

Teacher's Guide
to

**Festivals
of
India**

(Part One)

Introduction

“Festivals of India” is a session full of fun and activity. The Vedic culture is notable for its abundance of festivals and celebrations. Each occasion has a deep, spiritual meaning behind it. It’s important that we know *why* we are celebrating along with *how* we celebrate.

This session takes a look at five well-known Vedic festivals. The background, or story, which led to the festival is learned along with the traditional ways of celebrating each event.

Two class periods are spent on each festival. In the first period, the story is told and the preparations for the celebration are made. In the second period, the children actually celebrate the festival. In a normal two-month session, four festivals can be covered over eight weeks.

Five festivals are outlined in the student and teacher books. You can examine them and choose **four** that would be most appropriate for your temple. Vijay Dashami and Ratha Yatra are the festivals requiring the most preparation. Or if you’re having so much fun that you want to do them all, simply extend your session!

Some festivals can be performed inside and others will be much more successful outside. Do your best to plan the outdoor ones in weather that will be suitable. You don’t have to go in the order that they are written.

You will need a lot of cooperation and help between the teachers for this session. For best results, meet each week *after* class is finished to confirm what is to be done for the next week and to be sure that everyone knows what their responsibilities are.

Basic Format for all Festivals

Week One:

1. Tell the story that is found in the student booklets.
2. Divide into groups and make the advance preparations for the festival. Each group will have an adult group leader who is responsible for the materials and activities of that group. They should keep all children in their group engaged for the whole class period.
3. Have children record the festival schedule for the actual celebration in their booklets. It will be good for them to know what will be happening.

Week Two:

1. There will generally be some preparation for a few minutes before the celebration begins (room set-up, prasadam preparation, etc.).
2. The festival celebration begins!

The teacher's guide for this session will give some ideas for group activities to be performed in the festival preparation. It will also give you some forms to make the organization of children in groups a bit easier. As you plan the festivals in advance with your teachers and volunteers, write people's names down in this booklet to keep track of everyone's duties. Worksheet 1 can be copied and used throughout the session as a reminder to other teachers what their responsibilities are for each class.

If you don't have many children in your Sunday School, do only one or two of the preparation activities and simplify the festival as much as you need. But let all the children take part and experience first-hand the nectar of our spiritual holy days.

Gaura Purnima

Week One:

1. Tell each group the story of Lord Chaitanya's appearance. You can tell the story to all the children together or, if you have a wide age span, divide the children by age and tell the story more appropriately to each age group.

Younger Children -- For younger children or children not familiar with the story, a flannelboard tale will make more of an impression. Flannelboard figures are on Worksheet 2 (3 pages). Place the figures on the flannelboard as they appear in the story. Add details (a green leaf in Adwaita Acharya's hands, etc.). Place the chant, "Haribol," at the top and have the children shout it out each time you point to it. Point to it often, working it in as you tell the story. The black circle can cover the moon, showing them what an eclipse is.

Older Children - With older students and students very familiar with the story of Lord Chaitanya's appearance you may tell the story rather quickly and let them do the crossword puzzle in their booklets afterwards as a comprehension check. Answers are below:

Storyteller 1 will be:

Storyteller 2 (if needed) will be:

2. Three or four children can be chosen to perform the readings about Nimai's pastimes next week. Worksheet 3 (3 pages) can be copied and given to the children so they can practice their particular reading assignment during the week. Encourage them to practice reading loudly, slowly and with expression. Be sure to have a copy of their readings available next week in case they forget to bring theirs.

3. Write the schedule for the festival up on the chalkboard so that the children can copy it in their booklets on Page 6. If they are to do anything during the week for preparation, have them write it under "My duties." For example, the children can all bring an unoffered fruit from home. Those fruits will be used to make a fruit salad to be offered to the Deities.

4. Divide the children into groups for different activities. You can group the children by age or use the opportunity to mix children up and make new friends. Choose the groups in advance. You can spend the whole class hour letting the children decide which group they want to be in otherwise.

Group leaders are responsible for having the necessary materials for the class and for keeping their students engaged during the class period.

Group 1 -- Making Instruments for Kirtan

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 1: _____

This is a good group for younger children. Older ones like it, too. Maracas, drums, sticks, sandpaper blocks, cymbals. Older children can help with the younger children. See Worksheet 4 for some instructions.

Group 2 -- Decorate Altar

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 2: _____

Clean altar (or table set up for an altar) thoroughly, make silk garlands, cover the top with a nice cloth and make other decorations. Have altar ready for next week.

Group 3 -- Abhiseka

Group Leader: _____

Student in Group 3: _____

This should be a small group of older children who will be sure to come next week. They can learn to do a simple abhiseka, assemble the ingredients and get the paraphernalia together. These students can also be in charge of bringing necessary items next week, like yogurt, ghee, honey, etc. If they are supposed to bring something, have them write a reminder in their booklets under "My Duties."

Group 4 -- Arati

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 4: _____

Polish brass, assemble tray, learn arati by making a chart (picturing the order of items offered), have tray set for next week. One of the children from this group should perform the arati next week.

Group 5 -- Making Deity Gifts

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 5: _____

Students can make simple beaded necklaces, paint handkerchiefs, make plate covers, etc. for Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda. The gifts can be wrapped today, also.

Group 6 -- Room Decorations

Group leader: _____

Students in Group 6: _____

Some ideas for room decorations are paper chains, posters telling about the celebration, garlands, banners, colored pictures of the Lord Chaitanya. If the room to be used for the celebration is used during the week, save the decorations and put them up next week right before the festival. If the room is exclusively a Sunday School room, put them up today so you are ready for next week.

Gaura Purnima

Week Two -- Celebrating the festival

Each group from last week will probably have some initial preparation today. Keep the children in the same groups for this. Groups who are finished with the activities from last week can do some of the new preparations this week.

1. Preparation for festival 30 minutes

A. Set up abhiseka

Leader _____

B. Decorate room

Leader _____

C. Dress deities

Leader _____

D. Prasadam preparation -- fruit salad can be made for all

Leader _____

2. Celebrating the festival

Here is a basic schedule for the celebration:

A. Abhiseka and kirtan -- Allow all children to bathe the Deities

20 - 30 minutes

B. Deities are dressed (Readings will take place while Deities are dressed.)

C. Readings

Children read pastimes that they have practiced during the week.

10 - 15 minutes

D. Open gifts

5 minutes

E. Take prasadam

Special prasadam can be made -- cake or cookies and a drink along with the fruit salad that was prepared.

Govardhan Puja

Week One:

1. Tell each group the story of Govardhan Puja. You can tell the story to all the children together, or if you have a wide age span, divide the children by age and tell the story more appropriately to each age group.

Here's a fun way to teach about Govardhan Hill with the younger children. Have the listeners work in different groups to help you tell the story. (*Props needed: 2 clouds cut, cup, fan, posterboard for thunder, ropes for cows, sun, flowers, conchshells*)

One group of children is Indra's storm--2 carrying cardboard clouds, one sprinkling water from a cup for rain, 1 shaking posterboard for thunder and 1 waving a fan for the wind.

One group is cows and brahmans who walk around hill. (Put a hill in the center of the room. An overturned trash can?)

One child is the sun. He holds a yellow construction paper sun.

One group is demigods with flower petals and conchshells.

Others are townspeople.

Tell the story as it is written in the student booklet, pausing and giving plenty of time for the different groups of children to come on and act their parts as they listen.

Storyteller 1 will be:

Storyteller 2 (if needed) will be:

2. Write the schedule for Govardhan Puja on the chalkboard and have the students copy it in their booklets on Page 13. If they have any duties to be performed during the week, they can write them on the same page.

3. Break up the children into groups for different activities. You can group the children by age or use the opportunity to mix children up and make new friends. Choose the groups in advance. You can spend the whole class hour letting the children decide which group they want to be in otherwise.

Group leaders are responsible for having the necessary materials for the class and for keeping their students engaged during the class period.

Group 1 -- Making Costumes

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 1: _____

This is a good group for younger children. Next week the younger children can dress as cow, Krishna and Balaram and cowherd boys and girls. This week can be spent making cow masks (see Worksheet 5), jewelry (posterboard and glitter armbands, legbands, etc.) and crowns. Old saris or cloth can be cut for chadars and turbans.

Group 2 -- Making Hill Decorations

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 2: _____

Any hill decorations that can be made in advance should be done this week. Small temples out of posterboard, origami paper flowers and animals, and clay sculptures are a few ideas. Plastic cows can be purchased and the students can paint them, too. An origami book from the library will give you more ideas.

Group 3 -- Cooking

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 3:

There are several types of sweets and snacks that will keep well for a week and can be made this week to be put upon the hill next Sunday. Peanut butter and honey based sweets are great for molding into rocks and logs and keep well. Blue frosting can be made this week for lakes and rivers. Choose one or two items that the students can make easily.

Group 4 -- Arati

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 4: _____

Polish brass, assemble tray, learn arati by making a chart (picturing the order of items offered), have tray set for next week. One of the children from this group should perform the arati next week.

Group 5 -- Room Decorations

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 5: _____

Students can make special room decorations that fit in with the theme if Govardhan. Paper fruit and vegetable garlands can be made using Worksheet 6 (3 pages). Copy on colored paper, have students cut out shapes and color in details. Using a big needle with twine, pierce each fruit in and out

stringing them on, one by one. Leave space between fruits. They can be draped from the ceiling or from wall to wall.

Cow mobiles can be made and suspended from the ceiling. Using Worksheet 7, color and cut cow shapes, punch hole in top of cow, tying a string to it. Tie the string to the mobile frame (a hanger, crossbars, etc.). Monkey mobiles can also be made using Worksheet 8.

Younger students can also color pictures of cows that can be placed around the room next week.

Govardhan Puja

Week Two -- Celebrating the festival

To be done in advance:

- *Make a large batch of halava or rice to use as a base for Govardhan hill. It must be made early enough so that it will have time to cool before the children start molding it.*
- *Purchase or make drinks for the children*
- *Have broccoli and celery to cut up for hill decorations*
- *Purchase small colorful candies to use for decoration on the hill*

Most groups from last week will probably have some initial preparation today. Keep the children in the same groups for this. Groups who are finished with the activities from last week can do some of the new preparations this week.

1. Preparation for festival 45 minutes

Preparation for Govardhan puja will take more time than actually celebrating it. Let all the children join in the fun of putting some finishing touches of trees, paper flowers or animals on the hill.

A. Set up arati tray

Leader _____

B. Decorate room

Leader _____

C. Children can dress up

Leader _____

D. Preparing the hill (Let older children do the main work of molding the hill. Overturned bowls can be placed on a large table and halava scooped on top of the bowls. This will make it bigger without using so much halava.) Younger children can help at the very end by putting some of the sweets and decorations on top.

Leader _____

2. Celebrating the festival

Once the hill has been decorated (which is more than half the fun) the actual celebration can begin.

A. Aroti and kirtan -- Have all children circumambulate hill while the kirtan is going on.

15 - 20 minutes

B. Prasadam distribution -- Let all children come up in an orderly fashion and make a plate of Govardhan prasadam for themselves. Serve drinks.

