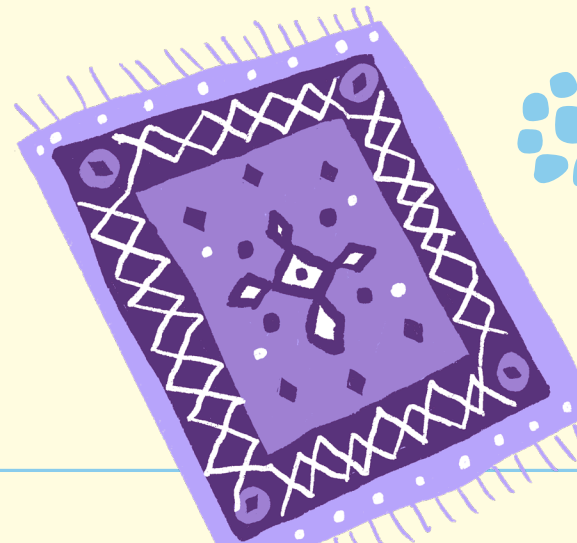
gallette

bannock



aen tapiii

a rug



aen fridge

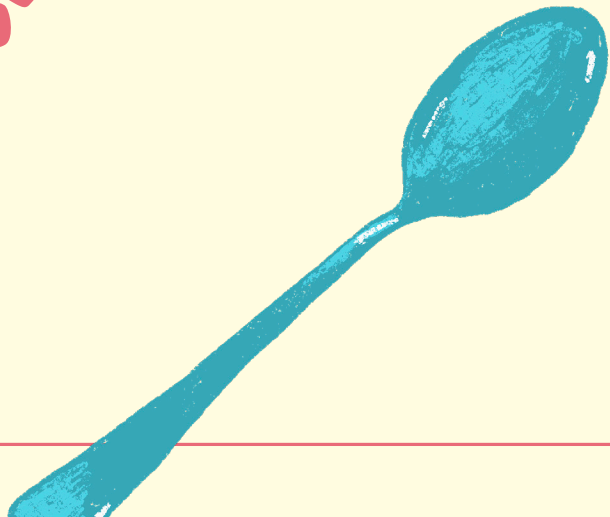
fridge _____



aen

kwiiiayr

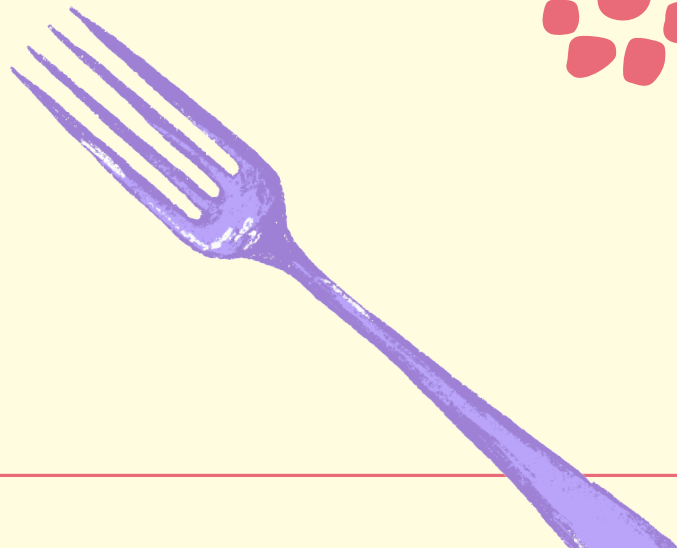
a spoon



lii

foorshet

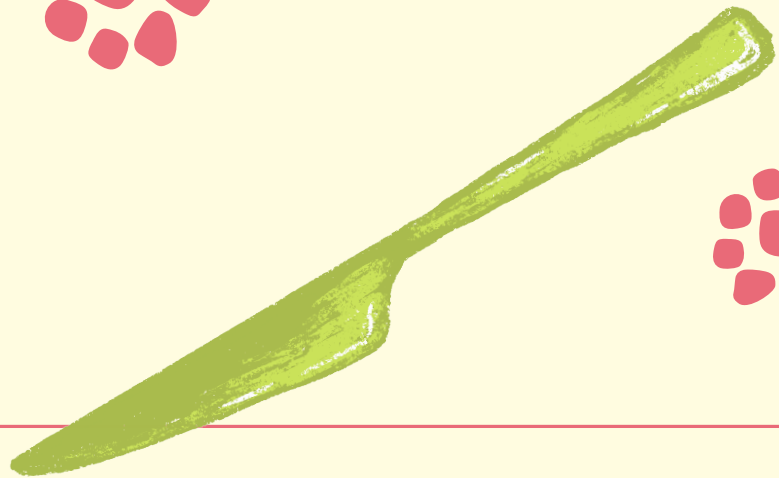
a fork



aen

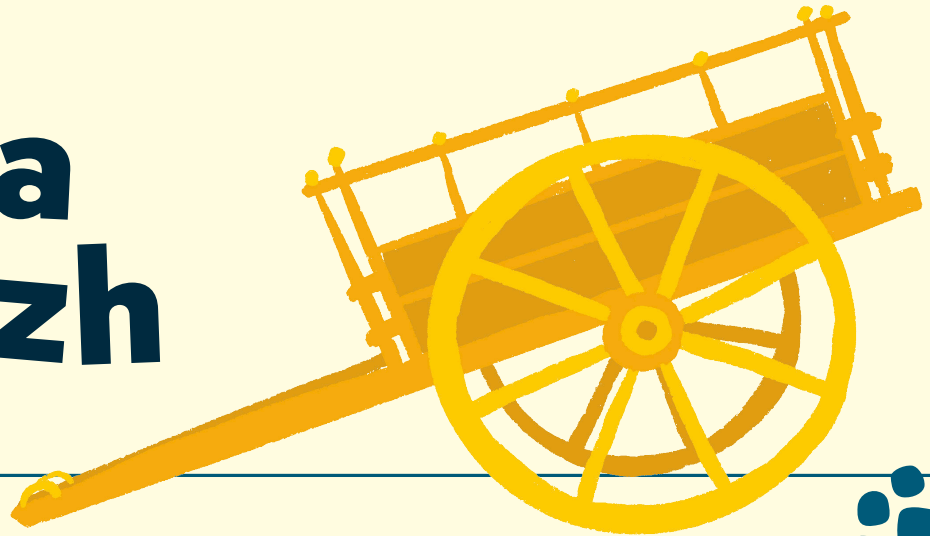
koutou

a knife



**charret di la
rivyayr rouzh**

the red river cart



paviiyoon

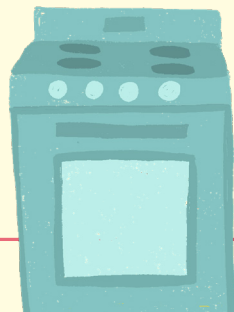
flag





aen pwel

stove



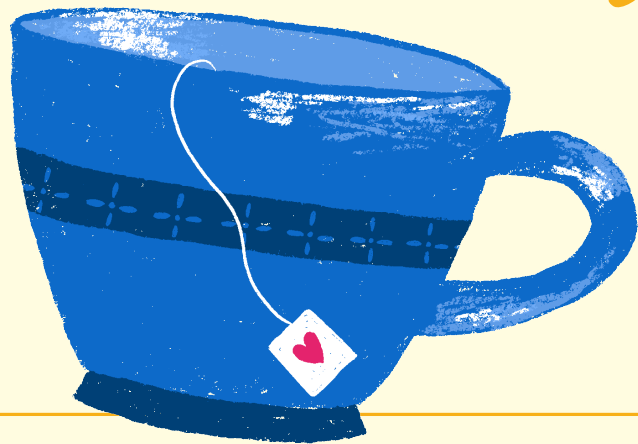
aen bool

a bowl



aen taas

a cup



lelelett

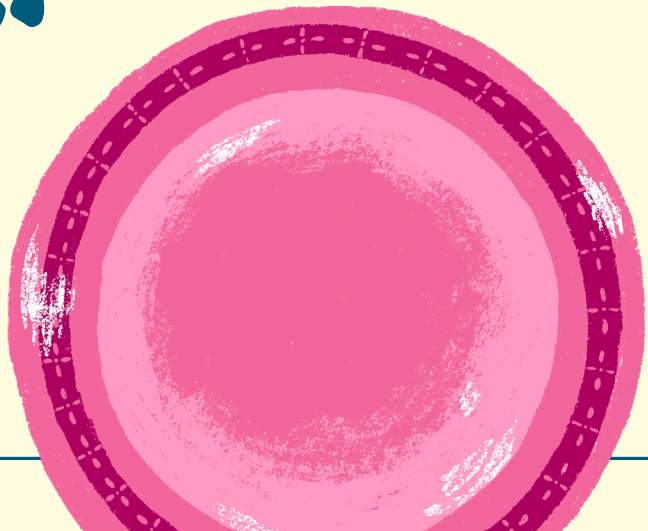
milk





aasyet de maanzhii

a plate





sayncheur



flayshii

sash



**aen
vyayloon**

a fiddle



Classroom Posters

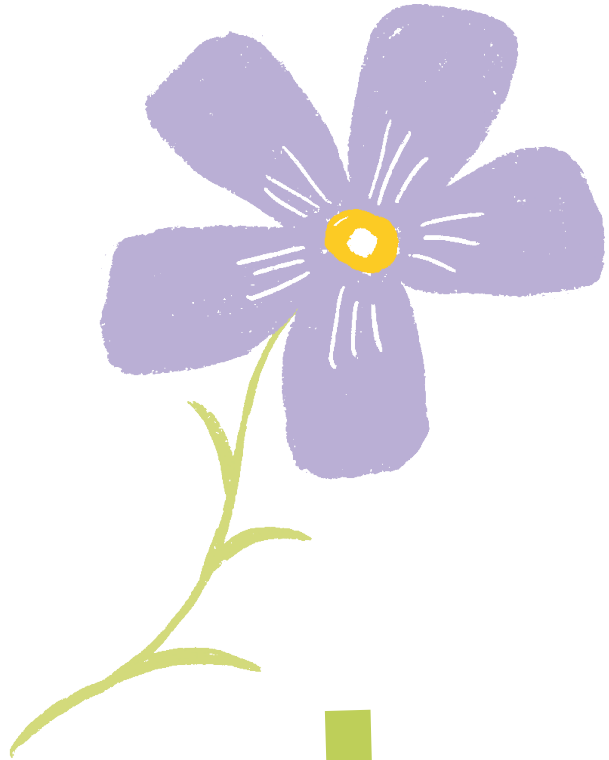
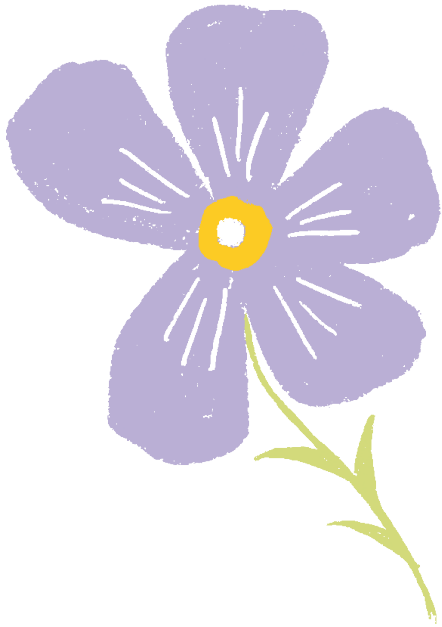


1



aen

2



deu

3



trwaa

4

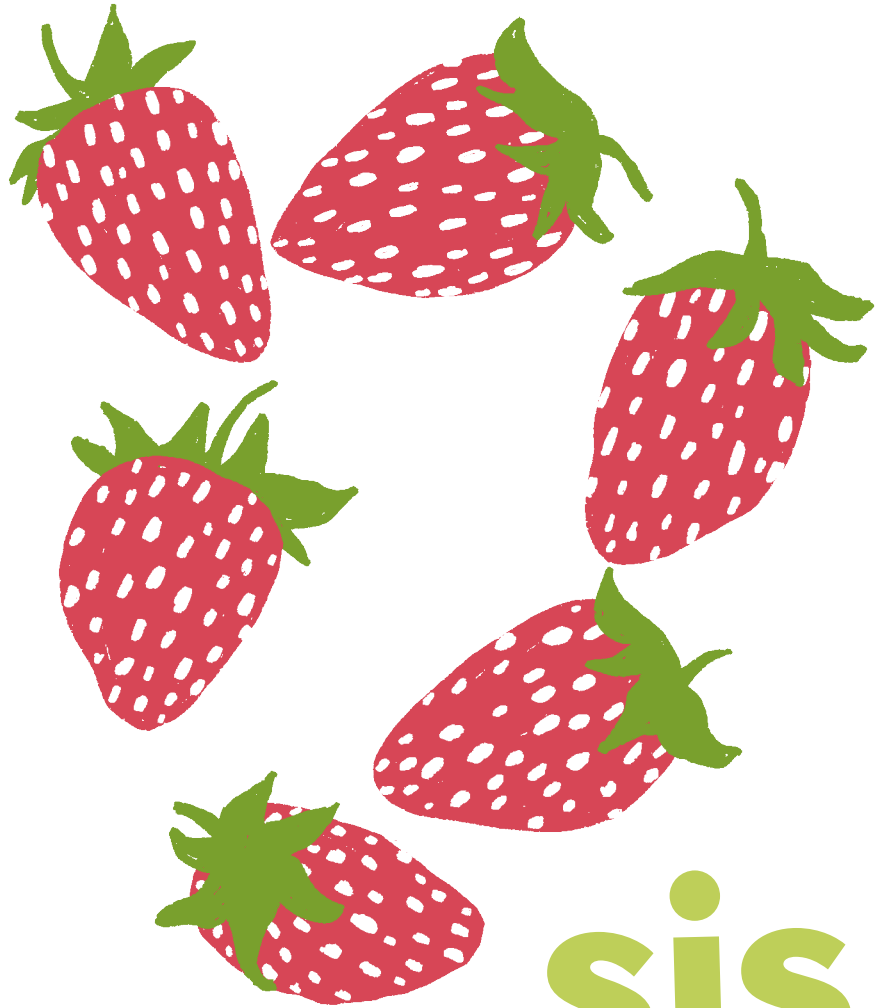


kaat

5



saenk



sis

7



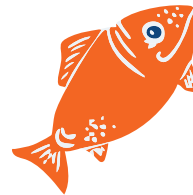
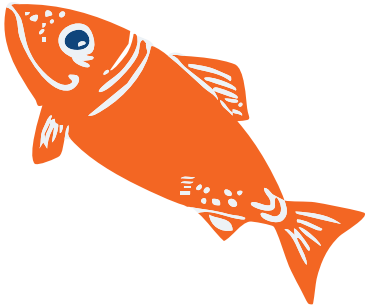
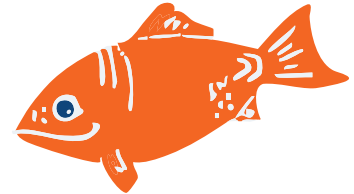
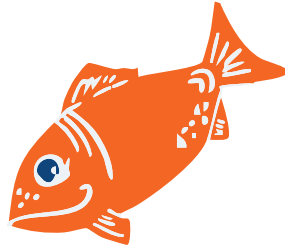
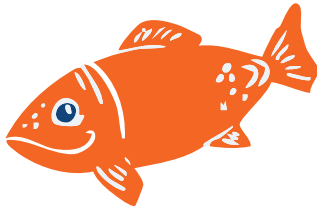
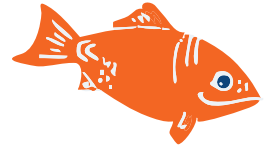
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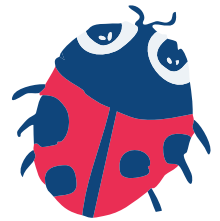
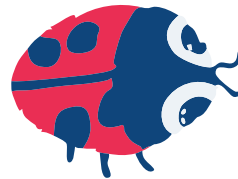
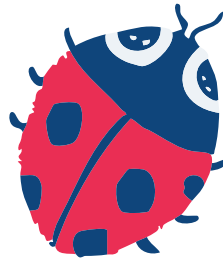
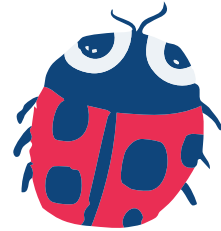
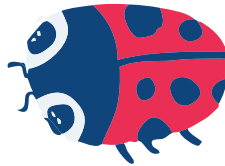
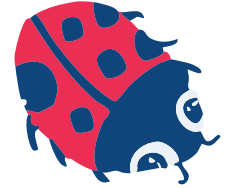
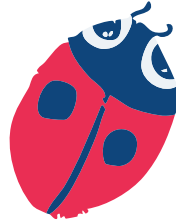
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9

