

RÉD PAPER KITE

TEACHER'S

Notes

Claudette



CLAUDETTE

Synopsis

Loutka is a brilliant puppet maker. All of his creations work perfectly, just as he expects them to. Except for Claudette. She is a rickety misfit who longs for freedom and adventure.

What can be done with such a puppet? Loutka doesn't know.

So Claudette stays on the shelf. Until one incredible day ...

With captivating illustrations and gentle words, *Claudette* takes the reader on a courageous and magical adventure beyond the clouds, discovering the power of beauty, possibility and self-worth along the way.

Themes

Independence, resilience, freedom, courage, self-identity and self-worth

About the Author/Illustrator: H el ene Magisson

H el ene Magisson is an award-winning illustrator. She started her artistic career as a painting restorer in Paris, where she was also trained in the art of medieval illumination.

H el ene has lived in Africa, France and India. She has now settled down in Australia with her family. Her travels both inspire and enrich her work.

She has illustrated several books, including classics like *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams Bianco and more contemporary stories like *Slowly! Slowly!* by T.M. Clark, a CBCA 2018 Notable Picture Book of the Year and *Little Puggle's Song* by Vikki Conley, a CBCA 2020 Notable Picture Book of the Year (Early childhood).

Claudette is her first book as an author/illustrator.

Author/Illustrator
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AGES 5-7

Inspiration as a writer

First of all, I wanted to write a story that sounded like a modern fairytale, where reality and magic ultimately blend into one. I chose the world of puppets because it has always fascinated me, from the design in the workshop to the performance on stage. I remember being absolutely dazzled by a human-size marionette show.

A craftsperson's workshop is full of all kinds of mysterious tools and materials. We can not really tell if they might be sorcerers or magicians instead. In these workshops, incredible creatures come to life through their genius hands. It is magical and brilliantly creative.

Furthermore, I am very attached to the concept of freedom, especially freedom of thought, which gives us the audacity to develop different ideas. And using a puppet to talk about freedom, exploration and adventure seemed interesting to me.

Inspiration as an illustrator

The workshop

Before becoming an illustrator, I was a painting restorer. My art studio was full of intriguing objects. I drew inspiration from this atmosphere for Loutka's workshop. I just made it messier and added more bizarre items.

Loutka

For this story to fit into a modern world, I decided with my editor that Loutka had to be young and trendy with a tattoo, jeans, sneakers and a skateboard. I wanted him to look like a gentle dreamer.

Claudette

I wanted Claudette to be very simple—someone whom we don't necessarily notice at first but who surprises us as the story develops.

Educational topics

This book will encourage conversation about independence, resilience, freedom, courage, self-identity and self-worth. It may also lead to activities about the importance of creative expression and initiative.

Discussion topics

Before reading the book

- Look at the cover. What kind of character do you think Claudette might be? Can you tell what she is feeling from the expression on her face?
- What else can you see on the cover? Name all the little pictures you can see.
- Read the back cover blurb. Predict what might happen to Claudette in the story.
- What kind of story do you think this will be? For example, funny? Serious? Mysterious?

After reading the book

- What made Claudette different from all the other puppets? What do you think of her?
- Why do you think the illustrator has painted some books in the story? What is the link between the books we see in the illustrations and Claudette's ideas? Which books or story characters have inspired you? How have they done this?
- What sort of person do you think Loutka is? Did he change by the end of the story? How?
- Describe the other puppets in the story and their actions.
- Write some words that describe Claudette's journey.
- Explain what you think might happen after the story finishes. What do you think Claudette's life will be like now? How might Loutka react if he were to make another 'misfit' puppet?

Additional activities

The Arts

Visual literacy

- Write a description of the style of the illustrations in the book.
- Which colours stand out the most to you in the illustrations? Why do you think the illustrator might have chosen them?
- Look closely at the objects the illustrator has included in Loutka's workshop. What do they tell us about his personality?

RED PAPER KITE

- Choose your favourite illustration in the story and explain why you like it so much.
- Look at the sketch of Loutka's desk at the beginning of the book. Draw and label a desk that you would like to work at if you were a puppet maker.

