





## Playhouse Disney hosts green 'Playing for the Planet' event for preschoolers

Playhouse Disney and the Woodland Trust are hosting a **free event** on Clapham Common on Thursday 9th August 2007 for 'green' parents who want to teach their preschoolers about the environment.

The 'Playing for the Planet' family day, hosted by actor, presenter and Chief Scout, Peter Duncan, will showcase the green games and activities from this guide, encourage kids to get involved and offer parents advice on how to teach their kids about the issues in a fun and engaging way.

Families attending will also be able to share their own green hints and tips. The best will be showcased as part of Playhouse Disney's Big Green Weekend on the channel over the August Bank Holiday, also featuring green episodes of hit preschool shows like My Friends Tigger and Pooh and Higglytown Heroes.

Spaces for the Playing for the Planet family day are limited.

To register, please e-mail [playingfortheplanet@slice.co.uk](mailto:playingfortheplanet@slice.co.uk)

Please include names, contact details, number and ages of children and parents that wish to attend.

A confirmation e-mail with further details of the event will be forwarded.

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by Playhouse Disney Managing Director Rob Gilby and actor, presenter and Chief Scout Peter Duncan

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## Playing for the planet wallchart

# Introduction



## **Rob Gilby, Playhouse Disney Managing Director**

Playhouse Disney is a channel aimed at helping young kids develop by making learning a playful and fun experience. We specifically focus on preschool children and as well as providing them with the very best entertainment we continually monitor issues that are relevant to them and important to parents.

We recently conducted research showing that the environment is an issue close to many of your hearts. Two thirds of parents told us that they felt more concerned about the future of the planet since having children. Four out of five parents think it's important for children to do something regularly to help the environment and yet nearly two thirds of them don't know how to access information on teaching their children about green issues. Almost all of you believe that going green and related issues should be taught in schools and, interestingly, more than three quarters believe that kids should start learning about the environment at preschool age.

In response to this demand for information and fun educational games, we have created the Playing for the Planet Guide – the first ever preschool environmental play manual. Playhouse Disney is all about using creative storytelling to aid learning and development for preschoolers. Programmes like My Friends Tigger & Pooh, Mickey Mouse Clubhouse and Little Einsteins tackle different areas of child development, from early maths to social interaction, problem solving and teamwork.

For the Playing for the Planet Guide, we took a similar approach to creating our shows, working with experts in childcare, development and entertainment. I'd like to thank parenting expert Eileen Hayes, Peter Duncan (who many of you will remember from your youth!) and our environmental partner the Woodland Trust who have all helped us produce a guide that is fun, relevant, engaging for you and your children and, most of all, useful.



# Introduction



## **Peter Duncan, actor, presenter and Chief Scout**

I am proud to be part of the Playing for the Planet Guide, not just because it's the first ever preschool handbook about the environment, but because it's something I truly believe in.

As parents, we want our children to grow up in a flourishing environment and now we can help even our youngest kids learn how to respect the planet and protect it too. The Playing for the Planet Guide is brimming with environmental tips, which can be introduced through exciting everyday activities that are guaranteed to entertain.

I have devised interactive games and activities that show how recycling and conservation can be fun for young children and parents to tackle together. My own children would have loved these activities when they were younger, and I am sure yours will relish the chance to play new games as they learn environmental lessons.

And if you'd like to know more, [PlayhouseDisney.co.uk](http://PlayhouseDisney.co.uk) is packed with additional information. Plus, there are fun events planned around the country, environmental workshops and Playhouse Disney theme activities. Details will be shown soon on Playhouse Disney and the website, so keep watching to get involved.

Have a great time, playing for the planet!

# A Parent's guide

by Eileen Hayes



## The Good Old Days

Many parents look back on their own childhood with fond memories of the things they enjoyed. It could have been playing on the beach during a family holiday or simple everyday pleasures, such as hide-and-seek in the garden or counting spots on a ladybird. One of my happiest childhood memories is sledging down a hill near my home in fluffy white snow. When you have children of your own, you often want to introduce them to the things you enjoyed at their age and to re-create some of the magic of your own childhood.

It is a sad fact that some of these simple pleasures are no longer as readily available. Global warming means that many children have yet to see snow. Pollution on beaches means some families avoid the coast altogether, and numbers of butterflies are declining rapidly.

## Does It Matter?

You may think it's not that important because each generation of parents and children has a new set of pleasures and worries to consider anyway. Today's youngsters have TV, games consoles, and computers, and sometimes seem less keen to play outside.

Quality educational children's television like Playhouse Disney, with the much-loved Disney character friends, brings joy to many. But experts agree that small children must experience all kinds of play as well as interaction with friends and family. They still need to ride bikes, run around in the park, discover sand and sea at the beach, jump in puddles, kick up leaves, and learn about the changing seasons. If some of these activities were under threat for your grandchildren, wouldn't you want to protect the planet?

