

Lesson 44



7-4-2021
LEADER GUIDE

THE POWER OF WORDS

JAMES 3:1-12

GOAL

To teach children that words have the power to build or destroy. We must tame our tongues if we are to live out the mission for which God created us.

WORDS TO KNOW

Corrupt: to change from good to bad; to rot or spoil.

MEMORY VERSE

James 3:10: Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing.
My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

OVERVIEW

Read James 3:1-12: The Apostle James writes to warn believers that speaking the truth of God is not as simple as opening our mouths, letting the words flow, and watching people convert after hearing our message. Because we are telling other people how to live their lives, ours will be put under scrutiny as we will be held to a higher standard. Our words must match our actions, which is a difficult thing to accomplish. The tongue, while small, may be the most dangerous part of our bodies. It can spew evil or spread praise. Words have power, and we must learn to tame our tongues.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: For what reason did the Apostle James say we should not be eager to be teachers of God's word?

A1: The Apostle Paul said we shouldn't be eager to be teachers of God's word because we will be held to higher standards.

Q1b: Have you ever said something you immediately wished you could take back?

Teacher Notes: Let students answer. Most of us will answer yes, even without thinking of a specific instance. Whether we wish we could take back saying something we said to be intentionally mean or something that was just inconsiderate and unintentionally hurtful, most of us have said something that we wish we hadn't.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: How can you control the direction in which a horse goes?

A2: You can control the direction in which a horse goes by putting a bit and bridle in its mouth.

Q2b: Has anyone ever tapped you on one shoulder while standing by the other to get you to look the wrong direction?

Teacher Notes: It's a harmless joke. People do this because we expect the person trying to get our attention to be standing by the shoulder that was tapped. It's basic, typical behavior that can be exploited for a bit of a laugh. A simple piece of metal placed in a horse's mouth doesn't seem like enough to control a horse's direction, but horses move in the direction their head is facing. Knowing this helps people who work with horses. Understanding our own typical behavior and responses can help us to prepare ourselves for situations in which we may be tempted to react negatively. This is how we learn to tame our tongues.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: Besides the wind, what controls the direction of a ship?

A3: A small rudder steered by a single person can control the direction of a ship.

Q3b: Why is it important to be able to steer a boat?

Teacher Notes: Unless we're up for going anywhere the wind blows and the waves drive, we have to be able to steer or we will never get where we are supposed to go. If we let our words take us in a direction we did not intend, it will take us a long time to get back on track to accomplishing the mission God created us for.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What can set a whole forest on fire?

A4: A tiny spark can set a whole forest on fire.

Q4b: What was the last mean thing anyone has said to you? What was the last nice thing anyone has said to you?

Teacher Notes: Let the students think. They do not have to tell the class their answers to these questions; this can be a conversation without students providing particular responses. There have been many studies that suggest that people remember negative comments and experiences more than positive. It may even be the case that some of us had a hard time remembering something nice someone has said to us but were able to think of a mean thing said. These mean things stick with us and make us think differently about ourselves. Like a tiny spark starting a wildfire, a single mean word starts to chip away at our self-esteem and confidence. We can take our negative experiences and their effects to help us as a reminder to choose our words carefully and kindly.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What is the one thing that humans have not been able to tame?

A5: Humans have not been able to tame their own tongues.

Q5b: Are pets, such as dogs and cats, always nice?

Teacher Notes: No, even tame dogs and house cats scratch and bite. Any animal we tame and train to perform in a certain way is still an animal. They will revert to their instincts when provoked or put into a certain situation. If we pull a dog's tail, it might growl, bark, or even bite at us. The same is true of people. We need to work very hard to understand the situations that trigger us to use unkind language. Maybe we get upset when we get into trouble for something, or when someone asks us to do our chores. When we learn the types of situations that make us angry and lash out, we know to guard our language. We may never be able to completely tame our tongues, but by practicing restraint, and thinking before we speak, we can make sure to reduce the number of people we hurt with our words.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: In the situation described, the tongue is used to do what in a single day?

A6: The tongue is used to praise God and curse someone made in God's image in the same day.

Q6b: Have you ever said something mean about a person you love?