Vijay Dashmi

Week One:

1. Tell each group the story of Vijay Dashmi. You can tell the story to all the children together, or if you have a wide age span, divide the children by age and tell the story more appropriately to each age group.

Younger Children - You will find finger puppets on Worksheet 9 that can be used to add some action to the story. Cut out the puppets and form a ring with the strips on the bottom. Tape the back to secure the rings and place them on your fingers.

As you tell the story, use the finger puppets to move in and out and around, performing the actions to the story. Ravana can capture Sita, Rama can chase Ravana and kill him, etc. (Practice at home a few times before you try it in class.) You may also make puppets for all the children and have them mimic the actions of your puppets with their own as you relate the story.

Storyteller 1 will be:

Storyteller 2 (if needed) will be:

2. Write the schedule for the Vijay Dashmi celebration on the chalkboard. Have the children copy it into their booklets on Page Break up the children into groups for different activities. You can group the children by age or use the opportunity to mix children up and make new friends. Choose the groups in advance. You can spend the whole class hour letting the children decide which group they want to be in otherwise.

Group leaders are responsible for having the necessary materials for the class and for keeping their students engaged during the class period.

Group 1 -- Making Weapons

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 1: _____

The children can make bows and arrows using sticks and string. They can make clubs by wrapping newspaper around sticks and securing with masking tape. Cover the clubs with aluminum foil. Save the weapons for next week. The students can have an archery contest if you like, shooting their weapons at Ravan.

Group 2 -- Making an Effigy of Ravan

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 2: _____

An effigy of Ravan can be made. Traditionally the effigy is burned. If you want to go to the trouble of getting a fire permit to do this, go ahead. Otherwise, it is suggested that the effigy be made like a pinata and hit with sticks instead of burned.

Again, if you want to go to the trouble of making a paper mache Ravan, go ahead. A simpler effigy can be made by making a chicken wire frame of a big Ravan-in advance. Then during classtime the children can wrap the figure with colored paper and add features (face, hair, crown, jewelry, etc.) An old sari or cloth can be cut for his dhoti.

You can put some candy or sweets into the effigy or suspend little bags of candy under its clothes so that when he is hit, the candy will spill out.

Group 3 -- Drama

Group Leader: _____

Student in Group 3: _____

Students can practice a very informal drama that can be performed at the beginning of the festival this week. Worksheet 10 is the drama. Let the students practice several times. They need not memorize their lines but should be able to read them easily, with expression and looking at the audience while performing. That means that they will have to practice a little during the week to become familiar with their lines.

You can either provide them with simple costumes or let them be responsible for their own. Perhaps they can come dressed and you can have some jewelry, garlands and crowns on hand.

Vijay Dashmi

Week Two -- Celebrating the festival

To be done in advance:

- *Hang the effigy (if he is a pinata-type) in a tree. It should be suspended so that it can be raised up and down.*
- *Have blindfolds on hand.*
- *You may wish to have special prasadam for the children afterwards. If so, something simple like popcorn and drinks will be fine.*

1. Celebrating the festival

If the effigy was finished last week, there shouldn't be any preparations to do at the beginning of this week. Just assemble the children for the celebration.

A. Drama

10 minutes

B. Archery Contest -- Children who made weapons can exhibit their skills (or lack of) by shooting arrows at the effigy of Ravan. You can even purchase some inexpensive children's bows and arrows from the store and stage a contest. You can expand on this idea and have beanbags to throw, too. Let them burn up some of their aggressive energy on Ravan.

15 - 20 minutes

C. The Killing of Ravan -- Rope off an area that will keep the other children far enough away from the stick-wielder. Let children take turns trying to hit Ravan with a big stick. Blindfold the older ones. Someone can control the effigy so that he bounces up and down, making it harder to get a direct hit. Just be sure you have plenty of adults around to control the kids. Be very careful so you don't have any children getting hit by accident.

If candy is within the effigy, make sure the children have enough restraint to avoid racing in and getting hit with the stick. This is one festival where it is imperative to have plenty of adult supervision. If the children aren't controlled, they can easily get hurt.

When Ravan is finished, rouse the children into a big cheer of
“Sri Ramachandra ki JAYA!!!”

30 minutes

D. If you have special prasadam prepared for the children, they may take it now. To really set the proper mood, play some Sita-Rama tapes in the background during prasadam.

Diwali

Week One:

1. Tell each group the story of Diwali. You can tell the story to all the children together, or if you have a wide age span, divide the children by age and tell the story more appropriately to each age group.

Storyteller 1 will be:

Storyteller 2 (if needed) will be:

2. There is a Word Match puzzle and a Word Scramble puzzle in the student booklets on Page 28. You can give them class time to complete these or have them do it for homework. The answers are below.

Diwali		Rama-lila	
ESACERRKCRIF	firecrackers	Bharat	Ravana's younger brother
ESTWES	sweets	Dasaratha	Celebrates Rama killing Ravana
IARTA	arati	Diwali	Ramachandra's wife
SITHGL	lights	Lakshmana	A monkey warrior
SMLPA	lamps	Ravana	Ravana's demon sister
TFSIG	gifts	Shurpanakha	A demon who captured Sita
XMALI	Laxmi	Sita	Rama's father
		Sugriva	One of Rama's brothers
		Vibhisan	Celebrates Rama returning to Ayodhya
		Vijay Dashmi	Rama's brother who ruled Ayodhya

3. Write the schedule for Diwali on the chalkboard and have the children copy it into their booklets on Page 26. Any duties they will have to perform during the week in preparation for the festival can be written in now.

4. Break up the children into groups for different activities. You can group the children by age or use the opportunity to mix children up and make new friends. Choose the groups in advance. You can spend the whole class hour letting the children decide which group they want to be in otherwise.

Group leaders are responsible for having the necessary materials for the class and for keeping their students engaged during the class period.

Group 1 -- Making Candles

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 1: _____

This activity is good for younger children. Using Worksheet 11 as a guide, the children make candles out of construction paper. They can make more than one. The candles will be used on the altar next week for decoration and then can be taken home by the children.

Group 2 -- Making Clay Lamp Holders

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 2: _____

Small receptacles that can hold a ghee wick can be made out of clay. You can purchase a certain type of clay that hardens as it dries. It doesn't need to be fired. Check at an art store or a ceramic studio. Let them make several styles and encourage them to be creative. Next week they can be placed on the altar with ghee wicks in them and lit. After the celebration, the

students may take home what they made. If they have made enough, let each student take one.

Group 3 -- Making Gifts

Group Leader: _____

Student in Group 3: _____

Students in this group will make enough gifts for the whole Sunday School. Choose something easy to make and something they can make a lot of. Suggestions: Bookmarks, tulasi necklaces, Krishna pictures framed in inexpensive frames, etc.

Group 4 -- Making Sweets

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 4: _____

Exchanging gifts of sweets is another traditional Diwali activity. Students can make a quantity of sweets that will keep until next week.

Group 5 -- Colored Sand or Rice Decorations

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 5: _____

Students can draw out and make designs of colored sand or rice on posterboard. The sand or rice should be glued on. Next week, they can be displayed on the altar or hung up (if the rice is glued on solidly enough).

Week Two -- Celebrating the festival

You will need four rooms or areas. A different activity will be taking place at each area.

- *Area 1: Putting on tilak -- have several small containers of tilak ready to use*
- *Area 2: Receiving gifts -- have the gifts that were made last week ready to pass out*
- *Area 3: Taking prasadam -- have the sweets made last week ready to pass out, plus drinks and other snacks if you wish*
- *Area 4: Arati and kirtan -- an altar should be set up with the construction paper candles and homemade ghee lamps surrounding it*

1. Celebrating the festival

A. Two representatives (children) can be stationed at Areas 1, 2 and 3. An adult should also be with the student representatives.

In Area 1, these representatives will apply tilak to all children as they come into that area.

In Area 2, the representatives will greet the other children as they come with, "Happy Diwali! We have a gift for you," and then give each child a gift.

In Area 3, the representatives will serve prasadam to the others.

After all children have been to the three areas, they can proceed to Area 4 where the arati and kirtan will take place.

Note: If you have a lot of children, divide them into three groups. Let them start off in different areas and eventually move to the other two.

30 - 40 minutes

B. Arati and Kirtan

Light the ghee wicks inside the homemade holders. Turn out the lights and have a wonderful candlelight kirtan. When the kirtan is over, allow children who made ghee lamps and candles to take one home. If extra were made, let other children take one also.

15 - 20 minutes

Ratha Yatra

Week One:

1. Tell each group the story of Ratha Yatra. You can tell the story to all the children together, or if you have a wide age span, divide the children by age and tell the story more appropriately to each age group.

Storyteller 1 will be: _____

Storyteller 2 (if needed) will be: _____

2. Write your schedule for Ratha Yatra on the chalkboard and let the students copy it into their booklets on Page 36. Any duties to be done or items to be brought for next week can be recorded now, also.

3. Break up the children into groups for different activities. You can group the children by age or use the opportunity to mix children up and make new friends. Choose the groups in advance. You can spend the whole class hour letting the children decide which group they want to be in otherwise.

Group leaders are responsible for having the necessary materials for the class and for keeping their students engaged during the class period.

Group 1 -- Packaging Nuts and Raisins

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 1: _____

This is a good group for younger children. A good quantity of raisins and nuts can be purchased (or some other type of small snack). The children can place a handful in a plastic bag, fold over the top and staple. These packages will be for distributing to the people during the Ratha Yatra parade next week.

Group 2 -- Making a Ratha Yatra Cart

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 2: _____

This activity can be as simple or as complicated as you want it to be. It can be a jazzed-up wagon or a four-wheel trailer. Whatever you decide on, see if somehow the children (older boys, maybe?) can be involved with some of the construction.

Group 3 -- Cart Decorations

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 3: _____

Worksheet 12 (3 pages) can be copied, colored and cut out. They can be placed around the base of the cart for decoration. Silk garlands can be strung. Balloons can be partially blown up, a message written on them and then deflated. They can be blown up and used for cart decorations next week.

Group 4 -- Making Flags and Banners

Group Leader: _____

Students in Group 4: _____

Triangles of cloth can be cut out and decorated with fabric paint. The cloth can either be stapled or glued to a dowel, making a flag that can be carried during the parade. Long rectangles of cloth can also be painted and decorated. Glue or staple each end to a dowel and you have a banner that two children can carry.

Ratha Yatra

Week Two -- Celebrating the festival

To be done in advance:

- *Have the cart out and ready to be decorated.*
- *Have Jagannatha deities to use for the parade*

Most groups from last week will probably have some initial preparation today. Keep the children in the same groups for this. Groups who are finished with the activities from last week can do some of the new preparations this week.

1. Preparation for festival 45 minutes

The beginning of classtime can be spend putting the finishing touches on the cart. A small altar can be decorated separately and secured on the cart.

The Deities can also be dressed and decorated at this time. If that would be too difficult, They can be made ready before classtime and just placed on the cart.

