



## Teacher Guide

# The Series

When Mona the Mouse stumbles across the wondrous world of the Heartwood Hotel in the middle of a storm, she desperately hopes they'll let her stay.

As it turns out, Mona is precisely the maid they need at the grandest hotel in Fernwood Forest, where animals come from far and wide for safety, luxury, and comfort.

But the Heartwood Hotel is not all acorn souffle and soft moss-lined beds . . . Mona must deal with each new challenge the seasons bring, from wolves to thieves, all the while learning the how to be more than a good maid, but a good friend too.



## About this Guide

These discussion questions and activities are designed to support the goal of helping students explore the books and their own creativity. Tap into the adventure of this series with language art lessons in creative writing, character studies and more!



Book 1

## A True Home

Published in the USA by Disney-Hyperion

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1484731611

Paperback ISBN: 978-1484746387

Published in Canada by HarperCollins Publishers Ltd

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1443443937



Book 2

## The Greatest Gift

Published in the USA by Disney-Hyperion

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1484732342

Paperback ISBN: 978-1484746394

Published in Canada by HarperCollins Publishers Ltd

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1443443968





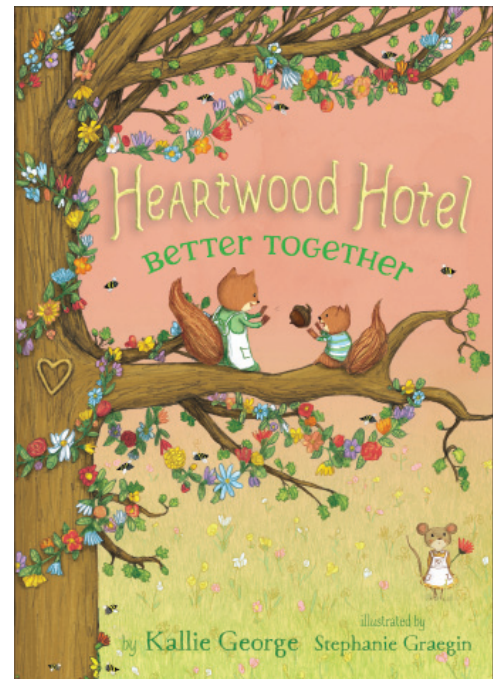
Book 3

## Better Together

Published in the USA by Disney-Hyperion

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1484732359

Paperback ISBN: 978-1484746400



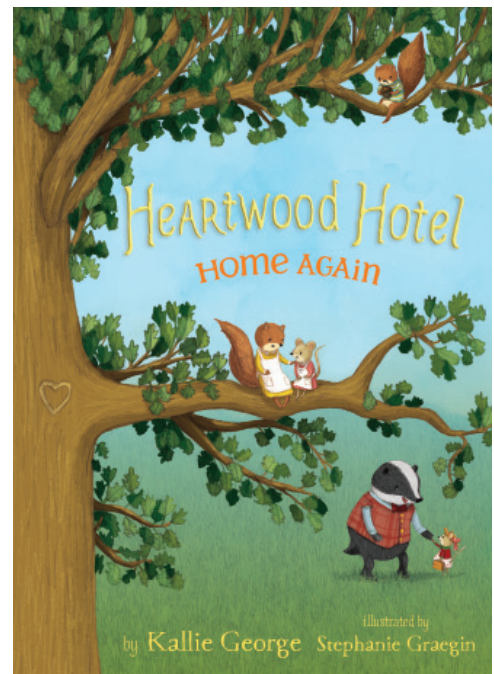
Book 4

## Home Again

Published in the USA by Disney-Hyperion

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1484732366

Paperback ISBN: 978-1484746806



## About the author

Kallie George is the author of the Magical Animal Adoption Agency series. She works as an author and speaker in Vancouver, Canada, and she holds a master's in children's literature from the University of British Columbia. In addition to writing books for young readers, she leads workshops for aspiring writers. She happened across the Heartwood Hotel on a hike with her husband and wishes she was a mouse like Mona so she could stay there, too. Visit Kallie online at [kalliegeorge.com](http://kalliegeorge.com).



## About the illustrator

Born during a blizzard on Groundhog Day in Chicago, Illinois, Stephanie Graegin spent her childhood drawing and collecting fauna in Fort Wayne, Indiana and Houston, Texas. She received her BFA in Fine Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, Maryland. She later attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, obtaining a Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking. Stephanie now lives in Brooklyn, is still drawing, and has managed to keep her collection down to one orange cat. Find out more at [graegin.com](http://graegin.com).



## Questions for thoughtful discussion

- 1) How is the Heartwood kept secret from most animals?
- 2) What does the sign mean: We Live by Protect and Respect, Not by Tooth and Claw? What animals don't follow the sign's motto?
- 3) Tilly doesn't treat Mona very nicely, and Mona learns from Mrs. Prickles that her heart has a hurt. On Page 70, Mona says, "Did a hurt allow you to hurt others, though? Mona didn't think so." What do you think?
- 4) Mona breaks a lot of rules at the Heartwood—including letting in Ms. J, the June bug. Why did Mr. Heartwood make the rule to keep out bugs? What does he realize? Are there some rules you disagree with? Why?
- 5) Most small animals usually have two options when faced with danger—to run or hide. What does Mona choose to do at the end of the book? How has she grown?
- 6) There are a lot of animals that come and go at the hotel. Which was your favorite? Why?



## Questions for thoughtful discussion

- 1) At the St. Slumber's Supper Mona gets many beautiful gifts. Yet, she is upset. Why?
- 2) As Mona works harder and harder at making her gift, she grows more and more determined for the gift to be a surprise. Why is that important to her? Do you think a surprise gift is better than one you know about? Why or why not?
- 3) In the end, Mona has to ruin her gift after ALL her hard work. Why? Does she care anymore about it? What has she learned about gifts?
- 4) What is the best gift that you ever got? Describe it
- 5) Hood has been stealing food for the orphaned animals—Do you think he should get in trouble for this? Why or why not?
- 6) The Duchess, although famous and wealthy, treats everyone terribly. But she has a secret. What do we learn about the Duchess? What does the Duchess learn from Mona?