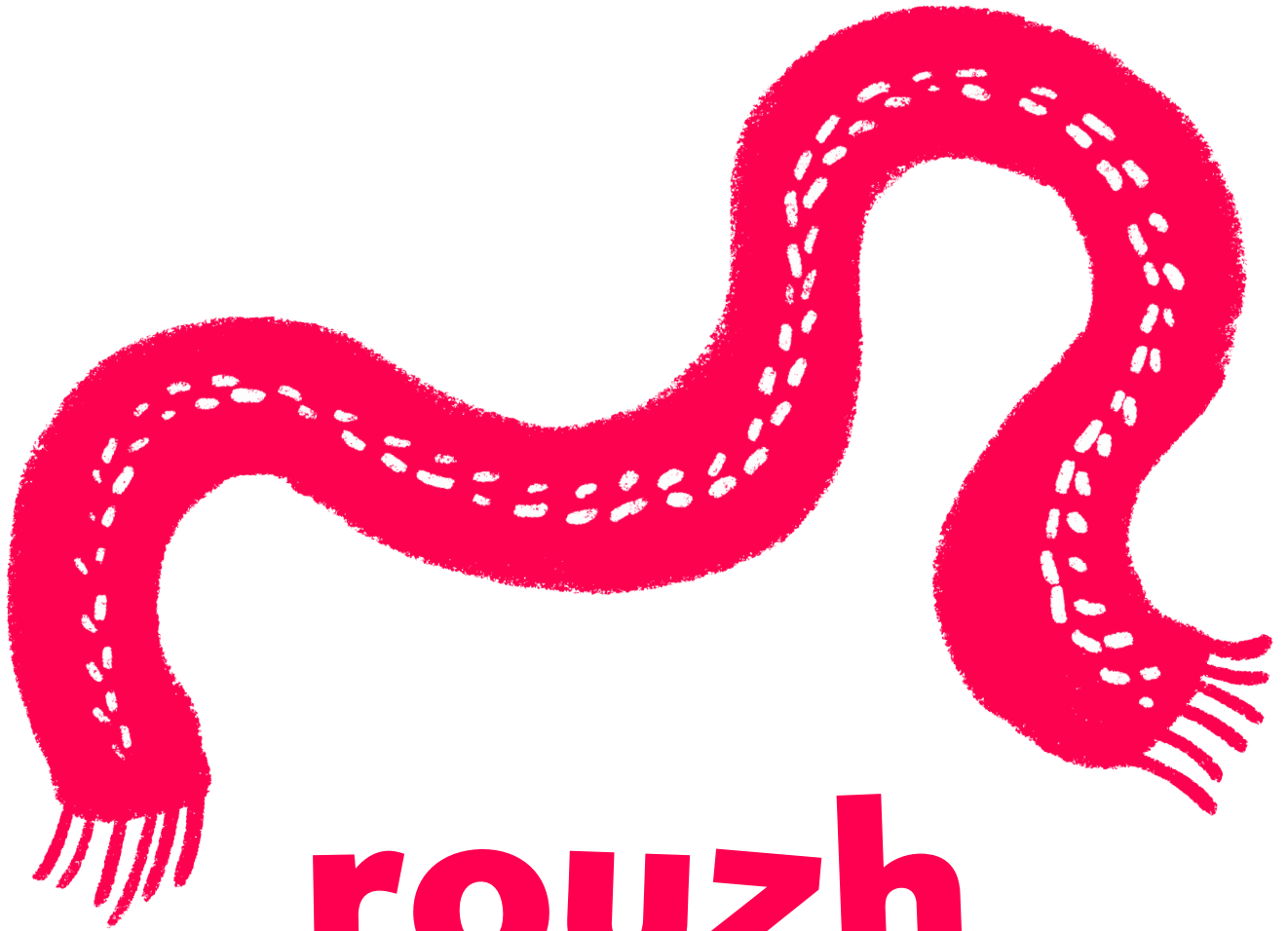


nauf

10



jhis



rouzh



zoraanzh



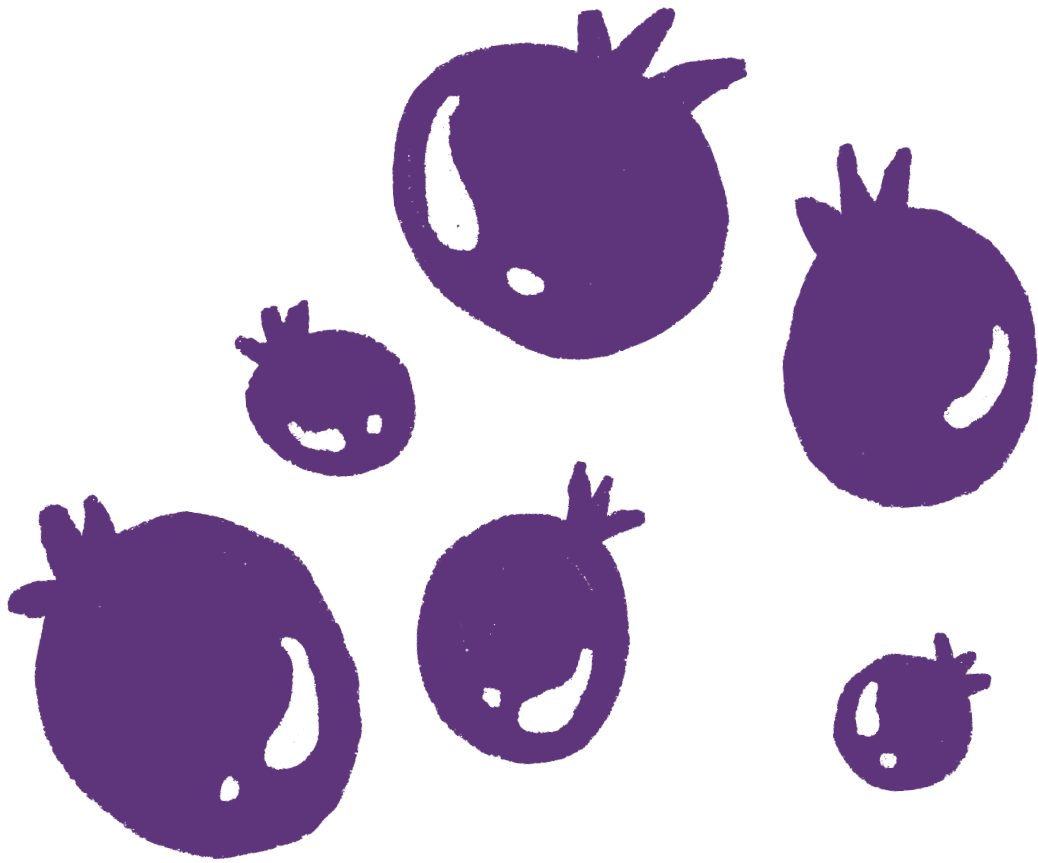
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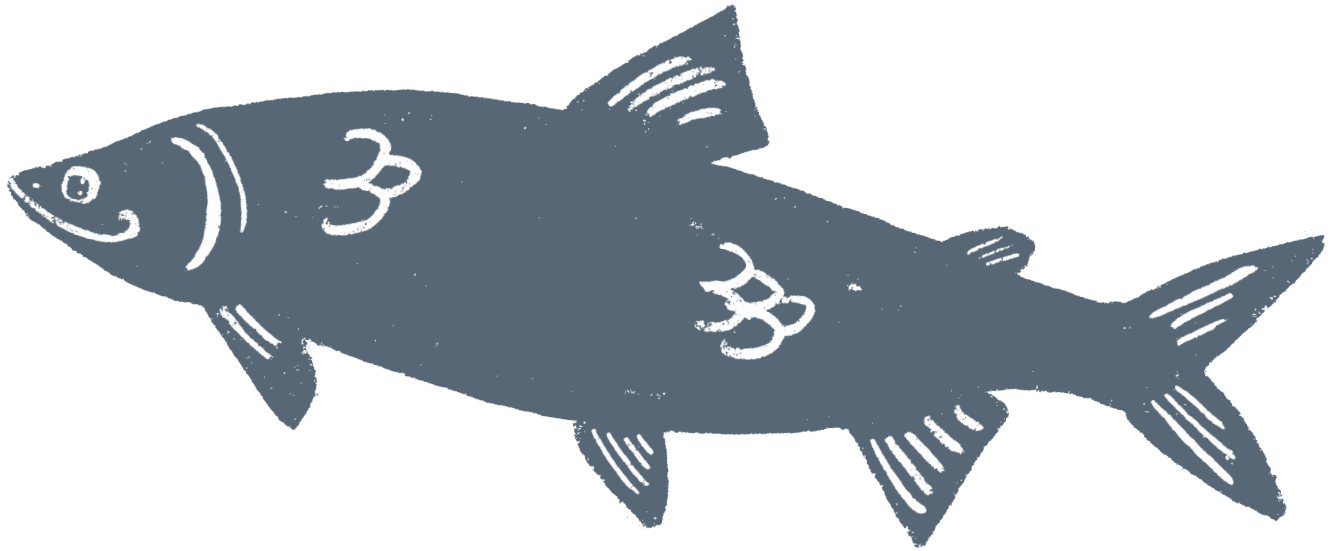
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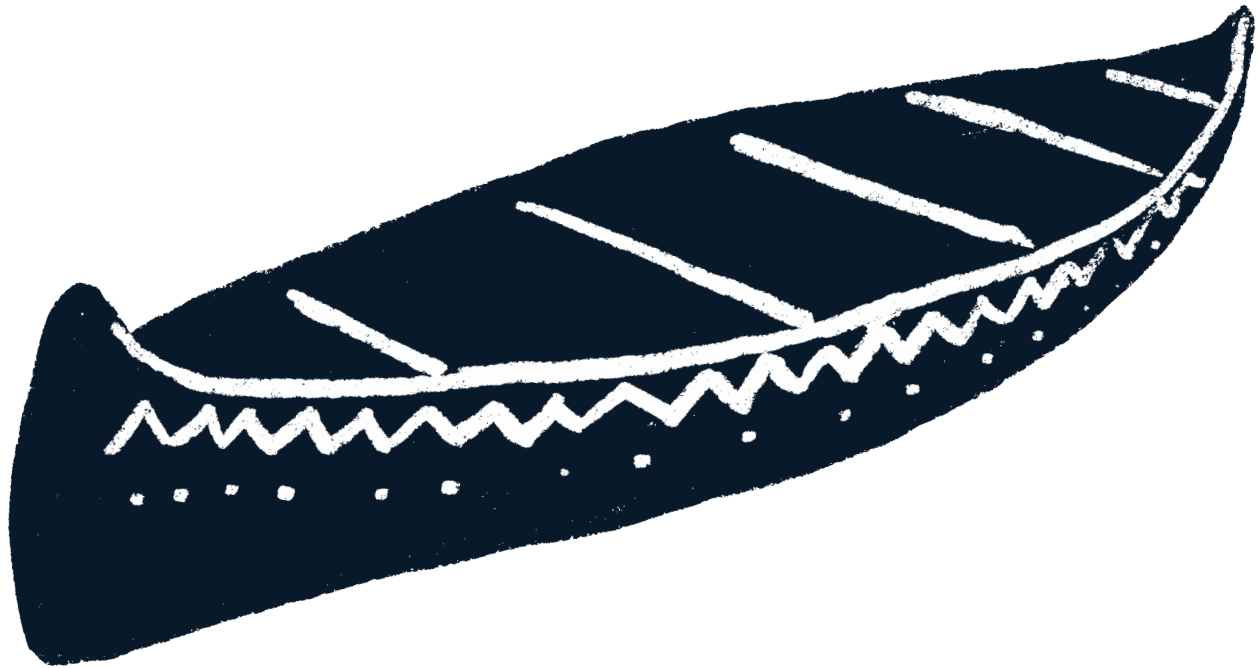
blu