# A Parent's guide

by Eileen Hayes



## Going Green

Newspapers, magazines, TV programmes and websites everywhere are urging us to go green, recycle or reduce our carbon footprint – the amount of carbon dioxide gas (CO<sub>2</sub>) that our lives create. CO<sub>2</sub> accounts for 80% of the so-called Greenhouse Gases that are believed to cause global warming. And if we don't act now, global temperatures will rise by 6.4C by 2100. Many of us have started to do our bit, but until now we may not have considered involving our preschool children.

## Parents Teach First

It's parents who teach children to behave responsibly and to act in ways that are kind and not harmful to others. This begins with gently showing babies that pulling hair or poking eyes can hurt! It continues when explaining to toddlers about sharing and taking turns.

Children only really understand these messages from about three years onwards, but it is important to start earlier to lay the foundations of social behaviour. In the modern world, we understand that our actions have global consequences, and we need to teach these messages to our children too.

## Small Children And The Planet

Preschoolers won't understand complicated messages about carbon footprints, so it's important to consider your child's developmental stage. Small children have a narrow view of the world. They can think about the local area and their immediate surroundings but can't grasp global ideas. This doesn't mean it's too early to start but you must be realistic about how much your child can understand and stick to child-friendly language and simple ideas.

A great way to begin is to involve your children's favourite programmes. If they enjoy Little Einsteins, with its emphasis on art and culture, they will see the characters saving energy and water and you can use this to introduce these ideas at home. An important part of the show is about travel to far-away places, and you can use this to start talking about types of travel and whether it uses less energy to go by plane or train.

If they are fans of Mickey Mouse Clubhouse, with an emphasis on counting and maths, you can do simple calculations while out shopping. You could explain that strawberries from the USA use up lots of energy on the plane journey, but fruit from a local farm does not. Children can count how many packaged items are in your trolley and this can prompt a chat about packaging and the rubbish it creates.

The new My Friends Tigger and Pooh with the characters playing in the Hundred Acre Wood could provide an opportunity to plant a tree in the garden, or grow some seeds in a window box. You could visit woodland and explain that trees use up carbon dioxide and therefore clean up the air.

# Parent Checklist



## With A Small Baby

- Use real nappies. Before potty training, a child gets through an average of 3,800 disposables.

Did you know? UK households throw away nearly 3 billion nappies a year, making them the largest contributor to landfill.

## With A Toddler

### Food Sense

- Introduce the idea of eating locally grown fruit and vegetables so toddlers don't think it all comes in plastic wrapping or has to travel thousands of miles.
- Find a local supplier that can deliver organic produce in season, or walk to the local greengrocer to pick out loose fruit and vegetables.
- Visit allotments or farmyards so toddlers can see the food process.

Did you know? It is estimated that each of us creates 8.5 tonnes of rubbish in our lifetime.

### Toilet Sense

- Encourage good habits while toilet training. It isn't necessary to flush away every wee as this wastes large amounts of water. Teach how to use just the right amount of toilet paper.
- Teach about not wasting water when brushing teeth or washing hands.

## With A Preschooler

You can teach a little more about the world and how it is changing.

- Use good books to read to children, or TV programmes like those on Playhouse Disney that demonstrate caring about the environment.
- Explain how the energy we use adds up with that used by everyone else in the world. Show how polar bears now have less ice to float on, and explain how we can help by walking and cycling instead of using the car.
- Teach simple habits like closing the fridge door quickly, always switching off the TV or DVD player at the wall.
- Teach about recycling – drinks cans, birthday cards, cereal boxes. Take them to nursery or playgroup to be used for crafts.
- Take old toys to the charity shop or pass them on to other children.

Did you know? A tree that took hundreds of years to grow can be cut down in minutes. Once felled, trees can't help balance the gases in the atmosphere, leading to further global warming.



# Hints & Tips



- Encourage your children to recycle paper for drawing and painting. Show them that old envelopes, work documents and cards all make great canvases for creativity. Little Einsteins on Playhouse Disney enjoy artistic adventures, so why not encourage your child to include them in their own artistic effort, and reward them by telling a story based on the drawing?

## Star Tip

**TV presenter Gaby Roslin and daughters Libbi-Jack, aged 6 years and Amelie, aged 6 months**

When making packed lunches or organising a picnic, get your children to help in the kitchen and explain that reusable containers are a lot more environmentally friendly than buying packaged snacks or using disposable plates and cutlery. See if the kids can help you plan a meal that means nothing needs to be put in the litterbin afterwards.



## Star Tip

**TV presenter Gaby Logan and twins Reuben and Lois, aged 1 year**

To entertain the kids during the summer holidays, why not organise a nature trail? Pick out key trees, plants and wildlife for your children to identify. This will keep them entertained and teach them about the environment at the same time.