Teacher Notes: Students do not have to answer out loud. This is a hard one to admit, but we have all done it. Whether we say it to the person's face or to someone else, we are using our words to hurt. It is for situations like this that we should all remember the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7

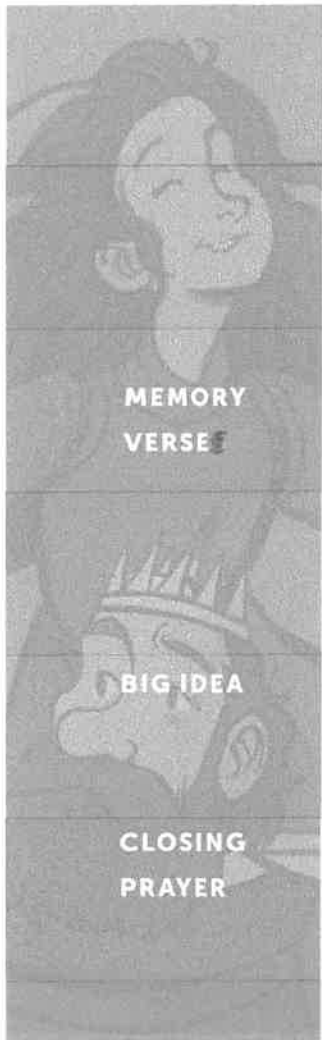


Q7a: What can an apple tree not do?

A7: An apple tree cannot bear oranges.

Q7b: If you try something and fail, should you just give up?

Teacher Notes: No! Failure means we tried, and in so doing, we learned one way that doesn't work. We are going to find ourselves in situations in which we say things we regret. We should learn from these instances to help us keep our words kind and helpful rather than mean and hurtful. *The more we try, the more successful we will become. We should never stop trying to be better people.* The good news is that with God's help, we truly have the power to see our lives changed!



QUESTION & ANSWER

▶ **James 3:10:** Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

▶ Our words have power, and we should use them to honor God.

▶ Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Jesus and the example He gave us of how we should live and use our words to help others and honor You. Help us to think before we speak and to choose our words carefully so that we can honor You. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

