

# Christingle crafts and games



By Mina Munns

[christingle.org](http://christingle.org)

# Introduction to Christingle and The Children's Society

**Christingle is a candle-lit, festive celebration that's perfect for bringing families and communities together. It was first invented by the Moravian church in the 1700s, but the celebration as we know it was introduced to the Church of England by The Children's Society in the 1960s.**

The celebration is named after the Christingles that are lit during it. Christingles are made from an orange decorated with red tape, sweets and a candle. They have been part of our history for over 50 years and have helped raise millions of pounds to help this country's most vulnerable children. Each year we ask those who celebrate Christingle to hold a collection to support children and young people in some of the darkest situations imaginable.

## The Children's Society

Founded in 1881 by Sunday School teacher Edward Rudolf, for the last 139 years The Children's Society has supported millions of this country's children and restored hope to their lives. We believe in building a society that works for every child, so that they are safe, happy and free to fulfil their incredible potential.

We run vital local services that provide vulnerable children across the country with the support, advice and guidance that they need, and we also campaign to make children's lives better and change the systems that are placing them in danger.

Together with our amazing supporters, we're improving life for children today and working to create a society where every child has hope for their future.

## Introduction to this resource

**The activities in this resource could be used in a children's or youth group to help you explore the meaning of Christingle and what it means to 'share the light' with others.**

The crafts are divided into two sections: the first section will help your group think about the different parts of the Christingle and will introduce you to the Christingle characters. The second section will help your group think about sharing the light of Christingle and of Christ with others.

The games are also divided into two sections: **Thinking about Christingle**, and **Working together**. The latter are designed to help children of all ages to work together, form relationships and build a team spirit.



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## **The author**

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# Amending the crafts and games in the light of Covid-19 restrictions

Before beginning any of the games or craft activities in this resource, please be sure to check [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) for the latest guidelines on safety and social distancing, and follow any guidance set out by your denomination and church.

## Christingle Crafts

All of the following craft activities would work perfectly for families to do as a group at home. Most of the items needed can easily be found in a house with children, and anything printable can be accessed from The Children's Society website! As part of your Christingle celebration you might want to organise an online session where families can share what they have made at home.

If you are holding Christingle activities in a socially distanced setting where the advice is not to share items, here are some hints to make the activities more workable:

Give each child their own small set of colouring pencils and a personal, named, bag to put their crafts in as they go round. This will help to make sure that everyone gets their own work and not someone else's! Ensure that there's a clear limit to how many children can be at each activity at one time and provide markers for them to stand/sit on so that social distancing can be observed.

Christingle treasure basket: Give each child their own orange, ribbons and pieces of cellophane to play with under supervision.

Playdough mat: Give each child their own pre-portioned piece of playdough, which they can then keep along with the playdough mat they use.

Christingle colouring sheet: Give each child their own small set of colouring pencils or send the colouring sheet home with them to colour later.

Clove and orange decorations: Make individual portions of cloves for each child and give them their own orange. Label each orange with their initials in a marker pen.

Red ribbon bookmarks: Make pre-prepared sets of what is needed for each bookmark, so each child can have their own without reaching for items.

Christingle Character collage: Give children squares of paper to draw their character on. Do not cut the character out, but stick it straight on the sheet. Use personal set of pencils to colour. Leave the characters with an adult who will stick them onto the big sheet.

Sharing the light colouring gift tags: Make pre-prepared sets of what is needed for each gift tag, so each child can have their own without reaching for items. Use personal sets of colouring pencils.

Christingle cupcakes: Pre-cover the cakes with butter icing. Make individual sets of sweets, candle and cocktail sticks so that children do not have to reach for/share items.

Tissue flame tea light: Make pre-prepared sets of what is needed for each tea light, so each child can have their own without reaching for items. Each child will need their own glue stick or use PVA glue (with own glue spreader).

Flame cards: Fork painting: Make pre-prepared sets of what is needed for each painting, so each child can have their own without reaching for items. Consider letting them write in the cards when they get home.

## Christingle Games

The following games would work perfectly for families to do as a group at home. As with crafts, most of the items needed can easily be found in a house with children and anything printable can be accessed from The Children's Society website! As part of your Christingle celebration you might want to organise an online session where families can share what they have done at home.

If you are holding Christingle activities in a socially distanced setting where the advice is not to share items, the hints below will make the activities more workable:

Remember to make sure that there is a clear limit to how many children can be at each activity at one time and provide markers for them to stand/sit on so that social distancing can be observed.

Christingle Scavenger Hunt: Make sure that children remember to stay appropriately socially distanced when outside.

Character matching cards: Give each child their own set of cards. Everybody start playing at the same time. The winner is the first person to find all of the pairs.

**Working together games: Children can still be allocated teams (eg with a coloured sticker) but can do the games individually and have scores recorded on a team scoreboard. The only game that it would be advisable to leave out entirely is the Christingle relay.**

Christingle bean bag throw: Give each child their own ball to throw and ask them to retrieve the ball before each throw, so only one ball is actually thrown per child. Make sure each child uses a completely new ball.

Put the candle on the Christingle: Use a separate fabric strip for each child as a blindfold. Ask them to turn around three times themselves. Use a separate candle picture/blu tack for each child. One person is allocated to mark the results for the game so that pens are not shared.

Christingle Drive: Give each child their own die, game cards and their own small set of colouring pencils. The game can still work the same way, with children sitting socially distanced from each other and using their own items.



# Christingle Crafts



## Thinking about Christingle

These activities will help you to explore and think about the different parts of the Christingle and will introduce you to the Christingle characters.

### Christingle treasure basket

This activity is great for helping younger children and babies to engage with the different parts of the Christingle.

#### You will need:

A basket or box and a selection of the following items:

- Oranges
- A 'globe' ball
- Red ribbons of various textures and thicknesses
- A mirror
- A battery-operated candle
- Red, yellow and orange cellophane
- Play food
- A piece of a foil blanket
- Shiny paper
- Metal spoons

Let the children explore and freely play with the items. It's amazing to watch how they interact!

### Playdough mat

#### You will need:

- Laminated copies of the playdough mat **(see template on page 13)**
- Playdough

Use playdough to add a ribbon, sweets, a candle and a flame to the Christingle. Fill the flame with a model of something you'd like to say thank you for.

### Christingle colouring sheet

Print out the sheet and have fun colouring it in! **(see sheet on page 14)**

### Clove and orange decorations

This craft is a really sensory experience, bringing out the wonderful smells of Christmas and helping to remind children of the good things God has given us.

#### You will need:

- Oranges
- Cloves

Stick the cloves into the oranges to make patterns and shapes on the skin. Take them home as amazing smelling Christmas decorations.



## Red ribbon heart bookmarks

For each bookmark you will need:

- 20cm lengths of red ribbon
- Heart-shaped templates  
(see template on page 15)
- Scissors
- Red felt
- Foam and/or fabric
- Glue

Cut hearts out of the red materials and glue them to the ribbon to make a bookmark.



## Christingle character collage

The Children's Society works with a huge range of children and young people. One aspect of their work is supporting young people with issues around bullying and relationships and bringing light and hope in difficult times. The Christingle characters are a great reflection of this hope that everyone, no matter who they are, can find friendship and work together.

You will need:

- Pictures of The Children's Society Christingle characters  
(see templates on pages 16 and 17)
- Paper
- Colouring pens
- A long strip of paper (a roll of wallpaper backing is perfect for this)
- Scissors
- Glue

Look at the characters. Which one do you like the best? Which one is like you? How are they different? How are they the same? Make your own Christingle character and draw it on the paper. What is the character's name? What are they like? Cut the character out and add it to the paper strip. Build a character collage as everyone else adds their character.

## Sharing the light with others

Sharing our light with others and helping to make the world a better place for children and young people is a key part of the work of The Children's Society. 'Sharing your light' is a way of helping children to think about how they can personally help to bring light to people who might feel caught up in dark times. The following crafts are designed to help children to make gifts and a card on the theme of light that they can then share with someone as a gesture of 'sharing their light.'



