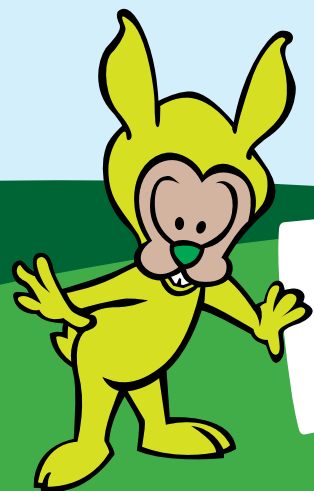
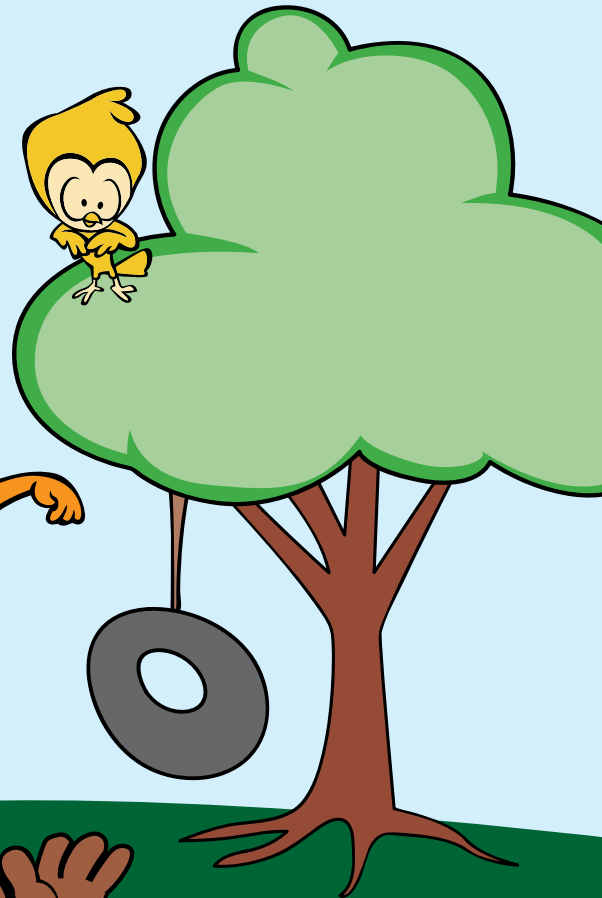
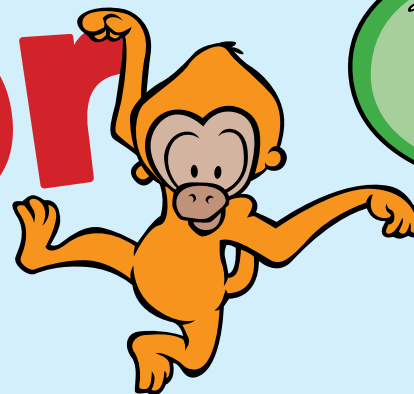


BE ACTIVE KIDS®

# Outdoor Play



# Every Day!



**Written by: Evie Houtz**

**Layout:** Jennifer Kanakos

**Special thanks to all those who  
helped bring this book to life:**

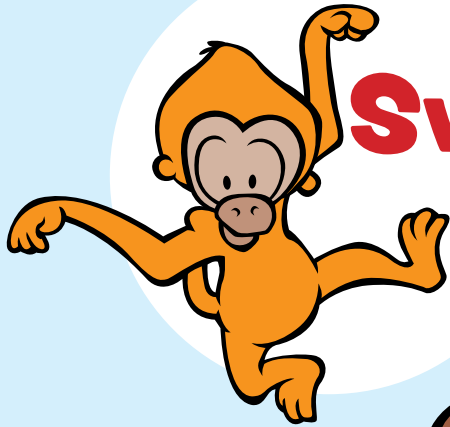
Rich Rairigh  
Lisa Butterworth

Nilda Cosco  
Robin Moore

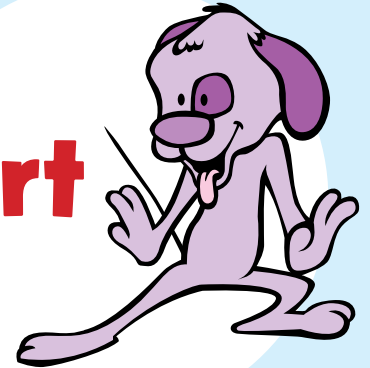
**Special thanks  
to our supporting partners:**



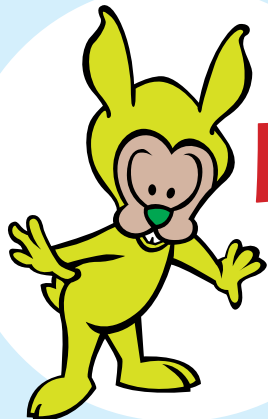
Hi Friends!  
My name is Blue,  
the Caring Cub,  
and these are  
my friends;  
Dart, Glide, Leap,  
and Swing.



