



The InvestiGator Club™ Prekindergarten Learning System

Investigations

PARENT'S
EDITION

Integrated Activities for Exploring, Experimenting,
and Making Discoveries



Marvelous Me!



THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPANY
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Part 2

Special Me!

Tell your child: *Now that you have been investigating what makes your body special and how you use your five senses, it's time to discover what makes you special and different from others. We'll do lots of thinking, exploring, and creating together. If you are ready, let's start investigating!*

Literacy/Fine Motor Skills/ Oral Language

Name-recognition activities including tracing and writing letters will help your child discover just how special a name is.

Materials

- poster board
- black marker
- tracing paper
- modeling clay, chenille sticks, buttons, dried beans (optional)
- letter cards
- crayons or pencils
- [My Name Activity Sheet](#)

For 3-year-olds

Each time you write your child's name to label belongings, to sign greeting cards, or when making lists, point it out. Eventually your child will learn to recognize his or her name whenever it is written. When using letter cards to spell a name, your young child might need help with correct letter orientation. Provide this help by placing a small red dot in the upper right-hand corner of each letter card.

My Name

Beforehand write your child's first name in black marker on a four-by-eleven-inch (or larger) piece of poster board. Point to and read your child's name. Explain: *Your name is special. Your name tells who you are. Sometimes we go by different names. Dilly Gator's real name is Cordelia Gator, but everyone calls her Dilly.* If your child has a nickname, mention it too. Have your child look at the name on the card. Say: *Your name is made up of letters.* Ask your child to touch each letter in his or her name. Point out that some names have a few letters and others have many. Say: *Your name has (a few/many) letters.* Name each letter as you point to it. Invite your child to hold up the name card and say the name aloud.

Pattern an oral language activity after the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Begin by naming your child and asking him or her to respond by naming you in return. Then switch roles.

Adult: (Magda), (Magda), who do you see?

Child: I see (Mommy) looking back at me.

Child: (Mommy), (Mommy), who do you see?

Adult: I see (Magda) looking back at me.

Involve other family members if they are available.

My Name (continued)

The following activities offer practice in name recognition:

- Provide letter cards for your child to build his or her name using the name card as a model.
- Have your child use modeling clay, chenille sticks, buttons, or dried beans to form the first letter in his or her name.
- Print your child's name as he or she watches. Make a slow demonstration for each letter. Help your child use one finger to trace over your printed example. Then cut sheets of tracing paper the same size as the name card, place them on top of the name, and staple on one side. Your child can see the name in black under the tracing paper. Have your child practice tracing the letters using a pencil or crayon. Make these tracing tags accessible for your child to practice on a regular basis. Additional tracing paper can be added as needed.
- Print a copy of the [My Name Activity Sheet](#) for your child. Observe your child as he or she traces the name. Then encourage your child to try writing his or her own name.

My name is
Rosalita
Sausalita!



**Literacy/Fine Motor Skills/
Social and Emotional/Oral
Language**

Your child will decorate and label a box that can be filled with special treasures.

Materials

- empty box with a lid (such as a shoe box)
- child's name card
- letter stickers (optional)
- crayons or markers
- items for decorations (beads, buttons, ribbon, yarn, glitter, shells, rickrack, etc.)
- glue

My Own Treasure Box

Explain: *Dilly often carries around a backpack filled with special things she likes to use. Inside you might find Dilly's notebook and pencil so she can write down things she investigates. Today you are going to decorate a box to fill with things that are special to you. Then you will share your treasures with family members or friends.*

- Provide your child with a box and lid such as a shoe box. Have your child label the box with his or her name by writing or using letter stickers. Your child can use a name card as a model if needed. Offer help if your child asks. Then suggest that your child decorate the box using a variety of art materials.
- Tell your child to put anything inside the treasure box that is special to him or her, such as small toys, photographs, a book, or a movie.
- Ask your child to share the contents of the box. Explain: *When you share things that are special to you, your family and friends can discover a lot about you and what you like. What special things did you put in your box that you want to share with me?*
- Encourage your child to describe each item and tell how it is used and why it is liked so much.



Your child experiments with shadows and gets the whole family involved in playing "Shadow Tag."