THE POWER OF WORDS

CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY

Across

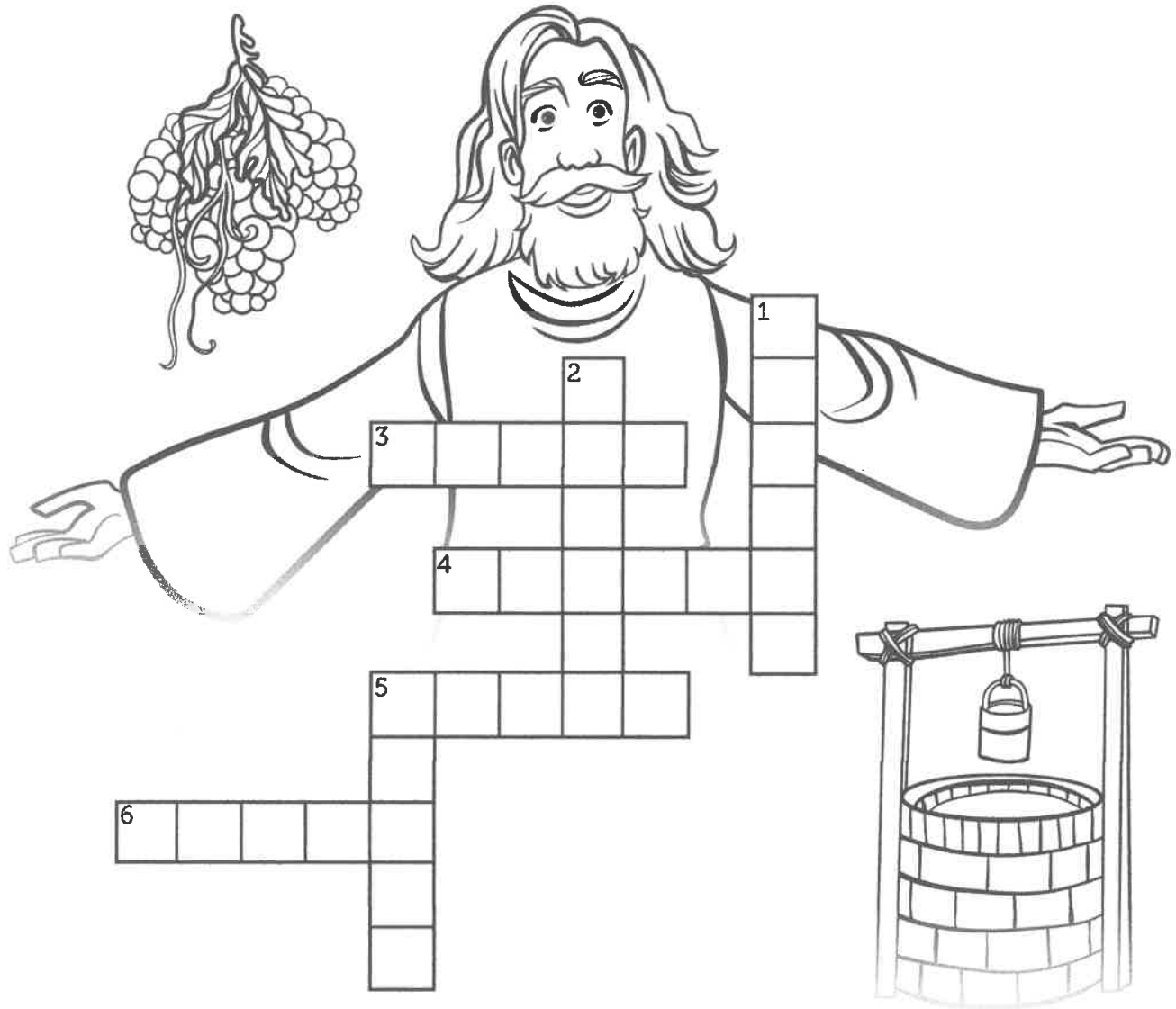
- 3. A tiny (**Spark**) can start a forest fire.
- 4. A bit and (**Bridle**) helps us to control the direction in which horses move.
- 5. James warned that we should not be (**Eager**) to teach God's word.
- 6. We should use our words to (**Honor**) God and reflect a godly life.

Down

- 1. A (**Rudder**) and a person can steer a sailing ship.
- 2. We use our tongues to (**Praise**) God and then curse people He made in His own image.
- 5. The only thing on (**Earth**) humans have not tamed is their own tongues.

THE POWER OF WORDS

James 3:1-12



Across

3. A tiny ____ can start a forest fire.
4. A bit and ____ helps us to control the direction in which horses move.
5. James warned that we should not be ____ to teach God's word.
6. We should use our words to ____ God and reflect a godly life.