viyalet



grii



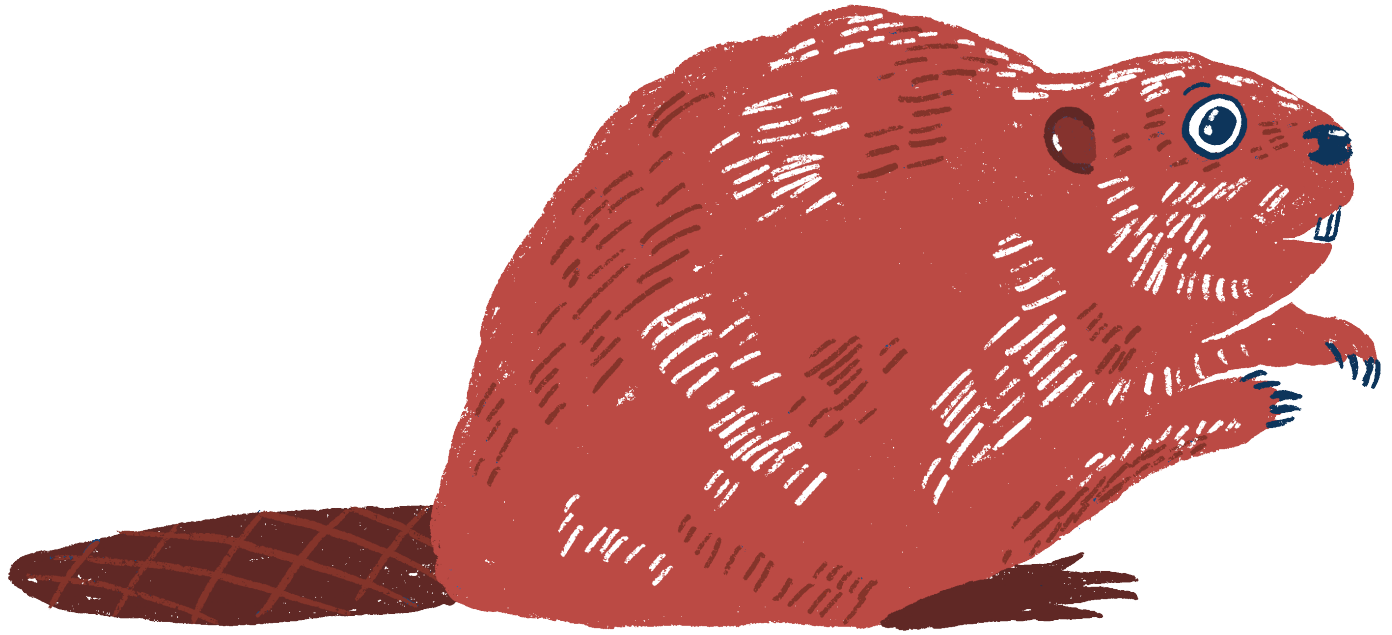
nwayr



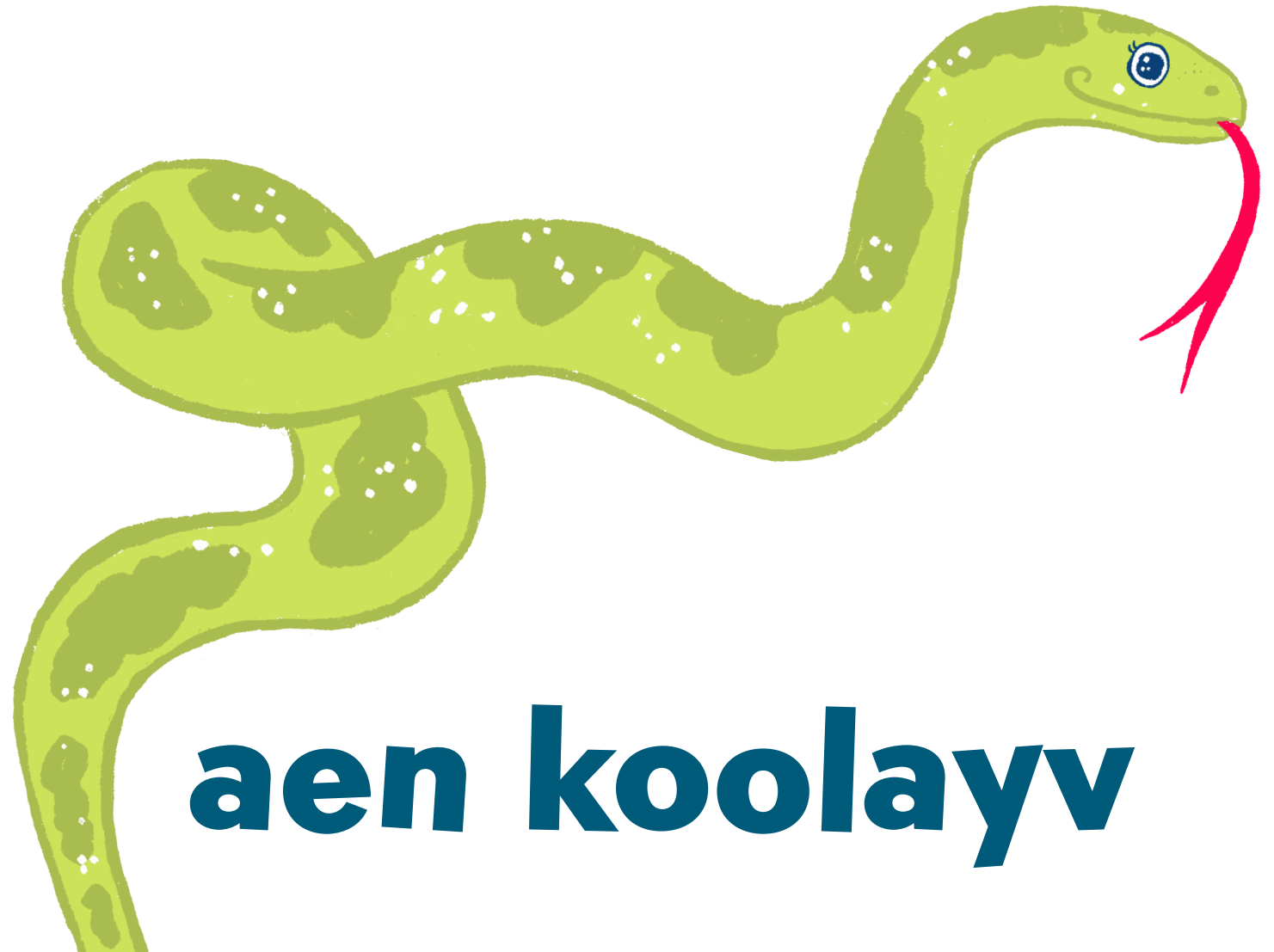
blaan



aen shiikawk



aen kaastor



aen koolayv



aen noors



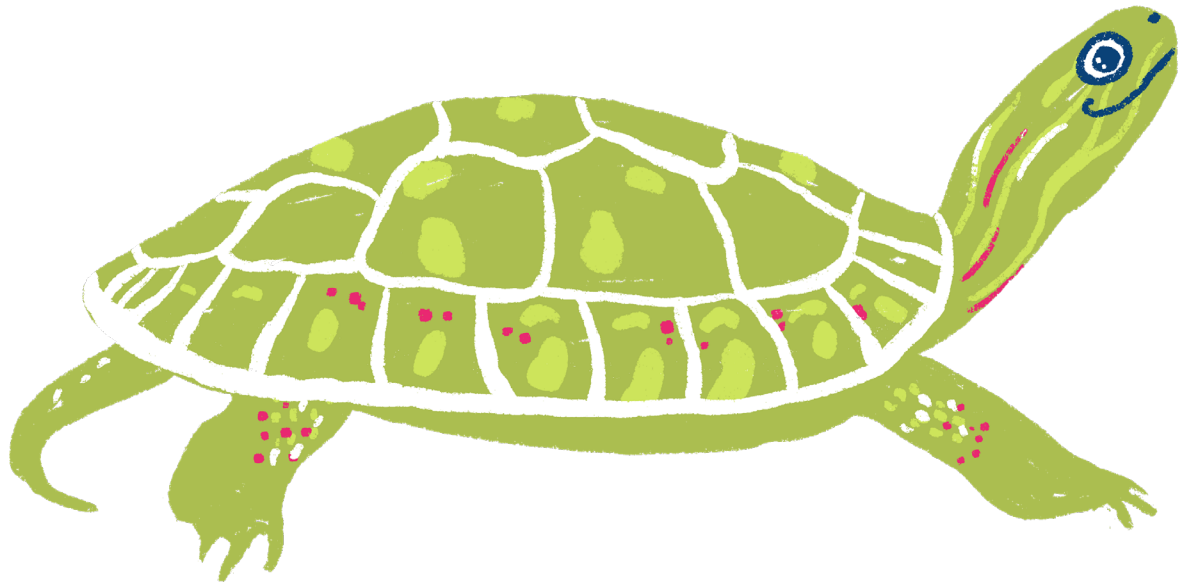
aen rinawr



aen shoovreu



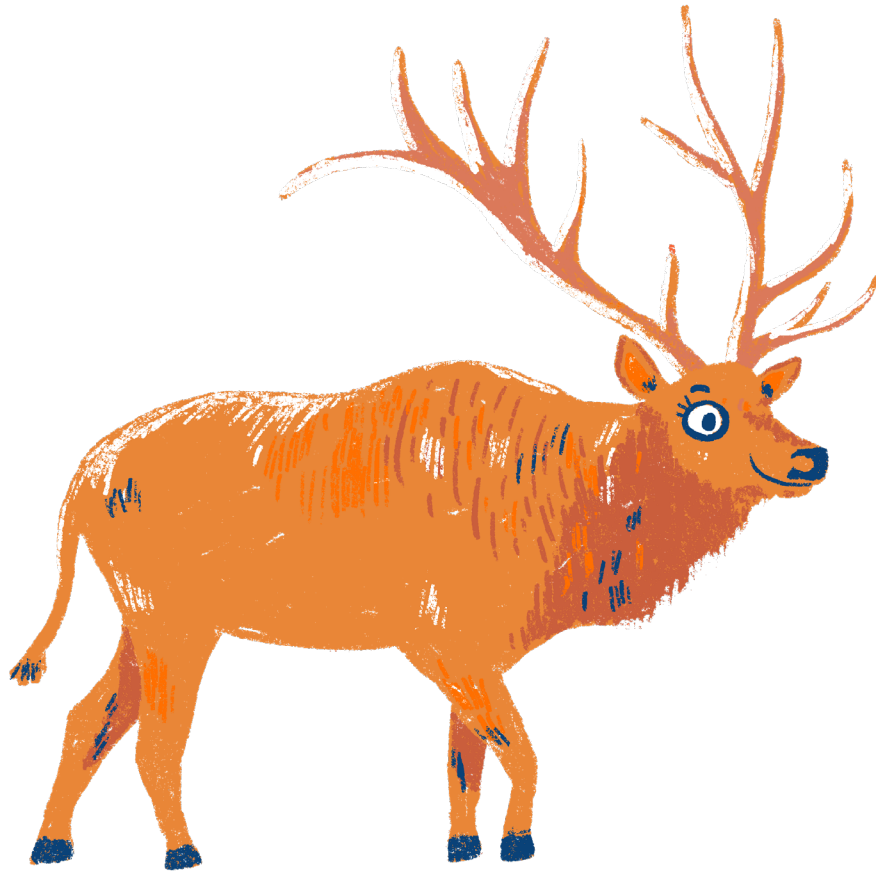
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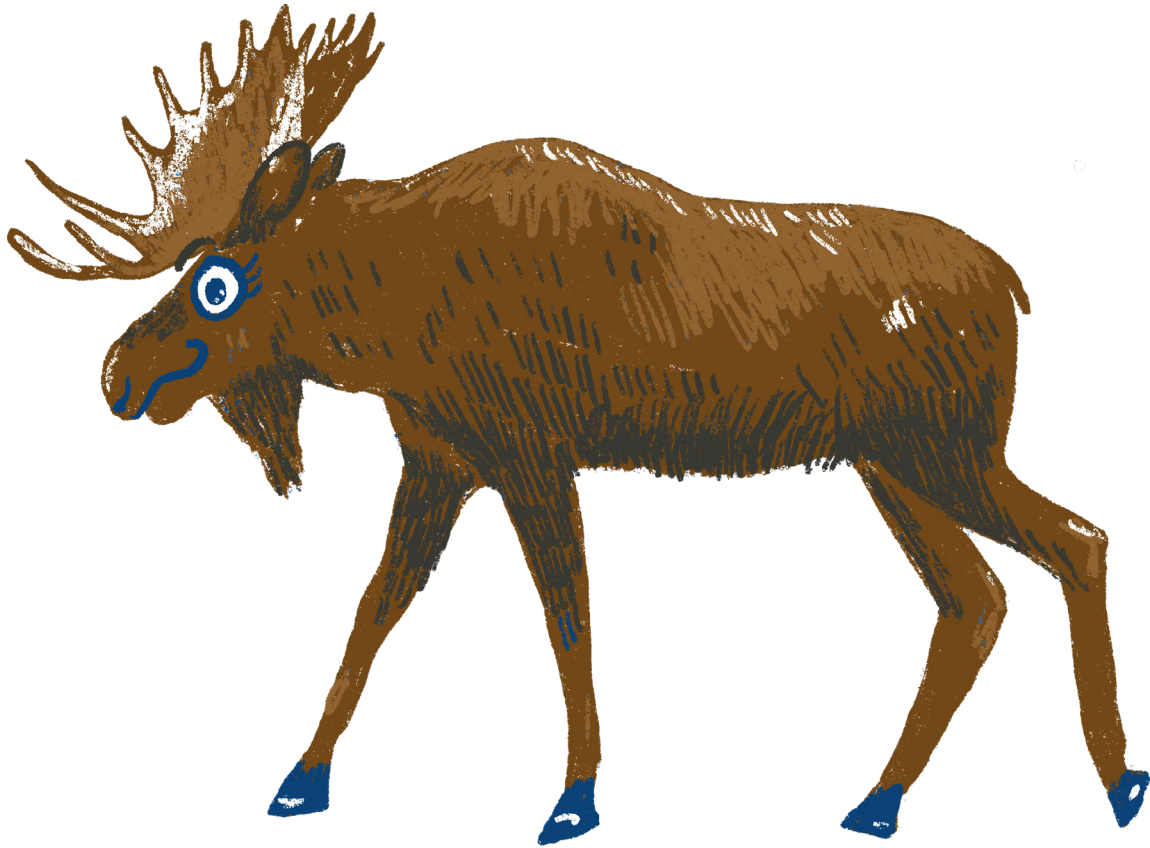
aen torcheu



