

Story Assemblies for the School Year

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BIBLE VERSE CARD

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

Key Bible verse

God looked at what he had done, and it was good.

GENESIS 1:12

BIBLE VERSE CARD

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

Key Bible verse

'Someone more powerful is going to come.'

MARK 1:7

BIBLE VERSE CARD

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

Key Bible verse

Jesus said, 'I have explained the secrets about the kingdom of heaven to you.'

MATTHEW 13:11

BIBLE VERSE CARD

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

Key Bible verse

Christ was humble. He obeyed God and even died on a cross.

PHILIPPIANS 2:8

BIBLE VERSE CARD

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Key Bible verse

A seed must die before it can sprout from the ground.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:36

BIBLE VERSE CARD

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibility and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Key Bible verse

I run towards the goal, so that I can win the prize
of being called to heaven.

PHILIPPIANS 3:14

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

Week One

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Badge (optional): my stories tell us about God
- Introduction about need for preparation
- Example of going on holiday
- Example of starting back at school
- Felix decides to create a garden
- Digging the rich red earth; stopping to enjoy the beautiful garden
- Using bits of wood to mark out the garden; stopping to enjoy and appreciate
- The sunshine; Felix was very pleased
- The pole and three ribbons with their different meanings
- Cliff-hanger: Felix had a wonderful idea for his garden...
- God and creation; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story of Felix and his beautiful garden, and thank you for the beauty of your creation. You made heaven and earth and all that is in them and, when you looked at what you had made, you saw that it was good. Help us to remember how much you love this world, and help us to care for it, too. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

Week Two

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: meaning of three ribbons and connection to creation narrative
- Felix finds the sack of seeds and bulbs in the shed
- Survey of favourite vegetables; all are found in Felix's garden
- Lots of flowers; Felix finds his favourite, the bluebell
- The pole and two new ribbons with their different meanings
- Cliff-hanger: Felix knows the garden is not quite complete yet...
- God and creation; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

*Lord God, thank you for the story of Felix and his beautiful garden, and thank you for the beauty of your creation, full of every living plant and creature. You made heaven and earth and all that is in them and, when you looked at what you had made, you saw that it was good. Help us to remember how much you love this world, and help us to care for it, too.
Amen*

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

Week Three

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: meaning of five ribbons and connection to creation narrative
- Felix finds the net of nuts in the shed and hangs it in his garden
- The robin arrives—a bossy 'king' who cares for the garden
- The pole and two new ribbons with their different meanings
- Cliff-hanger: one more thing is needed in the garden...
- God and creation; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story of Felix and his beautiful garden, and thank you for the beauty of your creation, full of every living plant and creature, and with people as well. You made heaven and earth and all that is in them and, when you looked at what you had made, you saw that it was good. Help us to remember how much you love this world, and help us to care for it, too. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

Week Four

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: meaning of seven ribbons and connection to creation narrative
- Felix brings a water butt and places it in his garden next to the pole with ribbons
- Felix tells the robin not to go near the water butt
- Felix goes to sleep
- The robin tries to get to the water and ends up knocking the water butt over
- Cliff-hanger: the robin has disappeared and the garden is ruined...
- God and his spoilt creation; the Bible verse (feels strange now); 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story of Felix and his beautiful garden, and thank you for the beauty of your creation. You made everything so well but now we have spoilt it, so that people fight and argue and nature is often ruined. Help us to remember how much you love this world, and help us to care for it, too. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

Week Five

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional): Shush! Felix is asleep!
- Felix's dream and connection to creation narrative; the Bible verse
- Felix finds the first five ribbons one by one, and the pole, but neither the last two ribbons nor the robin
- Felix eventually finds the robin hiding in the water butt with the last two ribbons
- Felix explains how life will be harder for the robin now
- Cliff-hanger: the robin says, 'Do you still love me...?'
- God and his spoilt creation... life is harder now; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story of Felix and his beautiful garden, and thank you for the beauty of your creation. You made everything so well, but now we have spoilt it, and our lives are so often filled with sadness and trouble. Help us to remember how much you love this world, and help us to care for it, too. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

Week Six

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap on story (no ribbons on pole) and connection to creation narrative
- The robin has asked, 'Do you still love me...?'
- Felix recounts how he has made the garden, and how it was ruined
- 'Of course I still love you!' The pole now has a rainbow ribbon
- The robin is so happy, the water drains away and the garden is recovering: a new beginning
- Noah and the flood; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story of Felix and his beautiful garden, and thank you for the beauty of your creation. Even though it's spoilt when people are greedy and don't think about what they're doing, you still love us and you give us the chance of a new beginning. Lord God, help us to remember how much you love this world, and help us to care for it, too. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

Week One

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction about making candles
- Badge (optional): my stories tell us about God
- The candle-maker had to leave her home town; the mirror as a leaving present; now she's lonely
- Three men arrive and ask for a candle to help them rob the palace
- The cracked candle is made and given to the men
- Later that night, it is returned and left on the candle-maker's doorstep
- The mirror says it's been used for bad things; a better candle is still to come
- Cliff-hanger: the mouse appears, looking all bedraggled
- God's prophets, especially Amos, foretelling the Messiah; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for candles and the light they make, and thank you for the story of the candle-maker. As we look at this cracked candle, we remember that bad things do happen in the world. Help us to hear the message of the prophets about someone special who was still to come, someone who would shine as the light for the whole world. Amen

Ask one of the children to blow out the candle.

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

Week Two

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: meaning of the candle, and connection to the prophets
- The mouse has seen the robbery and pesters the candle-maker
- The candle-maker tries ignoring the mouse, shouting at him, and throwing him out of the house
- Eventually the candle-maker cries with sorrow for what she's done
- The candle-maker creates the yellow candle as a sign of her penitence
- The mirror says a better candle is still to come
- Cliff-hanger: something comes through the letterbox
- God's prophets, especially Jonah, foretelling the Messiah; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for candles and the light they make. Thank you, too, for the story of the candle-maker. As we look at this yellow candle, we remember how important it is to be sorry when we do wrong things. We remember how we must give up wrong things and turn back to God. Help us to hear the message of the prophets about someone special who was still to come, someone who would shine as the light for the whole world. Amen

Ask one of the children to blow out the candles.

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

Week Three

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge
- Recap story so far: meaning of the candles and connection to the prophets
- A newspaper arrives with news of the robbery
- The candle-maker decides to go to the police station
- The candle-maker is locked up but then released and forgiven
- The candle-maker is given a silver candle so she can get safely home
- The mirror says a better candle is still to come
- Cliff-hanger: something else comes through the letterbox
- God's prophets, especially Hosea, foretelling the Messiah; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for candles and the light they make. Thank you, too, for the story of the candle-maker. As we look at this silver candle, we remember how much you love us and we remember that you are never angry with us. Help us to hear the message of the prophets about someone special who was still to come, someone who would shine as the light for the whole world. Amen

Ask one of the children to blow out the candles.

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

Week Four

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: meaning of the candles and connection to the prophets
- A letter from an old friend arrives
- The candle-maker wishes she could be back with all her friends
- The candle-maker's friend promises to come and visit
- The candle-maker makes a glittery candle to celebrate her friend's promise
- The mirror says a better candle is still to come
- Cliff-hanger: the mouse is worried about something
- God's prophets, especially Ezekiel, foretelling the Messiah; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for candles and the light they make. Thank you, too, for the story of the candle-maker. As we look at this glittery candle, we remember your promise to us that you will give us a new heart—a heart that wants to be close to you. Help us to hear the message of the prophets about someone special who was still to come, someone who would shine as the light for the whole world. Amen

Ask one of the children to blow out the candles.

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

Week Five

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: meaning of the candles and connection to the prophets
- The mouse is worried but he's not hungry and the wax isn't running out
- The candle-maker realises she must clean the house to make it ready for her visitor
- The candle-maker cleans and tidies
- The candle-maker makes a scented candle to complete her preparations
- The mirror says a better candle is still to come
- Cliff-hanger: the mouse is still worried about something
- God's prophets, especially Isaiah, foretelling the Messiah; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for candles and the light they make. Thank you, too, for the story of the candle-maker. As we smell this scented candle, we remember that we must be prepared for you. Help us to clear a pathway for you so that everything is ready. And help us to hear the message of the prophets about someone special who was still to come, someone who would shine as the light for the whole world. Amen

Ask one of the children to blow out the candles.

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

Week Six

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: meaning of the candles and connection to the prophets
- The mouse is still worried but the candle-maker can't think what still needs doing
- The candle-maker realises she needs a bed for her visitor
- The candle-maker tries different beds but ends up using her own mattress
- The candle-maker makes a purple bedside candle and now everything is ready
- The mirror says a better candle is still to come; the candle-maker doesn't understand
- Cliff-hanger: there's a knock at the door
- God's prophets, especially John the Baptist foretelling the Messiah; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for candles and the light they make. Thank you, too, for the story of the candle-maker. As we look at this purple candle, the colour fit for a king, help us to welcome someone so special into the world, someone who will shine as the light for the whole world. Amen

Ask one of the children to blow out the candles.

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

Week One

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Badge (optional); my stories tell us about God
- Introduction about exploring in a spare room
- Introduce Cassandra
- Cassandra explores in the spare room
- Cassandra finds the crown, puts it on and is transported into an adventure
- The elf tells Cassandra about the secret of the crown
- Cliff-hanger: will Cassandra decide to seek out the secret of the crown?
- God's heavenly kingdom; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for adventures when we discover new things, sometimes secret things that many people don't know. Thank you for the story about Cassandra and the secret of the crown, and thank you that Jesus taught people about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Help us to understand more and more about those secrets, so that we can belong in that kingdom as well. Amen

The Lord's Prayer is also especially suitable. Either traditional or contemporary wording can be used (see pages 17–18).