Bring out the flags for children to carry and the prasadam to be distributed. Let children take turns carrying flags and passing out prasadam during the festival. Some children may also blow conch shells.

2. Celebrating the festival

When the cart is ready, bring out the Deities (with great pomp and splendor, of course) and place them on the cart. Have a good kirtan leader and encourage the children to sing loudly. Take the Deities on a procession around the temple or, better yet, around the neighborhood if possible. End the parade at the kirtan with a rousing kirtan.

Worksheet 1

My Group: _____

Children in my group: _____

Schedule for the festival:

Activities my group will do:

Preparations I need to make or bring:

Worksheet 2
Flannelboard figures



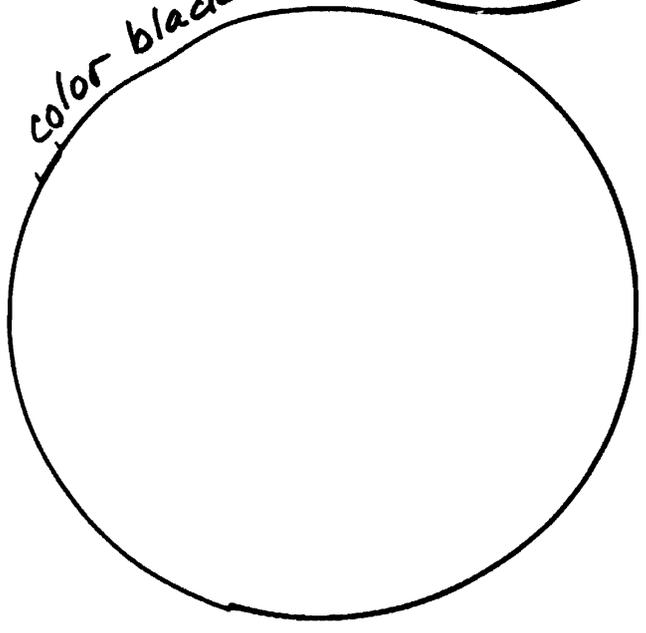
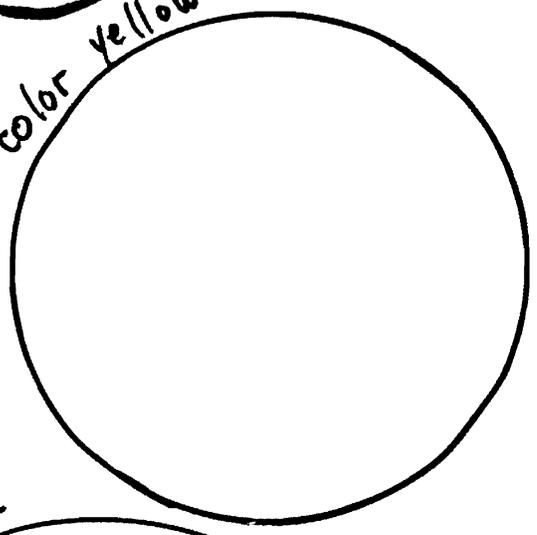
Worksheet 2, cont.





moon - color yellow

color black



HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Worksheet 3

Readings for Gaura Purnima

His Beauty

The Lord was so extremely attractive that even strangers would give Him whatever He asked for. They would give Him sweets or bananas and, very happily, He would run home with His treasures. Then Nimai would give the food to those ladies who sang Lord Hari's name.

Naughty Nimai

Nimai would come and go as He pleased, in and out of His house. He didn't care whether it was morning, noon or night. Every day he would visit some friendly neighbor's house and mysteriously steal something from that neighbor.

In some houses, He drank all the milk. In other houses, He ate all the rice. If He didn't find something to eat, He would break all the clay pots in the house. If a baby was sleeping, Nimai would put water in the baby's ears, making the baby wake up screaming. Other children He would tease until they cried.

But if someone caught Nimai being naughty, He would catch their feet and beg, "Please let me go one last time! I promise I will never come back again. I will never steal again! Please have mercy!"

People were so amazed at His intelligence that they could not be angry at Him. Everyone loved Nimai.

Nimai Chastises His Mother

Sometimes when Nimai didn't get what He wanted, He would become angry and strike Mother Sachi with His soft little hand. One time, He struck His mother in the head and she pretended to faint. She fell to the ground and lay there silently.

Nimai became scared and cried out, "Mother, Mother!" Hearing His cry, the neighbor ladies rushed to His home. They knew that Sachi was just teasing but they told Him, "Quick, run and get two coconuts for Your mother. That will cure her. Hurry, otherwise You may lose her!"

Little Nimai immediately ran outside and one second later returned with two coconuts. The ladies were astonished! They exclaimed, "My dear boy, how did you get such coconuts without going anywhere! You are so small. Where did You get them?" In this way, they began to realize that there was something very wonderful about baby Nimai.

Nimai and the Puppy

One day Nimai was playing with His friends and they found a litter of puppies. Nimai picked out the nicest one and took it home. Dogs and cats are considered dirty and usually in India, no one keeps them as pets. You can imagine Mother Sachi's surprise when she came home and found a puppy tied to their chair.

She said to Nimai, "Visvambhar, I don't understand You. You have so many things to play with, why do you play with a dog? What will people say when they see You, the son of a brahman, playing with a dog?"

Nimai's sweet face and charming beauty made her forget her anger. She put Him on her lap and said, "Now, my darling, just leave that puppy alone for awhile and go bathe in the Ganges. It's almost lunchtime. Tie up Your puppy and You can play with him later."

While Nimai went to bathe, Sachi untied the puppy and let him go. One of Nimai's friends saw this and ran to tell Him. Nimai raced back home to find the puppy gone. He cried and scolded His mother but she pretended that it was an accident. "We'll find Your puppy tomorrow," she told the Lord.

This puppy dog was very fortunate to be touched by the Lord. The dog gave up his bad habits and actually became Krishna conscious. One day the dog started dancing while chanting the holy names, "Radha-Krishna! Govinda!" The townspeople ran to see this miracle and before their eyes they saw the dog dancing in ecstasy. Suddenly, the dog gave up his body and died.

At that moment, a golden heavenly chariot came down from the sky and carried the dog to Goloka Vrindavan, the spiritual world. The chariot was decorated with pearls and dazzling jewels. The dog was sitting in his spiritual body on a jeweled throne inside the chariot. He looked more beautiful than millions of moons and was singing the glories of Radha and Krishna. Many demigods surrounded the chariot and sang Lord Chaitanya's praises. "Never before has He shown so much mercy!" they shouted. "He has liberated a dog and sent him back to Goloka!"

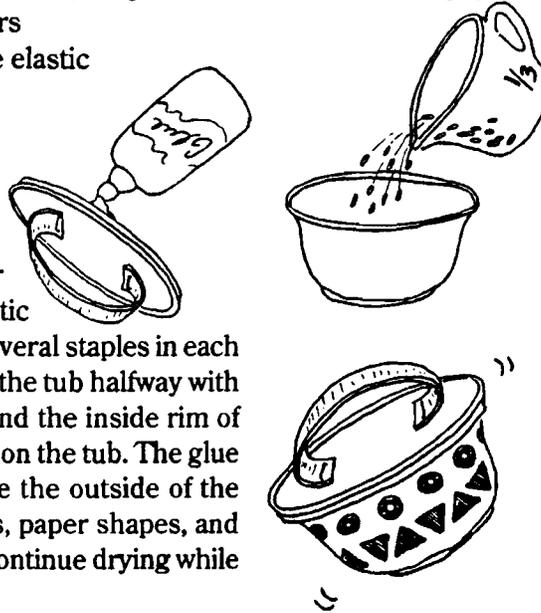
Worksheet 4 Instruments

Maracas

What you need:

- An empty margarine tub with its cover for each maraca
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup uncooked rice or dried peas for each maraca
- Pictures cut from magazines, shapes cut from construction paper, and children's stickers
- 5 inches of $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-wide elastic for each maraca
- Glue
- Stapler

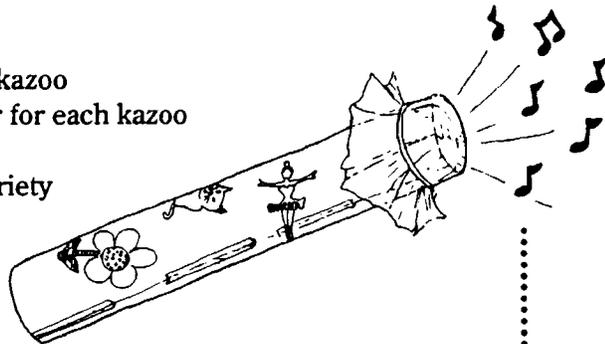
Attach the elastic to the top of the margarine tub cover by turning the ends of elastic in toward the center. Put several staples in each end of elastic to hold it. Fill the tub halfway with rice or peas. Put glue around the inside rim of the cover and put the cover on the tub. The glue can dry while you decorate the outside of the tub with magazine pictures, paper shapes, and stickers. Allow the glue to continue drying while you make the kazoos.



Kazoo

What you need:

- Paper towel tube for each kazoo
- 5-inch square of wax paper for each kazoo
- Rubber bands
- Construction paper in a variety of colors
- Stickers (optional)
- Clear tape
- Scissors



Homemade Rhythm Instruments

Fill cottage cheese containers, jewelry boxes, hosiery "eggs," film cans, match boxes with buttons, rice, macaroni, marbles, pebbles, or anything else that will rattle.