**Swing**



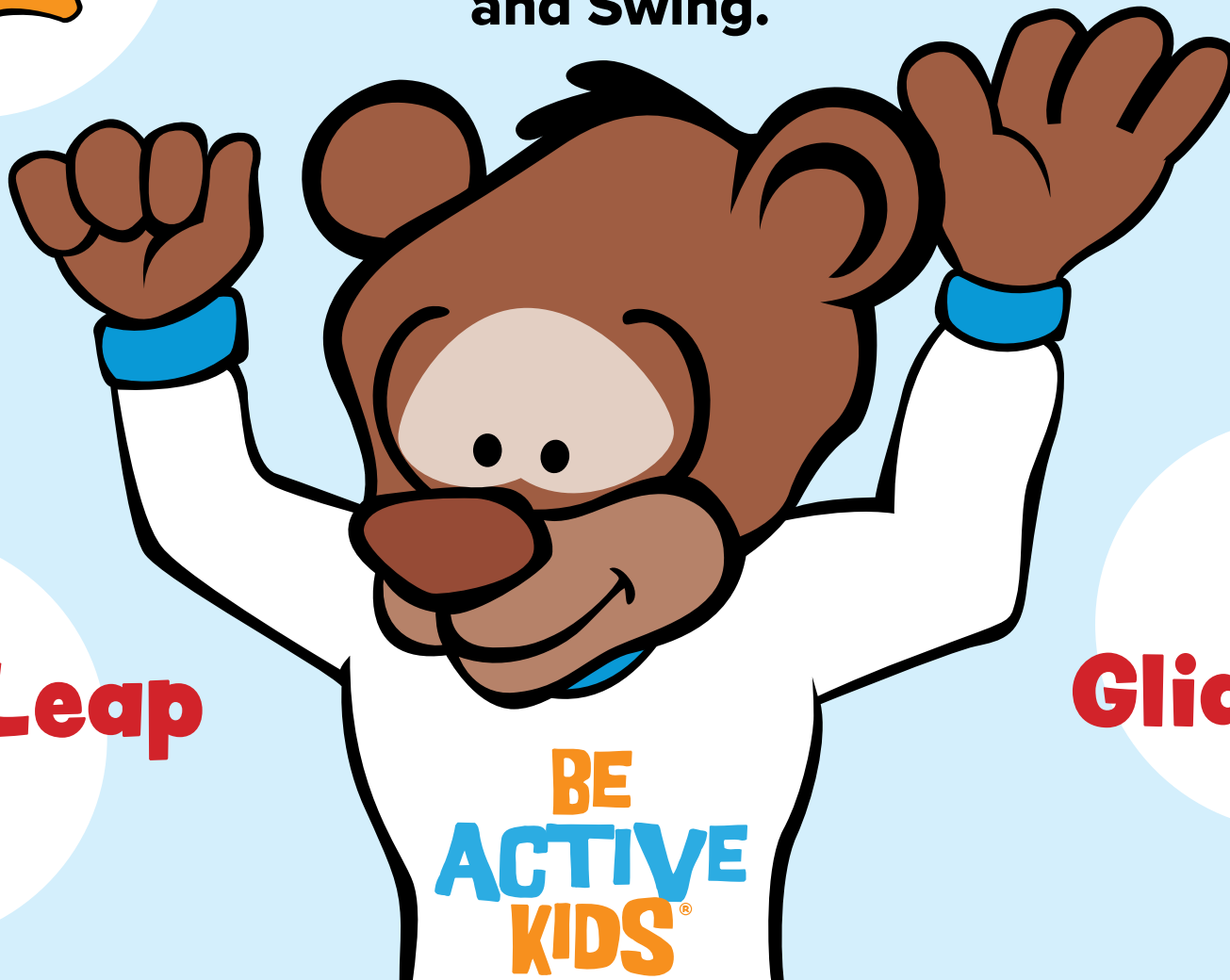
**Dart**



**Leap**



**Glide**



**BE  
ACTIVE  
KIDS®**

It's a beautiful day.  
Blue and his friends want to  
go outside and

# play!



Blue asks his friends if they would like to go

**explore**  
the neighborhood.



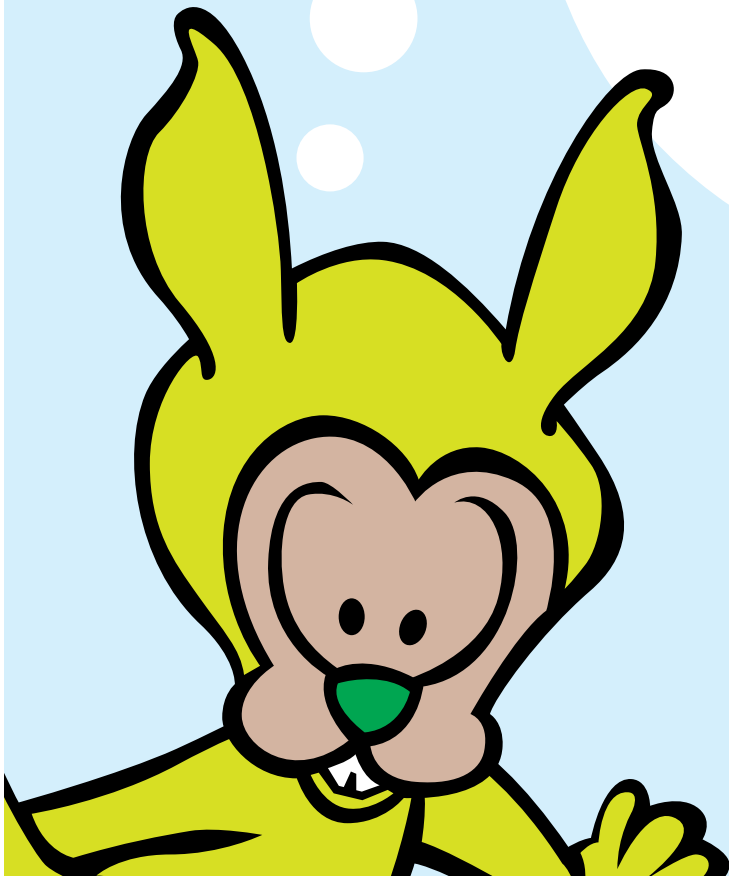
Outside they have the space to **run** in the grass, **jump** over fallen branches and **climb** tall trees.

This gives them strong bodies and healthy minds.



**The friends  
like to use their  
imaginations and  
create new ways to play.**

**What do you think Blue  
and his friends  
should do?**

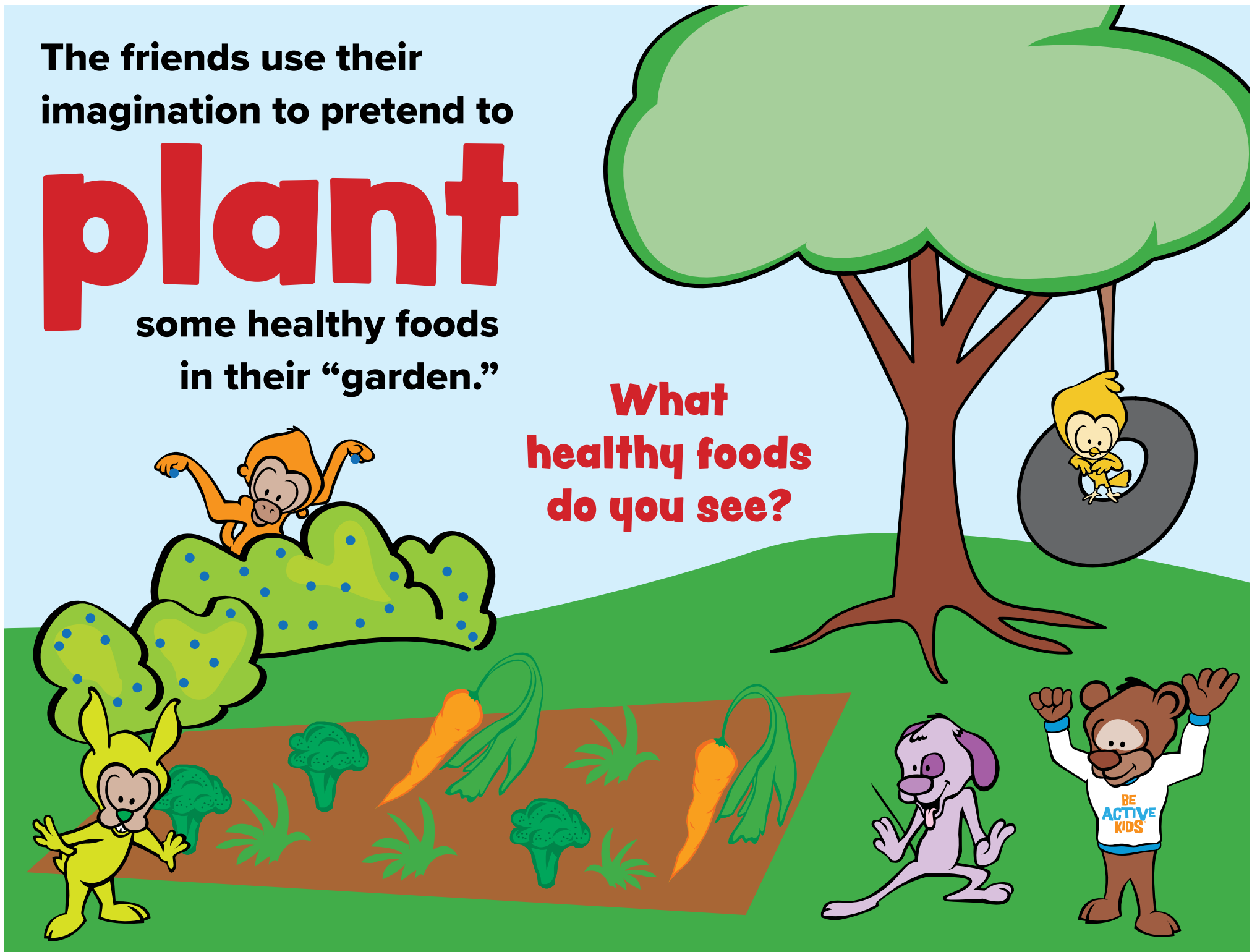


The friends use their  
imagination to pretend to

# plant

some healthy foods  
in their “garden.”

