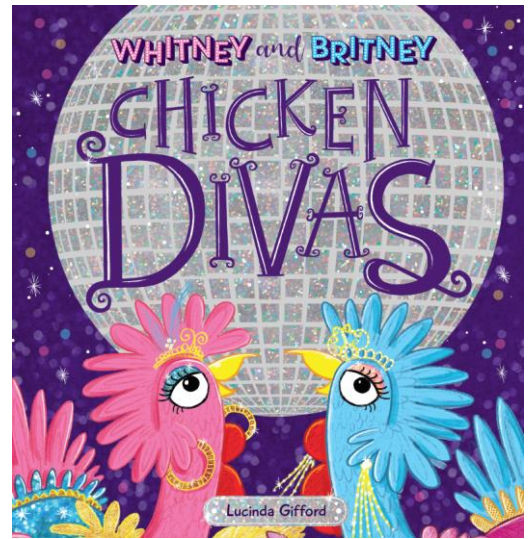


Whitney and Britney Chicken Divas

Author/Illustrator
Lucinda Gifford



Synopsis

Whitney and Britney are two gorgeous chooks who live with their friend Dora von Dooze the fox. They may seem like ordinary, if brightly coloured chooks, and they thoughtfully make sure that every morning there are fresh eggs waiting for Dora's breakfast. But to Dora's dismay, they spend the days snoozing and napping and are no company for her at all. The chooks, you see, have a secret. Every night they dress in fancy costumes and head to the theatre to perform in front of admiring crowds. How Dora investigates and discovers their secret lives as night-time Chicken Divas, and the subsequent formation of a brand new act is an entertainingly whimsical trip through a fantasy world where chooks wear feather boas and foxes are their best friend.

About the Illustrator

Growing up in the north of Scotland, **Lucinda Gifford** spent the long, dark winters reading and drawing in her room, to the sound of waves crashing over the sea wall. Some of the houses in her home town are built side-on to the sea. This is to stop the waves from crashing into the living room.

Due to her appreciation of sturdy buildings, Lucinda studied Architecture at university. However she quickly realised that she preferred drawing buildings, or just sitting and reading in them, to building them. Lucinda moved on to work in advertising and graphic design for several years, while developing her passion for writing and illustrating children's books.

Lucinda now lives in Melbourne with her husband, two children and no cats. Despite being a self-appointed Photoshop Guru, she is equally happy creating her illustrations with ink, pencil, charcoal and gouache. At the time of writing, her favourite artistic implements are dip pen and inky tooth-brush. Recently, her book *Dogasaurus* was selected as a CBCA Notable title in 2018.

Themes

Friendship, dancing, secrets, glamour, fun, adventure, and music.

Writing Style

Written throughout in the third person the story alternates between following the actions of Whitney and Britney (the Chicken Divas), and those of their friend Dora von Dooze as she seeks to discover their secret. Gifford utilises a scene-limited third-person-omnipotent voice, so the revelation of Dora's abilities and secret life comes as a delightful surprise for both the reader and the Chicken Divas. Consisting entirely of verse, the language used is as dramatic as the chooks who star in this story, and is ideally suited to reading aloud. Plot tension is consistently maintained throughout, with revelations of exciting chicken behaviour and antics present in the last line of several verses, supported by a layout placing the final word or phrase over the page from the first part of the verse in question. Rollicking, flamboyant, and rich with exciting adjectives to excite the young and endear the characters to older readers, *Whitney and Britney Chicken Divas* is a book written as a story to be shared.

Illustration Style

Consisting of a mix of full and half page spreads, vignettes, and multi-panel illustrations, Gifford's artwork is as colourful and bright as the characters in this story. The Chicken Divas and Dora von Dooze are depicted in vibrant and glittering jewel-tones and stand out against the paler and more muted tones used for backgrounds and crowd scenes. Night-time imagery cleverly contrasts a variety of deep greys with the well-lit and glittery main characters. Figures are rendered clearly with crisp edges and subtle uses of textural contrasts throughout. The characters are presented as anthropomorphised versions of the various animals, wearing (glittery) clothes, and with brightly coloured fur, feathers, or scales. The visual narrative parallels the textual narrative throughout, and Gifford's deft use of both texture and highlights illustrate the glitter, sparkle, and shine that her words describe.