Art/Craft

- Use recycled materials to make a range of different puppets.
- Make an egg carton whale. [Worksheet 1].
- Make a simple paper marionette [see Worksheet 2].
- Make a fabric collage of each of the puppets in the story, including Claudette, showing the details that make up each of their costumes.
- Create a stained glass kite to stick to the window [see Worksheet 3].
- Create a starry night sky picture on black card using paint in a spray bottle. Add a glowing moon too!
- Make a paper mâché moon.
- Make a shoebox diorama of a magical sky.
- Create a jellyfish [see Worksheet 6].
- Complete the colour-me-in pages [Worksheets 7 and 8].

Language

Writing

- Write your own magic spell for a magical puppet creation. You can use some of the ingredients Loutka used or make up your own.
- Make a list of the expressions you can see on Claudette's face throughout the story.
- Write a haiku poem that describes a journey to the moon and stars (Worksheet 4).
- Write a diary entry as Loutka, explaining how he felt when Claudette returned and how he feels his work will change as a result.
- Write a description of the whale that Claudette meets on her journey. Why is the whale covered with seashells? Research to find out.
- Write a book review [Worksheet 8].

Oral language

- Look closely at the final illustration in the book. Explain to a partner what story you think Claudette might be telling.
- Devise a short script with a partner that could be used for a puppet show, then try performing it for an audience.

Science

- Find out more about the constellation Cetus, the whale constellation. Research other animal constellations too.
- Make a telescope to see Cetus [Worksheet 5].
- Watch YouTube videos of puppeteers using marionettes. Use them to explore the concepts of push and pull.

Further information

- Puppets were used in ancient times in rituals, ceremonies and drama performances.
- The word marionette derives from words meaning 'little Mary' in French; it is believed to refer to the Virgin Mary, an early marionette character.
- Puppets are found across almost all cultures and continents in varying forms, including shadow puppets, water puppets, glove puppets and string puppets.

Further reading

Books about puppets

The Adventures of Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi

Balloons over Broadway by Melissa Sweet

Books about self-worth and courage

All the Ways to be Smart by Davina Bell and Allison Colpoys

Boy by Phil Cummings and Shane Devries

The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams and William Nicholson

Worksheets

See over page

Worksheet 1

Egg carton whale

You will need

an egg carton
blue paint
a paintbrush
blue card
a blue or white pipe cleaner
googly eyes
a black felt tip marker
scissors
a glue stick



What to do

1. Cut out one of the egg carton sections. Paint it and let it dry.
2. Ask an adult to cut a small cross in the top of the egg carton section.
3. Cut the pipe cleaner in half. Bend the two pieces and intertwine them together at the bend.
4. Pinch the pipe cleaner ends together and push them through the cross, leaving the intertwined part inside the egg carton. Bend the ends of the pipe cleaners to make them look like a water spout.
5. Cut a whale tail and two fins from the card and glue them to the egg carton. Bend the tail to make it stand up.
6. Glue on the googly eyes and draw a mouth on your whale.