## Questions for thoughtful discussion

- 1) What big news does Brumble bring? How does Mona react to this news? What about Gilles?
- 2) Henry is a newcomer to the hotel. Describe Henry. Do you like him? Or do you feel less certain, like Mona?
- 3) In Chapter 6, Mona has a “grump starting to sprout” inside her. What does this mean? What causes Mona’s grump to grow?
- 4) There are three different competitions that happen in the book. Which is your favorite? Can you imagine a fourth competition? What would it be?
- 5) In the end, what was the secret of the “splashy” hotel? Were you surprised?
- 6) How do Mona’s feelings towards Henry change throughout the book? What does she come to learn about him and herself?





## Questions for thoughtful discussion

- 1) Who is the surprise guest that turns up at Ms. Prickles' wedding? Who do Mona and Tilly THINK she might be?
- 2) Why does Harmony have trouble sharing her news? Do you like telling someone bad news, or do you find it difficult? Why or why not?
- 3) Mona and Tilly find a bat's baby blanket that has been left behind in a guest room. It is probably not worth many Fernwood Farthings, but does that make it not very valuable? Why or why not? What does "valuable" mean to you?
- 4) If you had a choice to stay at the Heartwood Hotel or the Inn Between, which one would you choose? Why? What are some of the differences between the two hotels? What are some of the similarities?
- 5) How does Mona convince Mr. Heartwood to leave the Heartwood? What do she and Mr. Heartwood learn about the Hotel?
- 6) Strawberry turns out not to be who Mona thought she was. Was Mona disappointed? Why or why not?





## Activities for Creative Nourishment

## ACTIVITY

# Create your own Motto

Above the Heartwood Lobby hangs the motto: “We Live by Protect and Respect, Not by Tooth and Claw.” If you lived in Fernwood Forest, what would your motto be? (Hint: first decide what kind of animal you are—a wolf would come up with a much different motto than a mouse!) Create and design your own motto in the banner below.



## ACTIVITY

# Create your own menu for the Heartwood Hotel

Every night, Ms. Prickles, the Heartwood cook comes up with a new menu for the guests in the ballroom. Tonight, she's sick! You're in charge of the menu instead. What should the guests eat? Remember, this is food for animals! Design the menu below:

Menu

Appetizers

Main Courses

Desserts

Beverages



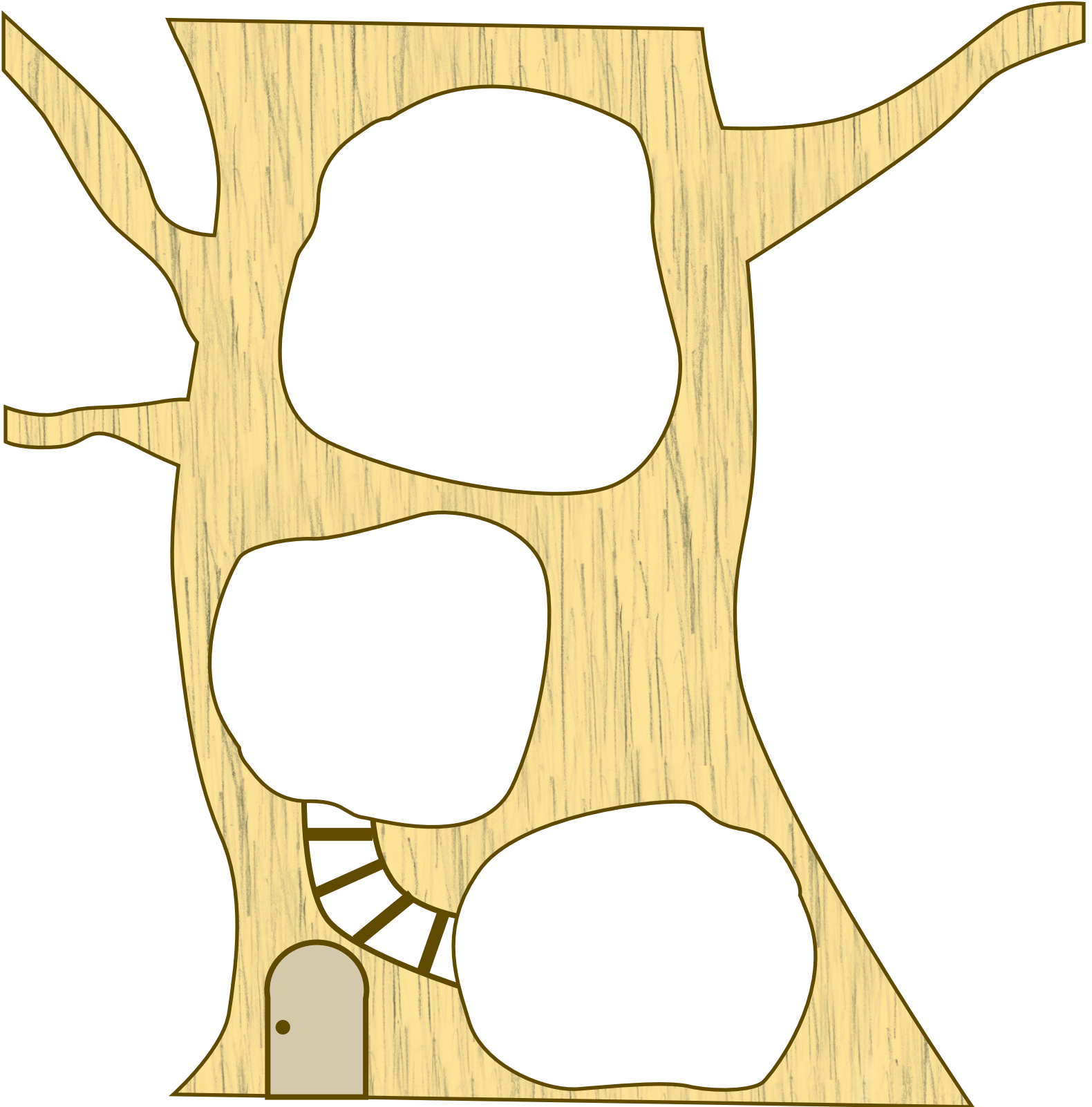
## ACTIVITY

# Design your own rooms at the Heartwood Hotel

Instructions:

Design your own rooms at the Heartwood Hotel by drawing all the furniture and other items.