TEACHERS' NOTES

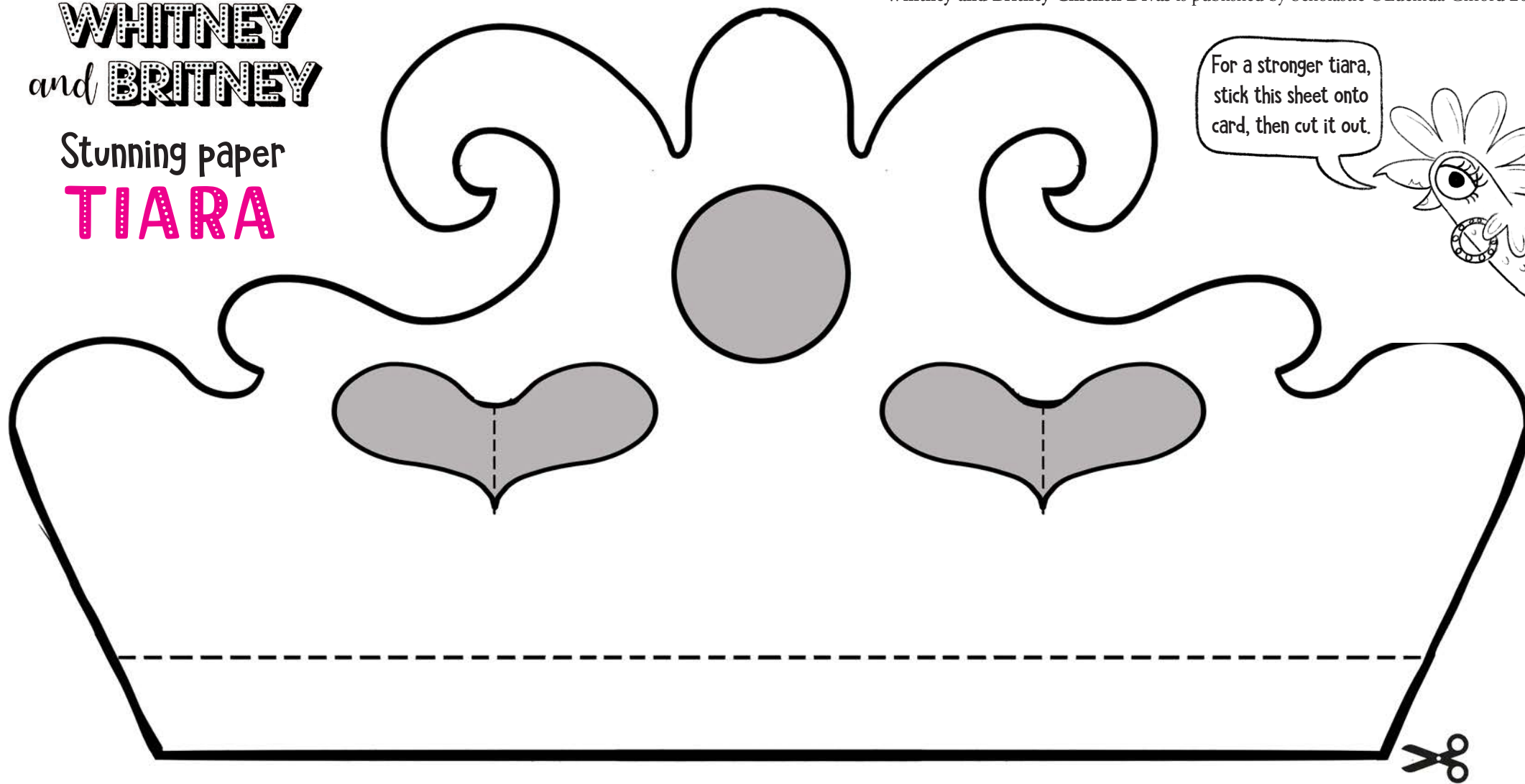
- 1) Before reading the story, as a class, look carefully at the cover and title of the book and discuss what you think it might be about. Some things to include in your discussion are:
 - What does the picture show?
 - Who do you think Whitney and Britney might be? Why do you think this?
 - What is a Diva?
 - What do you think a Chicken Diva might be?
 - Why do you think the chickens are such bright colours?
 - How differently do you think Chicken Divas might behave to backyard chooks?
- 2) Make a Chicken Diva headdress. Use a strip of thin card for the headband, and adorn it with brightly coloured feathers, scraps of colourful fabric or yarn, glitter, sequins, and paint. Once your creation is dry, carefully staple the ends of the card together and enjoy wearing it while you listen to the story being read.
- 3) Design a Diva costume of your own. What colour would you like it to be? What material would you want it to be made from? How do you think you could make it shine and sparkle? Draw a labelled illustration of your design and colour it using acrylic paints and glitter glue.
- 4) What are *glad rags*? As a class discuss what you think they might be and why.

