

# EXERCISES TO ACTIVATE THE BRAIN 2

ETNIMU  
PROJECT

IMPROVING BRAIN HEALTH  
OF ETHNIC MINORITY ELDERLY





# EXERCISES TO ACTIVATE THE BRAIN 2

This guidebook is developed as a part of the Society for Memory Disorders Expertise in Finland (Suomen muistiasiantuntijat ry) ETNIMU-project, which improves the brain health of ethnic minority elderly and is funded by STEA. The guidebook belongs to the ETNIMU-project series of publications, which are also published in Finnish, Estonian, Somali and Russian languages. The guide in English was published by ETNIMU-activity (ETNIMU-toiminta).  
More information: [www.muistiasiantuntijat.fi/etnimu](http://www.muistiasiantuntijat.fi/etnimu)

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# Happy exercises to activate the brain

This guidebook is addressed to group leaders aiming to improve the mental well-being of ethnic minority elderly in Finland. In this booklet, you find 26 different exercises for brain stimulation. From these exercises, you may create new ones for your group.

Memory training is a new trend in improving mental health. Every one of us can improve how the brain works. There is no good or bad memory. Our memory is working selectively by choosing only things that interest us most. By training perception and concentration, we can store the necessary information in our memory better if it is connected with emotions.

The easiest way to train memory is to focus on what we do, to develop a systematic approach, creativity, and imagination. Memory training is not so much about focusing on memory, but rather learning how to use memory by finding connections between information to be stored and information already known to us. When we see these connections and associations, remembering is easy.

Keeping your body active guarantees physical health, but memory training has proven necessary and useful too. Memory exercises support and enhance our mental abilities. Although you may do the exercises presented in this booklet on your own, the joy of being together in a group makes you feel good and creates a pleasant feeling of being united with other people.

The exercises are designed to be used primarily for group lessons and co-creating conversations on selected topics, word games, manual activities (such as coloring) and adding new activities. Tasks and physical exercises may be combined to make the lesson even more vivid and versatile.

***With happy exercising wishes***

*Siiri Jaakson, Anu Jonuks and Urve Jaakkola*

***Memory does not go to waste in use, quite the opposite!***

## Tips for the group leader

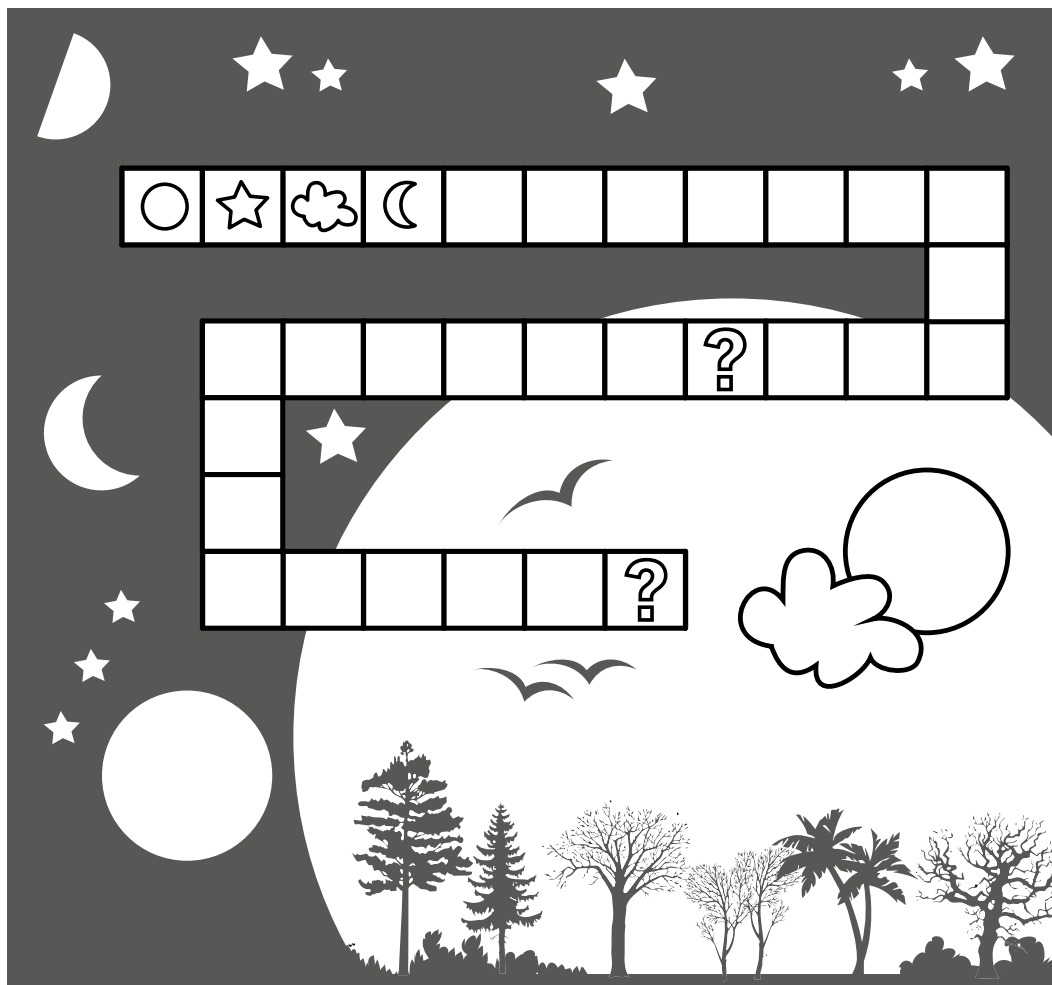
- Study the exercises and do them yourself before the group session.
- Introduce the instructions of an exercise clearly, repeat, if necessary.
- Every exercise is designed on a specific theme and you may supplement it as necessary and possible. Be playful.
- Consider the level of the group. Find a solution that suits all members of the group.
- Encourage all group members to participate, even if the start seems to be difficult.
- Don't make the participant compete!
- All results deserve appreciation.
- It is critical to discuss the correct solutions of the exercises in the group.
- Solving the exercises should be fun because it is always good to have a good laugh!
- Pay attention to the cultural characteristics of the group members.
- Handle only one subject/exercise at a time during the group lesson.
- **You may print out the exercise list for the participants on the website [www.muistiasiantuntijat.fi/etnimu](http://www.muistiasiantuntijat.fi/etnimu)**
- Participants may take the exercise list with them and continue/repeat exercises if they wish.

We recommend doing the exercises in a group.

If you are solving the exercises alone, follow the instructions carefully!

# The night sky



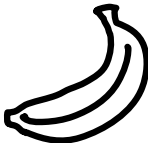
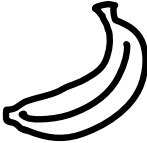
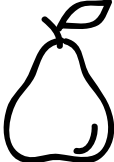

Continue to mark the shapes in the same order. What shape is in a square marked with a question mark?



- Do you know the stars?
- Remember expressions related to night.
- Do you recognize trees in the picture by their night outlines?

# The fruit basket

Each fruit corresponds to one number. Each fruit (number) may be on each vertical or horizontal line, but only on one diagonal line. Mark a number or draw a shape in the box.

	1			
	2			
	3			

- Color the shapes.
- Tell about the fruits you know.



# The ball track with holes



1

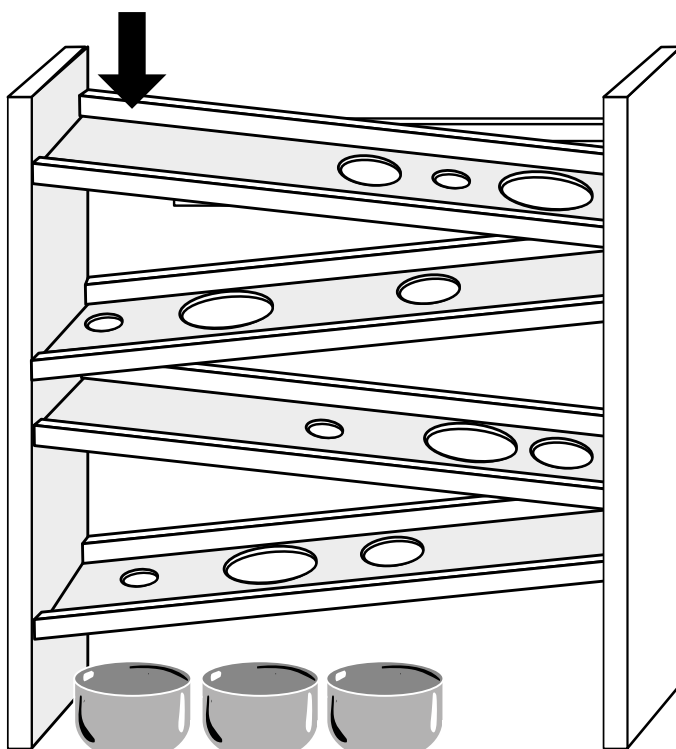
Into which bowls will the balls 1, 2 and 3 fall?