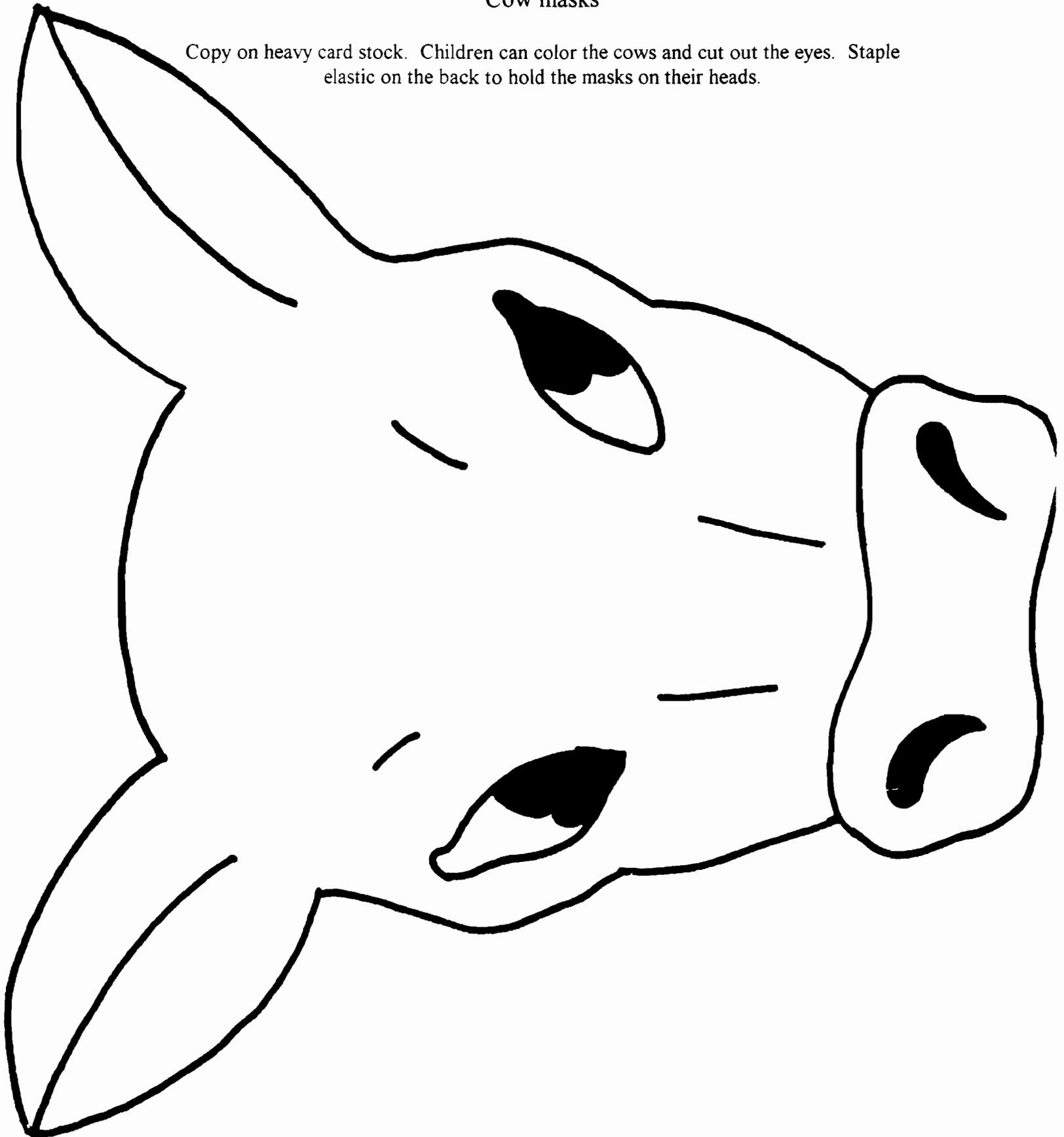
Use a large nail to thump a rhythm on a cake rack, pot top, tin can.

Put rubber bands across an open box, sugar scoop, or plastic cup to make a homemade stringed instrument you or a child can strum.

Use two of a kind to bump together: a variety of sizes of large bolts, jar lids, pot tops, tin cans. Drill a hole in the center of the tin can or lid so you can tie a string on the instrument which then can hang around your neck, leaving your hands free to tap, pound, or strum.

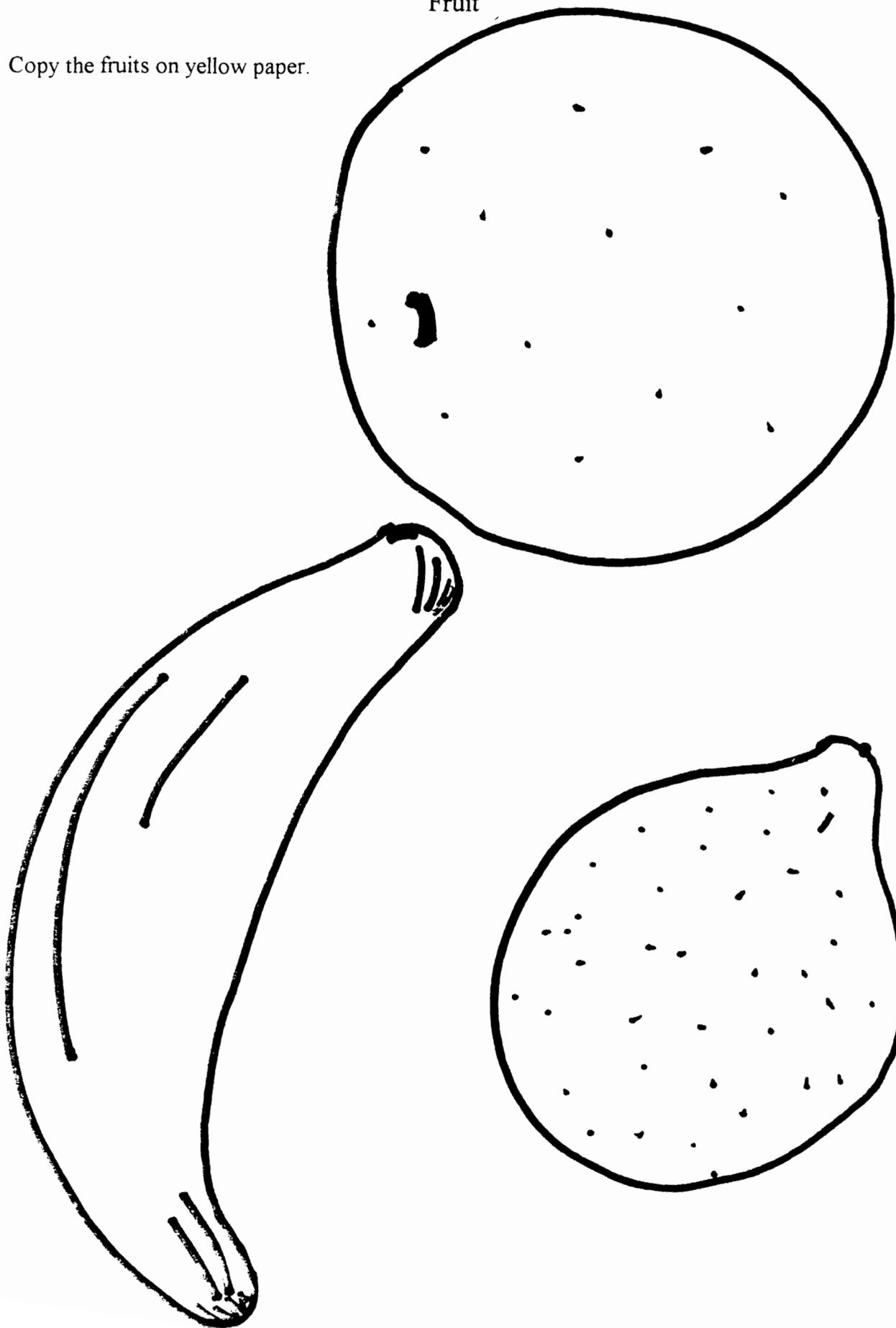
Worksheet 5
Cow masks

Copy on heavy card stock. Children can color the cows and cut out the eyes. Staple elastic on the back to hold the masks on their heads.