- If your children enjoy face painting, it is a great way to teach them about saving paper. You just need non-toxic face paints, water and a sponge to correct mistakes and bags of imagination. If you create designs based on your child's favourite Playhouse Disney characters, from programmes such as Little Einsteins and My Friends Tigger & Pooh, you can tell an environmentally friendly tale using those familiar faces, and ask your child to add some sound effects.

- Hosting a "clothes swap" party for your children and their friends can be great fun. It's a wonderful chance to pass on old clothes that your kids have outgrown and to get new ones in return. Point out to your children that this is environmentally friendly because nothing gets thrown away.

# Hints & Tips



## Star Tip

### Actress Angela Griffin and daughter Tallulah, aged 3 years

Since we moved to the country, we've tried to be more environmentally friendly. We have our own vegetable patch where we're growing onions, potatoes and courgettes. We even recycle all our rubbish to make our own compost to use on our patch. Recycling is very big in our house and we have lovely bin men who collect and recycle most things. We've planted lots of new apple trees in our garden and put nature-friendly hedgerows around our paddocks to encourage lots of wildlife to come and visit us. We even gave up our gas-guzzling 4x4!

## Star Tip

### TV presenter Gaby Roslin and daughters Libbi-Jack, aged 6 years and Amelie, aged 6 months

Reuse carrier bags when grocery shopping, and ask your kids to count how many bags they see at the supermarket – they'll be amazed at how quickly the numbers add up. You could even make your own reusable shopping bags, rather like Anya Hindmarsh. Your kids will enjoy customising plain linen bags with paints, buttons and sequins – and you can display the family artwork on your next shopping spree.



- When you boil eggs or vegetables, ask your children to use the cooled water on your houseplants. The plants will benefit from the nutrients released from the shells and veggies, and your kids will have fun watering the plants and watching them grow.
- Don't bin old teabags, eggshells and vegetable peelings – create a compost heap and put them on that instead. Show your children that compost is perfect for fertilising vegetables. They'll love watching the new plants grow. And when they're ready to pick, get the kids to help prepare them for a meal. Vegetables taste even better when you grow them yourself!

## Star Tip

### Actor Ian Kelsey and daughter Layla, aged 2 years

We make a conscious effort to be green in the home and teach Layla about the environment. One thing that works really well is turning the water off when we brush her teeth. We will run the tap and count it out for a second or two whilst we wash the brush off and then turn the tap off. She really responds to this and joins in with the counting.

# Hints & Tips



- Instead of needlessly running the tap to get a cold glass of water, encourage your children to make batches of ice cubes using fruit juice or squash. They provide colourful and refreshing treats that can be stocked in the freezer and used on hot days.
- Save electricity by having a candlelit family dinner. It's easy and fun to make candles with your children; starter kits can be bought from toy and craft shops or online. The wax can be easily scented or coloured and candle moulds come in lots of interesting shapes and sizes including Playhouse Disney characters such as Pooh and Tigger. (Remember to be safe and keep your child away from open flames and hot wax).



- Show your children that chemical cleaning products and air fresheners can be replaced with natural ingredients. Make your own as a family and ask the kids to help you count out the measurements as a simple way for them to learn. For furniture polish, mix half a teaspoon of olive oil with a quarter of a cup of vinegar. Get the children to dab it on a rag and polish a wood surface until it shines.

## Star Tip

TV presenter Gaby Roslin and daughters Libbi-Jack, aged 6 years and Amelie, aged 6 months

Get each of your children to plant a tree in the garden, and encourage them to take on the responsibility of nurturing their growth. Apple and pear trees produce fruit that you can then use for a tasty dish that the family can enjoy together. When your kids see how long it takes a tree to flourish, get them to think about how long the Hundred Acre Woods in My Friends Tigger & Pooh must have taken to grow – and how important it is for us to look after trees and plants.



## Star Tip

TV presenter Gaby Roslin and daughters Libbi-Jack, aged 6 years and Amelie, aged 6 months

After you've buckled the kids into the baby seats and loaded up the car, short journeys are often quicker by foot, bike or bus. Make local journeys fun by encouraging your children to use scooters, skates and bicycles. It's a great opportunity to teach them road safety too, while saving fuel and emissions.

# Green Games & Activities

by Peter Duncan



Before you begin playing our green games, create a Playing for the Planet Wall Chart to mark scores and progress. Decorate it with fun characters that your child can relate to, such as the stars of Playhouse Disney's My Friends Tigger & Pooh, Little Einsteins and Mickey Mouse Clubhouse. Each time your child plays for the planet, you can reward the good work with a star. When the chart is full each week, do something special together as a family such as go to the park, visit friends or ride a bike. These simple activities will help your child to develop and learn about the world in which they live.

Let the games begin!