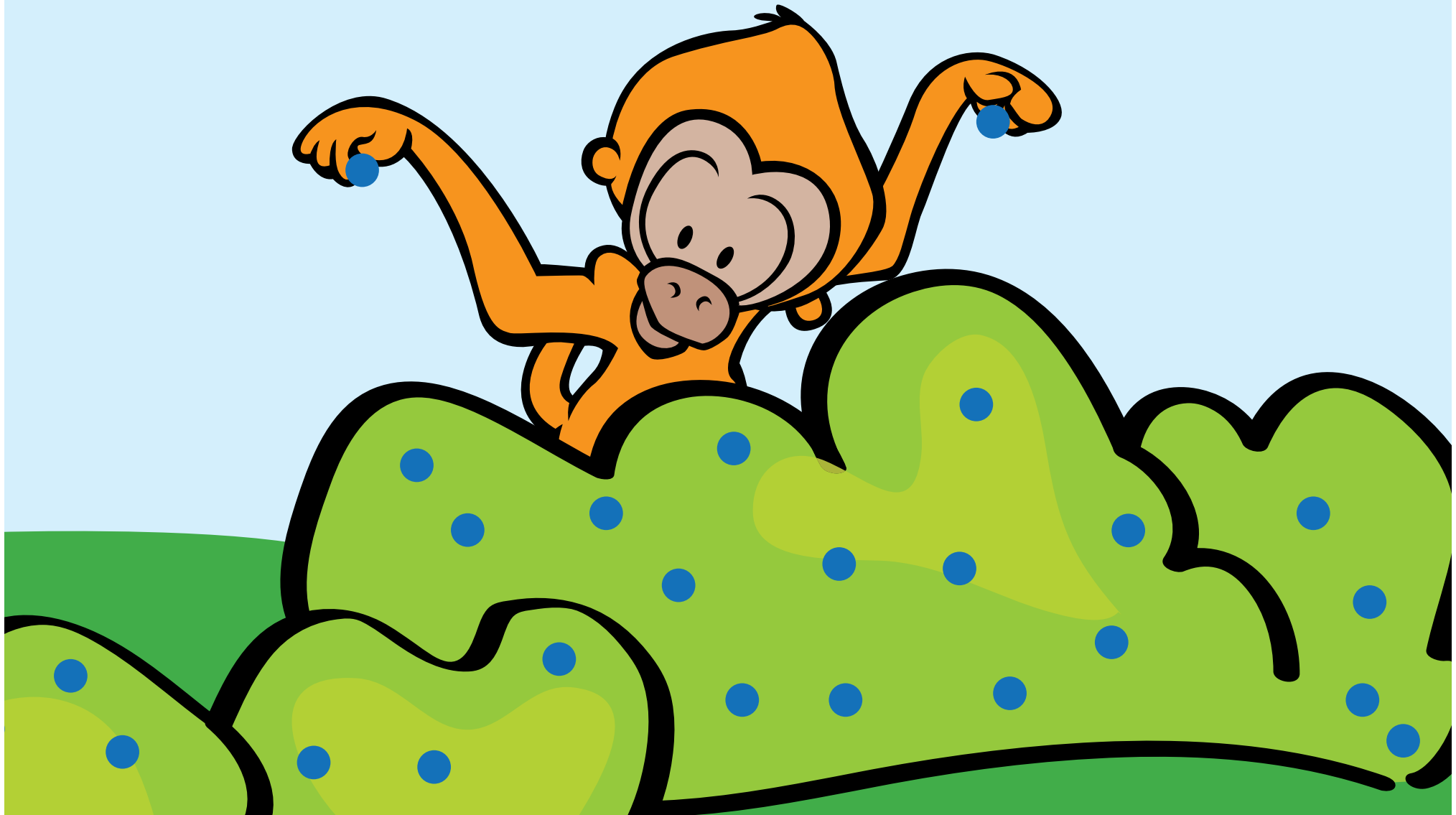
**What  
healthy foods  
do you see?**





Swing discovers his favorite healthy fruit in the “garden.”

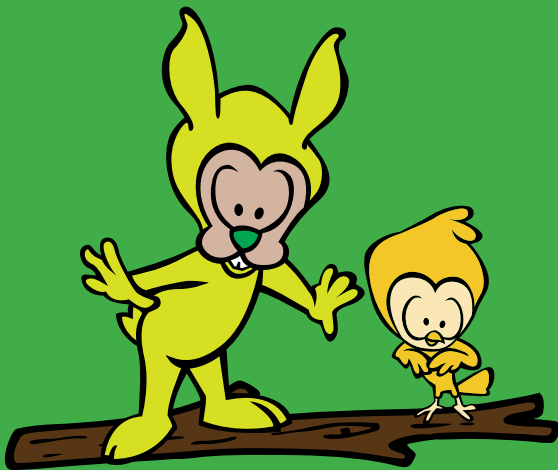
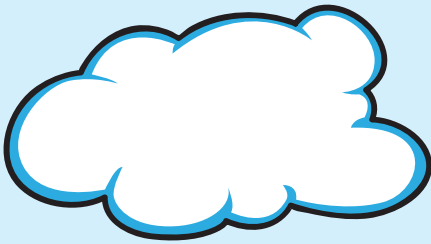
# Blueberries!



**As Blue and his friends continue exploring,  
they find a bunch of big sticks.**

**How many sticks did they find?**

**What would  
you do with  
the sticks?**



**1**



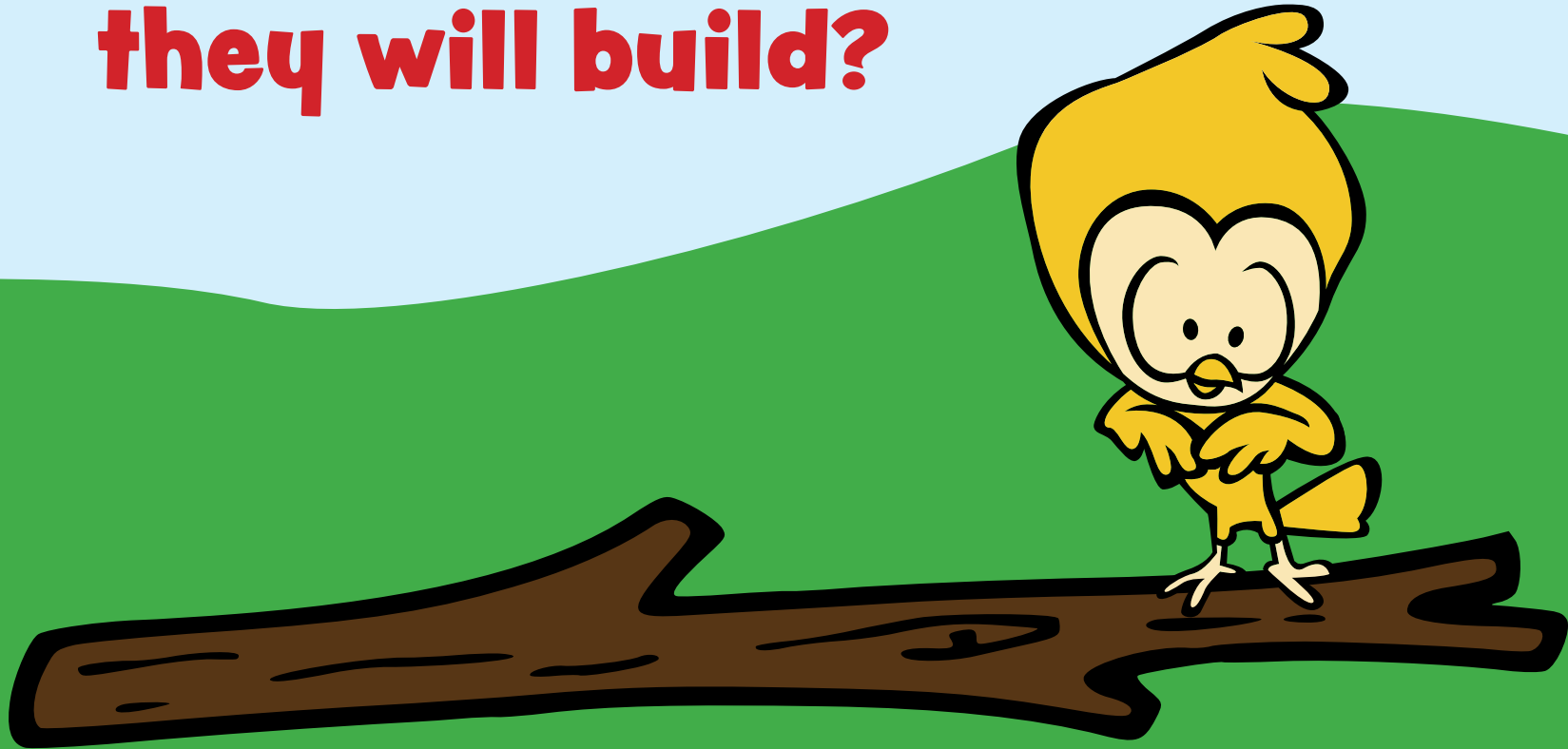
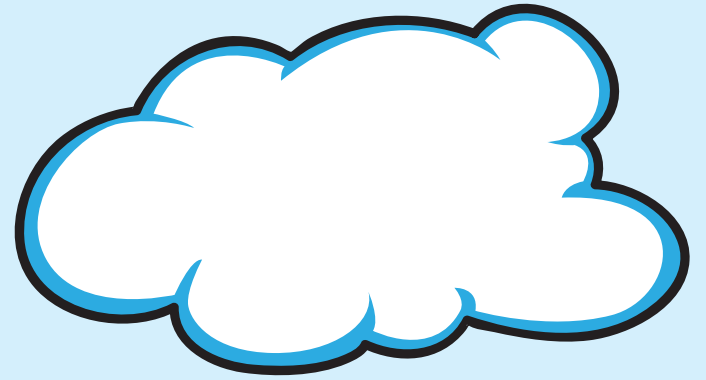
**2**



**3**

**Glide thinks the friends  
could use the sticks  
to build something.**

**What do you think  
they will build?**



They decide to **build** a teepee.

