



FAMILY HISTORY ACTIVITIES

A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

“ Honor your own stories and tell them too. The tales may not seem very important, but they are what binds families and makes each of us who we are.

-Madeline L'Engle

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Studies have shown that storytelling plays an important role in a child's neurological development as well as the building of relationships between children and their caregivers. Research also indicates that children who know more about their family history (family stories) are found to be more resilient in the face of life's challenges.

As a group of moms that love family history, we have each seen the positive impact that participating in family history has had in our families and we want to encourage all families to participate in family history work so you can see the benefits too!

We realize that jumping into family history can feel overwhelming really fast. So, we put together this guide of activities specifically geared towards families hoping to inspire you to get started and to make incorporating family history into your lives feel approachable and inviting.

We are so excited to share this resource with you and cannot wait to hear how you use this in your own families! Feel free to reach out to any of us with any questions and follow along with us on Instagram as we continue to share resources, tips and ideas!

Sarah Garner
@thekindredpress

Carly Morgan
@familytreenotebooks

Camille Mecham
@themommygenealogist

Dani Olroyd
@roots2blossoms

Kandis Lake
@familyhistorianmom

Jessica Van Woerkom
@treasured_families

Taralyn Parker
@keepmovingforwardwithme

THANK YOU FOR DOWNLOADING THIS RESOURCE!

We are so excited for you to get started incorporating family history into your family! There are just a few things we'd like to share with you before you get started:

NEEDED RESOURCES

While putting these resources together we tried to include pretty much everything you'd need to participate in these activities that you wouldn't already have at home. In addition to the pages in this packet, some of the suggested activities use the family tree website Family Search. If you do not already have a Family Search account, you can sign up for a free account by visiting: <https://www.familysearch.org/> however, an account is not necessary to enjoy this packet! If you have any questions about this please let us know.

PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

While we worked hard to ensure these would print perfectly on all standard home printers, please use the "Print Preview" option to ensure all of the graphics are aligned as

you'd like them to be before printing. If needed, you can use the "scale to fit" option to ensure none of the graphics/are cut off in the printing process.

USAGE RIGHTS

We would love you to share this guide with your family, friends, and neighbors! If they would like their own copy of the digital file, please share with them the download link.

You may not manipulate or alter this content in any way without specific and written permission. This product is intended for personal use only. You may share with family and friends, but you may not re-package or re-distribute this content without express written permission. Please be courteous and provide credit where appropriate. If you have any questions, please ask! hello@thekindredpress.com

Once again, we're excited to have you join us in adding family history to your lives. We hope that you see the positive affects as we have. We would love to hear about your experiences with these printables and to see how you use them! If you decide to share on Instagram, please tag #fhforyou. We look forward to hearing from you!

HISTORY

“As we learn about the past, we gather strength for the future” -Hank Smith

FIND THE STARS

Use RelativeFinder.org to look up which celebrities, historical figures or other famous people you are related to.

BIG FAN

In Family Search, utilize the many view options in the fan chart to explore the stories and photos that others have uploaded of your ancestors.

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Ask relatives or use the “Map My Ancestors” feature on Family Search to locate where your ancestors lived. Use our U.S. and world maps (on pages 11-12) to color in the States (U.S.) or countries your ancestors lived in or emigrated from. Talk about the ties you may still have to those areas or cultures.

GOOGLE EARTH

Use Google Earth to view countries, homes or landmarks your ancestor’s lived or may have visited.

FOCUS IN

A great way to create a personal connection to our ancestors is to focus in on one specific person. Choose an ancestor and use our “Ancestor Profile” (on page 13) as a guide to research about their life. Choose one person as a family and research together, or have each person choose a different ancestor and share what they find.

BACK IN TIME

Create a timeline of your ancestor’s life on your wall using painter’s tape. Highlight major life events as well as world events to get a feel for the things they may have experienced. Add in images of places they may have lived or photographs of them and their family at different times in their lives.

READ UP

Visit your local library and check out books about immigration, that talk about a specific time period you would like to learn about, the country of origin for an ancestor or a historical event your ancestors may have experienced. Try to put yourself in your ancestor’s shoes and talk about what it may have been like to experience those things.

TAKE A TOUR

Many historical sites have virtual tours available online. Pick a location that may have been meaningful to your ancestors (like Ellis Island) and take a virtual tour as a family.

SNAIL MAIL

Talk about old types of communication our ancestors may have used. Party lines? Telegrams? Snail mail? Take some time to write a letter to a friend or family member and mail it the “old-fashioned” way.

CENSUS

Census records are an important resource for finding information about our ancestors. Learn about how the census works by creating your own census! Use our Census Template (page 14) to create your own census record. Here are some ideas on how you can practice filling in your census record:

- Ask the family members in your house for their information
- Create a lego village and take the census for your village
- Call your family members and ask for their information to fill in your census record

You can find copies of real census records on FamilySearch.org, Ancestry.com and Google.

SCAN IT

Find some family photos to digitize. If you don't have access to a scanner, you can download Google's free Photo Scan app. Upload the photos you scan to Family Search or share with family members via email or Facebook.

ANCESTOR ADVENTURE

Our friends at Branches Art have put together some free postcard printables to get your kids and family involved in family history. Do you have Royal Relations or ancestors that were Early American settlers? Download and print these free postcards to mail out to cousins or friends and send them on their own adventure to find those ancestors.

Find the cards here:

Royal Relations: <https://branchesart.com/product/royal-relations/>

Early American Settlers: <https://branchesart.com/product/early-american-settlers/>

LIVING HISTORY

“Family history is more than genealogy, rules, names, dates, and places. It is more than a focus on the past. Family history also includes the present as we create our own history. It includes the future as we shape future history through our descendants.” -Alan F. Packer

FAMILY INTERVIEWS

Choose a living relative to interview. Use our list of interview questions (page 15) and conduct an interview with them in person or over the phone. Audio or video record the interview. Use the recording to create a video or write up a life story of the person you interviewed.

FAMILY NARRATIVE

What is your family narrative? Have each member of your family individually write down three words that describe your family without seeing what others have written. Once you're all done, compare your answers and see what stands out as being part of your family story.

KIDS DAILY JOURNAL

Take the time to journal every day. Aside from increasing literacy skills, journaling also helps with creativity and emotional intelligence in kids. Use our kids journaling pages (page 16) as well as our prompts for kids (page 17) to start your own kids journals.

FAVORITES

Work together to create lists of your family's "favorites". Favorite meals, favorite vacations, favorite memories, favorite things to do together, etc.

FAMILY PHOTOS

Take some time to look back through your favorite family photos together. Organize the photos on your phone and have your kids pick some of their favorites to print in a photo book, place in an album or hang in your home.

FAMILY JOURNAL

Start a journal together as a family. Spend time together each week recording what happened during your week as well as memories of big or important events that happen in your family.