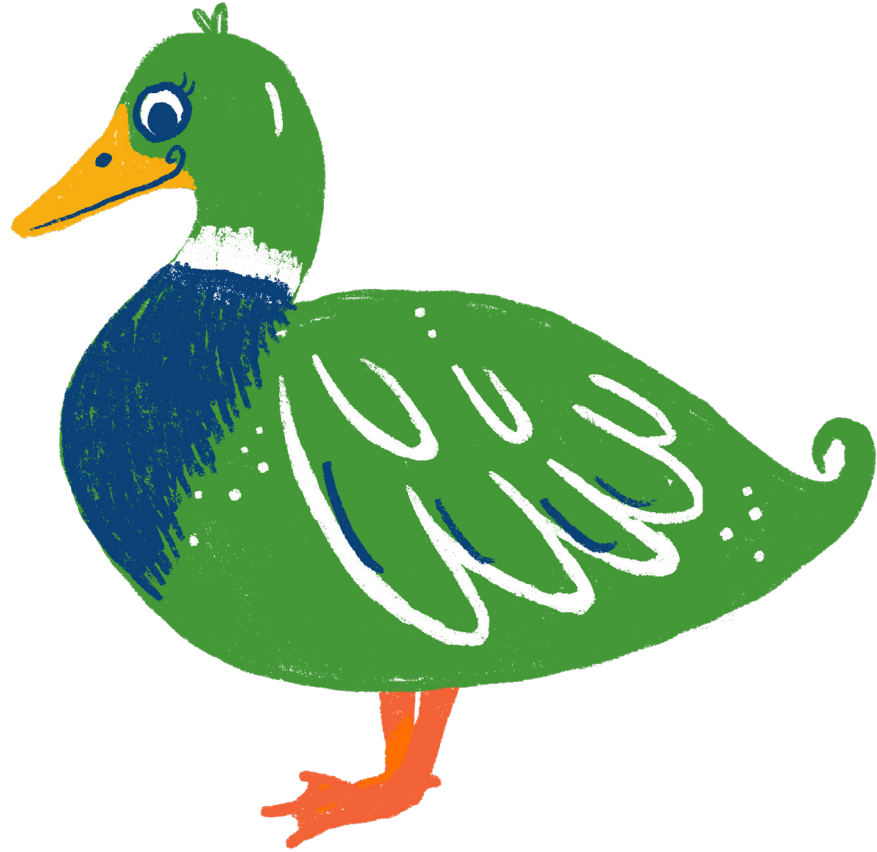
aen swiss



aen bish



l'aariyaanl



aen kanaar



aen poul



aen nwayzoo



aen loo



aen zourii shood



aen poul di prayrii



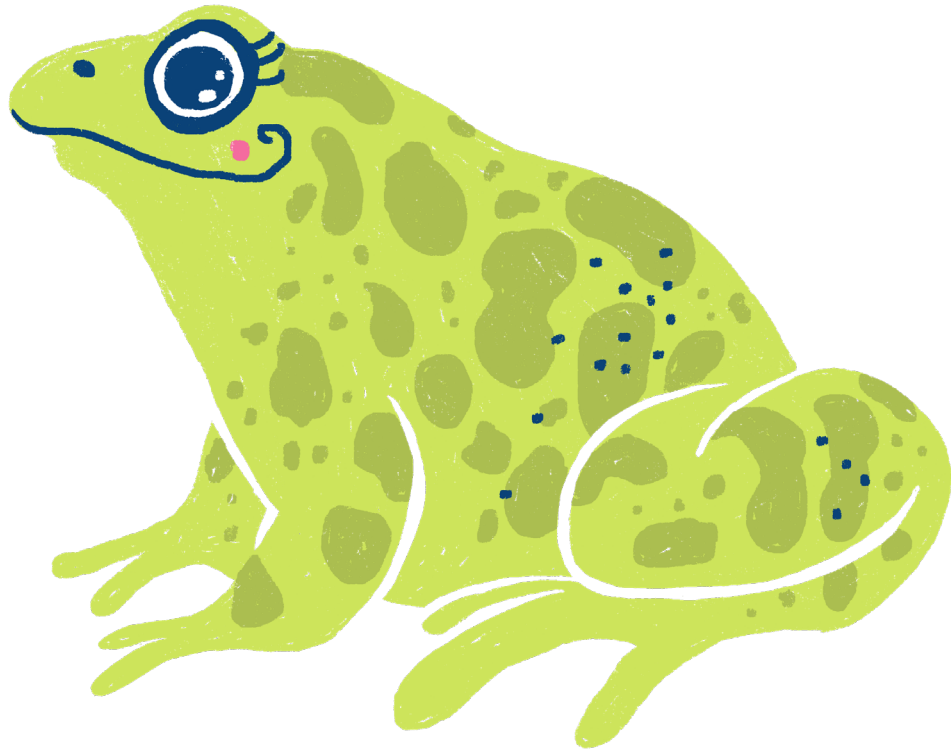
aen yeebou



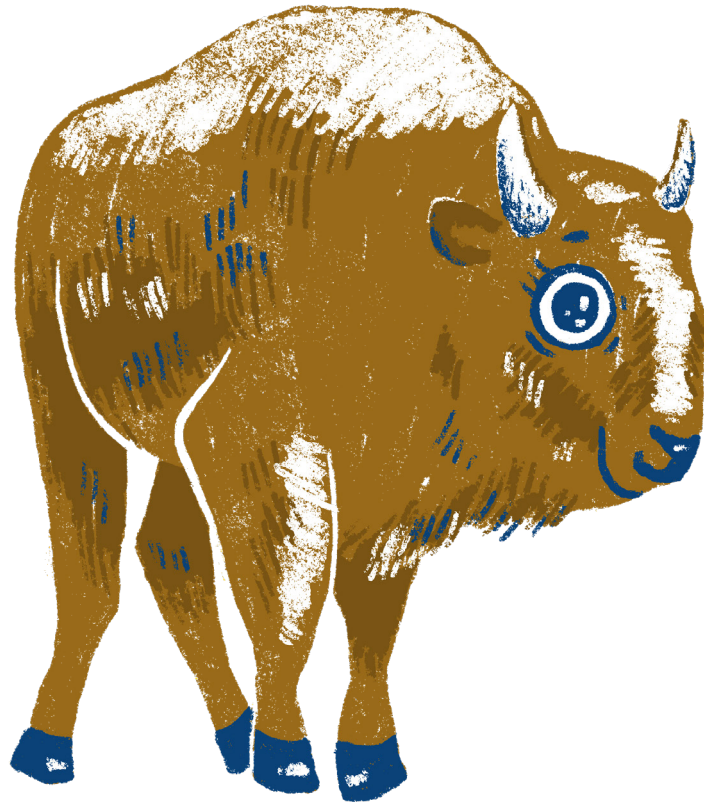
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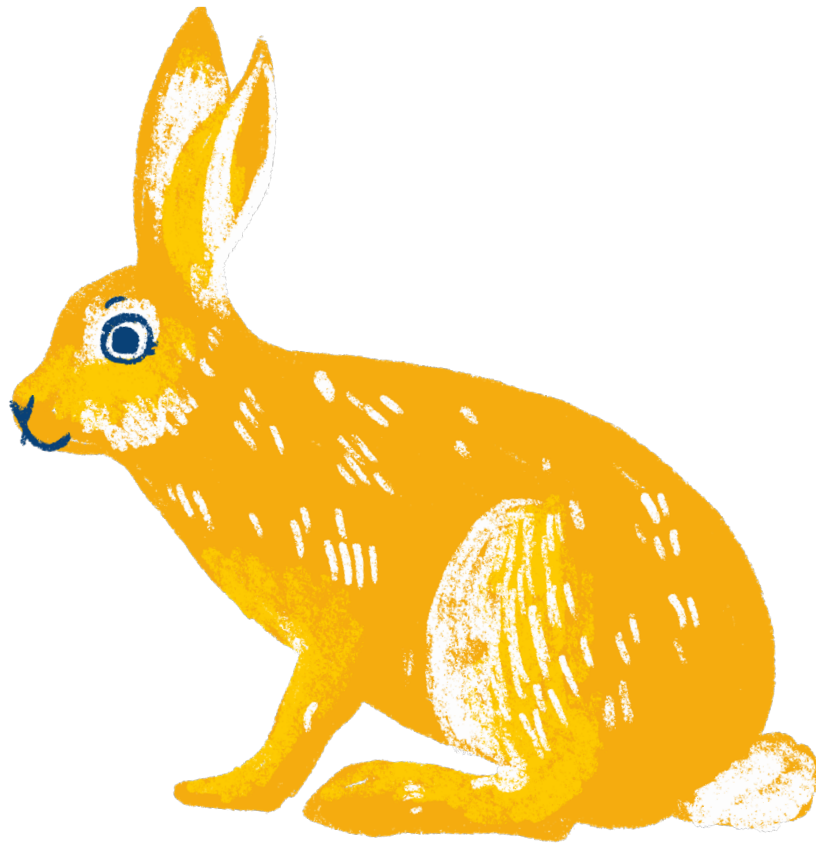
aen portipik



aen goornouy



aen bufloo



aen lievr

Classroom Calendar



1



aen

2



deu

3



trwaa

4



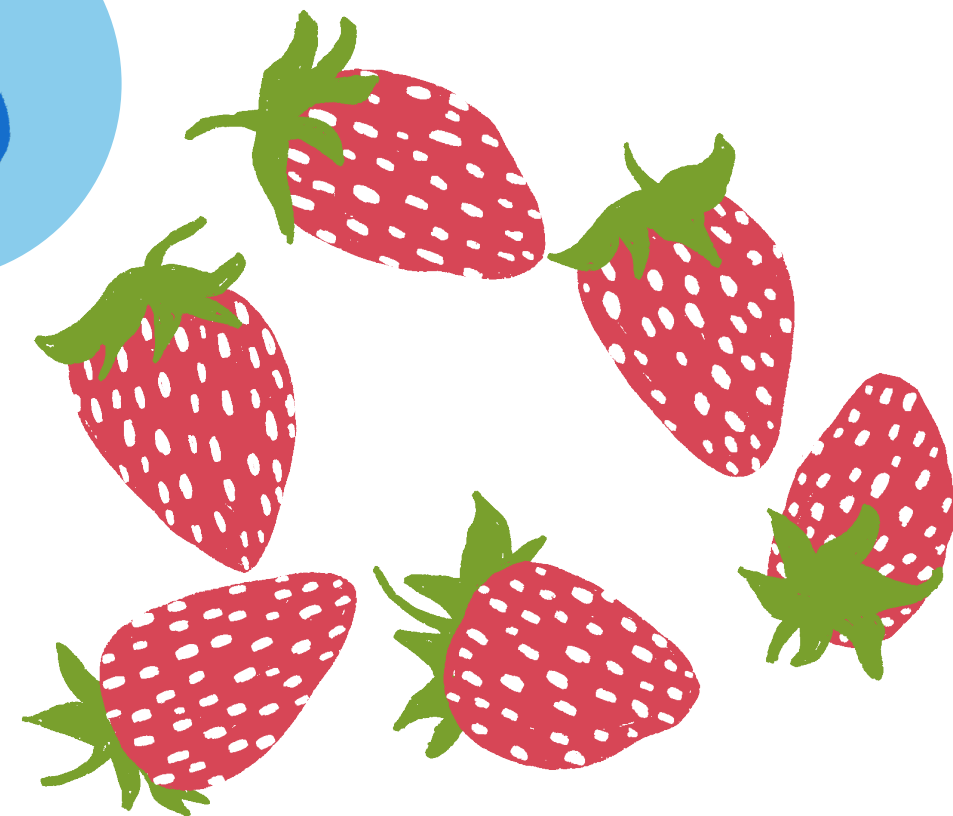
kaat

5



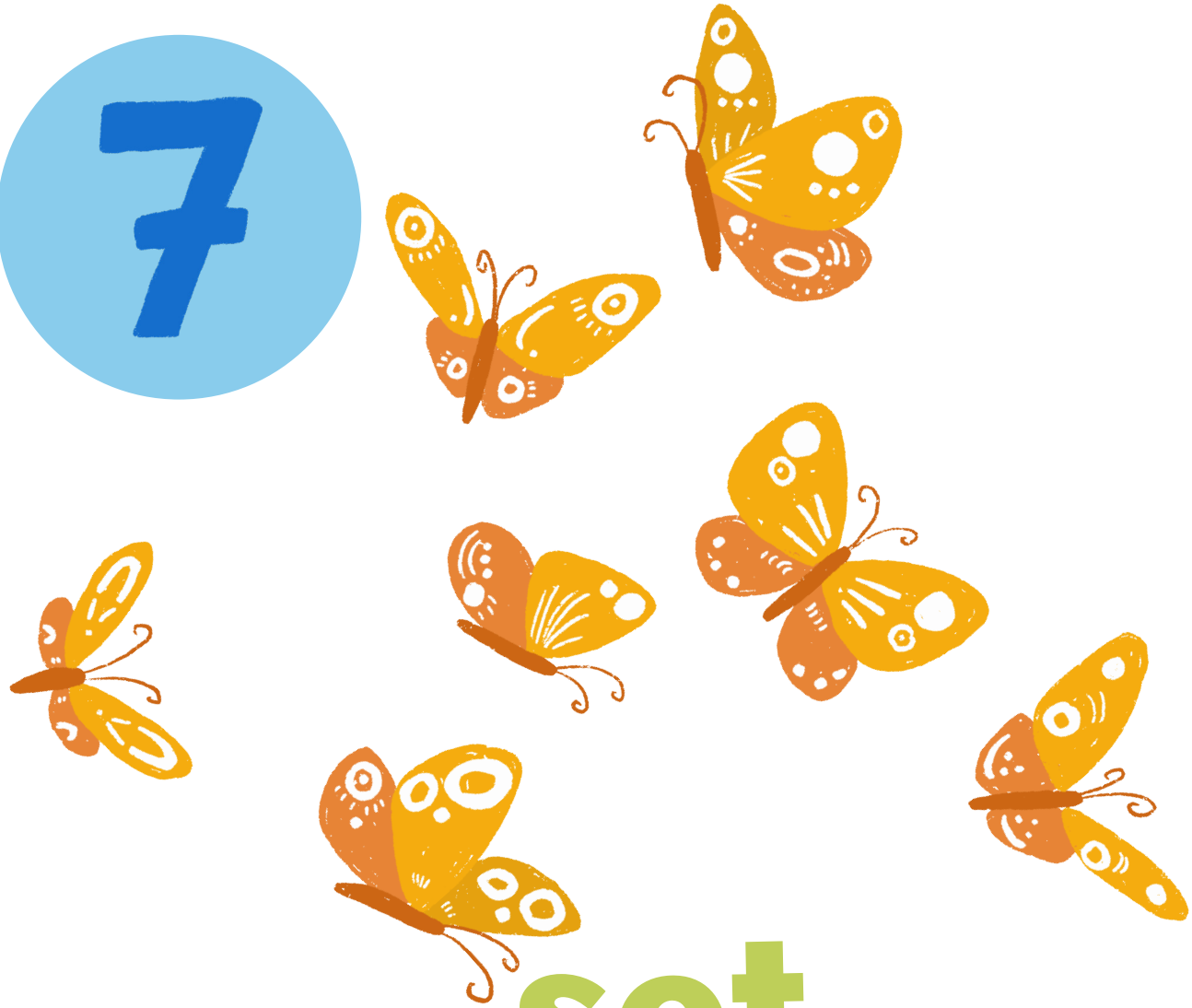
saenk

6



sis

7



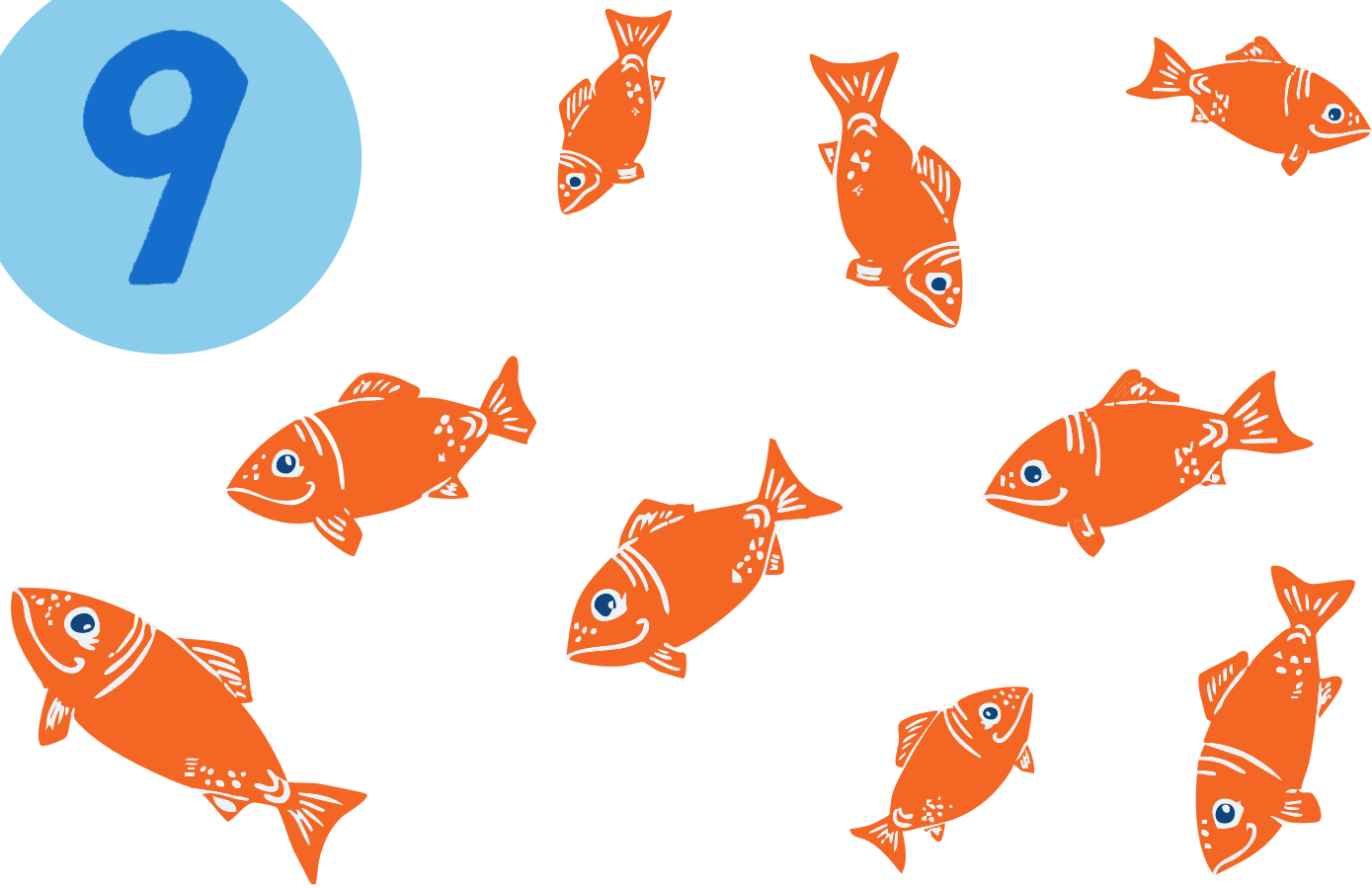
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8