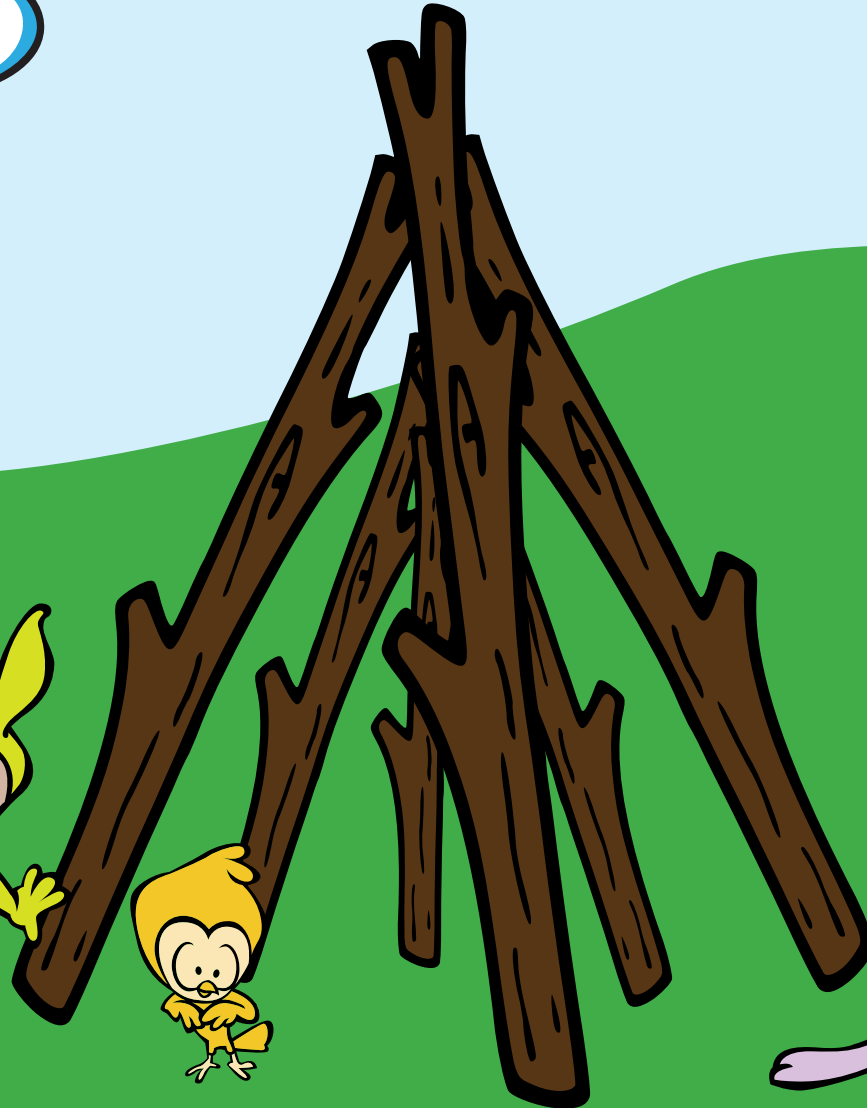
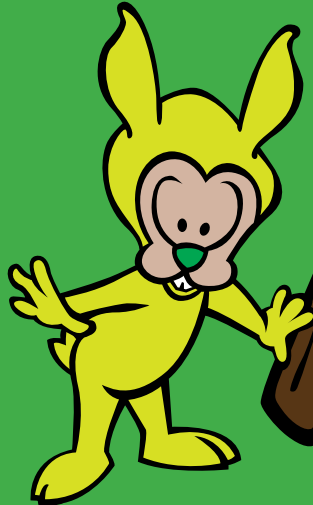
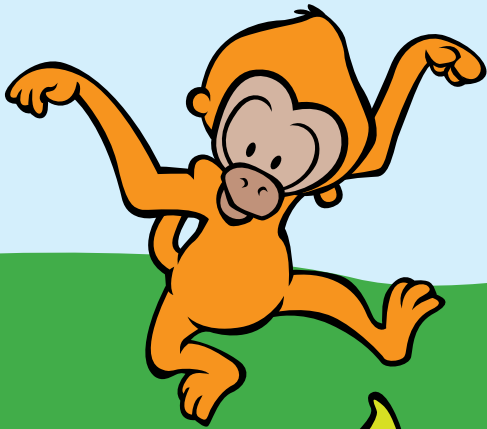
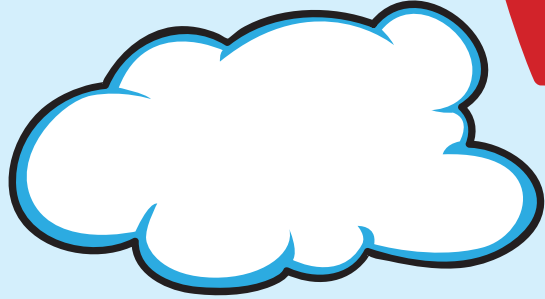
Blue, Dart and Leap **lift** the big sticks into place.

Are you strong enough to **lift** heavy sticks?