Claudette marionette



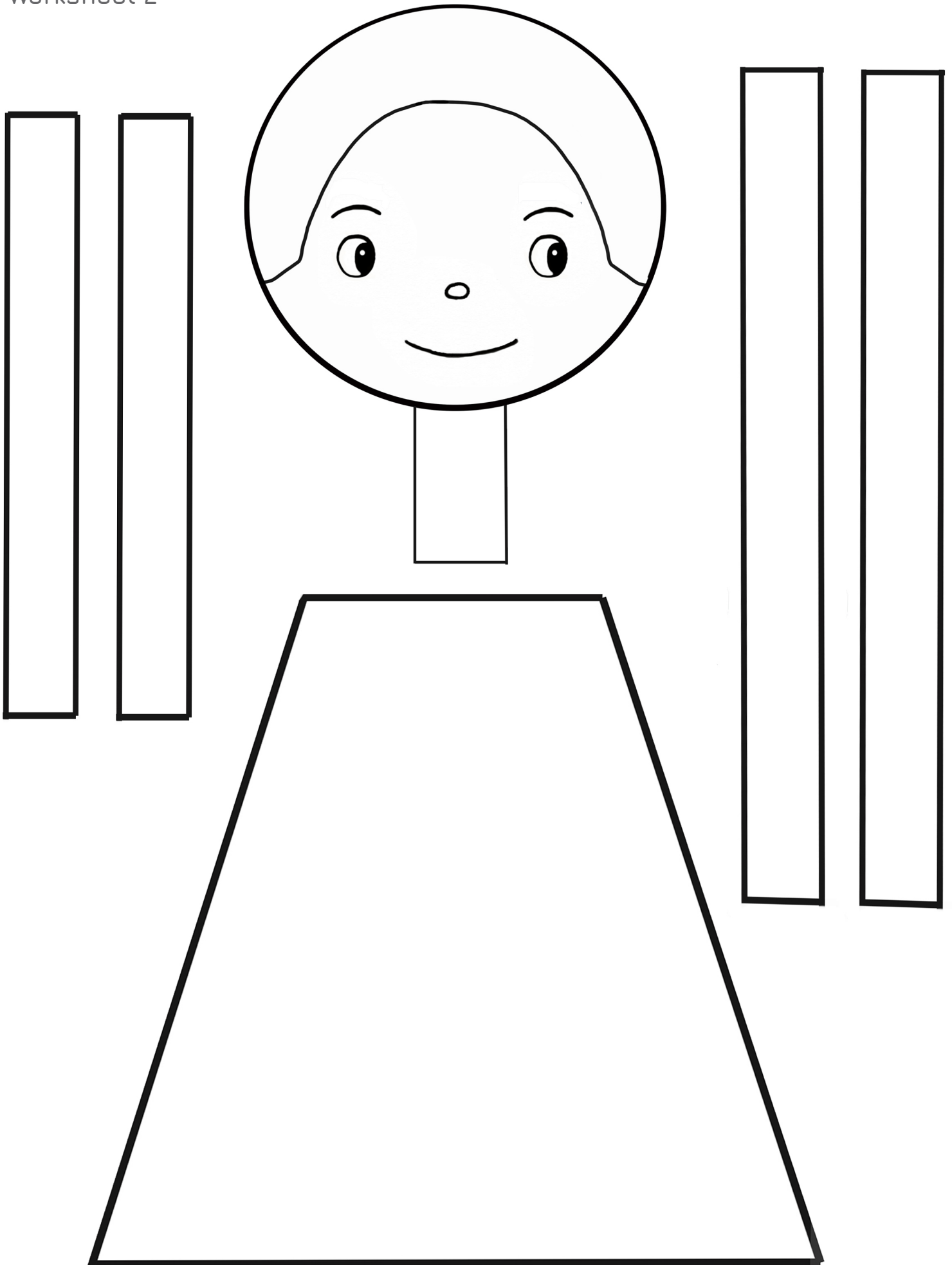
You will need

two 30-cm lengths of black wool or thread
double-sided tape
stickers, glitter and other decorations (optional)

