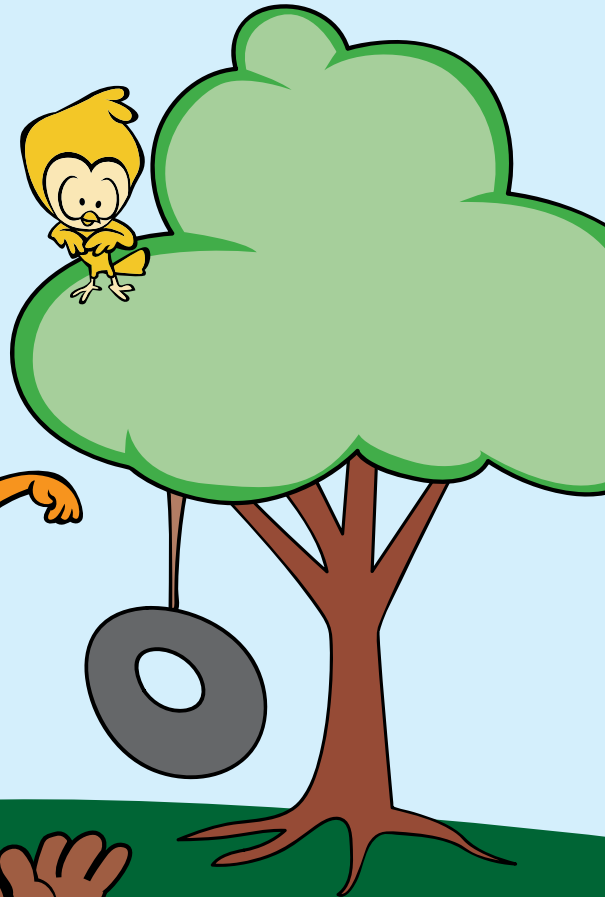
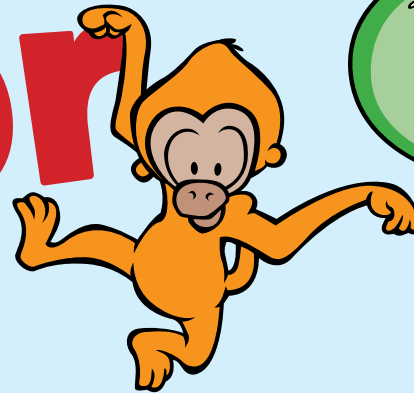
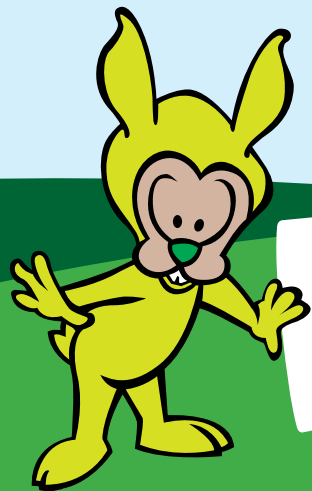


BE ACTIVE KIDS®

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

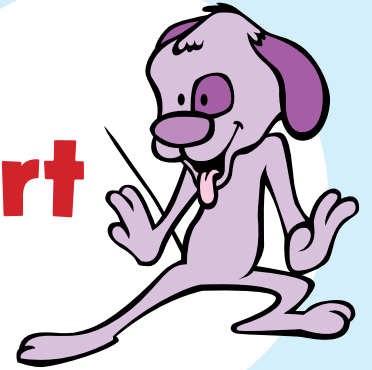
**Special thanks
to our supporting partners:**



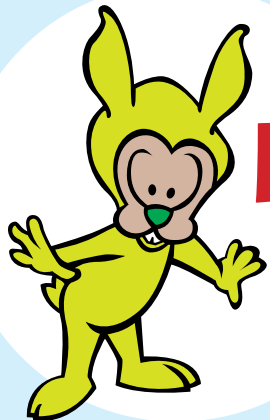
Hi Friends!
My name is Blue,
the Caring Cub,
and these are
my friends;
Dart, Glide, Leap,
and Swing.



Swing



Dart



Leap



Glide



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

play!



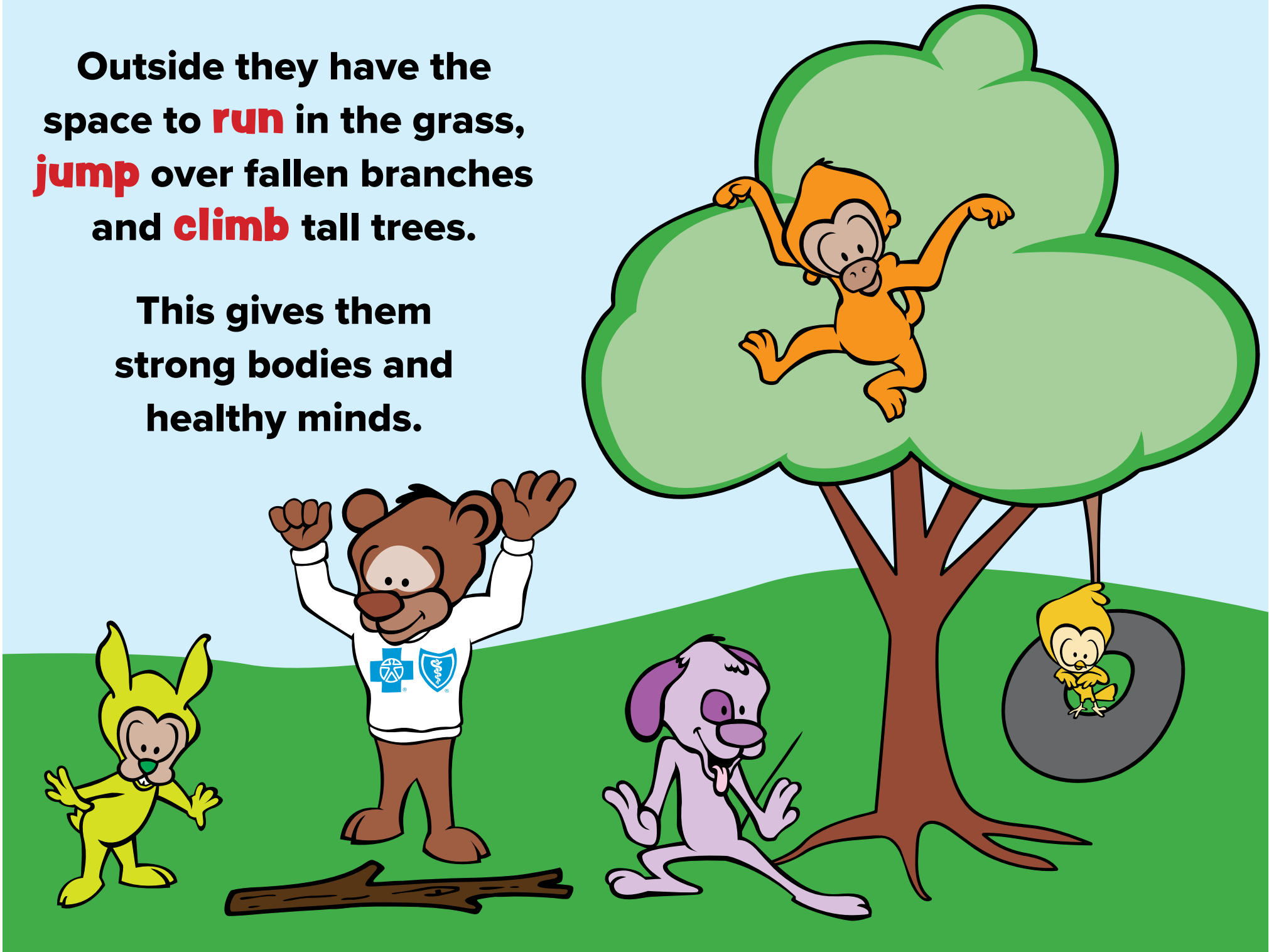
Blue asks his friends if they would like to go

explore
the neighborhood.