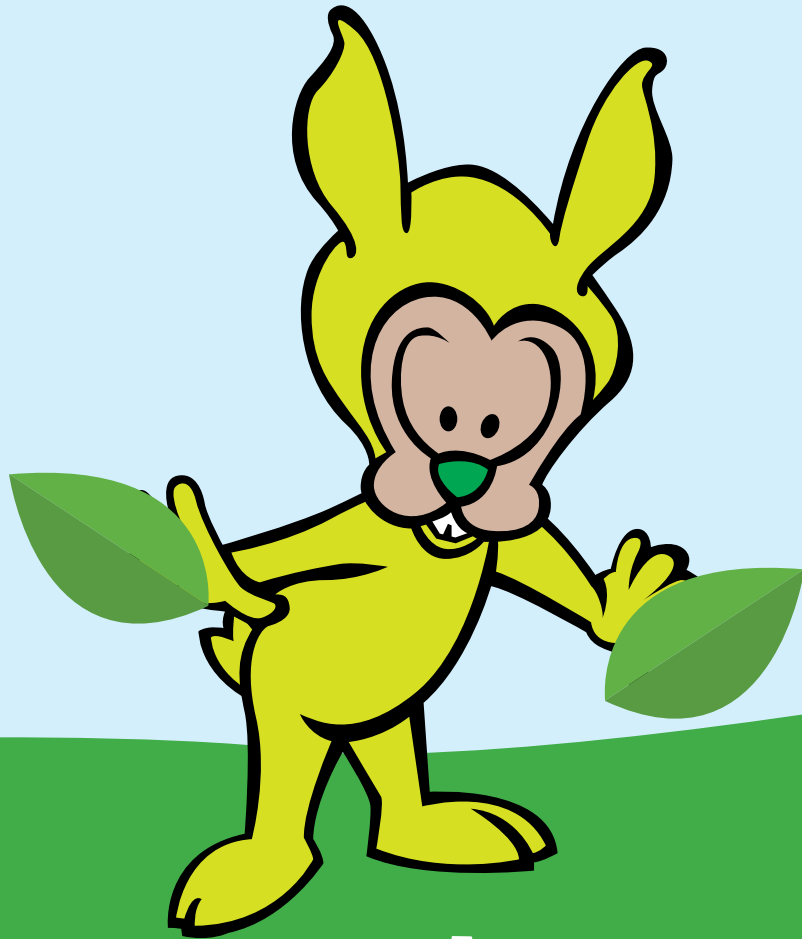
**How would you do it?**



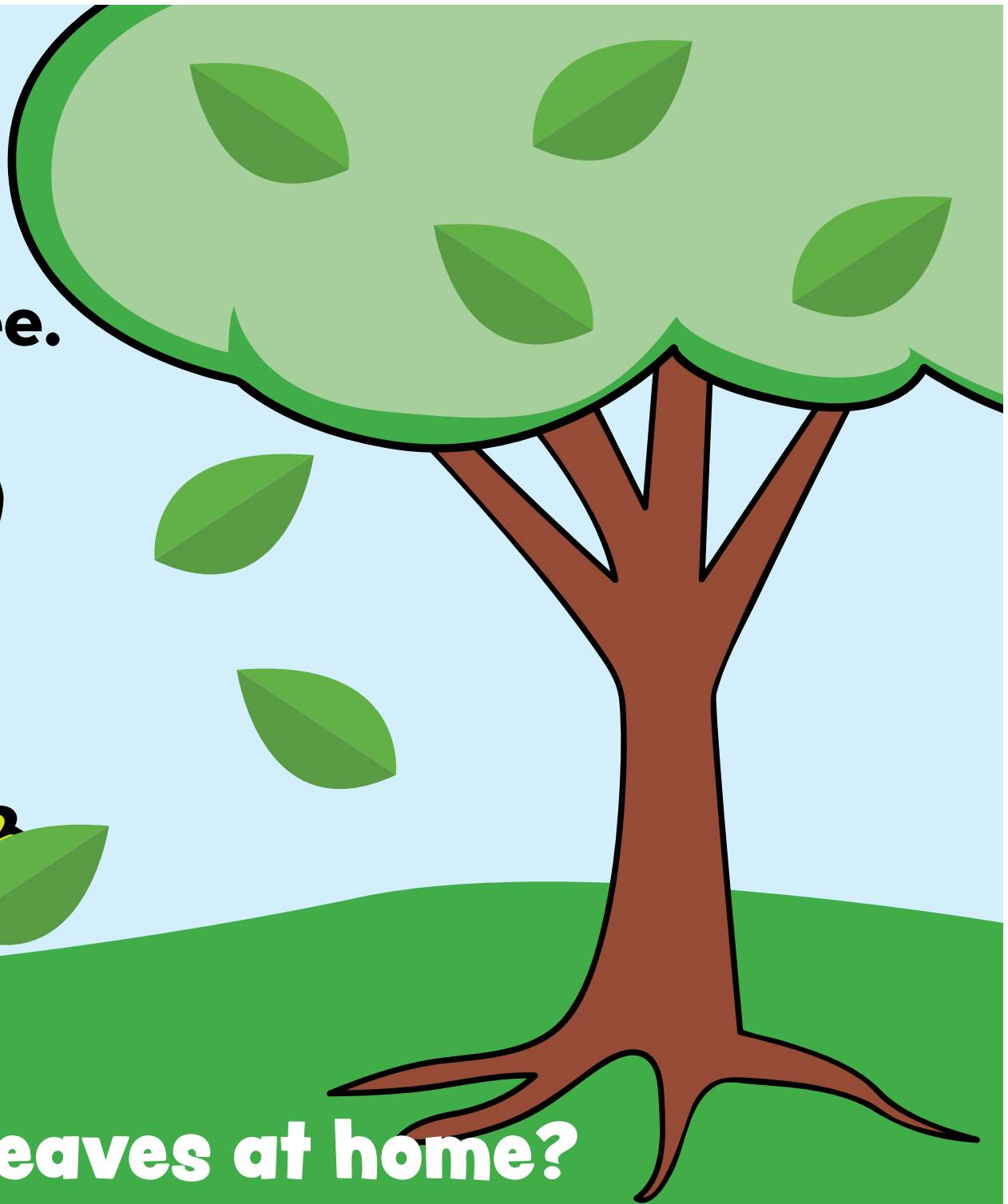
They did it! They **worked** together and built a teepee!



Leap wants to **gather** leaves to use as the floor of the teepee.



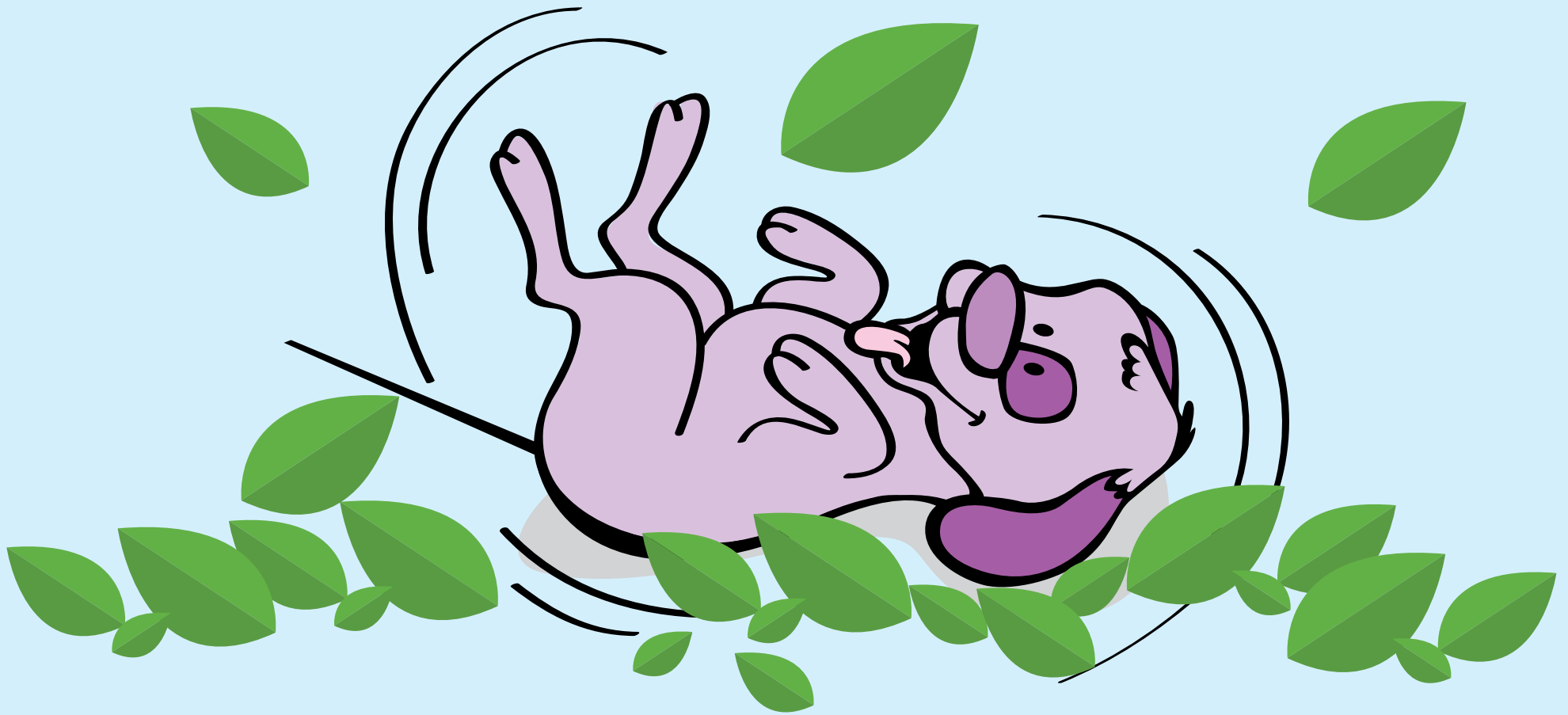
Do you gather leaves at home?