## Grow Your Own: Competition Time

Growing your own vegetables is a great way to save money, stop wasteful packaging and save the energy used transporting them to the supermarket. This can become a fun competition by giving each member of the family their own vegetable patch or tub. It is best to begin with tomatoes, courgettes, broccoli, potatoes (if you have the room) runner beans and peas. Pick a spot with plenty of sunlight and remember to water your veggies. You could even grow flowers too – perhaps see who can grow the tallest sunflower. Towards the end of the growing season (late summer) you can have family awards for the top growers, with the winner receiving extra stars on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart. The best part is that you get to eat the veggies at the end too – they always taste better when they are home grown with your family's love and attention!

## Grow Your Own: Herbs Make Scents

Even if you don't have much space, there's always room for a herb garden. Plus, cooking food with herbs is a fantastic way of adding flavour and making your child's taste buds tingle. Get your family to plant herbs in flowerpots and take it in turns to water them so they flourish. When they have grown, cut some leaves from each plant for this game. Take it in turns to pass the herbs around and smell them. Use simple herbs that are easy to remember like mint, basil and chives. When smelling each herb, you can relate the smell to something that your child will identify, such as toothpaste for mint. For every herb your child guesses correctly, add a star to the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart.



# Green Games & Activities

by Peter Duncan



## Food Recycling: Wiggly Woo

It is hard to believe, but worms love to live in the dark with biodegradable waste – which means any vegetable matter that you currently throw in your dustbin! You can buy worms from an angling shop or via internet mail order, and you can make them a home using a small rubbish bin with a lid or a glass fish tank. Get your child to put the worms at the bottom of the bin and fill it on top with kitchen waste. Encourage your child to keep checking the box, because after just a few days the vegetable waste will disappear. You can pretend at first that it's a magic trick – and then, as they keep filling it, teach them all about food recycling in a fun and educational way.



## Clothes Recycling: Clothes Horse

Recycling clothes is something very few people do but it can be great fun for you and your children. Using dad's old shirt, or a piece of an old coat, fashion a cape for your little hero (and friends!). All sorts of costumes can be made from unwanted clothes and this is a great way of highlighting to children that you're being environmentally friendly. For variety, ask friends to bring round their unwanted items too. Soon you'll have one of the best (and most individual) dressing up boxes in the neighbourhood. You could even hold a children's fashion show and award stars on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart for the most inventive outfit. Or why not write your own story around the clothes and put on a play?

## Tree Planting: Olympic Trees

In China, a huge forest has been planted near Beijing to improve the atmosphere by reducing smog in the city for the 2008 Olympics. The more trees there are, the more carbon dioxide is absorbed by the leaves and turned into fresh air. Show your child that a tree can grow from a freshly cut leaf pushed firmly into a flowerpot containing compost and some root powder from the garden centre. If, in a few weeks, it starts to grow, ask your child to choose a suitable spot in the garden to transplant it, and get them to dig a small hole for it. Because they won't all be successful, always try growing several different kinds of plants, shrubs and trees at a time. This activity doesn't have instant results but you can have fun together watching the trees and plants grow, and who knows, by the London 2012 Olympics, you may have grown a tree that's taller than anybody in the family.



# Green Games & Activities

by Peter Duncan



## Tree Awareness: Catch A Falling Leaf

Trees are mysterious and there is evidence they can send messages over long distances to other trees when they are threatened by disease or cut down. All over the country there are woods where trees are cared for and protected (see [www.woodland-trust.org.uk](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk)) and visiting them can be a great family day out. During an autumn visit to a wood, play a game called Catch A Falling Leaf in which you have to catch each leaf before it reaches the ground. After a set time, compare leaves to see who has collected the most and how many different kinds there are. Everybody gets one star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart for each leaf caught and for every different colour. This is a simple but fun way to play together while enjoying nature.



## Energy Saving: Eye Spy Standby

If everyone on the planet turned off all the electrical items that are left on standby, the world's power consumption would drop by between 5 and 10%. In this quick game, make a list of how many home appliances are on standby in your house (usually displaying a red light) and ask your child to spot as many as they can in five minutes. TVs and DVDs are obvious but there are some more obscure ones such as the washing machine and the home computer. Correct answers get a star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart, and you can point out any appliances that they missed and ask them to help you check they are switched off in the future.

## Recycling: Plastic Bottle Greenhouse

A plastic bottle greenhouse acts in the same way as an ordinary greenhouse and it's completely recyclable. It retains heat from the sun and helps seedlings grow. Work with your child to collect as many plastic bottles as you can – and we are talking a lot, think one hundred! When you have a big stash, you are ready to build a greenhouse. You will also need some canes or straight sticks. Begin by finding some soft ground in your garden and push the canes or sticks into the ground to form a framework that fits the bottles – you will need to do this but it will be exciting for your child to watch. When you are satisfied with your creation, which should be about the size of a dog's kennel, get your child to plant some seeds in a small tray of compost and place it inside the greenhouse. Encourage your child to water the seeds and watch what grows. The Plastic Bottle Greenhouse is something to be proud of because you built it together as a family.

