

Celebrate Your Own

# Curiosity Day



Every child is a curious child. You can turn this curiosity into a lifelong love of reading by hosting a fun-filled, family event celebrating books. Who better to act as host than everyone's favorite mischievous monkey, Curious George?

**Curiosity Day** is an annual event in Boston, MA. Together, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, the Boston Public Library, and WGBH, Boston's local PBS station, have helped thousands of kids, parents, and grandparents celebrate a love of reading and learning. The popular event draws thousands of attendees each year.

Based on these wonderful Boston celebrations, this packet will help you plan your own **Curiosity Day**.

Contents include a planning list, reproducible sheets, activity suggestions, a recommended booklist, and some tips we've learned over the years.

*Have fun!*



# Curiosity Day

## Checklist for the Big Day

### ☐ Decorate

- Create a colorful, inventive window or shelf display using Curious George books, red and yellow streamers, and construction paper balloons.
- Include a large event poster with the date and time of your celebration.
- **Tip:** Make yellow bananas made out of construction paper, the headline “I’m Curious about” and a blank space where kids or their parents can write in the subject. Add the completed bananas to your display.

### ☐ Snacks

- Order cupcakes – mini ones are best for little fingers! Have red & yellow napkins on hand, too. Other popular options include bananas, goldfish, or pretzels.
- **Tip:** It’s best to separate the cupcakes or snacks from the rest of the activities – it will be a bit of a mob scene so you’ll want to strategize ahead of time about crowd control.

### ☐ Curious George costume guidelines

- Be sure you have water on hand and a bathroom the actor can use while on a break.
- Determine whether you will be taking photos for guests or if guests will be able to use their digital cameras or cell phones. Include this information in your advertising. If you are taking Polaroid or digital photos for guests, you’ll need a few people to work cameras, open film, take email addresses, etc.
- Stanchions or cones work well to keep a line and you’ll need staff members to help maintain order.
- **Tip:** Have a coloring sheet or sticker sheet handy to give to kids who get shy around Curious George and don’t want to meet him. That way they’ll have a memento to take home.

### □ Organize crafts and activities

- Print and copy the activity sheets included in this packet
- Pin the banana on the tree – this requires a bit of advance preparation but can be very fun. Create a tall tree from brown and green construction paper; cut out yellow bananas. On Curiosity Day, tie a yellow bandana around the child's eyes, put some tape on the bananas, and see who can get them onto the trees leaves!
- Sing songs! If possible, print lyrics on poster board for holding up or resting on an easel.
- Play “The Man with the Yellow Hat Says” – played the same as Simon Says, but done with Curious George-type activities (“MWYH Says Pretend to Eat a Banana,” “MWYH Says Scratch yourself Like a Monkey” etc.)
- Check out [pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org) for other great downloadable activities
- **Tip:** Be sure you have plenty of sharpened crayons.

### □ Logistics are curiously important!

- Set up a timeline of events.
- Assign staff/volunteers specific duties (craft table, line control, cupcake patrol) so everyone knows what to do.
- Does your storyteller/singer need a microphone?
- If you will be showing episodes of the *Curious George* television show, make sure your equipment works and you have a spot where kids can sit down to watch.
- Plan for stroller parking!
- **Tip:** Create badges for all staff/volunteers, or have everyone wear red shirts so they will be recognizable when guests have questions



**HELLO, MY NAME IS**



*Curiosity Day*

**HELLO, MY NAME IS**



*Curiosity Day*

**HELLO, MY NAME IS**



*Curiosity Day*

**HELLO, MY NAME IS**



*Curiosity Day*

**HELLO, MY NAME IS**



*Curiosity Day*

**HELLO, MY NAME IS**



*Curiosity Day*



## Curious about George?



H(ans) A(ugusto) Rey was born on September 16, 1898, in Hamburg, Germany. He grew up there near the world-famous Hagenbeck Zoo, and developed a lifelong love for both animals and drawing. Margarete Elisabeth Waldstein (who would be known to most of the world as Margret Rey) was also born in Hamburg on May 16, 1906. The two met briefly when Margret was a young girl, before she left Hamburg to study art. They were reunited in 1935 in Rio de Janeiro, where Hans was selling bathtubs as part of a family business and where Margret had gone to escape the political climate in Germany. Margret convinced Hans to leave the family business and soon they were working together on a variety of projects.

Hans and Margret were married in Brazil on August 16, 1935, but they moved to Paris after falling in love with the city during their European honeymoon. It was there that Hans published his first children's book, after a French publisher saw his newspaper cartoons of a giraffe and asked him to expand upon them. *Ragi et les 9 singes* (*Cecily G. and the Nine Monkeys* in English) was the result, and marked the debut of a mischievous monkey named Curious George.