scissors
a pencil to use for the rod
coloured pencils or markers

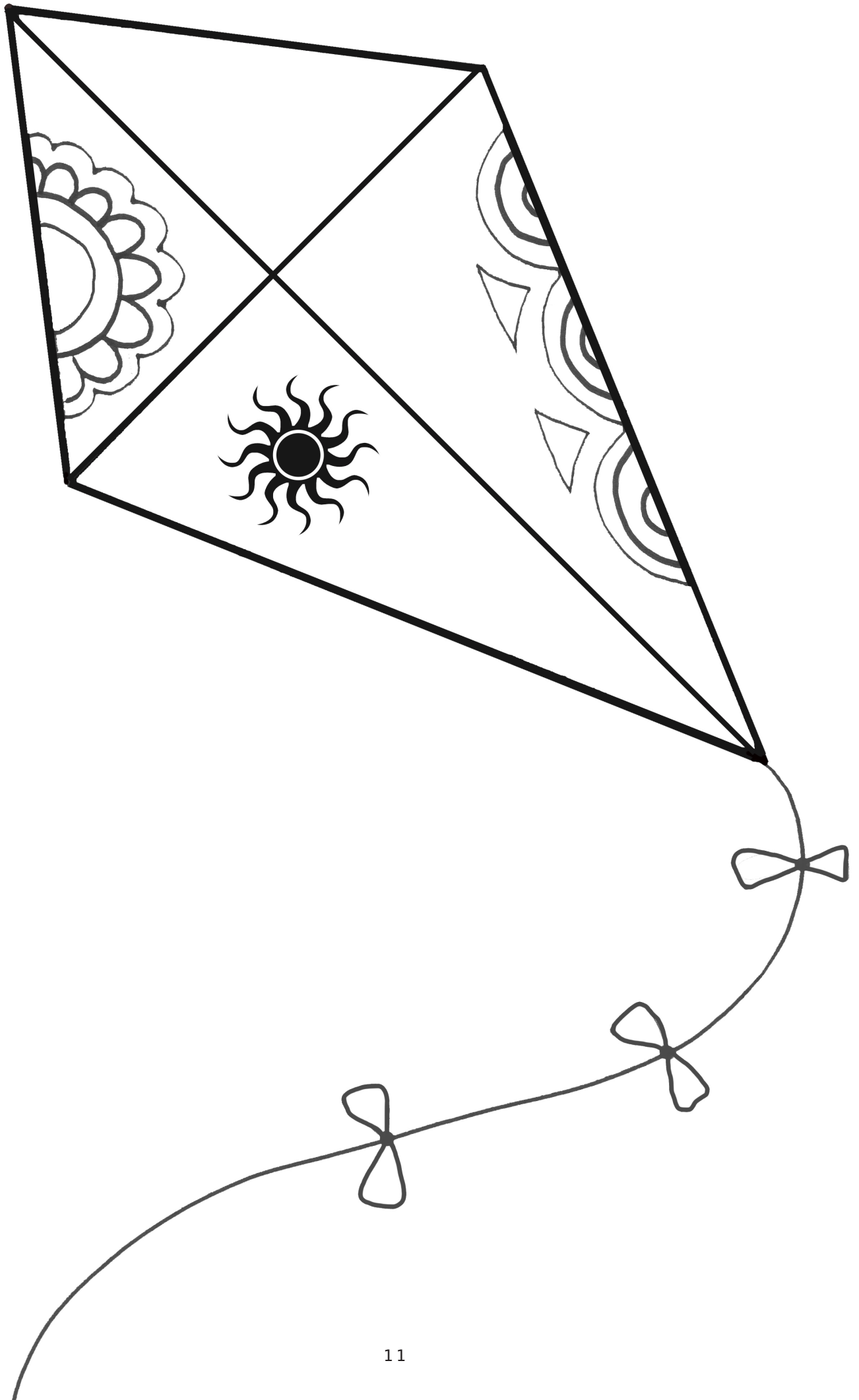
What to do

1. Colour and decorate Claudette's head, body, arms and legs. Cut them out.
2. Fold each leg and arm back and forth in a concertina fold.
3. Tape each arm and leg to the back of the body.
4. Tape the head to the front of the body.
5. Tape the wool or thread to the ends of the arms.
6. Tie the wool or thread to the pencil.
7. Make Claudette dance!



Stained glass kite

1. Colour the kite using wax crayons.
2. Cut out the picture.
3. Dip a cotton wool ball in vegetable oil and wipe it over the front and back of the picture.
4. Stick your kite against a window while it is still damp.