CORE MEMORIES

In the movie *Inside Out*, the main character Riley has personality islands that make up her personality and who she is. They are hockey, goofball, friendship, honesty, and family islands. Use the "Personality Island" worksheet (page 18) to help your kids determine what their personality islands are. Write out words or draw pictures that represent each island. Riley also had core memories that helped form her islands. Use the "Core Memories" printable (page 19) to write or draw about some special memories and events that helped your kids form their personality islands. If you'd like, use the "feeling colors" from each character to color in each memory orb.

ABOUT ME

Turn the tables on your kids and let them interview themselves or interview each other. Have your kids fill out the “All About Me” profile (page 20).

TELL ME A STORY

Share some of your favorite stories from your childhood with your children. If you can't think of any, have your kids help you think of prompts (like “park, or “first grade”) to help you think of new memories to share. You may be surprised at how they love even the simplest stories because it teaches them more about you and what your childhood was like.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Record what a day in the life of your family is like. Record it in your journal or with pictures or videos.

TIMELINE

Create a “Family Timeline” or have each individual create a timeline for their own life. Include big events and pictures where possible.

WRITE YOUR STORY

Help your family members start writing their personal life stories using the prompts available from Family Search's 52 Stories campaign. Record them in a journal or use your phone to video or audio record your responses. The questions can be found at <https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/52stories/>

CULTURE / CELEBRATIONS

“I am bound to them, though I cannot look into their eyes or hear their voices. I honor their history. I cherish their lives. I will tell their story. I will remember them.” - Unknown

DANCE PARTY

Call a grandparent and ask what songs they listened to as teenagers. Or, pick an ancestor and look up music that would have been popular when they were teenagers. Make a playlist and have a dance party. Learn some simple dance moves from that era.

FAMILY RECIPES

Talk about some favorite recipes your family makes or recipes you liked as a child. Use the printable recipe cards available at <https://thekindredpress.com/family-holiday-recipe-cards/> to start your own family cookbook. Make a favorite family recipe together.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Celebrate your ancestor’s birthdays! Have a special dessert and share their names and a fact about them. You can download a free family lesson plan with ideas and tips for celebrating ancestors birthdays from Branches Art here: <https://branchesart.com/product/family-worth-celebrating/>

CELEBRATION CALENDAR

Put together a yearly overview calendar with special dates for your family and ancestors. Include birthdays, anniversaries and other special dates for yourselves as well as your ancestors.

IMMERSE YOURSELF

Use our cultural research printable (page 21) and either work together or individually to research about the culture of one of your ancestors. Use the blank flag (page 22) to draw the flag of their country or state of origin.

MUSICAL CONNECTIONS

Pick a country of origin for one of your ancestors and look up traditional music and dances from that country or culture. Find YouTube videos of people playing or dancing to that music.

CULTURAL DINNER

Try foods from the country of origin for one of your ancestors. Make it a whole dinner celebration and include music and decorations from that culture.

ART

“We all feel stronger if we are part of a tapestry. One thread alone is weak, but, woven into something larger, surrounded by other threads, is more difficult to unravel.” - Stefan Walters

ANCESTOR PORTRAITS

Find photographs of your ancestors and use our photo frames (pages 23-25) to try to draw your own portraits of that ancestor. If you don't have photos of your ancestors, Google photos of people who lived in the same era and/or location they did to see hair and clothing styles from the period and create a portrait from your imagination.

FAMILY TREE

Print our blank family tree (page 26) and add the names of your ancestors or family members and draw a picture of them. Talk about how we are connected to our ancestors even if we've never met them.

HEROES

Pick an ancestor and draw them as a superhero. What is their super power?

TRADES & TALENTS

Learn about the trades and talents of one of your ancestors (sewing, weaving, pottery, gardening) and try it out for yourselves. Discuss if they participated in their talent for fun or if they used it to earn a living.

FAMILY STORIES

Think of a favorite family story to write out. Have your kids draw pictures to illustrate the story.

PAPER DOLLS

If you have any full body photographs of your ancestors, print one and cut it out to use as a paper doll. Have your kids create new clothes and accessories for that ancestor based on the time period in which they lived.

FAMILY CREST

In ancient times many families had a crest which represented them. On the crest were different symbols that represented different traits or characteristics of that family. Talk about the things that are most important to you/your family and create your own personal or family crests using our blank family crest (page 27-28).

TWIN PORTRAITS

Look through ancestor photos for family members who look like you or your children. Re-create a photo of them to compare side by side. Compare what your child likes to do to what your ancestor may have liked at that age. If they're living, call and ask them!

GAMES

“Other things may change us, but we start and end with the family.” -Anthony Brandt

GAME NIGHT

Think of your favorite games from growing up. Have a “game night” with your family and share those games (and your memories of playing them) with your kids.

OLD-TIMEY

Look up some old-fashioned games your ancestors may have played (marbles, jacks and bottlecaps are some ideas) and try them out.

DIY GAMES

Make your own Memory, BINGO, “Don’t eat Pete” or Guess Who games using photos of your ancestors.

HEADBANDZ

Write some names of family members who will be recognizable to your kids on individual pieces of paper or note cards and play a family version of the game “Headbandz” with your family. This is a great activity to play with extended family.