# Green Games & Activities

by Peter Duncan



## Recycling: Blind Man's Waste

In this fun but messy game, mum or dad creates separate piles on the kitchen table including old waste such as newspapers, dinner leftovers, vegetable peelings and old teabags. Blindfold your child so they can't see what is there – and explain what is going to happen, so they get excited about the game and not scared by the blindfold. Lead them to the table and ask them to guess what they are feeling in their hands. Award a star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart for every correct answer and a bonus star for knowing how to recycle it. This is a great fun way to teach your child about recycling.



## Recycling: Recycle Race

It's vital that we all recycle as many materials as we can at home, and this activity encourages this. Using large cardboard boxes, get your child to decorate them with paints, perhaps painting each one with a different character from Playhouse Disney (Tigger could be for paper, Pooh could be for plastic etc.) Each day, encourage your child to find rubbish that can be recycled and placed in the correct bin. If done correctly, they win a star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart. This increases your child's knowledge about recycling. You could encourage other families in your street to see what toys and games can be made from everyday rubbish. Collages look great made from old magazines and newspapers. If everyone in your street did the same, a recycle race could be born! There are hundreds of items waiting for a new life – so show your child how to release the rubbish.

## Water Awareness: Water World



Lack of rain and melting ice caps are contributing to water shortages and changes in climates across the world. Get your child to spot all the places in your house where wasted water drains away – such as the bath and sink – and award a star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart for each one. You could collect the dirty water and re-use it for games and watering the garden or even make your own mini pond. If you dig a hole for a bucket or washing up bowl, get your child to decorate the edges with foliage or rocks to create a water feature.

# Green Games & Activities

by Peter Duncan



## Water Saving: Water Water Everywhere

At the breakfast table, have a chat with your child about saving water, what this means and what they can do. Talk about turning off the tap while cleaning teeth, showering instead of bathing, and only flushing the loo when necessary. Each time your child saves water from then on, reward them with a star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart. Reward them with praise to show how well they are doing and to ensure they learn that water saving is important. These lessons will stay with them for life.

## Green Family Holidays: Surround Sound

Wherever you go on a family holiday, you always hear different sounds. In the country, you may hear birds singing or trees rustling in the wind. In the city you are more likely to hear the sounds of cars and lorries and the chatter of humans. In this game, which you can play anywhere in the world, you just stand very still and listen to all the sounds you can hear. From distant aircraft to the buzz of a fly and even the sound of your own breathing. Point out to your child that there are always more sounds than we first realise. For every noise that is heard, award a star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart. You could ask your child if they think any of the sounds is polluting (e.g. plane) and which, improve the environment (e.g. trees).

## Green Shopping: Pass The Packaging

This game is like pass the parcel only the package gets bigger instead of smaller. To play, you need a big roll of sticky-back plastic. After a shopping trip, get children to put all the packaging that comes with the food and groceries into a special pile. Look at it carefully and decide how best to build it into one object using the sticky-back plastic. With a little imagination, egg cartons, cardboard and plastic can be shaped into no end of fresh creations. You could build a spacecraft, a monster or something that just looks good. Any pieces you don't use can be returned to the supermarket. Help your child to ask the store manager whether there is a recycling bin or scheme that they can use. Explain that by recycling, they have saved the planet from waste that would otherwise go to landfill sites (big holes in the ground full of rubbish) or be burnt in incinerators (perhaps creating more global warming).