Remember to think about the type of animal or bird that would stay in your rooms.



## ACTIVITY

# Sign the guestbook at the Heartwood Hotel

Imagine you are guest that has just checked out of the Heartwood Hotel. Write about your stay in the Heartwood Guest Book. Did you have a good time? A bad time? What happened? Did you take part in any special festivals?

Heartwood Hotel

GUEST BOOK

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Stay: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Animal Species: \_\_\_\_\_

What you liked about the Heartwood:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Picture of you



## ACTIVITY

# Write an application letter to work at the Heartwood

The Heartwood Hotel needs a new staff member! If you're interested, fill out the application letter below:

## The Heartwood ♥ Hotel

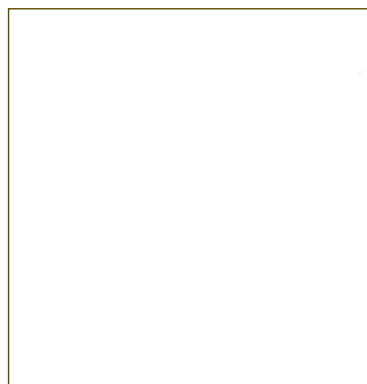
Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of animal are you? \_\_\_\_\_

Your age: \_\_\_\_\_

Check all the skills you have below:

- |                                              |                                          |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chopping vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> Dusting         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweeping            | <input type="checkbox"/> Washing         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Singing             | <input type="checkbox"/> Greeting guests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making a bed        | <input type="checkbox"/> Guarding        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picking berries     | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing      |



Draw a picture of yourself here

Why do you want to work at the Heartwood Hotel?

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## ACTIVITY

# Design a new festival at the Heartwood

Every season the Heartwood features a festival—sometimes more than one: The First Acorn Festival, the First Snow Festival, St. Slumber's Supper, St. Bright Eyes's Brunch, The Heartwood Hop! It's time to add a new festival to the hotel to attract new guests!

What is the name of the festival: \_\_\_\_\_

What season does it take place in: \_\_\_\_\_

What does it celebrate? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you eat it? \_\_\_\_\_

Now, design a holiday card for your festival!

Backside

Frontside

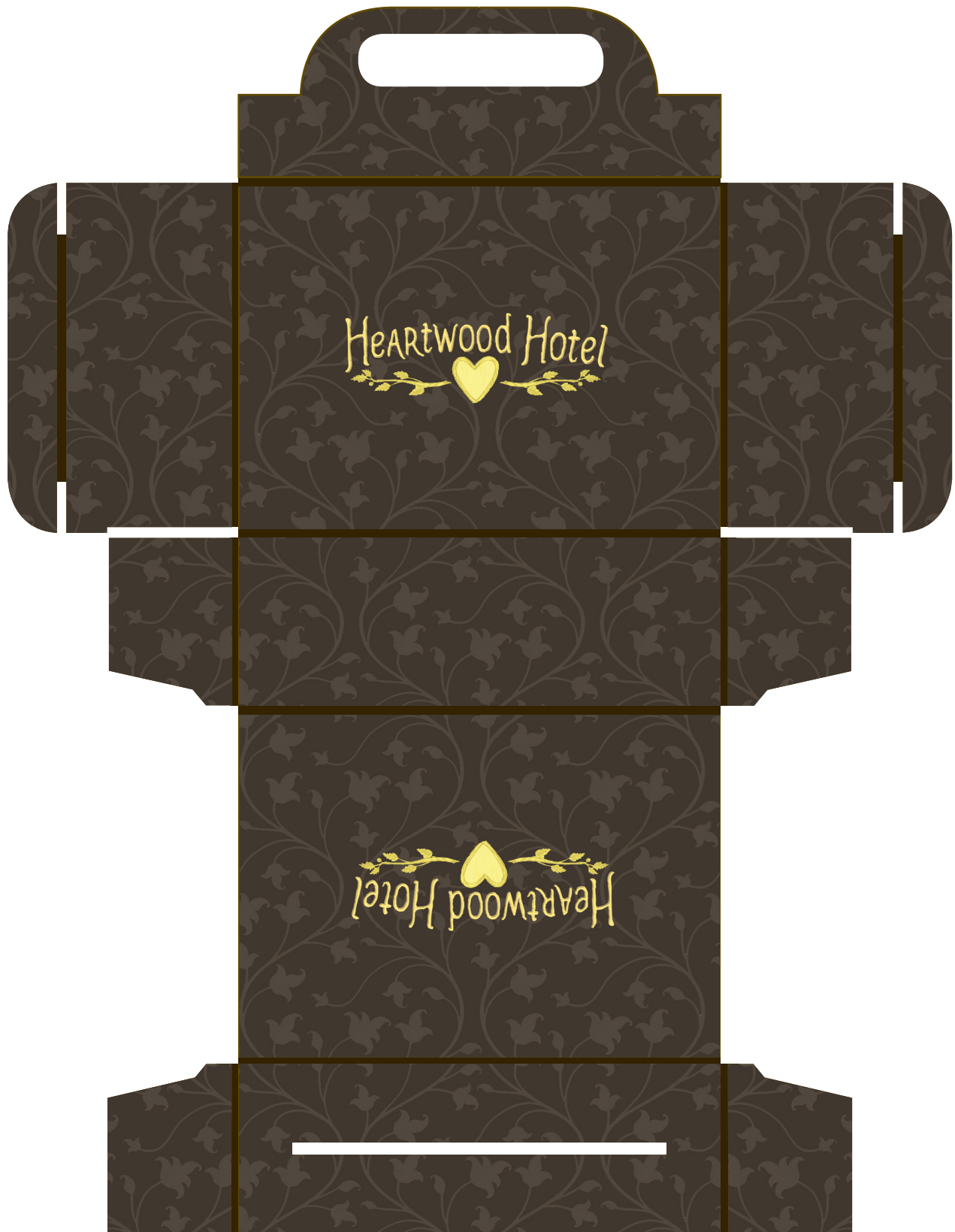
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ACTIVITY

# Make your own suitcase

Carefully cut out the shapes below. Then fold the suitcase into your own miniature case!