# Reflecting on Christingle

Do you remember what life was like during the early days of lockdown? Perhaps you felt frightened or scared. Some people weren't able to go out to get shopping or what they needed. They felt sad and lonely.

But then something amazing happened. Other people helped those who weren't able to go out. They got their shopping and medicine. They called people and talked to them online. This helped people feel they weren't alone and that other people cared.

Maybe you put rainbows in your window to give hope to people who walked by. Perhaps you joined in the 'clap for carers' to thank those who were risking their lives to help others. Maybe you made a special effort to thank those who were looking after you or your teachers.

We are not all key workers. But we all have a key role to play in sharing light and hope with others. Jesus was born at Christmas to bring light and hope to our world, and we can follow his example by sharing his light with others.

One of the ways we can do that is to support charities like The Children's Society. We bring light and hope to children and young people by supporting them in difficult times.

*Take a few moments to think about how you will share your light in the world. Can you show love and care to someone? Can you thank someone? Can you help someone in need? Can you raise money for a charity like The Children's Society?*

If you wish, write or draw one thing on the image below and keep it in a safe place as a reminder of your promise.

## The Children's Society



**I will share the light by:**

## Sharing the light colouring gift tags

### You will need:

- Copies of the colouring gift tag (see template on page 18)
- Paper bags big enough to hold a cupcake
- Hole punch
- A card
- String or ribbon
- A battery-operated tealight

Colour in the tag. Choose who you would like to give your 'light' gifts to and write their name on the tag. Punch a hole in the top of the tag and thread a string through it. Attach the finished tag to a paper bag and fill the bag with the gifts (below) that you make.

## Christingle cupcakes

### For 12 servings you will need:

- 12 ready-made cupcakes
- 200g icing sugar
- Orange food colouring
- 100g butter (softened)
- 12 birthday cake candles
- Red ribbon (long enough to tie around the cupcake case)
- 48 cocktail sticks
- Small sweets or raisins

Gradually mix the icing sugar into the butter until you have made a smooth butter icing. Add a few drops of orange food colouring to colour the icing. Cover the top of each cake with icing. Put sweets and raisins on the cocktail sticks and stick four of them into each cupcake as you would on a Christingle. Put a birthday cake candle in the middle of the cake and tie a red ribbon around the middle of the cupcake case.

## Tissue flame tea-light

### You will need:

- Red, yellow and orange tissue paper
- Yellow or red card
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Battery-operated tealight

Measure around the base of the tealight and cut a strip of card long enough to go all around it and cover the plastic. Cut flame shapes out of the tissue paper and glue them to the strip of card so that the bottom of each flame lines up with the bottom of the card strip. Make several layers of tissue flames. Fit the card strip around the tea light and glue it in place. Switch on the tealight to bring the flames to life.

## Flame cards: Fork painting

### You will need:

- Red, yellow and orange paint
- Black card
- Forks
- Silver or gold pens

Cut the black card into A5 pieces and then fold each in half. Dip a fork in paint and use it to paint 'flames' on the front of the card. Use all three colours and don't worry about mixing the flames! When the paint is dry, write inside the cards with the gold or silver pens. Address the card to the person you want to share your light gifts with. You might want to add some of these 'light' verses:

**'You are the light of the world.' Matthew 5.14**

**'The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.' John 1.5**

# Christingle Games



## Thinking about Christingle

### Christingle Scavenger Hunt

#### You will need:

- A scavenger hunt sheet for each child (**see page 19**)
- A small bag or large matchbox for each child

This game is best played outside in daylight. Give each child a scavenger hunt sheet and set them off to find something in nature that fits each category. If they want to, children can use the bag or large matchbox to collect what they come across. Make sure you issue health and safety warnings about not eating anything they find! Set a time limit (maybe 10 minutes) and then draw everyone back together to share what they've found. Link each item on the hunt to the various parts of the Christingle.

### Character matching cards

#### You will need:

- One pack of the card match game per pair of children (**see pages 20 and 21**)

Shuffle the cards and lay them face down. Take it in turns to turn over two cards. If the cards match, the player can keep the pair. If the cards don't match, turn them back over and wait for your next turn. The player with the most pairs of cards at the end of the game is the winner.

## Working together

As detailed in Jamie's story, some of the work done by The Children's Society is about creating positive relationships and building confidence. The following games are designed to encourage children of all ages to work together, form relationships and build a team spirit.

### Christingle bean-bag throw:

#### For each team you will need:

- 4 paper plates
- Pictures of an orange, a candle, a red ribbon and some sweets
- 4 bean bags or balls

Stick one picture on each of the four plates. Line up the team and put the plates in a horizontal line about two metres from where the team is standing. Team members take it in turns to throw four beanbags, trying to get a beanbag on each of the four plates. Award a point for each plate where a beanbag lands. When every team member has had a turn, add up the total team points. The team with the highest total is the winner.



## Put the candle on the Christingle

### You will need:

- A large picture of a Christingle minus the candle **(see pages 22 and 23)**
- A picture of a candle **(see pages 22 and 23)**
- A blindfold
- Blu tack
- Marker pen

Fix the picture of the Christingle to the wall at child height. Place the picture of the candle on the main Christingle picture and mark where the top of the candle is. Take the candle picture away. Blindfold the first player and give them the picture of the candle. Make sure there is some blue tack at the back of the picture. Spin the player round once and then ask them to pin the candle on the Christingle. Mark the position of the top of where they have put the candle picture and let them take off their blindfold. Repeat with other players. The winning team is the team with the player who placed their candle closest to the original mark.

## Christingle relay

### For each team you will need:

- A tray
- An orange
- A red ribbon or a piece of red tape long enough to go around the middle of the Christingle
- 4 cocktail sticks
- 4 large sweets
- A birthday cake candle and holder

Make teams of no more than six. Line each team up behind a mark. About four metres away from the team, place a tray with the orange, ribbon or tape, cocktail sticks, sweets and candle.

Children must run to the tray, perform one of the actions and then run back to their team so the next person can run. Actions are:

- Put the ribbon/tape on the orange
- Put a sweet on a cocktail stick and stick it in the orange (x 4 children - only do one cocktail stick per run)
- Stick the birthday cake candle in the orange
- Bring the finished Christingle back to base

The first team to bring their finished Christingle back is the winner.



## Christingle drive

For each team you will need:

- Enough copies of the Christingle drive sheet (**see page 24**) for each individual to have one.
- Dice
- Colouring pens or pencils

Throw the dice and colour in one of the Christingle parts that matches the number thrown. Children must throw a six so that they can colour in the orange before they can colour in any of the other parts of the Christingle. The winner is the first member of the team to colour in the whole Christingle. The winning team is the first to have every member with a fully coloured Christingle. Children can always start a second card if they finish quickly. Anyone completing a second card before the whole game is over can get a special prize!