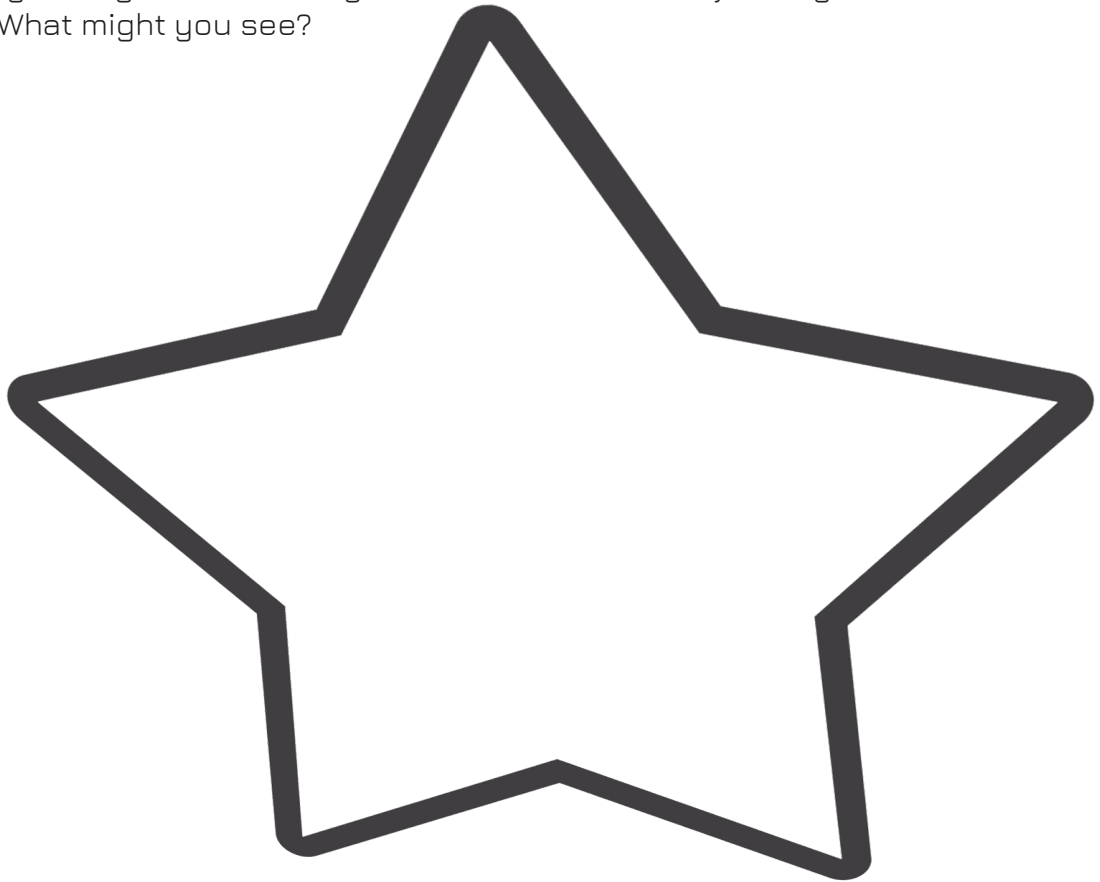
Worksheet 4

Write a moon and stars haiku

A haiku is a type of Japanese poem. It has three lines. The first line has 5 syllables. The second line has 7 syllables. The third line has 5 syllables. The poem does not need to rhyme.

Write a haiku poem about a journey to the moon and stars—just like Claudette’s.

1. Start by writing all the words you can think of about a journey to the moon and stars. What might you see?



2. Use some of your words to draft your haiku.

Line one (5 syllables):

Line two (7 syllables):

Line three (5 syllables):