Materials

- bright light source
- white paper
- crayons or markers
- construction paper
- scissors
- drinking straws
- tape

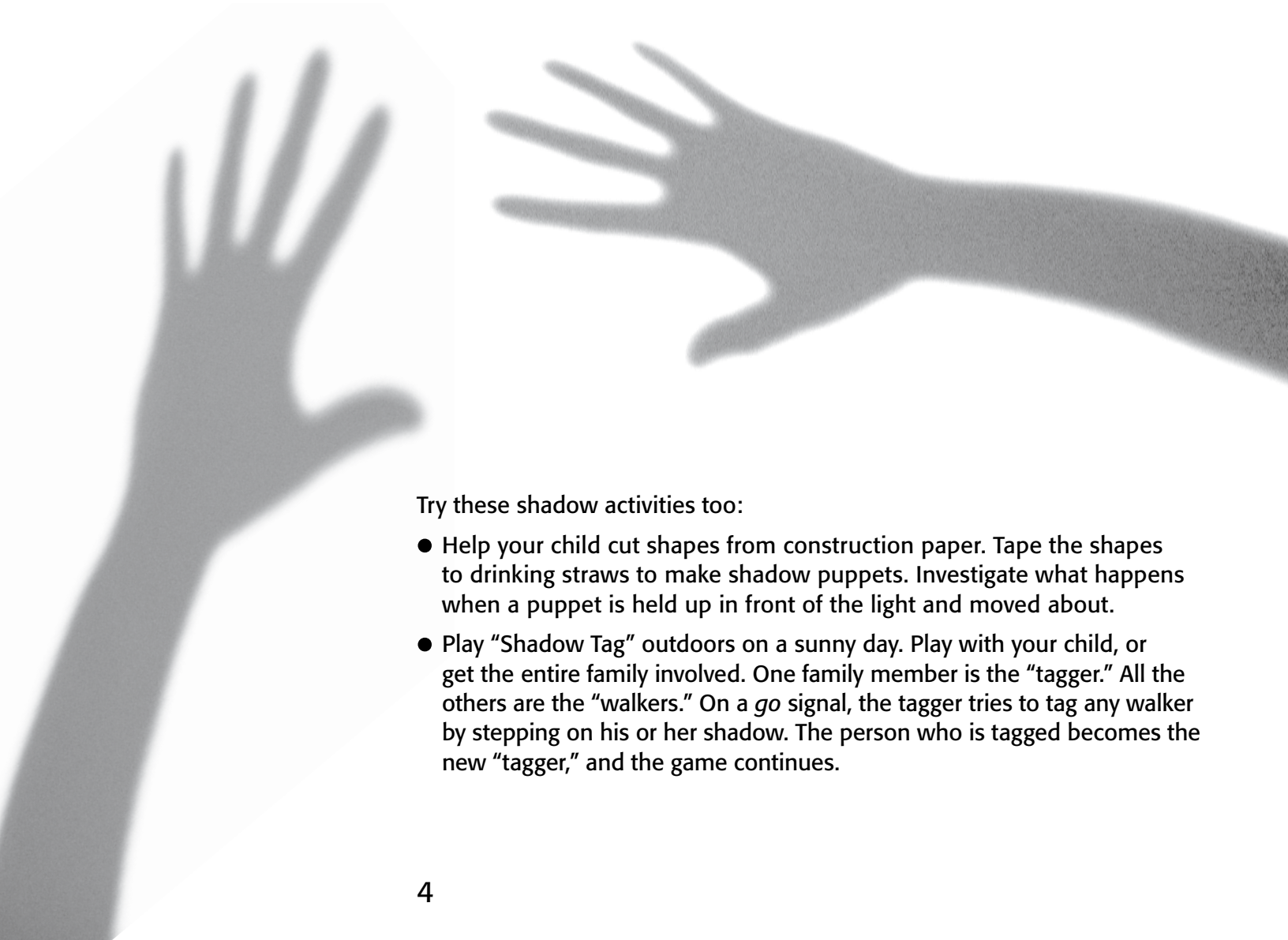
Me and My Shadow

Explain: *One thing that is special about you is that you have your very own shadow. All the InvestiGators look forward to sunny days when they can make their shadows move in different ways. They like to chase each other's shadows too.*

Demonstrate playing with shadows using your hands and a bright light. Show how each time you change your hand position, your shadow does the same. Invite your child to move both hands in the light so the shadows fall on a wall.

Your child can investigate what happens when he or she moves closer or farther from the wall. Ask: *What do you see? How does your shadow change?*

Tape white paper to the wall. Trace your child's hand shadow. Ask your child to trace yours. Show what happens when you hold your hand at different distances from the paper. Ask: *How can you make your shadow smaller? bigger?*



Try these shadow activities too:

- Help your child cut shapes from construction paper. Tape the shapes to drinking straws to make shadow puppets. Investigate what happens when a puppet is held up in front of the light and moved about.
- Play "Shadow Tag" outdoors on a sunny day. Play with your child, or get the entire family involved. One family member is the "tagger." All the others are the "walkers." On a *go* signal, the tagger tries to tag any walker by stepping on his or her shadow. The person who is tagged becomes the new "tagger," and the game continues.