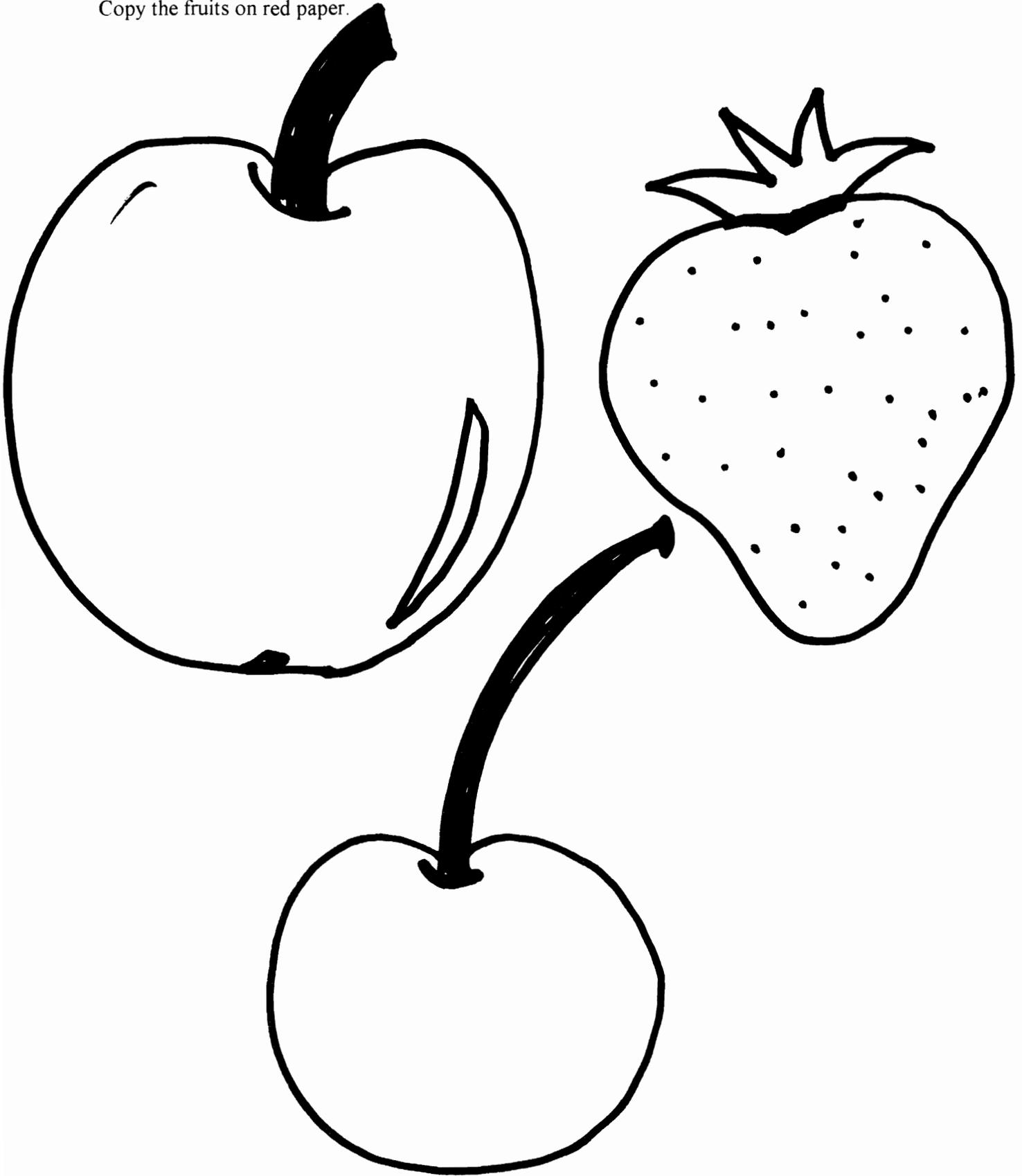


Worksheet 6
Fruit

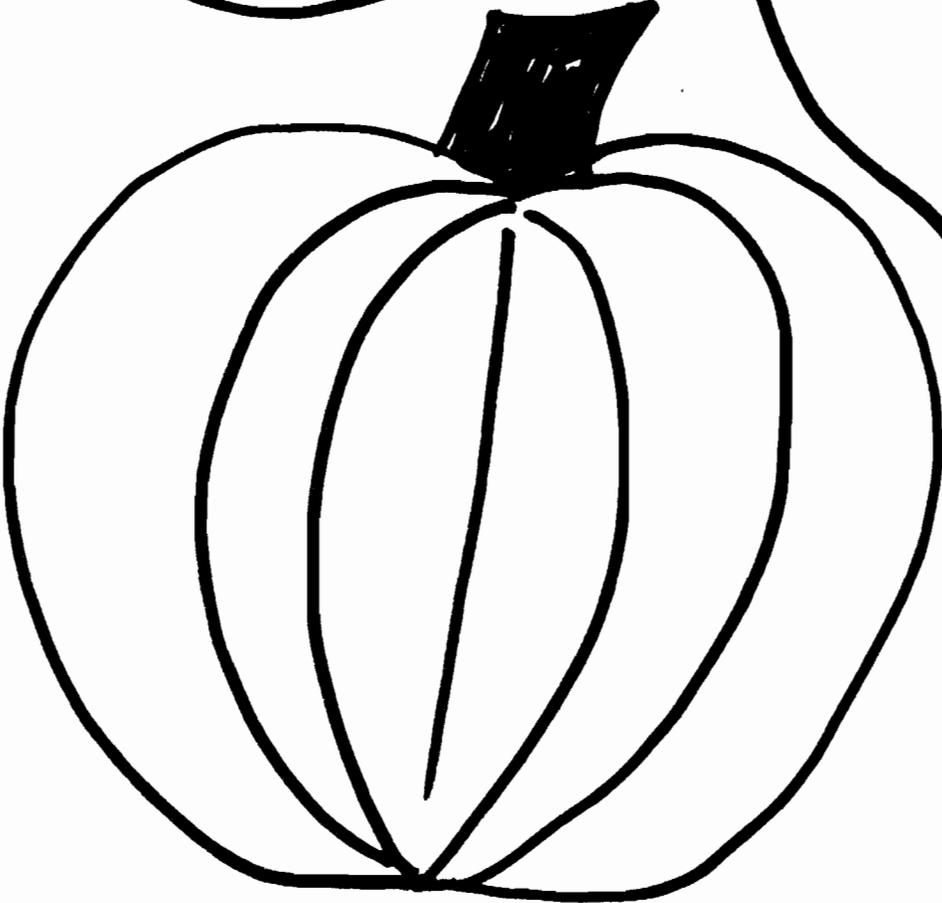
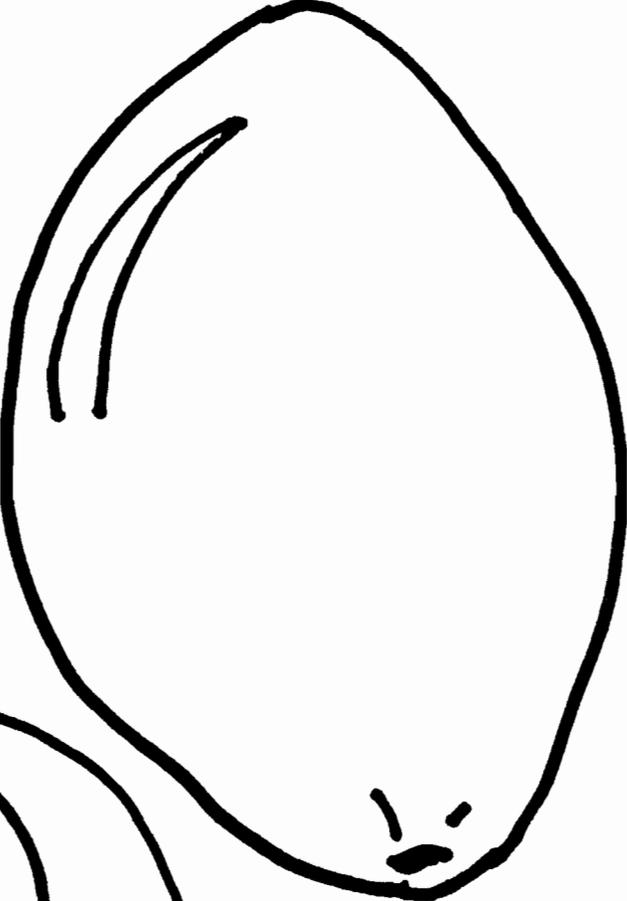
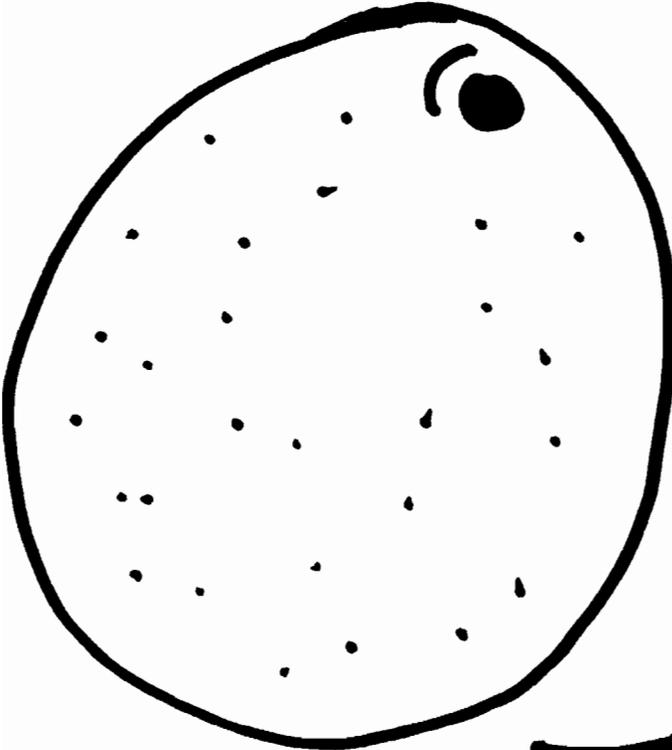
Copy the fruits on yellow paper.



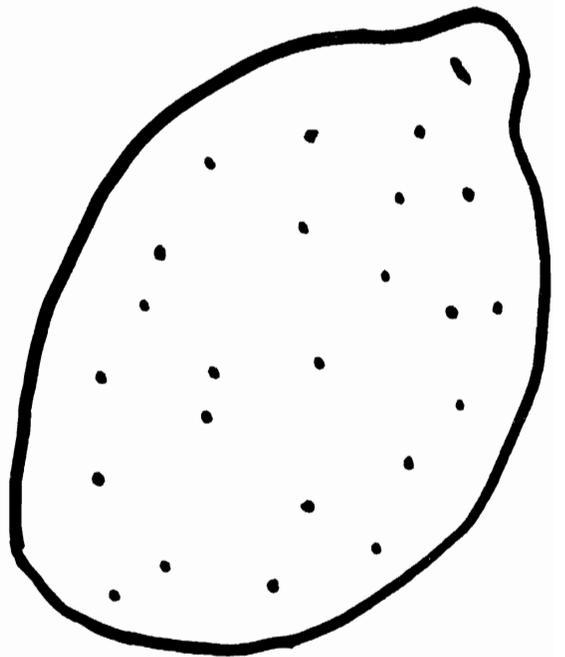
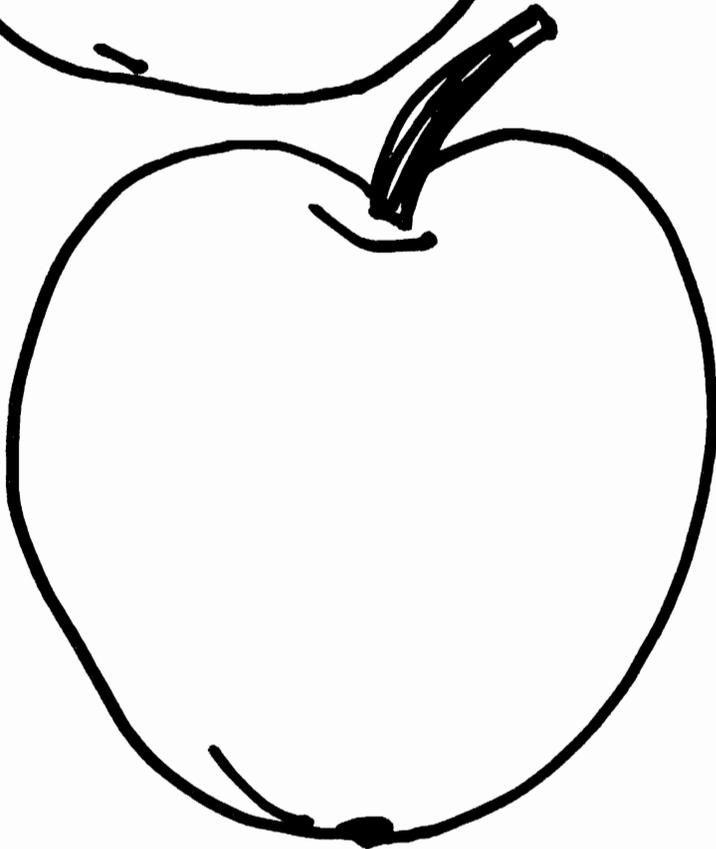
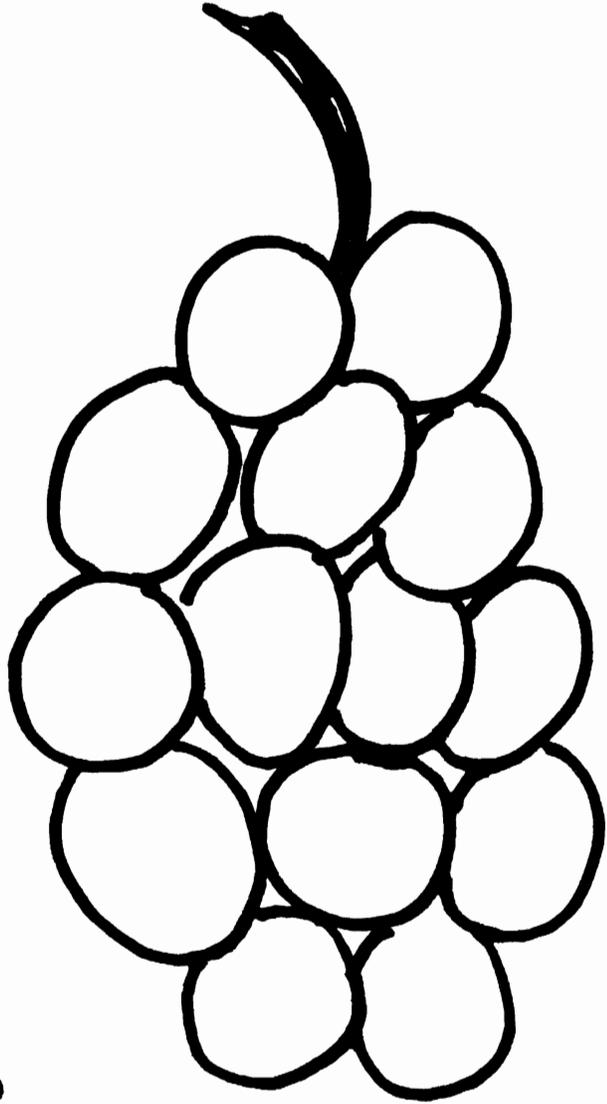
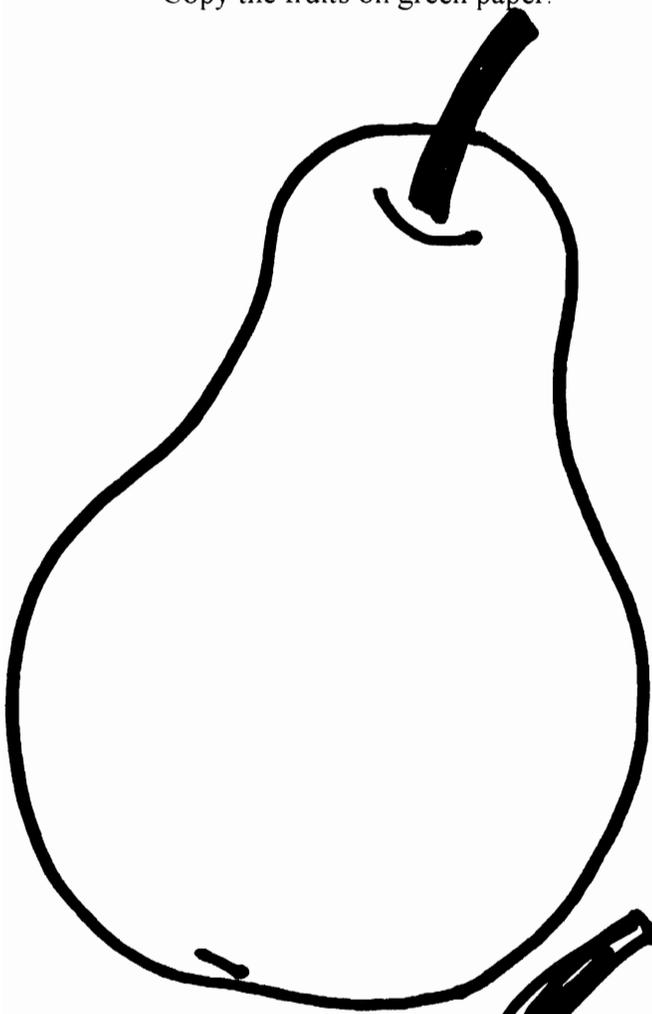
Copy the fruits on red paper.