2



3



**A**

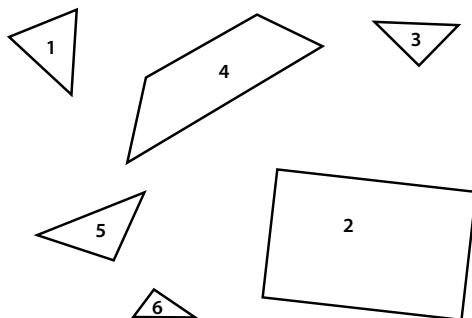
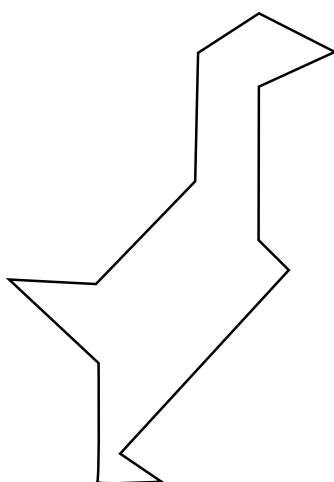
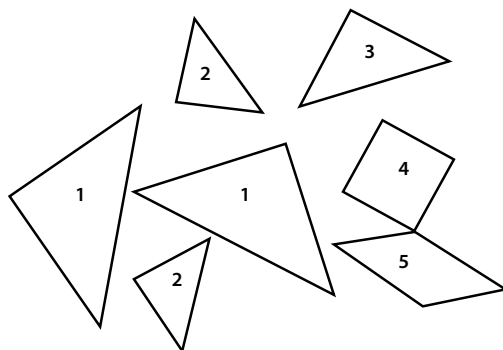
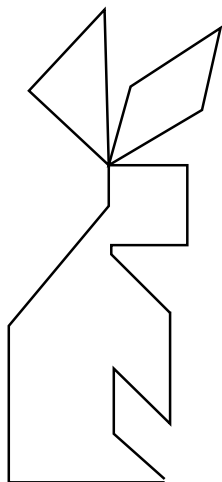
**B**

**C**

- Use balls during lessons in different games (Stress Ball, Game Ball, etc.).
- List games and sports involving a ball.

# Domestic animals

Assemble out of pieces the rabbit and goose depicted on the picture.



- Color the pieces of the same shape with the same color and use them to make a shape.
- Discuss domestic animals.

# Lunch box

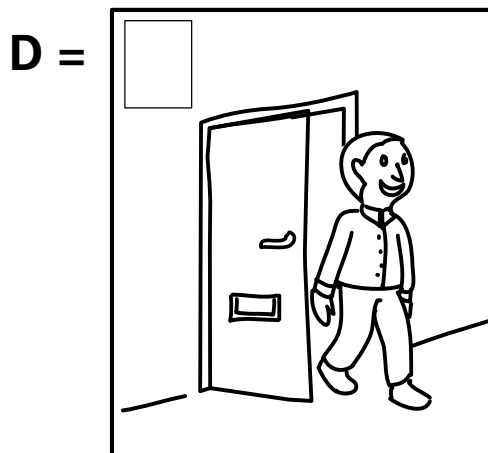
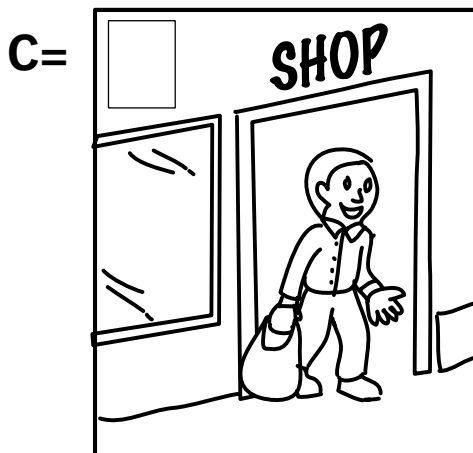
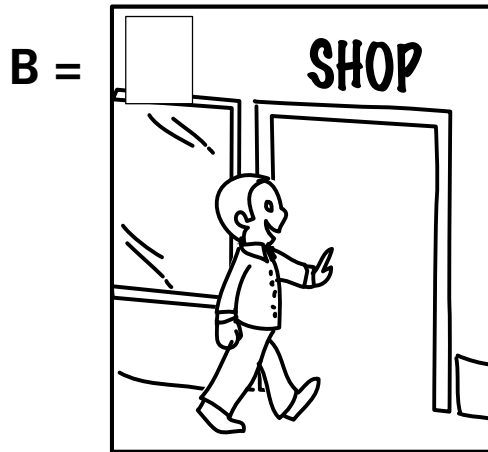
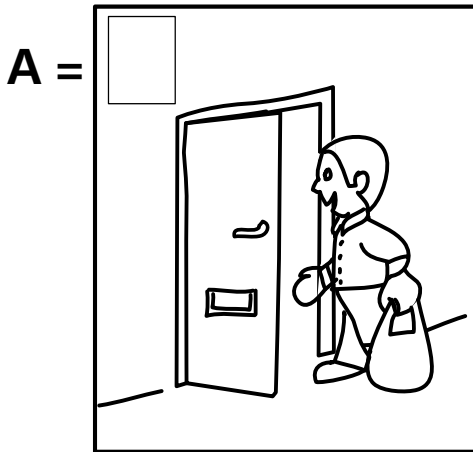
Liisa's lunch box is rectangular and has stripes but no handle. There is a sandwich in the lunch box but no water bottle. There is also an apple and yogurt but no chocolate. Find Liisa's lunch box.



- Color the picture.
- Have a conversation about a picnic outdoors.
- What would you put in your lunch box?

# Let's go shopping!

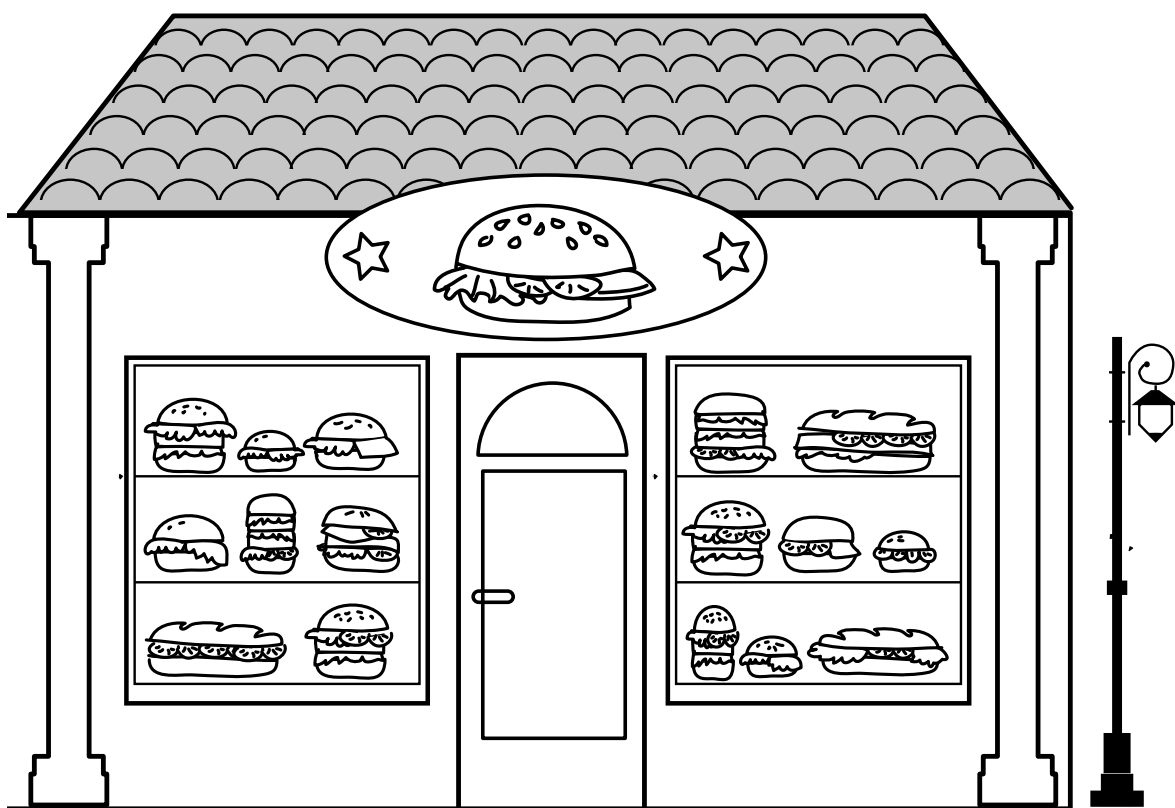
Arrange the pictures correctly.