## ACTIVITY

# Draw your own luggage

Mona the mouse is known for her walnut suitcase with the heart on it. But inside, she carries nothing. Most guest, on the other hand, have suitcases full of belongings. In the space below, draw what you think the following guests might be carrying:

A Speed-Reading Snail:

A Very Smelly Skunk:

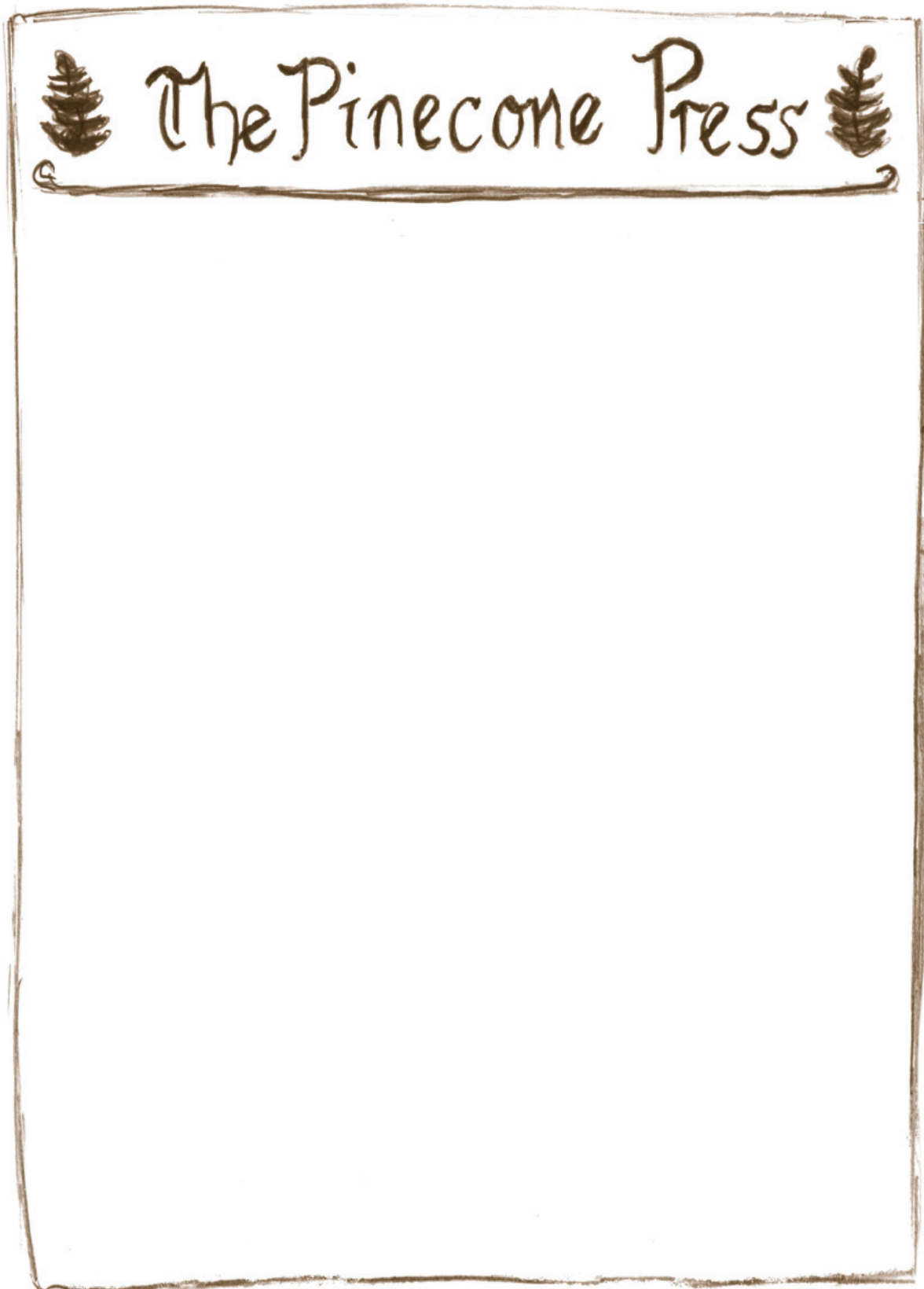
A Duchess Rabbit:

A Wily Wolf:

## ACTIVITY

# Write an article for the Pinecone Press

The Pinecone Press has space for a new article. Come up with your own, below! Is it a feature story? An advice column? A review of a new hotel? You decide!

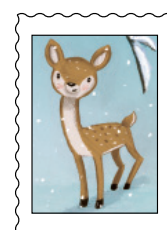


## ACTIVITY

# Send a postcard from the Heartwood Hotel

Instructions:

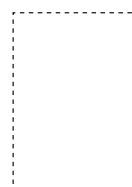
Carefully cut out the postcard below and fold in half. On the backside, imagine you are a guest staying at the Heartwood Hotel and write a note to a family member or friend.



← Stick your stamp here.

← This is the place to write the address of the person you're sending the postcard to.

Postcard



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

↑  
Write your note here.



## ACTIVITY

# Send a postcard from the Heartwood Hotel

Instructions:

Carefully cut out the postcard below and fold in half. On the backside, imagine you are a guest staying at the Heartwood Hotel and write a note to a family member or friend.



← Stick your stamp here.

← This is the place to write the address of the person you're sending the postcard to.