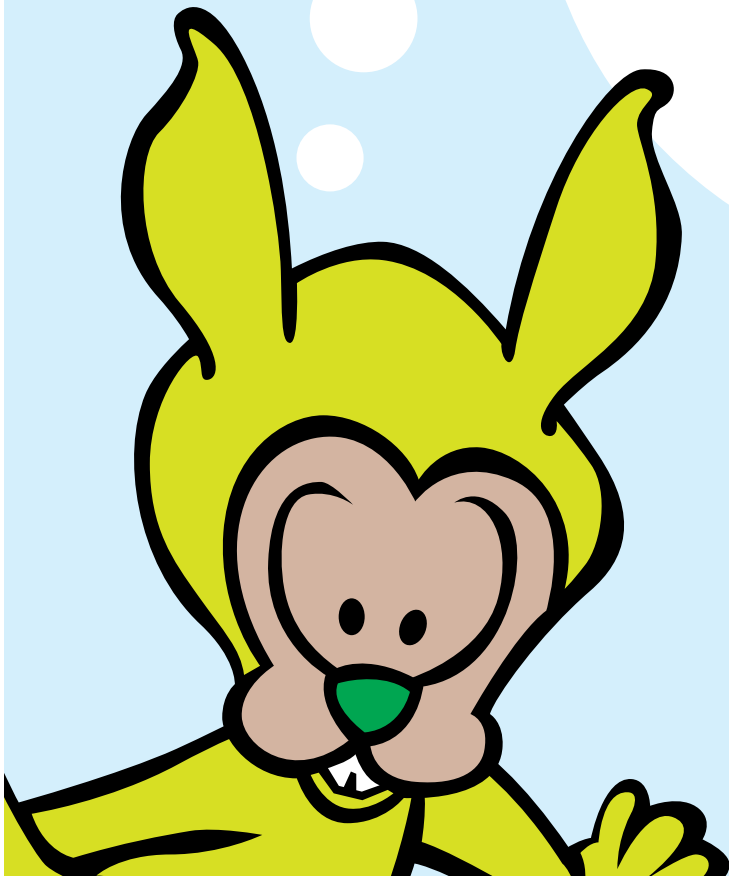
Outside they have the space to **run** in the grass, **jump** over fallen branches and **climb** tall trees.

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?**

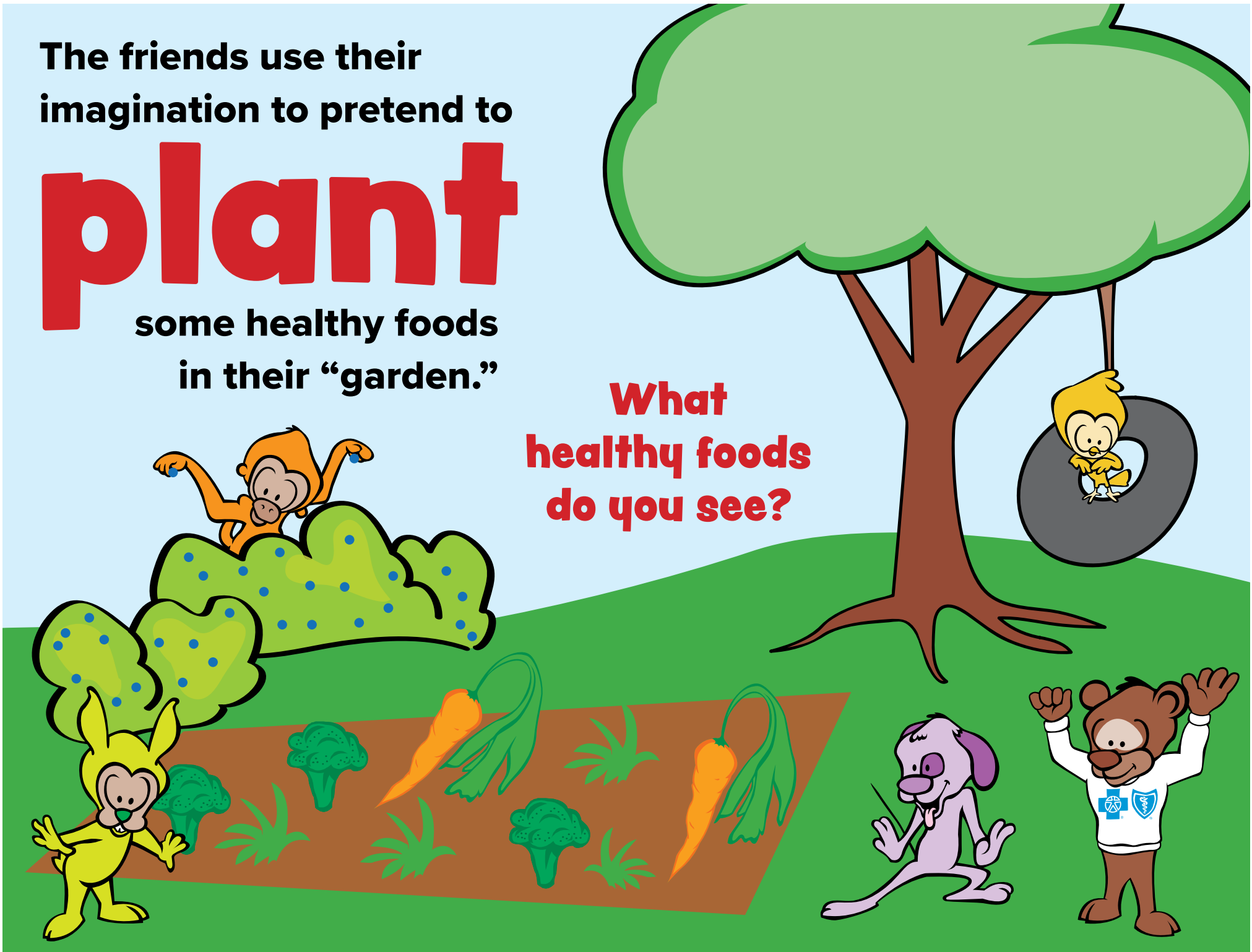


The friends use their
imagination to pretend to

plant

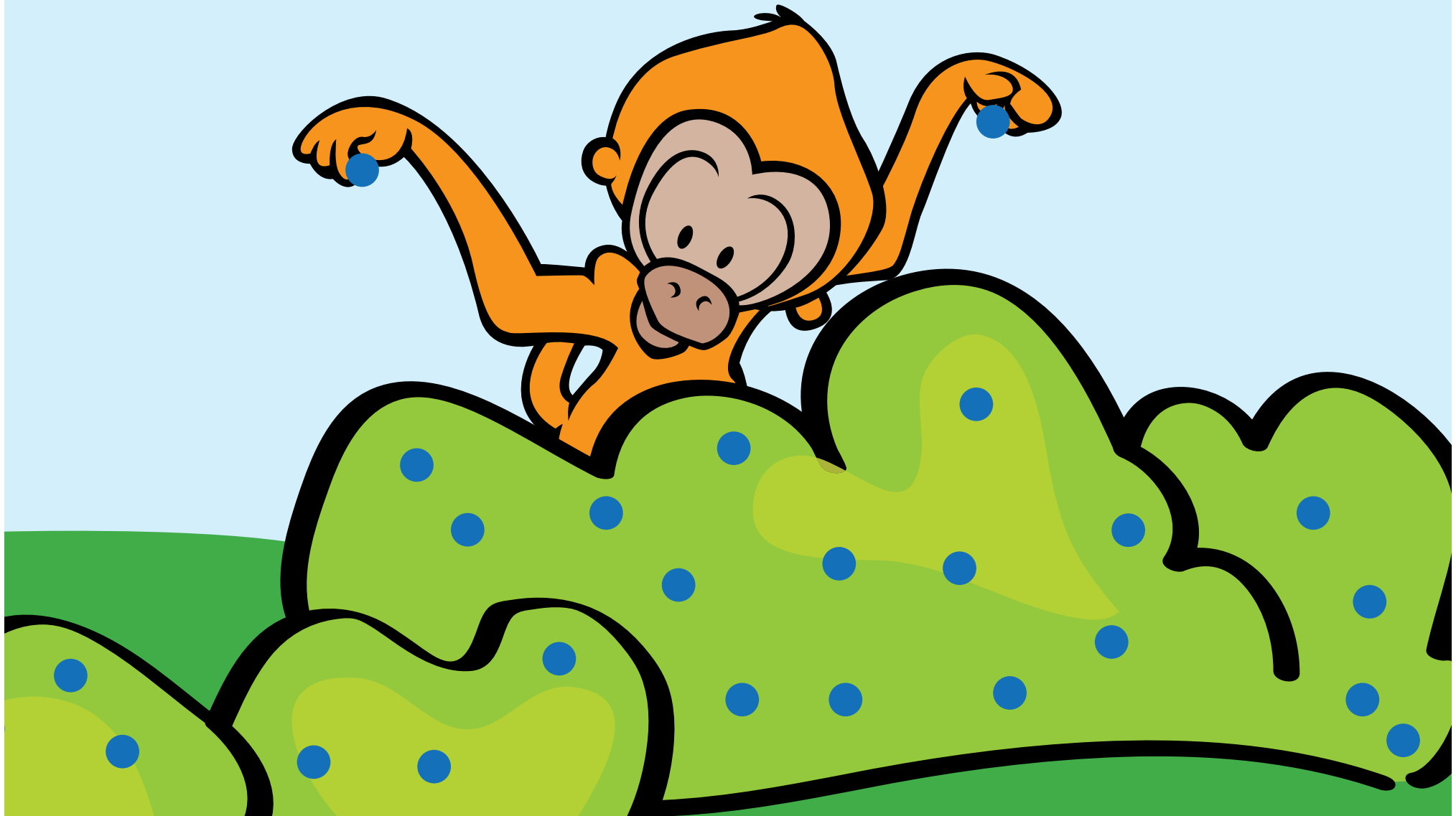
some healthy foods
in their “garden.”