- Color the picture.
- Have a conversation about shopping, give examples.
- How do you remember what you need to buy from a store?

# Hamburger kiosk

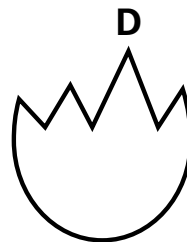
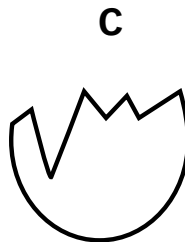
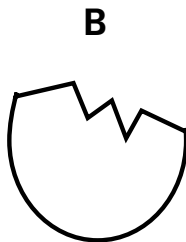
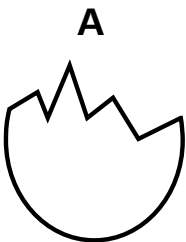
Find two similar burgers in the kiosk.



- Color the picture.
- Have a conversation about healthy diet.
- A healthy diet consists of five colors.  
List the colors of various foods.

# Eggshells

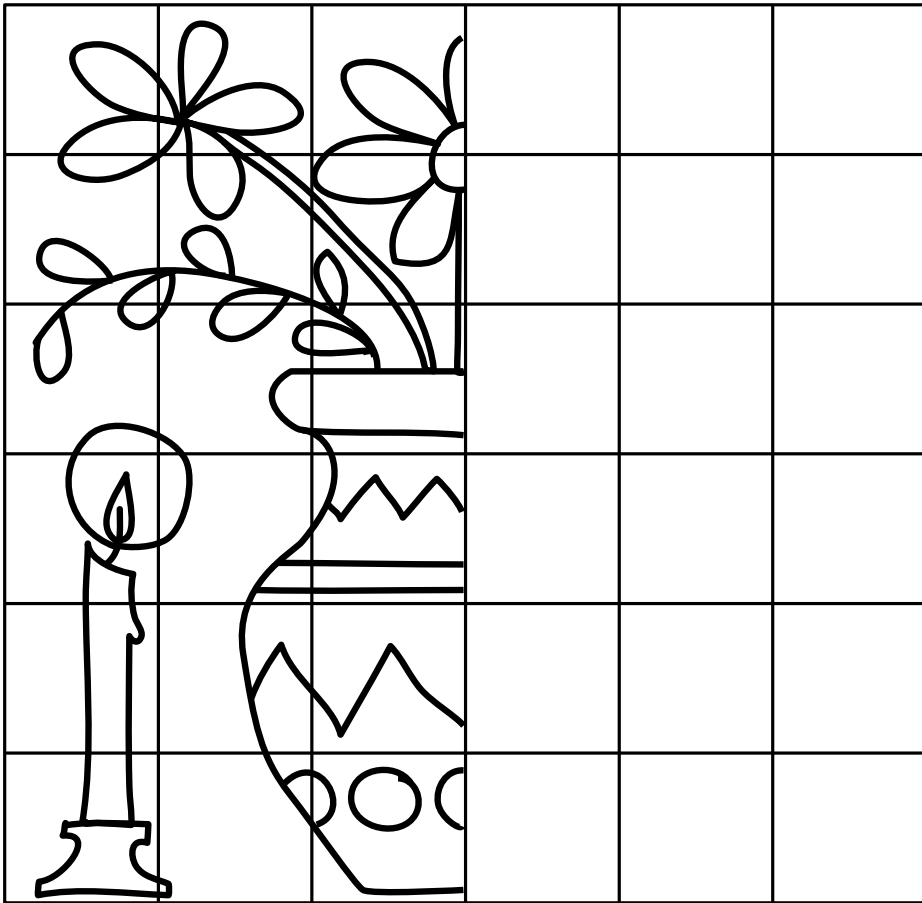
Four eggs were used to make the cake.  
Which eggshell halves fit together?



- Color the shells that belong together with the same color.
- List the dishes containing eggs.

# Half of the picture is missing.

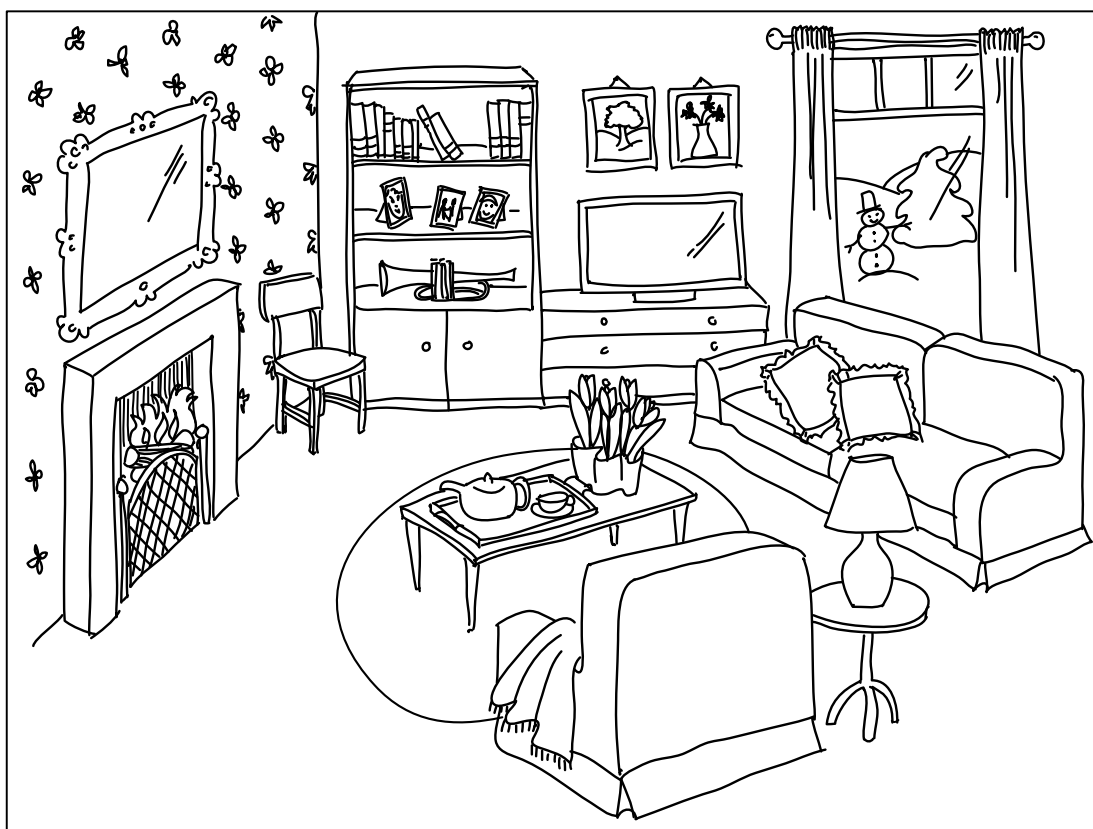
Draw the missing half by following the grid.



- Color the picture.
- List the flowers first by color, then by the initial letter of the flower name.

## With letter T

Which objects in the picture begin with the letter T? One object may also have several names starting with the letter T.