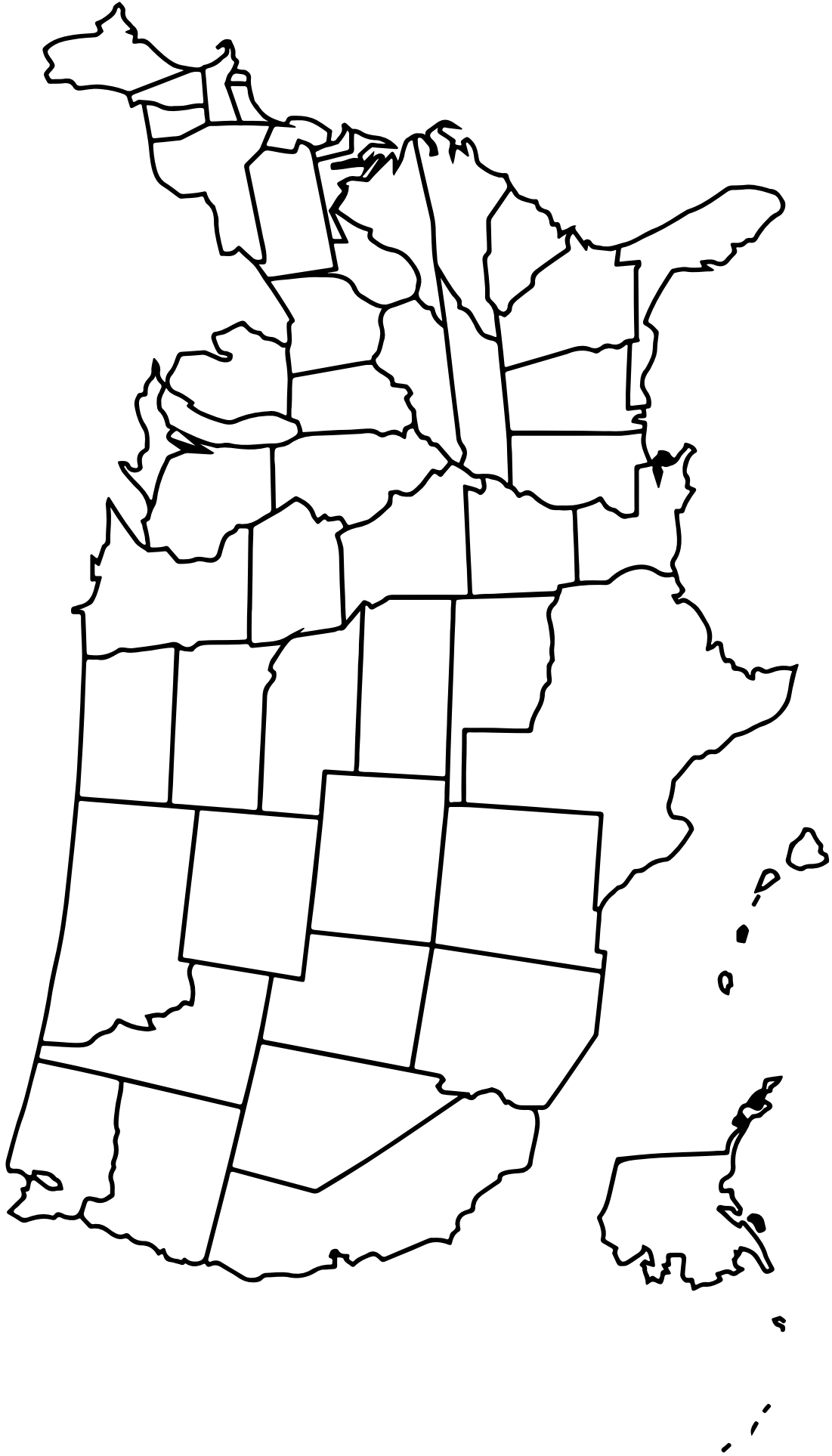
WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Color in the countries where your ancestors were born or lived.



WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Color in the states where your ancestors were born or lived.



Life Story Interview Questions

Use these questions to interview family members about their lives. You can conduct your interviews in person or on the phone. Record their answers by using audio or video or by writing them down. Adjust the questions to fit the person being interviewed and be sure to add your own as well!

- What was something you enjoyed doing as a child?
- Where did you grow up?
- What was your favorite thing about the place you grew up?
- What was your favorite treat as a child? What is your favorite treat now?
- What did you do for fun when you were my age?
- What was your favorite song growing up?
- Tell me what school was like for you.
- What were your parents like?
- What is your parents love story?
- What's the story behind your name?
- Tell me about your siblings.
- What was something you are really good at?
- What major events were on the news in your lifetime?
- How did you meet your spouse?
- What is/was your favorite thing about being a parent?
- Where is your favorite place you have traveled to or your favorite place you have been?
- Who or what are you most thankful for?
- What has changed most about the world since you were a kid?
- What advice do you have for kids today?
- Who is someone who had a big impact on your life?

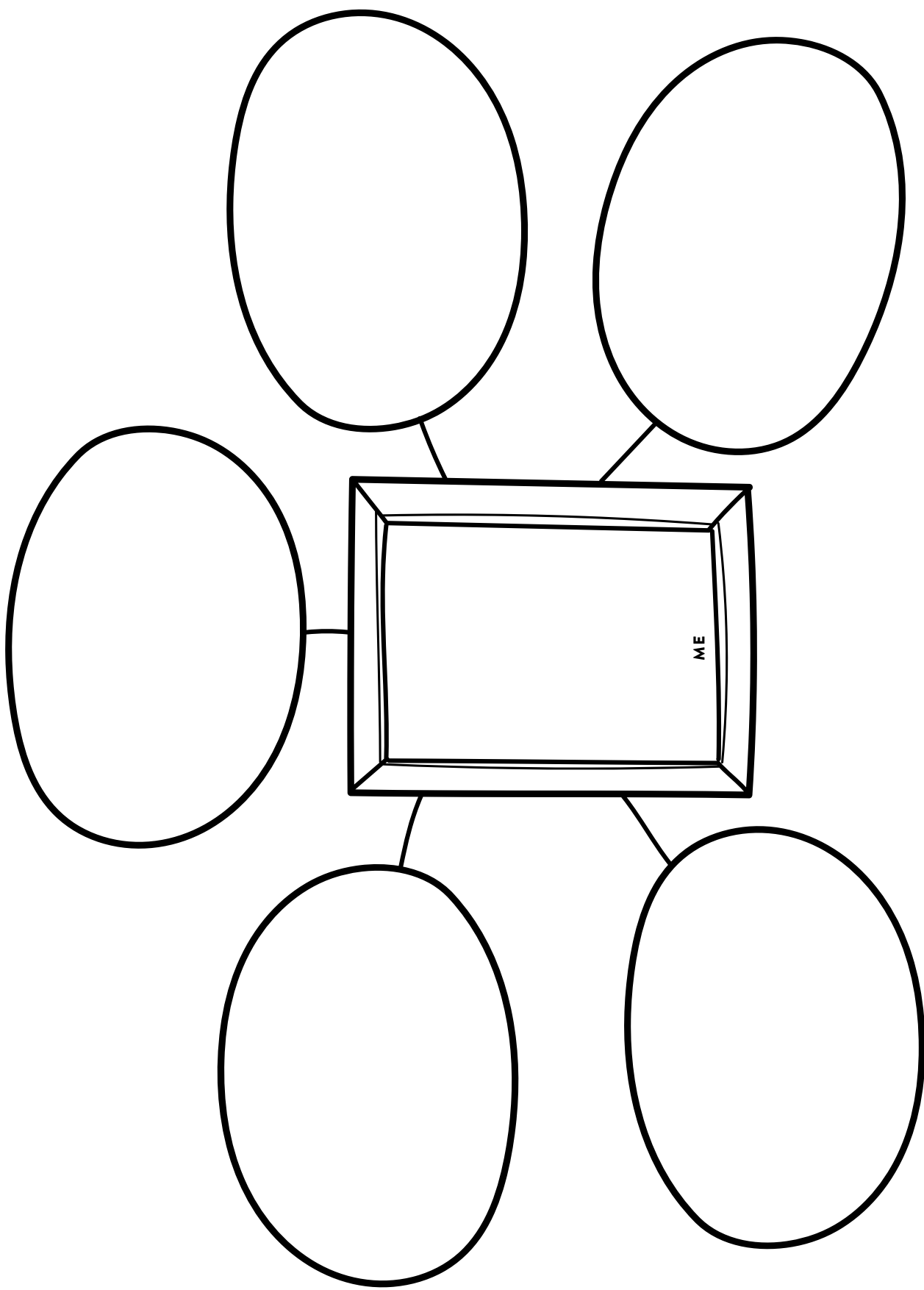
Journaling Prompts for Kids

These prompts are meant to give kids the opportunity to use their writing skills and imagination to reflect on their hopes, dreams, life and how they see the world. Older kids may need more space. For younger kids who cannot write yet, have them answer the question while you write out their words and then draw a picture.