After *Ragi et les 9 singes* was published, the Reys decided that Curious George deserved a book of his own, so they began work on a manuscript that featured the lovable and exceedingly curious little monkey. But the late 1930s and early 40s were a tumultuous time in Europe, and before the new manuscript could be published, the Reys—both German Jews—found themselves in a horrible situation. Hitler and his Nazi party were tearing through Europe, and they were poised to take control of the city. Knowing that they must escape before the Nazis took power, Hans cobbled together two bicycles out of spare parts. Early in the morning of June 14, 1940, the Reys set off on their bicycles. They brought very little with them on their pre-dawn flight . . . only warm coats, a bit of food, and five manuscripts, one of which was *Curious George*. The Nazis entered Paris just hours later but the Reys were already on their way. They rode their makeshift bicycles for four long days until reaching the French-Spanish border, where they sold them for train fare to Lisbon. From there they made their way to Brazil and on to New York City, where they began a whole new life as children's book authors.

You can read the full story behind the Reys' dramatic escape in *The Journey That Saved Curious George*, written by Louise Borden and illustrated by Allan Drummond.

*Curious George* was published by Houghton Mifflin in 1941, and for seventy years he has been capturing the hearts and minds of readers throughout the world. All the Curious George books, including the seven original stories by Margret and Hans, have sold over 60 million copies. So popular that his original story has never been out of print, George has become one of the most beloved and most recognizable characters from children's literature.

**For more information, visit [www.curiousgeorge.com](http://www.curiousgeorge.com)**

## Some fun facts about George

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More than 60 million copies of *Curious George* books have been sold worldwide.

*Curious George* has been translated into many languages, including Yiddish, Afrikaans, Braille, Japanese, French, Portuguese, Swedish, German, Chinese, Danish, and Norwegian

Curious George first appeared in *Cecily G and the Nine Monkeys*, which was published in France in 1939. He was called Fifi in those editions.

Hans Rey first saw his future wife, Margret, at a party in her father's home in Germany, where she was sliding down the banister.

When *Curious George* was published in 1941, King George was the king of England. So as not to be disrespectful to the king by associating him with a monkey, Curious George was called Zozo in England.

The Reys created *Curious George Goes to the Hospital* at the request of officials at Boston Children's Hospital, who wanted a book to prepare children for a hospital stay. After it was published, many parents wrote to the Reys to tell them how effective the book was in reducing their child's fear of hospitals.

A newspaper clipping about two mice that were sent into space to study the effects of weightlessness inspired the story of George's own space flight in *Curious George Gets a Medal*.

Many of the Reys' own interests and adventures found their way into the Curious George books. Both Hans and Margret were very fond of animals, and their first stop in a new city was always the zoo. Hans smoked a pipe; they lived among palm trees in Brazil; they rode out of Paris on bicycles; and they left Europe on an ocean liner.

The *Curious George* books were a true collaboration. Hans was usually in charge of the ideas and the illustrations, while Margret handled the plot and the writing.



## 70 Curiously Fun Activities!

This year, Curious George celebrates seventy years of inspiring curiosity, learning and a sense of adventure in both children and adults. *You* can help keep his curiosity alive by emphasizing the value of spending time with children and encouraging them to learn and explore. The following fun and educational activities show how simple (and inexpensive!) it can be to nurture a child's inquisitive spirit.

1. Play rhyming games using new words
2. Create a cookie recipe and bake a big batch
3. Have your child read bedtime stories to their stuffed animals
4. Write daily entries in a shared journal
5. Create sock puppets and put on a show
6. Write a song and serenade each other
7. Draft an adventurous story
8. Take a nature hike
9. Create an obstacle course and host your own mini-Olympics
10. Plant a vegetable or flower garden
11. Host a party! Create fun decorations and make your own scrumptious snacks
12. Using body paint, put on a funny face
13. Draw portraits of each other
14. Make up silly words and their definitions
15. Create your own deck of cards and play "Memory"
16. Play "Simon Says"
17. Build a lemonade stand and sell your homemade lemonade
18. Whip up a batch of pancakes on a Sunday morning
19. Construct cities and skyscrapers with your favorite building blocks
20. Read a book to your child, then let him/her dream up the ending before telling your child
21. how the story really ends
22. Create costumes and act out a skit
23. Play "Guess the Object" – put an object in a small jar and shake it
24. Host a "Mystery Night" – hide items in your home and leave clues on where to find them
25. Play "school" - have your child be the teacher and you be the student
26. Make homemade presents for each other
27. Create "thinking of you" cards for each other
28. Put together a family newsletter
29. Take funny pictures of each other and create a collage
30. Pick flowers and leaves and press them
31. Create your own holiday and ways to celebrate it
32. Do kid-robics
33. Visit a zoo



34. Visit the library
35. Create your own family flag
36. Share what you like about yourselves and each other
37. Have a storytelling contest
38. Have a spelling bee
39. Host a book club
40. Create and draw a fictitious animal
41. Visit a museum
42. Learn a new word from a different language each day
43. Have a water fight with your garden hose on a hot summer day
44. Build a snowman and/or make snow angels
45. Write letters to someone
46. Visit a park
47. Create a "ME" book compiled with pictures and literature
48. Build a puzzle
49. Pretend you are movie stars and make your own commercial and/or movie
50. Draw your favorite thing in the whole world
51. Play "Jeopardy"
52. Reminisce over family photos and videos
53. Visit a beach
54. Have a bubble-blowing contest
55. Play double-dutch
56. Sing along to your favorite songs
57. Create a rock garden
58. Learn how to make chocolate
59. Pretend you are astronauts and create your own planet to visit
60. Play tug-of-war
61. Play hide-and-go-seek
62. Collect different instruments and form a family band
63. Practice yoga poses named for animals like downward dog, camel, lion, and cobra
64. List all of the countries and cities you would like to visit
65. Draw pictures out on the sidewalk with colorful chalk
66. Dance to different types of music
67. Draw a map of your neighborhood including important landmarks
68. Name all of the circular/rectangular/triangular items in one room
69. Design the menu for an imaginary restaurant
70. Climb and count the number of stairs in your entire house
71. Tell jokes to make each other laugh