Down

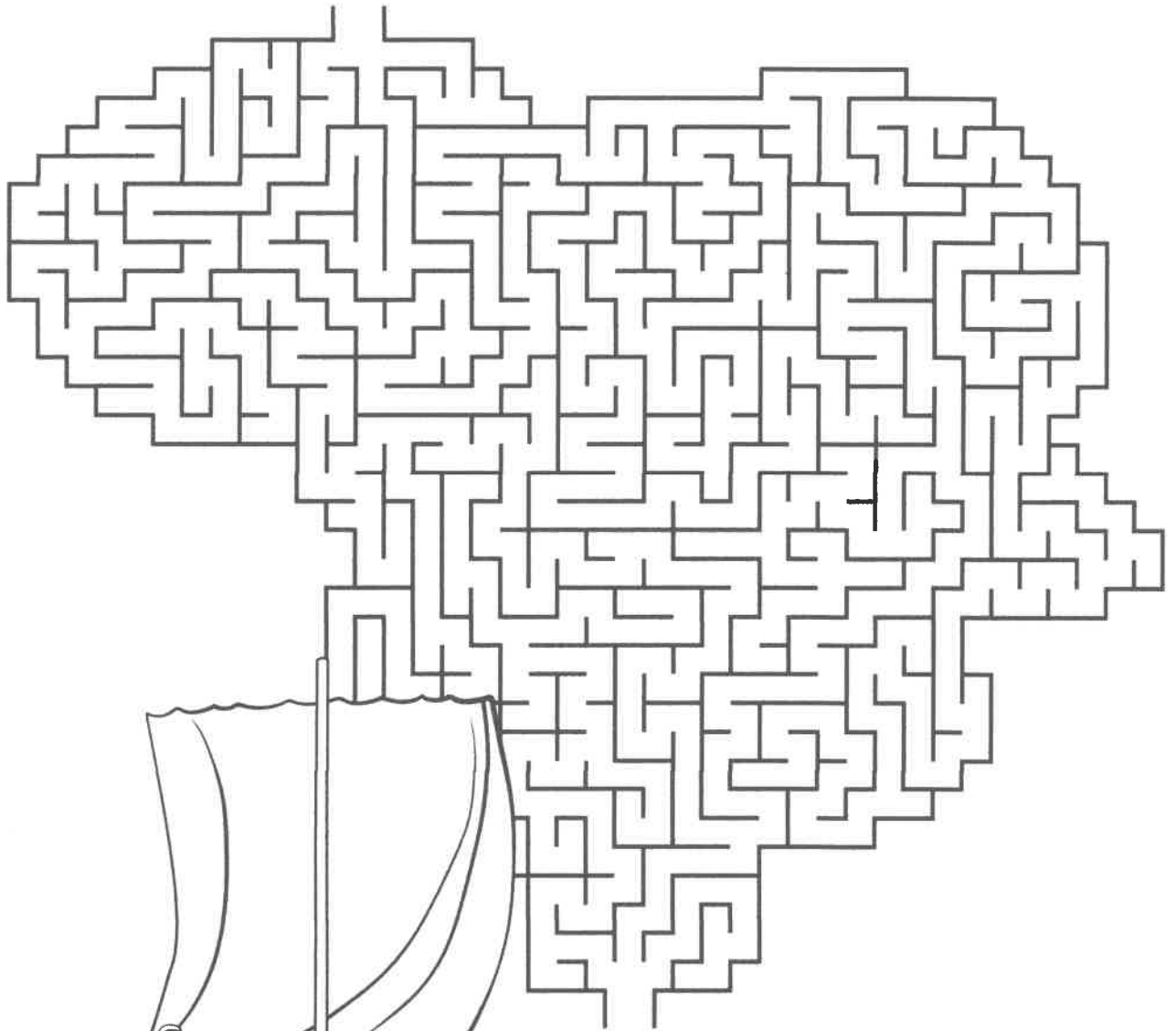
1. A ____ and a person can steer a sailing ship.
2. We use our tongues to ____ God and then curse people He made in His own image.
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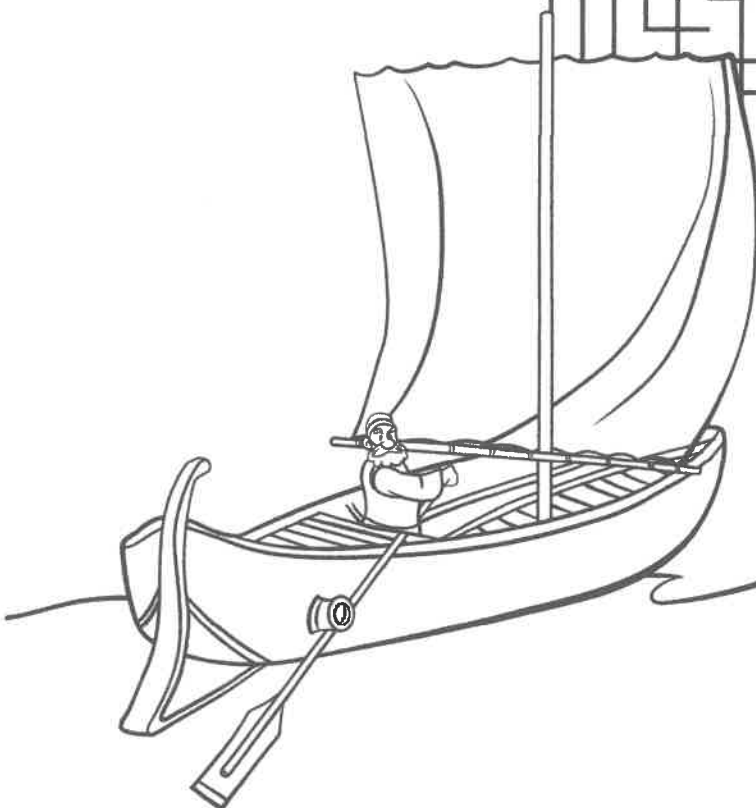
THE POWER OF WORDS

Guide the sailing ship through the ocean.