- 5) Listen to some jazz music. See if you can find some which you think Foxy and the Chickettes might like to perform to.
- 6) The eggs which Whitney and Britney leave for Foxy are beautiful and brightly coloured. Experiment with dyeing hardboiled eggs to create beautiful eggs of your own. If you wish, after you have admired your eggs you can carefully peel and eat them, and use the coloured shells to create a collage.
- 7) Sculpt chickens out of salt dough. Use one large ball of dough for the body, a smaller one for the head, and a tiny triangle shaped lump to form the beak. Once your chicken is sculpted, use the tip of a feather to poke in holes for the eyes, to draw in the edges of the wings, and gently press the plume of the feather into the salt dough to make feathery patterns for your chook. For a real chicken diva experience, sprinkle glitter over your chook before baking it, or paint it with metallic glittery paint once it is baked and cool.
- 8) Why do you think that the Chooks didn't tell Foxy of their secret night-lives as Chicken Divas? Do you think the Chicken Divas knew about Foxy's singing and dancing abilities? Why/why not?
- 9) If you could have a secret night-time career that no-one knew about, what would you like it to be? Draw a picture of yourself in your secret night-time role, and caption it with your name, and the name of your secret career.
- 10) Using the artwork in the book for inspiration, create a sequin and glitter splattered collage featuring Chicken Divas, Foxy, or any other jazzy animal performers you can imagine.
- 11) Create a feather-patterned art design for Foxy and the Chickettes' poster advertising their next performance. You can use craft feathers as stencils or stamps, or you can draw and colour feather patterns. Be sure to make your poster sparkly and glittery!
- 12) Make Chicken Diva handprint art. Carefully paint the palm of one of your hands with non-toxic washable poster paint, and make a handprint on a clean piece of paper. (Alternatively, for a less messy activity you can trace around the outside of your hand.) Once your handprint has dried, use a felt-tipped marker to draw a beady chicken eye and a beak on the thumb, a wobbly line for the wing on the palm of the hand, and draw lines on the fingers to form the chicken's feathers. Don't forget to draw legs underneath as well! Decorate your Chicken Diva handprint with brightly coloured markers, paint, or glitter glue.
- 13) Make a Chicken Diva Mask. Use a small paper plate and carefully cut out two holes for the eyes. Using a stiff yellow piece of construction paper, cut out a triangle for the beak. Fold the triangle in half lengthways, and crease it firmly, before gluing or taping it to the centre of the plate below the eyehole to form a beak. Use brightly coloured acrylic or poster paints, or even felt-tipped markers if you wish, to colour the mask. Glue coloured craft feathers to your mask. Arrange the feathers so that the central shafts are pointing towards the centre of the mask, while the plumed parts are pointing out, and overhanging the edge. Once the glue is dry you can try gluing glitter on as well for a super-sparkly Chicken Diva effect.

- 14) Make your own feather boa out of strips of crepe paper. Cut a piece of A4 paper lengthwise into 6 strips. Glue, tape or staple the strips together to form one long piece of paper to make the spine of your feather boa. Cut crepe paper into strips approximately 2 cm wide and 15 cm long. Glue or tape one end of each piece of crepe paper to the construction paper spine so the crepe paper strip is at right angles to the spine. Continue gluing the crepe paper strips along the spine, alternating sides, until the entire spine is covered. Once dry, you will have a crepe paper feather boa to wear, or to decorate the room with!