# Healthy Veggie Mini Pizzas!

- 6 mini whole wheat pita pockets (6-inch rounds)
- 1 can pizza sauce (6.5 ounces or more)
- 1 package shredded mozzarella cheese
- Veggies of your choice (good ones for pizza include red, orange, yellow, or green peppers, mushrooms, onions, olives, and eggplant—or any other veggies you like!)

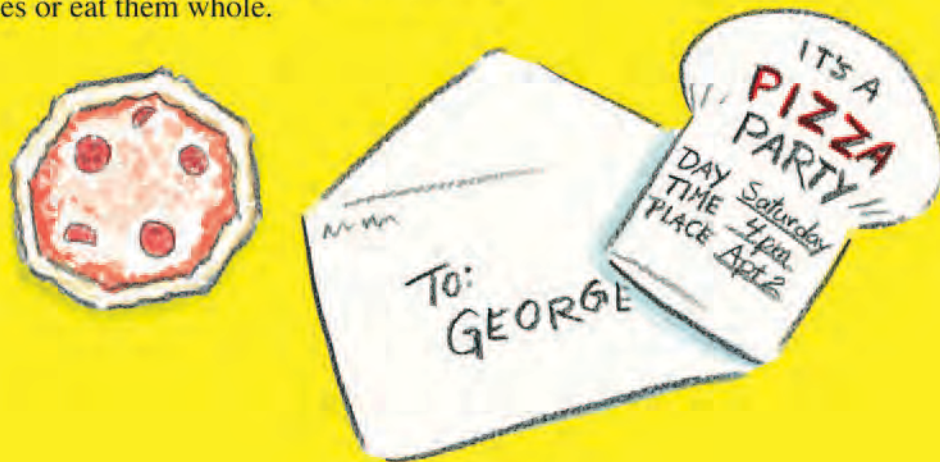
Have an adult help to slice the veggies and to preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

Place all of the pita pockets onto a large baking sheet. Spoon pizza sauce onto each pita and then add the shredded mozzarella. Add the veggies next, either just placing them any which way or creating fun patterns and shapes with them.

Have an adult put them in the oven and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until they are crisp. You can cut them up into small pieces or eat them whole.