Copy the fruits on orange paper.

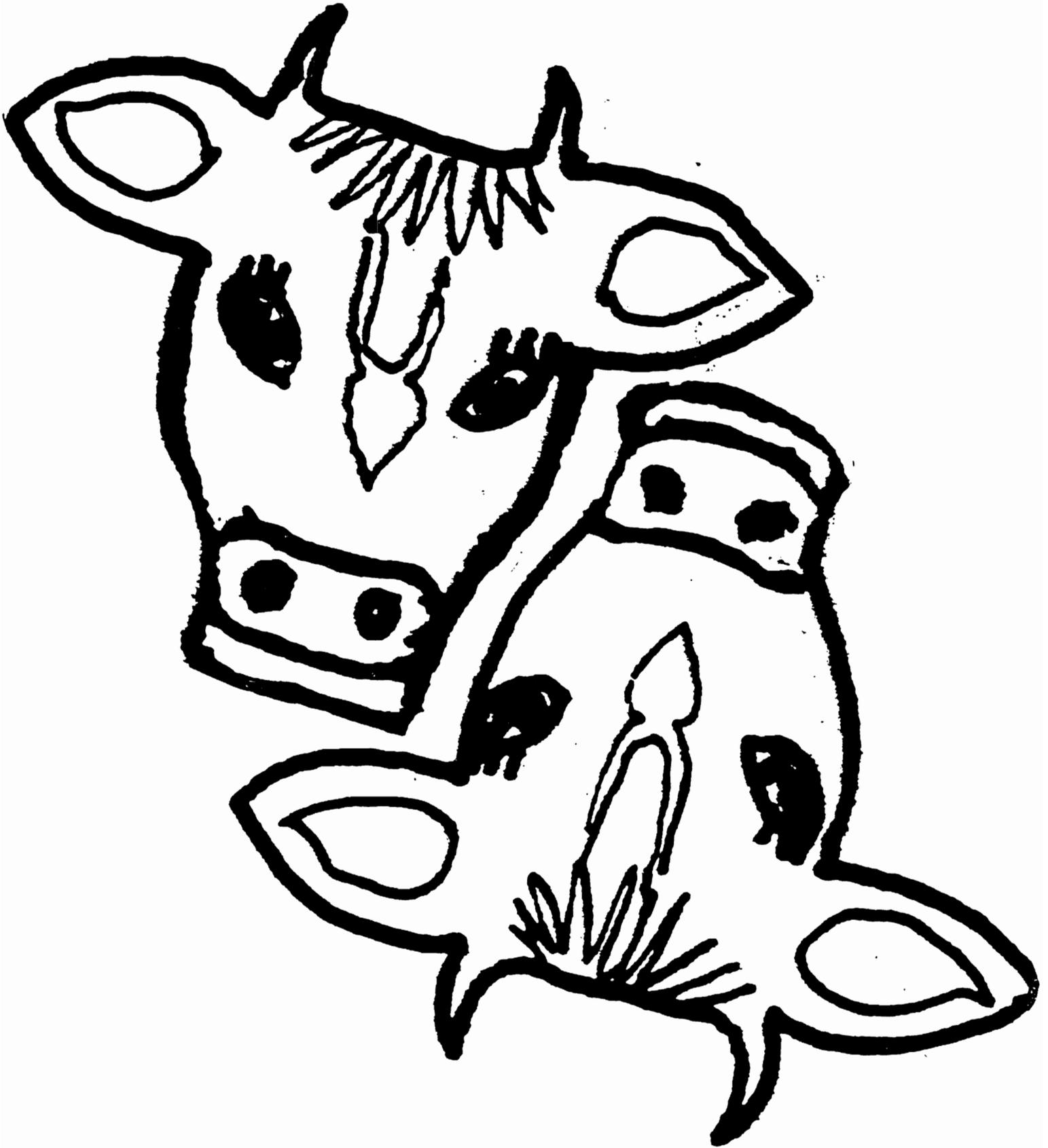


Copy the fruits on green paper.

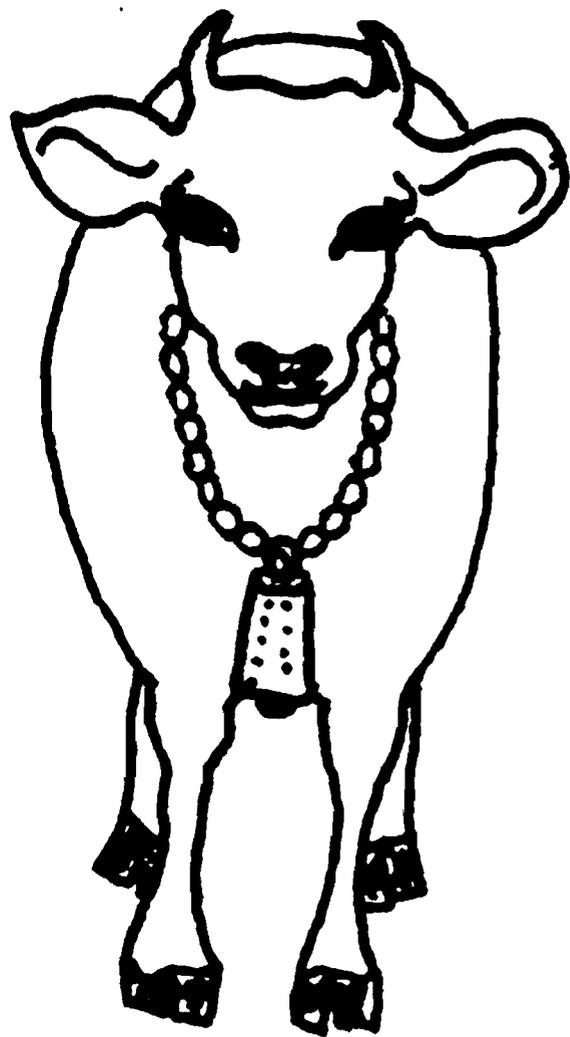
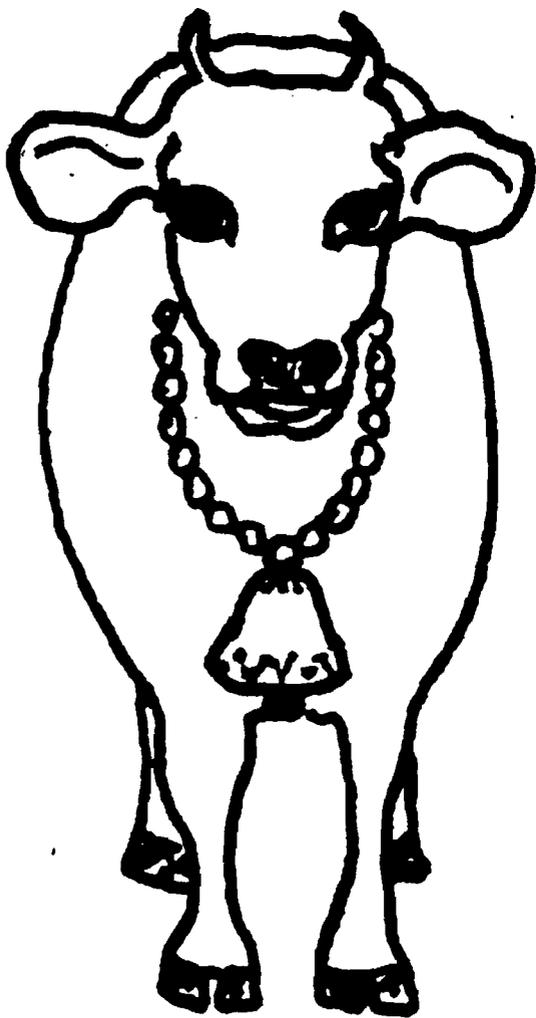
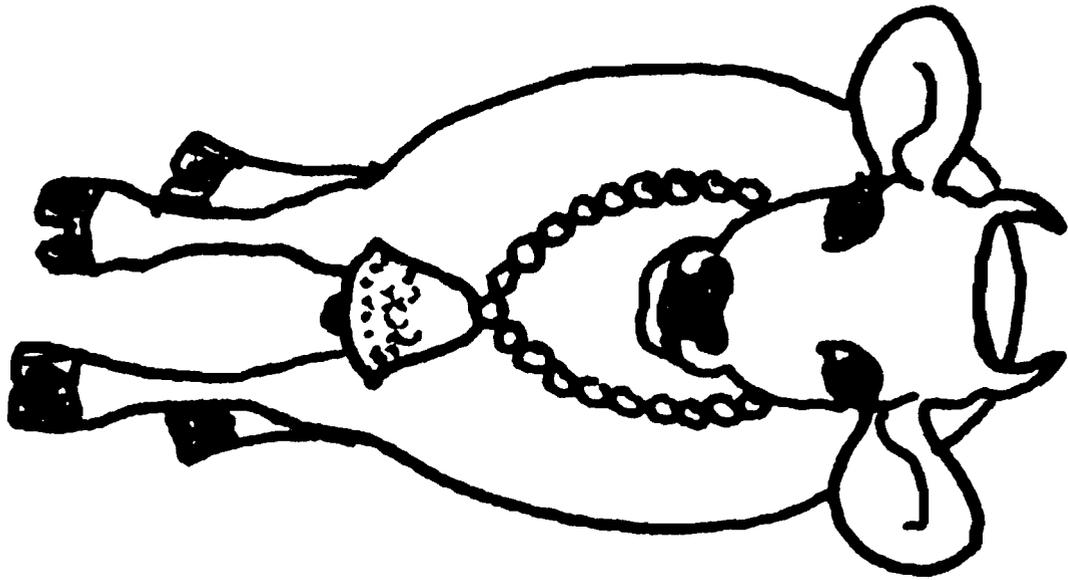