WHITNEY and BRITNEY

Stunning paper **TIARA**



1 Cut around the tiara

If you're good with scissors, cut out the grey bits too.

HINT – fold the paper gently first to get your scissors in.

2 Using the dotted line, fold the bottom of the tiara up

This will make it stronger.

3 Cut a strip from the bottom of this paper

This strip will help hold your tiara on. Cut along the line below.

4 Attach and measure

Staple the strip to the tiara at one end. Measure it on your head and, once it fits, staple the other end.

NOW DECORATE YOUR TIARA

You can use sequins, glitter, pens, pencils and stickers

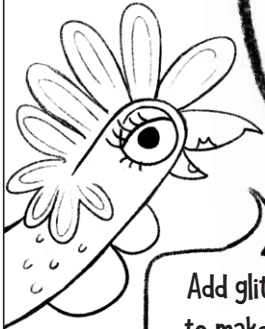
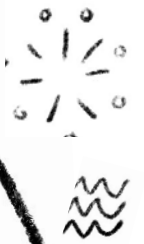
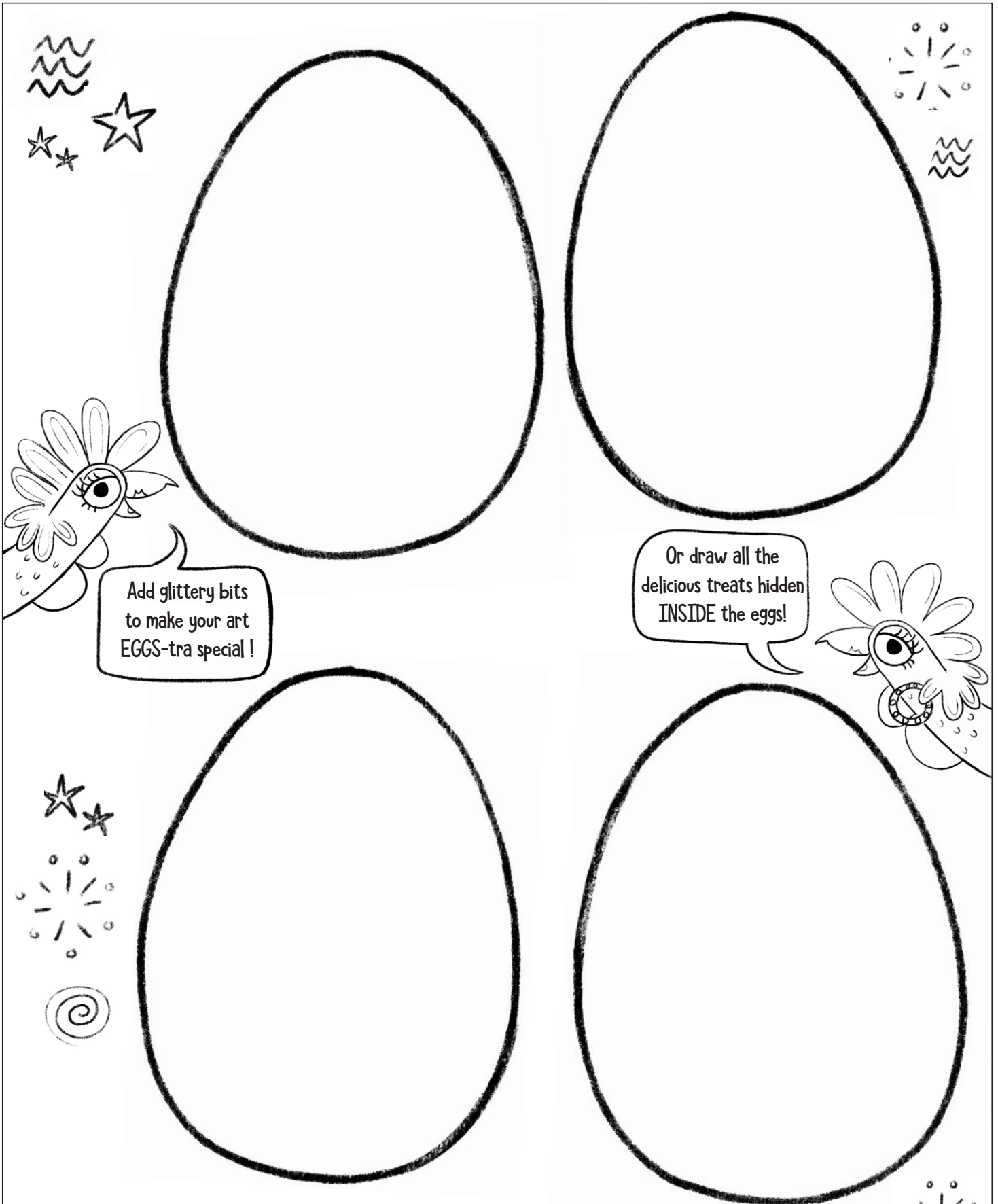