**Enjoy!**

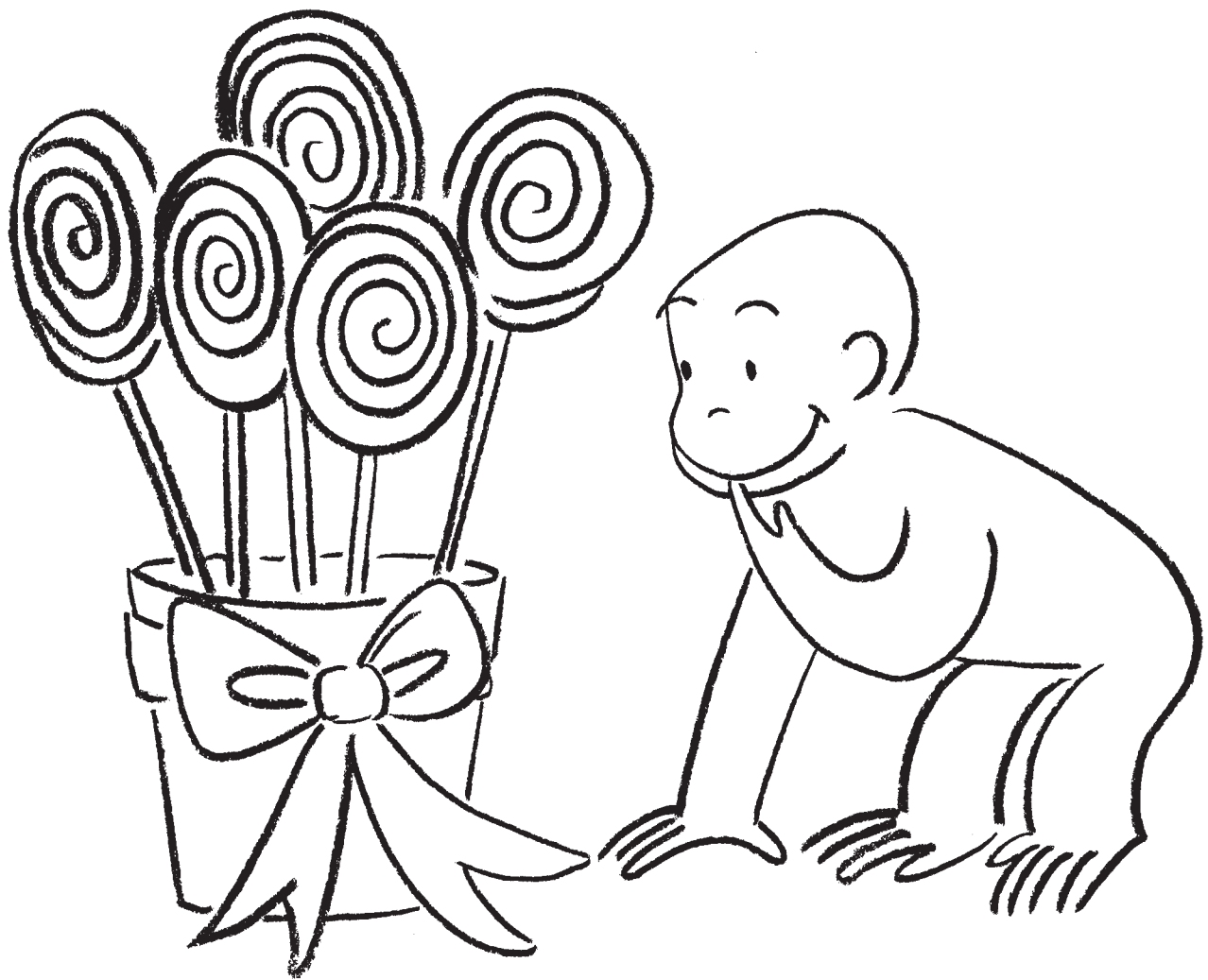


# Curious about coloring?



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# Curious George lollipop treat!



# Curious George goes fishing!



## Curious George reads a book!





# Let's Draw Curious George!



Let's learn how to draw Curious George!

## Step 1

Start with George's eyes.



1

## Step 2

Next comes George's face.



2

## Step 3

Then draw George's nose.



3



 reproducible

### Step 4

Give George a big smile!



4

### Step 5

Add the top of George's head.  
Do you think George is  
starting to look like George?



5

### Step 6

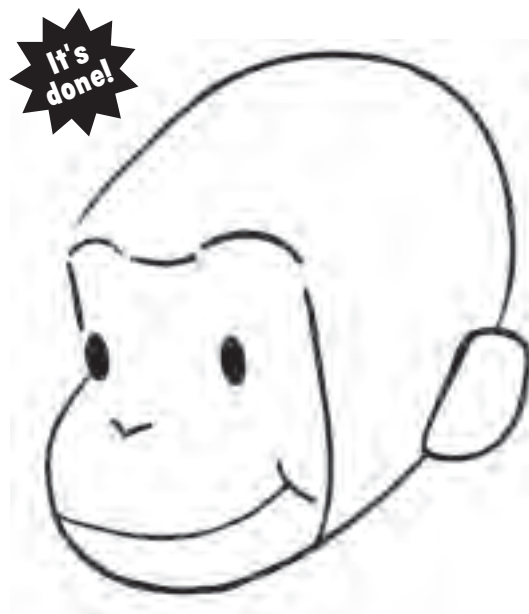
George's eyebrows and fur  
outline come next!



6

### Step 7

Don't forget George's ear!