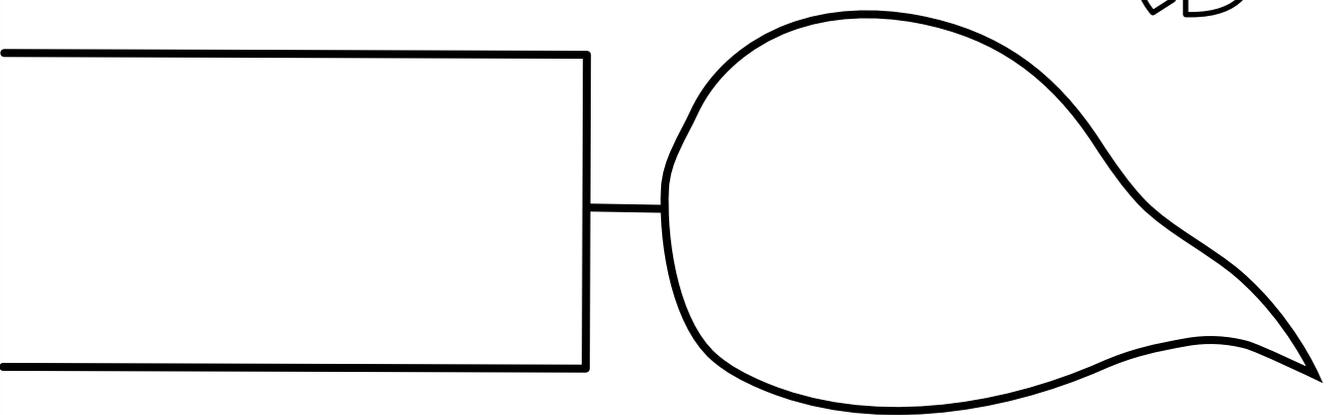
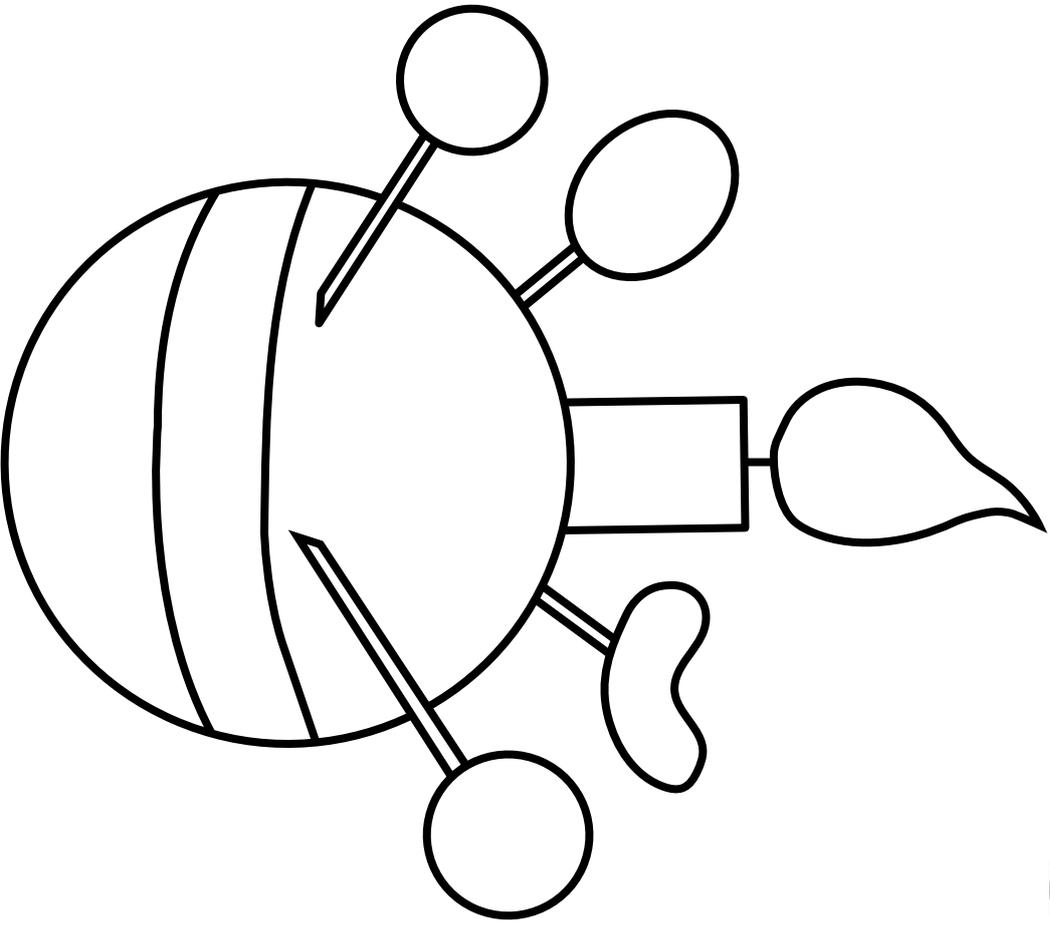
1. Ribbon
2. Square sweet
3. Round sweet
4. Candle
5. Flame
6. Orange