Worksheet 7
Cow Mobiles

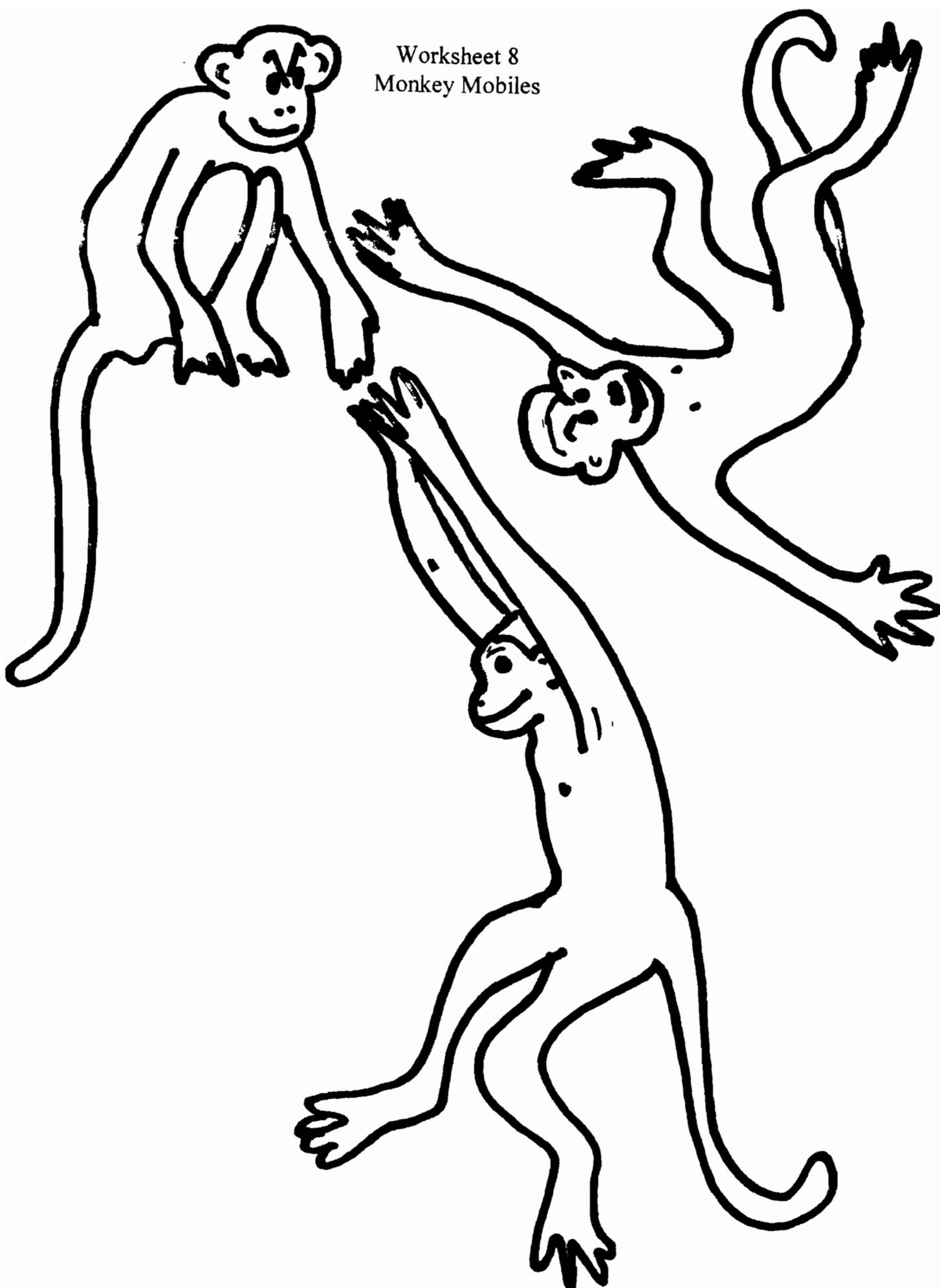
Use four or more cows per mobile. Color and punch holes in the tops of the figures.
Attach string and suspend from hangers or a cardboard crossbar.



Cow Mobiles #2



Worksheet 8
Monkey Mobiles



Ramayana Drama

First Narrator:

The Epic Rāmāyaṇa, written by Sage Vālmīki, is familiar to all of us. In this manifestation, the Lord was born as Rāma, eldest son of King Daśaratha of Ayodhyā. His three brothers, Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa, and Satrughna are also considered to be partial manifestations of the Lord. They lived like ideal brothers, and Sītā was the perfect wife of Rāma.

In this avatāra, the Lord killed the rākṣasa Rāvaṇa, who was invincible. The Rāmāyaṇa gives us a moving portrait of an ideal man, an ideal woman, and an ideal kingdom, Rāmarājya.

Second Narrator:

Our story opens with Rāma living in the Daṇḍaka Forest along with his wife, Sītā, and his brother, Lakṣmaṇa. To redeem his father's pledge to Queen Kaikeyī, Rāma abandoned his kingship to her son Bharata and went to live in the forest for fourteen years.

(Turn on lights. Curtain opens. A tent is next to the river. Rāma, Sītā, and Lakṣmaṇa sit by the river talking. Suddenly, Lakṣmaṇa puts his hand to his ear, gets up, and goes to the side of the stage.)

Lakṣmaṇa:

I hear the thump of men and elephants. *(Angrily)* Ah! It is Bharata coming with an army. What more does he want? He has already gained the throne of Ayodhyā through the manipulation of his mother and exiled you to the forest.

Rāma *(Smiling calmly)*:

Dear Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata is our brother; he will never harm us. Come, let us welcome him.

(They get up. Bharata enters with a guru and a few men.)

Rāma:

Bharata, my brother. It is nice to see you.

Bharata *(In anguish)*:

O brother, Rāma. I returned home to Ayodhyā to find you gone. My mother's jealousy has caused you and my revered father great pain. I cannot accept the throne. You are the most fit to rule Ayodhyā. We all want you to come back to Ayodhyā as our king.

Rāma:

I can't go back on my father's promise. It is my dharma to redeem his pledge. I hope you understand, Bharata.

Bharata (*Sadly looking at Rāma*):

I cannot accept the throne either. If you refuse to return now, I shall rule in your name. Your sandals shall grace the throne and represent you until you return.

(Bharata bends down, touches Rāma's feet, and gets up with Rāma's sandals in his hands.)

Rāma:

You are indeed a noble brother, Bharata. Do as you will, but I must stay here.

(Rāma blesses Bharata. Bharata exits with his men, holding the sandals on his head. Lights dim and slowly brighten. Lakṣmaṇa and Rāma are practicing with their bows and arrows. Sītā sits by the tent stringing flowers.)

Lakṣmaṇa:

We have lived in the forest for some time now. I have begun to like it here.

Rāma (*Smiling*):

This is our kingdom now for the next few years. So let's make the most of it.

(A golden deer enters and bounds swiftly across the stage.)

Sītā:

That deer is so beautiful. I would love to have it.

Rāma:

I will get it for you, Sītā. Lakṣmaṇa, you stay here and guard Sītā.

(Rāma, with bow and arrow in hand, follows the deer twice across the front of the stage.)

Rāma:

Wow! It is swift. It is really taking me on a chase through the forest.

(Suddenly, the deer cries out.)

Deer:

O Lakṣmaṇa! O Lakṣmaṇa!

(The deer darts off the stage. Rāma follows the deer offstage. Sītā comes forward.)

Sītā (*To Lakṣmaṇa*):

Rāma is calling you, Lakṣmaṇa.

Lakṣmaṇa:

But Rāma has asked me not to leave you alone.

Sītā:

I will be all right. You must go help your brother. He may be hurt.

Lakṣmaṇa:

Okay. I shall go. But promise me you will not cross this line. The forest is full of wild beasts and strange creatures. *(Bends and draws a line and then leaves.)*

(From the other side, Rāvaṇa enters disguised as a brāhmin.)

Rāvaṇa:

Will the kind lady offer this simple brāhmin some food? I am tired.

Sītā:

Please wait. I shall get some food for you. *(Sītā enters the tent.)*

Rāvaṇa:

I am so tired. Please bring it out to me.

(As soon as Sītā comes out, Rāvaṇa grabs her. Sītā drops the plate of food.)

Rāvaṇa:

Ha, ha, I am Rāvaṇa, King of Laṅkā. You, Sītā, will come with me and be my wife.

Sītā (Cries out):

Rāma, help! Lakṣmaṇa, help me! Save me from this devill

(Rāvaṇa drags Sītā offstage.)

Narrator:

When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa returned, Sītā was gone. After a long search, they met the monkey king, Sugrīva, who helped them find Sītā. With Sugrīva's army, Rāma prepared to attack Laṅkā.

(Rāma and Rāvaṇa enter with their respective armies. Music starts. A fight ensues. Finally, Rāma kills Rāvaṇa. Music stops. Sītā enters the stage. All look towards her.)

Rāma:

Sītā, I'm happy to see you. Come, let us return to Ayodhyā.

(Rāma and Sītā leave the stage, followed by Lakṣmaṇa. Curtain closes.)

Narrator:

Thus Rāvaṇa was killed and Sītā was rescued. After fourteen years, Rāma, Sītā, and Lakṣmaṇa returned to Ayodhyā where they were welcomed by their brother, Bharata. Rāma was crowned king. In Rāmarājya, the people were happy. There was peace, prosperity and justice.

Worksheet 11

Construction Paper Candles

AGE GROUP

This craft was designed for children from ages 8 to 10. Younger children can make the Christmas Candle with a lot of adult help.

MATERIALS LIST

Each child needs:

- ◇ A pencil
- ◇ A ruler
- ◇ Scissors
- ◇ Glue
- ◇ White, yellow, and red construction paper
- ◇ 4 cotton balls
- ◇ Glitter

DIRECTIONS

Tell the children the following: "Use the pencil and ruler to draw a rectangle $5\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 inches onto white construction paper. Roll the rectangle into a cylinder 10 inches long to make the candle. Overlap the edge of the cylinder $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches and glue it to hold its shape.

