ACTIVITY PACKET
CREATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DISNEYNATURE EDUCATIONAL TEAM
DISNEY
PETE'S DRAGON
Some Secrets Are Too Big To Keep.
AUGUST 12
IN 3D AND REAL D 3D

Remember When...

You watched the grownups from a secret hiding spot?

You climbed higher than ever before in a favorite climbing tree?

You dreamed of flying?

You turned clouds into dragons?

Playing meant being outside?

Bring Back the Power of Play with Disney Pete's Dragon

A reimagining of Disney's cherished family film, "Pete's Dragon" is the adventure of an orphaned boy named Pete and his best friend Elliot, who just so happens to be a dragon. "Pete's Dragon" stars Bryce Dallas Howard (*Jurassic World*), Oakes Fegley (*This is Where I Leave You*), Wes Bentley (*The Hunger Games*), Karl Urban (*Star Trek*), Oona Laurence (*Southpaw*) and Oscar® winner Robert Redford (*Captain America: The Winter Soldier*). The film is directed by David Lowery ("*Ain't Them Bodies Saints*"), screenplay by Lowery & Toby Halbrooks based on a screenplay by Malcolm Marmorstein and produced by Jim Whitaker, p.g.a. (*The Finest Hours; Friday Night Lights*), with Barrie M. Osborne (*The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring; The Great Gatsby*) serving as executive producer.

For years, old wood carver Mr. Meacham (Robert Redford) has delighted local children with his tales of the fierce dragon that resides deep in the woods of the Pacific Northwest. To his daughter, Grace (Bryce Dallas Howard), who works as a ranger, these stories are little more than tall tales…until she meets Pete (Oakes Fegley). Pete is a mysterious 10-year-old with no family and no home who claims to live in the woods with a giant, green dragon named Elliot. And from Pete's descriptions, Elliot seems remarkably similar to the dragon from Mr. Meacham's stories. With the help of Natalie (Oona Laurence), an 11-year-old girl whose father Jack (Wes Bentley) owns the local lumber mill, Grace sets out to determine where Pete came from, where he belongs, and the truth about this dragon. Disney's "Pete's Dragon" opens in U.S. theaters on August 12, 2016.

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Activity Packet Goals

- Increase families' understanding of the value of imaginative play
- Extend the viewing experience of "Pete's Dragon" and inspire imaginative play outdoors
- Connect kids with the magic of nature to inspire hope for the planet and a desire to protect the environment

CONTENTS

The Importance of Imaginative Play 3
Encouraging Imaginative Play 4
Inspiring the Imagination Outdoors. 5
Inspirational Places for Imaginative Play . . 6
Resources & References 7

Activity 1: Discover Hidden Dragons 8
Activity 2: Go on a Micro Quest. 9
Activity 3: Liberate Your Library 10
Activity 4: Frame a Friend 11
Activity 5: Build a Dragon's Lair 12

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Dr. Lizabeth Fogel
Director of Education, The Walt Disney Studios

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The Importance of Imaginative Play

"Pete's Dragon" inspires the imagination through the story of a young boy named Pete and his dragon friend Elliot who joins him on adventures in their forest home. Children are naturally drawn to tales of fantasy and adventure and will instinctively put themselves in Pete's shoes to reenact scenes from the film or invent new quests with an imaginary dragon, especially if they are provided with the time and space to let their imaginations explore those possibilities.

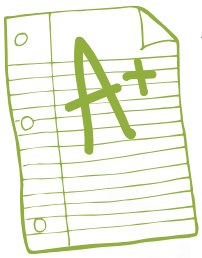
Imaginative play, also called dramatic play or pretend play, is a critical part of early childhood development. Playing affects the developing brain in important ways that lay the groundwork for future social and emotional growth, cognitive functioning and physical and mental well-being.

Environmental Stewardship

Pairing imaginative play with outdoor play is a natural connection. Research shows that children who are exposed to nature are healthier and happier, and it is widely believed that these outdoor experiences lead to kids caring about the planet over their lifetimes.

Social Skills

Children often use imaginative play as a form of self-expression. The imaginary friends and make-believe scenarios they invent are important steps in brain development. Exercising their creative neural pathways leads to higher self-motivation, greater flexibility in thinking and increased collaboration with peers.



Academic Success

Childhood learning research has shown that play and learning are not mutually exclusive; in fact, imaginative play is an early form of learning for young children. Applying creative thinking skills during play helps children become better problem-solvers, decision-makers and communicators.