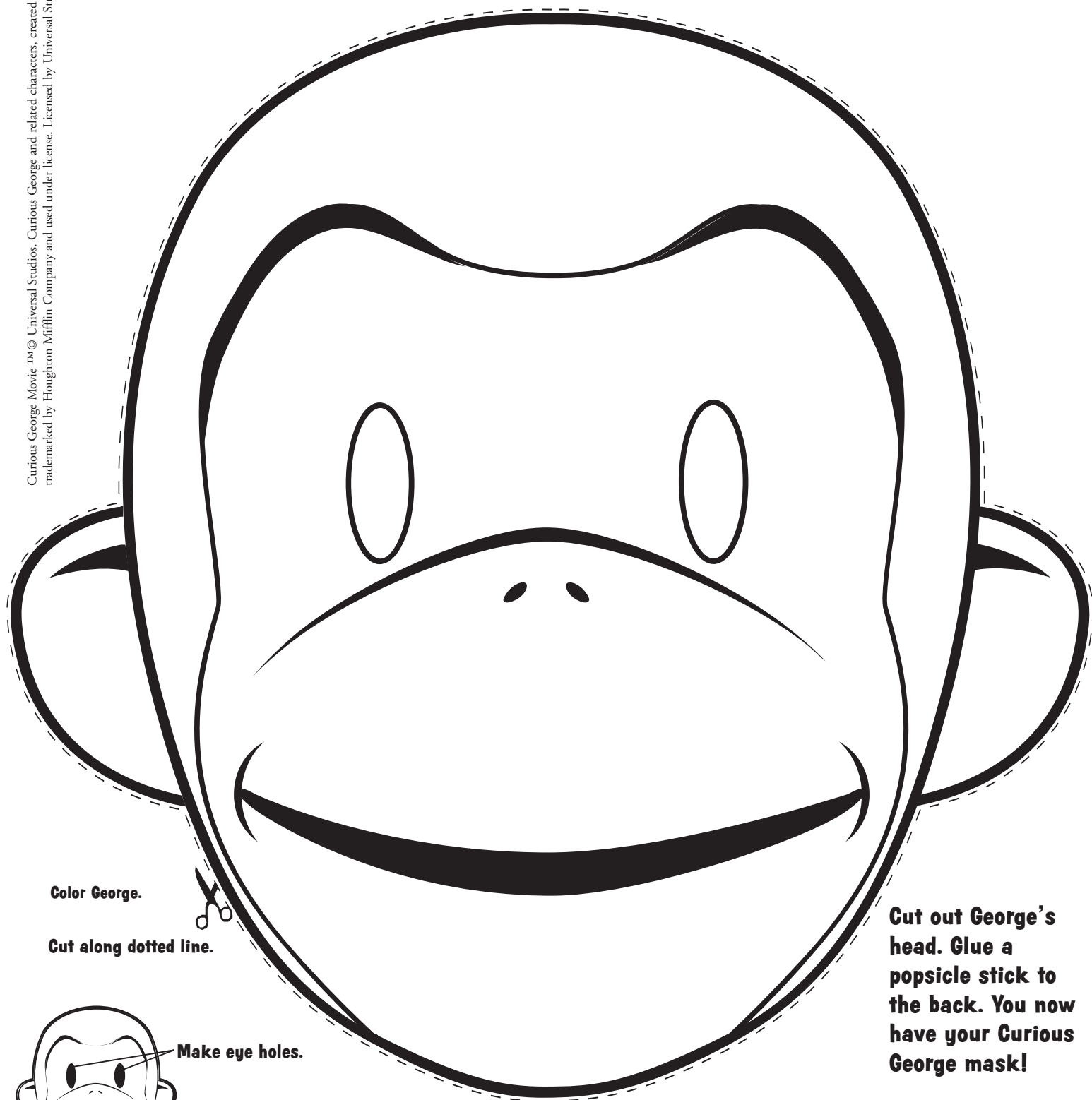


7

 reproducible

# Curious George<sup>TM</sup>

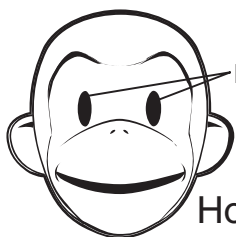
## Mask



Color George.

Cut along dotted line.

Cut out George's head. Glue a popsicle stick to the back. You now have your Curious George mask!



Make eye holes.

## DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

Match these fun facts to the right animals:

1. Can imitate human speech and learn up to a thousand words.



2. Males are called bucks. Females are called does. Babies are called joeys.



3. When its babies hatch out of their eggs, they are carried around in their mother's mouth.



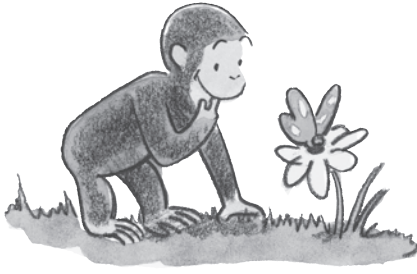
4. It is the largest bird in the world and lays eggs that weigh about three pounds each.