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen*

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen*

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

Week Two

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Cassandra and the secret of the crown
- The old man and the table of sweets: 'Don't waste them'
- Cassandra gradually eats all the sweets and feels sad
- Cassandra wonders whether to blame an accident or someone else
- Cassandra returns to the old man and says sorry
- The elf spots the new red gem on the crown and explains its meaning
- Cliff-hanger: 'You haven't discovered everything about the secret of the crown yet'
- The parable of the two sons; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for adventures when we discover new things, sometimes secret things that many people don't know. Thank you for the story about Cassandra and the secret of the crown, with its new red gem, and the way she discovered about going back to say sorry. Thank you that Jesus taught people about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Help us to understand more and more about those secrets, so that we can belong in that kingdom as well. Amen

The Lord's Prayer is also especially suitable (see pages 17–18).

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

Week Three

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Cassandra, the secret of the crown and the red gem
- Cassandra sees Cruella, her worst enemy, lying slumped in the passageway
- Cassandra goes past Cruella
- Cassandra finds Cruella for a second time; her enemy asks for help but she passes by again
- Cassandra finds Cruella for a third time, and this time helps her; the old man is pleased
- The elf spots the new green gem on the crown and explains its meaning
- Cliff-hanger: 'You haven't discovered everything about the secret of the crown yet'
- The parable of the good Samaritan; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for adventures when we discover new things, sometimes secret things that many people don't know. Thank you for the story about Cassandra and the secret of the crown, with its new green gem, and the way she discovered about helping her worst enemy. Thank you that Jesus taught people about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Help us to understand more and more about those secrets, so that we can belong in that kingdom as well. Amen

The Lord's Prayer is also especially suitable (see pages 17–18).

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

Week Four

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Cassandra, the secret of the crown and the red and green gems
- The elf points the way and says it gets even harder; Cassandra reaches a dead end
- Five animals appear: dog, cat, horse, kangaroo, monkey—together they must paint a picture on the wall
- Gradually, each of the animals falls asleep until only the dog is left
- The picture is finished and the old man gives Cassandra golden badges as a reward for those who helped
- Cassandra decides to give a badge to all the animals and the old man is very pleased
- The elf spots the new blue gem on the crown and explains its meaning
- Cliff-hanger: 'You haven't discovered everything about the secret of the crown yet'
- Parable of the workers in the vineyard; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for adventures when we discover new things, sometimes secret things that many people don't know. Thank you for the story about Cassandra and the secret of the crown, with its new blue gem, and the way she discovered that everyone is equal. Thank you that Jesus taught people about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Help us to understand more and more about those secrets, so that we can belong in that kingdom as well. Amen

The Lord's Prayer is also especially suitable (see pages 17–18).

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

Week Five

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Cassandra, the secret of the crown and the red, green and blue gems
- The elf gives Cassandra a golden recorder and tells her to look after it; Cassandra locks the recorder safely away and puts it in her bag
- The pathway leads into a maze which gets more and more scary; Cassandra ends up lost and in the middle of the maze in tears
- Cassandra searches in her bag for something to use but can't find anything
- Cassandra eventually decides to use the golden recorder and then finds a way out
- The elf spots the new purple gem on the crown and explains its meaning
- Cliff-hanger: 'You haven't discovered everything about the secret of the crown yet'
- The parable of the three servants; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for adventures when we discover new things, sometimes secret things that many people don't know. Thank you for the story about Cassandra and the secret of the crown, with its new purple gem, and the way she discovered that gifts must be celebrated and used, not locked away. Thank you that Jesus taught people about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Help us to understand more and more about those secrets, so that we can belong in that kingdom as well. Amen

The Lord's Prayer is also especially suitable (see pages 17–18).

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

Week Six

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Cassandra, the secret of the crown and the four gems
- The elf gives Cassandra an invisibility cloak from the old man as she continues
- Three goblins guard a first bridge, but Cassandra uses the invisibility cloak to pass
- Two trolls guard a second bridge, but Cassandra uses the invisibility cloak to pass
- A giant guards a final bridge; he can see through the cloak: 'You must give me everything!'
- Cassandra gives the giant her food, her toy, the golden recorder and the cloak, but each time he roars: 'That's not enough! You must give me everything!'
- Cassandra runs at the giant shouting, 'I'll have to give you my life', but he disappears and she finds the old man; the elf spots the pearl on the crown and explains its meaning
- Cliff-hanger: 'You've almost learnt the secret of the crown'
- The parable of the valuable pearl; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for adventures when we discover new things, sometimes secret things that many people don't know. Thank you for the story about Cassandra and the secret of the crown, with its gems and pearl, and the way she discovered that she must be ready to give her whole life. Thank you that Jesus taught people about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. Help us to understand more and more about those secrets, so that we can belong in that kingdom as well. Amen

The Lord's Prayer is also especially suitable (see pages 17–18).

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

Week One

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. A key feature of the story of the witness birds is the historically accurate things that the birds have seen, so it is worth memorising them carefully if possible, including precise dates and other details. The second thing that the sparrow saw should be something that the children have been personally involved with.

- Introduction: favourite wild birds
- Badge (optional); my stories tell us about God
- Introduce the five birds on the perch; they've been alive for ages and have seen many things
- The sparrow talks about the new volcanic island (15 November 1963)
- The sparrow talks about a local funfair or street fair with ponies or horses
- The sparrow tells of William the Conqueror arriving in London on a huge horse
- The sparrow remembers Jesus arriving in Jerusalem on a donkey
- Contrast between William and Jesus:
 - * defeated enemies / love of enemies
 - * special royal clothes / ordinary clothes
 - * huge horse / donkey
- Catchphrase: 'If you ask me, that was a big mistake!'
- Paul writing a letter; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for stories and for the story of the five witness birds. Help us to remember what the sparrow saw and help us to understand why Jesus wasn't like other kings. We know that Jesus was so humble that he rode on a donkey. Help us to be humble, too, so that we can be like him. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

Week Two

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. A key feature of the story of the witness birds is the historically accurate things that the birds have seen, so it is worth memorising them carefully if possible, including precise dates and other details. The second thing that the dove saw should be something that the children have been personally involved with.

- Introduction; badge (optional); recap on last week's story
- The dove talks about the heaviest rainfall ever (15 March 1952) and the tornado that brought cola cans from the sky (4 July 1995)
- The dove talks about dinner time at school
- The dove talks about the Queen's banquet for her 80th birthday
- The dove remembers Jesus washing the feet of his disciples at the last supper
- Contrast between the Queen and Jesus:
 - * gold plates and rich food / ordinary plates and food
 - * papers and TV / no one knew
 - * people bowed their heads / feet-washing
- Catchphrase: 'If you ask me, that was a big mistake!'
- Paul writing a letter; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for stories and for the story of the five witness birds. Help us to remember what the dove saw and help us to understand why Jesus wasn't like other mighty rulers. We know that Jesus was so humble that he washed the feet of his disciples. Help us to be humble, too, so that we can be like him. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

Week Three

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. A key feature of the story of the witness birds is the historically accurate things that the birds have seen, so it is worth memorising them carefully if possible, including precise dates and other details. The second thing that the owl saw should be something that the children have been personally involved with.

- Introduction; badge (optional); recap on last week's story
- The owl talks about the Great Fire of London (in the year 1666)
- The owl talks about a local Bonfire Night
- The owl talks about the gunpowder plot (5 November 1605)
- The owl remembers Jesus being arrested in the garden of Gethsemane
- Contrast between King James I and Jesus:
 - * protected by a friend / stepped out in front
 - * friend used weapons / made Peter put his sword away
 - * arrested Guy Fawkes / was arrested by his enemies
- Catchphrase: 'If you ask me, that was a big mistake!'
- Paul writing a letter; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for stories and for the story of the five witness birds. Help us to remember what the owl saw and help us to understand why Jesus wasn't like other mighty kings. We know that Jesus was so humble that he didn't let his friends fight to protect him. Help us to be humble, too, so that we can be like him. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

Week Four

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. A key feature of the story of the witness birds is the historically accurate things that the birds have seen, so it is worth memorising them carefully if possible, including precise dates and other details. The second thing that the cockerel saw should be something that the children have been personally involved with.

- Introduction; badge (optional); recap on last week's story
- The cockerel talks about the biggest wave (6 February 1933)
- The cockerel talks about the local swimming pool
- The cockerel talks about Richard the Lionheart and the ransom paid to free him (1191)
- The cockerel remembers Jesus, whose friend Peter abandoned him
- Contrast between King Richard the Lionheart and Jesus:
 - * pretended he wasn't a king / didn't deny he was a king
 - * boasted about his importance / said his kingdom wasn't of this world
 - * friends paid a ransom to free him / friends denied and abandoned him
- Catchphrase: 'If you ask me, that was a big mistake!'
- Paul writing a letter; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for stories and for the story of the five witness birds. Help us to remember what the cockerel saw and help us to understand why Jesus wasn't like other mighty kings. We know that Jesus was so humble that he accepted punishment, even though he didn't deserve it. Help us to be humble, too, so that we can be like him. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

Week Five

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. A key feature of the story of the witness birds is the historically accurate things that the birds have seen, so it is worth memorising them carefully if possible, including precise dates and other details. The second thing that the crow saw should be something that the children have been personally involved with.