# Templates

## Playdough mat

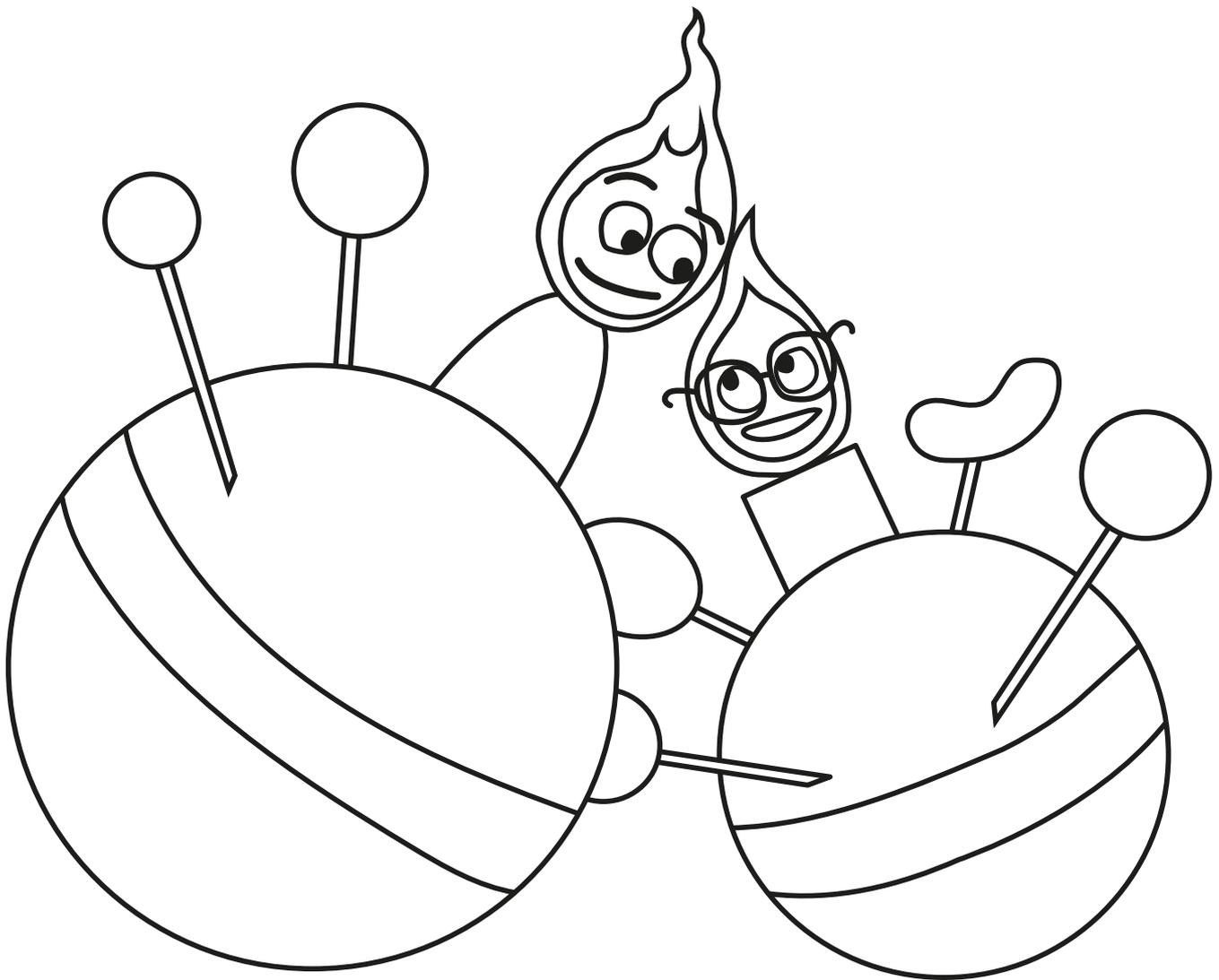
# Christingle



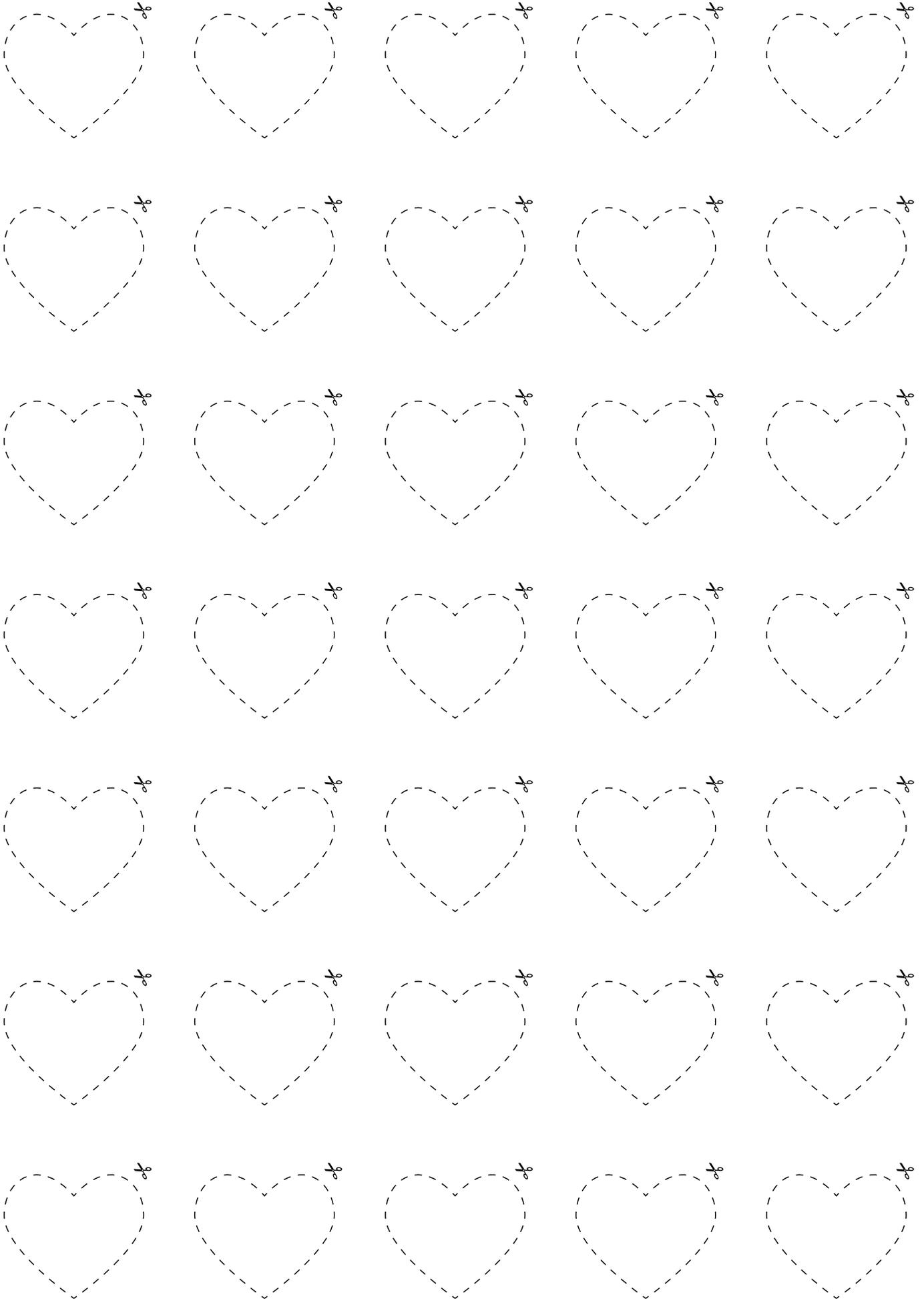
Use playdough to add a ribbon, sweets, a candle and a flame.

In the flame, make a model of something you would like to say 'thank you' for.