**What
healthy foods
do you see?**



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

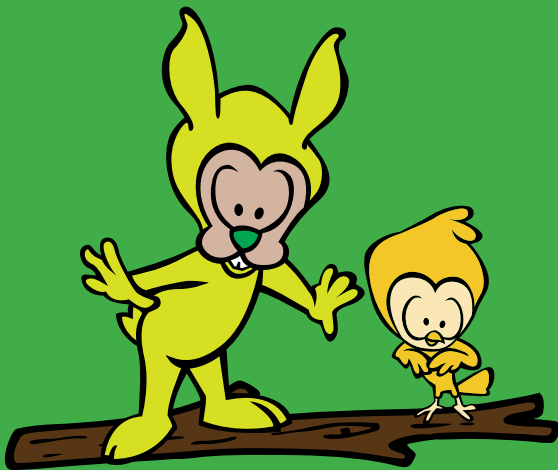
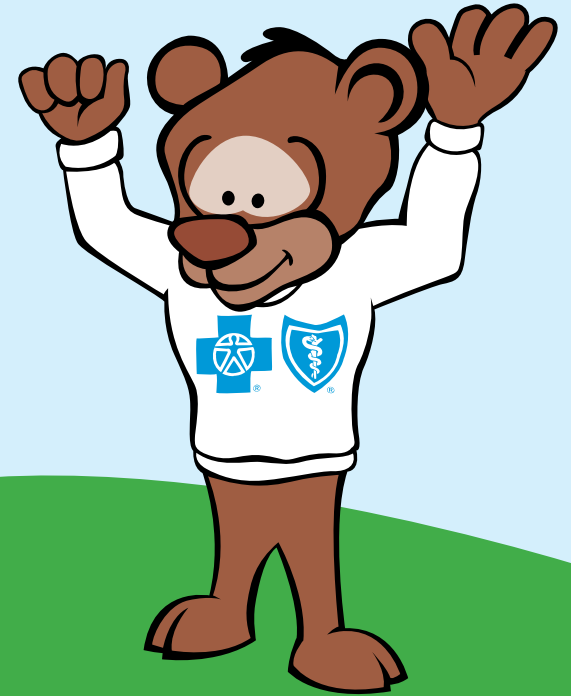
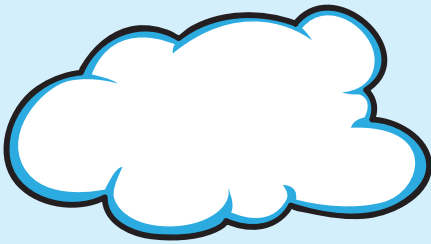
Blueberries!



**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



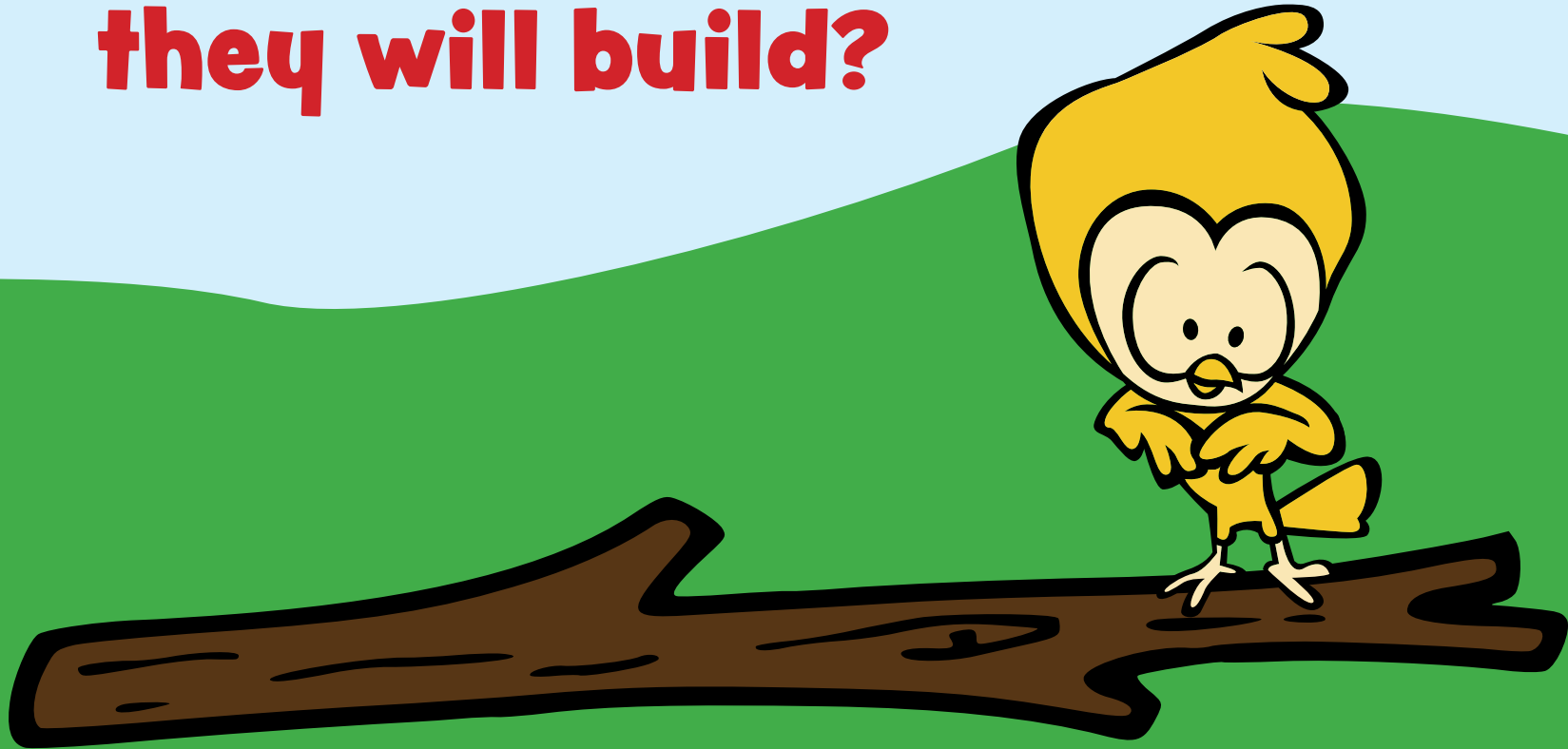
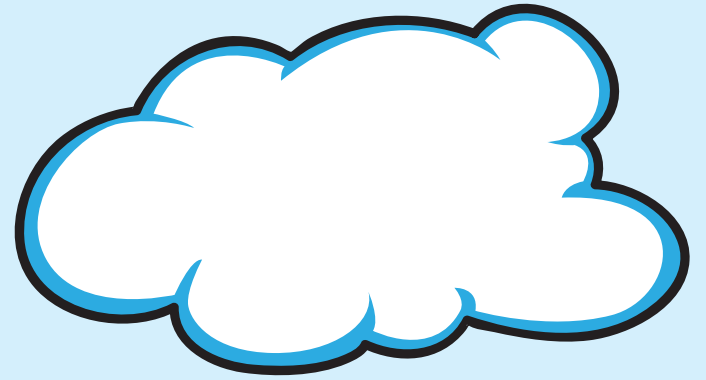
2



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.