- If you could be any animal, what animal would you be and why?
- If you could have any super power, what superpower would you have and why?
- Tell me about a time you did something difficult.
- Tell me about your favorite place.
- Who is a person you admire, and why?
- What do you know about what is happening in the world right now? What questions do you have?
- What is something you are really good at?
- What makes a good friend?
- What are your hopes for your future self?
- What do you want to be when you grow up?
- What are some things you don't like?
- What is something you want to learn?
- What things make you happy?
- What makes you unique?
- What is your room like?
- Describe what your family is like?
- What is most important to you?
- What is your favorite family story?
- What are some things you are thankful for?
- What are your favorite hobbies?
- What is something that makes you laugh?
- Tell me about a time that you solved a problem
- If someone wrote a book about your life what would they call it?

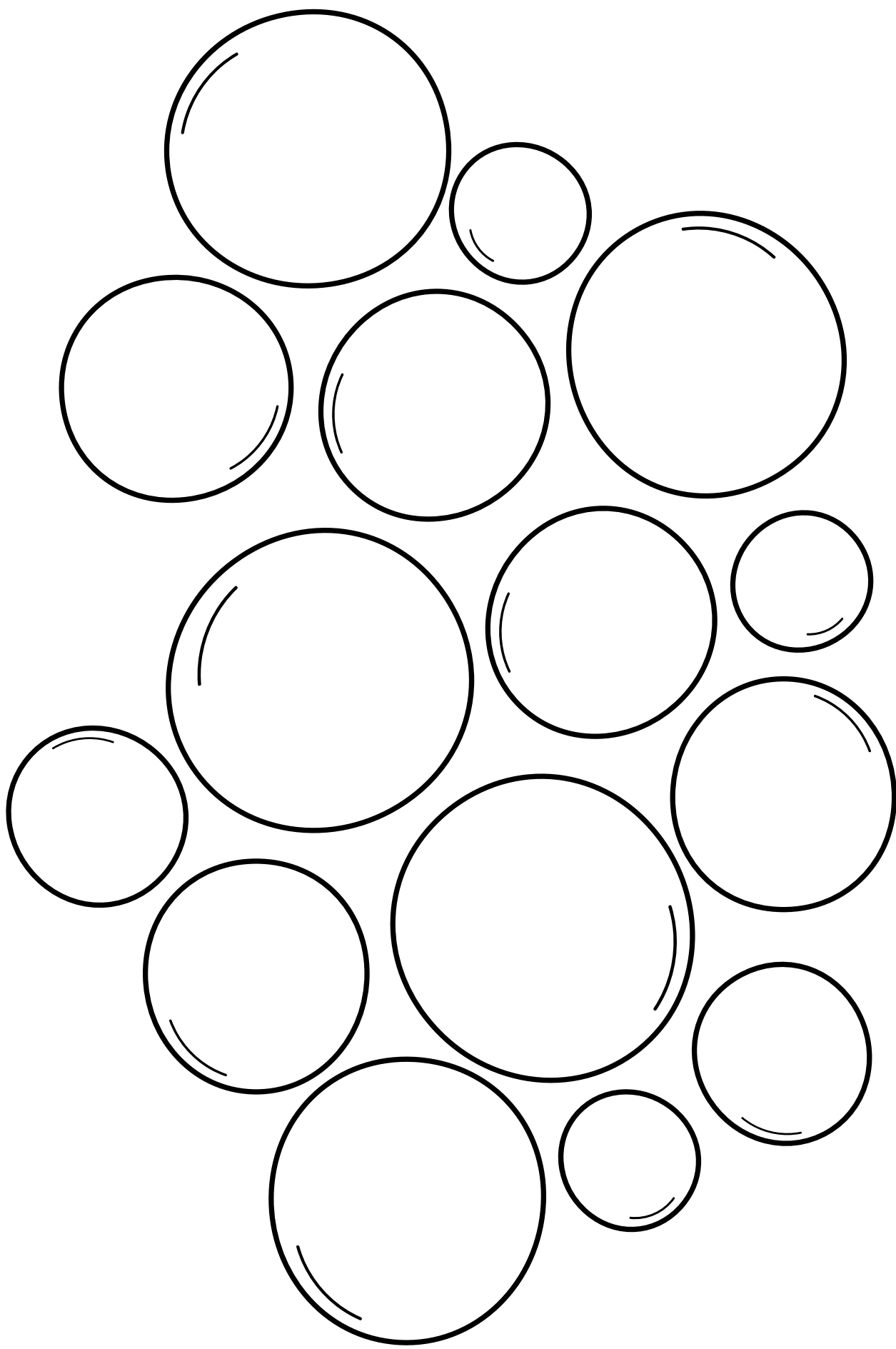
MY PERSONALITY ISLANDS

Draw a picture of yourself in the middle. Then, fill in each "island" with words or pictures that describe who you are.

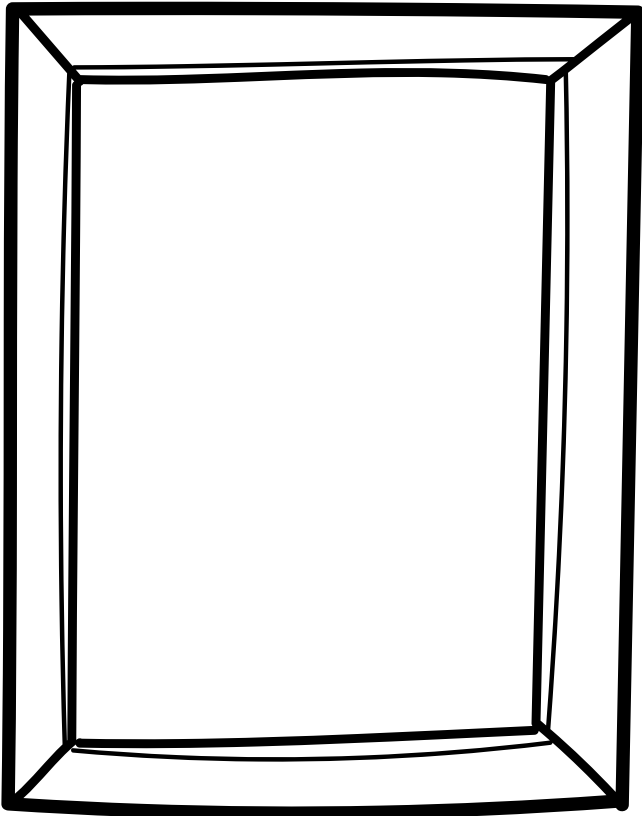


MY CORE MEMORIES

Write or draw about some special memories and events that helped you form your “personality islands”. If you’d like, use the “feeling colors” from each character to color in each memory orb. Color any extra orbs your favorite colors.