Physical Health

Imaginative play – especially outdoors – promotes bodily activity, leading to improved physical health. There are direct correlations between outdoor play and lower risk of obesity, increased ability to fight off illness and greater overall fitness. Many studies have shown that time spent in nature reduces stress, speeds healing and extends life expectancy. If you feel better after walking in a tree-lined park, empirical evidence explains why. Research suggests that greener surroundings enhance people's immune functioning. This finding is incredible both in its simplicity and potential impact for healthier communities.

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Encouraging Imaginative Play

What is the role of the parent/caregiver during imaginative play? Whatever role you are assigned! Let go of the need for games that declare a winner or specific instructions on how to use a particular toy. Play-pretend that you are part of whatever scene your child conjures up and the imaginative play will come naturally.

While playing make-believe might not appear to be a productive use of time, the interactions between a child and a parent or caregiver during imaginative play serve a significant role in fostering learning. Language, attention, memory and other executive functions are all enhanced through the shared experiences of parents/caregivers and children.

Parents and caregivers can encourage imaginative play by allowing time and space for it to occur. A few props or prompts are all it takes to get young children engaged in pretend play.

At Age 7, Your Grandson Is Constantly Creating A Mess – And Dirty Laundry!

Let messy be ok when he is outside. Resist the urge to pull out the hand sanitizer when he gets dirt under his nails and you may be treated to the transformative power of nature. Soil and water are excellent starters for imaginative play. "Should we prepare a magic stew to feed the hungry dragons? Maybe then they will give us a ride on their backs!"

Your 9-Year Old Daughter Has Scrambled Up Some Rocks In A City Park...

Fight the fear of injury and the instinct to demand that she come down immediately. Instead, give her a mission that engages her imagination. "Your Royal Highness, Queen of the Rocks, please grant me my wish!" Once you have captured her attention with this playful scenario, you can direct her to use caution as she climbs.

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Inspiring The Imagination Outdoors

The great outdoors is one big jungle gym, bounce house, waterslide, trampoline, swing set and play fort combined! Sending kids outside to play is one of the best and easiest ways to inspire their imaginations because it provides constant stimulation. Outside there are endless opportunities for inventing, seeking, problem-solving, experimenting and exploring. The natural materials found outside provide places to climb, hide, construct, deconstruct and romp – always in a unique way because of the elements. Being outside fuels physical activity, which in turn inspires imaginative play.

In "Pete's Dragon," Pete's Outdoor Upbringing Inspires His Imagination...

...which gives him the courage he needed to overcome adversity. With Elliot, his loyal dragon friend by his side, Pete has the confidence to climb trees, run through the forest and jump long distances as they explore their forest home. Elliot's incredible ability to turn invisible, as well as his impressive size and roar, provides a level of comfort and safety to Pete as they turn each day into an adventure.

The Real Magic Of A Forests & Parks Is That Trees Make Everyone - Not Just Kids - Feel Better!

Forests and parks have always played a healing role in nature. They provide us with fresh air, filter toxins out of water sources and prevent erosion. They are also home to millions of plants and animals of all sizes and shapes. Nature provides value for everyone, not just kids experiencing imaginative play.

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Inspirational Places For Imaginative Play

Playing outside does not have to mean playing in a vast forest like the one where Pete lived. While wooded areas are wonderful playscapes, all of the benefits of outdoor play can just as easily take place at a small park, in a schoolyard, in your backyard, at the beach or near a creek.

A single climbable tree provides hours of imagination-driven play. Even a dirt crawlspace under the front porch steps can become a marvelous imaginative play environment and a place to collect special natural treasures that become part of the play narrative. Small outdoor spaces are especially appealing to young children because they feel exclusive and hidden from adults, yet close enough to feel safe.

Find Your Park / Encuentra Tu Parque

If wide expanses are what you seek, our national parks are an excellent resource, and this year marks the centennial anniversary of the National Park Service, celebrating 100 years of stewardship for America's national parks and for communities across the nation. In celebration of this milestone anniversary, the National Park Foundation, the national non-profit partner to the National Park Service, launched Find Your Park/Encuentra Tu Parque, a public awareness and education movement to inspire people from all backgrounds to connect with, celebrate and support America's national parks and community-based programs. Find Your Park/Encuentra Tu Parque offers an online tool designed to locate a place, an event or an experience that will connect you to the outdoors and spark imaginative play for the children in your life. Whether a national park is your primary destination or simply a rejuvenating stopover during a road trip to somewhere else, findyourpark.com can help introduce a little health and happiness into your family's day.