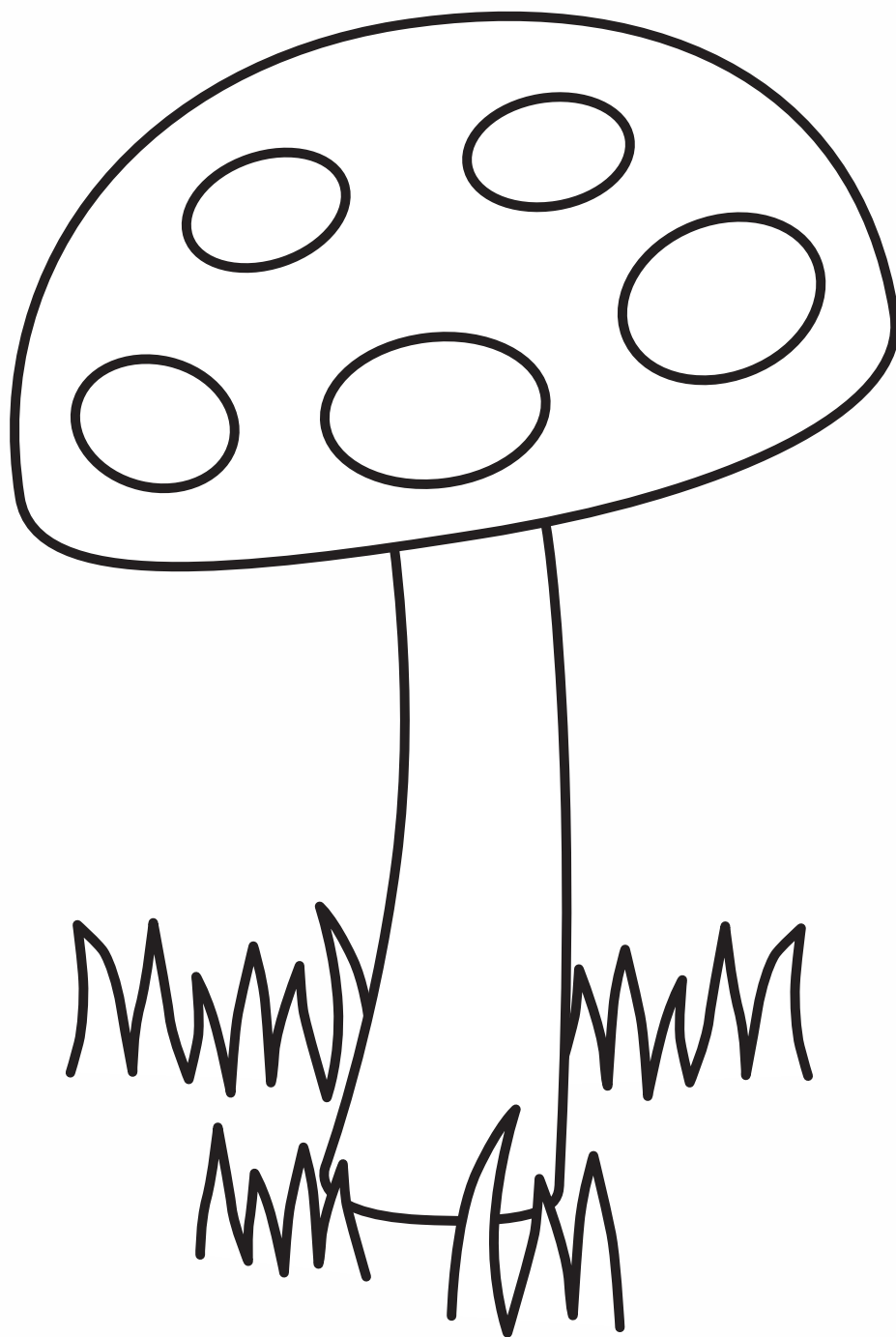


## Green Transport: Iron Monster

When trains were first invented, they were known as 'iron monsters' because they used to belch out dirt and steam as they were powered by coal. Nowadays, train travel is one of the least polluting forms of transport. Perhaps in the future trains will be powered by the sun and they won't even need electricity. Take the train next time you have a family day out, and use the time together to play games and look at the passing countryside. One good train game is to guess the number of trees or planes or other trains you will all see in the next minute. Award a star on the Playing for the Planet Wall Chart for every correct answer. Make a point of putting it on the chart as soon as you get home.