ALL ABOUT ME



This is what I look like

My name is _____

I was born on _____
date

in _____
place

My parents are: _____

Places I've Lived:

<i>location</i>	<i>date</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

My best friend is _____
_____.

My favorite food is _____
_____.

and my favorite treat _____
_____.

My favorite thing to do is _____

_____.

When I grow up I want to be _____

_____.

Some cool things about me:

_____.

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN RESEARCH GUIDE

Learn more about your ancestors by learning about the culture, language and customs of their country of origin.

LOCATION



Country Name: _____

Ancestors from here: _____

LANGUAGE

Language(s) Spoken: _____

How to say 'hello': _____

FOOD

What traditional foods are eaten in this country? _____

Draw a picture of a traditional dish:

ENVIRONMENT

What is the land and weather like? What are the flora and fauna like? _____

CLOTHING

Is there specific clothing worn in this place or for cultural events? _____

Draw a picture of traditional clothing:

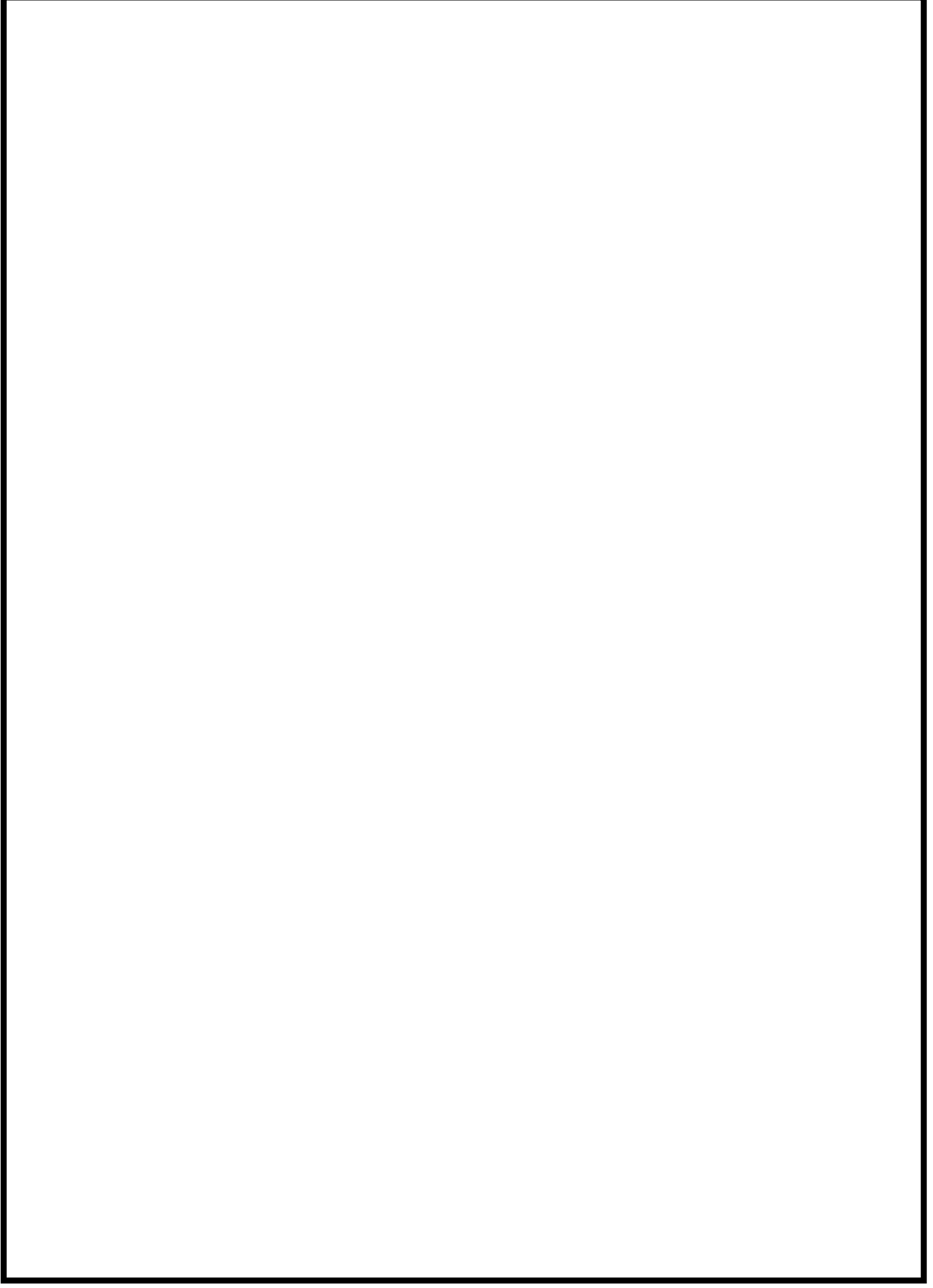
HOLIDAYS & TRADITIONS

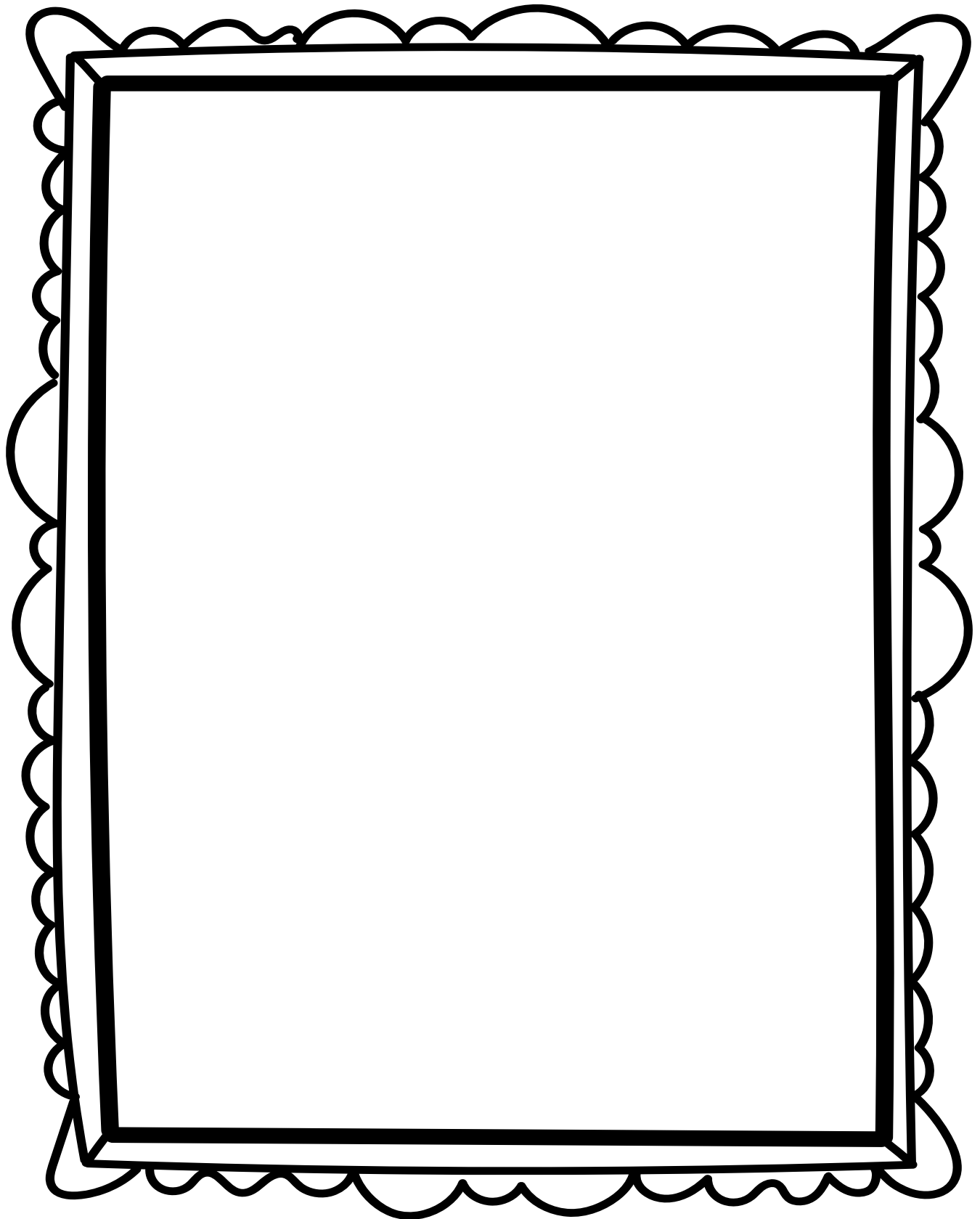
What special holidays or traditions are celebrated here? _____