Every Kid In A Park

The National Park Service is also part of the Every Kid in a Park initiative which allows fourth graders nationwide to go to www.everykidinapark.gov and obtain a pass for free entry for them and their families to more than 2,000 federally managed lands and waters nationwide for an entire year. Every Kid in a Park encourages America's youth to explore and appreciate our nation's astounding beauty, its rich history and its diverse culture. The National Park Service and the National Park Foundation invite all families to play in our more than 400 national parks across the country.

National Park Foundation

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Disney Conservation Fund

Established on Earth Day in 1995, the Disney Conservation Fund (DCF) helps to protect the planet and connect kids with nature. In honor of its 20th anniversary, DCF announced a targeted philanthropic strategy to help protect the planet through collaborations with leading nonprofit organizations that will help threatened animals and inspire a lifelong love for nature in young people. The new initiative, called "Reverse the Decline, Increase the Time," is aimed at reversing the decline of 10 species through scientific research and community engagement, and increasing the time kids spend in nature to inspire them to care for the planet. The well-being of people is deeply connected to the health of the planet. That's why DCF supports projects like the National Park Foundation's Open Outdoors for Kids, connecting underserved youth to national park experiences, and the Find Your Park/Encuentra Tu Parque movement that engage young people in discovering the magic of nature and inspiring them to protect the planet. Since 1995, the fund has awarded $40 million to projects in 115 countries to reverse the decline of wildlife and increase the time kids spend in nature. For more information visit www.disney.com/conservation.

Resources

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- Family Nature Play & You: E-Guide for Families. (2015) Downloadable PDF online at www.aza.org/nature-play
- National Forest Foundation. www.nationalforests.org
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ACTIVITY 1

Discover Hidden Dragons

GOOD CHOICE FOR PLAY:

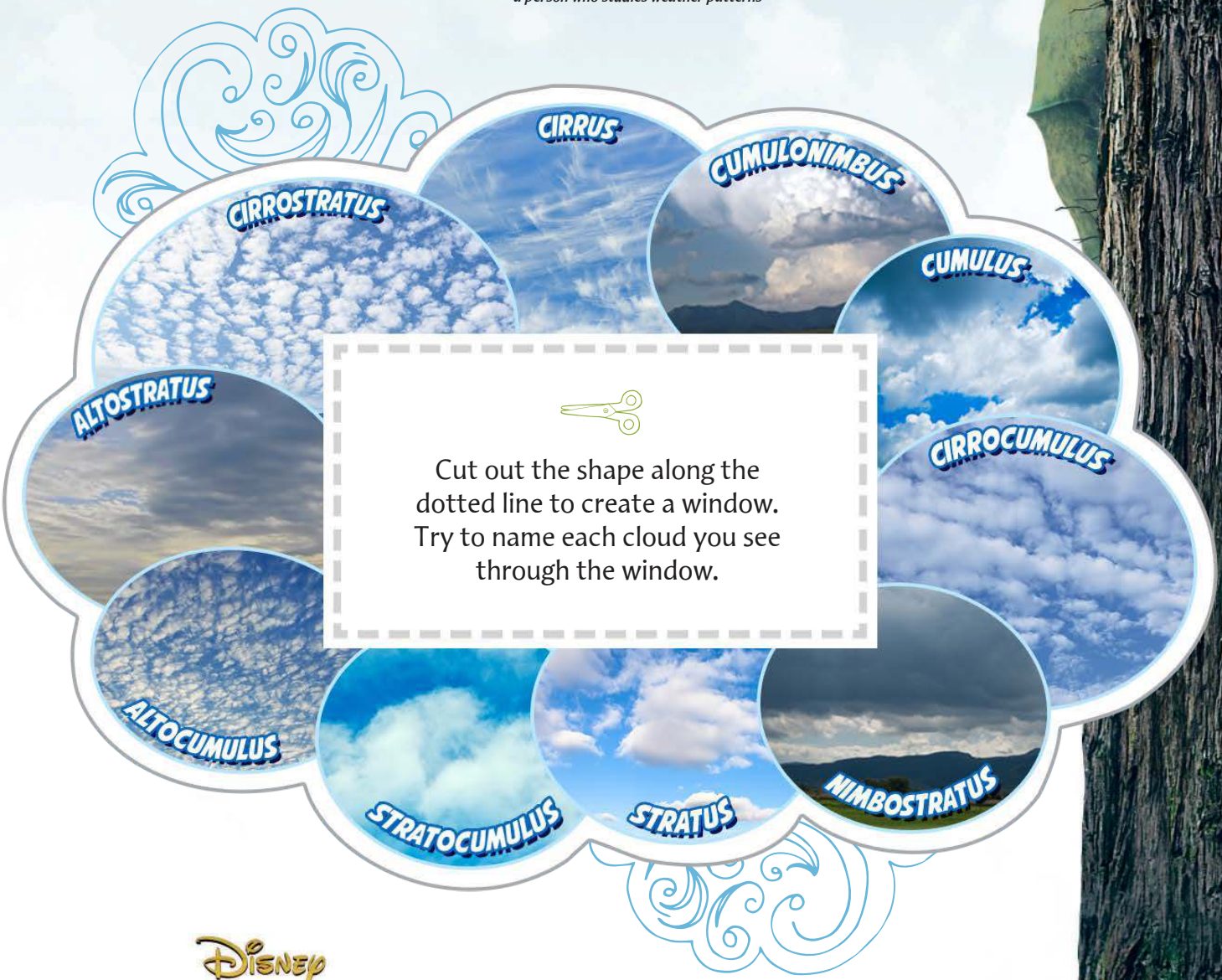
- ✓ AT A NATIONAL PARK
- ✓ IN YOUR BACKYARD
- ✓ AT THE SHORE
- ✓ IN A CITY PARK

Lie on your back on a day when the sky is filled with cumulus clouds (the puffy kind). Find a cloud that is shaped like a dragon. What else is around the dragon? Observe what the dragon changes into.

Are there other types of clouds in the sky? What do they resemble?

Can you identify the name of the cloud that a meteorologist* might use?

**a person who studies weather patterns*



Cut out the shape along the dotted line to create a window. Try to name each cloud you see through the window.

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ACTIVITY 2

Go On A Micro Quest

GOOD CHOICE FOR PLAY:

- ✓ AT A NATIONAL PARK
- ✓ IN YOUR BACKYARD
- ✓ AT THE SHORE
- ✓ IN A CITY PARK

Let your eyes focus on the little things and pick out the fine details in the great outdoors. With a camera, zoom in and snap pictures of the tiny treasures you find. Later, print the pictures and make a collage to design your own seek-and-find puzzle.

Search under rocks, leaves and logs to find an invertebrate like a beetle or a spider. Imagine that you just discovered that this creature has an extraordinary ability, never before known to science. What mega power does your mini friend have?

Can you find the 5 mini invertebrates with MEGA POWERS in the image below?

Itsy Bitsy Invertebrates... Larger Than Life Power!

Armor Shield!

Ironclad Beetle

The ironclad beetle has an exoskeleton so strong it can survive being stepped on by a bison.

Stronger than Steel!

Darwin's Bark Spider

The Darwin's bark spider produces the world's strongest natural material. Its silk is 25 times stronger than steel (twice as strong as any other spider silk) and its web can be over 80 feet wide.

Chemical Weapon Defense!

Bombardier Beetle

When threatened, the bombardier beetle sprays a mixture of boiling hot chemicals at attacking insects.

360-Degree Vision!

House Fly

House flies have compound eyes which allow them to see in all directions at once. This is why they always see you coming.

Extreme Flyer!

Monarch Butterfly

Monarch butterflies migrate up to 3000 miles, traveling south for the winter and north for the summer. Monarchs are the only butterfly known to make this two-way migration.

Micro Quest Seek & Find

Nature Note

Avoid picking items from living plants and instead look for already fallen leaves, twigs, etc.

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ACTIVITY 3

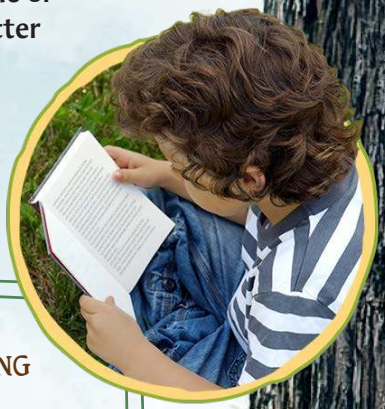
LIBERATE YOUR LIBRARY

GOOD CHOICE FOR PLAY:

- ✓ AT A NATIONAL PARK
- ✓ IN YOUR BACKYARD
- ✓ AT THE SHORE
- ✓ IN A CITY PARK

Load up a basket or bag with some books and a blanket and find a comfy spot to read, read, read. Who are the characters in the story you read? Is the setting inside or outside or some of both? If you could be any character in this story, who would you be and why? Can you imagine a different ending to the story you read?