- Introduction; badge (optional); recap on last week's story
- The crow talks about the 1923 FA Cup Final
- The crow talks about games in the school playground
- The crow talks about Oliver Cromwell beating King Charles I
- The crow remembers Jesus being mocked but praying for his enemies
- Contrast between King Charles I and Jesus:
 - * treated with respect / mocked with a crown of thorns
 - * kept his clothes and possessions / stripped of his clothes
 - * cursed his enemies / prayed for his enemies
- Catchphrase: 'If you ask me, that was a big mistake!'
- Paul writing a letter; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for stories and for the story of the five witness birds. Help us to remember what the crow saw and help us to understand why Jesus wasn't like other mighty kings. We know that Jesus was so humble that he accepted the mockery of his enemies and even prayed for them. Help us to be humble, too, so that we can be like him. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

Week Six

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction; badge (optional); recap on last week's story and all the things the birds have seen
- The five birds fly away to hide
- Jesus is crucified on a cross with nails, and a sign says he is a king
- Two men crucified with Jesus say different things
- The five birds can't understand why Jesus has been crucified; the Bible verse
- A robin appears and asks why the five birds are there
- Catchphrase: 'If you ask us, he made a big mistake!'
- Cliff-hanger: the robin says, 'I can explain...'
- The Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for stories and for the story of the five witness birds. Help us to remember what the birds saw and help us to understand why Jesus wasn't like other mighty kings. We know that Jesus was so humble that he was treated like a poor criminal and, even when he was suffering, he cared for others. Help us to be humble, too, so that we can care like him. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Week One

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction about planting seeds
- Badge (optional); my stories tell us about God
- Percy buys a flowerpot for his window ledge 'garden'
- What ideas are there for seeds he could plant?
- None of these seeds grow, although he tries extra water and compost
- Even the 'guaranteed to grow' seeds don't grow and Percy despairs
- Percy takes the flowerpot back but is persuaded to try the 'surprise seeds', his last hope
- Cliff-hanger: Percy opens the packet of surprise seeds and sees something very surprising...
- Despair that Jesus will die, but hope that he will rise again; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story about Percy and his flowerpot. We know that when seeds fall into the ground they seem to die, just like Jesus, who was buried in a tomb. Help us to remember what Paul wrote, that a seed must die before it can sprout again from the ground. Just as Percy had one last hope with the packet of surprise seeds, fill us too with hope in the resurrection of Jesus. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Week Two

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Percy and the flowerpot from which nothing seems to grow
- Percy plants the first of the surprise seeds
- Nothing happens to start with
- On the third day the first flower grows; it is shimmering and Percy isn't sure if it is real
- The flower makes a lovely smell and Percy knows it is real
- Cliff-hanger: there are five more seeds in the packet...
- Mary Magdalene met the risen Jesus in the garden; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story about Percy and his flowerpot. We know that when seeds fall into the ground they seem to die, just like Jesus, who was buried in a tomb. Help us to remember what Paul wrote, that a seed must die before it can sprout again from the ground. Thank you that Mary Magdalene met the risen Jesus in the garden at Easter time and knew she wasn't dreaming because of the lovely smells there. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Week Three

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Percy, the flowerpot, and the first flower; make connection to the Bible story
- Percy plants the second of the surprise seeds
- Nothing happens to start with; Percy must walk his neighbour's dogs in the park
- On the third day the second flower grows; it is shimmering and Percy isn't sure if it is real
- The flower makes a tasty fruit and Percy knows it is real
- Cliff-hanger: there are four more seeds in the packet...
- Two disciples met the risen Jesus on the road to Emmaus; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story about Percy and his flowerpot. We know that when seeds fall into the ground they seem to die, just like Jesus, who was buried in a tomb. Help us to remember what Paul wrote, that a seed must die before it can sprout again from the ground. Thank you that those two disciples met the risen Jesus on the road to Emmaus and knew they weren't dreaming because of the food they tasted with him. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Week Four

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Percy, the flowerpot, and the first two flowers; make connection to the Bible stories
- Percy plants the third of the surprise seeds
- Nothing happens to start with; Percy looks in a book and remembers seeing his favourite flower
- On the third day the third flower grows; it is shimmering and Percy isn't sure if it is real
- The flower makes a beautifully coloured bloom, Percy's favourite, and he knows it is real
- Cliff-hanger: there are three more seeds in the packet...
- Peter saw the risen Jesus and the full net of fish at the lakeside; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story about Percy and his flowerpot. We know that when seeds fall into the ground they seem to die, just like Jesus, who was buried in a tomb. Help us to remember what Paul wrote, that a seed must die before it can sprout again from the ground. Thank you that Peter saw the risen Jesus on the beach by the lake and knew he wasn't dreaming because of the fish he could see in his net. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Week Five

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Percy, the flowerpot, and the first three flowers; make connection to the Bible stories
- Percy plants the fourth of the surprise seeds
- Nothing happens to start with; Percy begins to doubt whether any of the flowers are real
- On the third day the fourth flower grows; it is shimmering and Percy still isn't sure if it is real
- Percy reaches out of the window and touches the fourth flower, and knows it is real
- Cliff-hanger: there are only two seeds left in the packet...
- Thomas felt the wounds of the risen Jesus; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story about Percy and his flowerpot. We know that when seeds fall into the ground they seem to die, just like Jesus, who was buried in a tomb. Help us to remember what Paul wrote, that a seed must die before it can sprout again from the ground. Thank you that Thomas could touch the risen Jesus and feel all his doubts go away. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Week Six

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap story so far: Percy, the flowerpot, and the first four flowers; make connection to the Bible stories
- Percy plants the fifth of the surprise seeds
- Nothing happens to start with; Percy's friend asks him to play football but he's not sure
- On the third day the fifth flower grows; it is shimmering and Percy isn't sure if it is real
- Percy hears the fifth flower, and knows it is real; the sound of the whistle makes him feel he could play football after all
- Cliff-hanger: there is now only one seed left in the packet...
- The risen Jesus commissioned the disciples; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, thank you for the story about Percy and his flowerpot. We know that when seeds fall into the ground they seem to die, just like Jesus, who was buried in a tomb. Help us to remember what Paul wrote, that a seed must die before it can sprout again from the ground. Thank you for the time when the disciples heard Jesus speak to them and were filled with bravery so that they could go and spread the good news. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibilities and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Week One

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. The three cuddly toy animals are passive but attractive visual props.

- Introduction: the meaning of the word 'vital'
- Badge (optional); my stories tell us about God
- The three animals are introduced: Skipper, Colorado and Perry
- The village in darkness
- Perry catches the light in the flask
- The wolf and his tricks: mind-reading, great strength, makes things disappear
- Perry blinds the wolf with the flask of light
- The explanation to the onlooking wild animals: 'We're responsible. It's up to us'
- Cliff-hanger: the journey continues
- Paul and his journeys; Paphos and the magician Elymas; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, the good news about Jesus gives life to those who hear it and lights up the world with your love. Help us to remember Paul, who went on a vital race to bring the message of Jesus to everyone he met. Help us to be like Paul as well, so that we too can share the good news of Jesus and reach the finishing line to be with you. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibilities and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Week Two

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. The three cuddly toy animals are passive but attractive visual props.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap the story so far: the names of the animals; the link to Paul's journeys
- The path goes up into the mountains to a pass
- A gate blocks the way; the riddle of the most valuable thing
- Colorado finds five statues of valuable things: money, jewellery, crown, book, servants
- The empty plinth with 'an unknown statue'
- Perry puts the flask of light on the empty plinth and the gate opens
- The explanation to the wild animals: 'We're responsible. It's up to us'
- Cliff-hanger: the journey continues
- Paul and his journeys; Athens and the 'unknown god'; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, the good news about Jesus gives life to those who hear it and lights up the world with your love. Help us to remember Paul, who went on a vital race to bring the message of Jesus to everyone he met. Help us to be like Paul as well, so that we too can share the good news of Jesus and reach the finishing line to be with you. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibilities and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Week Three

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. The three cuddly toy animals are passive but attractive visual props.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap the story so far: the names of the animals; the link to Paul's journeys
- The path runs down to a big river which cannot be crossed
- Perry designs a raft from logs
- The raft falls apart and the animals are swept towards a waterfall
- The animals hold on to a rock but eventually are taken over the waterfall into a lake
- The animals survive the plunge: 'It's almost as if we've died and then come back to life again.'
- The explanation to the beavers: 'We're responsible. It's up to us'
- The flask of light is brighter than ever
- Cliff-hanger: the journey continues
- Paul and his journeys; Ephesus and teaching about baptism; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, the good news about Jesus gives life to those who hear it and lights up the world with your love. Help us to remember Paul, who went on a vital race to bring the message of Jesus to everyone he met. Help us to be like Paul as well, so that we too can share the good news of Jesus and reach the finishing line to be with you. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibilities and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Week Four

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. The three cuddly toy animals are passive but attractive visual props.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap the story so far: the names of the animals; the link to Paul's journeys
- The path goes through a thick forest; the animals are seized by gorillas who have escaped from a zoo and now control the forest
- The animals are put in a cage and receive no food
- Skipper explains about the vital race to the gorilla who is guarding them
- The guard laughs at the story, and other gorillas arrive, including the chief
- The vital race is explained again, this time with the light revealed: 'We're responsible. It's up to us'
- The chief gorilla lets them go on their way
- Cliff-hanger: the journey continues
- Paul and his journeys; Agrippa in Caesarea; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, the good news about Jesus gives life to those who hear it and lights up the world with your love. Help us to remember Paul, who went on a vital race to bring the message of Jesus to everyone he met. Help us to be like Paul as well, so that we too can share the good news of Jesus and reach the finishing line to be with you. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibilities and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Week Five

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. The three cuddly toy animals are passive but attractive visual props.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap the story so far: the names of the animals; the link to Paul's journeys
- The path goes into a valley and then to a huge lake; the village is on the other side
- An eagle could fly them, but won't take the flask of light
- A giant mole could dig a tunnel for them, but not under the lake
- A boat crewed by brown bears will take them, but they warn it is very dangerous
- Cliff-hanger: just then Perry had a really good idea...
- Paul and his journeys; the storm off Crete; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, the good news about Jesus gives life to those who hear it and lights up the world with your love. Help us to remember Paul, who went on a vital race to bring the message of Jesus to everyone he met. Help us to be like Paul as well, so that we too can share the good news of Jesus and reach the finishing line to be with you. Amen

STORYTELLER'S NOTES CARD

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibilities and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Week Six

The most effective storytellers, like actors, do not rely on a script. They use plenty of eye contact, as well as variation in pace and dramatic pauses, to draw the listeners in. These notes give the key features of this week's episode, to enable the storyteller to prepare. The three cuddly toy animals are passive but attractive visual props.