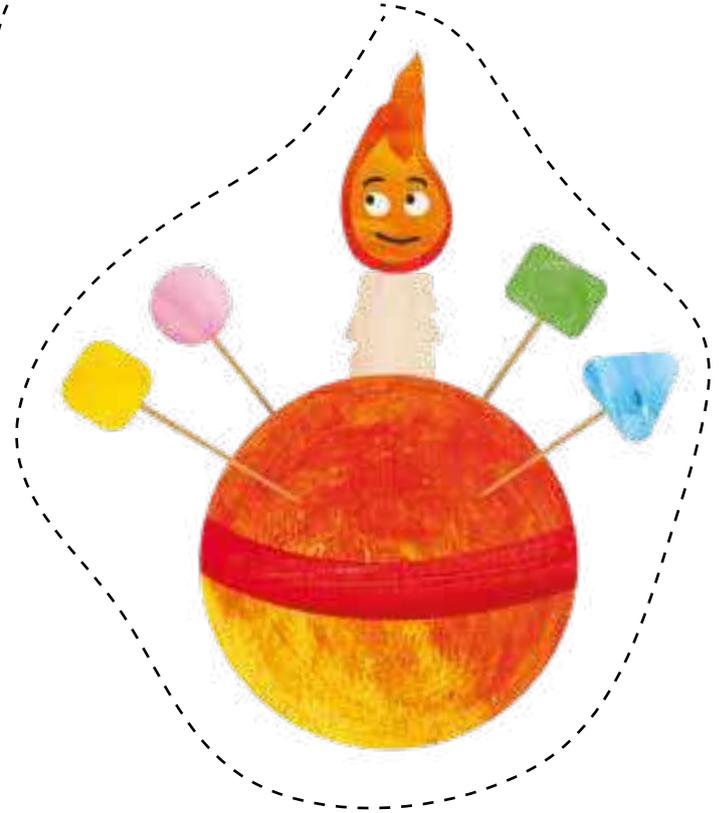
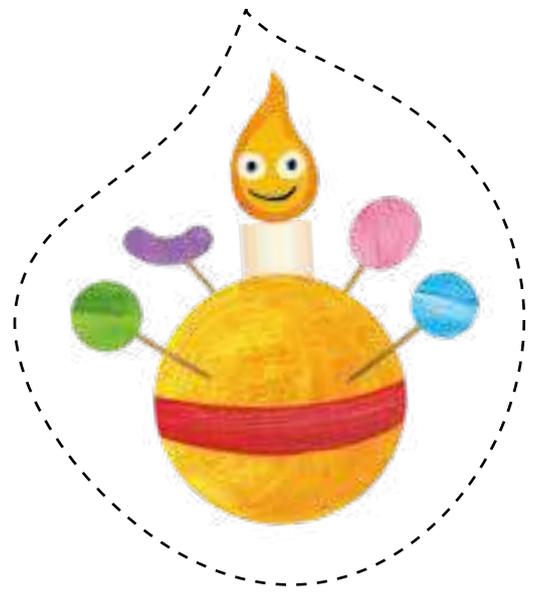
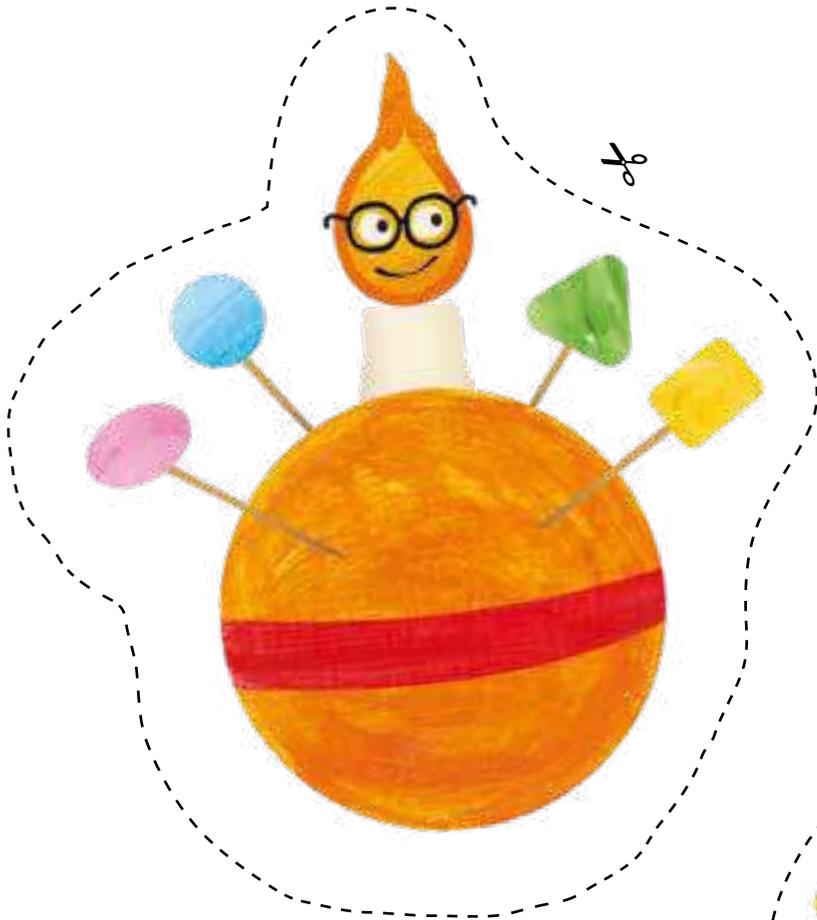
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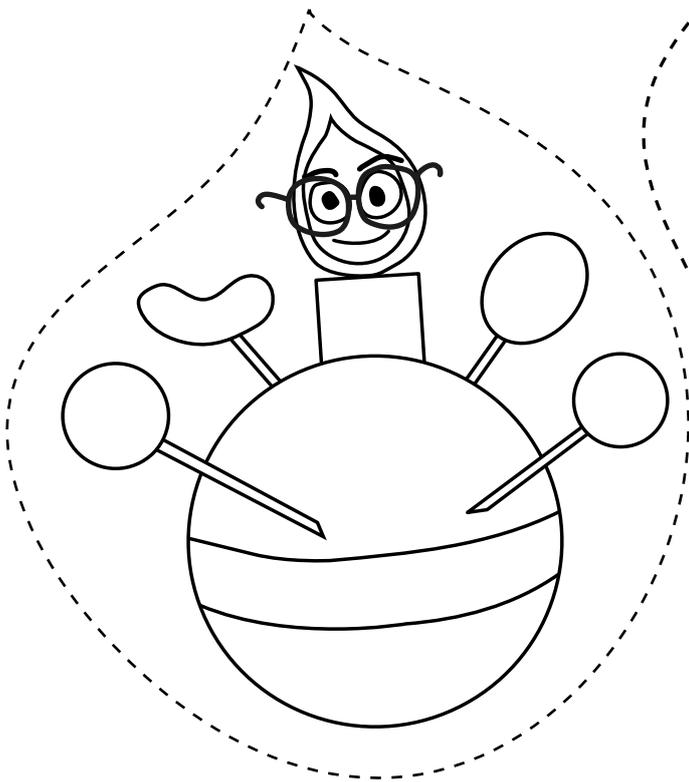
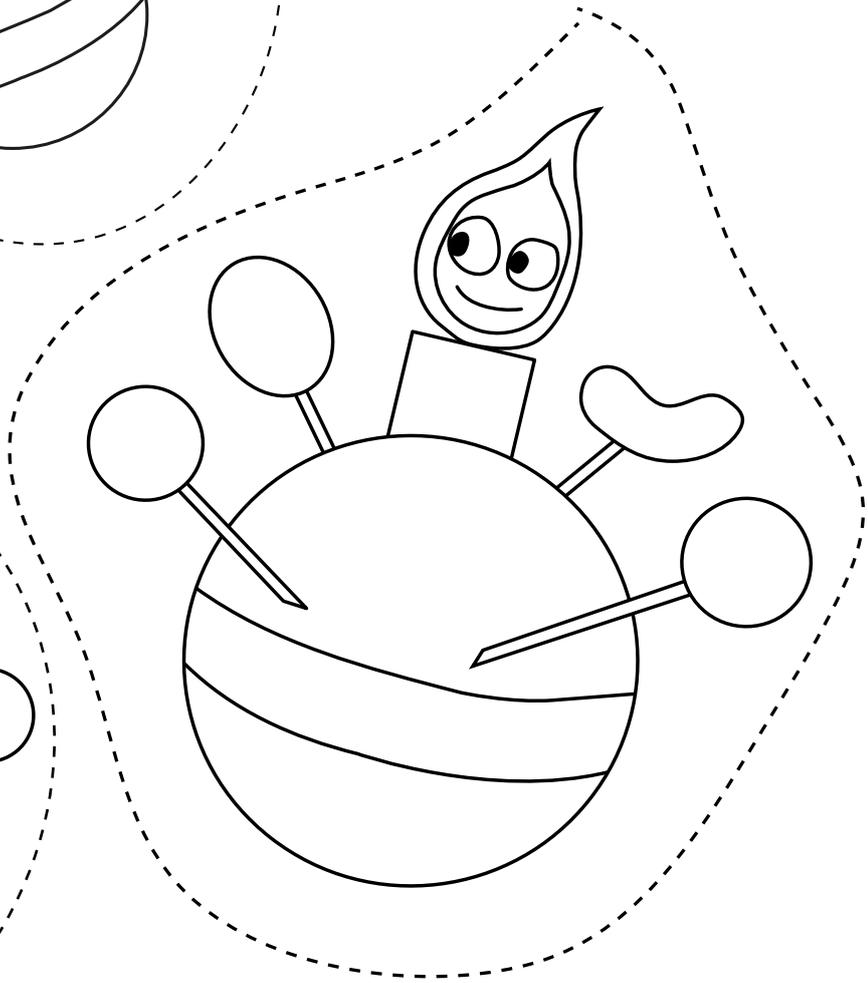
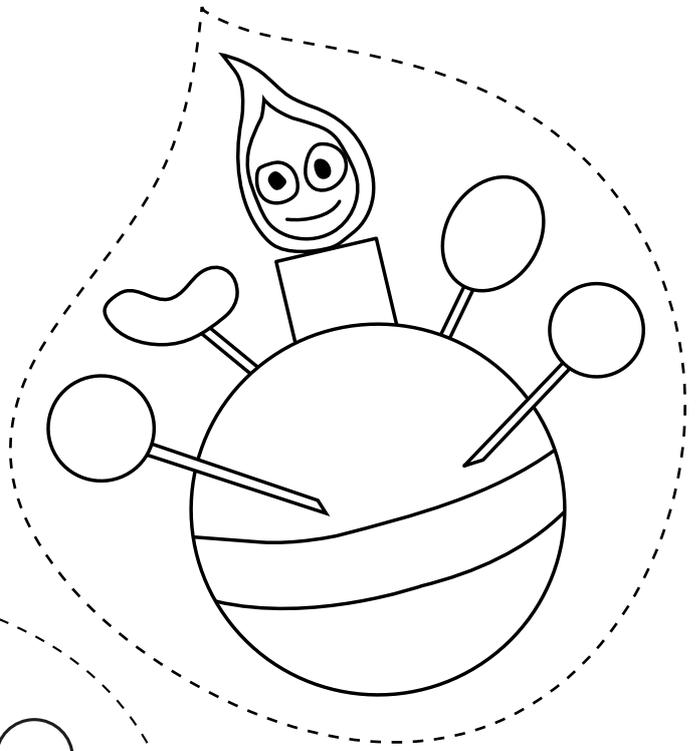
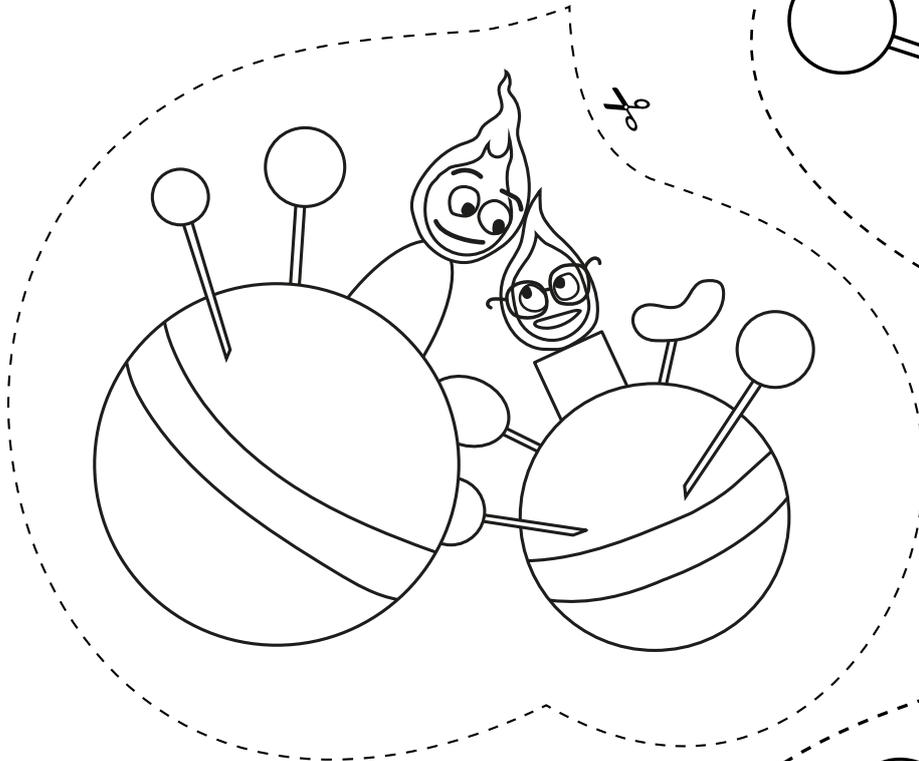
# Red ribbon heart bookmarks