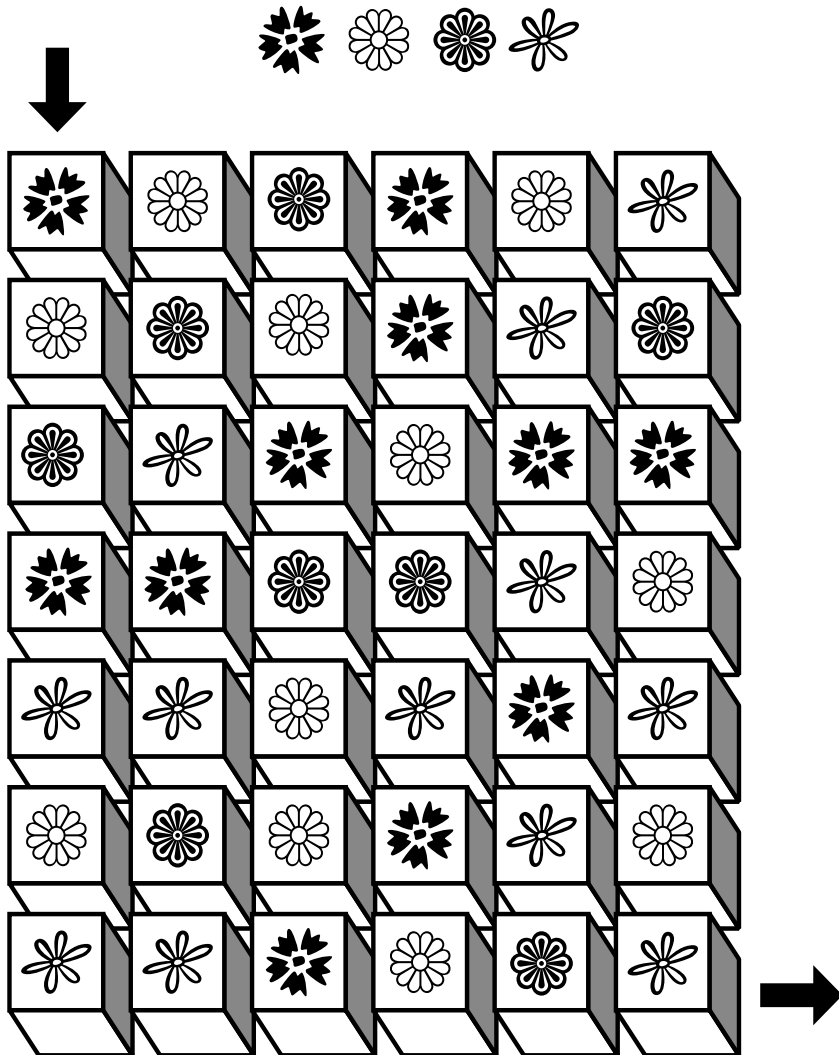


- Color the picture.
- Create a story on the basis of the picture.
- Repeat the exercise by changing the letter.



# Flowers in blocks

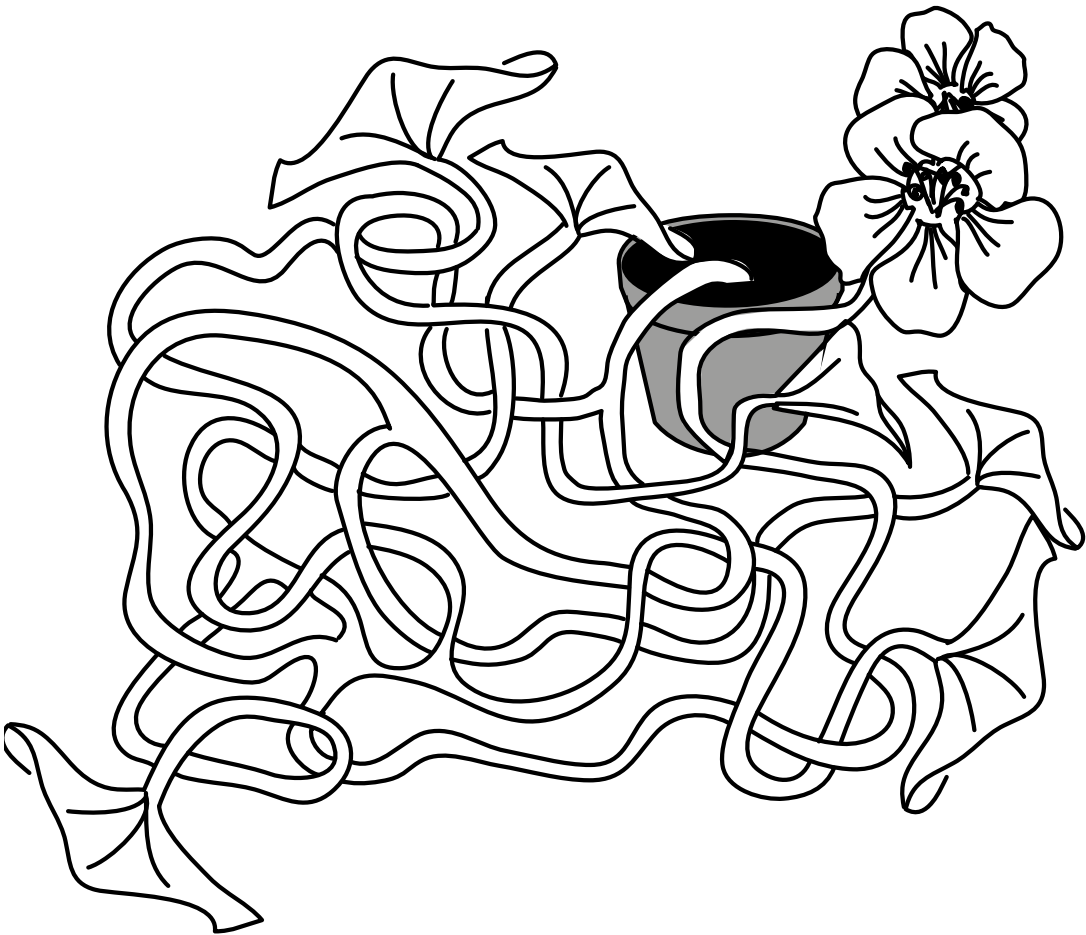
Try to move from one block to another so, that you will encounter these flowers only in the following order.



- Remember flowers with various scents
- Recall an event associated with fragrant flowers.

## A big spring flower

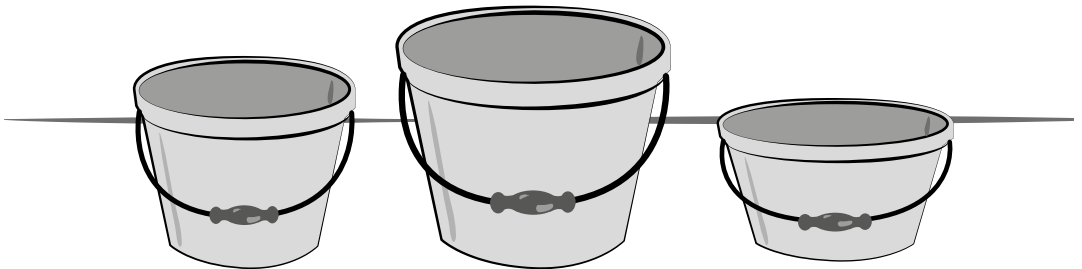
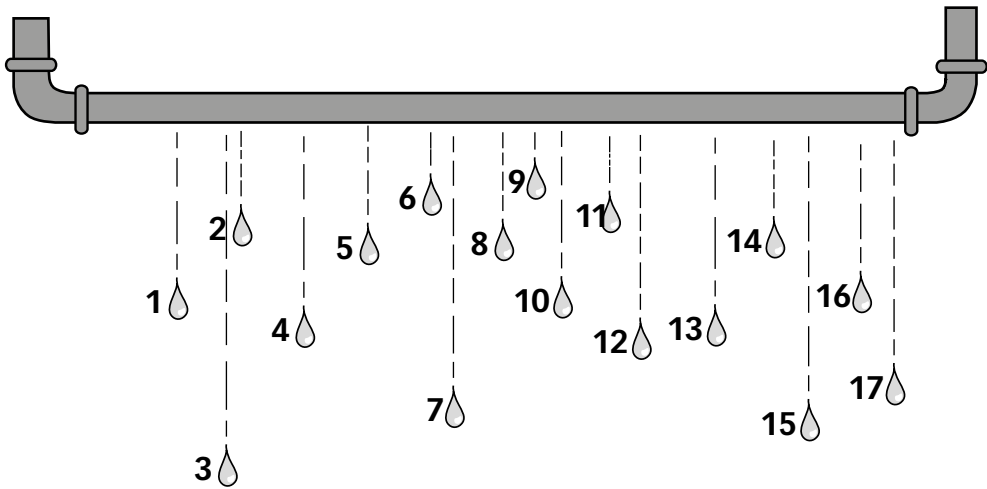
The spring sun has grown a big flower. Find the stem from foot to the flower.



- Color the picture.
- Recall the first spring flowers.