- Introduction and put on badge (optional)
- Recap the story so far: the names of the animals; the link to Paul's journeys
- The storm is terrifying but Perry reveals the flask of light
- Skipper explains all the adventures the three animals have had so far: 'We're responsible. It's up to us'
- The ship reaches the other side, but it's so dark it's hard to see how anyone could be still alive
- The animals run to the village and hold up the flask of light: 'We've brought you the gift of light'
- Some of the villagers grumble and turn away
- Some of the villagers accept the gift of light and want to share it
- Paul and his journeys; his arrival in Rome; the Bible verse; 'I wonder...'

Suggested prayer

Lord God, the good news about Jesus gives life to those who hear it and lights up the world with your love. Help us to remember Paul, who went on a vital race to bring the message of Jesus to everyone he met. Help us to be like Paul as well, so that we too can share the good news of Jesus and reach the finishing line to be with you. Amen

Curriculum suggestions for KS1 and KS2

Section One: God's creation

Values: Beauty and appreciation

Story: Felix's garden

There are possible links with science, geography, art, literacy, PSHE, Citizenship and RE.

RE

Links can be drawn with the Non-statutory National Framework for RE themes for KS1 and KS2, most specifically beliefs about God and symbols/symbolism. These links are not about everything within the themes but can contribute to pupils' understanding of elements of both. For example:

- **KS1:** Explore the nature of symbolism and how one thing can stand for or point towards something else. A good story to help draw this out is *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox. Pupils talk about the links between items and their meanings or significance. Draw comparisons with the Felix story and the significance of the ribbons. Think of symbols in school and other areas of life and understand the link between the items and their meanings.
- **KS1:** Beliefs about God. An appropriate way to approach this with KS1 pupils is to enable them to encounter the creation narrative found in Genesis 1:1—2:4. There are many storybooks about this narrative. The aspiration is for the pupils to be able to retell the story and identify that, for some people, it carries an important message about stewardship. Using *Godly Play* could be a good way to meet and think about the story.
- **KS2:** Building on an existing understanding of symbolism, pupils could explore specific elements of symbolism linking with the Felix story. Colours—how they are used as symbols and ways of expressing feelings and moods—will lead on to a consideration of the rainbow and meanings given to it (compare Week Six of the Felix story). There are a great many possibilities for exploring ways in which 'green' is used to symbolise environmentally friendly products and initiatives, linking with the green ribbon featured first in Week Three. Over the term, pupils can also explore the parallel between the Felix story and the biblical narratives of creation, disobedience and covenant found in Genesis 1—9, so that they can show understanding of the biblical origins of beliefs about creation, stewardship, disobedience, sin, renewal and covenant, and how these beliefs link with some Christian practices today. Links could be drawn with the words of some hymns and prayers used by Christians to express their beliefs.

PSHE and Citizenship

- Links will focus mainly on developing an understanding of what harms local, national and built environments and some ways in which people look after them. In considering these social and moral dilemmas, pupils can talk, debate and write about their own opinions. There are good opportunities here for the development of literacy (speaking, listening and writing) and ICT skills. Pupils could develop a PowerPoint presentation of images and captions about harming and caring for environments. Acknowledging that religious beliefs provide a motivation to care for the world will draw links with RE. A school council and all the processes that are part of it might be used to review the state of the school environment or garden, its beauty, pupils' use of it and how it could be improved. The latter episodes of the story provide opportunities to explore feelings such as disappointment, guilt, anger, forgiveness, acceptance and reconciliation.

Art

- Pupils could explore colour and mixing colours. They could also make observations of gardens and illustrations or photographs of gardens, plants, creatures and garden constructions. An interesting exercise would be to design a garden.

Geography

- Links can be made with environmental issues and issues of environmental change, land use and managing school grounds. Water and its importance also come within the scope of geography: this theme opens up exploration of inadequate or polluted water supplies and organisations that work to bring water to communities within the developing world—for example, Water Aid. Consideration can also be given to water supplies in Britain and how the system works. Floods and drought can also be included, especially if there are current examples in the news.

Science

- Topics such as growing plants and helping them grow well, plants in the local environment, soils, light and dark (or shadows), earth, sun and moon all have links with the Felix story and creation narratives. Pupils might create a PowerPoint presentation about different aspects of light to include examples of natural and artificial light.

Literacy

- Speaking and listening, reading associated stories and writing will underpin everything outlined above. There are many opportunities to develop descriptive writing and poetry.

Key themes week by week

Week One: Preparation

This is a major element of the first episode of 'Felix's garden'. The idea of preparation, along with appreciation and beauty, can feature throughout any and all of the worship and curriculum links this week—for example, the importance of thinking and finding out before we act, preparation and patience needed in making a garden, gathering information and organising it into a presentation for a meeting of the school council, preparation of art materials and so on. In general, there is an understanding that being prepared usually makes projects work better. Preparation is an important idea connected with harvest, which will be celebrated by many schools during this term—for example, preparing land to grow crops (short- and long-term), preparation and rehearsal for harvest service/celebration and so on.

Week Two: Growing

Successful growing depends on good preparation. Alongside growing go ideas about change and patience. Curriculum links could explore how and why vegetables are good foods, with discussion about children's favourite vegetables and flowers. Vegetarian and other diets could also be investigated. It would be good to study how different foods and flowers grow in different parts of the world and climates, and how vegetables are used in various ways in other cultures.

Week Three: Stewardship

The meaning of stewardship can be explored together with the way the skills, understandings and talents of each individual can be used to care for the environment.

Week Four: Water

The importance of water is clear in this part of the story. Thirst and drought, together with the work of charities that help to bring clean water to parts of the world where people have not had it, make rich areas of exploration. The

destructive power of flooding is illustrated at the end of Episode Four of the story, and this idea continues into the fifth week. Alternative themes could be the importance of rules, and pollution. These ideas could be carried over into thoughts about rights and responsibilities in Week Five.

Week Five: Rights and responsibilities or consequences

Everything we do and say has an impact on other people around us. Rules are provided for the good of all, and disobedience can have unpleasant consequences. This part of the story also enables an exploration of feelings of guilt and repentance. Links could be made with school rewards and sanctions.

Week Six: New beginnings and forgiveness

This last part of the story provides a happy ending. The robin is forgiven for his disobedience and pupils will be able to empathise with his relief at being forgiven and loved by Felix, having been given the opportunity for a fresh start.

Section Two: The prophets

Values: Patience and trust

Story: The candle-maker

There are possible links with science, art, literacy, PSHE, Citizenship, history and RE.

RE

Links can be drawn with the Non-statutory National Framework for RE themes for KS1 and KS2, most specifically celebrations, symbols/symbolism and sacred texts. These links are not about everything within these themes but can contribute to pupils' understanding of elements of them. For example:

- **KS1:** Explore what we mean by celebration—ways in which we prepare for and celebrate special occasions. Focus in particular on Advent and Christmas.
- **KS1:** Explore the nature of symbolism and how one thing can stand for or point towards something else. In particular there can be an exploration of the symbolism of light and how candles are used in worship and celebration—for example, Advent wreaths. Consideration can also be given to how and why candles or similar lights are used in other religions—for example, diva lamps during Divali celebrations, candles in a Hanukkiah during Hanukkah (both festivals are celebrated around this time of year).
- **KS2:** Building on an existing understanding of symbolism, pupils could explore Christians' understanding of Jesus as the 'light for the world' and how this belief is mirrored in styles of worship throughout the year, especially during Advent and Christmas
- **KS2:** Discover where narratives about the prophets, included in the story of the candle-maker, can be found in Jewish and Christian scriptures. Consider what significance these narratives have, and find out more about some of these prophets. The story of Jonah is read during the Jewish high holy day of Yom Kippur. Some pupils may have met the narrative in that context. If not, they could be asked to consider its relevance to that very special day.

PSHE and Citizenship

Links will focus mainly on issues relating to rights and responsibilities. Possibilities exist to consider systems of punishment, the work of the police force and imprisonment. This story engages pupils with a range of strong feelings, which could be explored in the context of PSHE and/or circle time—for example, temptation, repentance,

owning up, forgiveness, promises, wishing, excitement and preparation. Linking with the latter part of the story, pupils could also explore the importance of sleep.