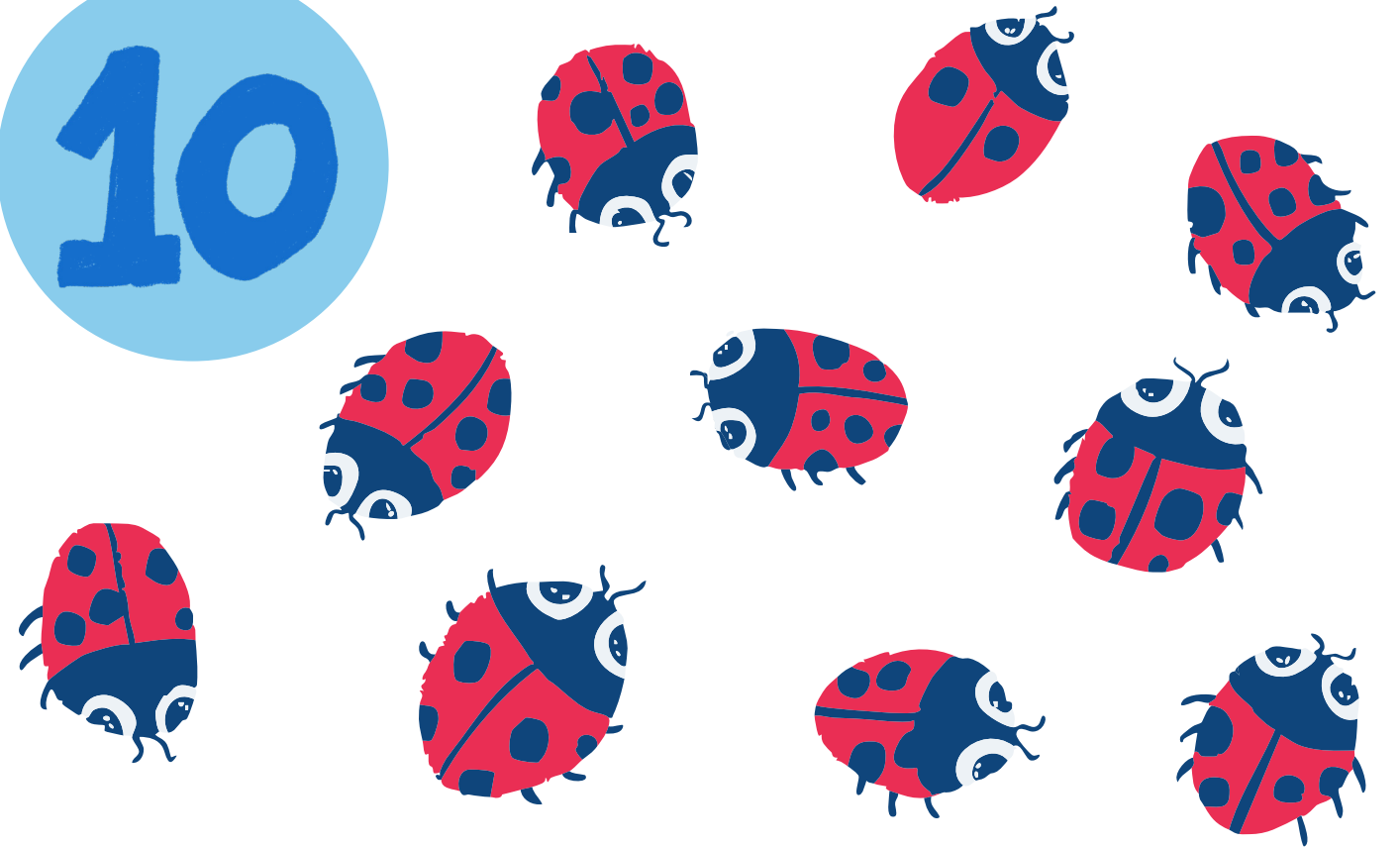
whit

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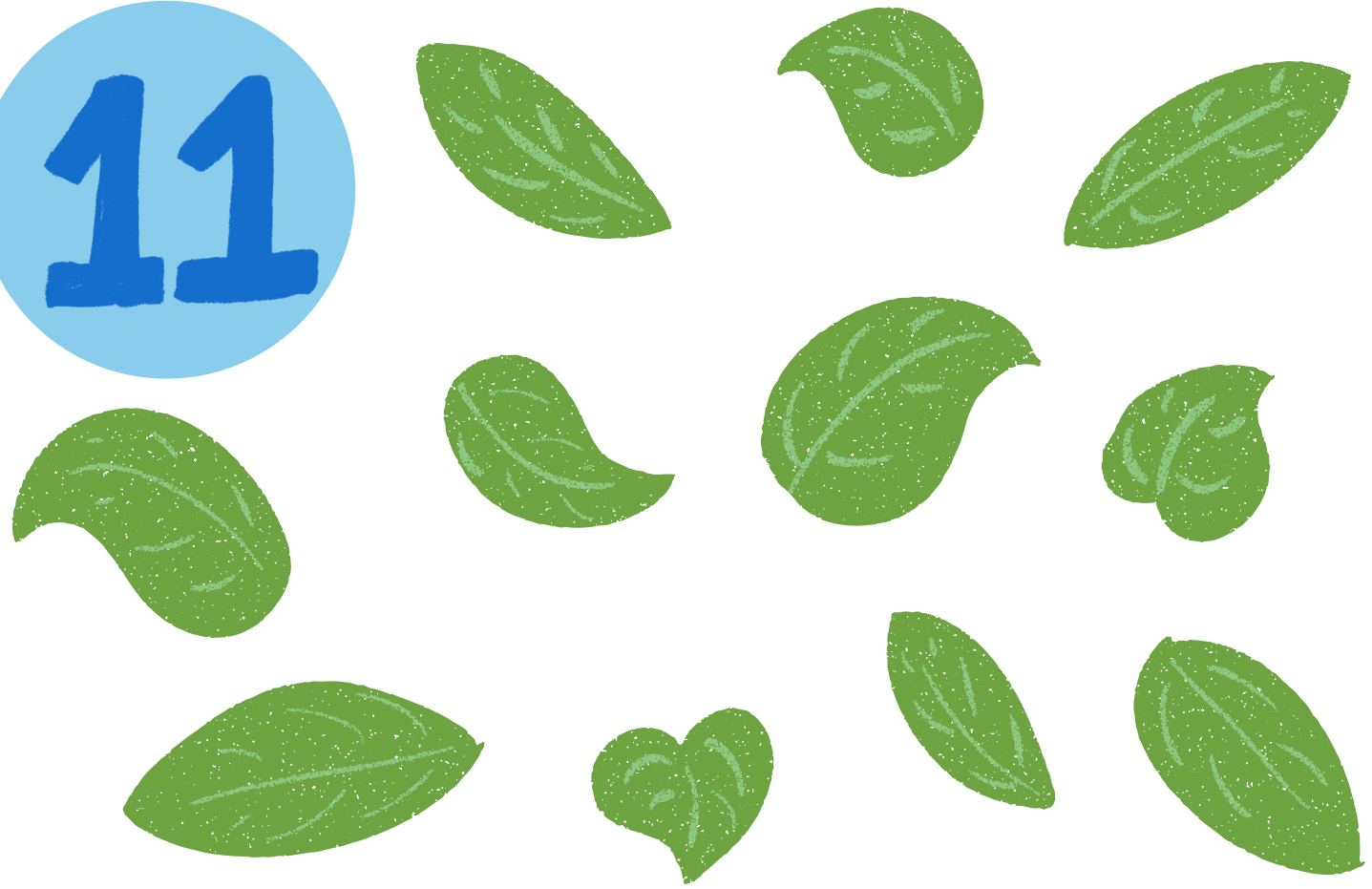
nauf

10



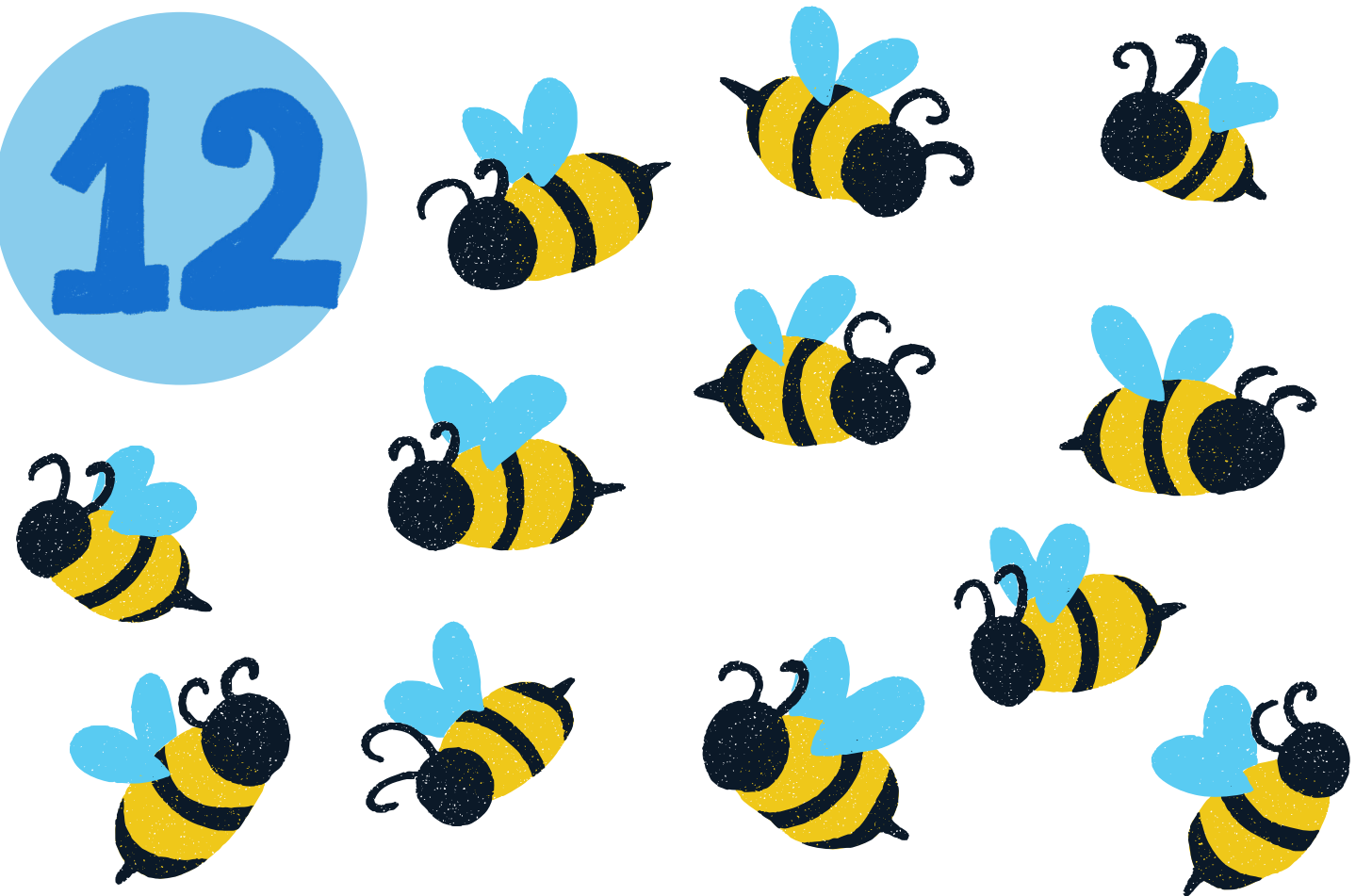
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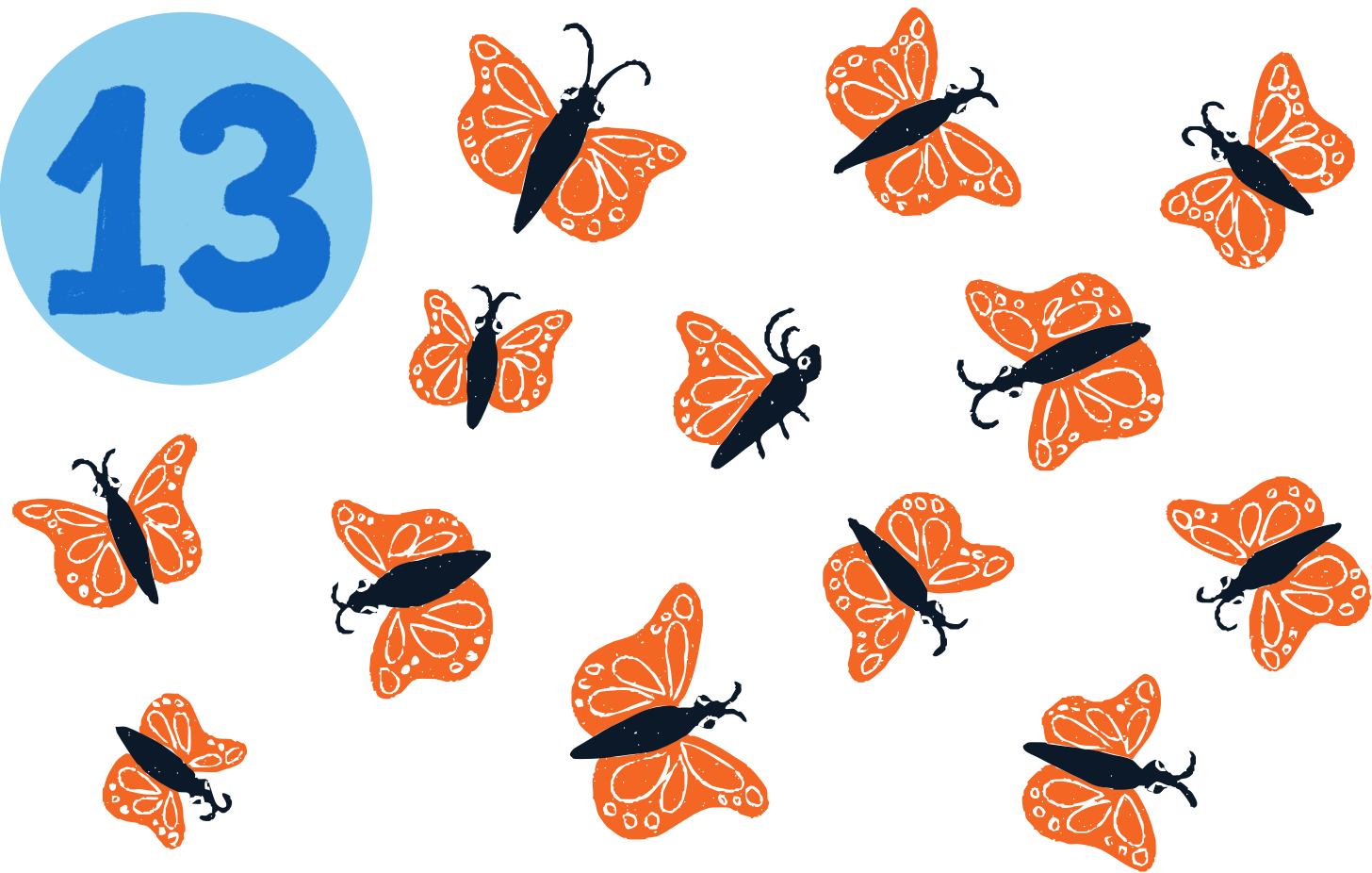
oonz