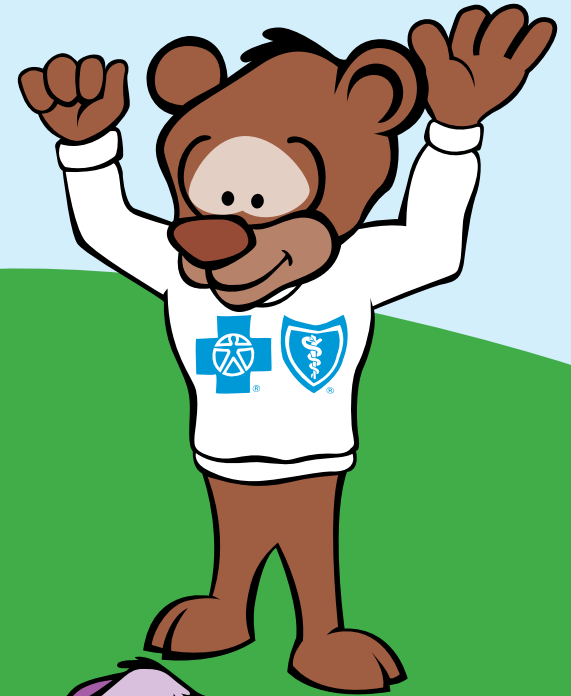
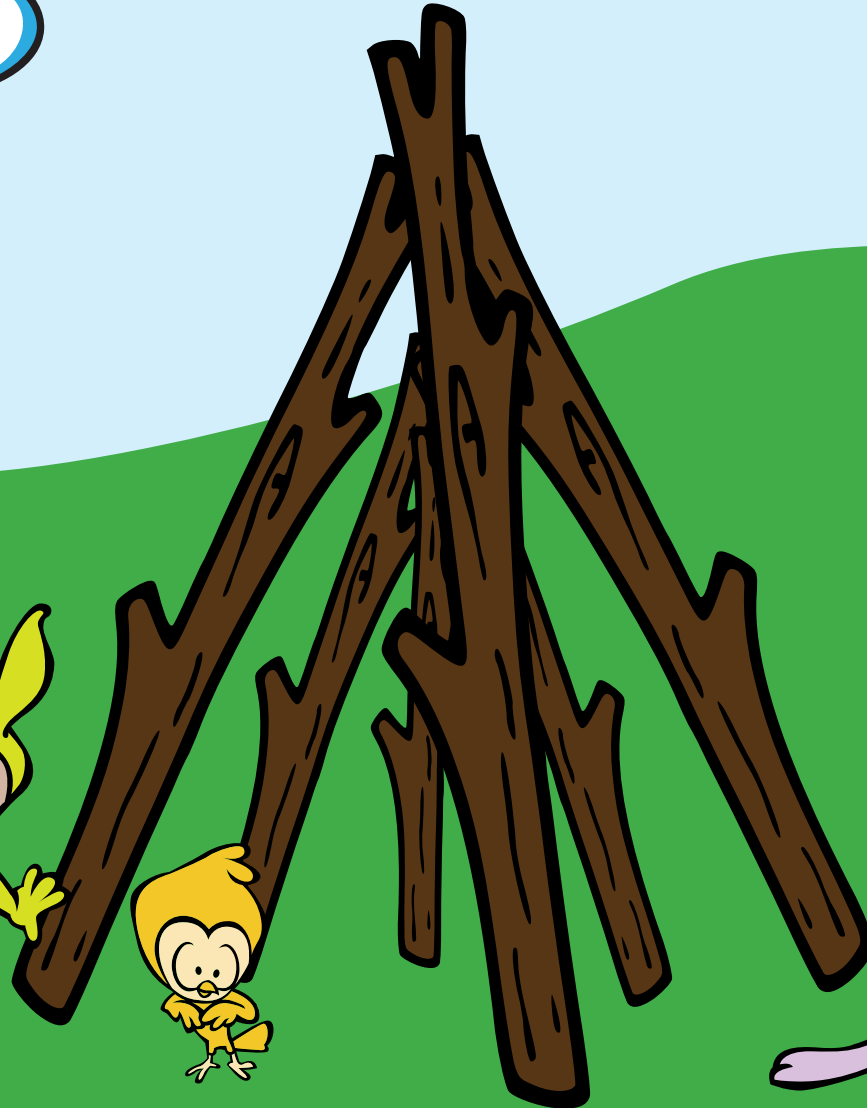
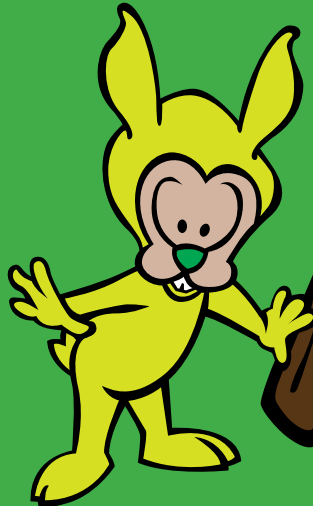
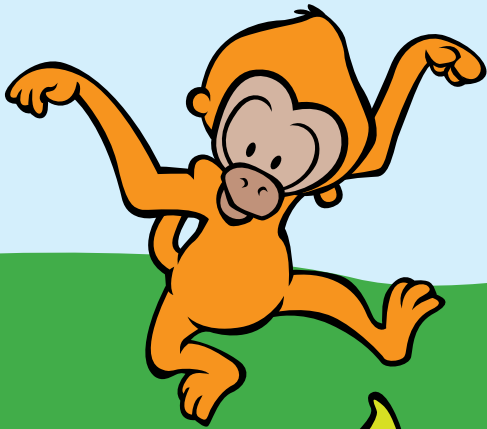
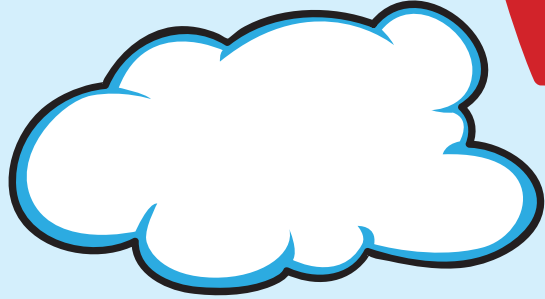
Blue, Dart and Leap **lift** the big sticks into place.

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

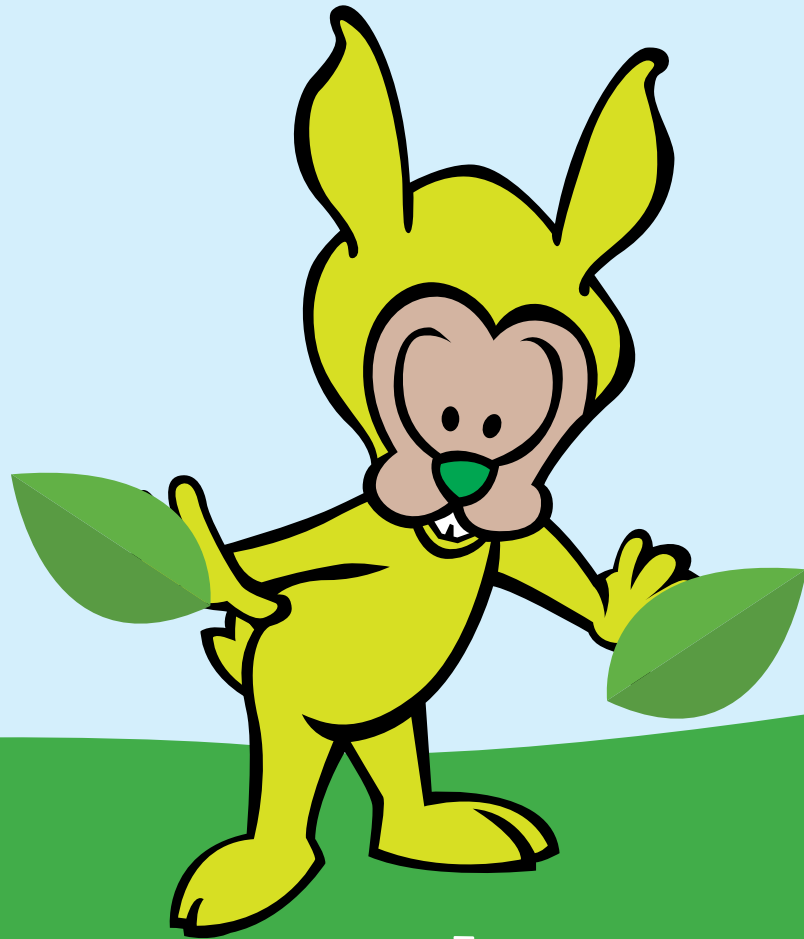
How would you do it?



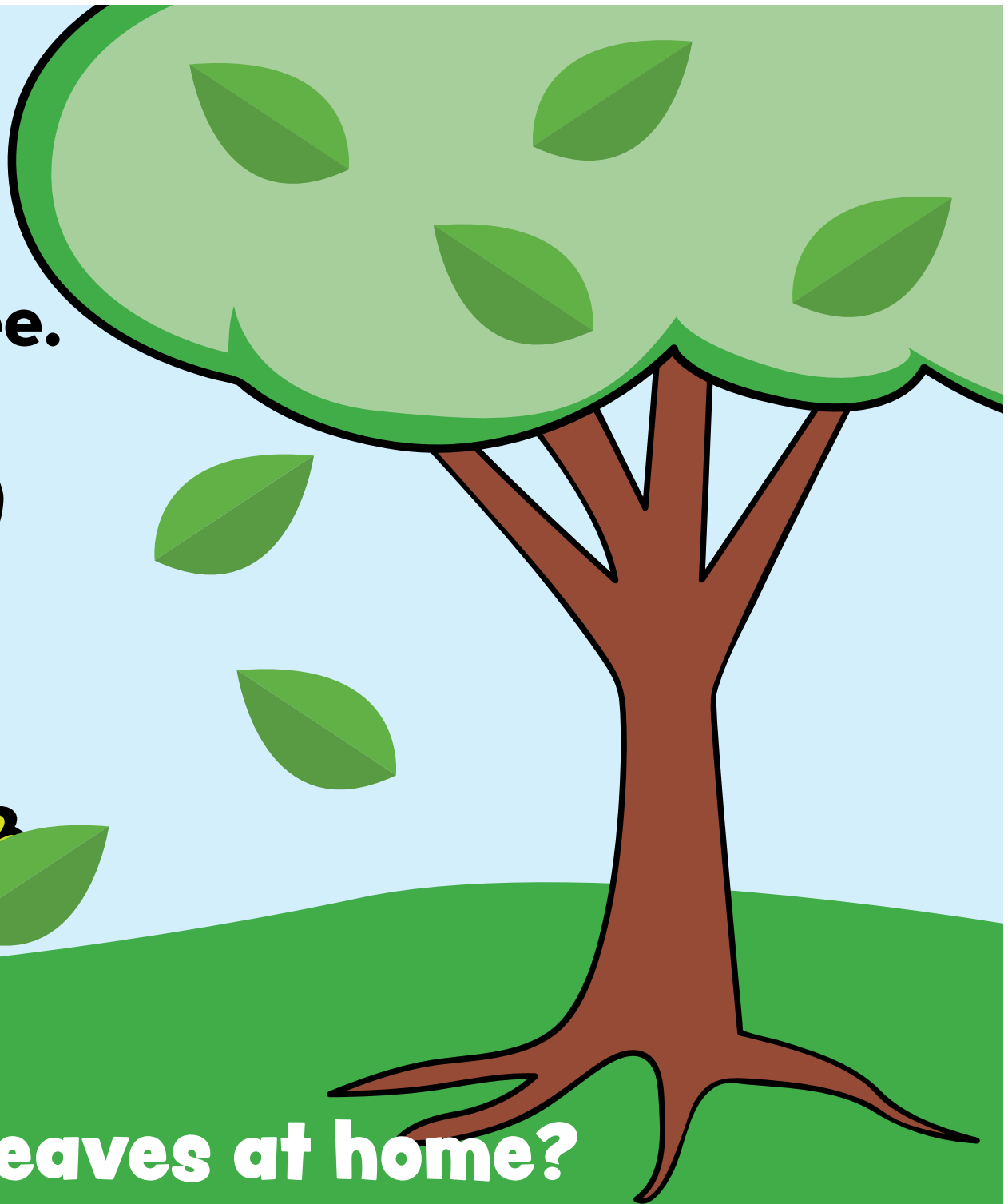
They did it! They **worked** together and built a teepee!