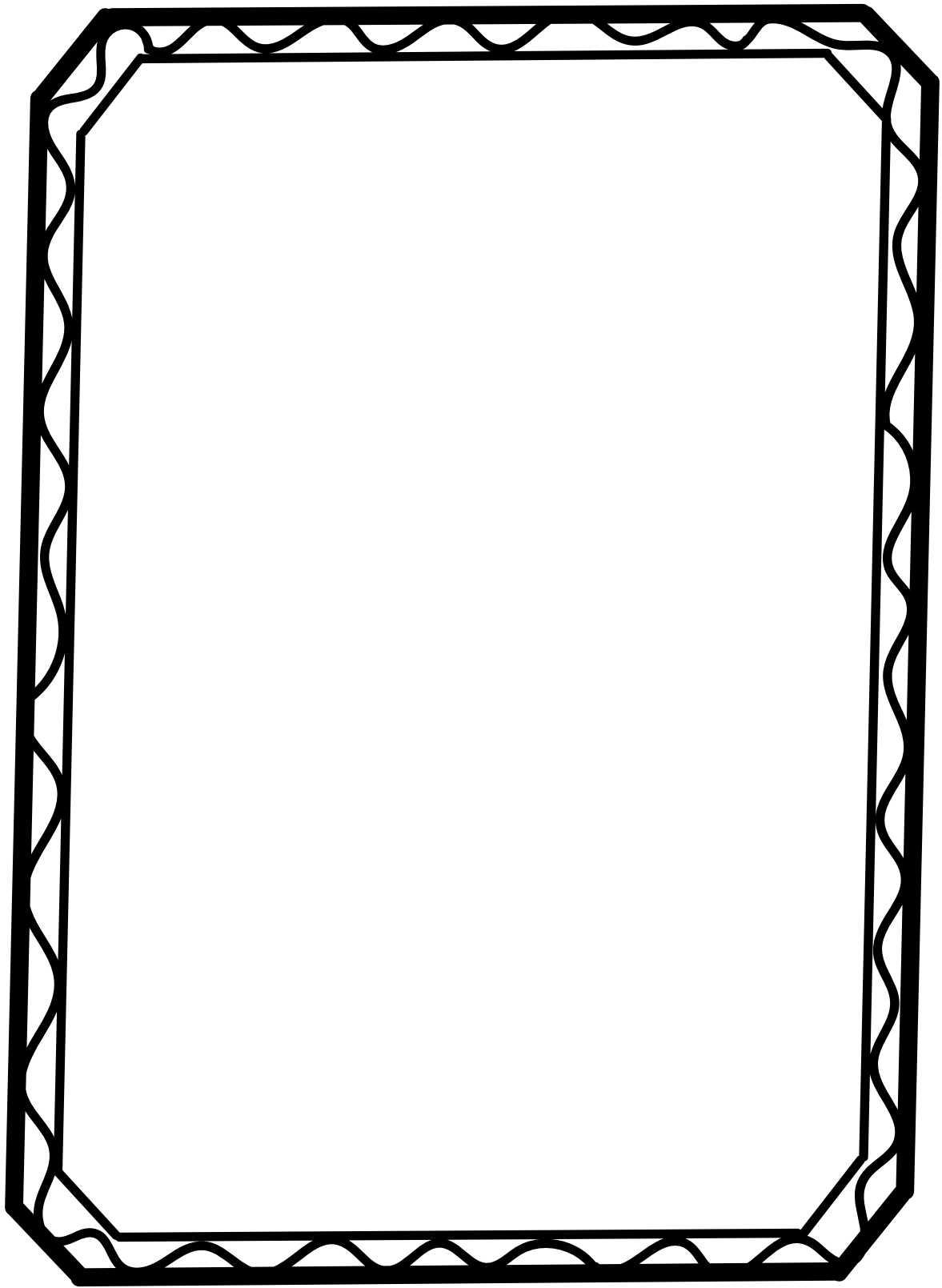
OTHER INFORMATION

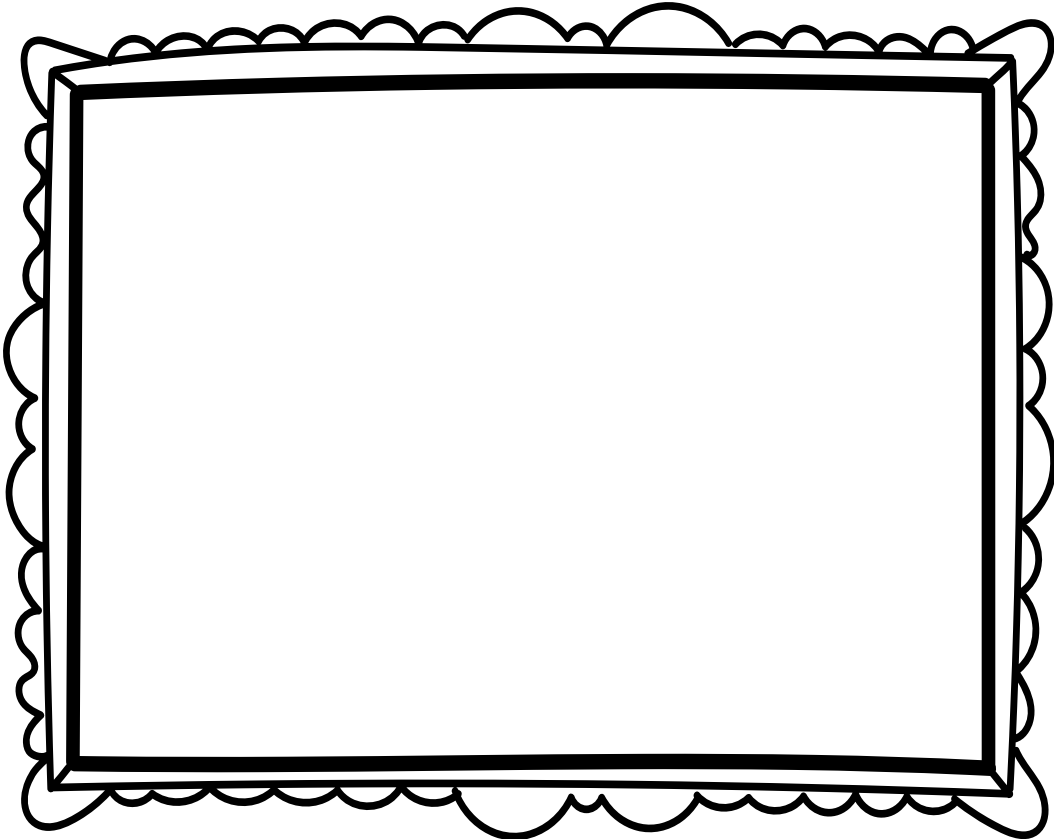