12



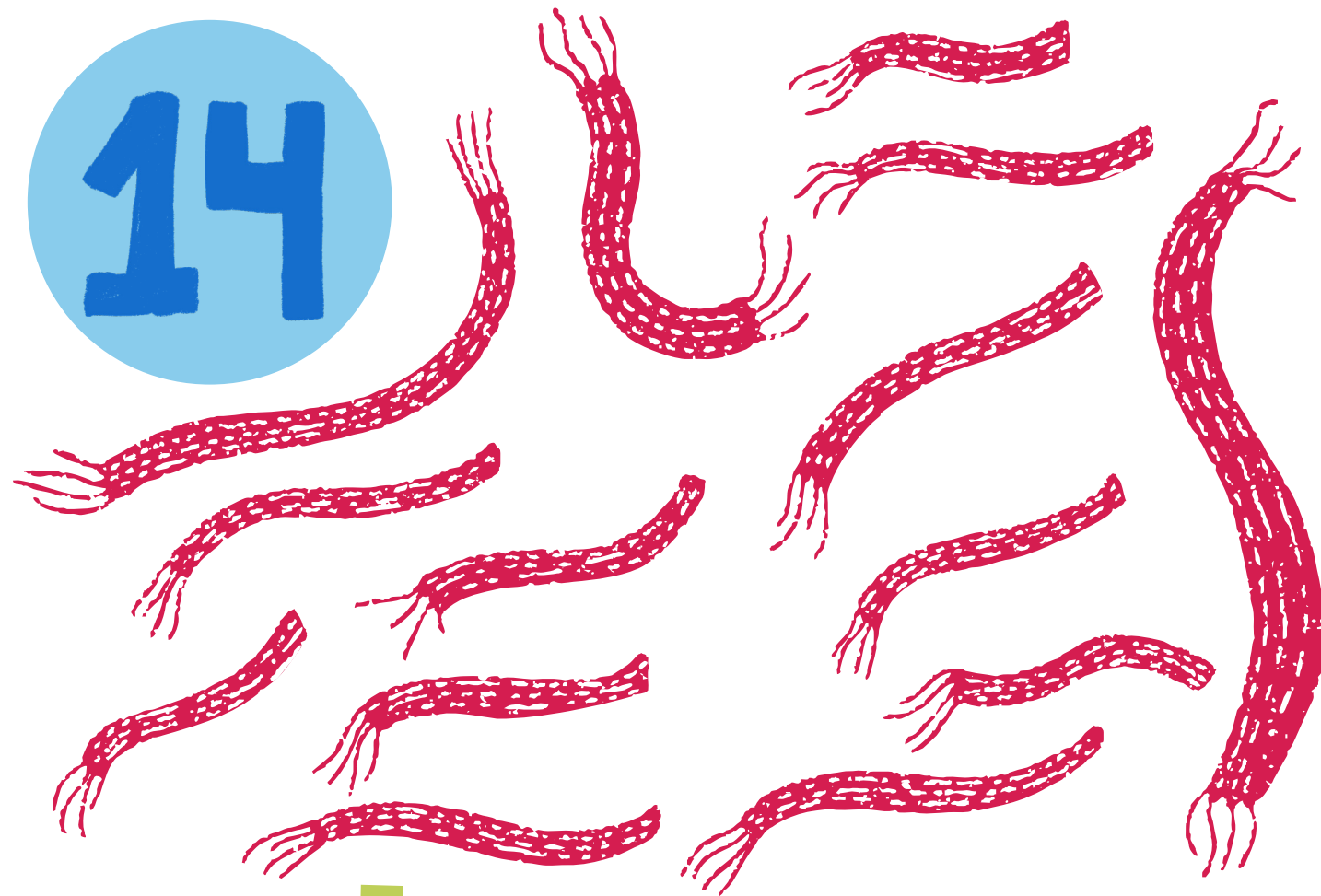
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13



trayz

14



katorz

15



kaynz

16



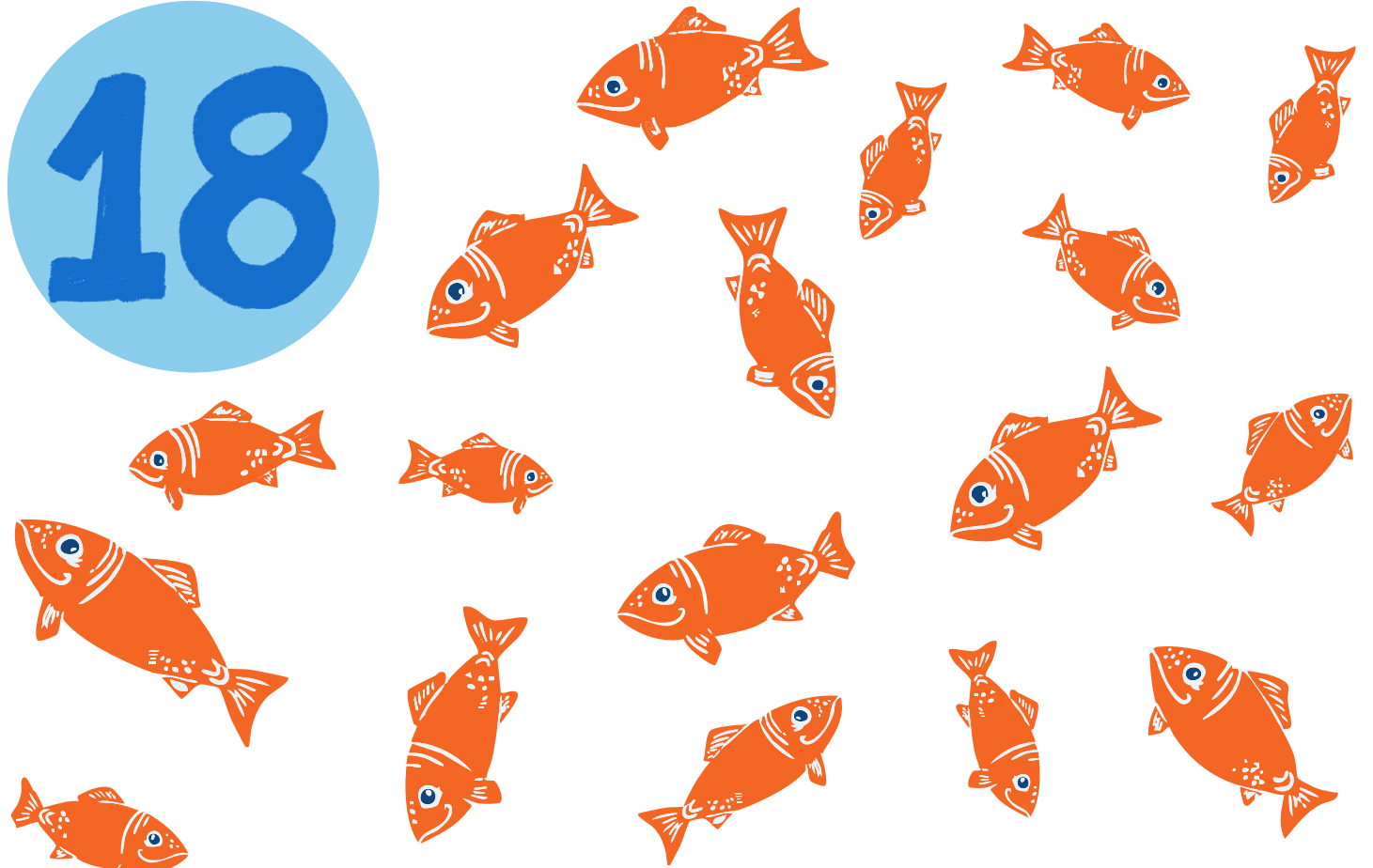
sayz

17



jhiset

18



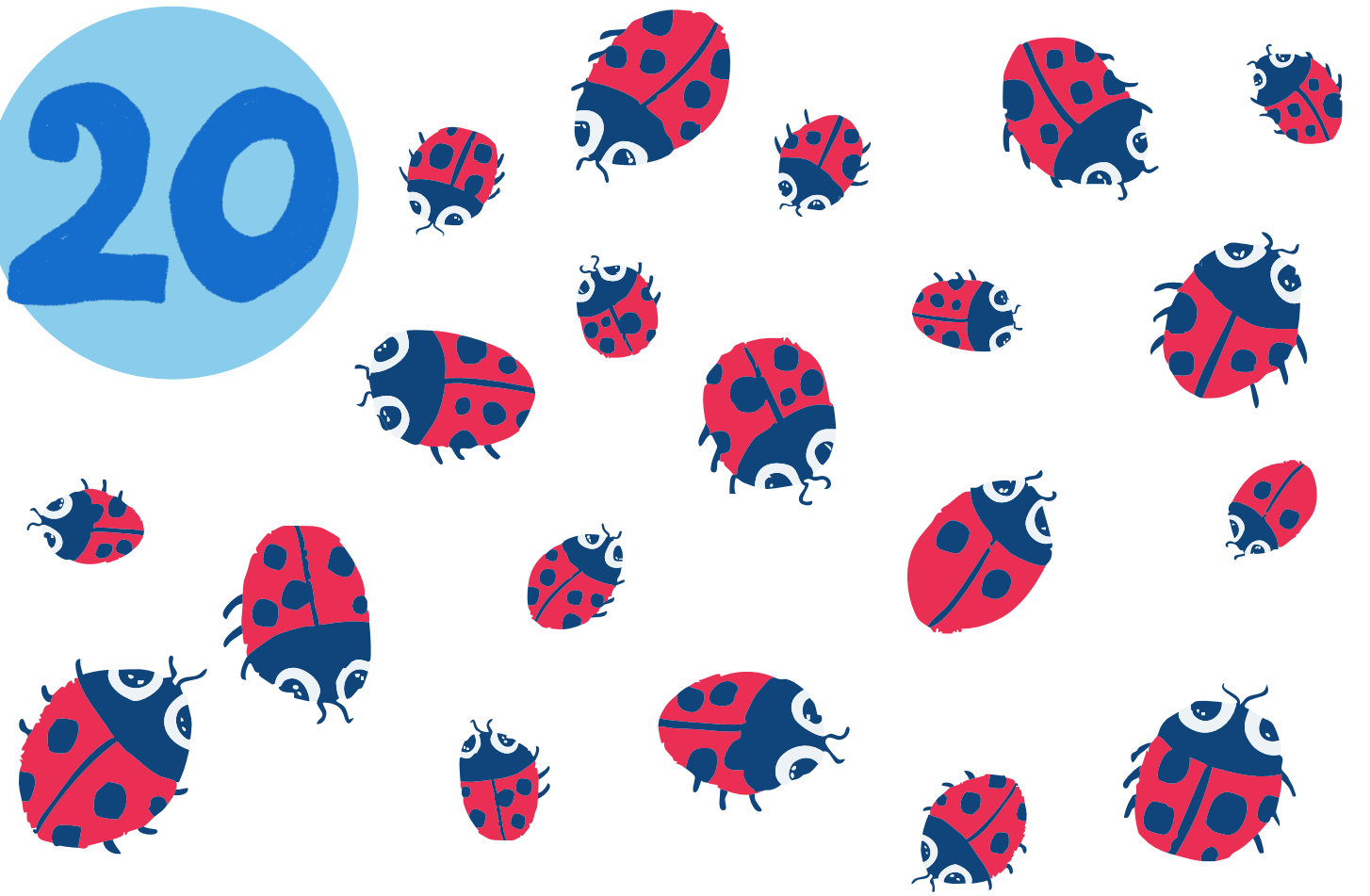
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19