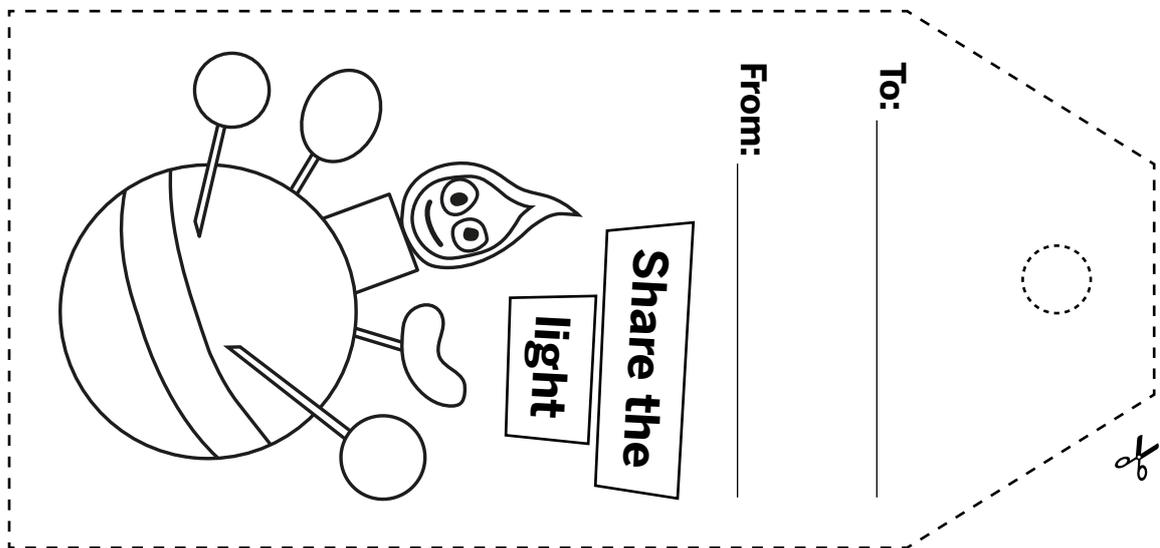
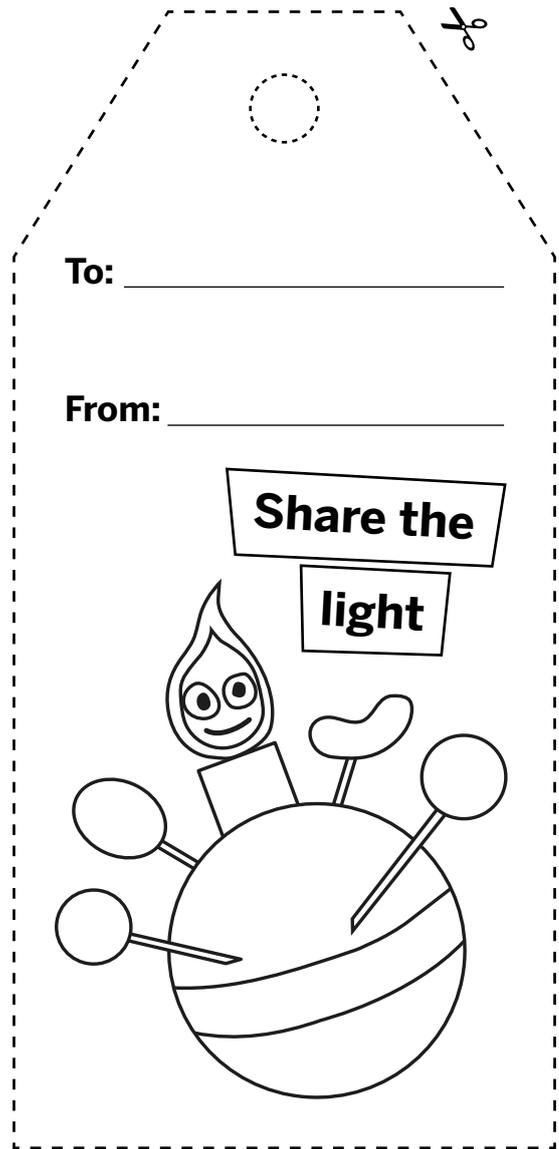
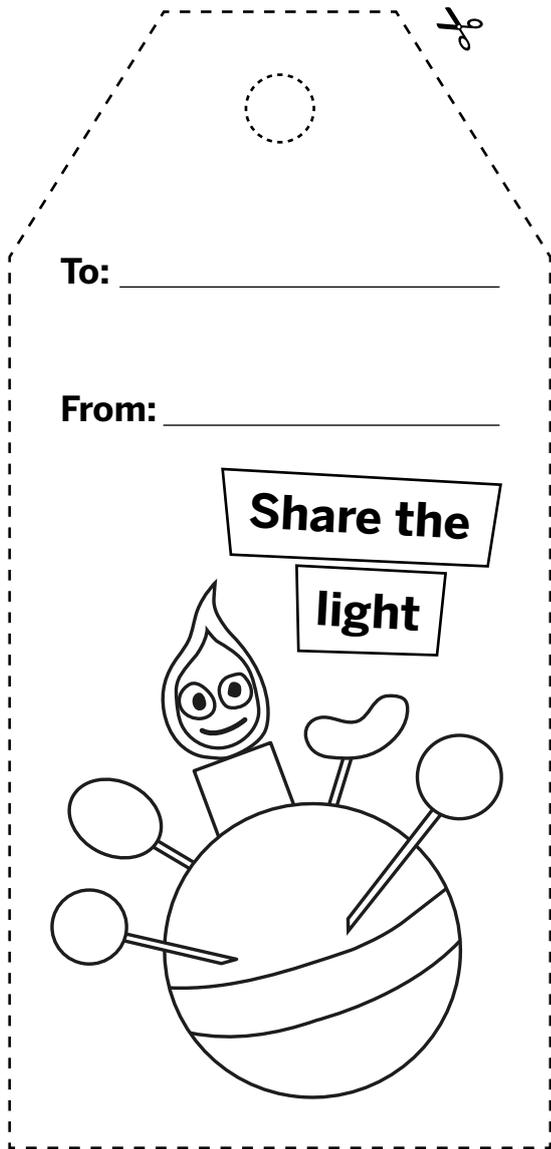
Christingle character collage