**Science/Oral Language/
Creative Arts/Fine Motor
Skills**

Your child learns about reflections using mirrors and then draws a self-portrait using his or her reflection as a model.

Materials

- unbreakable hand mirror
- [Mirror, Mirror Activity Sheet](#)
- crayons or markers



Mirror, Mirror

Tell your child: *Rosalita Sausalita uses a mirror when she practices her dance steps. She can see herself dancing. This helps her to know how she is moving.* Provide your child with a hand mirror. Have your child look in the mirror to examine facial features, make faces, and change expressions to show happy, sad, excited, and mad. Explain: *When you look in a mirror, you see a copy of yourself. This is called a "reflection."* Invite your child to tell what is seen in his or her reflection.

- Have your child hold up one mirror and turn his or her back to a second mirror, such as one hanging on a wall or door. Show your child how to position the mirror so he or she can also see the one behind. Ask what is seen now.
- Take a walk around your home to investigate other reflective surfaces, checking windows, doors, tables, walls, and shiny things in kitchens and bathrooms. Have your child identify which surfaces are reflective and which are not. Ask: *How are these reflections different from the one in the mirror?*
- Ask your child to look again in the mirror and describe his or her face. Then your child can draw a self-portrait using the reflection as a model. Print a copy of the [Mirror, Mirror Activity Sheet](#) to use to make the drawing inside the frame.

**Social and Emotional/
Dramatic Play**

Your child can show off the many things he or she can do well through this game of pantomime and guessing.

I Can Do It!

Tell your child: *We are all good at doing something. Dilly is a good reader, and JT is good at playing the harmonica. Chuck Wood is great at building things while Rosalita is a computer whiz. Then there is Manny Salamander who is quite a soccer player while Bruno Buzzbee gives out good advice to everyone.* Discuss with your child many things he or she can do, including routines such as washing hands, brushing teeth, and picking out clothes; physical activities such as running, jumping, hopping, and playing games; and caring activities such as being a good friend, helping, loving, and taking care of a pet.

- Ask: *What are some things you can do now but could not do when you were a baby? What are some things you want to learn to do when you get older?*
- Invite your child to choose an activity he or she can do well and act it out for you and other family members to guess. After pantomiming, the child can ask: *What do I do well?* Once the activity is identified, ask another family member to take a turn before your child tries again.

Your child will discover just how unique fingerprints are, especially when they can be turned into art creations.

Materials

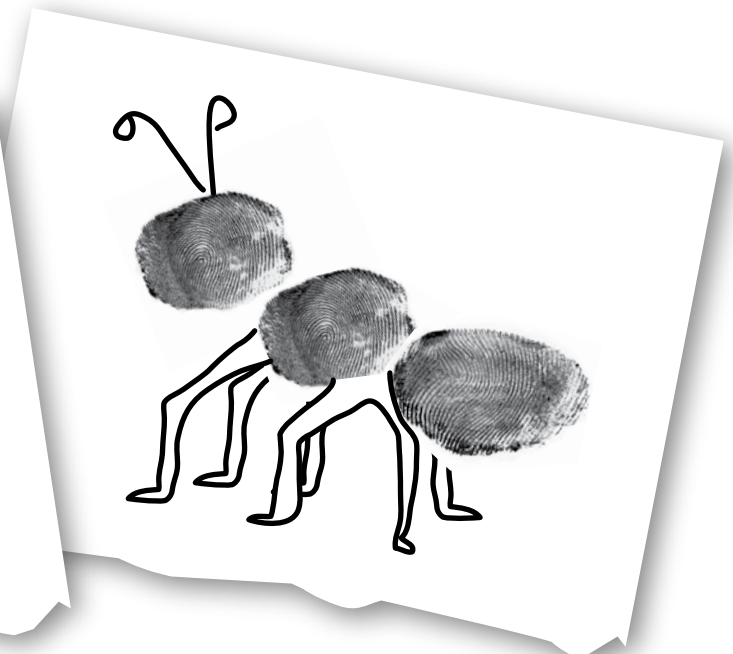
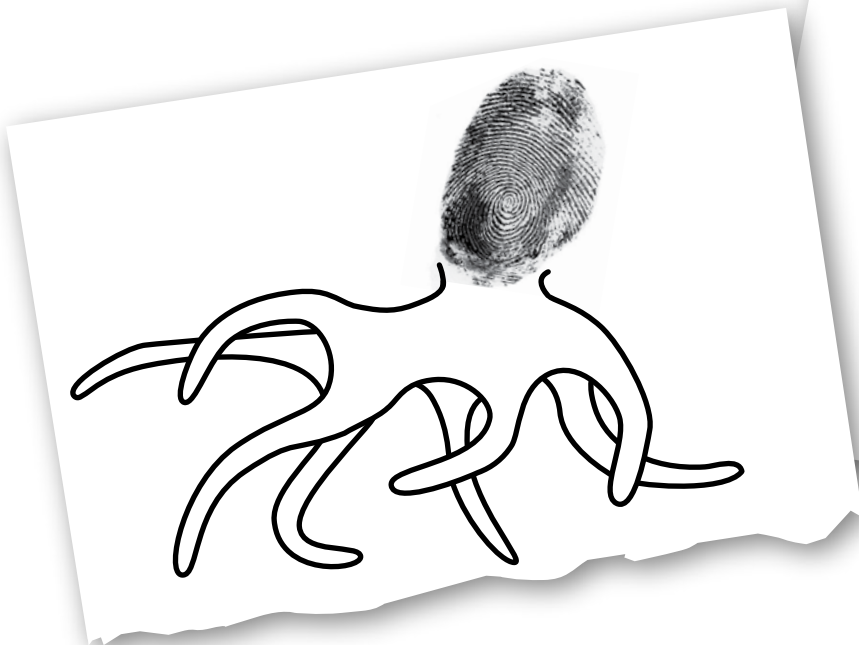
- stamp pad
- white art paper
- magnifying lens
- fine-tip markers