**What should  
they do with  
the extra  
leaves?**

**Play**  
**with them!**

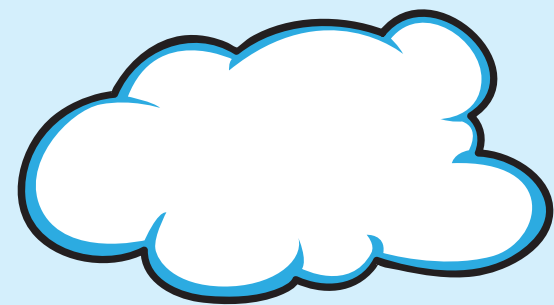




The friends **throw** the leaves in the air,  
then **roll** on them when they are on the ground.

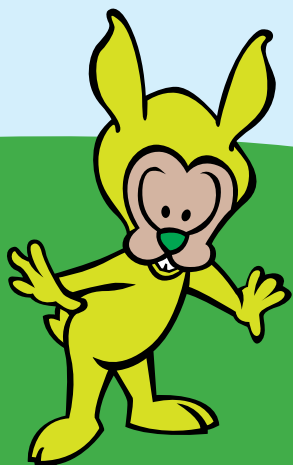
They enjoy hearing the sounds  
of the leaves under their bodies.





Blue and his friends  
are having fun

**playing**  
outside.



What  
could they  
do next?

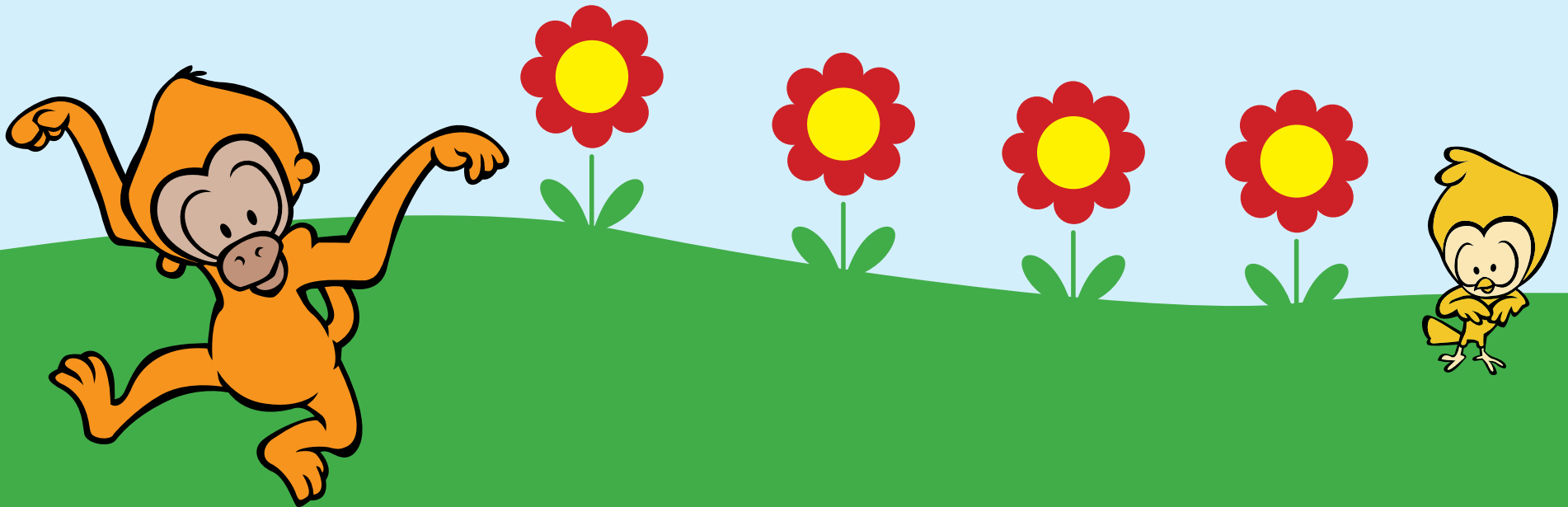
The friends **walk** and find a field  
with beautiful red flowers.

They stop to smell the flowers.

How many flowers do you see?



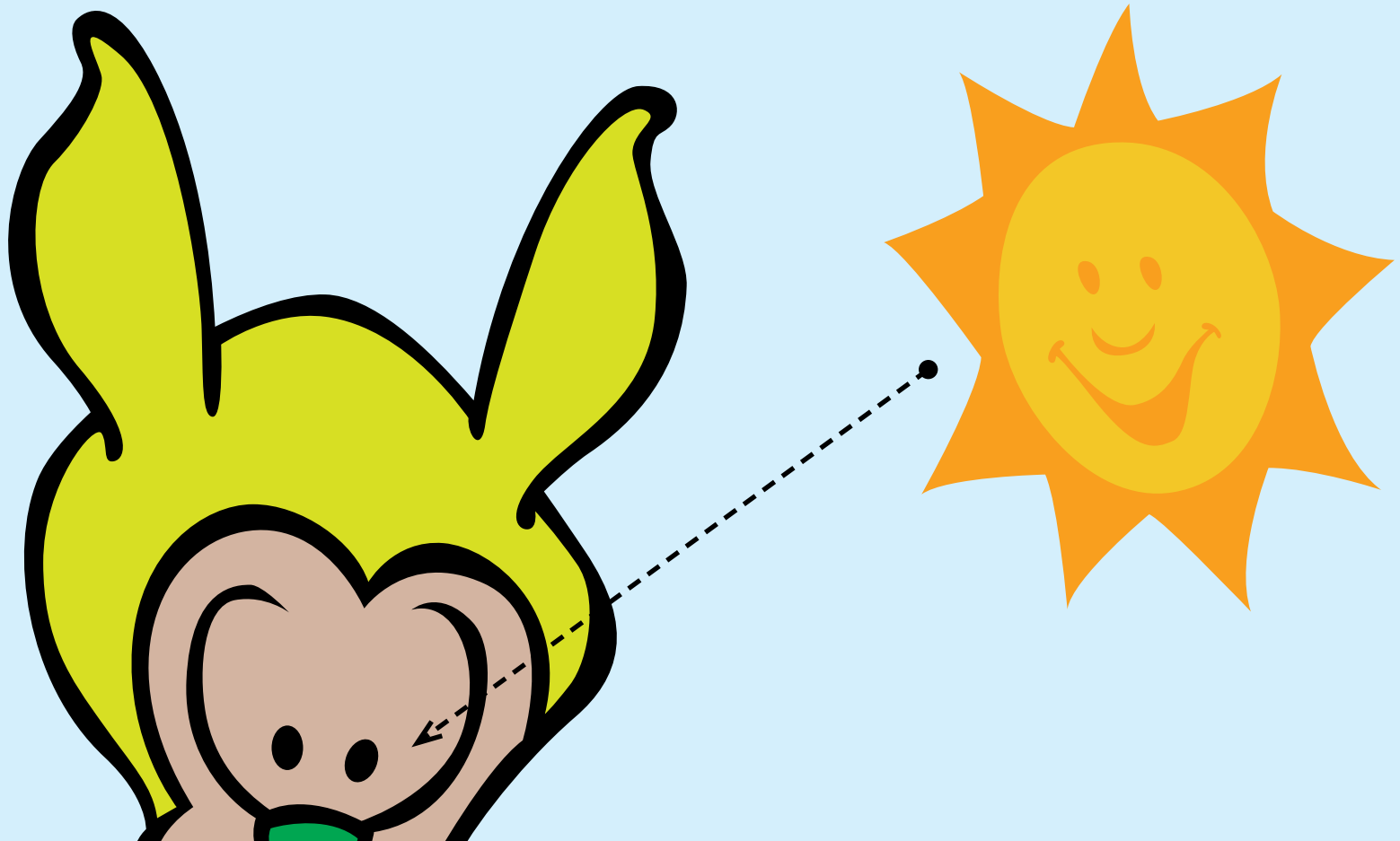
**As they play,  
they feel the warm sunshine.  
It helps their skin  
make Vitamin D,  
which gives the friends energy.**



**The sunlight gives our eyes a workout too.**

**Our eyes have to adjust  
to different lights and colors.**

**This helps to keep our eyes healthy and strong.**



Soon, clouds cover the sun, and it starts to rain.  
The friends are ready to play in the rain — except Glide —  
she **hides!**

Can you  
find Glide?