5. The world's tallest animal, it grows to eighteen feet and sleeps standing up.

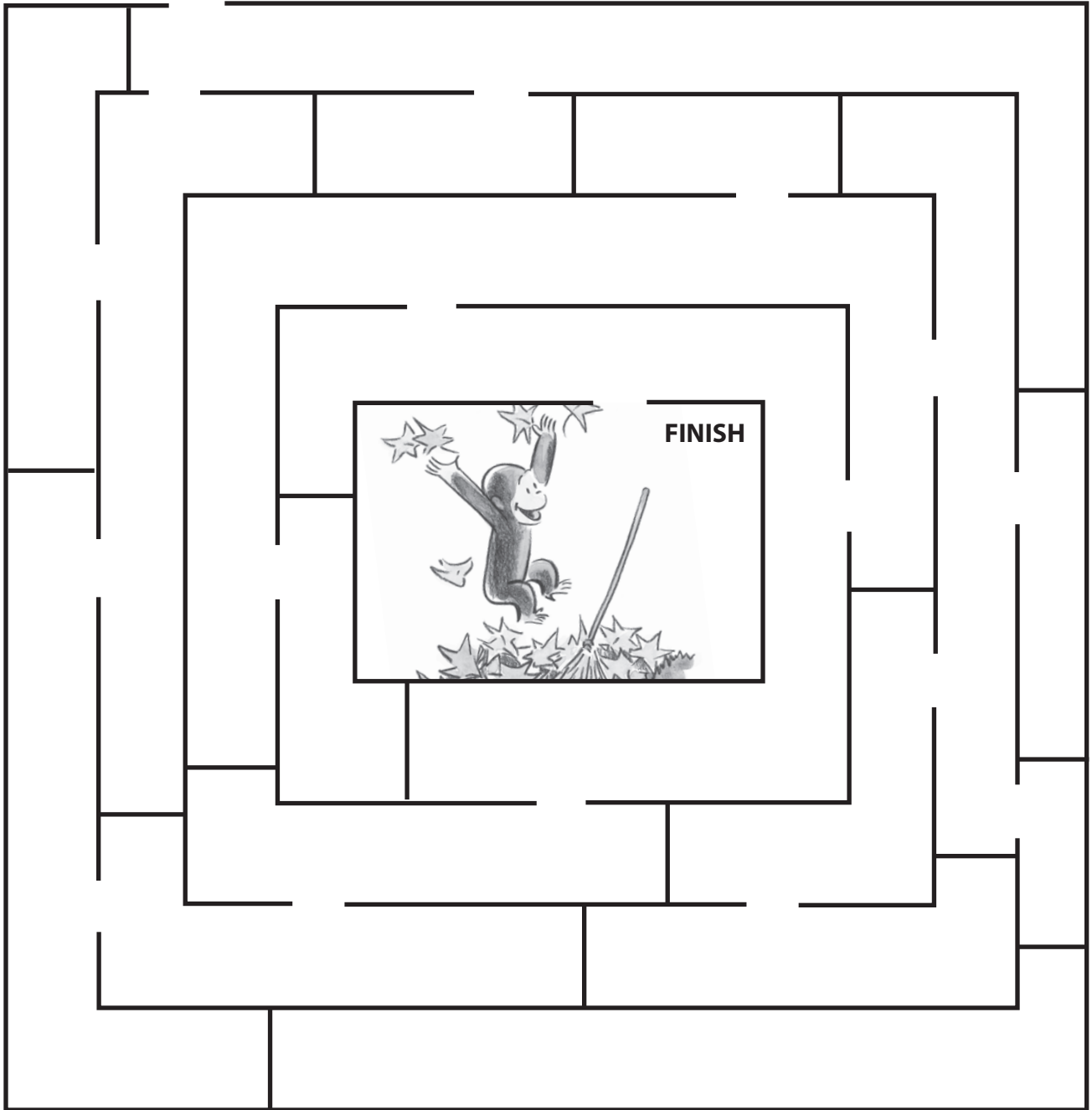


Answers: 1-Parrot, 2-Kangaroo, 3-Crocodile, 4-Ostrich, 5-Giraffe



**George is on a nature hike and wants to collect leaves. Can you help him?**

**START**

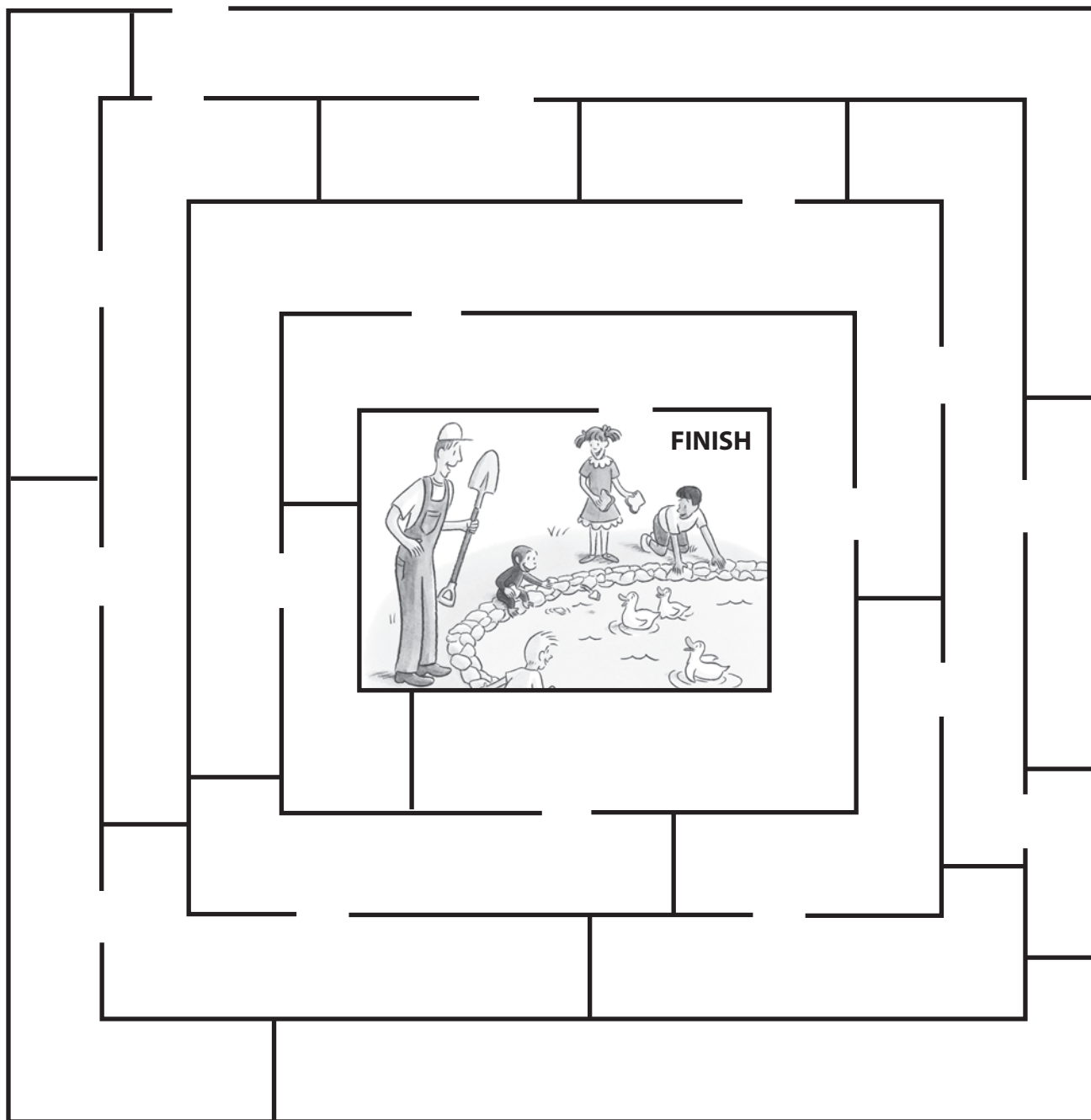






**George wants to take a bike ride.  
Can you help him find his way to the pond?**

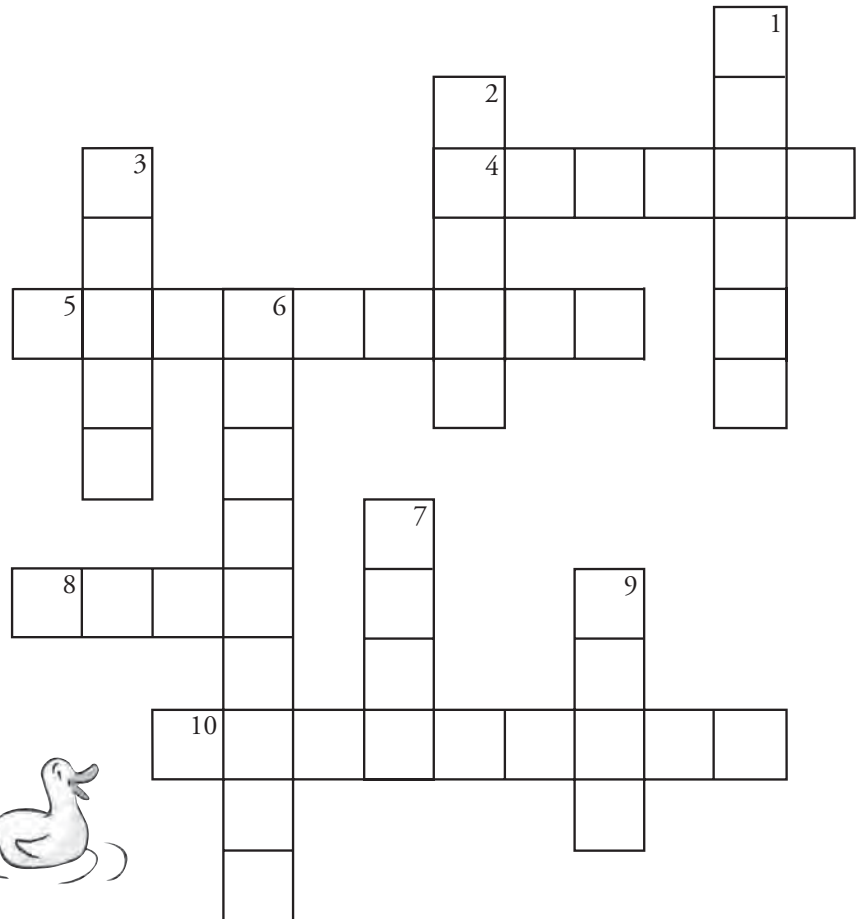
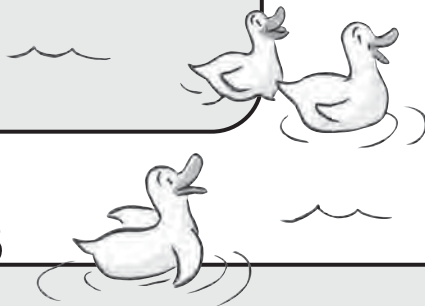
**START**



Use the story to help you find the missing words in the sentences below.  
Then insert these words to complete the crossword puzzle.

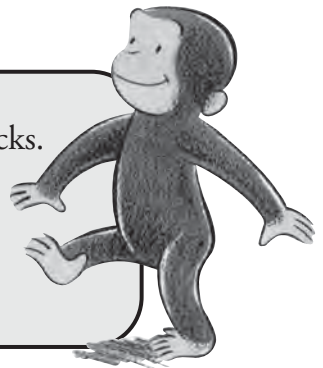
## DOWN

1. Because George is a \_\_\_\_\_, he could swing to the top of the truck.
2. There were children flying \_\_\_\_\_ in the park.
3. George became curious when he heard a \_\_\_\_\_ outside his window.
6. George climbed into the \_\_\_\_\_ when no one was around.
7. The ducks led George to the \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The \_\_\_\_\_ was nicer for the ducks after the island was added.