"Use the pencil and ruler to draw four 2-inch lines down one end of the cylinder. Space them equally apart. Cut on these lines. Fold out the cut ends to make four tabs. Set the candle aside while you make the circle base.

"Use the pattern to trace the circle base onto yellow construction paper. Cut out and discard the smaller circle in the center.

"Slide the circle over the top of the candle. Put glue on the upper side of the four tabs. Press the tabs against the bottom of the circle base. Now the candle will stand by itself.

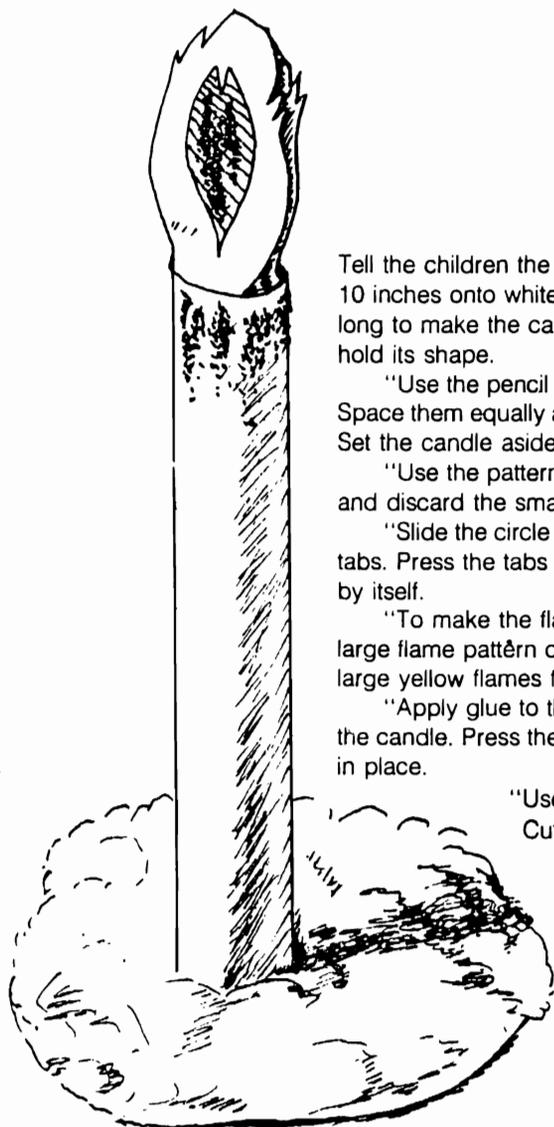
"To make the flame, fold yellow construction paper in half. Place the top of the large flame pattern on the fold. Trace onto the paper. Cut out the piece to make two large yellow flames fastened together at the top.

"Apply glue to the outside of the flames' long ends. Insert the ends in the top of the candle. Press the glued ends against the insides of the candle to make them stay in place.

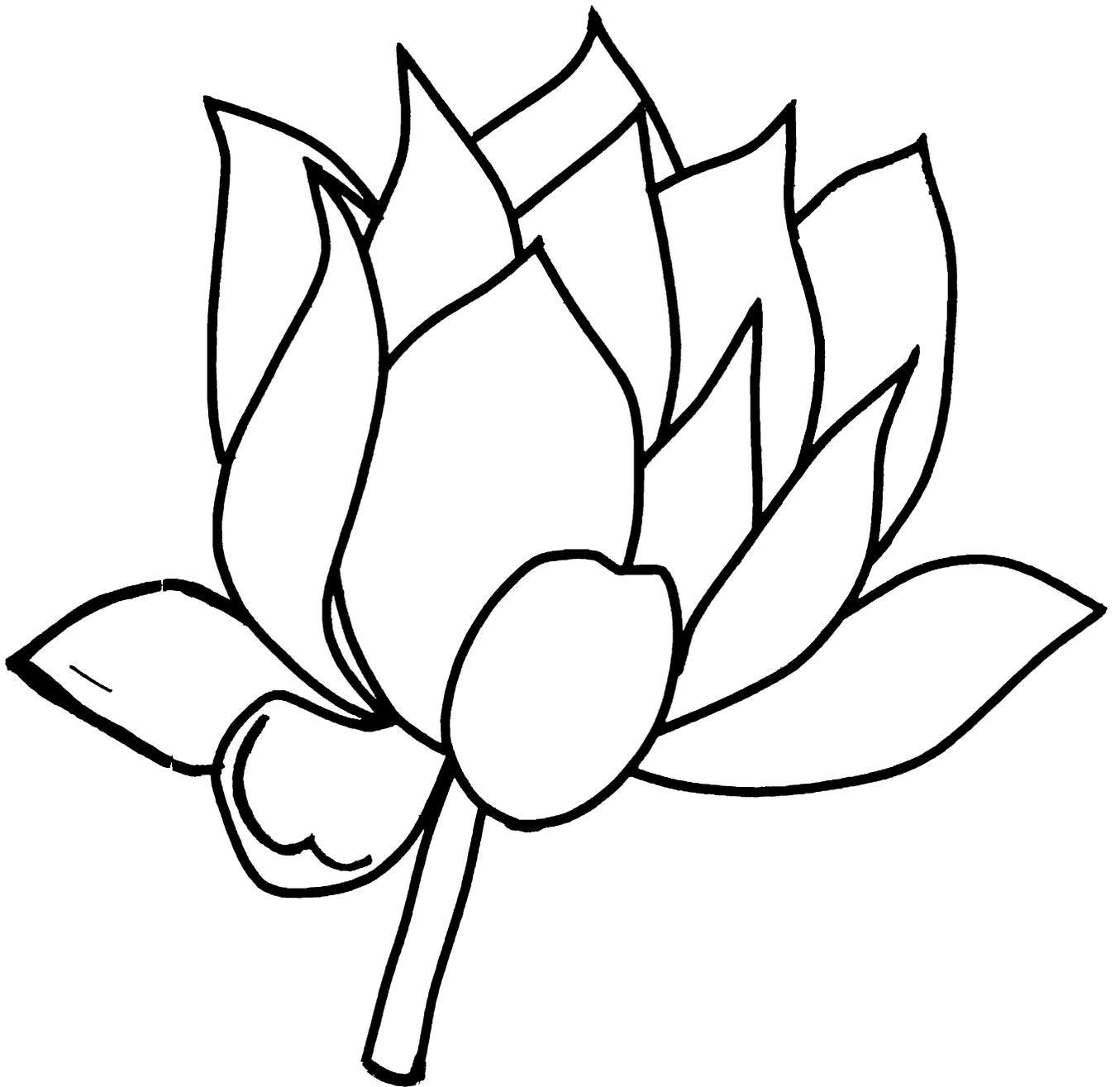
"Use the small flame pattern to trace two flames onto red paper. Cut out. Glue a red flame in the center of each yellow flame.

"Spread glue on the circle base. Pull the cotton balls apart and stick cotton to the base to look like snow.

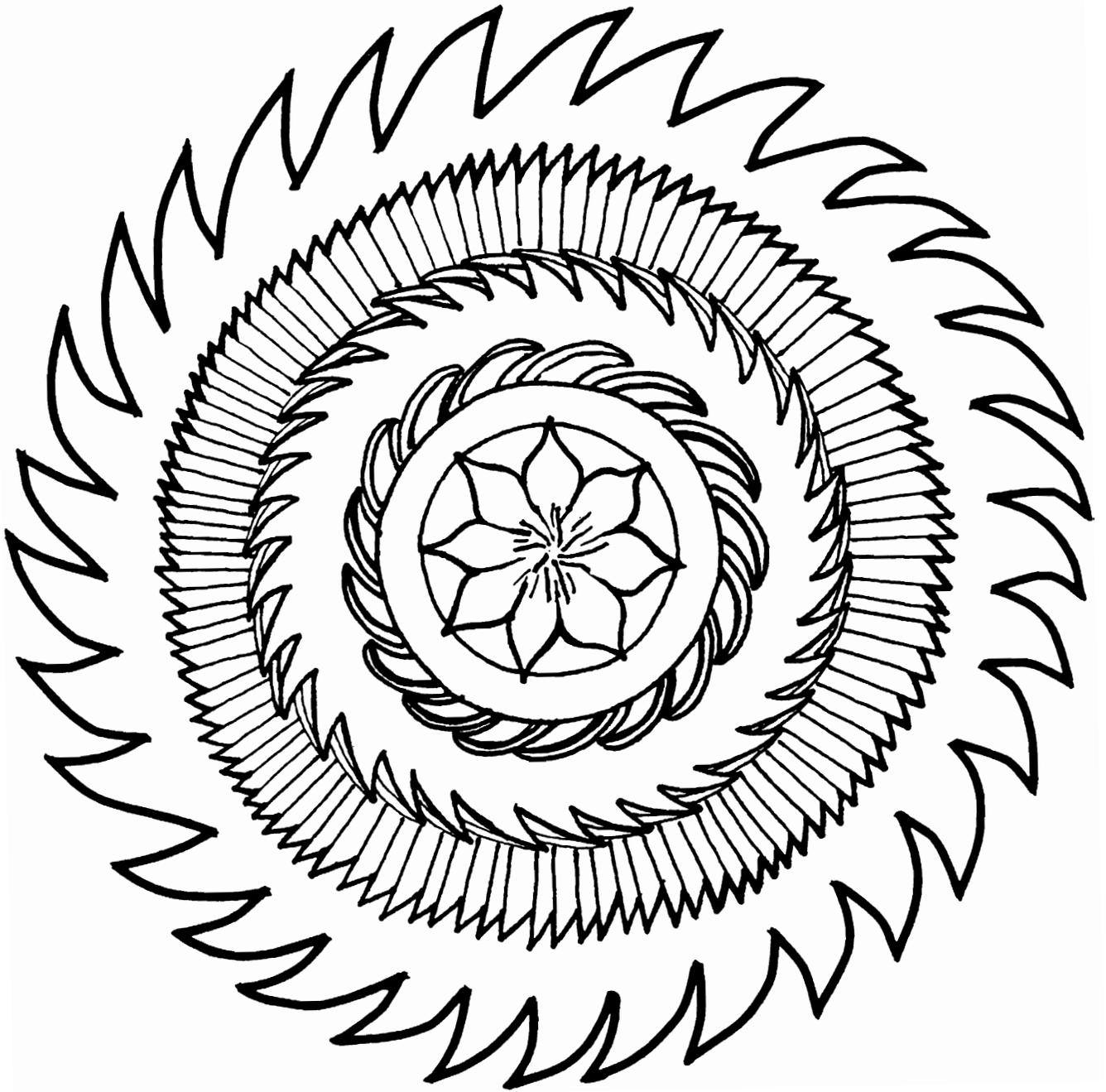
"Spread glue on the red flames and in loops around the top of the candle to look like melted wax. Sift glitter onto the glue."



Worksheet 12
Cart decorations



Worksheet 12, cont.
Cart decorations



Worksheet 12, cont.
Cart decorations