Art

Candles come in all sorts of shapes and colours. Observations and designs can be made. There is also an opportunity to look at and use reflections and shadows.

Handwriting

There is a reference in the story to beautiful handwriting. Hence there could be an opportunity to research handwriting styles and/or experiment with calligraphy techniques.

Science

Topics such as light and dark, light and shadows, characteristics of materials, solids and liquids, contrasting reflection and shadow formation, all have links with this story.

History

It would be possible to explore the development of light sources in relation to topics such as ‘What were homes like a long time ago?’ and ‘What was it like to live here in the past?’

Literacy

Speaking and listening, reading associated stories and writing will underpin everything outlined above. There are many opportunities to develop descriptive writing and poetry.

Key themes week by week

The key themes help to develop empathy with the feelings experienced by the candle-maker.

Week One: Right and wrong

Pupils can be encouraged to consider how we know or decide what is right and wrong and discover sources of authority that help us. Explore ideas about giving in to and resisting temptation, and invite responses to Amos’ idea that people don’t know how to do right.

Week Two: Repentance

Explore what it feels like to be sorry. How easy or difficult can it be to say ‘sorry’? Pupils might consider how they respond to people who apologise to them. How should we respond? There are many stories that include this theme—for example, *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister (North-South Books, 1998).

Week Three: Forgiveness

Explore what it feels like to be forgiven, and how easy or difficult it is to forgive others. How should we respond to others who repent? Is it right to forgive the candle-maker or should she be punished?

Week Four: Celebration

This is a big idea to explore and can include anything from the nature of celebration, to ways in which we celebrate, times when we celebrate and an exploration of the celebrations of Christianity and other faiths, especially celebrations taking place at this time of year. It is a good idea to think about how the ways in which people celebrate link with the event being celebrated.

Week Five: Preparation

As preparation was a theme at the very beginning of term, this time we focus on preparations for Christmas. Pupils can consider how the anticipation and excitement they feel as Christmas draws near is like what the candle-maker was feeling, waiting for her friend to arrive.

Week Six: Welcoming

The candle-maker was keen to have everything ready so that her friend would feel welcome. How are people welcomed and made to feel at home? How do we welcome newcomers and visitors to our school?

Section Three: The discipleship parables

Values: Love and honesty

Story: Cassandra's crown

There are possible links with science/geography, art, literacy, PSHE, Citizenship, history and RE.

RE

Links can be drawn with the Non-statutory National Framework for RE themes for KS1 and KS2, most specifically beliefs about God; leaders and teachers; inspirational people; religion and the individual; beliefs in action. These links are not about everything within these themes but can contribute to pupils' understanding of elements of them. For example:

- KS1: Explore what the parables teach us about how we should behave and respond to other people.
- KS1: Explore the idea of Jesus being king.
- KS2: Building on earlier learning about the parables, explore in more detail the potential impact on society if people follow the guidance provided in the parables included in this series. Explore the impact on the lives of people who have followed this guidance—for example, people who make great sacrifices for their faith (monks and nuns, martyrs through the ages such as Thomas Becket, William Tyndale, Maximilian Kolbe, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Oscar Romero).
- KS2: Look for similarities and possible differences in the teachings of other faiths. For example, the story of Bhai Ghanaya in Sikhism has much the same challenge as the parable of the good Samaritan. With a slightly different emphasis, there is a story of the kindness of the Prophet Muhammad to a very bad-tempered woman. Interesting comparisons might be drawn with the Jewish practice of people putting things right that they've done wrong—apologising and so on—between Rosh Hashanah (New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), with the understanding that if a person refuses three times to accept an apology and efforts at putting things right, then the bad deed/sin is counted against them. This points to a responsibility to forgive as well as to repent.
- KS2 pupils might explore ideas/beliefs about heaven and their own thoughts about this.

PSHE and Citizenship

Links might explore how religious teachings and faith make a difference to how people behave and respond to others. Explore ideas and people who influence the ways in which we live our lives. The NATRE website has a huge database of young people's responses to the questions 'What is the best way to live?' and 'What is your vision of a perfect world?' which can provide excellent discussion starters: see www.natre.org.uk/db.index.html.

This approach links well with RE, which might be an appropriate context in which to explore secrets and the feelings and difficulties associated with them. The secret of the crown is a theme running right through the story. Secrets can be exciting—for example, surprises, gifts and so on—but they can also be divisive if some people are excluded by or from them.

Links with healthy eating might invite learning about some of the health implications of sweet-eating.

Art and Design

Pupils could make their own crowns after researching examples of real ones. A Google image search for crowns or crown jewels will give plenty of inspiration. They could also explore mazes—for example, in gardens such as Hampton Court and Longleat and the temporary maize mazes often created at Millets Farm near Abingdon and on a farm just west of Hungerford (Week Five).

Science/Geography

Pupils could explore rocks, erosion and cave formation (linking with Week Six), as well as gemstones (where and how they are found and turned into the articles found in jewellers' shops).

History

Finding out about monarchs and/or the history of the crown jewels might be a possibility (linking with art ideas).

Literacy

Speaking and listening, reading associated stories and writing will underpin everything outlined above. There are many opportunities to develop descriptive writing and poetry around Cassandra's journey and adventures and the crown with its gemstones. Looking at examples of adventure stories might be appropriate. There are also opportunities for debate and or drama around the decisions Cassandra made at each stage of her adventure.

Key themes week by week

The key themes emerge from the parables linked with the story of Cassandra's crown.

Week One: Learning from stories

Jesus used stories to help people understand his challenging messages. Sometimes stories can simplify or clarify ideas. They can also bring to life difficult teachings, helping people to understand the impact of behaviours and actions. They are often easier to listen to than information or lectures.

Week Two: Saying sorry

Sometimes it's very hard to say sorry and admit mistakes, but it is important in the process of putting things right. The parable of the two sons is also about the forgiveness and love of the father and links with one of the values associated with this theme.

Week Three: Helping others

The challenge of the parable of the good Samaritan is not about just helping others but helping those we feel least inclined to help. Who are the outcasts in our society today—those we might feel uncomfortable with or prejudiced against? Explore examples of good Samaritans in our society who help these people; then reflect on who we would find it difficult to help and how we could overcome these feelings. Consideration may need to be given to contexts when it would be unwise for children to go directly to the aid of people in need. Why, and what else could they do instead?

Week Four: Equal but different

Everyone is a child of God and, as such, loved by God despite the many differences between people and their different behaviours. Explore understandings and responses to other people and to God. Reflect on how this challenges people to treat others.

Week Five: Using our talents

Everyone is good at something. Christians believe that God gives us all talents and he wants us to use them to live the very best lives we can. There are lots of opportunities to reflect on the talents of people within and outside school, and how the way they are used makes a difference to those individuals, the people around them and, in some cases, to the world.

Week Six: Commitment

Christians believe that they should dedicate their lives to God and what he wants. Other people have other commitments and beliefs that inform their lives. Reflect on the things that are important to different people and the effects this has on their lives.

Section Four: The humility of Jesus

Values: Humility and hope

Story: The witness birds

There are a great many references to historical events, places in the world and features of the planet and its weather system, which enable some history and/or geography links with the story of the witness birds. There are also possible links with science, art, literacy and RE.

RE

Links can be drawn with the Non-statutory National Framework for RE themes for KS1 and KS2, most specifically (KS1) beliefs about Jesus; celebrations; symbols, and (KS2) beliefs and questions about Jesus; worship and sacred places; symbols and religious expression; the journey of life and death. These links are not about everything within these themes but can contribute to pupils' understanding of elements of them. For example:

- **KS1:** Explore the story of Holy Week and Easter, drawing on links between the story and ways in which Easter is celebrated today—for example, hot cross buns, Easter eggs and Easter gardens. Pupils could explore the significance of the cross for Christians.
- **KS2:** Building on earlier learning, explore in more detail the narratives of Holy Week and Easter and their significance for Christians, examples of Holy Week and Easter worship, and the significance of Jerusalem as a place of pilgrimage for Christians today and through the ages (possibly link with reference to the Crusades in Week Four). Consider the way beliefs about Holy Week, Easter and Jesus are represented in symbols, art, films and plays. Explore the origins and significance of a variety of representations of the cross. Find out how Christians' beliefs about life after death are informed by their beliefs in the resurrection of Jesus. There is also an opportunity, if you decide to focus on Jerusalem, to consider its significance for Jews and Muslims as well as Christians.

Science

Find out about different species of birds, especially those featured in the story.

Art and Design

Study works of art portraying the events of Holy Week, the crucifixion and resurrection. There is a wide range of art and design ideas in *A-cross the World* by Martyn Payne and Betty Pedley (Barnabas, 2004)—for example, in relation to the Salvadorean and Celtic crosses.

Geography

Places mentioned within the story of the witness birds include the Arctic Circle, Iceland, the Indian Ocean, Cilaos, Madagascar, Venice and Israel. Other aspects of geography that arise include volcanoes, hot water pools, rainfall, tornadoes and hurricanes. These might give rise to some interesting links with studies planned within the geography curriculum or one-off, short-term reading or research projects for individuals or groups.

History

Key historical figures and events mentioned within the story of the witness birds include William the Conqueror, Harold and the Battle of Hastings; Queen Elizabeth II's 80th birthday celebrations at Windsor Castle; the Great Fire of London; Guy Fawkes' plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament; Richard I and the Crusades; the 1923 FA Cup Final; Charles I, Oliver Cromwell and the Battle of Newbury. These might give rise to some interesting links with studies planned within the history curriculum or one-off, short-term reading or research projects for individuals or groups.