# Activity sheet: Colouring in



WOODLAND  
TRUST

# Activity sheet: Ladybird maze



Winter



Summer

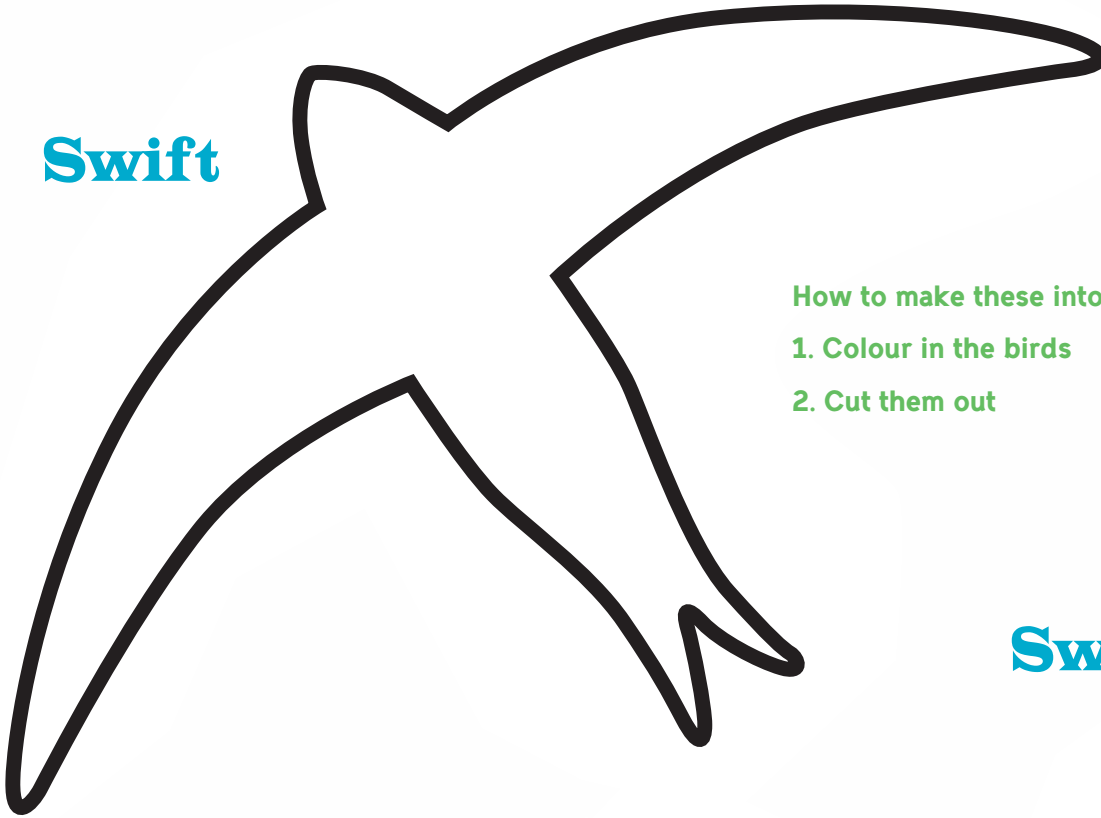


WOODLAND  
TRUST

# Activity sheet: Finger puppets



## Swift



How to make these into finger puppets:

1. Colour in the birds
2. Cut them out

## Swallow



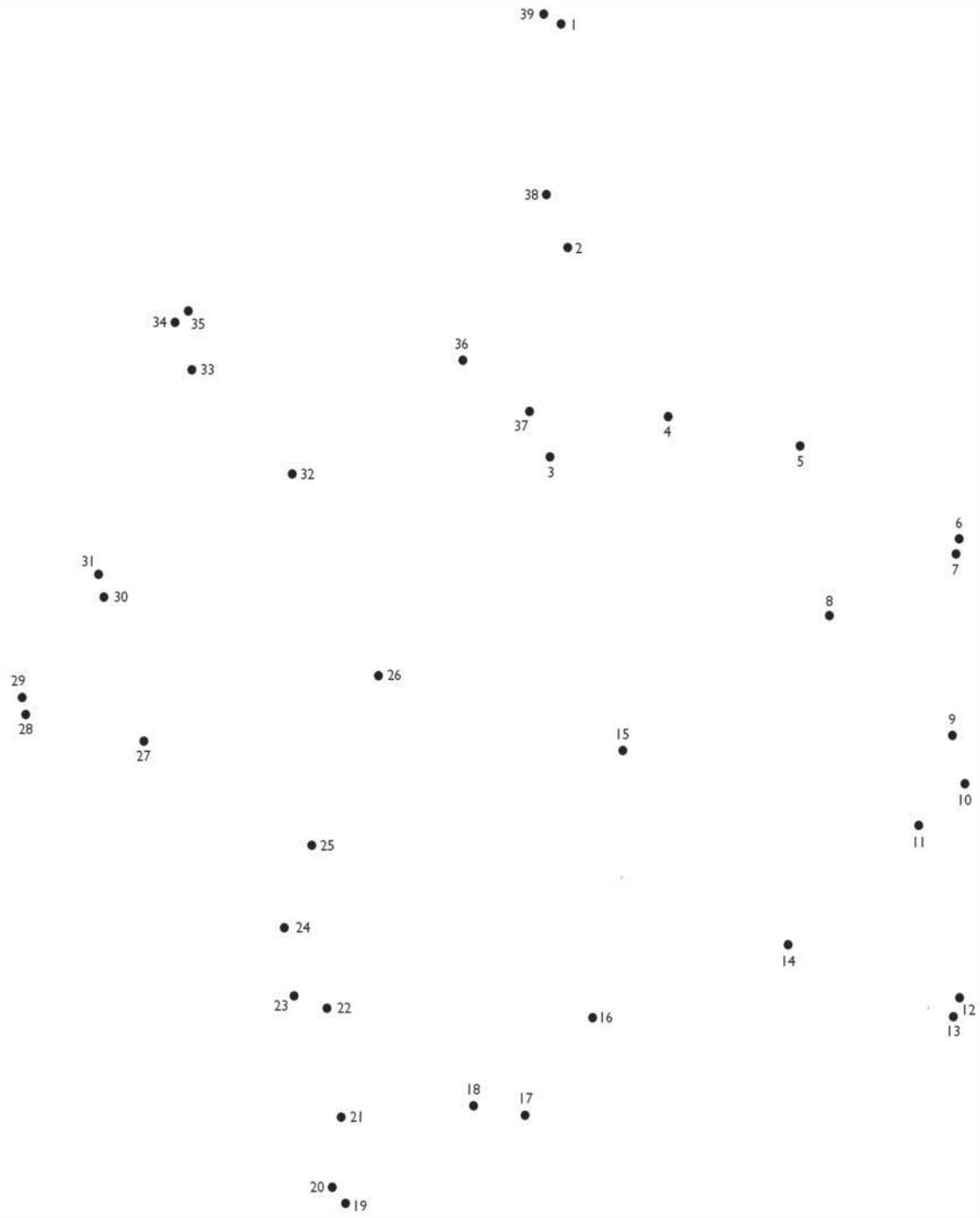
## Finger bands



3. Cut out the finger bands and glue them into circles (big enough to fit round your finger)
4. Glue the bands underneath the birds (in the middle of the tummy)