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



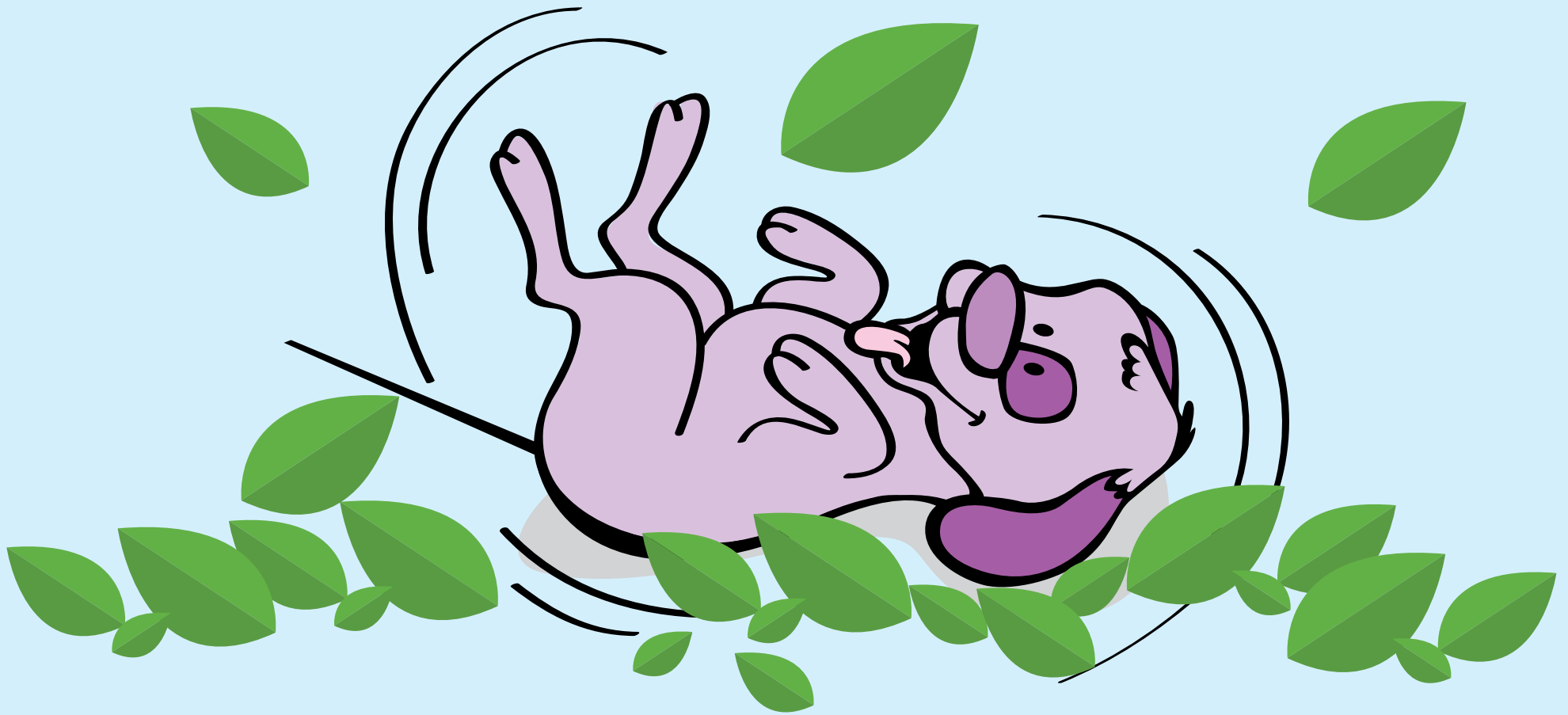
Do you gather leaves at home?



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

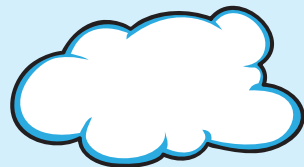
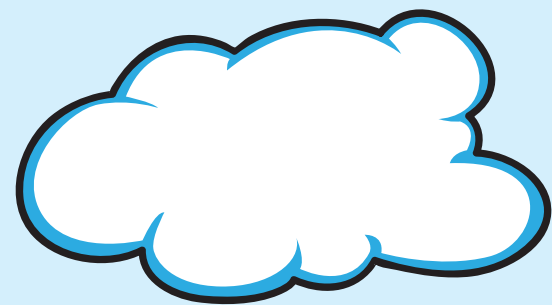
Play
with them!





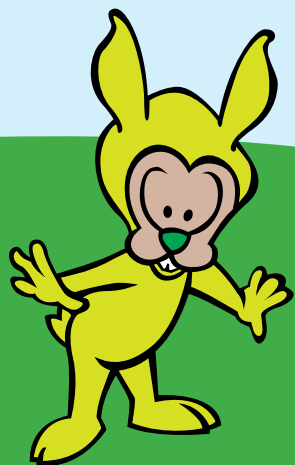
The friends **throw** the leaves in the air,
then **roll** on them when they are on the ground.

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?

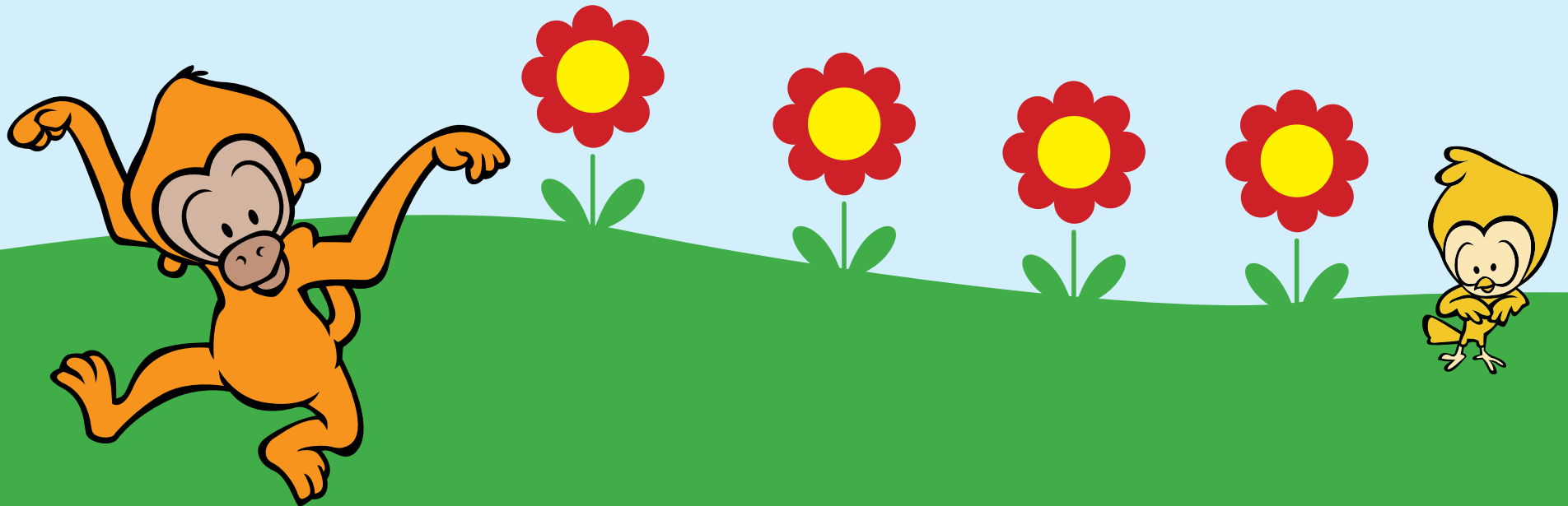
The friends **walk** and find a field
with beautiful red flowers.