Literacy

Speaking and listening, reading associated history or geography non-fiction texts, and writing will underpin everything outlined above. There are many opportunities to develop empathetic and persuasive writing.

Key themes week by week

The key themes emerge from aspects of the Holy Week narrative.

Week One: Being popular

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, it was to the acclaim of the crowds. They hoped he would be the Messiah they were waiting for. Discussion can focus on experiences of being popular or unpopular, ways in which we show regard for others and so on.

Week Two: Serving others

At the last supper Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. He demonstrated the idea that his followers should be willing and quick to serve others. Discussion can focus on ways in which people can and do serve one another. This will enable an exploration of one of the values associated with this theme—humility.

Week Three: Non-violence

Even though it meant he had no protection, Jesus would not allow Peter to use a sword against those who came to arrest him. Discussion can focus around peaceful ways of resolving difficulties and disagreements in the playground.

Week Four: Betrayal

After Jesus was arrested, Peter denied knowing Jesus. This was probably because he was afraid about what might happen to him if people knew he was a friend of Jesus. Discussion can focus on ways in which people sometimes let their friends down, how hard it is sometimes not to do this, and how it feels to be let down and to know we have let someone else down.

Week Five: Bullying and persecution

Jesus had been arrested and the crowd had turned against him. Not only that, but he was also mocked and humiliated. Discussion can focus on how people bully and taunt people today, why they do it and how it makes others feel. Consideration can also be given to ways in which teachers and pupils can ensure that these kinds of behaviour do not occur in school.

Week Six: Different perceptions

The two men crucified alongside Jesus had very different responses to him. The people around him had various ideas about who he was. Discussion can focus around how everyone creates different impressions of themselves in different contexts. Pupils can reflect on how they would like people to remember them when they leave the school.

Section Five: Jesus: risen and ascended

Values: Peace and understanding

Story: The amazing flowerpot

Possible links can be drawn with science, art, PSHE, literacy and RE.

RE

Links can be drawn with the Non-statutory National Framework for RE themes for KS1 and KS2, most specifically (KS1) beliefs about Jesus, and (KS2) beliefs and questions about Jesus; the journey of life and death. These links are not about everything within these themes but can contribute to pupils' understanding of elements of them. For example:

- KS1: Explore the narratives in order to be able to retell them and suggest why they are important to Christians.
- KS2: Building on earlier learning, explore in more detail the resurrection narratives, their significance for Christians and the key beliefs arising from them, including Christian beliefs about life after death. The NATRE database of children's ideas has a section on their thoughts on this topic, which will provide good discussion starter material: www.natre.org.uk/db/profile1.php.

Science

Study growing plants and their varying needs, how plants grow, and the senses of sight, sound, touch, taste and smell.

PSHE

The ideas included in the 'key themes' listed below might provide a focus for PSHE.

Art and Design

Make observations of plants for drawing and photographing, study artwork depicting flowers, and produce collage work relating to the human senses.

Literacy

Speaking and listening, reading and writing will underpin everything outlined above. There are many opportunities to develop descriptive writing relating to flowers and senses. Drama and writing about the feelings and responses of the followers of Jesus open up alternative possibilities.

Key themes week by week

The key themes emerge from aspects of the Eastertide narratives.

Week One: Feeling low and disappointment

After Jesus' death and burial, his friends were probably confused, bewildered and disappointed. Discussion can focus on times when pupils have experienced such feelings—for example when a friend moved away. If it is appropriate to do so, there could also be some discussion about bereavement.

Week Two: The sense of smell

Percy's flower smelt beautiful. Not all smells are so nice, but a sense of smell is important. Consider how life might be different without it.

Week Three: The sense of taste

The fruit on Percy's flower tasted delicious. Consider the tastes that people like and dislike, as well as their favourite fruits and other foods.

Week Four: The sense of sight

For Peter, seeing was believing. Consider the importance of sight and the experiences of people who live without it. Think about the support that is available for those who can't see—for example, guide dogs, the work of Louis Braille and the use of his alphabet today, and audio books and newspapers.

Week Five: The sense of touch

Being able to touch Jesus' wounds was what Thomas needed, to convince him that Jesus was alive. In what ways is touch used to convince people of affection or anger? Some people live with little or no sense of touch, leading to all sorts of dangers. Consider how important this sense is to people's safety.

Week Six: The sense of hearing

Hearing Jesus' voice reassured his friends. Consider what it would be like to live in a silent world. Find out about how technology, signing and lip reading can help those who experience hearing impairment. Find out about Evelyn Glennie, the world-famous percussionist.

An additional theme relating to this section of the story is the idea of wanting to have a go. Percy had not played football for ages but he was willing to try. Similarly, Jesus' friends, inspired by his words, wanted to tell others about him. Discussion could focus on the importance of being willing to have a go at doing different things.

Throughout the story, the idea of surprise recurs, and reflection on this could lead to discussion on pleasant and perhaps distressing surprises.

Section Six: Paul's journeys

Values: Responsibility and tolerance

Story: The vital race

Possible links can be drawn with science, PSHE, Citizenship, geography, literacy and RE.

RE

Links can be drawn with the Non-statutory National Framework for RE themes for KS1 and KS2, most specifically (KS1) leaders and teachers, belonging, celebrations, symbols, and (KS2) inspirational people; religion and the individual; religion, family and community; worship; symbols. These links are not about everything within these themes but can contribute to pupils' understanding of elements of them. For example:

- KS1: Explore the narratives about Paul's journeys and understand that they come from the Bible. Find out about baptism, its significance and symbolism (especially the use of candles in some services).
- KS2: Building on earlier learning, explore in more detail narratives about Paul and his journeys and their significance for Christians. Find out about some of the key teachings included in Paul's letters and what they mean to Christians today. The Spring 2006 edition of the *RE Today* magazine has a good article about the apostle Paul with teaching ideas. Develop understanding of different forms of Christian baptism and what Christians mean when they say that Jesus is the light of the world.

Science

Explore the topic of light. Find out about the lives of the animals that feature in the story, such as wolves, beavers, badgers, porcupines, moles, gorillas, eagles and bears. It may be possible to incorporate some into work on life cycles and or habitats.

PSHE

The story invites pupils to engage with ideas such as determination, helping others, being brave and thinking carefully. There is also an opportunity to explore what people think is extremely precious in relation to Week Two, including the idea that, for some people, worshipping God is the most precious and valuable thing in the world.

Geography

Various locations are included in the parallel narratives of the 'vital race' and Paul's journeys, which could either support elements of the geography curriculum or give rise to one-off, short-term reading or research projects for individuals or groups—for example, Paphos, Athens, Ephesus, Caesarea, Crete, Rome, mountain and forest locations, waterfalls.

Literacy

Speaking and listening, reading and writing will underpin everything outlined above.

Key themes week by week

Week One: Being part of a team

Skipper, Colorado and Perry were a team. They each had different skills, so they could help each other out and work well together. Discussion could focus around the times when people need to work together in teams, what makes a good team and the benefits of working in a team.

Week Two: Precious and valuable

Perry knew that the most precious and valuable thing to put on the plinth was the flask of light. For many Christians, worshipping God is the most precious and valuable thing in the world. Discussion could focus around different understandings of value, what different people think is the most valuable thing in the world, and why they think so. This will also provide an opportunity to engage with the values associated with this theme, because people have responsibilities toward things that are of value and need to be tolerant of ideas that are different from their own.

Week Three: Shining like a light

People in Ephesus were baptised so that they would shine like lights in the world. Christians believe they should share the message of Jesus with other people. Discussion could focus on how each person, with their different talents, skills, interests and beliefs, can shine like a light for other people.

Week Four: Persuasion

The three friends in the story had to convince the chief gorilla of the value of their mission. Paul was set free because he convinced Agrippa about Jesus. Consider the power of persuasion and how it can be used for good and bad causes.

Week Five: Fear

The bears and the three friends were afraid in the storm. When people are afraid, they cannot always think straight and don't know what to do. Sometimes people need help to overcome their fears. The storm did not go away but the light helped all the animals to feel less afraid. Discussion might focus on examples of times when people have been afraid and things that have helped them overcome their fears. Consideration might be given to the idea that sometimes we are afraid of things we don't understand properly. For example, before they were understood, solar eclipses terrified people, and people who thought the world was flat were afraid they might fall off the edge.

Week Six: Making a difference

The arrival of the light in the village saved lives, and Christians believe that the good news about Jesus changes people's lives. Lots of people do jobs that make a big difference to the lives of others—for example, doctors, nurses, fire fighters and teachers. However, all these people can only really make a difference if the people they are trying to help accept the help that is offered. This balance engages well with the value of responsibility. Discussion could focus on classroom or school examples, as well as examples of people who are advised by doctors to exercise or not to smoke, but choose not to follow the advice.