# The broken water pipe

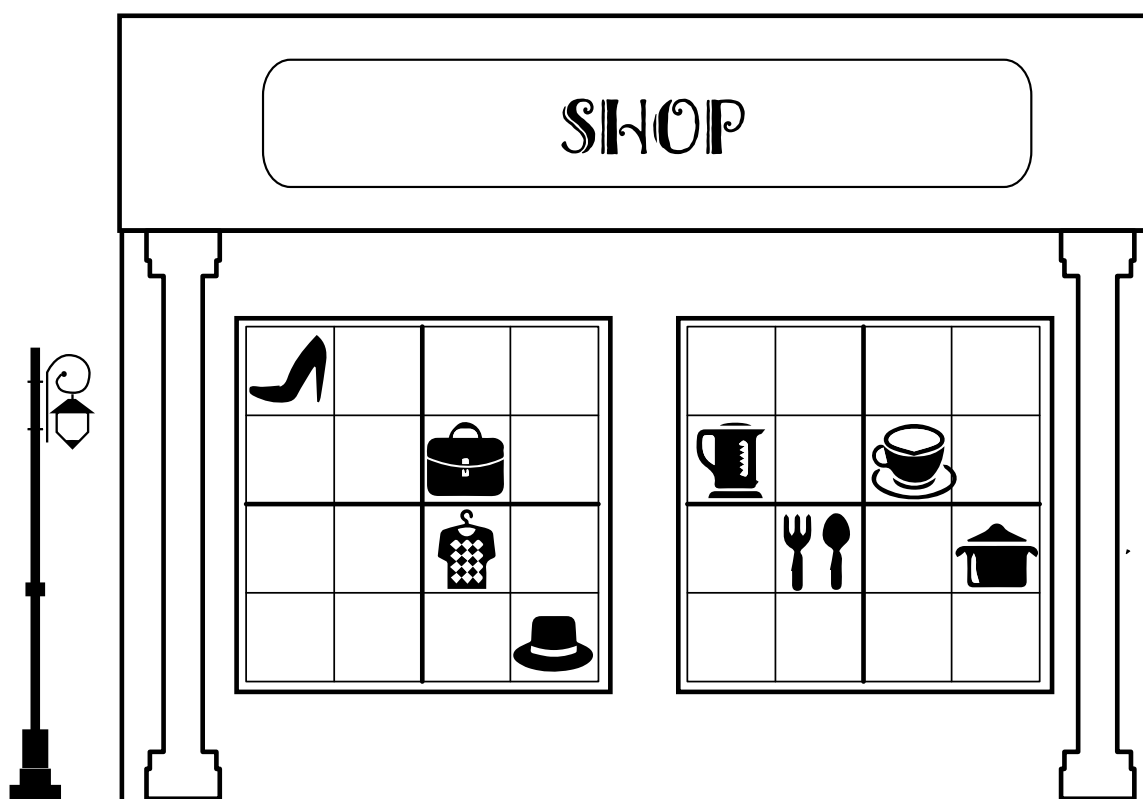
Due to the autumn rains, the pipe has started to leak. Buckets have been placed under the pipe until a plumber arrives. Two drops fall onto the floor. Which ones?



- What are the benefits of the rain?
- What do you like / don't like when it is raining?
- Recall a sweet memory associated with the rain.

# A shop window composition

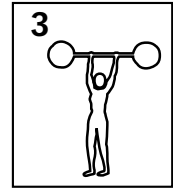
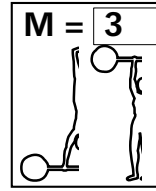
A friend is helping to arrange the display window in a shopping center. Finish the display window so, that there is one item in each column, row and larger four-square grid only once.







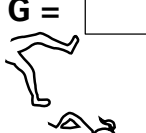

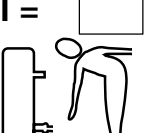
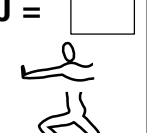
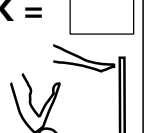
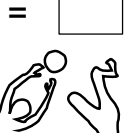




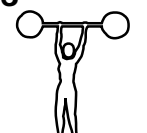




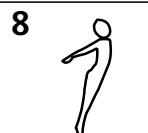

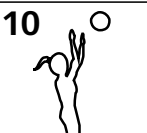


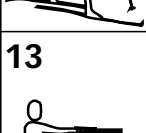

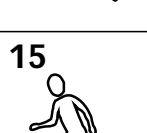
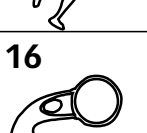
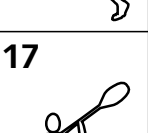

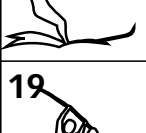
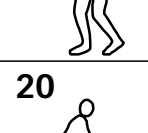
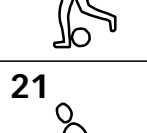


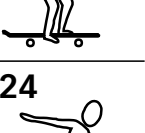
- Color the facade of the store.
- Remember your last visit to the store – what did you put into your shopping cart?

# Athletes

Find the whole picture of each halved picture. Write its number to the corner of the halved picture.



<b>A =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>B =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>C =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>D =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>E =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>F =</b> <input type="text"/> 
<b>G =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>H =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>I =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>J =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>K =</b> <input type="text"/> 	<b>L =</b> <input type="text"/> 

<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 	<b>3</b> 	<b>4</b> 	<b>5</b> 	<b>6</b> 
<b>7</b> 	<b>8</b> 	<b>9</b> 	<b>10</b> 	<b>11</b> 	<b>12</b> 
<b>13</b> 	<b>14</b> 	<b>15</b> 	<b>16</b> 	<b>17</b> 	<b>18</b> 
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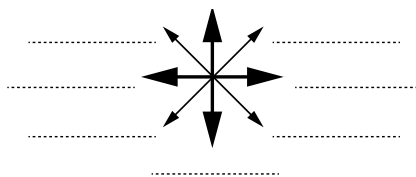
- List various sports.
- What sporting equipment do you use for exercise?
- What is your favourite sport?

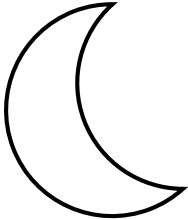
# Points of the compass

Recall the points of the compass and mark TOGETHER in the compass.  
Read the text and fill the boxes with shapes.

From the Moon, the Sun is to the south. From the Sun the eye is to the southwest.  
From the eye, the bucket is to the east. From the eye to the northwest is the letter M. From the letter M to the northeast is a stocking. From the stocking to the west is a bottle. From the bottle to the southeast is a flower. If you solved the exercise correctly the left box of the bottom row remains empty. Write your name in the box.

**NORTH**

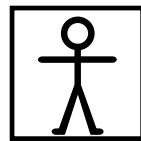
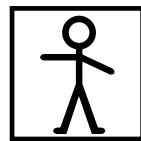
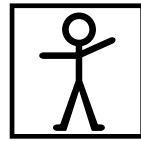
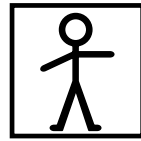
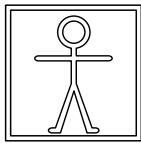
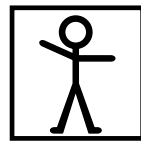
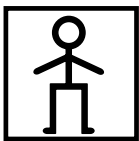
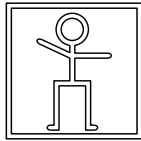
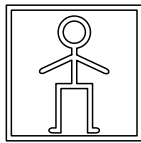


- Color the shapes.

# Stick figures

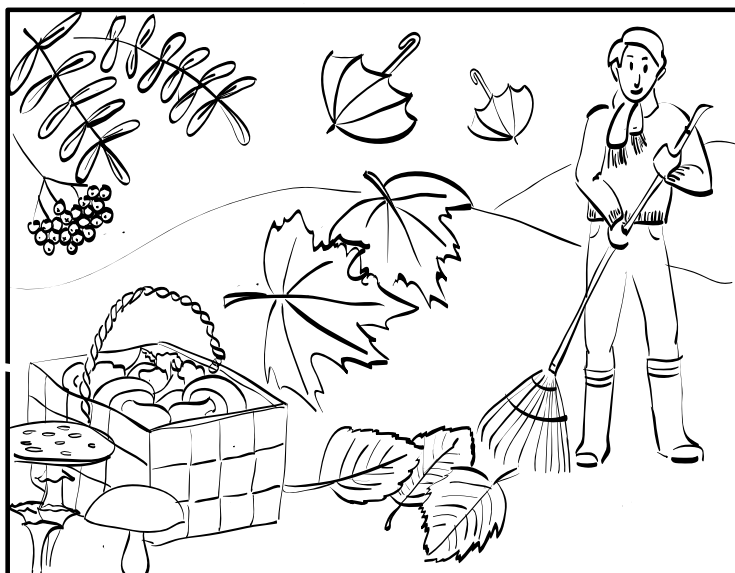
Find a pair for each stick figure and join the pairs with a line.