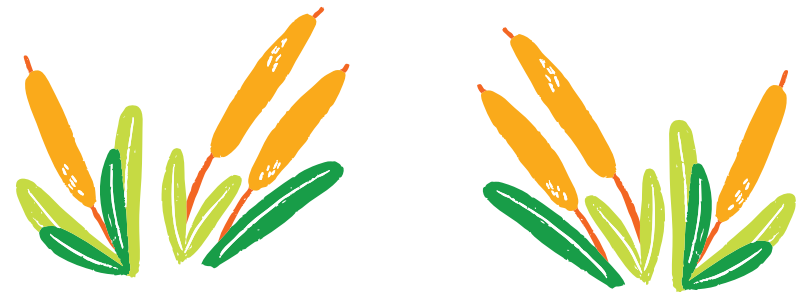
jhis nauſ

20



vaen

21



vaentay aen

22



vaent deu

23



vaent trwaa

24



vaent kaat

25



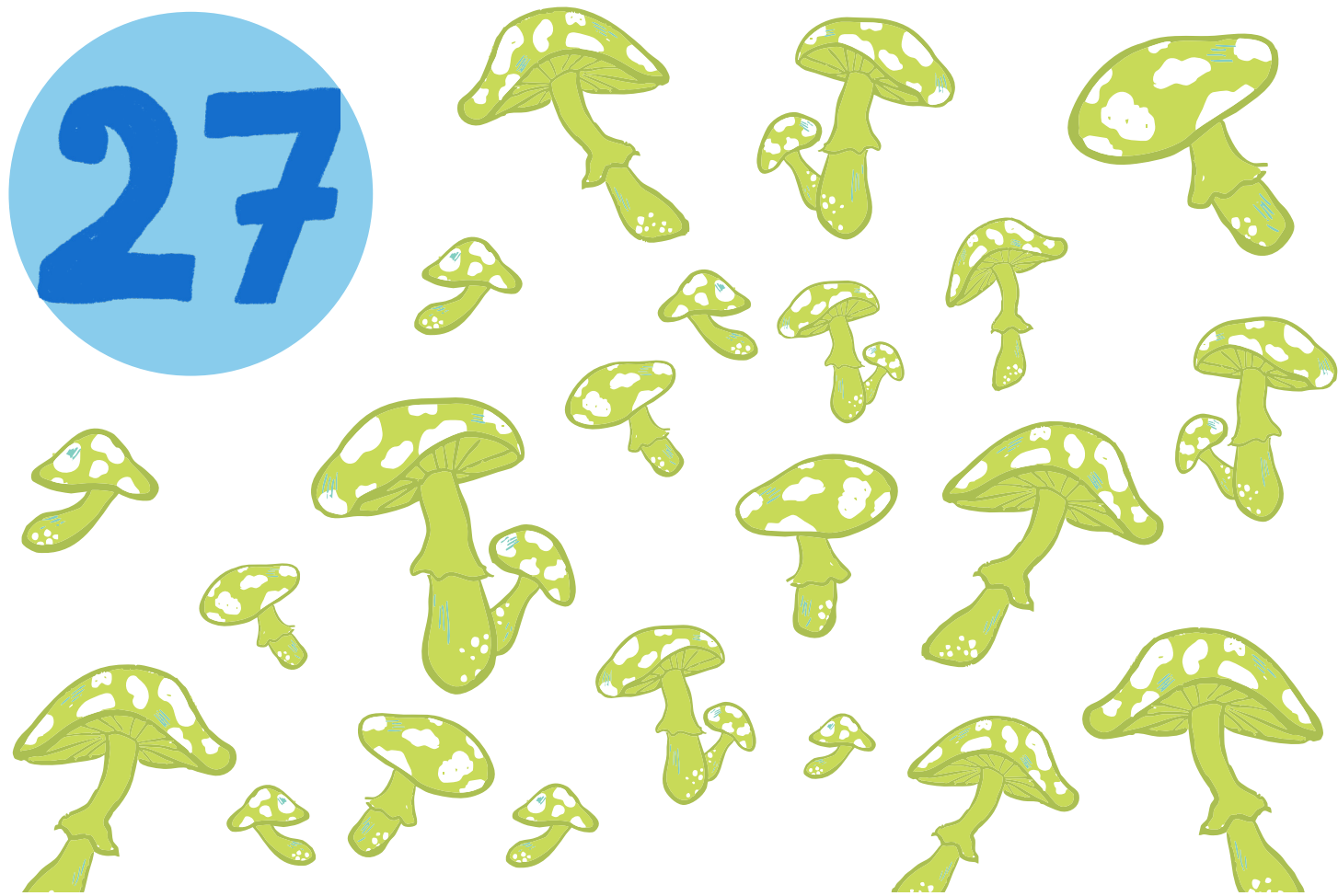
vaent saenk

26



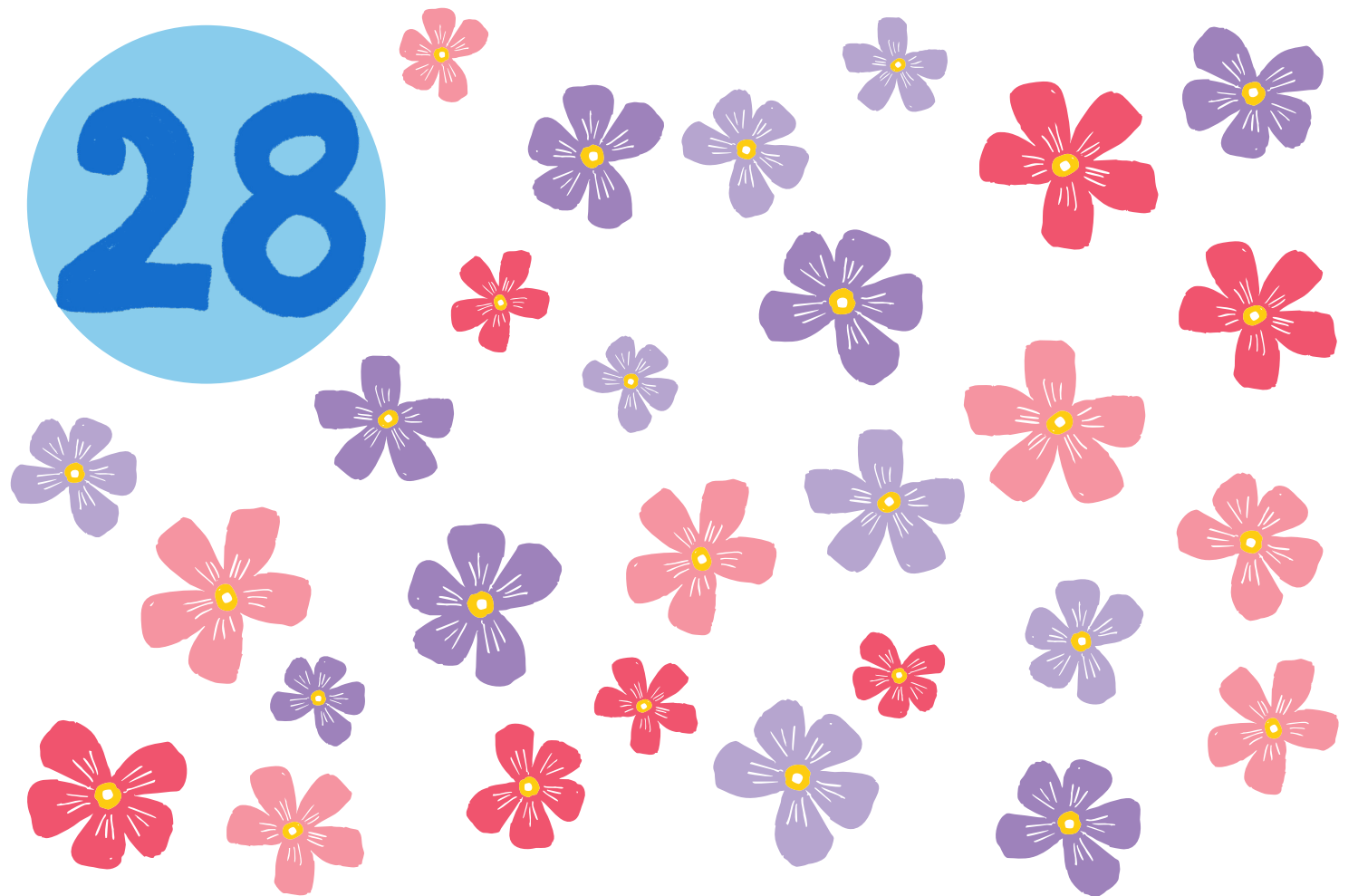
vaent sis

27



vaent set

28



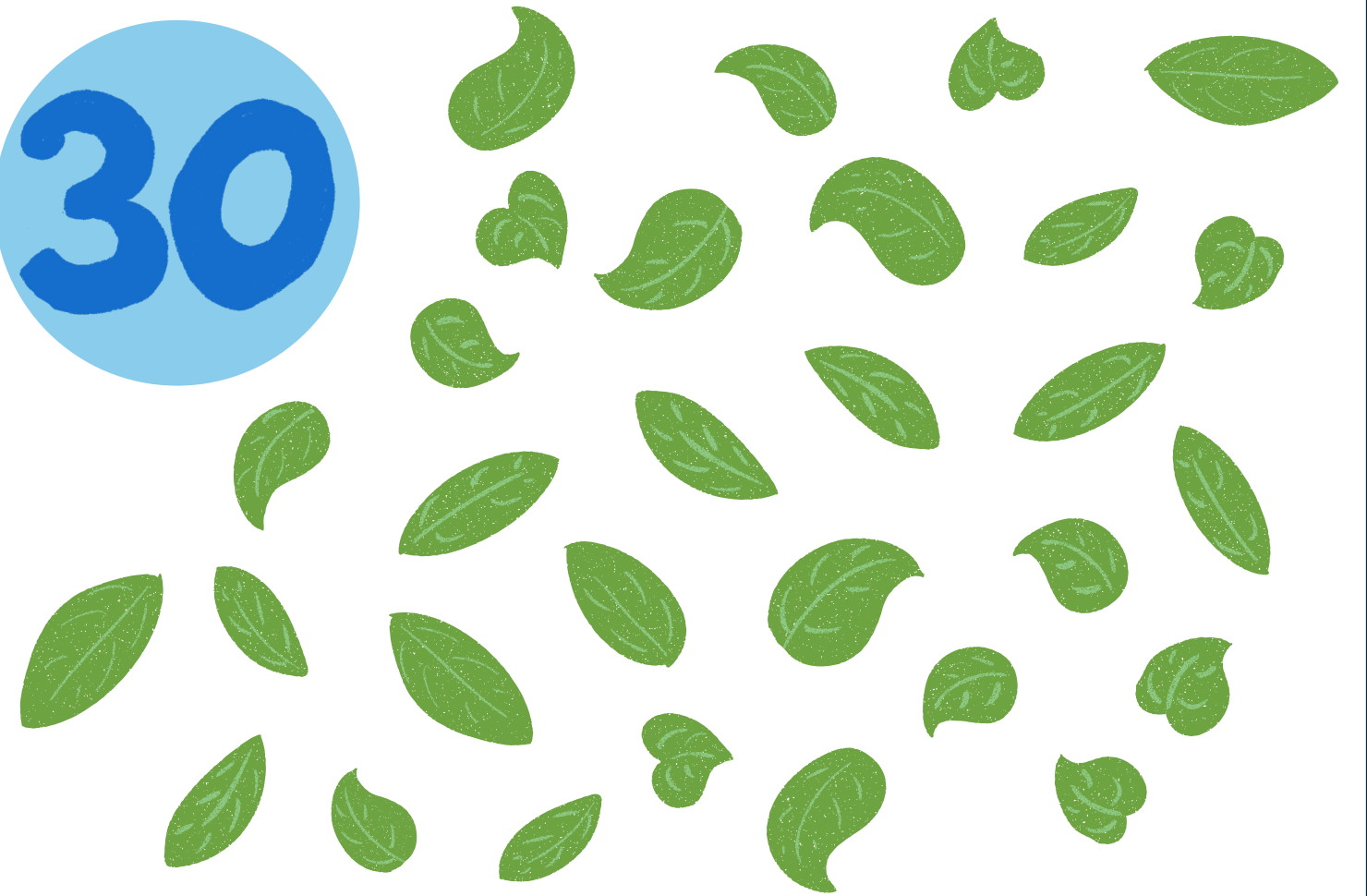
vaent whit

29



vaent nauuf

30



traante

31



traantay aen

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vaent sis

27

vaent set

28

vaent whit

29

vaent nauf

30

traante

31

traantay aen



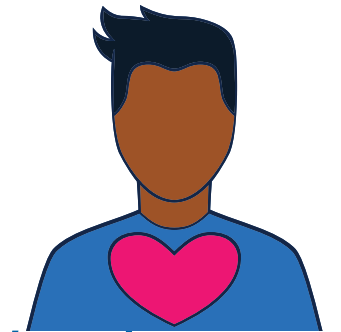
halloween



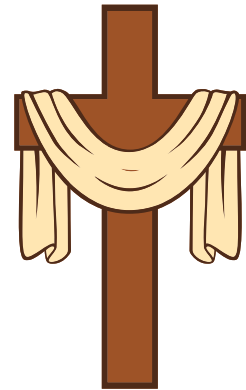
bonn fayt



*le daaryiin
zhour d'ikol*



*la zhournii
poor lii paapaa*



le zhour di paak



*li zhour
di raamoo*



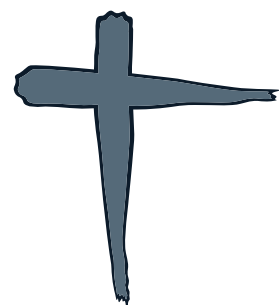
li zhour di paak



*li zhour di St.
Patrick*



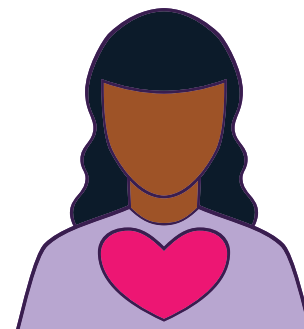
le zhour de tayr



*mikarjii dii
saandr*



*la zhournii di
shmiizh oraanzh*



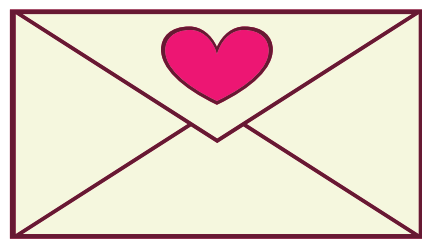
*la zhourni poor
lii mayr*



*le saan zhour
d'ikol*



le zhour d'laan



*la fayt de St.
Valentine*



*le zhour de
nowel*



nowel



*le zhour de
nowel*



nowel



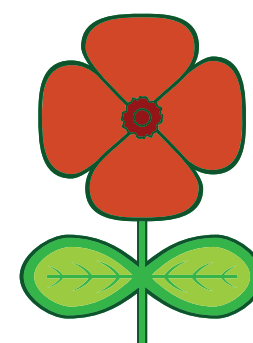
*le promii
zhour d'ikol*



le zhour de swiss



*la zhournii de
Louis Riel*



*zhourni dju
souv'nir*



*zhourni di l'action
d'graas*



laindji

monday



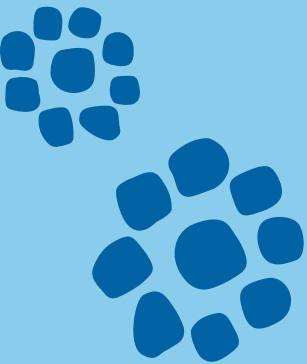
mardji

tuesday

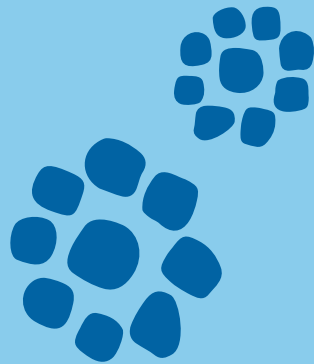


mikradjii

wednesday



zhudjii
thursday



The image features a solid pink background with decorative floral patterns in the corners, composed of small, rounded shapes in a slightly darker shade of pink. The main text is centered and reads "vandra djii" in a large, bold, white, lowercase sans-serif font. The word "vandra" is followed by a space, and "djii" has three dots above the final 'i's.