Photographic images of the six stories

Felix's garden



The candle-maker



Cassandra's crown



The witness birds



The amazing flowerpot

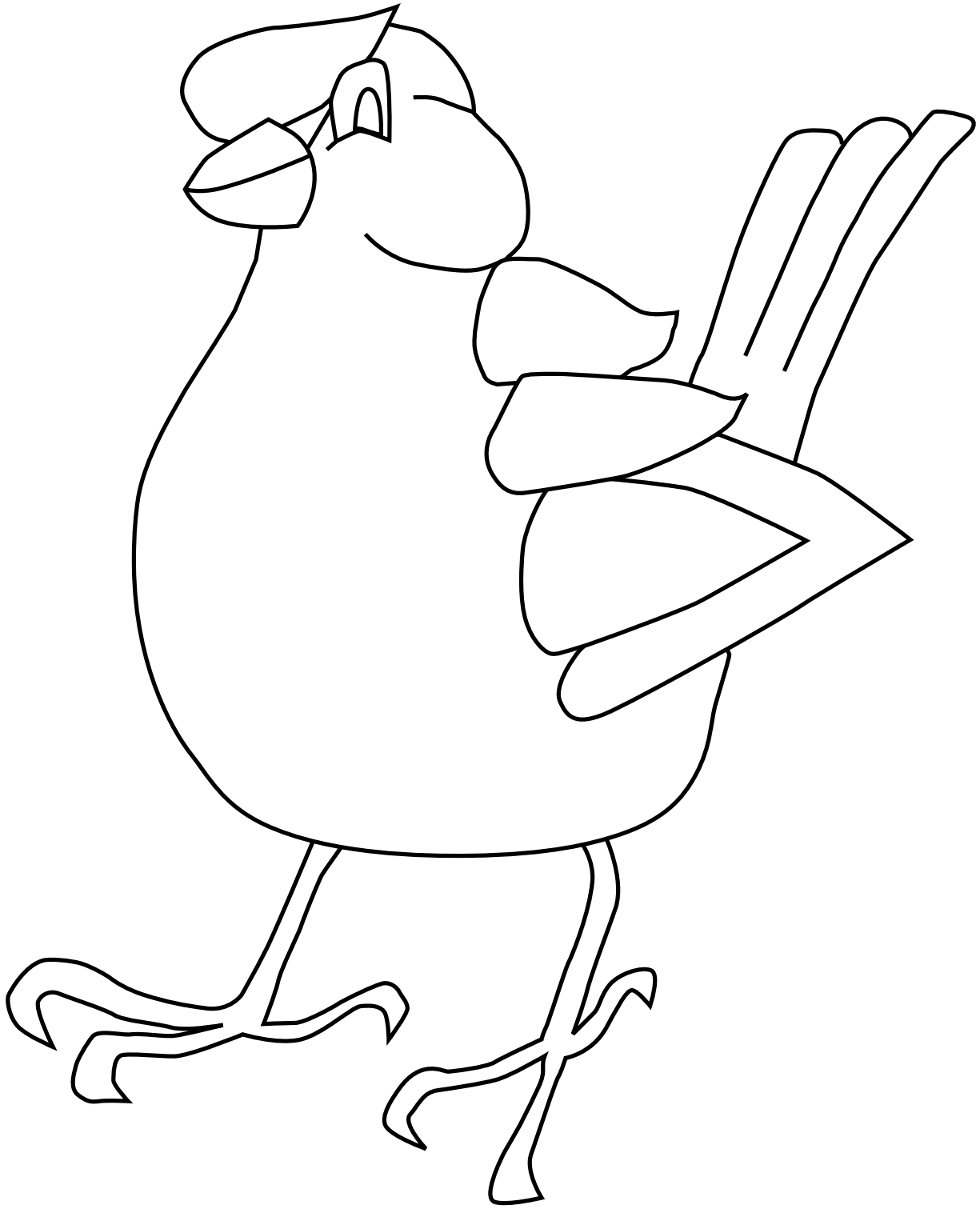


The vital race

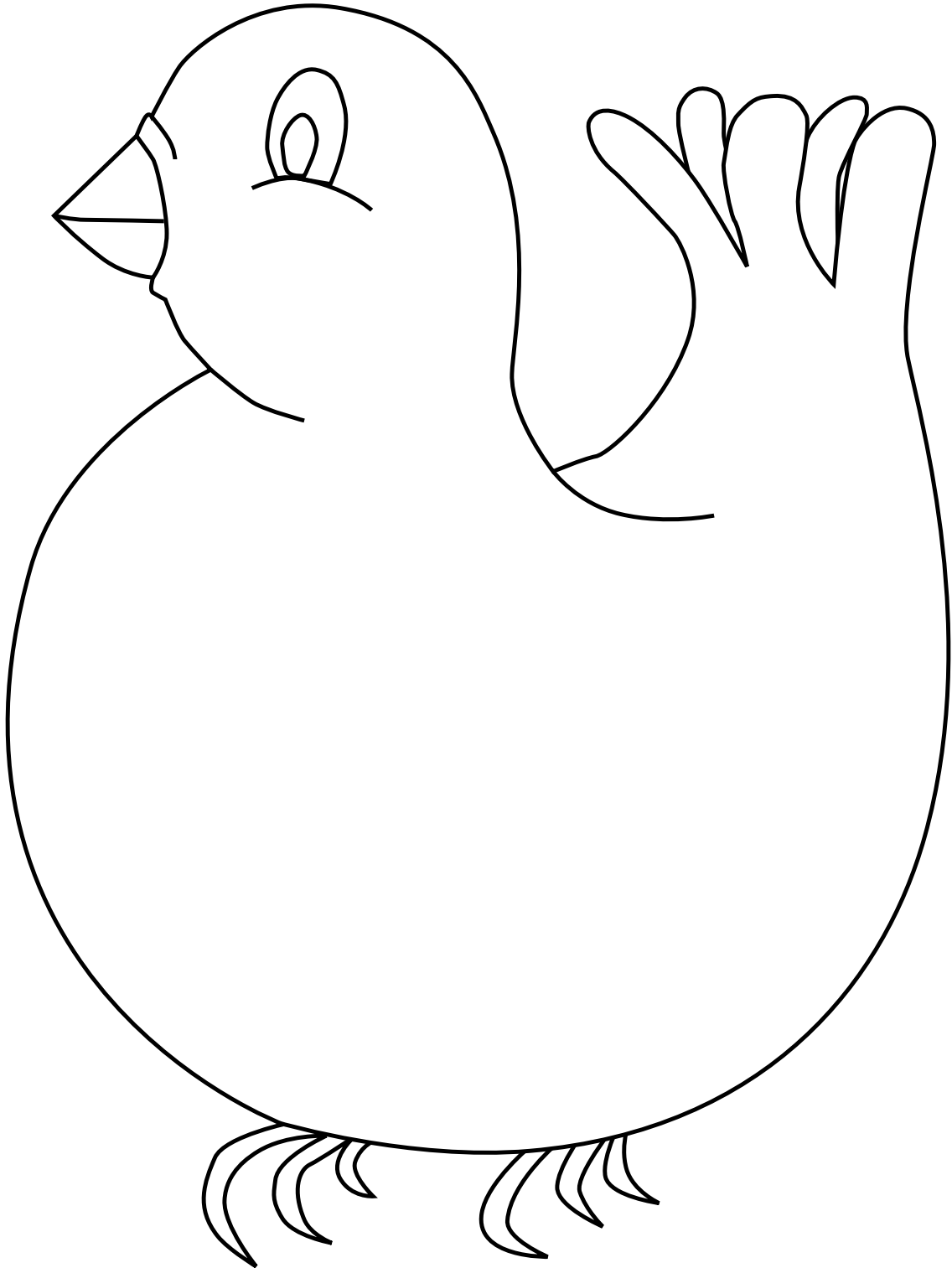