They stop to smell the flowers.

How many flowers do you see?



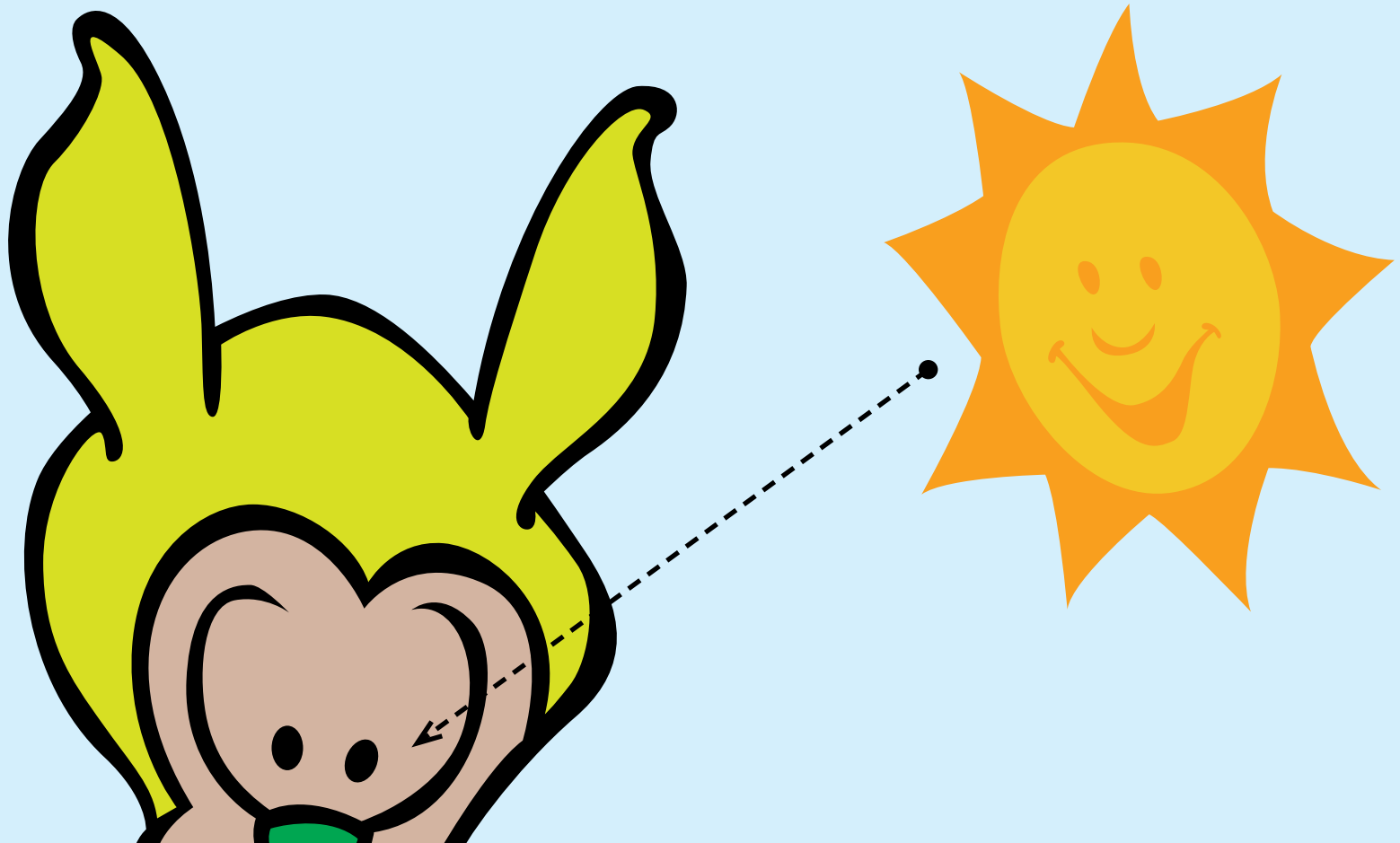
**As they play,
they feel the warm sunshine.
It helps their skin
make Vitamin D,
which gives the friends energy.**



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.



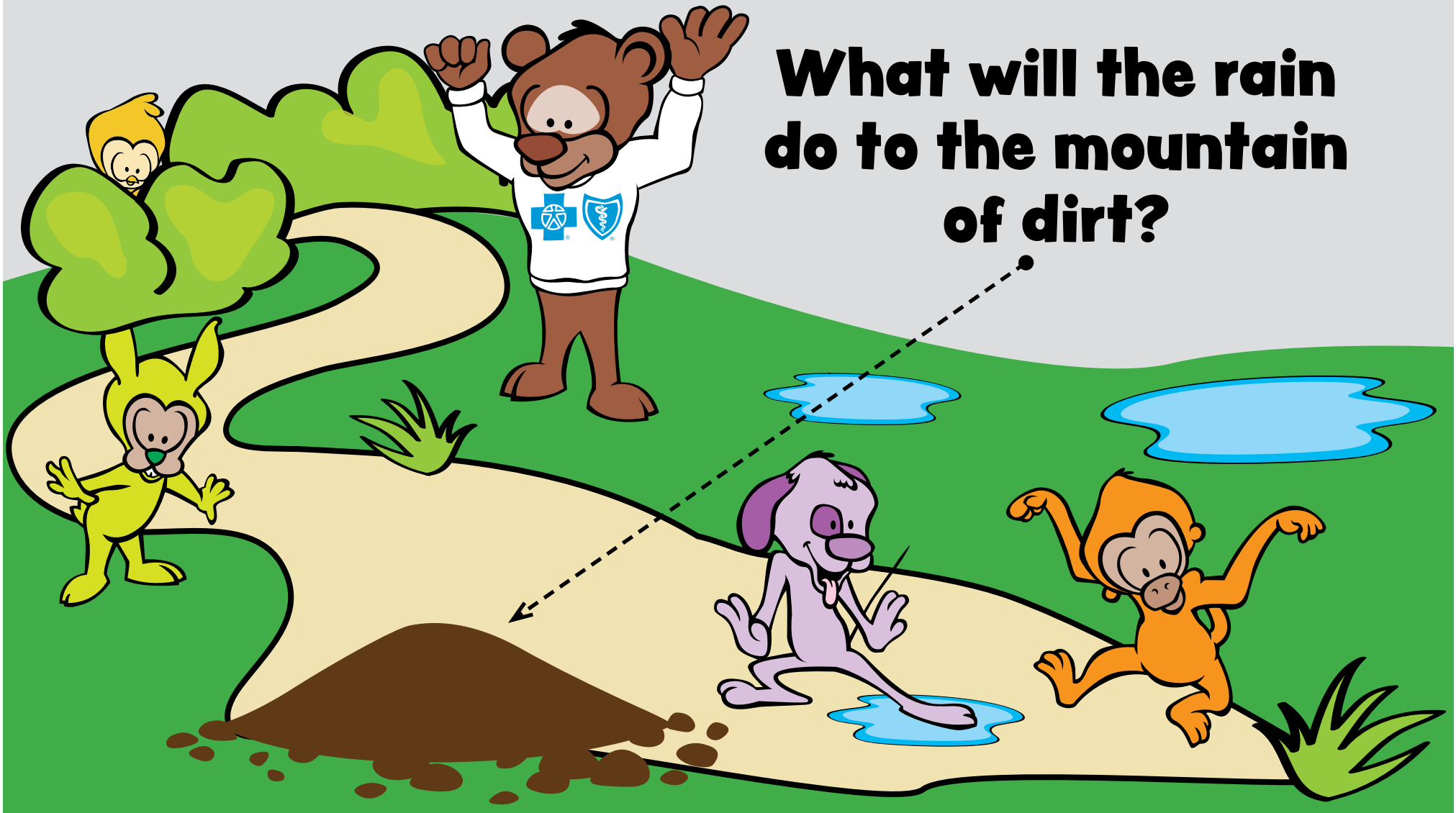
Soon, clouds cover the sun, and it starts to rain.
The friends are ready to play in the rain — except Glide —
she **hides!**

Can you
find Glide?