- Color the pairs.
- Imitate positions that seem comfortable.

# Autumn

Spot the differences.

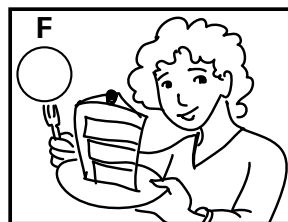
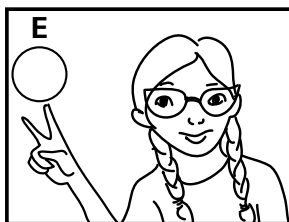
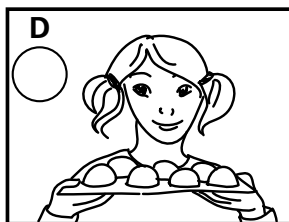
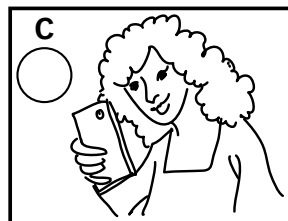
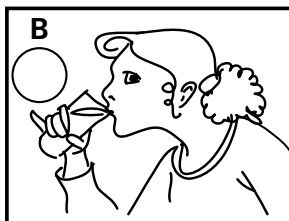


- Color the picture.
- Discuss the harvest of the autumn – not just the harvest of edible plants but also the harvest of other plants (such as birch, oak, rowan).



# Summer pictures

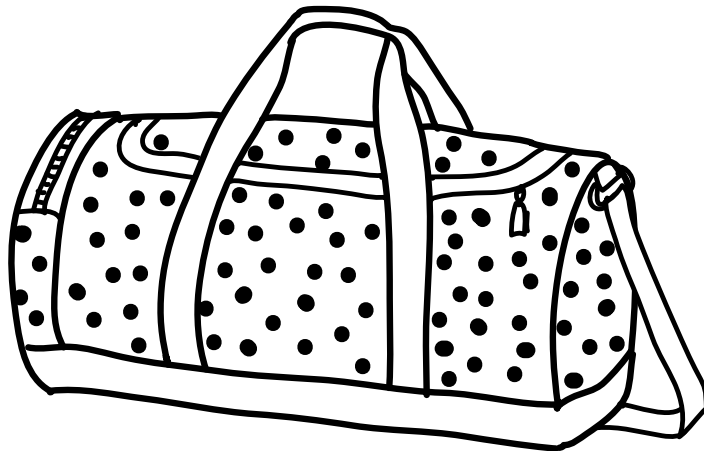
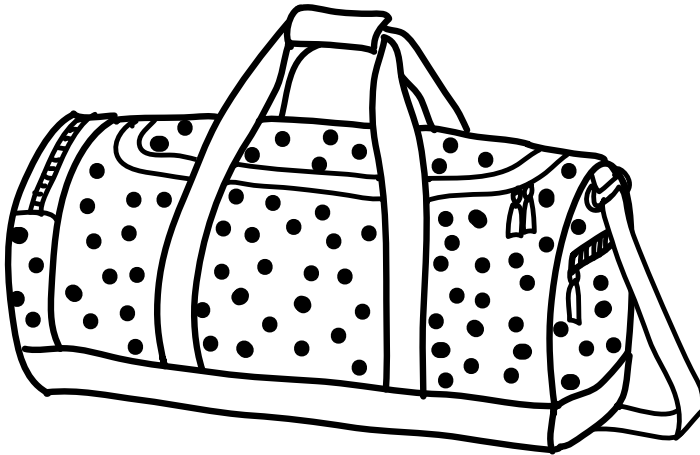
A lot of pictures were taken during the summer. Here are the memories of a block party. Who took the pictures? Find out where the photographer stood and who did s/he photograph.



- Color the pictures.
- Start a word chain about summer (the first word is, for example, THE SUN, the next player comes up with a word that begins with the letter the previous word ended with, which is in this case, the letter N – the NATURE, etc.).

# Travelling

You must be kidding me! The luggage got exchanged with another one at the airport! Find the differences in the suitcases.

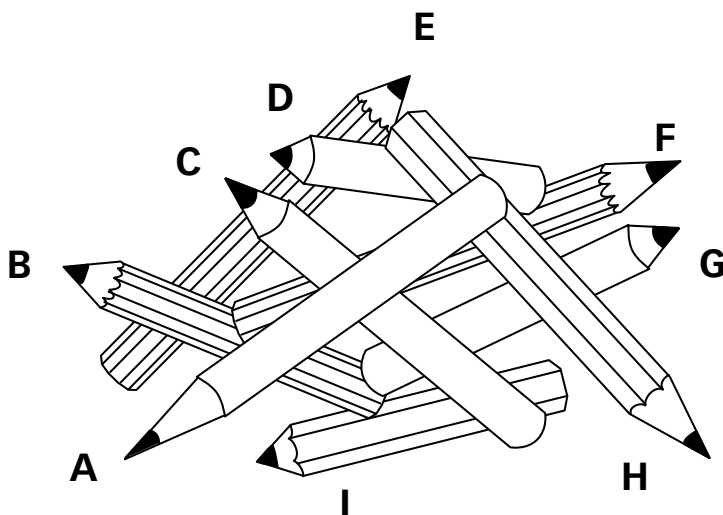
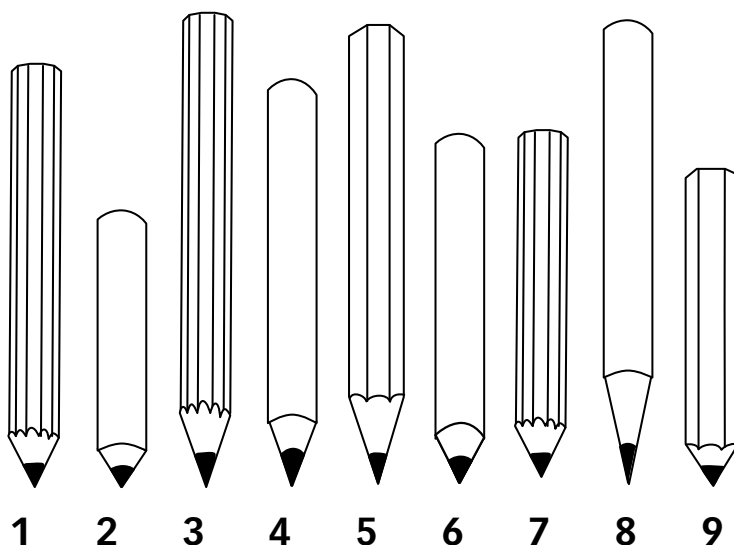


Continue your travel by playing "I pack my suitcase."

- The first player names an item s/he would put into the suitcase when going on a trip.
- The next player repeats the item already put into a suitcase and names a new one and so forth.
- Color the pictures.

# Pencils

Find similar pencils and write under the number a corresponding letter.