END

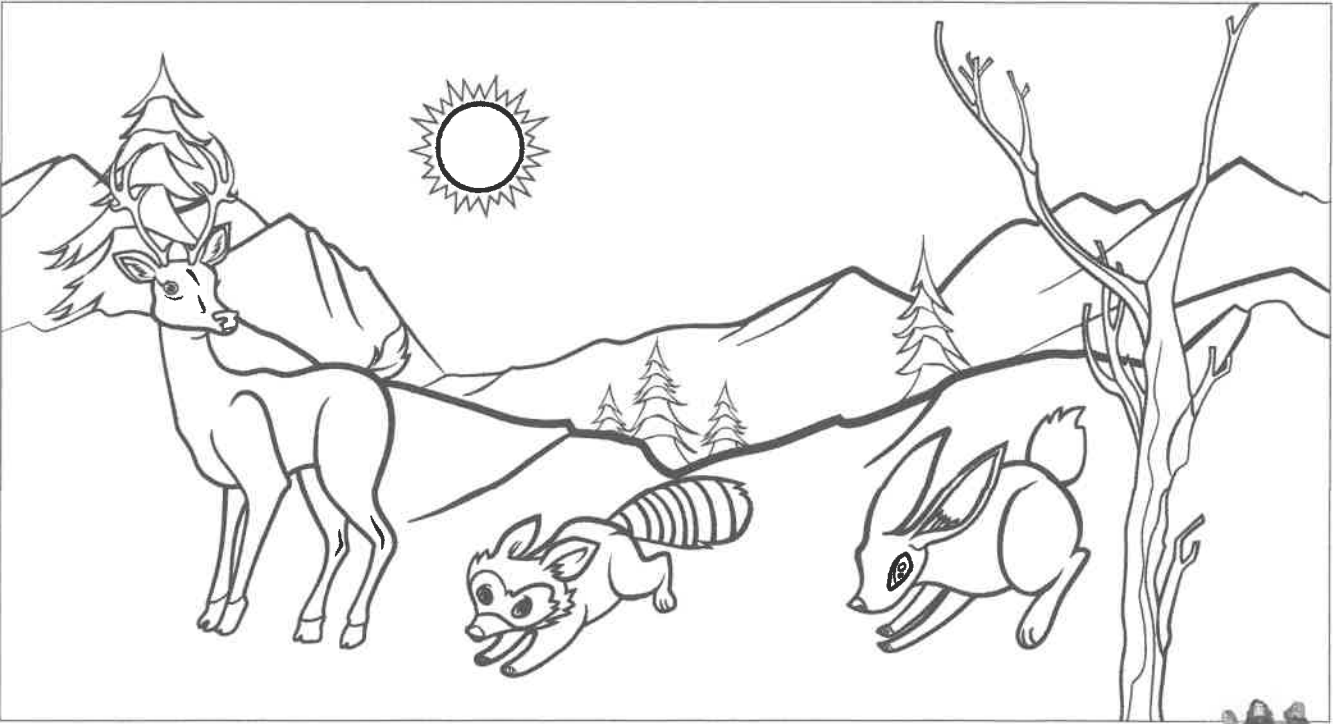
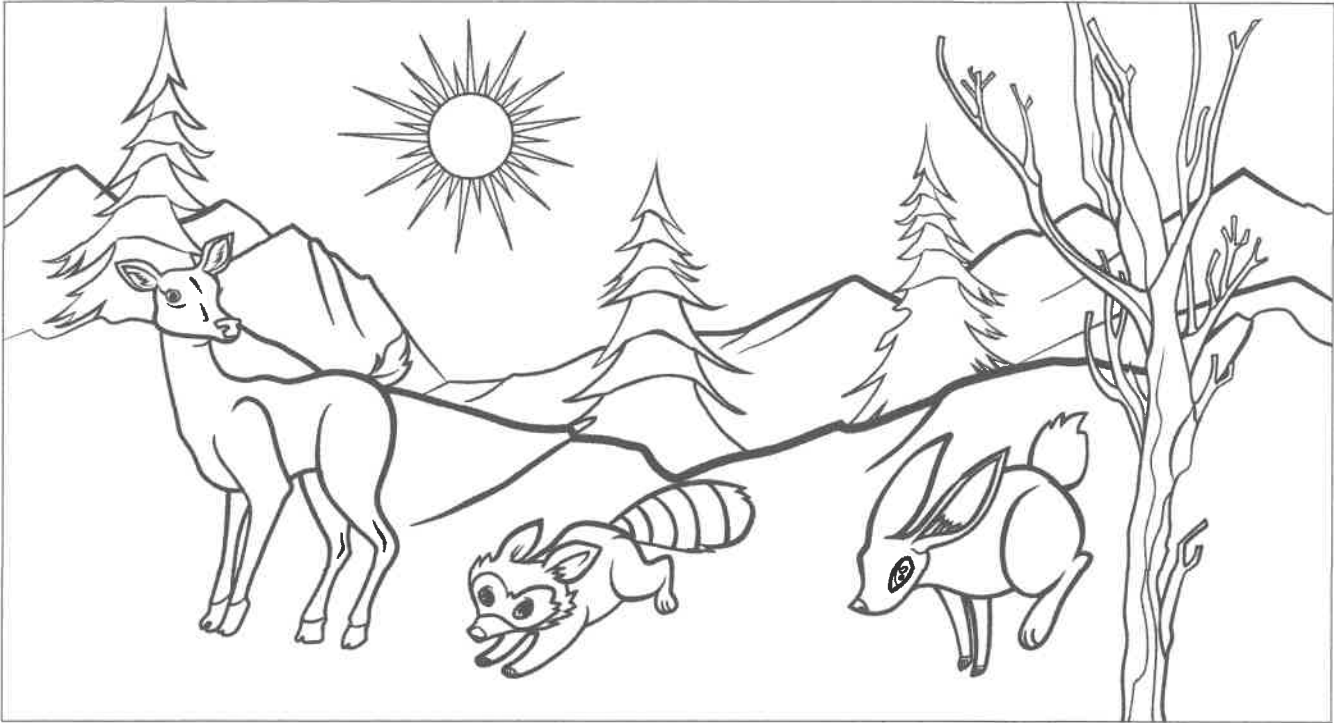