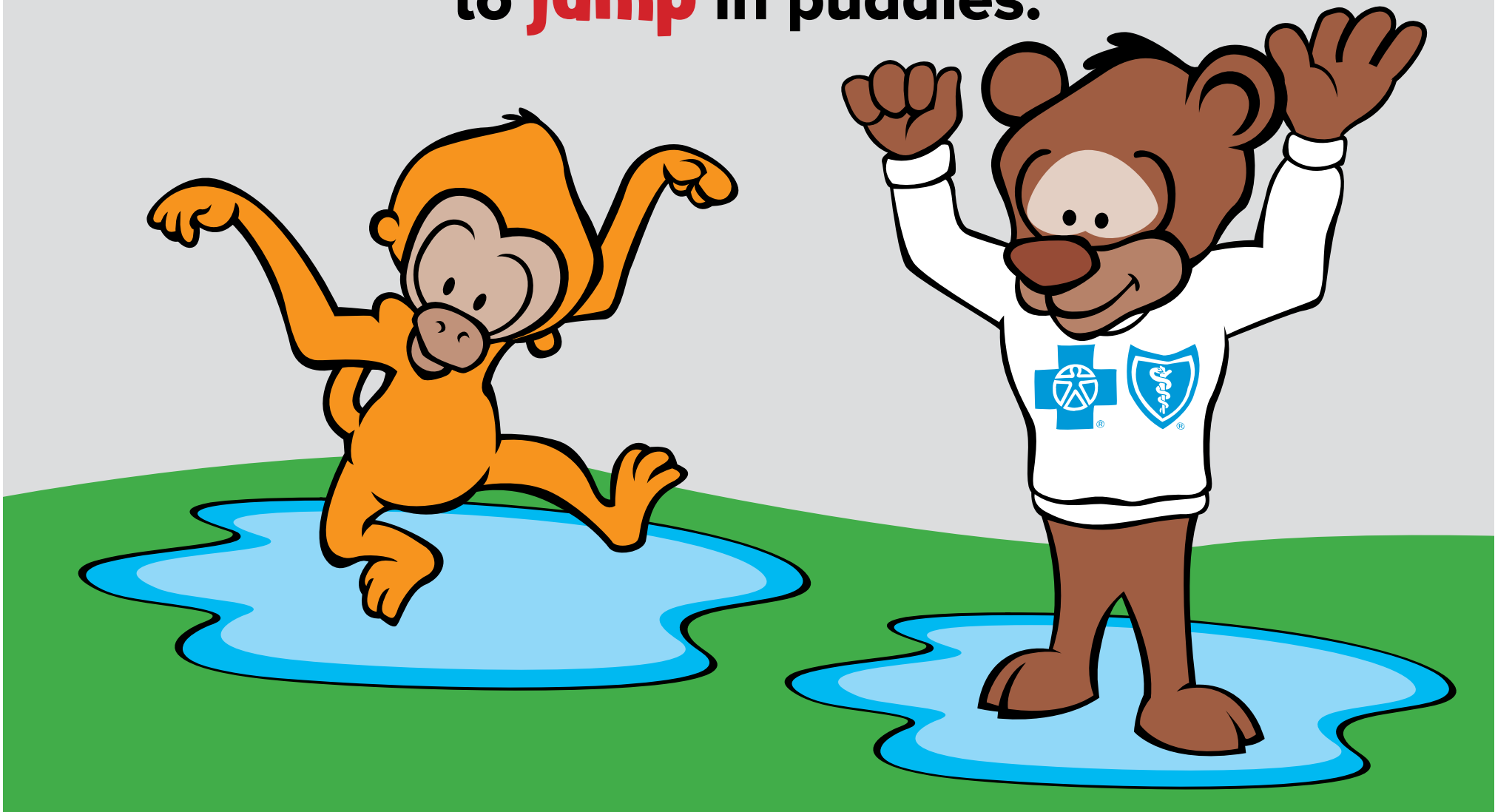
**Blue and his friends see the
rain drops making puddles.**

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

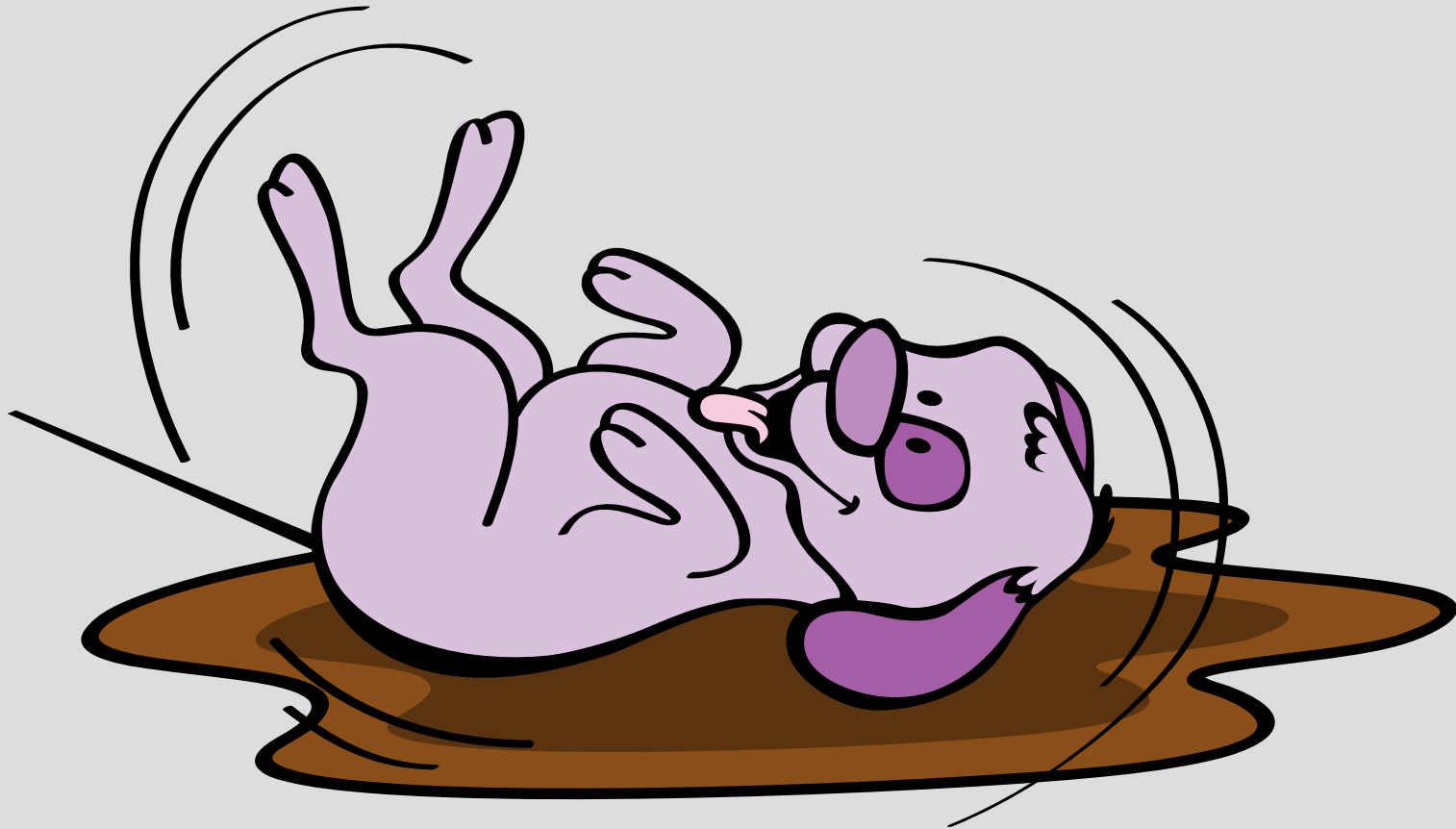


Leap, Dart, Swing, and Blue love to **jump** and **splash** in the puddles.

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

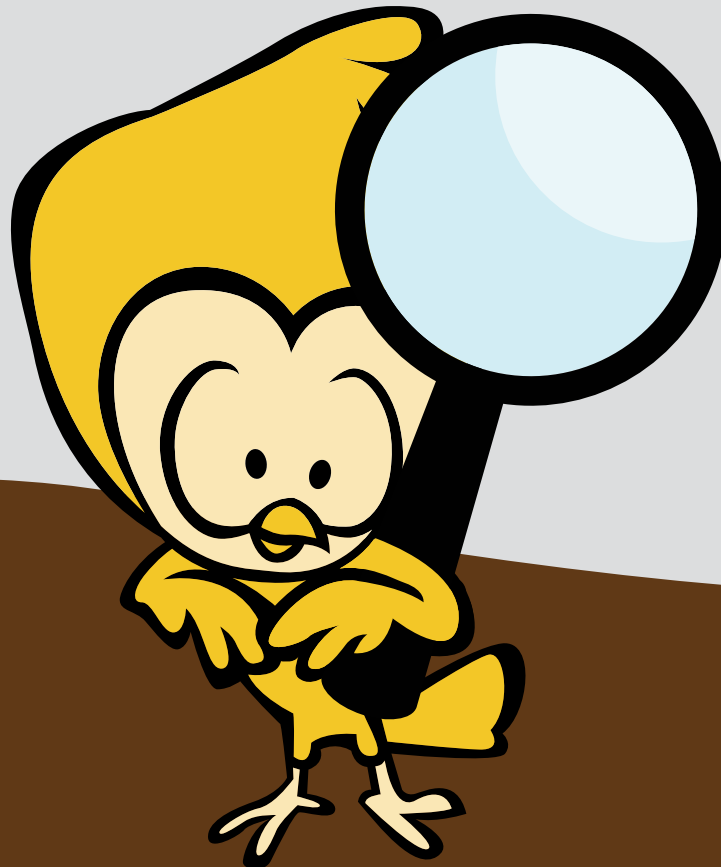


The rain turned the dirt into mud.
The friends enjoy playing in the mud.
Do you like to play in the mud?