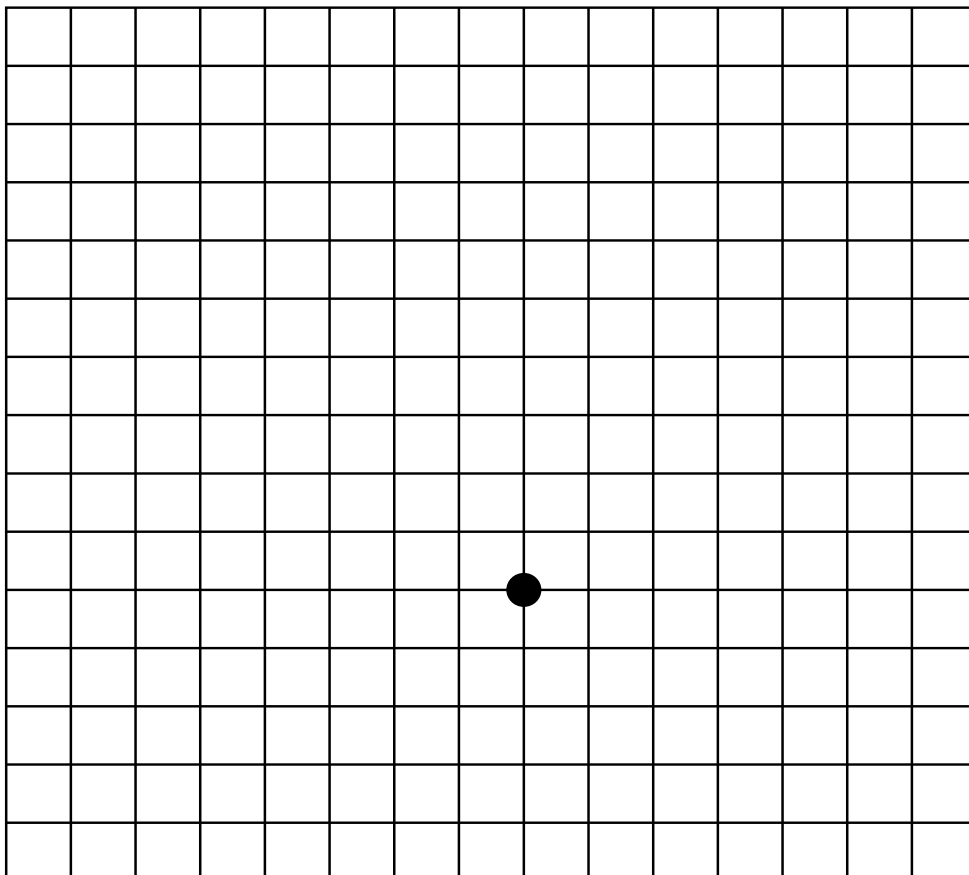


- Color the pairs.
- List the objects by colors.
- List your favourite colors.

# Counting the squares

Move within the grid as instructed. Start from the mark.

10 squares up / 1 square to the left / 2 squares down / 1 square to the left / 2 squares down /  
1 square to the left / 2 squares down / 1 square to the right / 2 squares down / 1 square to the right /  
2 squares down / 7 squares to the left / 1 square down / 2 squares to the right / 1 square down /  
1 square to the right / 2 squares down / 8 squares to the right / 1 square up / 1 square to the right /  
1 square up / 1 square to the right / 1 square up / 2 squares to the right / 1 square up /  
6 squares to the left / 1 square up / 1 square to the right / 2 squares up / 1 square to the right /  
1 square up / 1 square to the right / 3 squares up / 1 square to the left / 2 squares up /  
1 square to the left / 1 square up / 2 squares to the left.

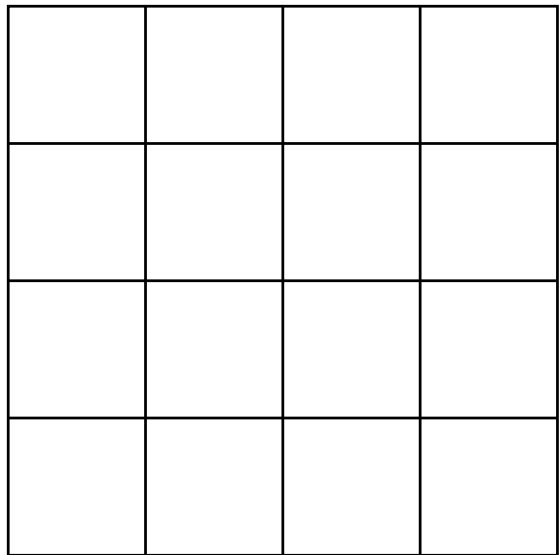
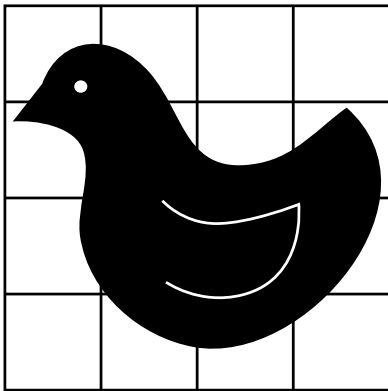


- Color the shape.
- You may draw the pattern once more on a squared paper if you want.
- Recall words associated with the shape and use them in a story.



# Bird flight

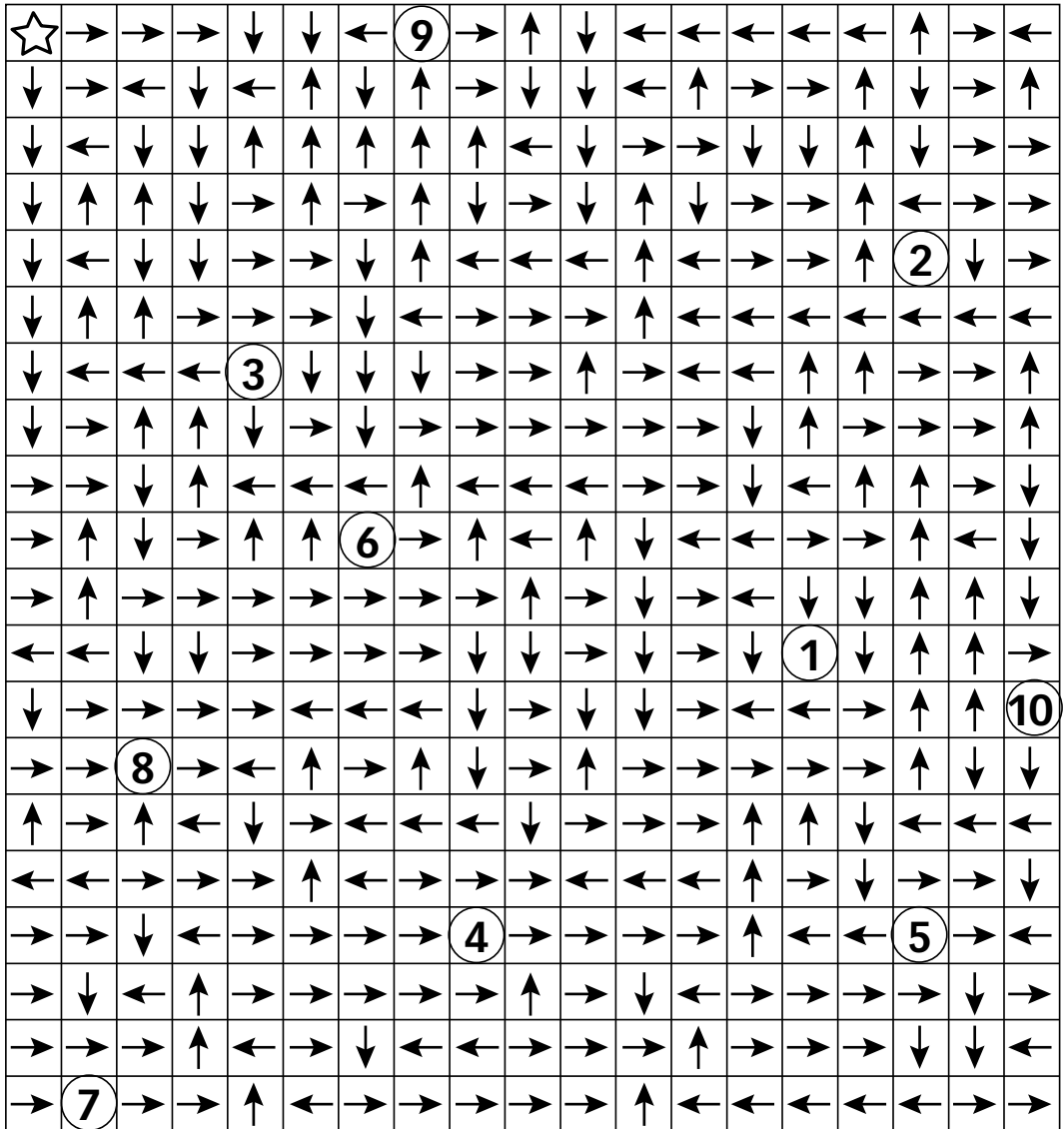
Follow each square carefully and copy the bird into the bigger grid.



- Color the bird you draw.
- What birds do you know?
- Start a word chain about birds and animals (the first player says, for example, WOODPECKER, the next player comes up with a word that begins with the letter the previous word ended with, which in this case is the letter R – RACCOON, etc.).
- Imitate bird flight with your hands.