Postcard



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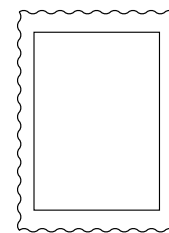
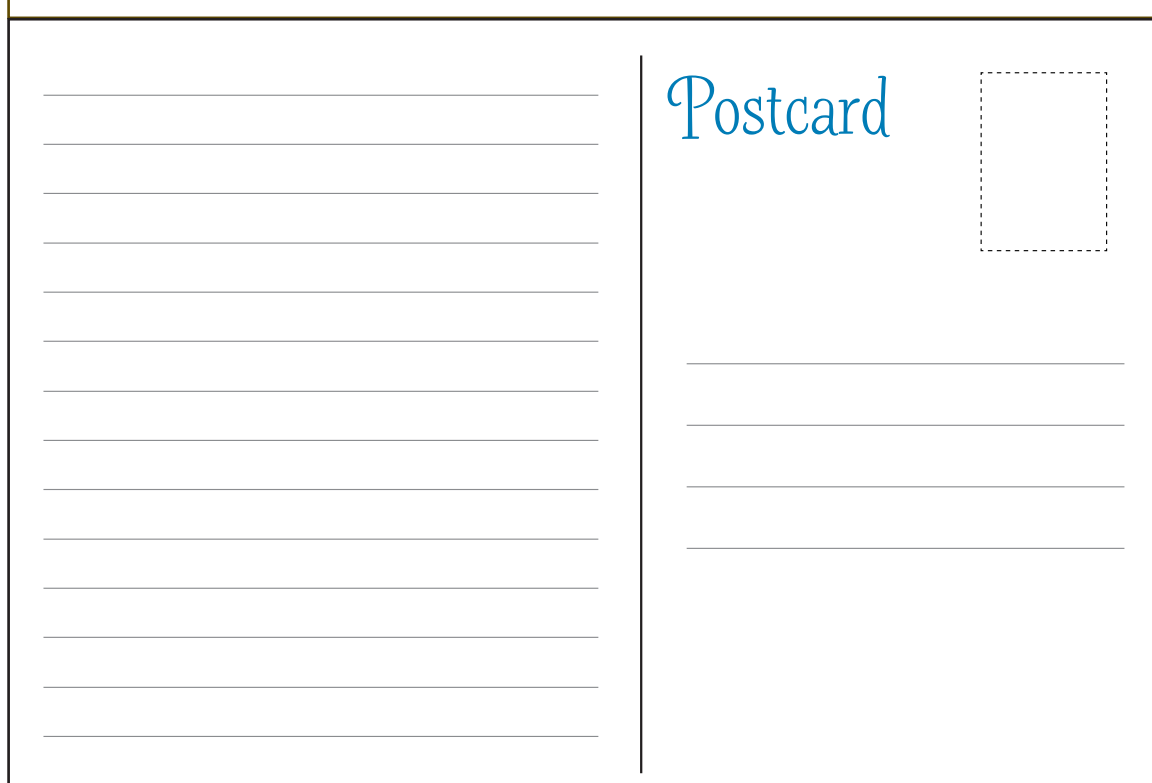
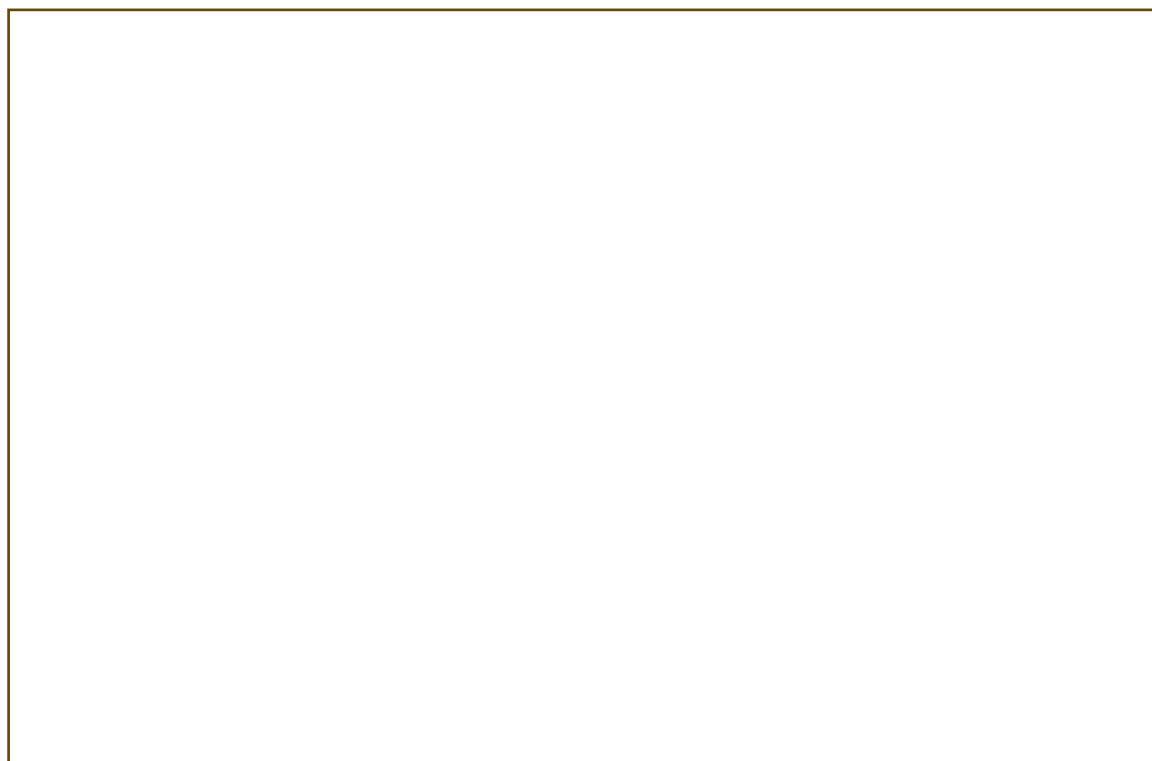
↑  
Write your note here.

## ACTIVITY

# Send a postcard from the Heartwood Hotel

Instructions:

Carefully cut out the postcard below and fold in half. On the frontside, draw your own image of the hotel. On the backside, write a note to a family member or friend.