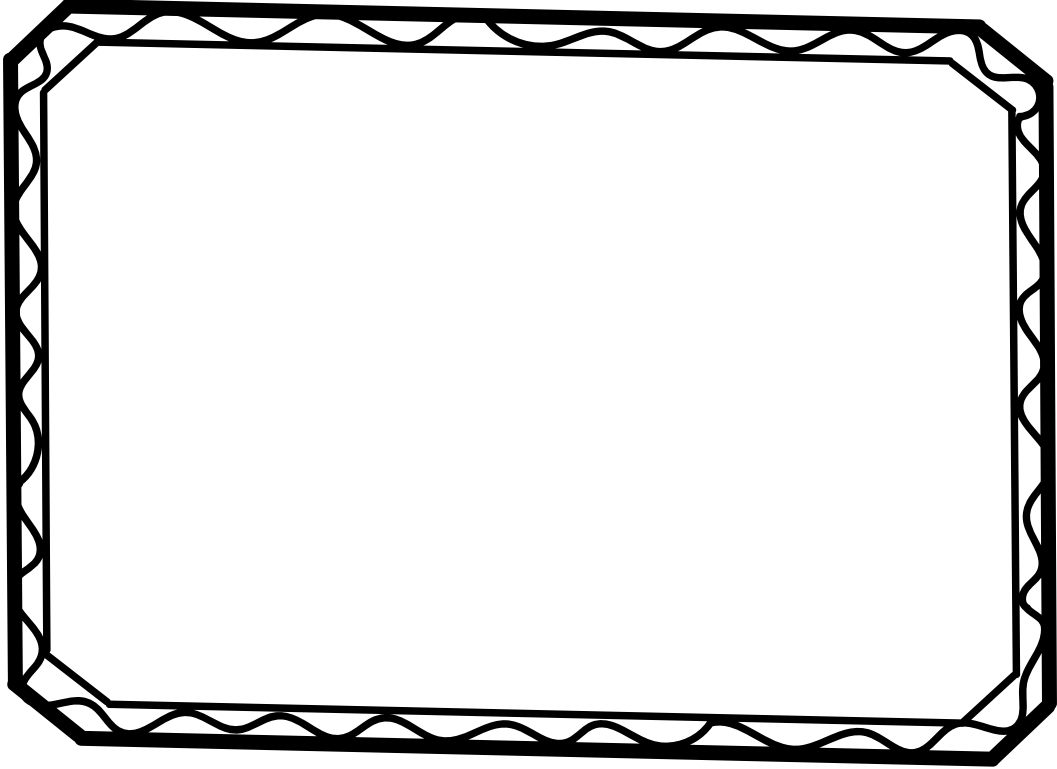
COUNTRY OR STATE FLAG