Sit in a quiet place outdoors and fill in the blanks to complete this story:



THIS IS A STORY ABOUT A GIRL/BOY WHO LOVED SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS. FOR YEARS, NOBODY BELIEVED SHE/HE COULD _____. BUT ONE DAY ON A WALK, HER/HIS
(something you do outside)

GRANDPA NOTICED A _____. THE GRANDFATHER
(something small you can find in nature)

PICKED IT UP AND PUT IT IN HIS POCKET. LATER THAT DAY, THE GIRL/BOY HEARD THE SOUND OF_____. SHE/HE FOLLOWED
(a sound you can hear from where you are sitting)

THE SOUND AND IT LED HER/HIM TO A_____.
(the biggest natural object you can see from where you are sitting)

THE AIR SMELLED_____. JUST THEN, HER/HIS
(the way the air smells to you now)

GRANDPA APPEARED HOLDING THE OBJECT. THE GIRL/BOY SMILED AND FELT _____ BECAUSE SHE/HE KNEW THAT
(the way you feel when you discover something new)

HER/HIS GRANDPA BELIEVED IN HER/HIM.

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ACTIVITY 4

Frame a Friend

GOOD CHOICE FOR PLAY:

- ___ AT A NATIONAL PARK
- ✓ IN YOUR BACKYARD
- ✓ AT THE SHORE
- ✓ IN A CITY PARK

Lie on the ground and ask a friend to place rocks, leaves or sticks around you in the shape of your body. Or if you are at the beach, use shells or have them draw a line around you in the sand.

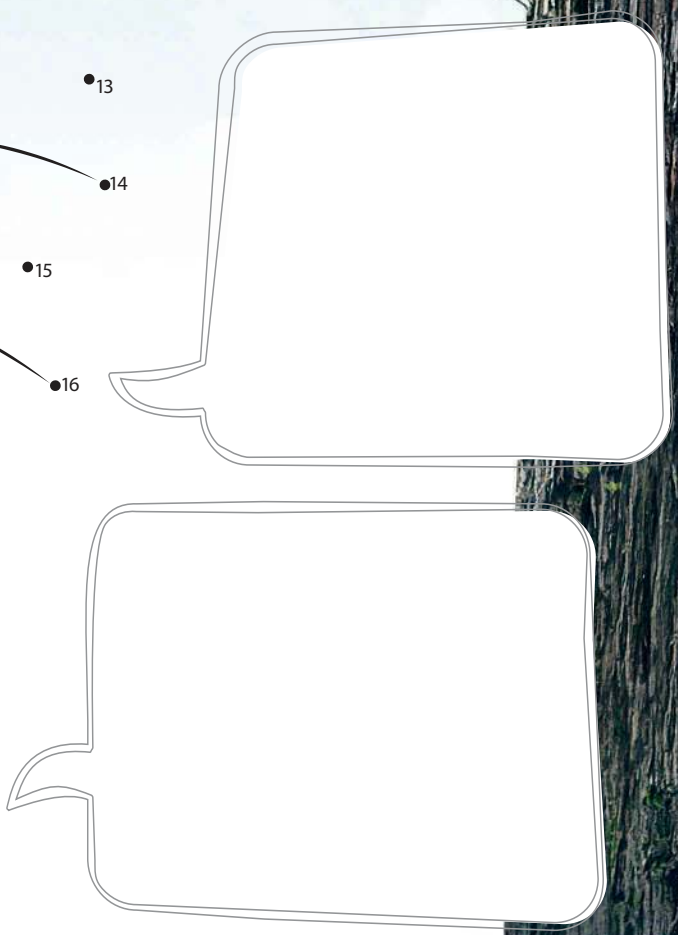
Trade places and make a border around your friend. Stand up and look at the shapes you've created. Imagine what the two characters are doing together. What adventures are they having?

NATURE NOTE

Avoid picking items from living plants and instead look for already fallen leaves, twigs, etc.

Connect the Dots

...to show Pete and his dragon.
Then write or draw in the bubbles
to show what they are saying.