Design your  
own stamp.

← Draw your image here.

← Stick your stamp here.

← This is the place to  
write the address  
of the person  
you're sending  
the postcard to.

Postcard

↑  
Write your note here.

## ACTIVITY

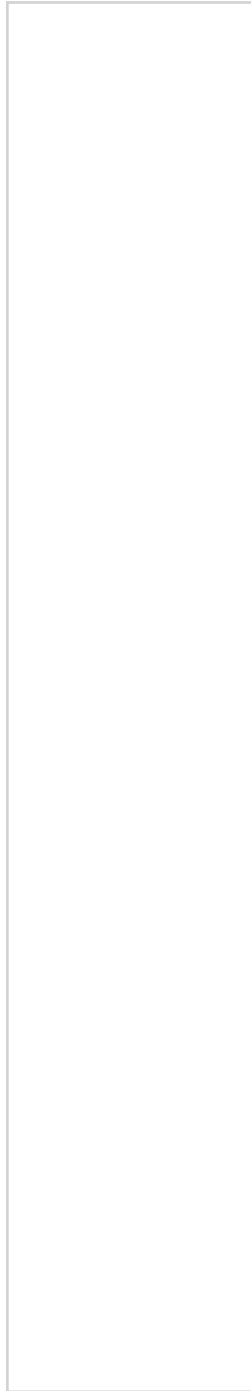
# Make a Spring Splash crown

Instructions: Start by coloring the parts below. Then cut slots into the top part of the front side to make "tines" on the crown, like blades of grass. Afterwards, cut out the front crown and the back bands and tape them together, to fit. You can add stickers or add other decorations, too!



TAPING EDGE

TAPING EDGE



BACKSIDE BAND



BACKSIDE BAND

TAPING EDGE

TAPING EDGE

TAPING EDGE



FRONT SIDE

TAPING EDGE

## ACTIVITY

# Make your own Spring Splash ribbon

Instructions:

Color the ribbon below and carefully cut it out to help celebrate the Spring Splash at the Heartwood Hotel!

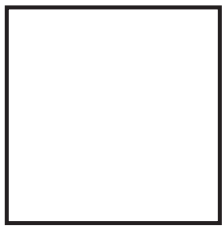




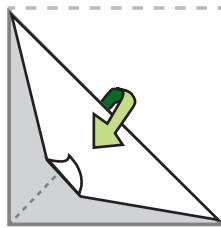
## ACTIVITY

# Make your own Spring Fortune Teller

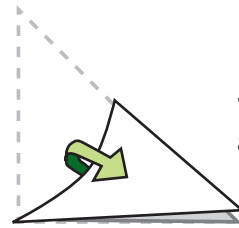
Instructions: Fold your own Spring Fortune Teller by following the diagrams below.



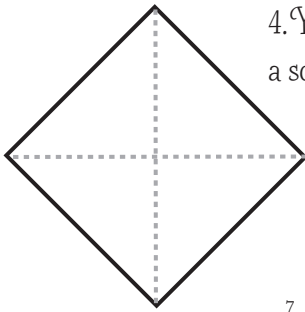
1. Start with a square piece of paper.



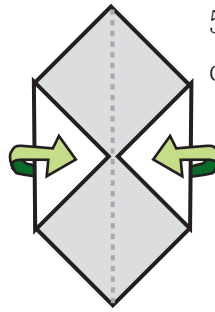
2. Fold in half diagonally.



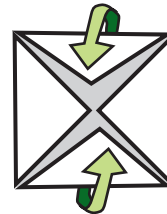
3. Then fold again, diagonally.



4. You should now have a square with creases.

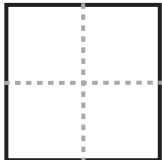


5. Fold in the two side corners.

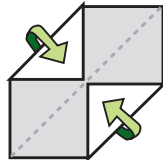


5. Fold in the two top corners.

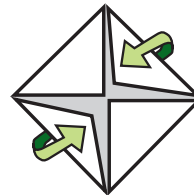
2  
3  
7  
6  
5  
4



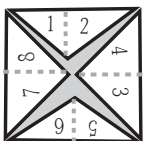
6. Flip over



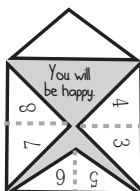
7. Fold in top left and bottom right corner.



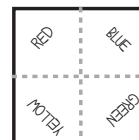
8. Fold in top right and bottom left corner.



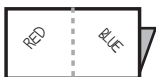
9. Number the eight flaps that open in pairs.



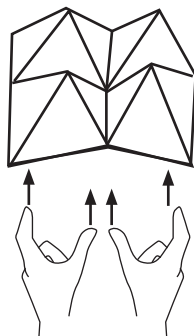
10. Write fortunes inside.



11. Flip over and either color the squares or write the color names.



12. Fold in half.



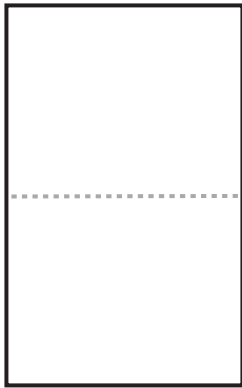
13. Slip fingers inside the flaps to open up.

Begin with the thumb and index fingers of each hand in the four pockets. Have the person whose fortune is being picked one of the colors on the top four flaps. If the color is blue, spell out the letters of blue while alternating a pinching and pulling motion with the Teller. Each pinch will expose four of the numbers on the inner flaps, and each pull will expose the other four numbers. After spelling out B-L-U-E, the Teller will be showing one of the sets of four numbers. The other player will then pick one of those numbers, and the responding action is the alternating pinch and pull from the first round, except it continues with a counting of the number instead of spelling the color. Once the number has been counted, four numbers will be exposed. After one is picked, the fortune under that number is read.