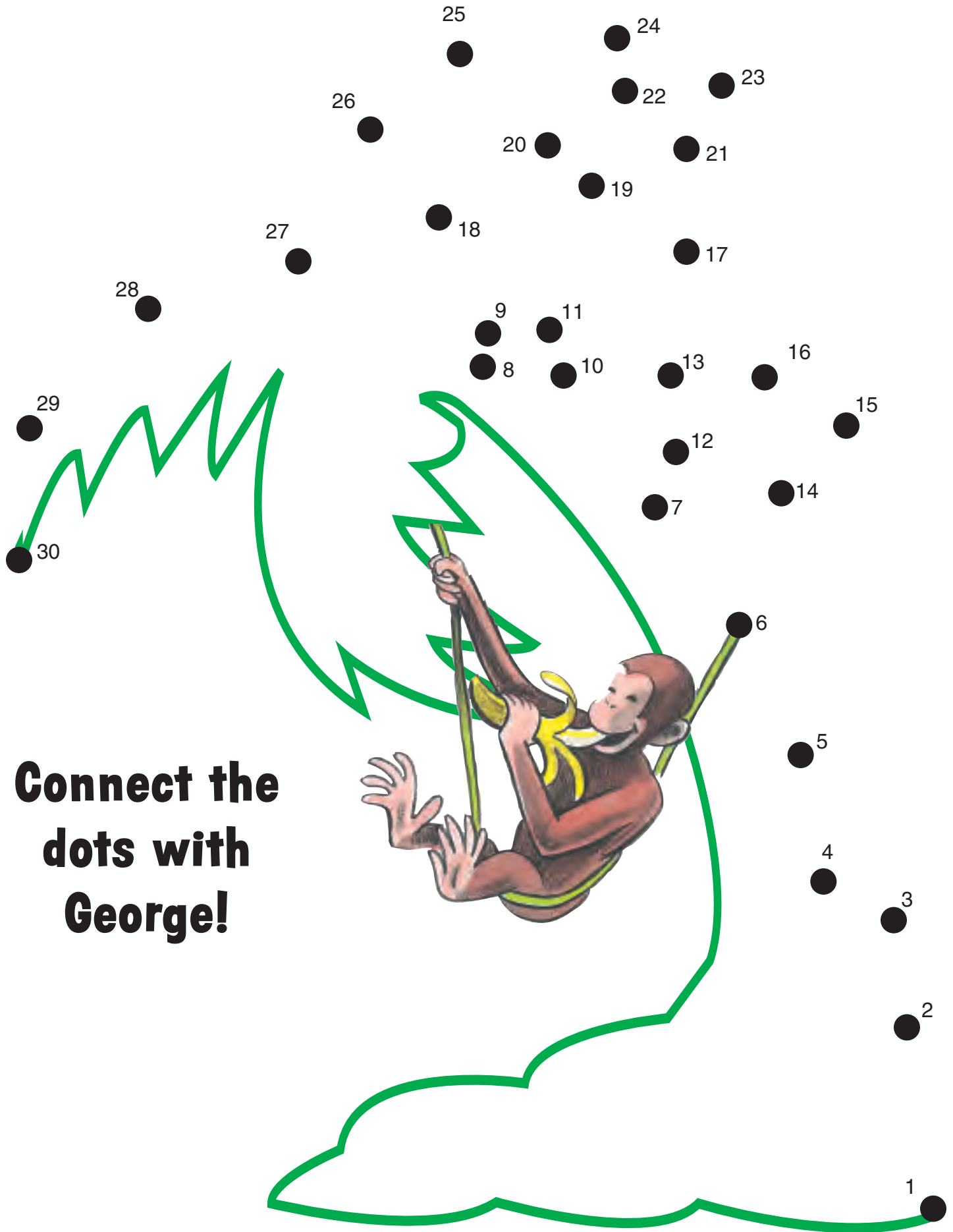


## ACROSS

4. The dirt that George dumped was made into an \_\_\_\_\_ for the ducks.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ were planting trees by the pond.
8. The dump truck was filled with \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Curious George followed the \_\_\_\_\_ and their mother.



# Connect the dots with George!



# Curious about spelling?

Fill in the letters to finish the words.



**h \_ t**



**d \_ g**



**b \_ ll**



**tr \_ ck**



**\_ ock**



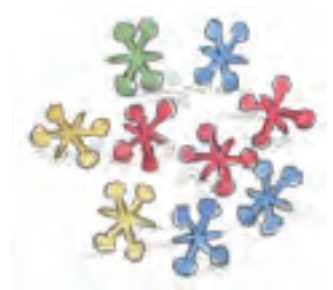
**d \_ ck**



**c \_ r**



**fr \_ g**



**j \_ cks**

# CURIOUS GEORGE WORD SEARCH

Help George find these words. They can go forward, backward, up, down, and even diagonally.



- curious
- monkey
- silly

- banana
- balloon
- friends

- movie
- jungle
- city

- count
- fun

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



# Curious George Matching Game

*Before playing, this page needs to be copied. Then help your child cut out the twelve Curious George playing cards.*

There are two ways to play the Curious George Matching Game.

**Game 1:** Play by yourself or with a friend. Lay out all cards face up. Look for the pictures of Curious George that are the same. Put the matching cards on top of each other. Continue until all pairs are found.

**Game 2:** Find a friend to play with you. Lay out all cards face down. Player 1 begins by turning over two cards. If the two cards have matching pictures, Player 1 gets to keep the pair. If the two cards do not match, Player 1 turns both cards face down and it becomes Player 2's turn. The game continues until all pairs are found.