3. Write your finished haiku on a separate sheet of paper. Read it to a friend.

Indoor telescope

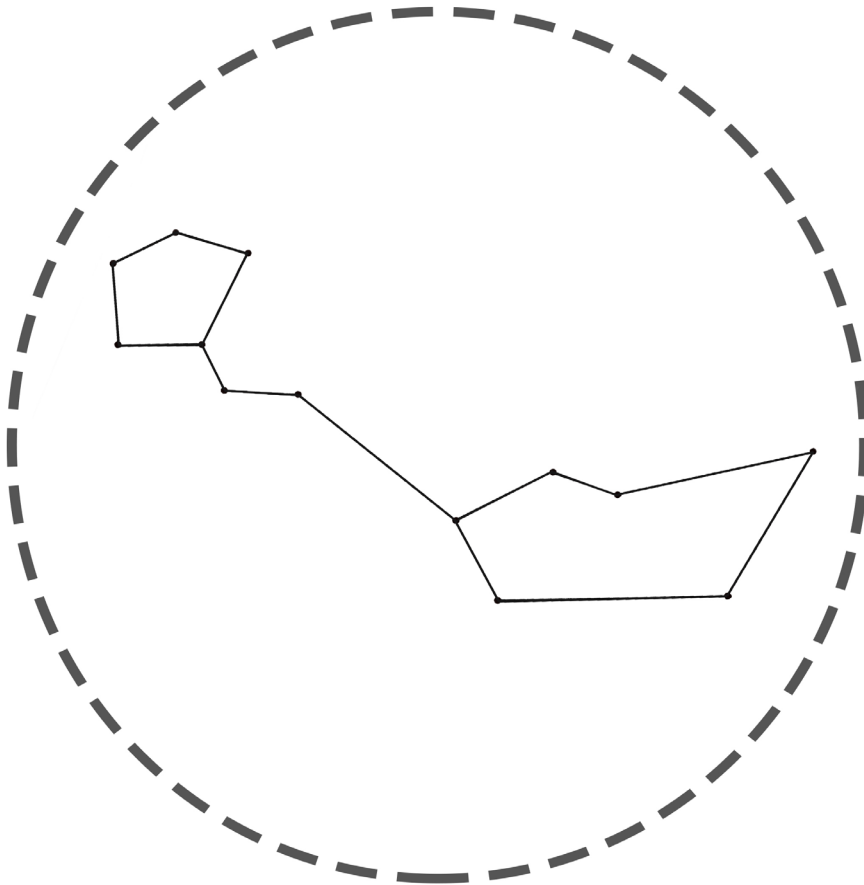
Claudette went up into the sky and saw a magical whale ... and you can too!
Make your own telescope so you can see Cetus, the whale constellation.