**Blue and his friends see the  
rain drops making puddles.**

**What will the rain  
do to the mountain  
of dirt?**

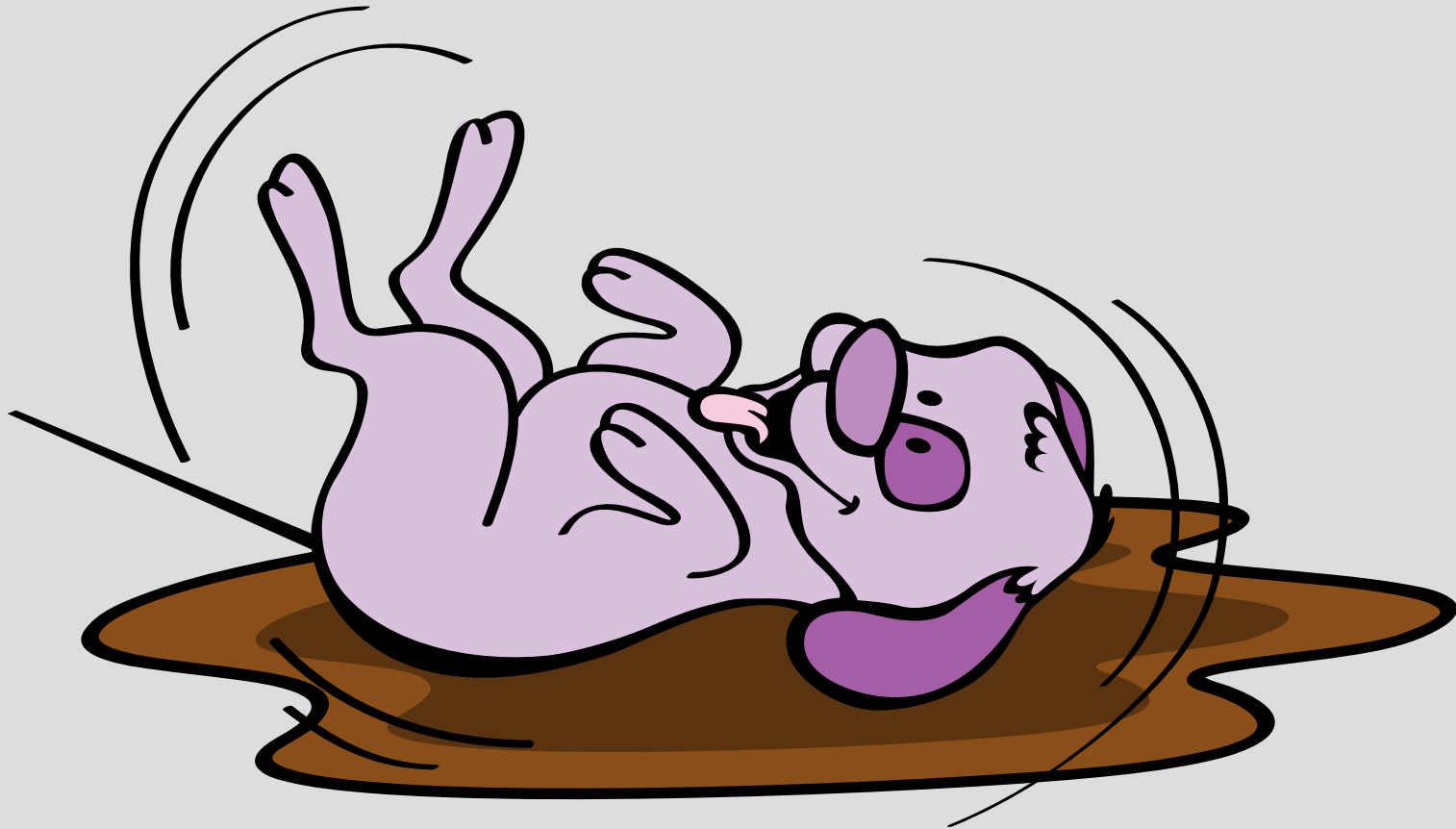


Leap, Dart, Swing, and Blue love to **jump** and **splash** in the puddles.

Blue wants you to pretend to **jump** in puddles.



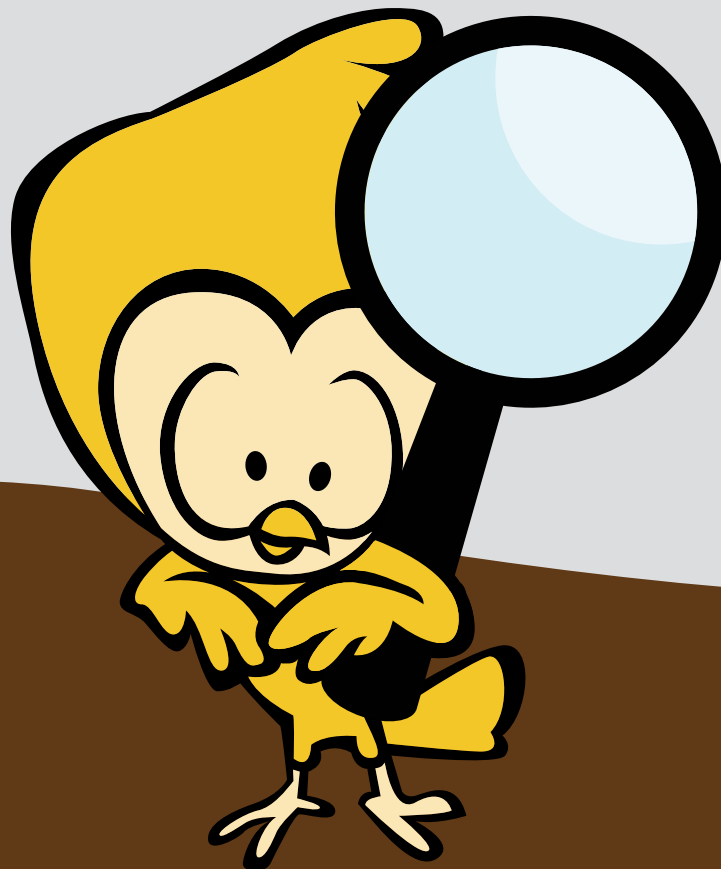
**The rain turned the dirt into mud.**  
**The friends enjoy playing in the mud.**  
**Do you like to play in the mud?**





**Dirt and mud are full of tiny microbes  
that keep us all healthy.**

**“Microbes are even smaller than I am.  
So small you can’t see them”, said Glide.**



**When the friends are finished  
playing in the mud, they**

# **splash**

**in the puddles  
to get clean.**



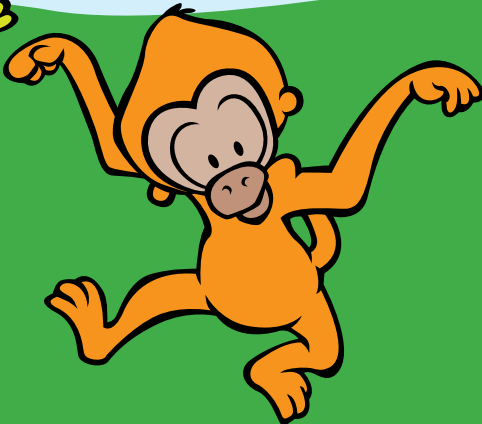
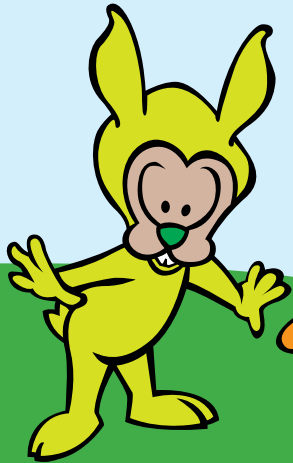
**The sun  
comes out  
and makes  
everything  
brighter.**

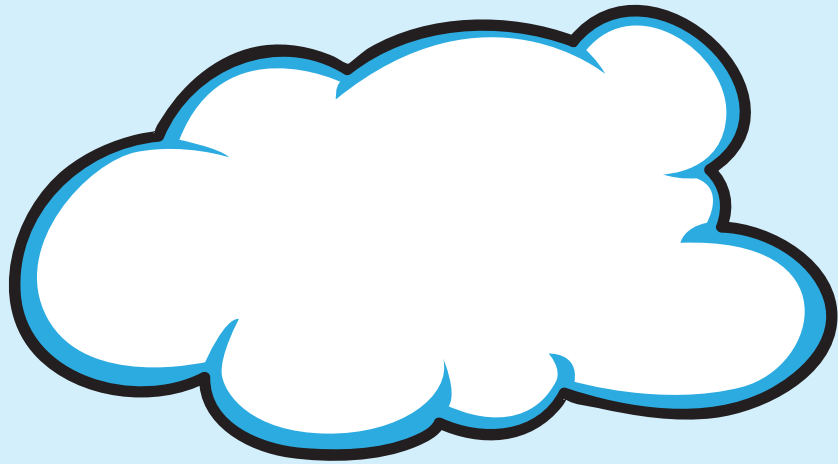




The friends love  
**playing**  
outside.