START



THE POWER OF WORDS

Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.





THE POWER OF WORDS



Discover the hidden words.

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

Word Bank

POWER

SPARK

FIRE

OCEAN

HORSE

BRIDLE

JAMES

GOD

RUDDER

HONOR

PRAISE

EARTH



Tongue Twisters

Sam shaved seven
shy sheep.



Nat's knapsack strap
snapped.



A proper copper
coffeepot.



Fred's friend Fran flips
fine flapjacks fast.



She sells seashells
by the seashore.



If Peter Piper picked a peck of
pickled peppers,
How many pickled peppers would
Peter Piper pick?



A skunk sat on a stump,
The stump thunk the skunk stunk.
The skunk thunk the stump stunk.



A tutor who tooted a flute
Tried to tutor two tooters to toot.
Said the two to their tutor,
"Is it harder to toot or
To tutor two tooters to toot?"



Tongue Twisters



The sun shines on shop signs.



Cheryl's cheap chip shop sells Cheryl's cheap chips.



Six sick snakes sit by the sea.



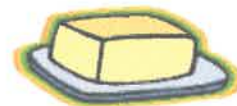
Wishy-washy Wanda watched her watch get washed.

Knock Knock
Who's there?
Howdy!
Howdy who?
Howdy do that?

Knock Knock
Whos there?
Dwayne
Dwayne Who?
Dwayne the bath tub,
I'm ddowning !!



Which witch wished which wicked wish?



Betty Batter had some butter,
'But,' she said, 'this butter's bitter.
If I bake this bitter butter,
It would make my batter bitter.'