vandra djii

friday



samjiii
saturday





djiiimanch

sunday



septamb

september





awktub

october





noovaamb

november



desaamb

december



zhaanvyyii

january



fevriiyii
february





maars

march





avril

april





mai

may





jwaaen
june





Witii
summer





latonn
fall





I'ivayr

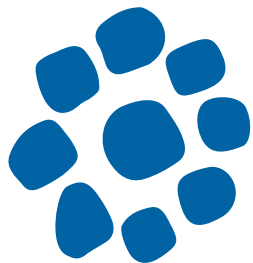
winter





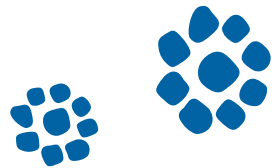
praentaaan
spring





awzhourdjwii

today





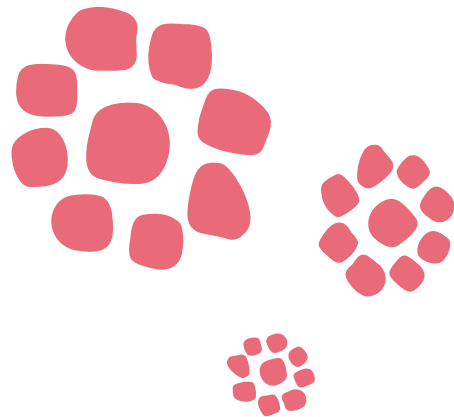
dimaaen

tomorrow



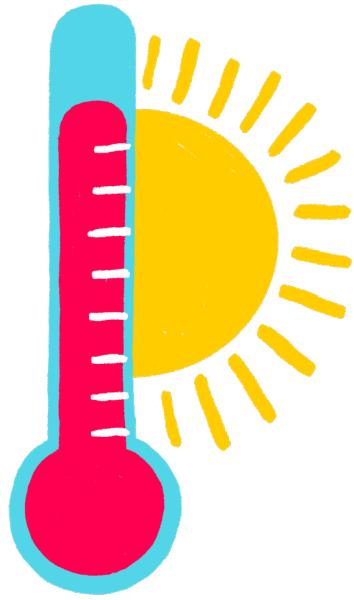


eyayr
yesterday



Word of the day

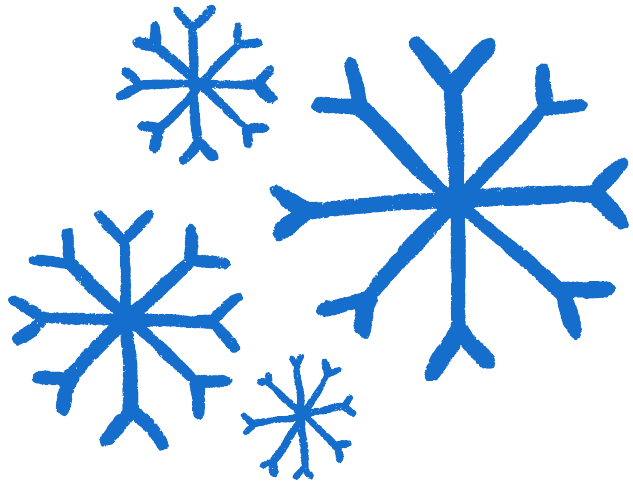




shoo
warm



groovaan
windy



ill niizh
snowing



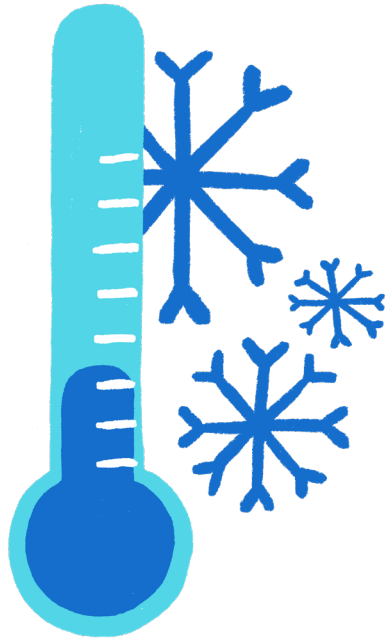
solay
sunny



taan koover
cloudy



il moiyy
raining



fret
cold



l'ark aan syel
rainbow



kouzin



**aen
pchi baybii**



aen shyaen



aen shaa



mon frer



ma seur



pawpaw



mawmaw



graanpayr



grandmayr



maarsh



garochii



daans



soot



bwair



maanzh



graapii



nawj



**fawnd le
bwaa**



koor



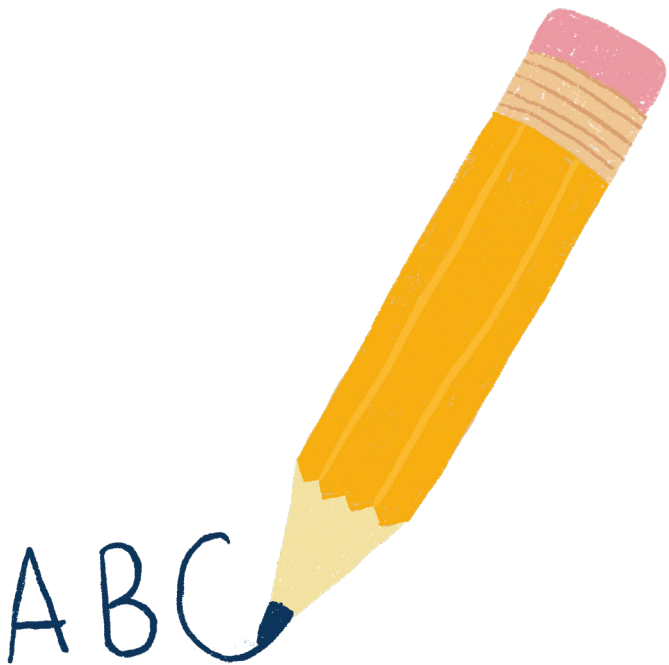
**laav tii
maen**



asi



aen
zhoo zhoo



aycrii



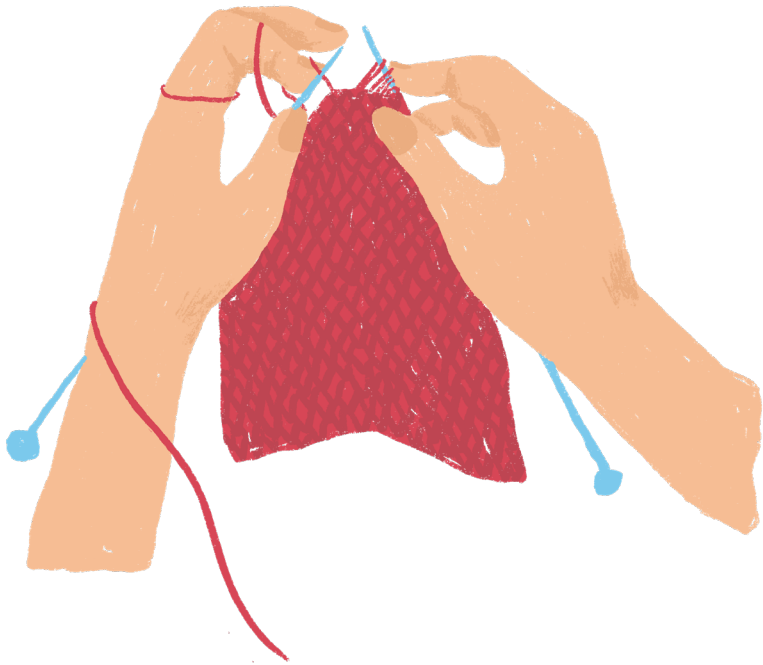
dessinii



countii



ferr kwiir



ferr



abii tway



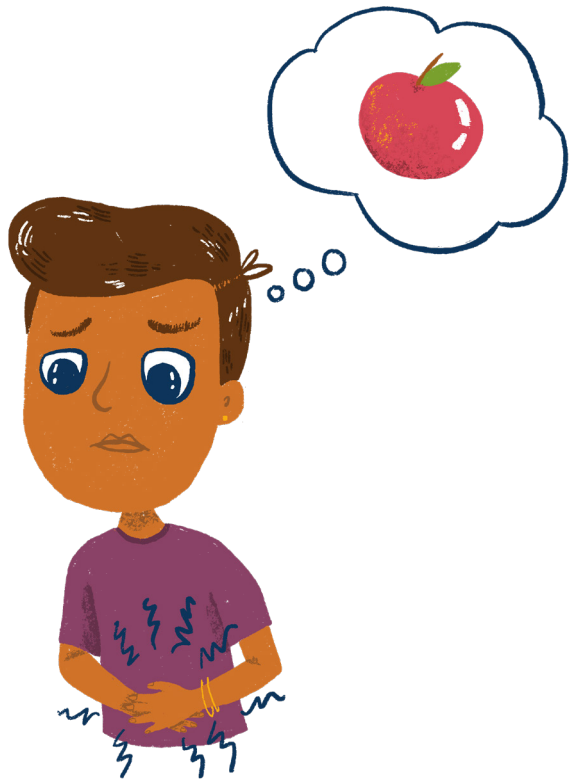
emmen



koodipyii



poingyii



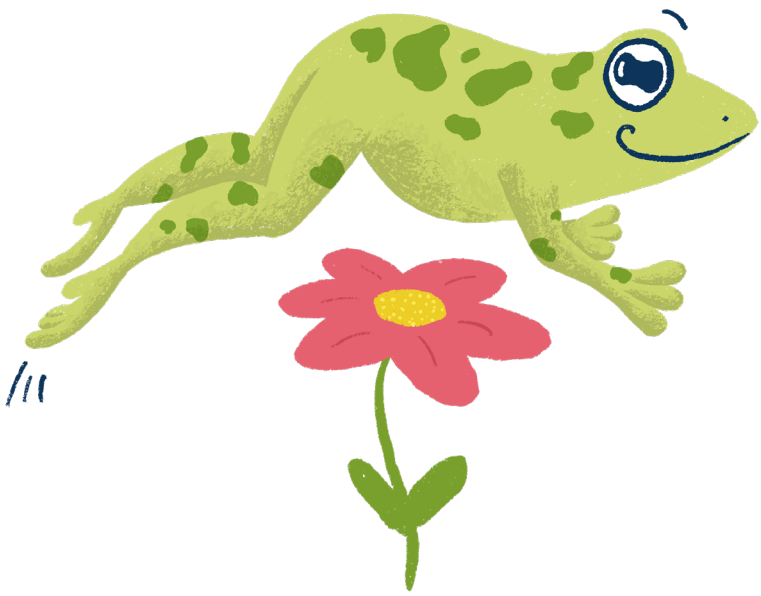
ja faen



frappii



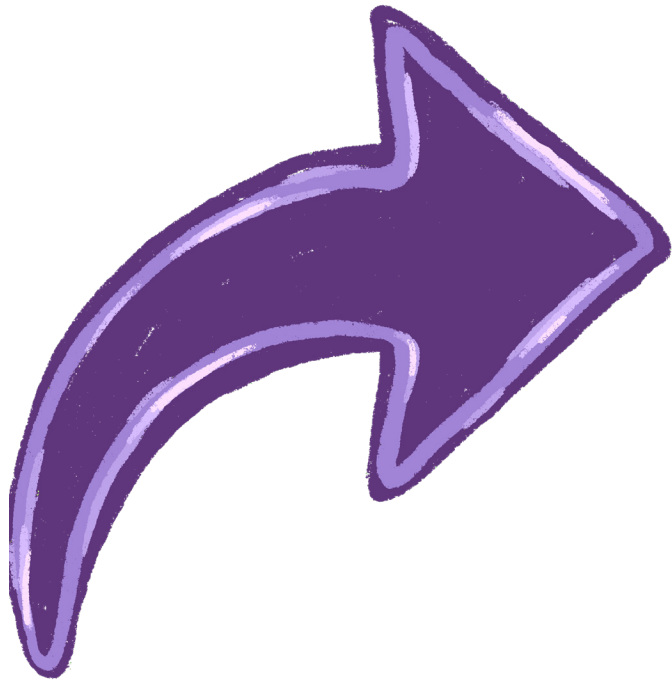
maashchii



grooii



la goosh



adret



netawyii sa



li korr



the body

lii zhveu
hair

lii dway
fingers

la tet
head

maen
hand

lii zaryl
ear

lii zyeu
eyes

le nii
nose

aen braa
arm

la boosh
mouth

le vaant
stomach

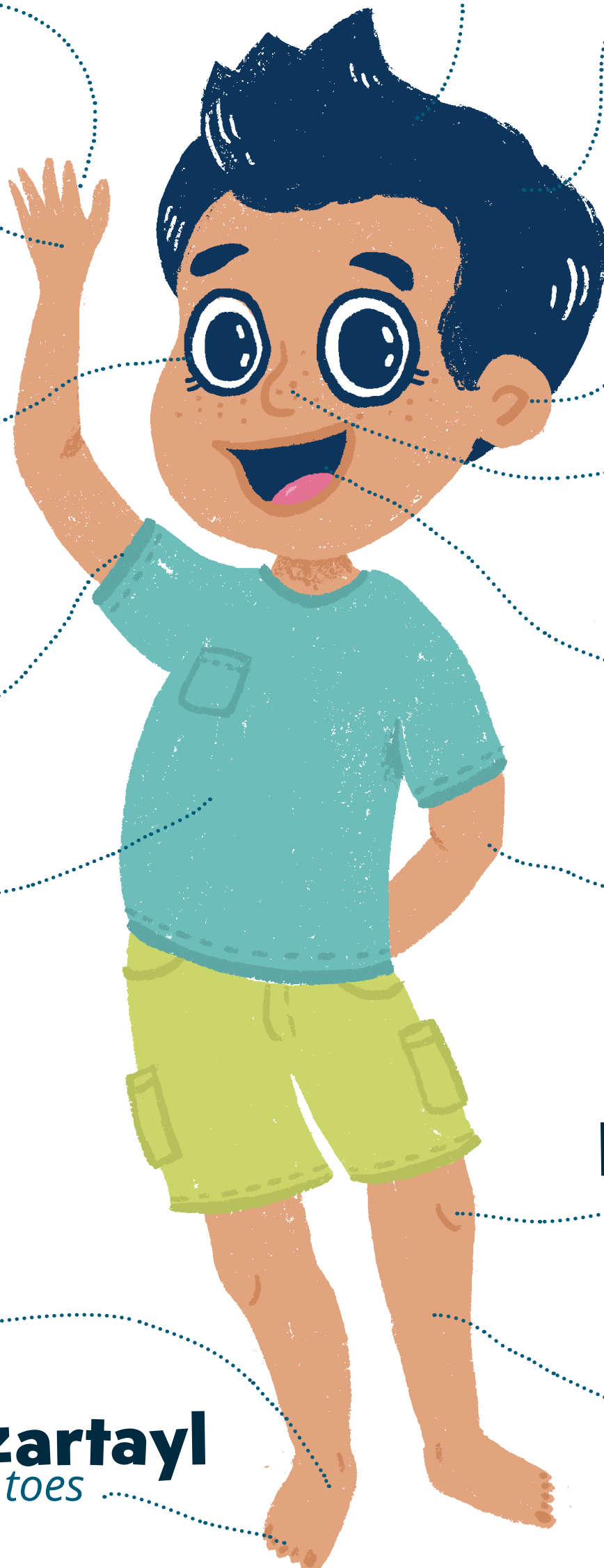
lii koodr
elbow

lii zhnoo
knee

lii pyii
feet

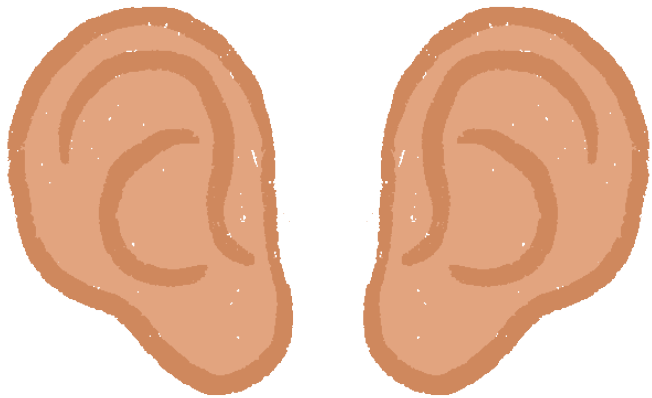
lii jaamb
legs

lii zartayl
toes





zaray



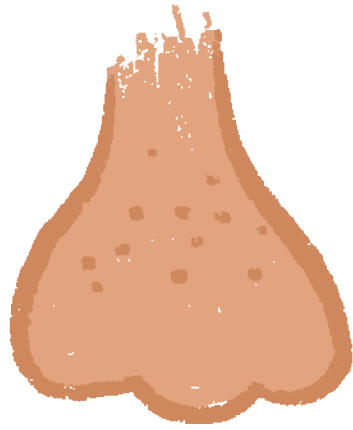
lii zaray



zyeu



lii zyeu



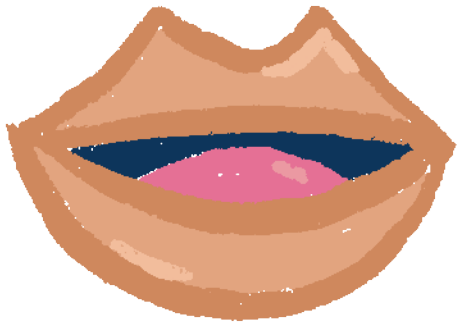
le nii



maen



pyii



la booosh



la laang



lii babinn