WHITNEY and BRITNEY

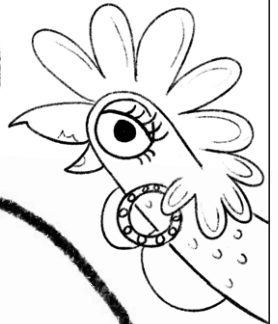


love to 'Glam-up' their eggs for Easter!
Can you decorate the eggs below to make them gorgeous?



Add glittery bits
to make your art
EGGS-tra special!

Or draw all the
delicious treats hidden
INSIDE the eggs!



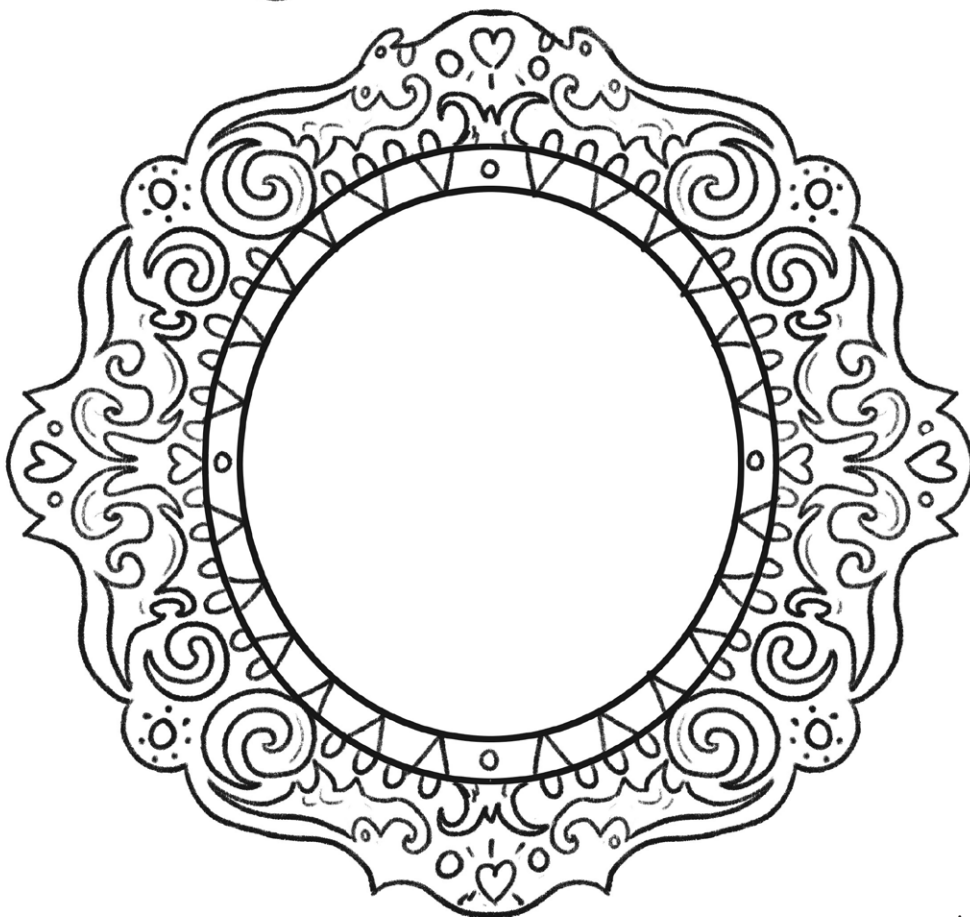