They know  
they must take care  
of nature so that they  
can keep enjoying it!





**Blue and his friends  
all agree they love  
playing outside.**

**They feel  
so free and calm.**

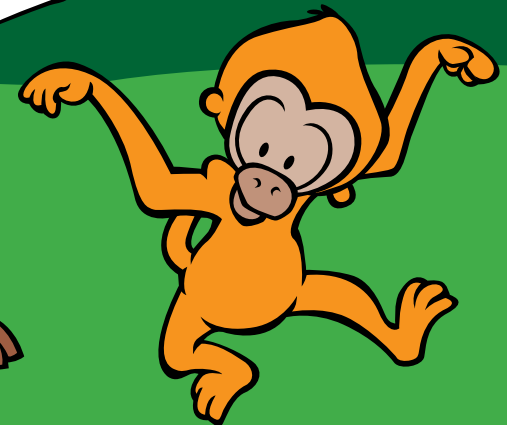
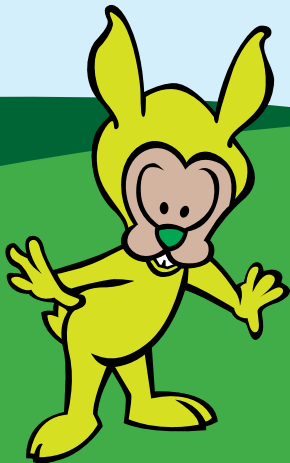


**We know that**

**playing**

**outside is important**

**to feel good and stay healthy!**



# Tips

- **While reading talk about nature and the importance of outdoor play**
- **Take the story outside to read and participate in activities taking place in the story**
- **Practice learning objectives while reading the story; numbers, patterns, letters, science concepts or letter sounds**
- **Send tips, recipes, and activities from the book home for parents and children to work on**

# Creating Bamboo or Vine Teepee

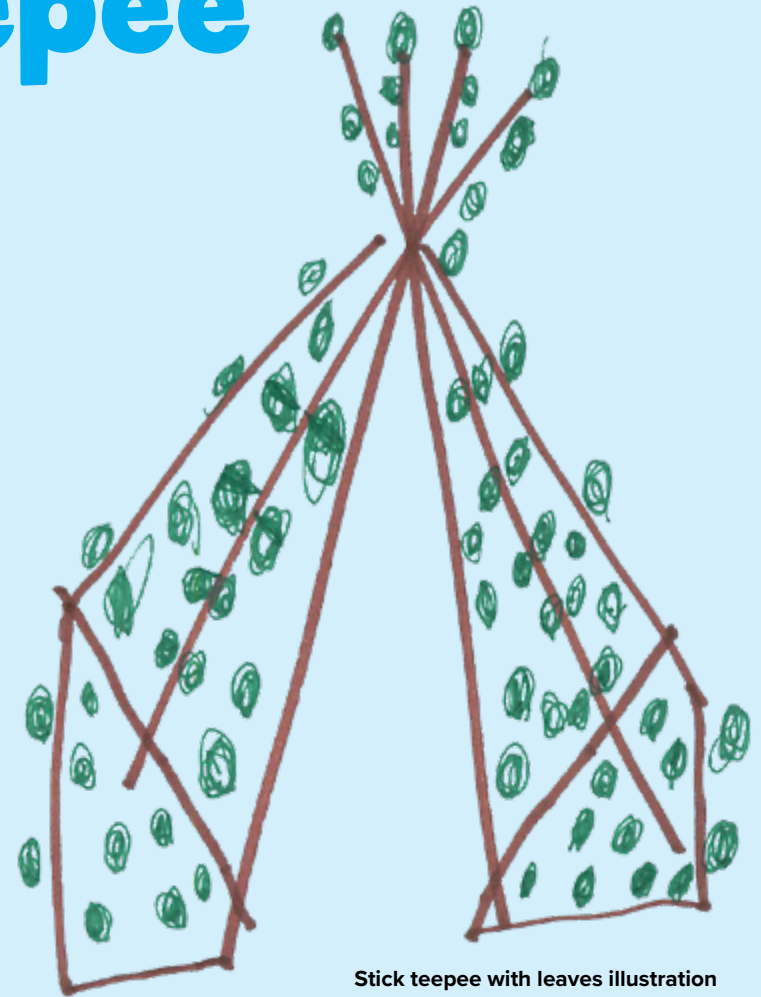
## Materials:

Sticks, twine (rope or vine), shovel, compost, tarp or sheets, and decorations (optional)

## Directions:

1. Gather long sticks
2. Create main support by placing sticks in an upright position and using twine to secure together at the top
3. Plan where the entrance will be
4. Add sticks to act as cross-bridges for support
5. Wrap teepee with tarp, scrap material or vine.

(Inspired by Domestic Engineer, 2009)



Stick teepee with leaves illustration  
by Tyler K., age 5

**For step-by-step instructions visit the [Natural Learning Initiative](#)!**



# Snack Recipes

## Blueberry Yogurt Bites

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 T honey
- 1 cup fresh blueberries

### Directions:

- Mix the honey and the yogurt together.
- Then roll the blueberries in the mixture and freeze.

## Play Mix

### Ingredients:

- Granola pieces
- Freeze dried blueberries
- Sunflower seeds
- Peanuts

### Directions:

- Mix ingredients in a large bowl and separate into small portions.

# Movement Activity

## Fort Building

### Materials:

- boxes
- ropes
- sheets
- tarps
- long sticks

### Instructions:

Provide the children with the materials and encourage them to work together to create some sort of structure or shelter.

The possibilities are endless.

## Jump the River/Creek

### Materials:

- long sticks or tape if you are inside

### Instructions:

Using the materials create an inverted “V.” Then have the group attempt to jump the “river” where it is very narrow. Continue to challenge the children to jump the “river” where it is wider. They can **jump**, **hop**, or **leap** the “river.”

**jump** - leaving the ground and landing with two feet

**hop** - leaving the ground and landing with one foot

**leap** - leaving the ground on one foot and landing on the other

# Additional Resources:

- **NC Children and Nature Coalition**  
<http://ncchildrenandnature.org/>
- **Natural Learning Initiative, College of Design, North Carolina State University**  
<https://naturalearning.org/>
- **North Carolina Zoo**  
<https://www.nczoo.org/>
- **Playful Pedagogy**  
<https://www.nczoo.org/education/adult-education/playful-pedagogy>
- **Children and Nature Network**  
<http://www.childrenandnature.org/>
- **1000 Hours Outside**  
<https://1000hoursoutside.com/index.html/>



# BE ACTIVE KIDS®

*Be Active Kids* is an award-winning program. This innovative, interactive health program for children ages birth to five is available to adults working in child care centers, child care homes, and schools across North Carolina. Its *evidence-based* and evidence-informed messages are carried out through five cuddly and adventurous *characters* including Blue the caring cub, Glide the bird, Swing the monkey, Leap the rabbit and Dart the dog. Using these characters as their guides, children can engage in playful experiences, interact with a story, explore their natural surroundings, and much more.

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