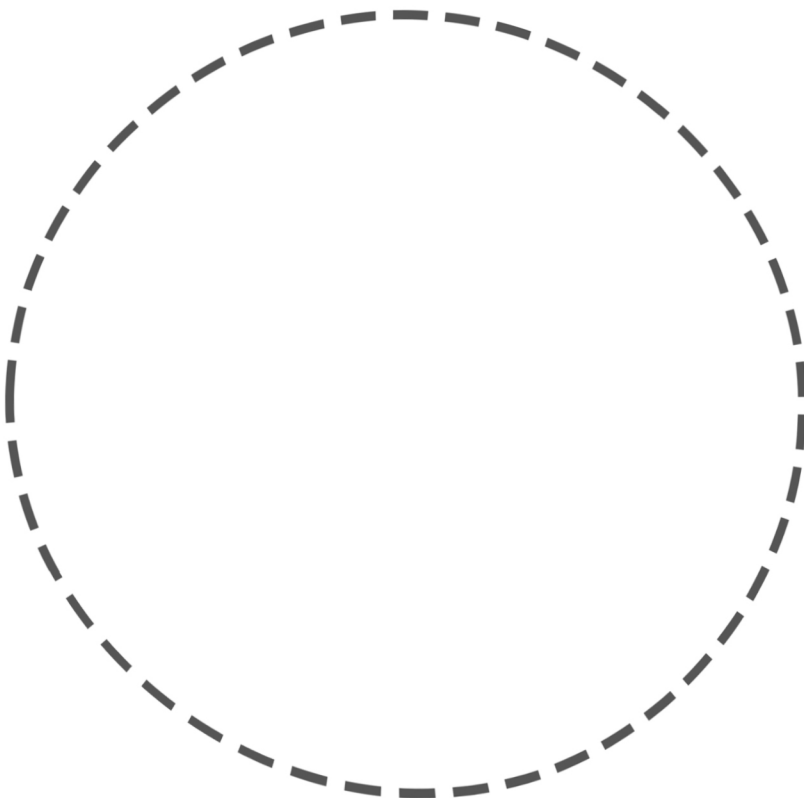
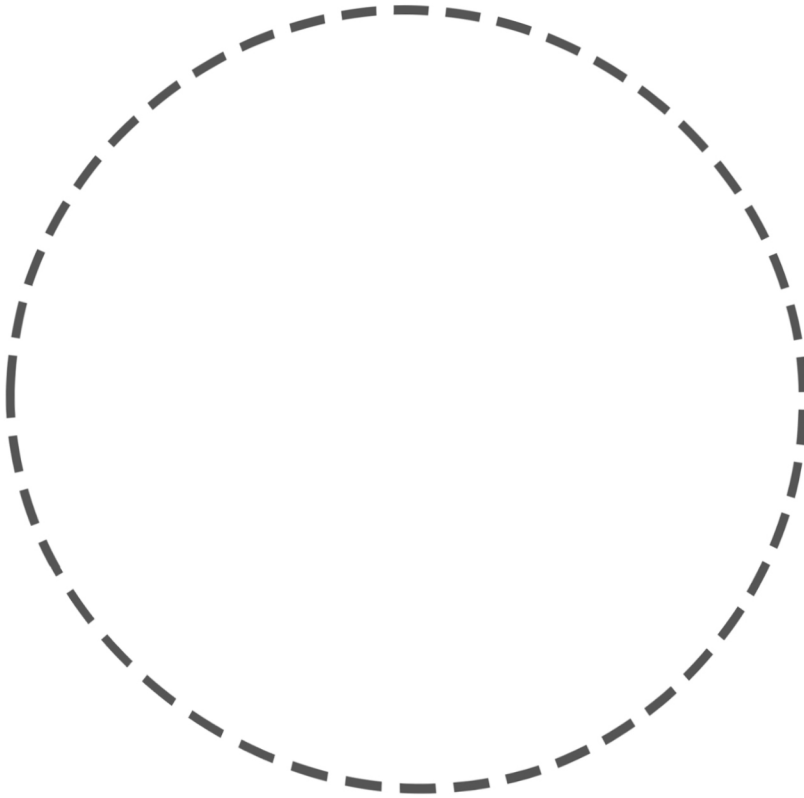
You will need

a plastic two-litre bottle
circles of black card the same size as the bottom of the bottle
glitter or stickers
a drawing pin
scissors
circles of black card a little bigger than the end of the tube
glue

What to do

1. Paint the outside of the bottle. When the paint is dry, you can decorate it.
2. Cut out the Cetus constellation.
3. Glue it onto a piece of black card.
4. Ask an adult to help you poke a hole through each star with the drawing pin.
5. Hold the constellation flat against the end of the telescope. Hold the telescope up to the light and look through it.
6. Now try making some constellations of your own on the blank circles.





Worksheet 6

Create a jellyfish

You can watch a tutorial video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pwiXmUsN4ns>

You will need

scissors

blue food colouring

a small clear piece of plastic bag [15 cm x 15 cm]