**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**

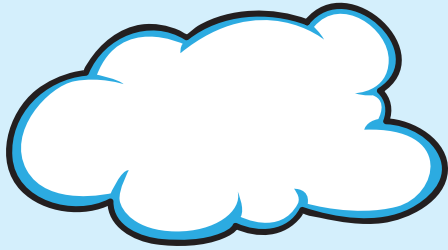
splash

**in the puddles
to get clean.**



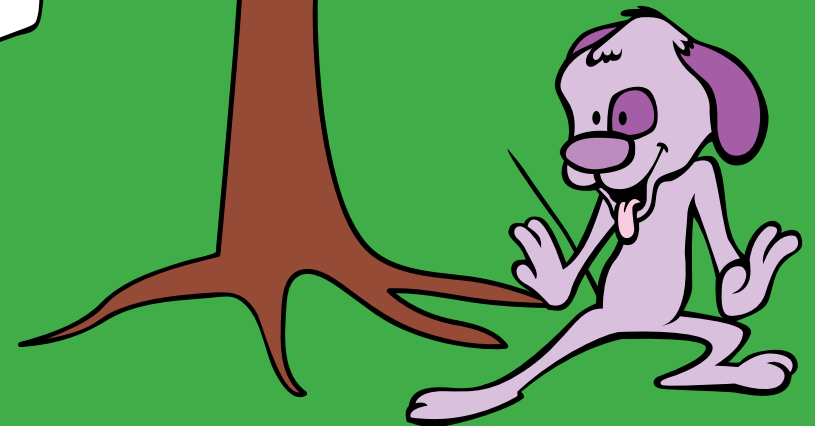
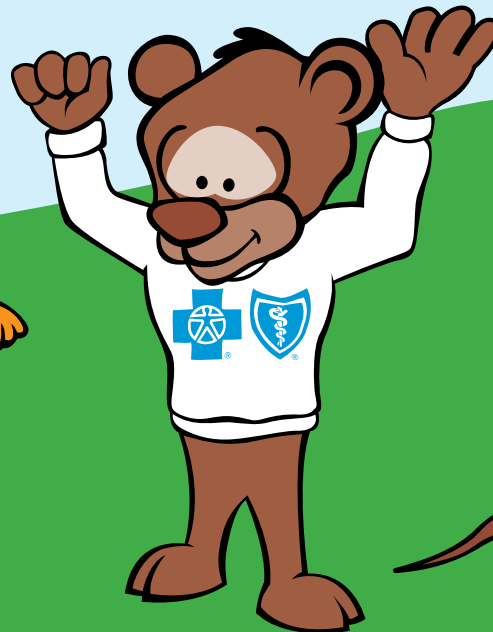
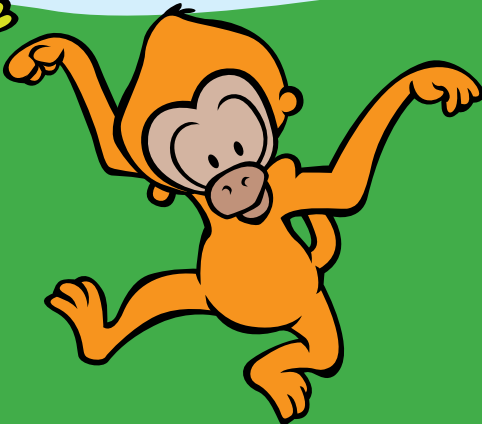
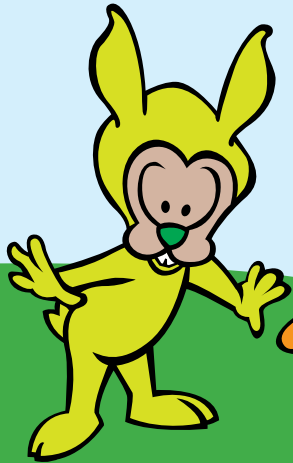
**The sun
comes out
and makes
everything
brighter.**

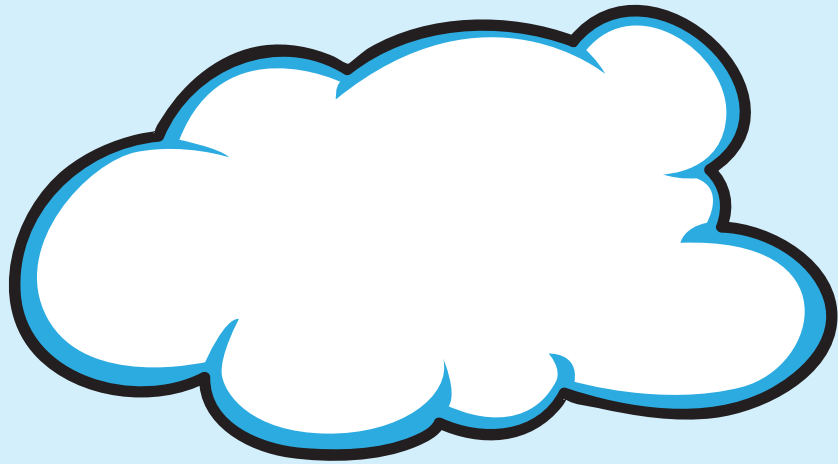




The friends love
playing
outside.

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.**



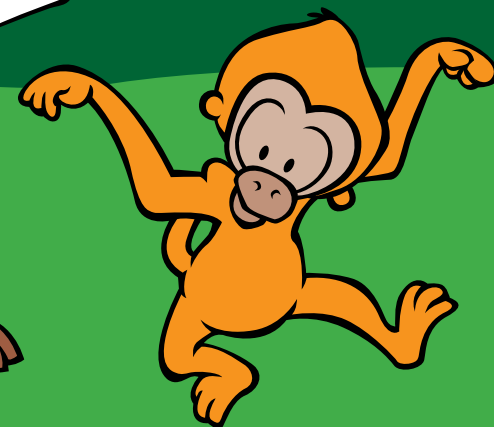
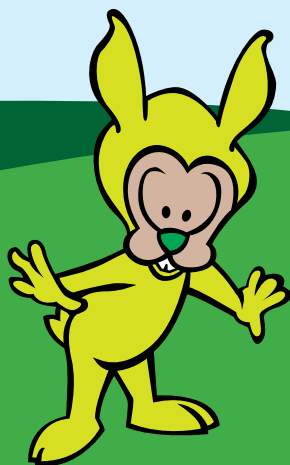
**They feel
so free and calm.**

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

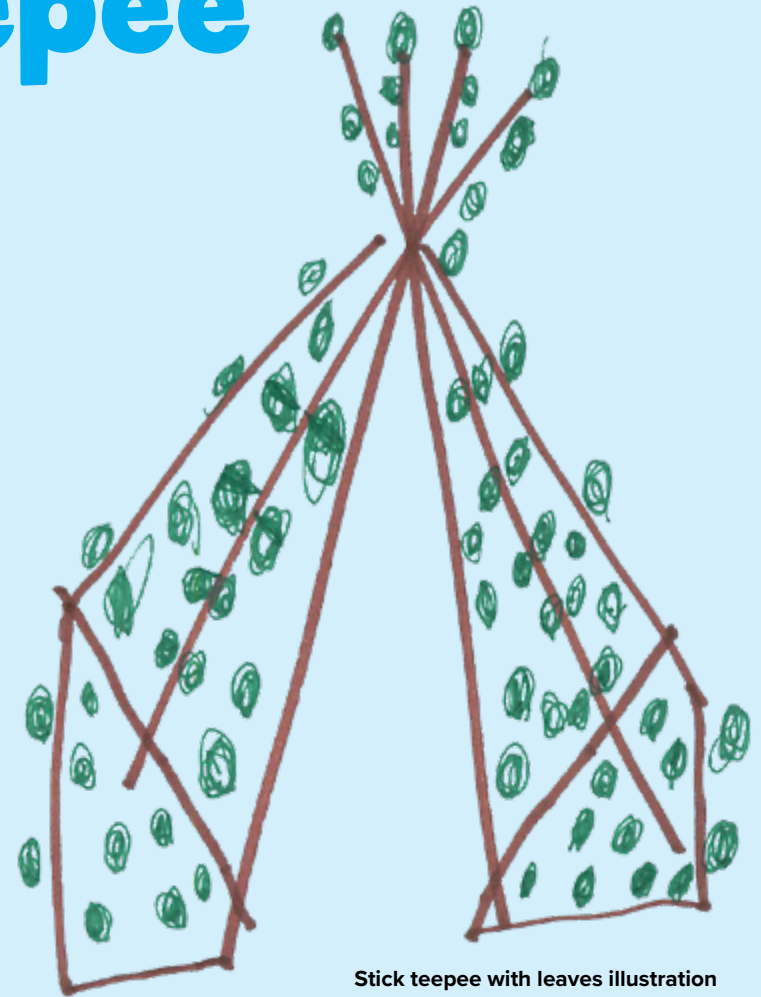
Materials:

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, signature program of the *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation*. 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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