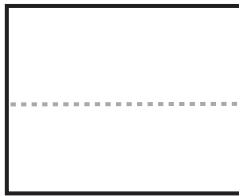
## ACTIVITY

# Make your own book for the Heartwood Hotel Library

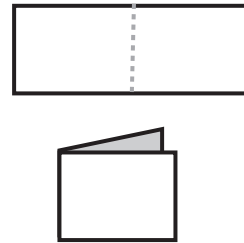
Instructions: Create your own book by following the instructions below.



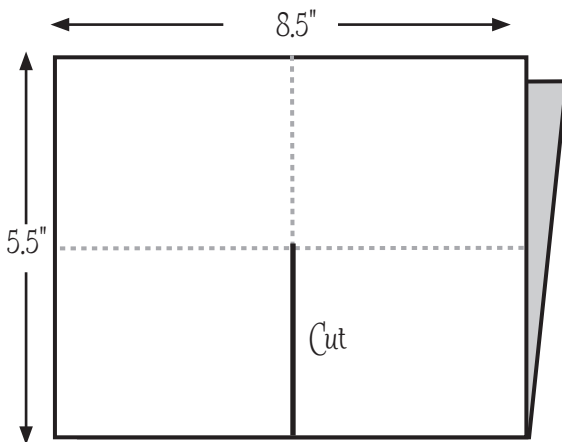
1. Start with a 8.5 x 11 page and fold it in half.



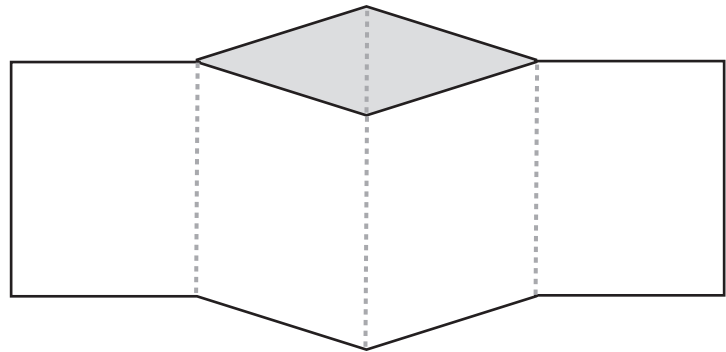
2. Fold the page in half again.



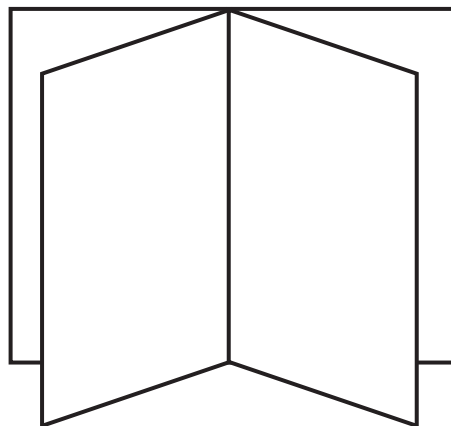
3. And again!



4. Open and cut halfway up, beginning at the fold. Open and refold to 11 x 4.25.



5. Push in the ends ...



6. . . . and you have a miniature book. Fill the pages with words and pictures, and you will have the perfect book to fit the library in the Heartwood Hotel.

## ACTIVITY

# Design your own furniture

In the space below, design furniture for the Inn Between for each item listed. How creative can you be?

A thimble:

An eraser:

A spoon:

Your own idea!

ACTIVITY

# A boot for a house

Use this template to design a "boot-house" for a mouse!



## ACTIVITY

# Design your own rooms at the Inn Between

Instructions:

The Inn Between exists between the floors of an inn for humans. Can you create the rooms in the Inn Between—drawing the big people floor and the little animal floor?