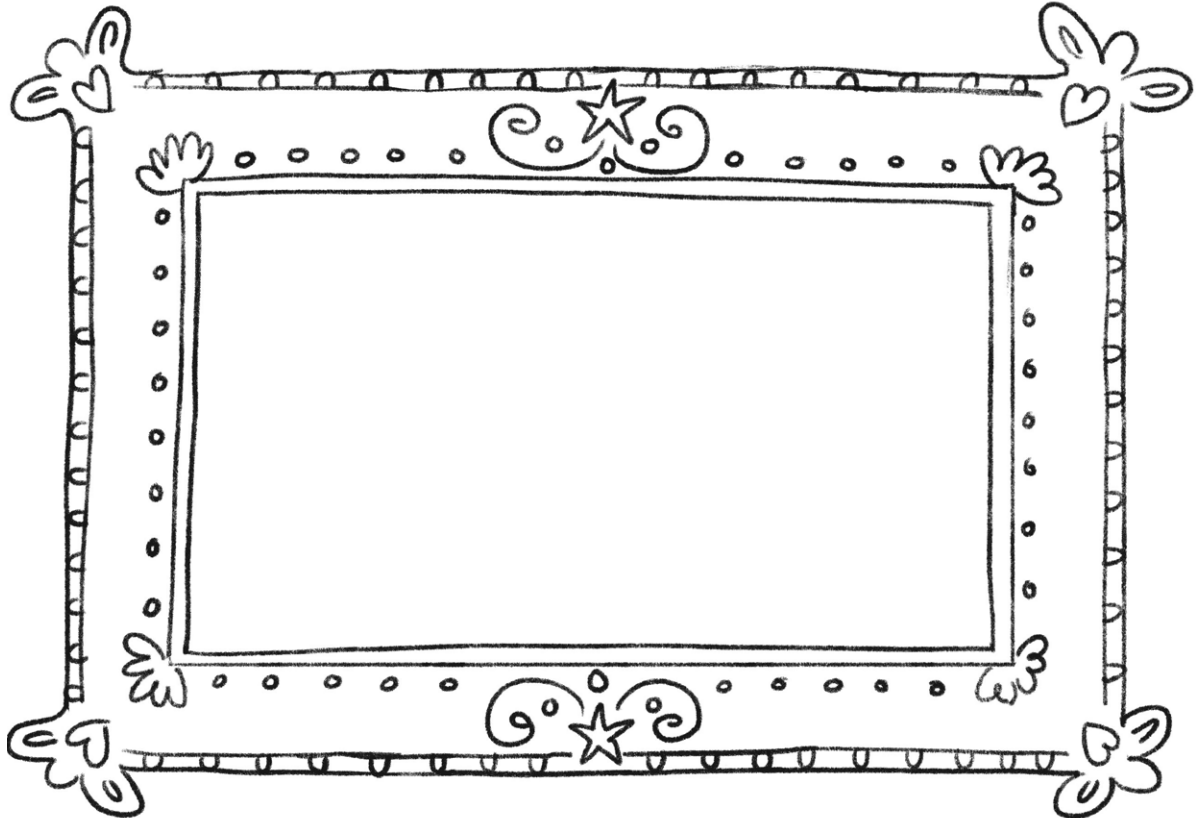


WHITNEY and BRITNEY

gorgeous, gifty
picture frames



Decorate the picture frames and draw a picture of your favourite person or animal inside.



The square picture is a portrait of:

.....

The oval picture is a portrait of:

.....

Artist name:

.....