# Activity sheet: Dot to dot



# Activity sheet: Word Search



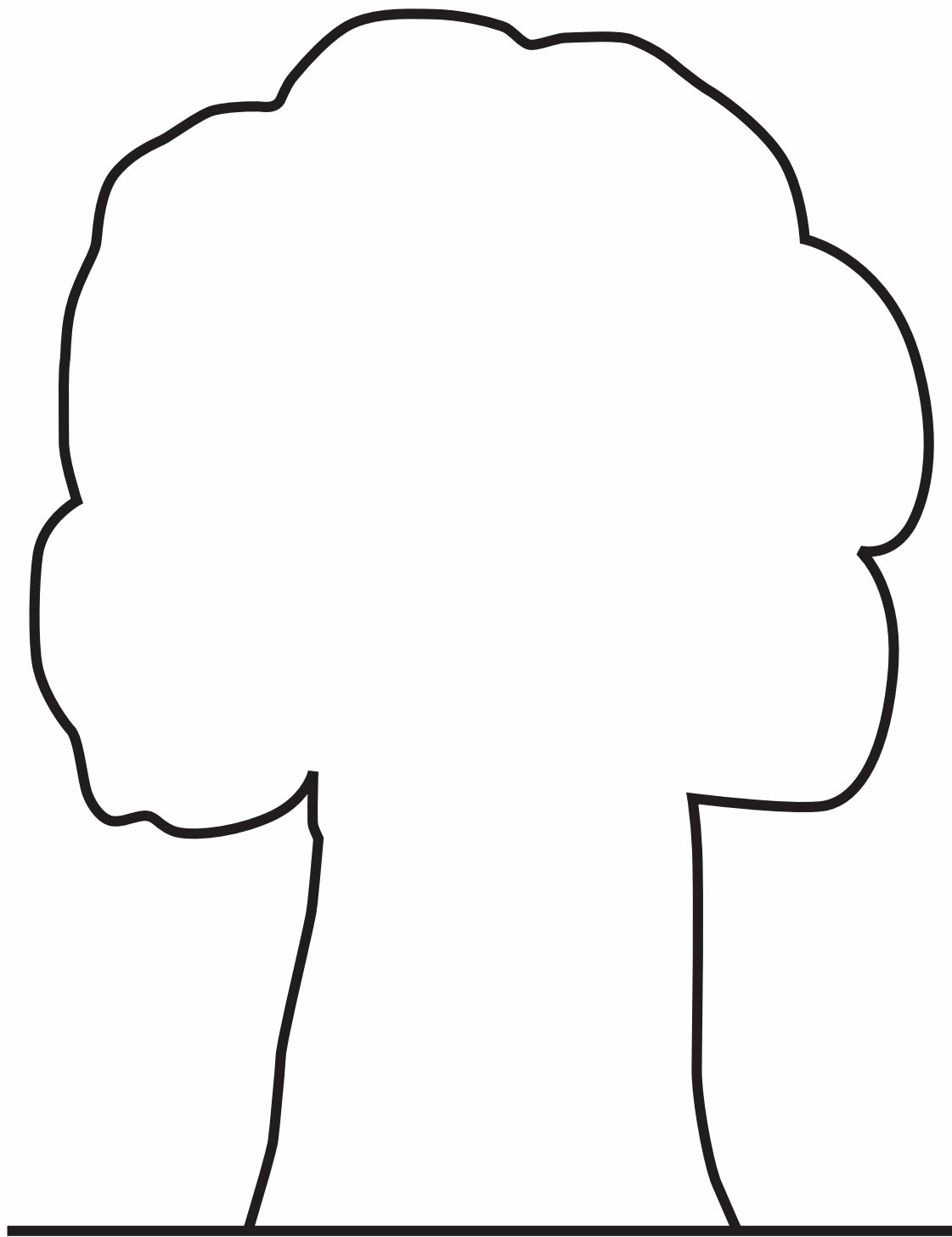
R	E	T	F	A	L	M	L	E	A	F
O	N	W	O	O	D	S	H	T	B	S
O	P	A	R	P	E	O	B	L	R	I
T	R	E	E	L	B	R	A	N	C	H
S	B	F	S	A	H	I	R	S	U	T
E	I	H	T	R	U	N	K	M	L	A

**Can you find all 8 words?**

**BARK**  
**BRANCH**  
**FOREST**  
**LEAF**

**ROOTS**  
**TREE**  
**TRUNK**  
**WOODS**

# Activity sheet: Collage



# Playing for the Planet

Names	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							