# Arrow game

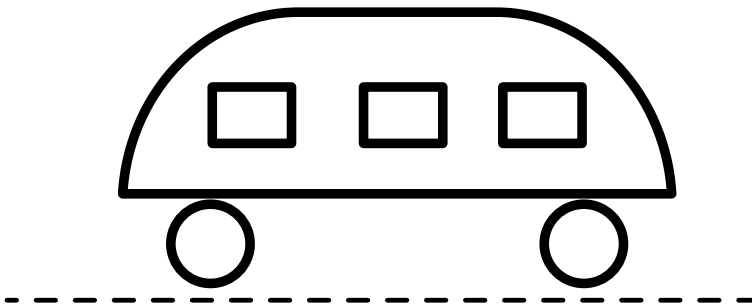
Move along the arrows. Which number do you reach to?



- Group members count one by one numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...  
Each time the number contains number 5, clap your hands once. Each time the number contains number 2, march while sitting.
- Add movements to other numbers.

# A Bus

The picture depicts a bus. Which direction (right or left) does the bus go to?



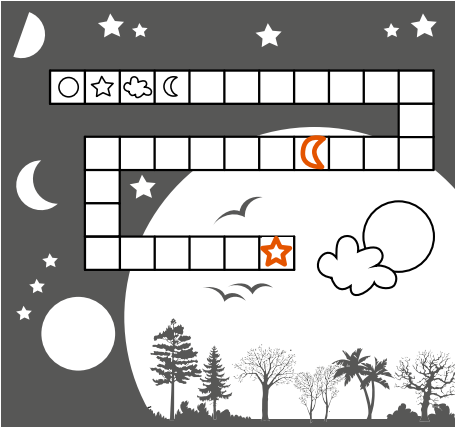
- Justify your answer.



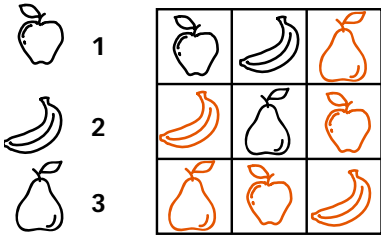


# Answers

## 1. The night sky



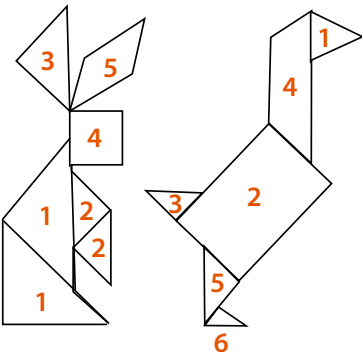
## 2. The fruit basket



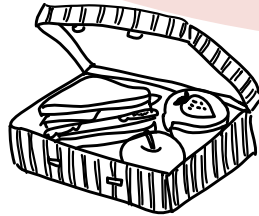
## 3. The ball track with holes

Answer: 1=B, 3=B, 2=C

## 4. Domestic animals



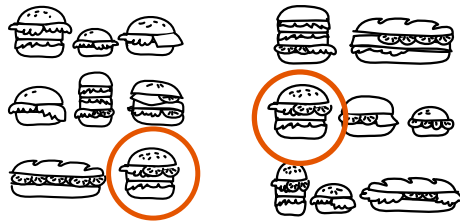
## 5. Lunch box



## 6. Let's go shopping!

Answer: A=4, B=2, C=3, D=1

## 7. The hamburger kiosk



## 8. Eggshells

Answer: 1=C, 2=D, 3=A, 4=B

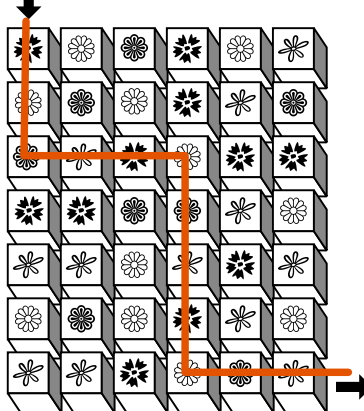
## 9. Half of the picture is missing

Answer: Everyone draws by himself/ herself

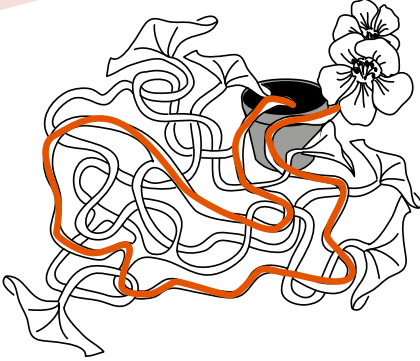
## 10. With letter T

Answer: Words starting with letter T

## 11. Flowers in blocks



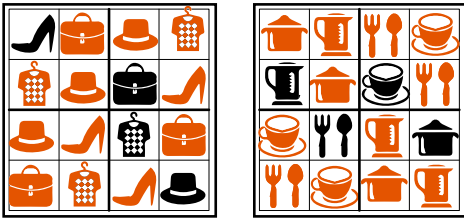
### 12. A big spring flower



### 13. The broken water pipe

Answer: 5, 13

### 14. Shop window composition



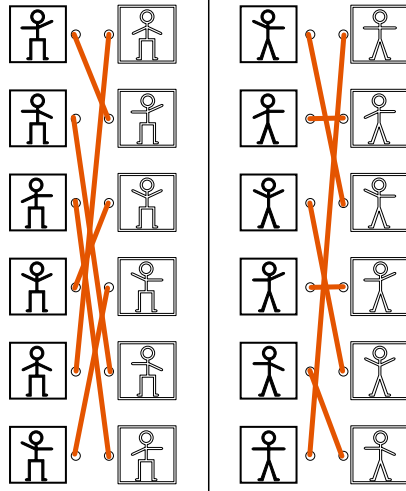
### 15. Athletes

Answer: A=20, B=10, C=1, D=16,  
E=17, F=19, G=4, H=14, I=24, J=6,  
K=8, L=22

### 16. Points of the compass



### 17. Stick figures



### 18. Autumn



### 19. Summer pictures

Answer: A=3, B=4, C=6, D=2,  
E=1, F=5

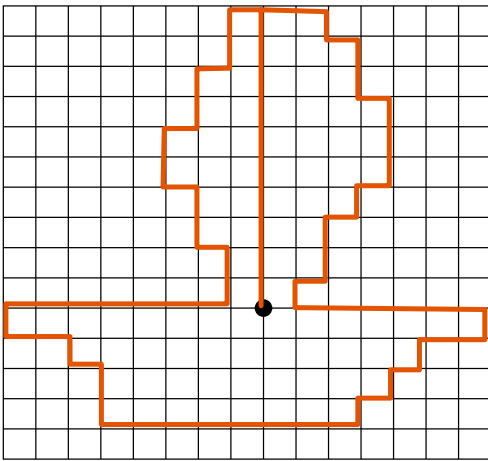
### 20. Travelling



### 21. Pencils

Answer: 1=E, 2=D, 3=F, 4=C, 5=H, 6=G, 7=B, 8=A, 9=I

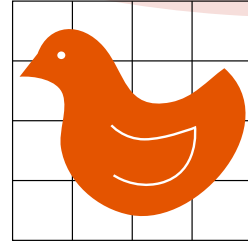
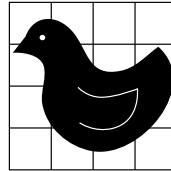
### 22. Counting of the squares



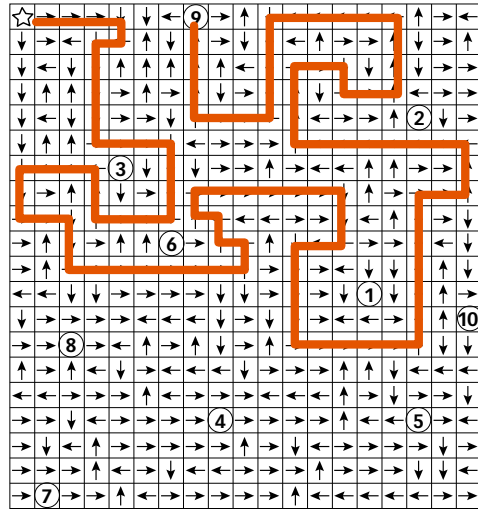
### 23. Flea market



### 24. Bird flight



### 25. Arrow game



### 26. A Bus

Answer: To the left because the bus doors are on the right side.





This guidebook is developed as a part of the Society for Memory Disorders Expertise in Finland's ETNIMU-project, which improves the brain health of ethnic minority elderly.

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