WHITNEY and BRITNEY



Find a word

A	G	C	Q	C	T	M	I	U	A	F	F	X	R	S	Z	N	V
W	O	B	S	H	L	P	D	D	P	B	Q	D	F	Y	F	B	V
H	R	D	E	I	O	E	I	T	D	Q	S	I	O	P	E	R	J
I	G	O	Q	C	X	R	V	G	I	A	H	V	X	O	A	I	K
T	E	R	U	K	M	F	A	L	O	A	Z	F	Y	D	T	T	S
N	O	A	I	E	B	O	S	A	U	B	R	Z	D	A	H	N	P
E	U	K	N	T	Z	R	J	M	B	M	P	A	L	I	E	E	A
Y	S	M	S	T	F	M	B	O	L	B	J	T	B	E	R	Y	R
Q	C	R	P	E	O	E	E	U	I	G	L	I	T	T	E	R	K
C	W	H	K	S	W	R	Q	R	N	O	T	I	R	L	W	T	L
I	T	L	C	M	V	U	E	K	G	N	K	B	E	D	N	Q	Y
W	J	A	Z	Z	N	P	W	B	O	A	G	S	R	Y	L	J	R

BLING

BOA

BRITNEY

CHICKETTES

DAZZLE

DIVAS

DORA

FEATHER

FOXY

GLAMOUR

GLITTER

GORGEOUS

JAZZ

PERFORMER

SEQUINS

SPARKLY

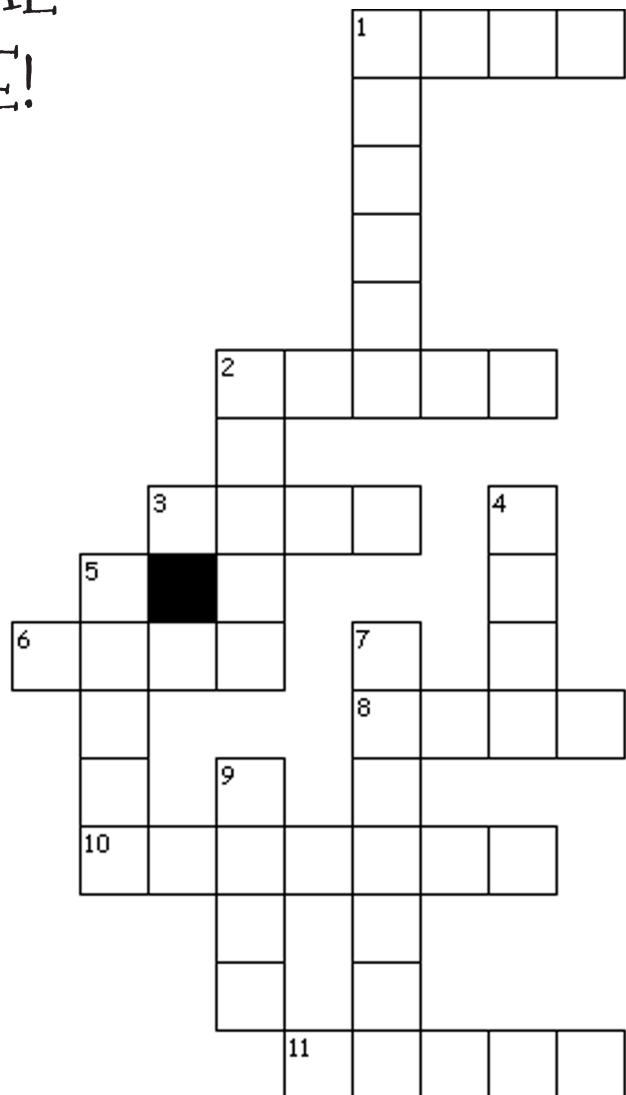
TIARA

WHITNEY

WHITNEY and BRITNEY

Love to pass the TIME
thinking up RHYME!

Can you fill in the
rhyming answers to the
crossword clues?



ACROSS

- 1 Breathe out sadly, or with relief, rhymes with 'eye'
- 2 Farm animal, rhymes with 'asleep'
- 3 Fancy dress, rhymes with 'town'
- 6 What wings do, rhymes with 'map'
- 8 Made by chickens! Rhymes with 'legs'
- 10 Sparkly powder, rhymes with 'twitter'
- 11 What we do when we're asleep, rhymes with 'gleam'

DOWN

- 1 Sleep, rhymes with 'shoes'
- 2 Look around or spy, rhymes with 'coop'
- 4 Bird arms! rhymes with 'sing'
- 5 Sparkly accessories, rhymes with 'ring'
- 7 Bird plumage, rhymes with 'weather'
- 9 Fabulous singer, rhymes with 'fever'