string

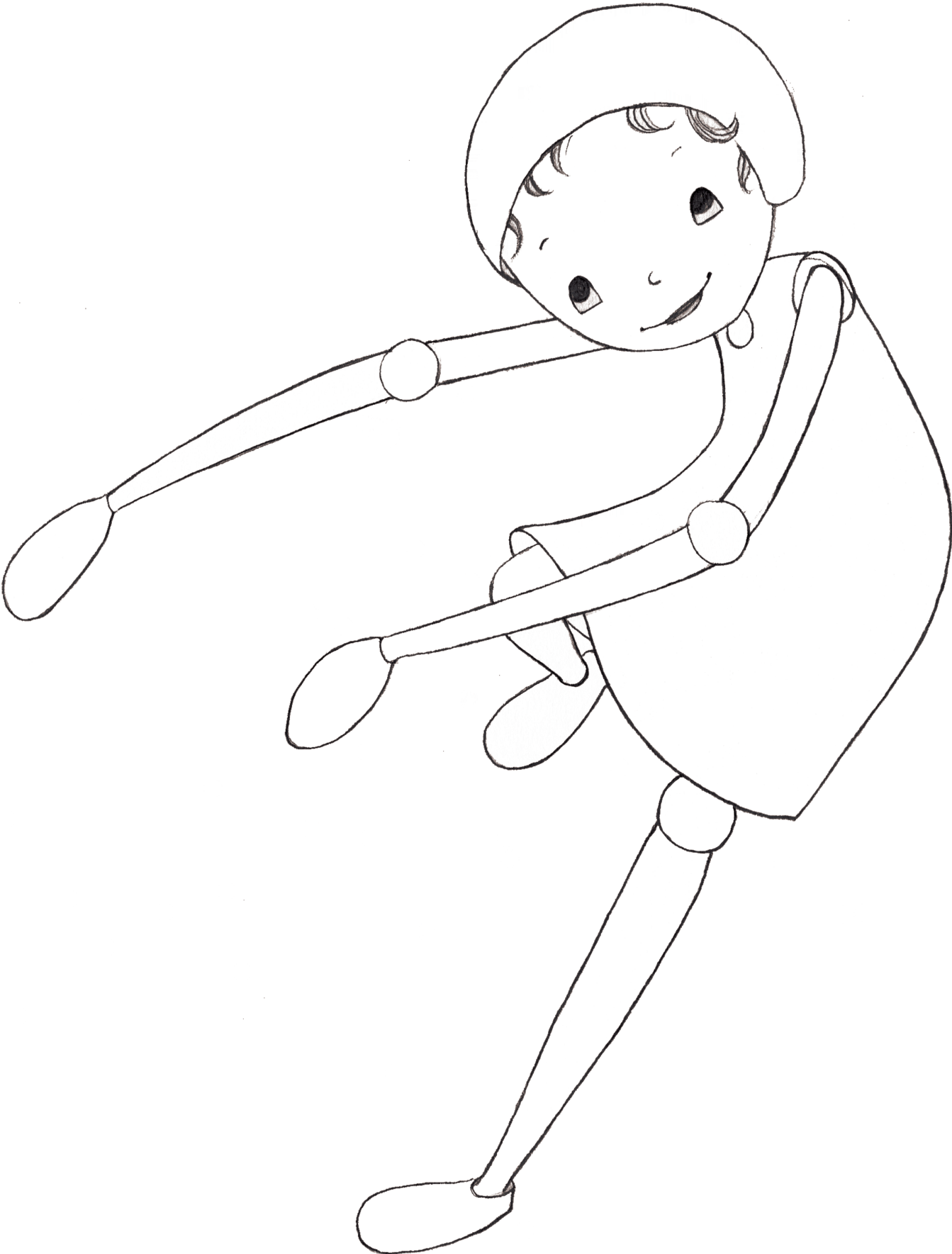
felt tip pen

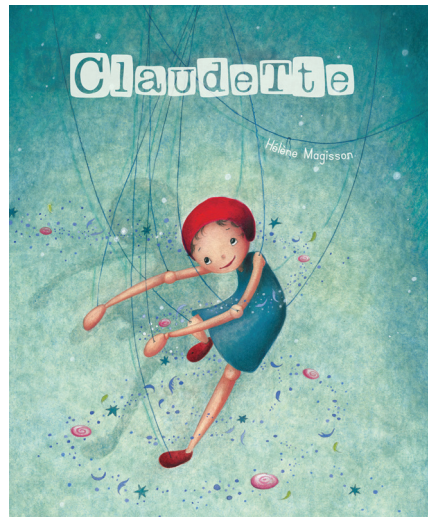
water

a clear plastic bottle

Worksheet 7







BOOK REVIEW

Title

The main character is

The story is set

What happens in the story

Did you like the story? Give it a score.