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ACTIVITY 5

Build a Dragon's Lair

GOOD CHOICE FOR PLAY:

- ___ AT A NATIONAL PARK
- ✓ IN YOUR BACKYARD
- ___ AT THE SHORE
- ✓ IN A CITY PARK

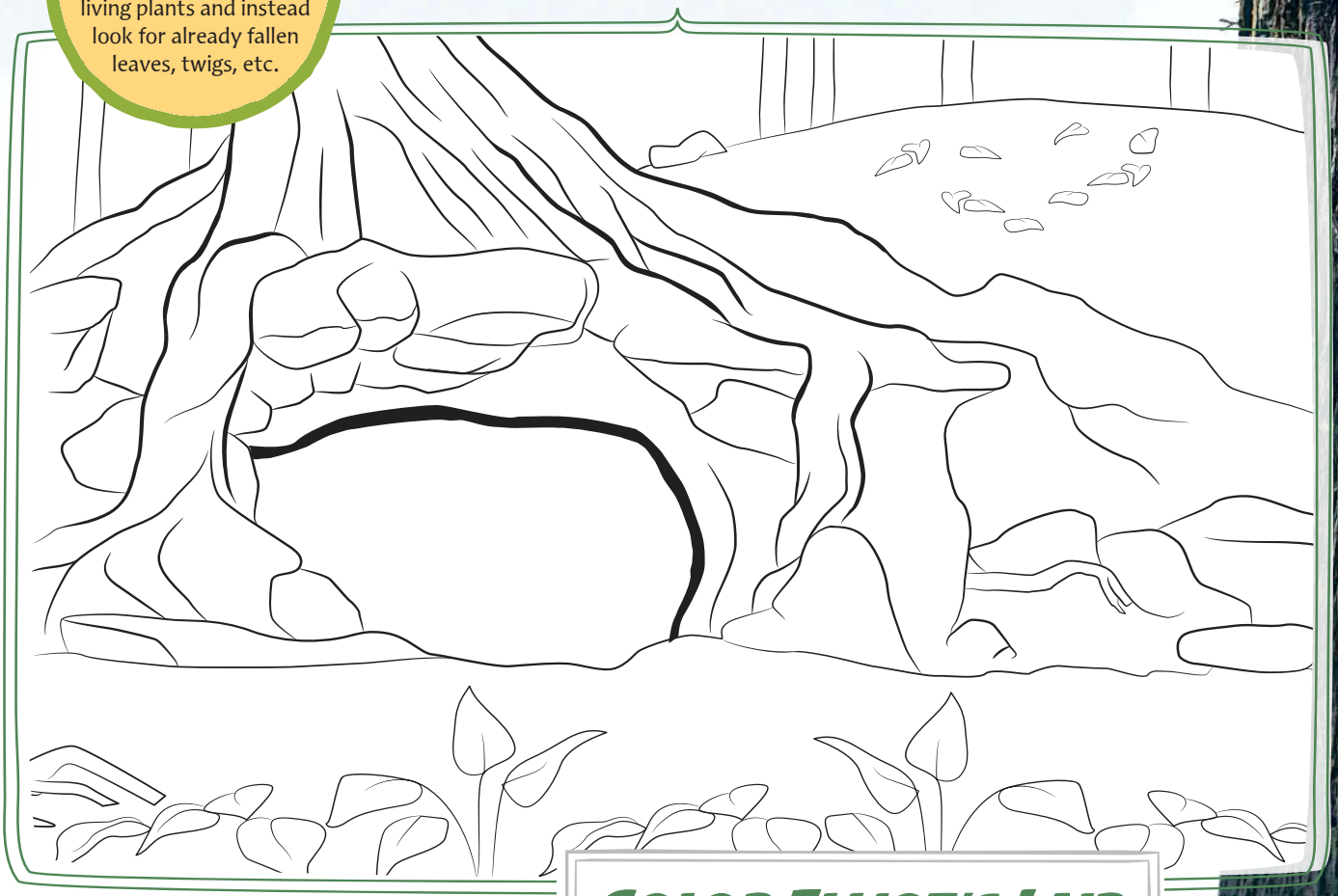
In addition to food, water and space, all animals need shelter. What kind of shelter would a dragon need? When creating your dragon's lair, you might wish to consider:

- Can light get in so the dragon can see?
- Is there a way to block the wind?
- Do you want to disguise the entrance?
- Have you included the right materials for resting? -For eating and drinking? -For playing?

Construct a secret hideout for yourself nearby. Imagine that you are leading the way from your hideout to your dragon's lair. Can you find something to bring your dragon friend as a gift when you arrive? It's neat to feel safe inside this space together!

NATURE NOTE

Avoid picking items from living plants and instead look for already fallen leaves, twigs, etc.



Color Elliot's Lair

and draw your own dragon inside.

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