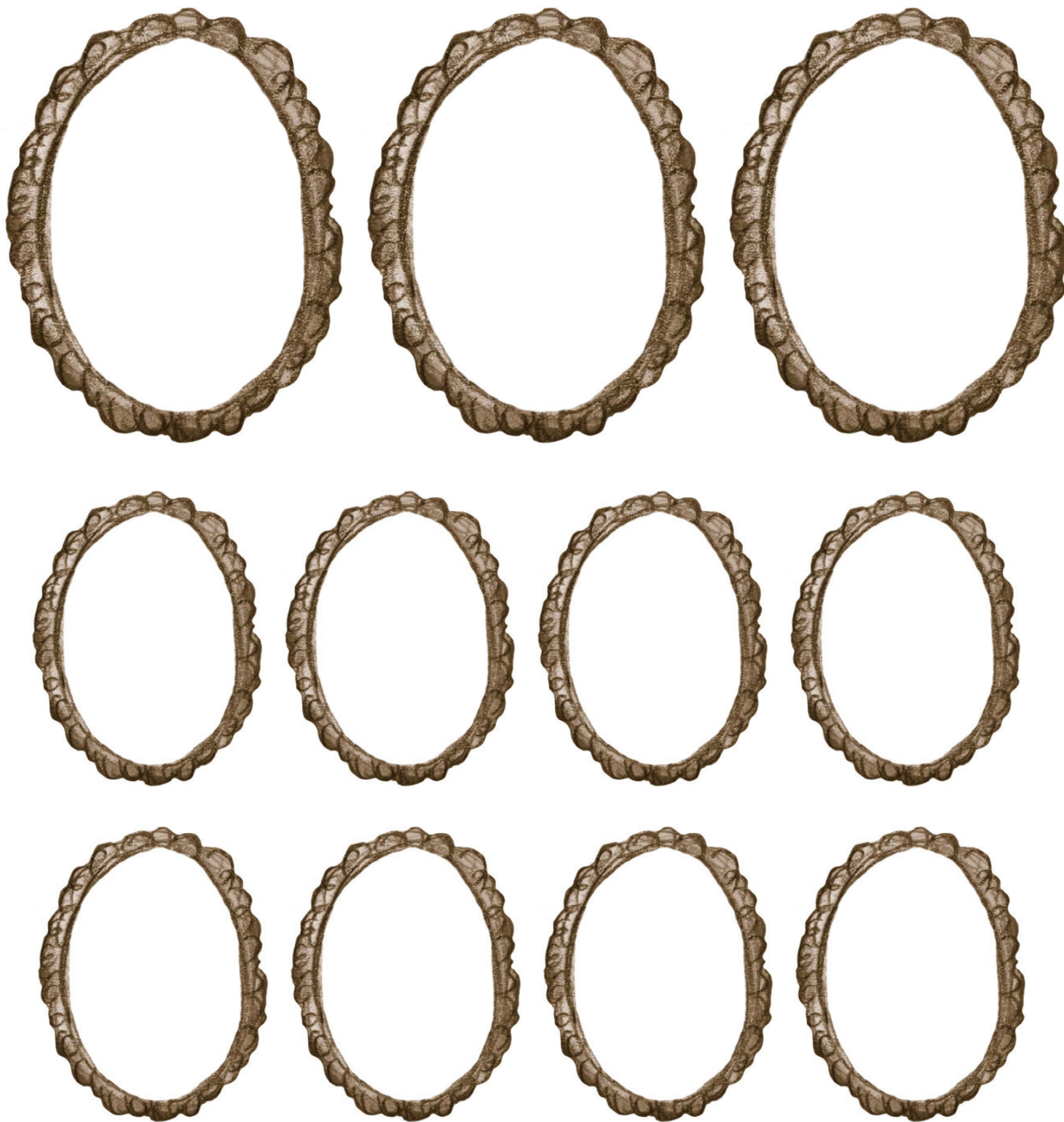


## ACTIVITY

# Create your own tiny portrait

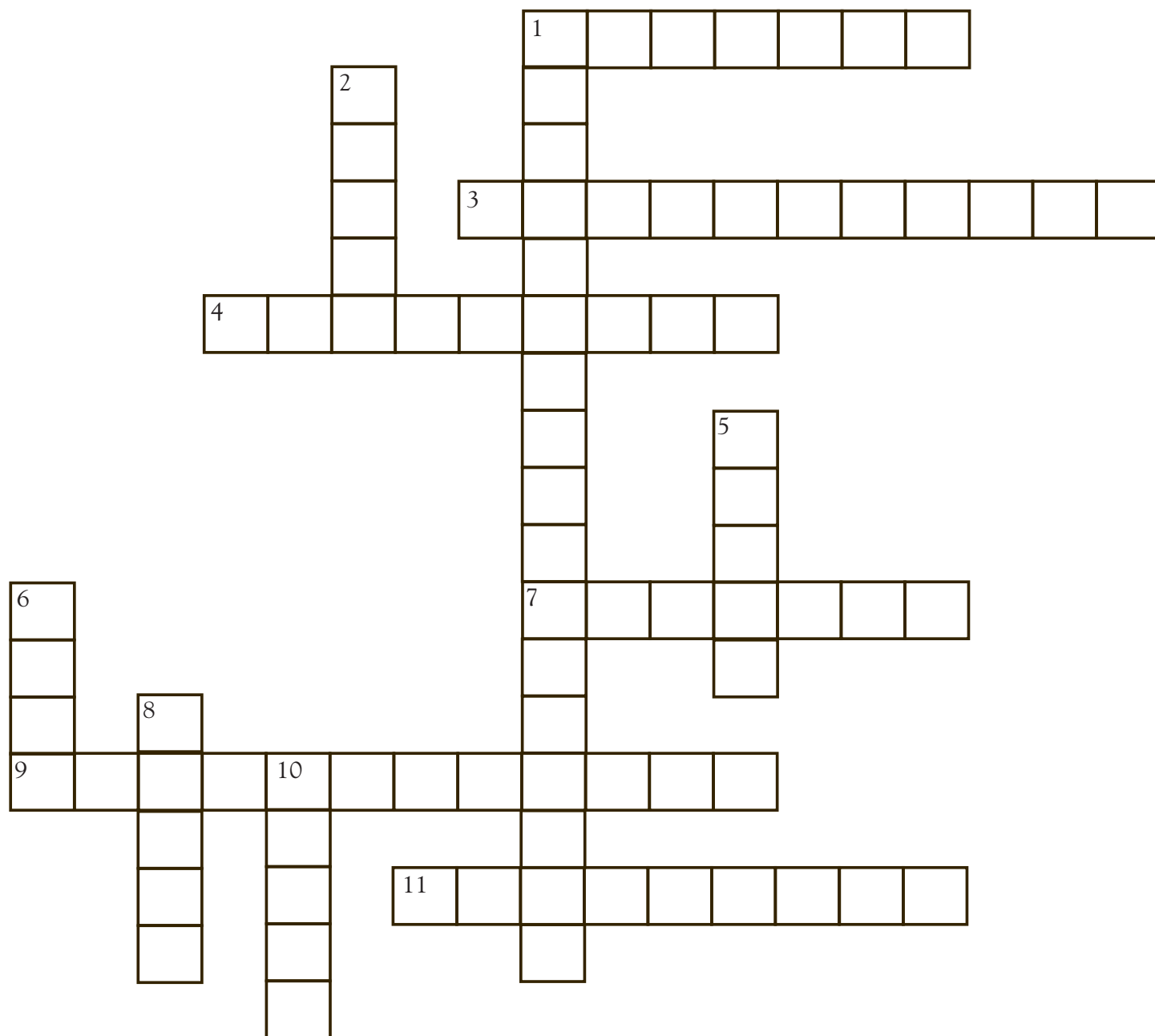
Instructions:

Draw a family portrait, pretending you are the drawing centipede that draws the portrait for the Heartwood staff at the wedding. How tiny can you make it?



# ACTIVITY

## Crossword Puzzle



### ACROSS

1. Cybele is a ...
3. A nervous skunk
- 4 . Heartwood food
7. A confused bear
9. We Live By Protect and Respect, Not by...
11. Two things animals usually do

### DOWN

1. At the top of the tree
2. What Wince wears
5. Mr. Heartwood speaks in...
6. What Tilly has
8. Maid at the Heartwood
10. The secret lock



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Kallie George

Illustrated by  
Stephanie Graegin

[www.heartwoodhotel.com](http://www.heartwoodhotel.com)