Christingle character collage



# Sharing the light colouring gift tags



## Christingle Scavenger Hunt sheet

Scavenger hunt checklist of things to find:

Something  
round

Something  
red

Something  
flame-  
shaped

Something  
you can  
share with  
others

Something  
heart-  
shaped

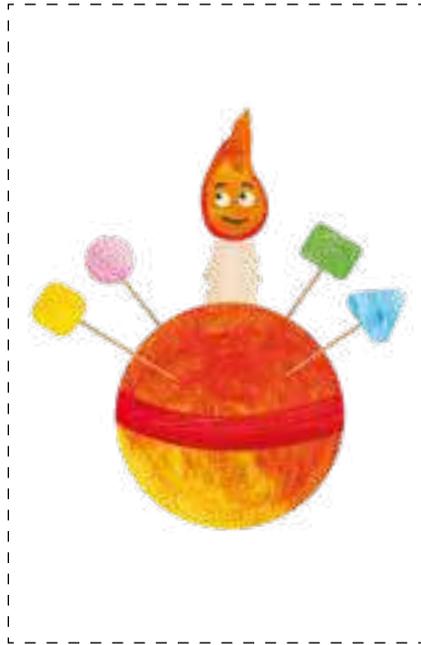
Something  
yellow

Something  
orange

Something  
shiny

Something  
sweet

Character matching cards

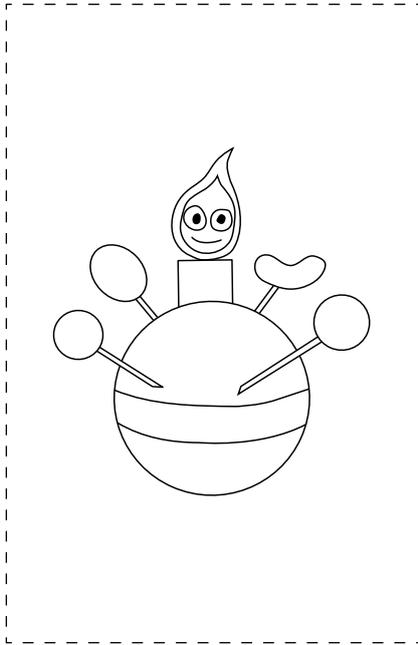
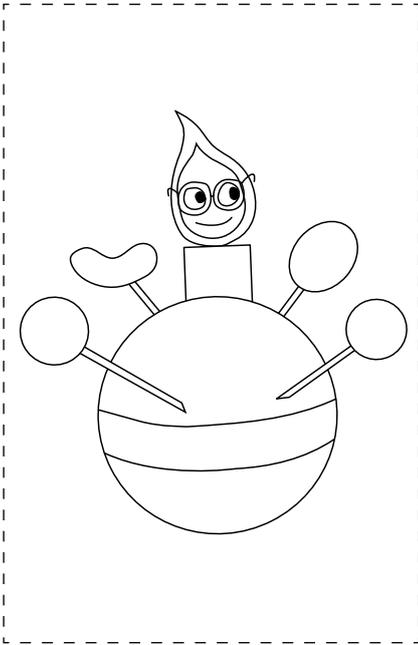
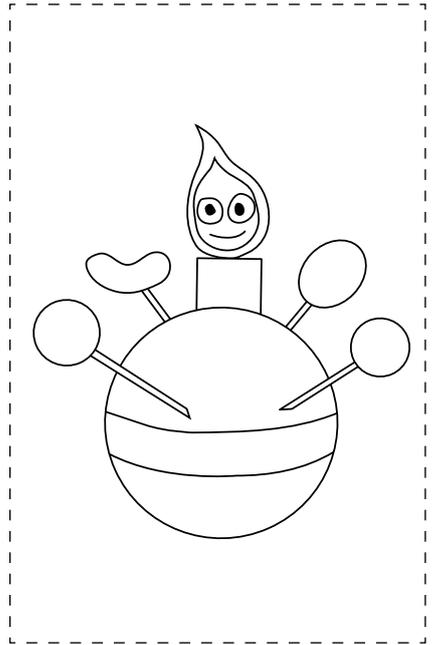
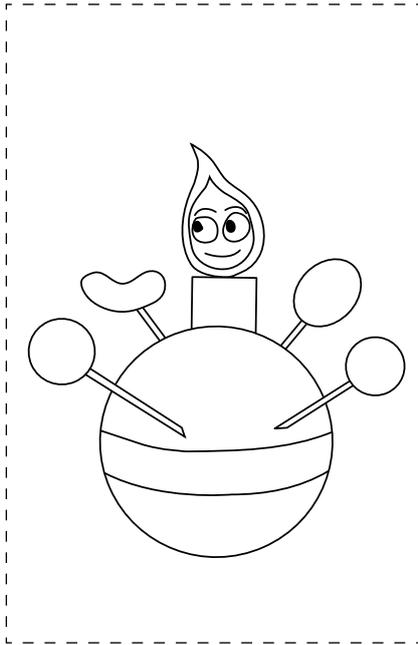
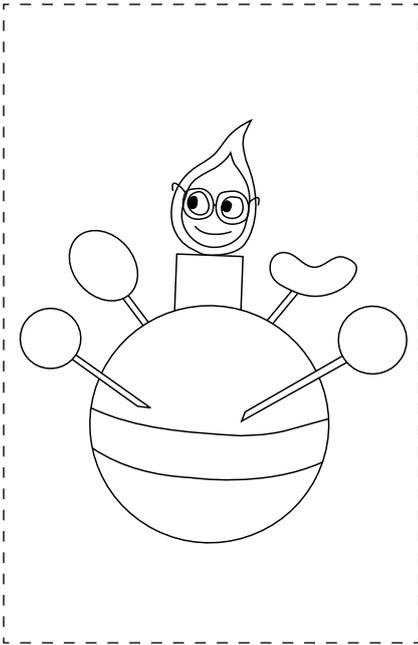