Witness bird pictures

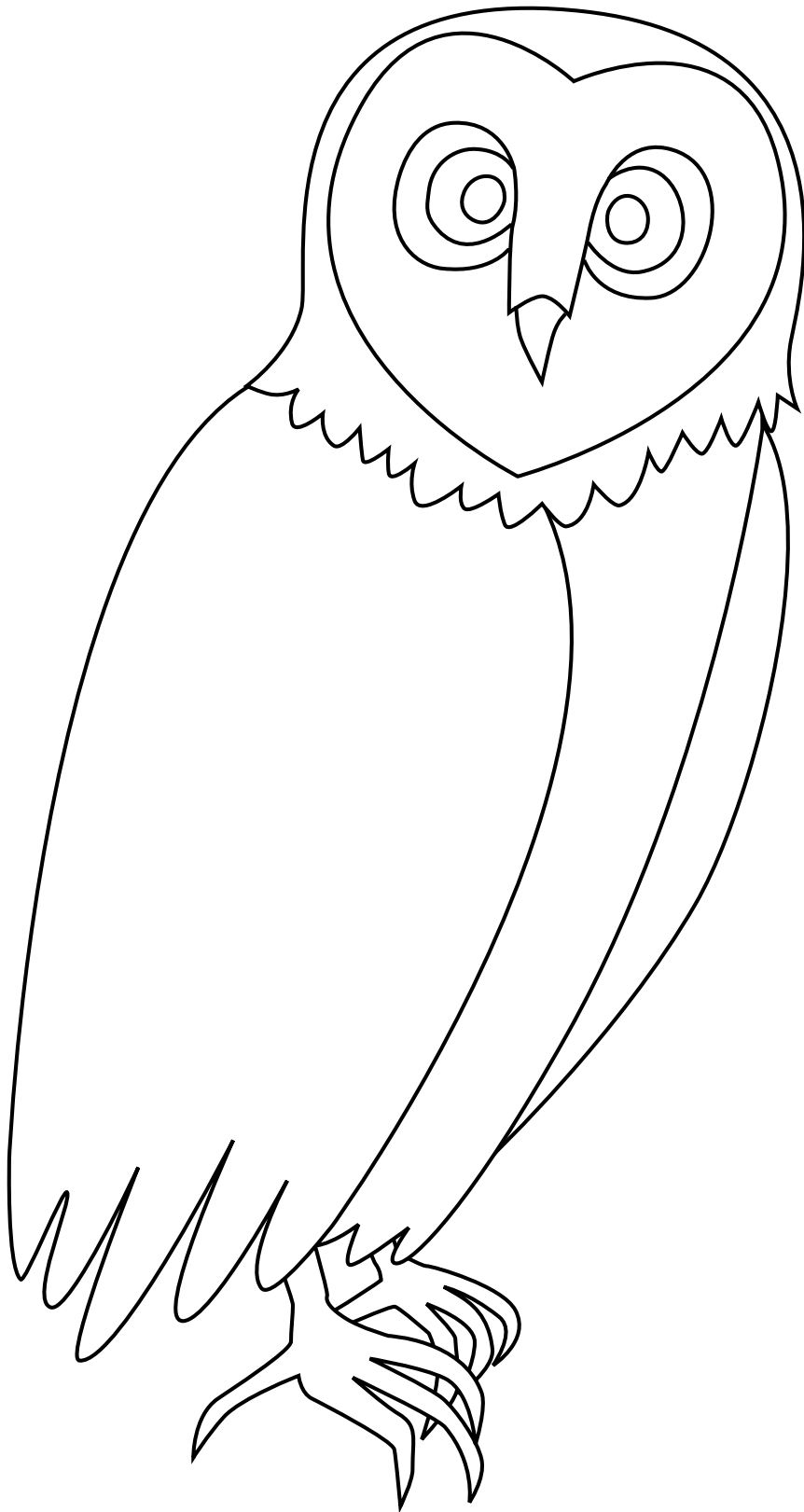
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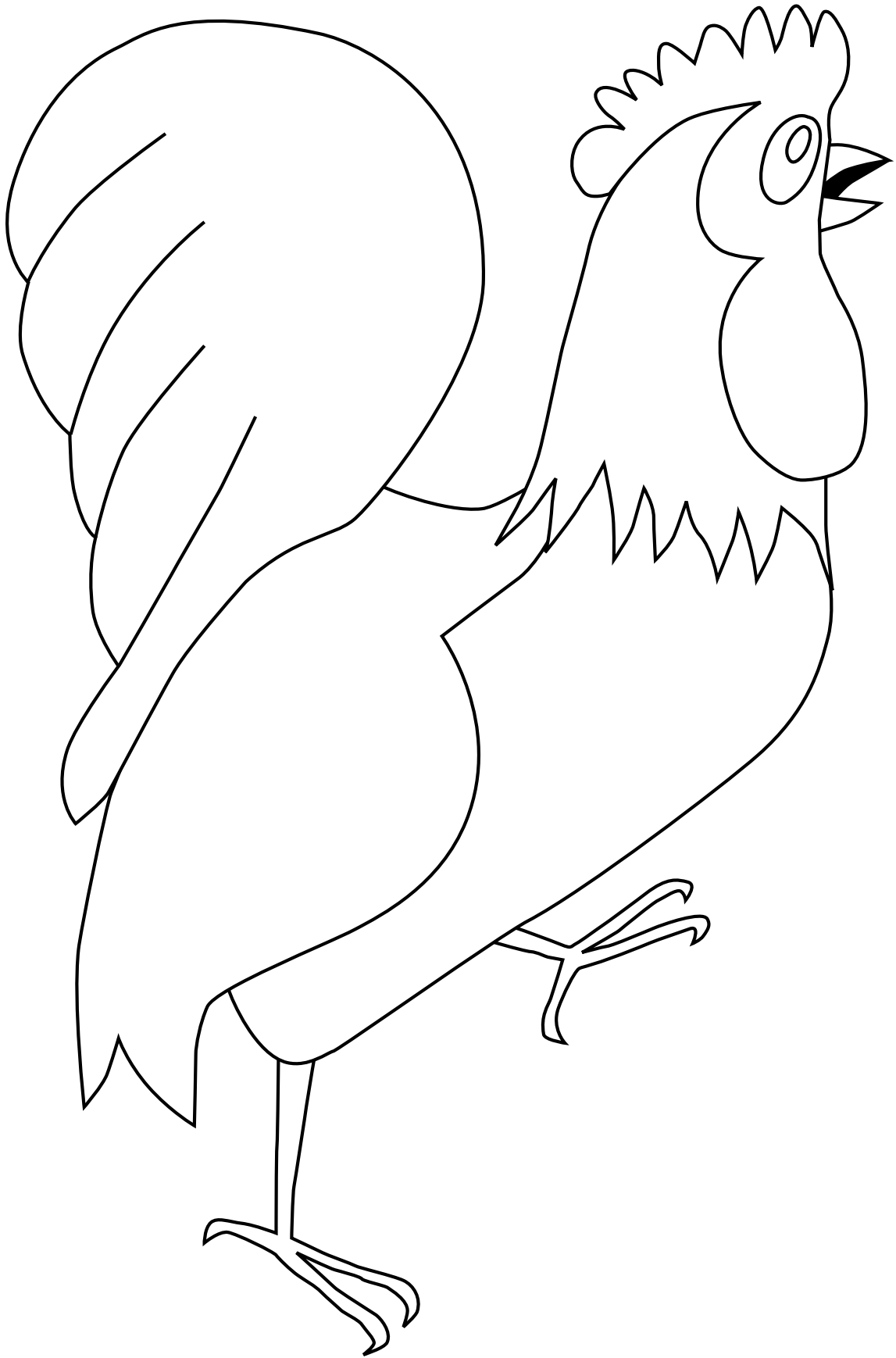
Dove



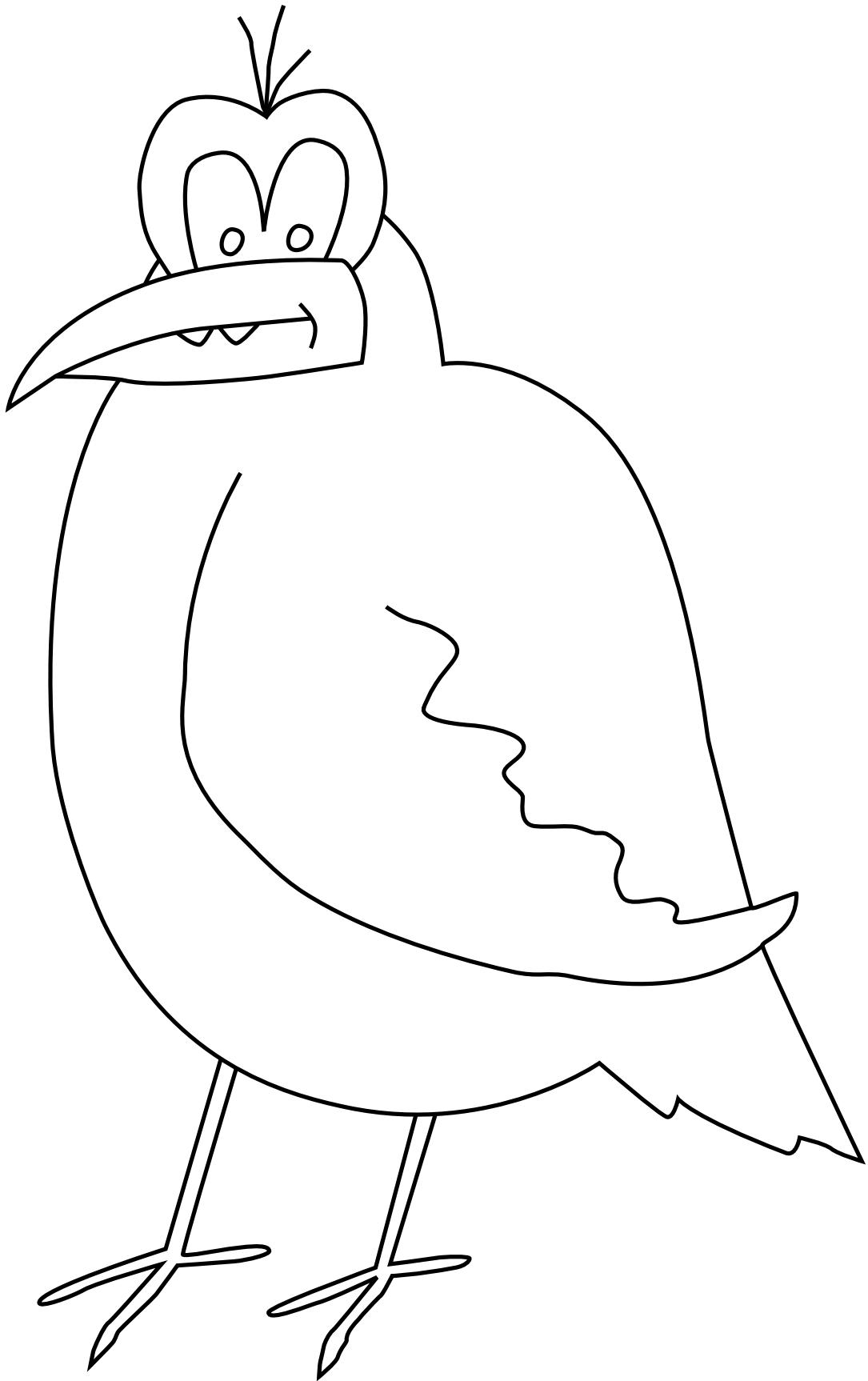
Owl



Cockerel



Crow



God's storyteller badge