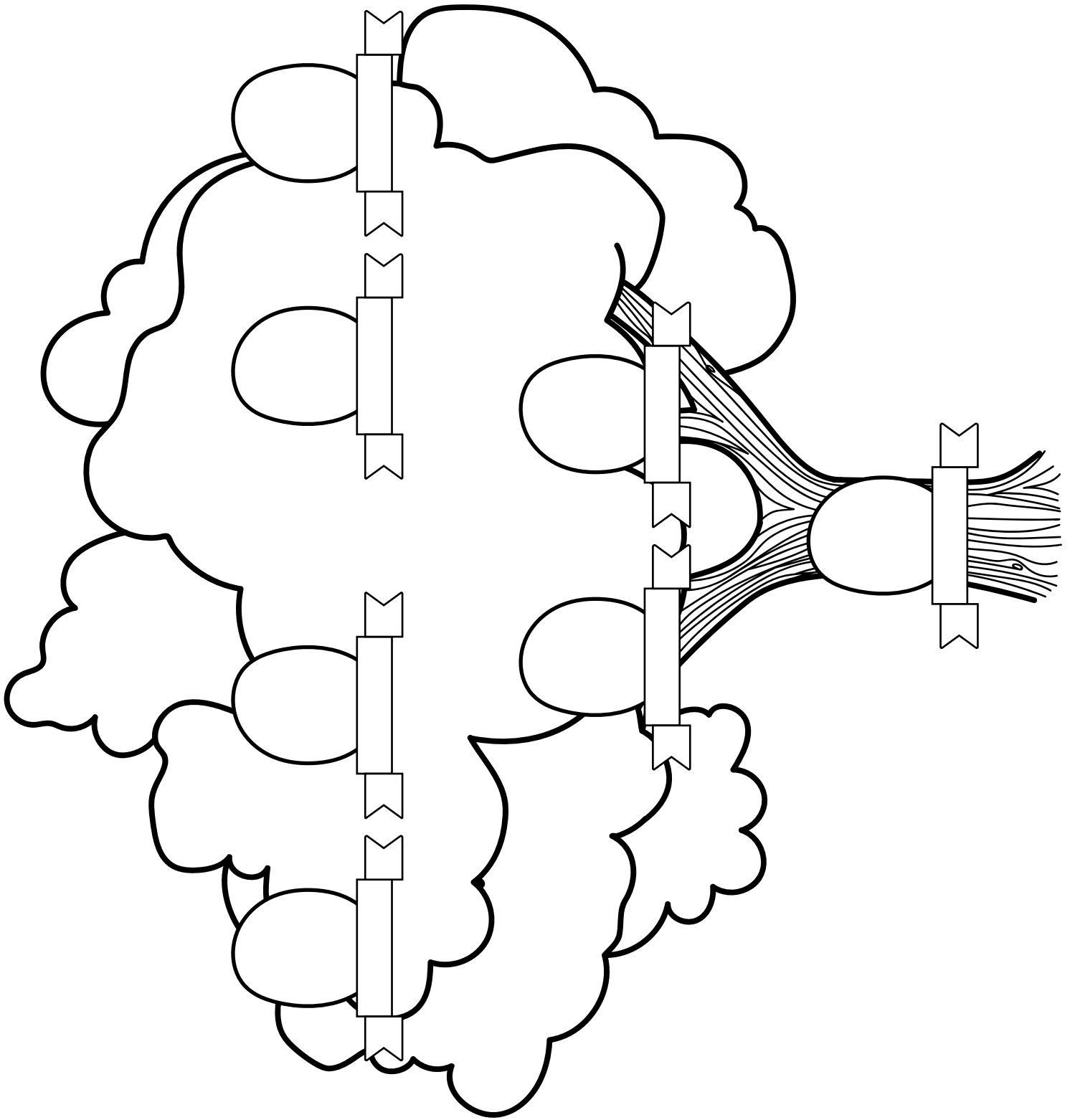
Google what the country or state flag of one of your ancestors looks like. Draw it here.





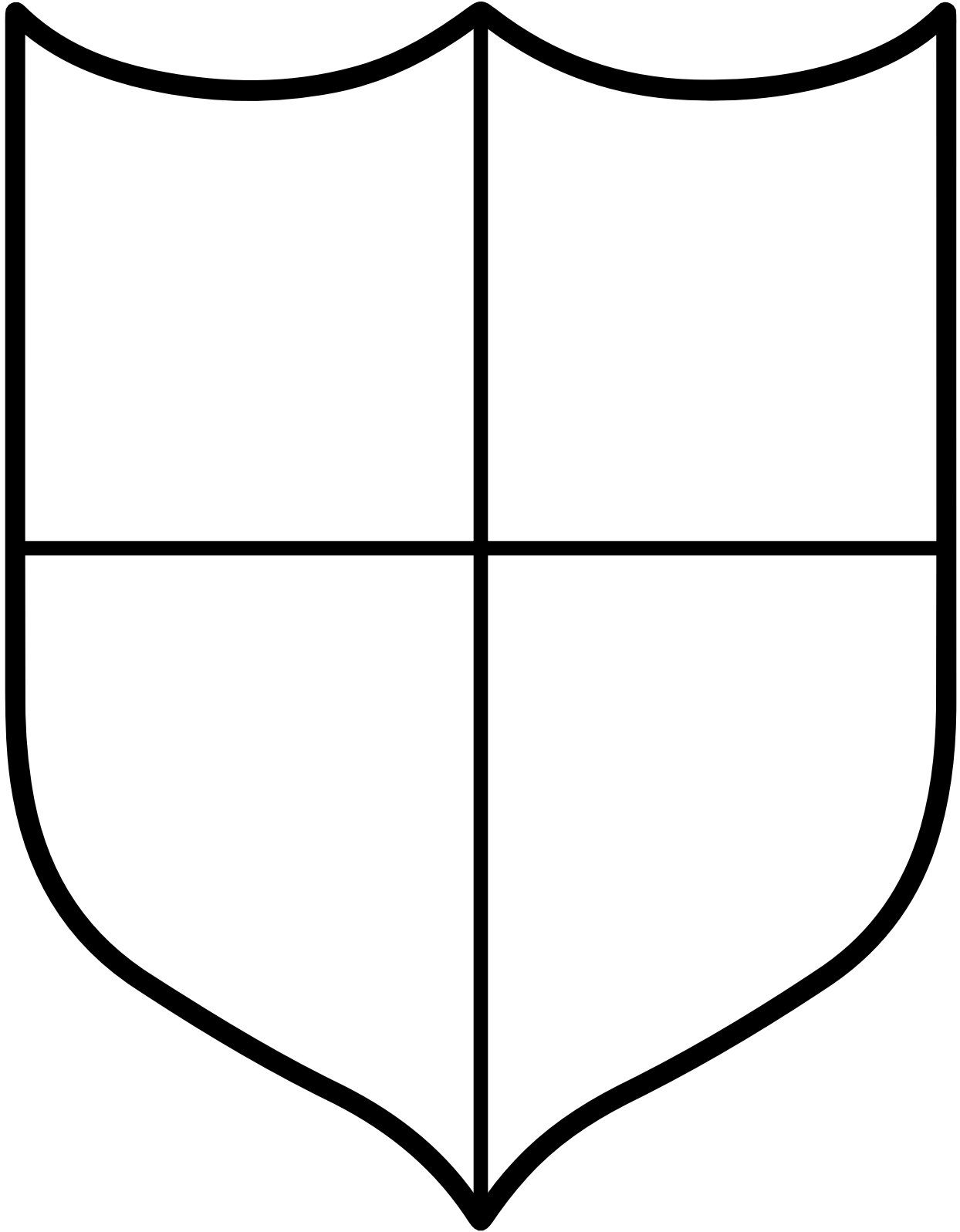






FAMILY CREST

Think of objects, animals, places, colors or symbols that represent you and/or your family and draw them on the crest below. When you're finished, cut it out and display it.



FAMILY CREST

Think of objects, animals, places, colors or symbols that represent you and/or your family and draw them on the crest below. When you're finished, cut it out and display it.