Share

the

light

Character matching cards

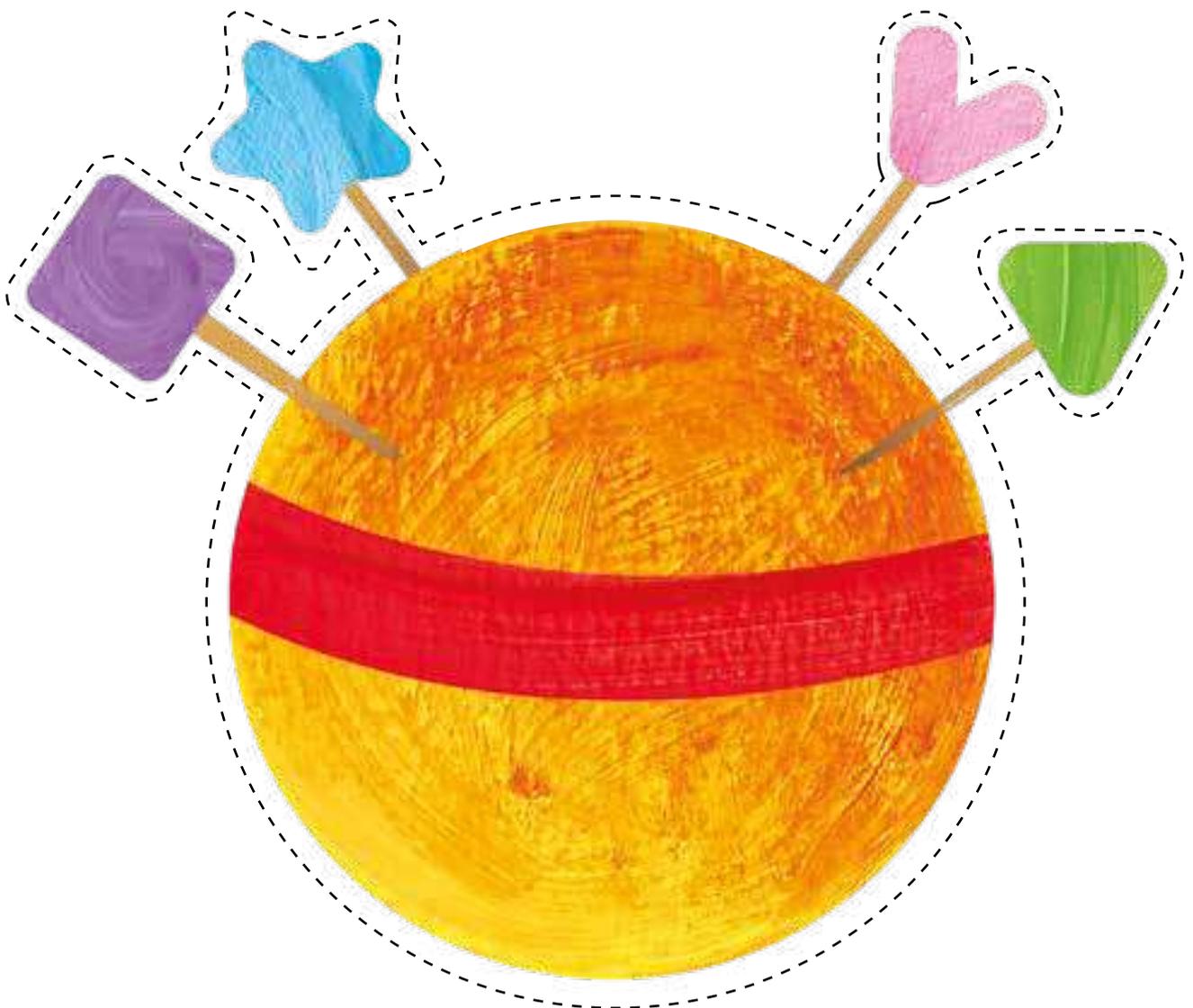
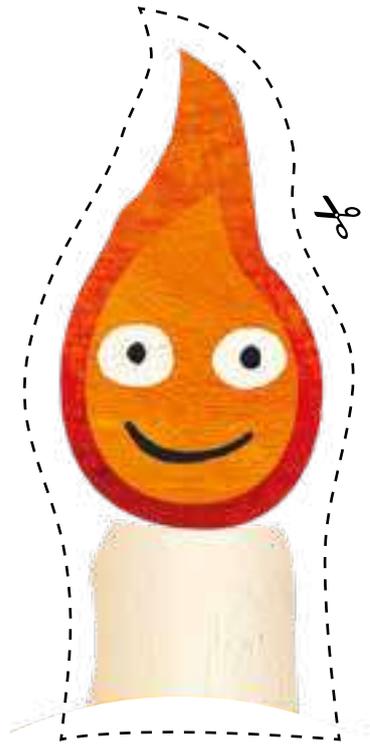


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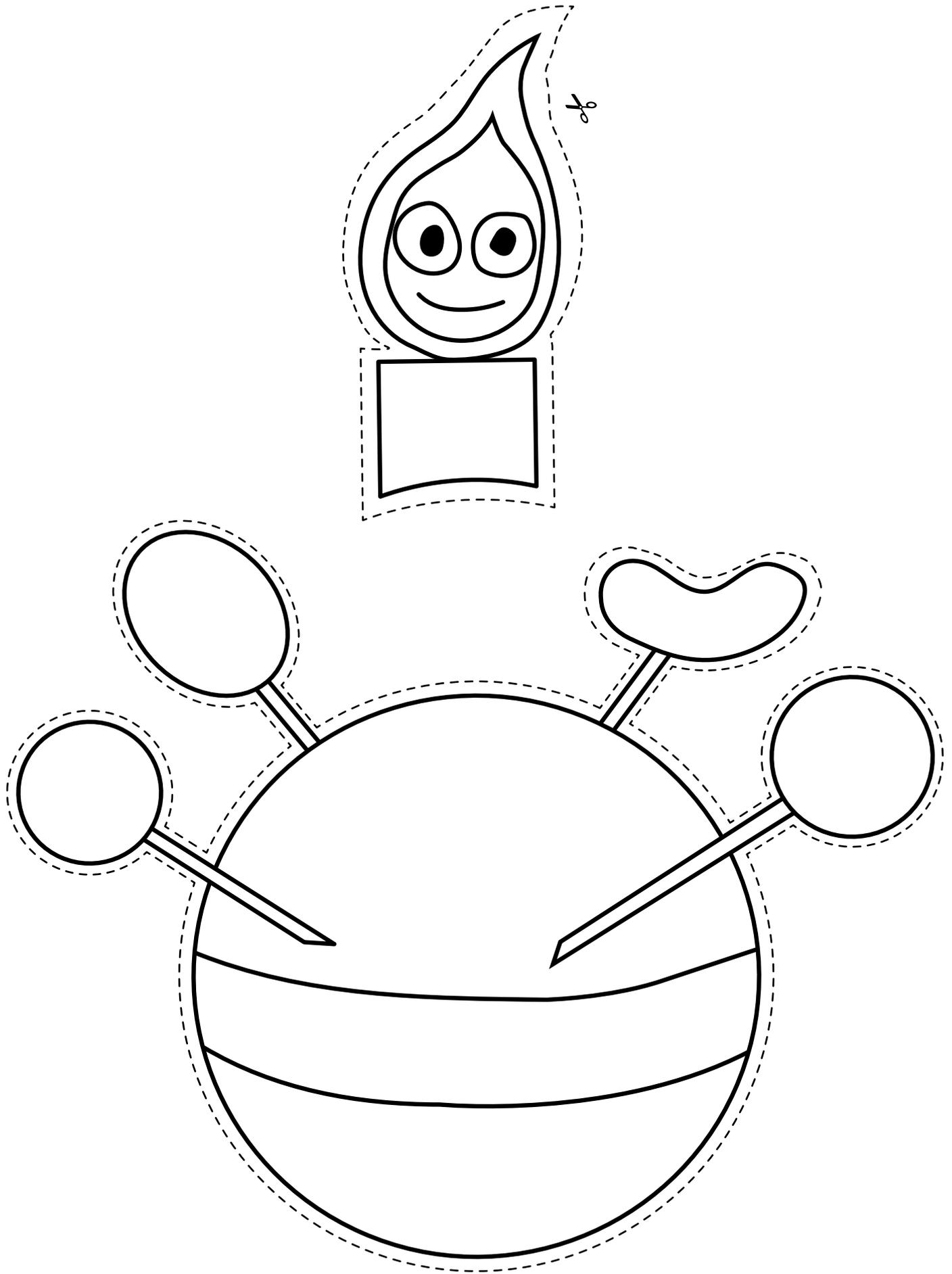
**the**

**light**

Put the candle on the Christingle



Put the candle on the Christingle



## Christingle drive sheet

- 1 Ribbon
- 2 Square sweet
- 3 Round sweet
- 4 Candle
- 5 Flame
- 6 Orange