Fingerprint Critters



Remind your child: *You have been learning how there are things about you that make you special and not like anyone else. Can you name some of these things?* Invite your child to name things that make him or her one of a kind. Then tell your child there is something else that nobody else has—special fingerprints! Explain: *Your fingerprints identify who you are. No two people's prints are exactly the same. The prints made by each of your fingers are different too!* Tell your child that sometimes Dilly uses a magnifying lens to investigate things up close. Your child will make a set of fingerprints and then use a magnifying lens to look at the prints up close.

- Provide a stamp pad and white paper for your child to make prints of different fingers. Then use a magnifying lens to examine them closely. Make prints of your own to share to show the differences.
- Show your child how to turn fingerprints into little critters by adding details with a fine-tip marker. The prints can easily become a sun or the bodies for a cat, dog, fish, rabbit, octopus, or butterfly. Show children how to stamp two prints for the body of a spider and add eight legs or three prints for an ant with six legs. Several little prints in a row become a caterpillar.



Note: You might want to use fingerprints to create IDs for each of your children. Place a photo of each child on an index card. Write the child's name and have him or her make a fingerprint on the card. Add pertinent information such as home address, telephone number, name of parent or guardian, and name of school. Laminate the cards, and keep them in a safe place.

Focus on special birthday traditions to do some problem solving with your young mathematician.

Materials

- 9 rectangles cut from colored construction paper
- 3 stuffed animals or dolls
- modeling clay
- 12 birthday candles
- [Happy Birthday! Activity Sheet](#)
- crayons or markers
- scissors
- glue

Happy Birthday!

Use a birthday focus to teach your child about sharing. Begin by singing together the “Happy Birthday” song. In place of someone’s name, sing *us*. Remind your child: *Birthdays are special days when we celebrate the day we were born. Everyone has a birthday!* Tell children that when one of the InvestiGators has a birthday, they all celebrate with a little party. Encourage your child to recall a memorable birthday. Talk about special family traditions like singing, having a birthday cake, blowing out candles, wearing party hats, and receiving gifts. Say: *The activities we will do today are all about birthdays.*

- Share a birthday-themed story with your child. Some books to look for in your local library are *A Chair for My Mother* by Vera B. Williams, *Happy Birthday, Moon* by Frank Asch, or *Happy Birthday to You!* by Dr. Seuss.
- Have your child gather three stuffed animals or dolls. Say: *Let’s pretend each one has a birthday today.* Show your child three colored rectangles cut from construction paper. Tell your child to pretend these are birthday gifts and that each stuffed animal or doll will get the same number of gifts. Ask: *How many toys do you see? How many gifts do you see? How many gifts do you think each one will get?* Encourage your child to guess. Then show how to check by giving each stuffed toy a gift one at a time until they are gone. Repeat the procedure using six and then nine gifts.
- Give your child modeling clay to form three small cakes, one for each stuffed animal or doll. Provide 12 birthday candles. Tell your child to figure out how many candles to use so each cake has the same amount. After the candles have been inserted, ask your child to count the candles in each cake to verify. Ask: *How old is everyone today?*
- Print a copy of the [Happy Birthday! Activity Sheet](#). Ask your child to figure out how many candles will go on each cake by coloring and cutting out the candles and then gluing them on the cakes.

All Sorts of Clothing

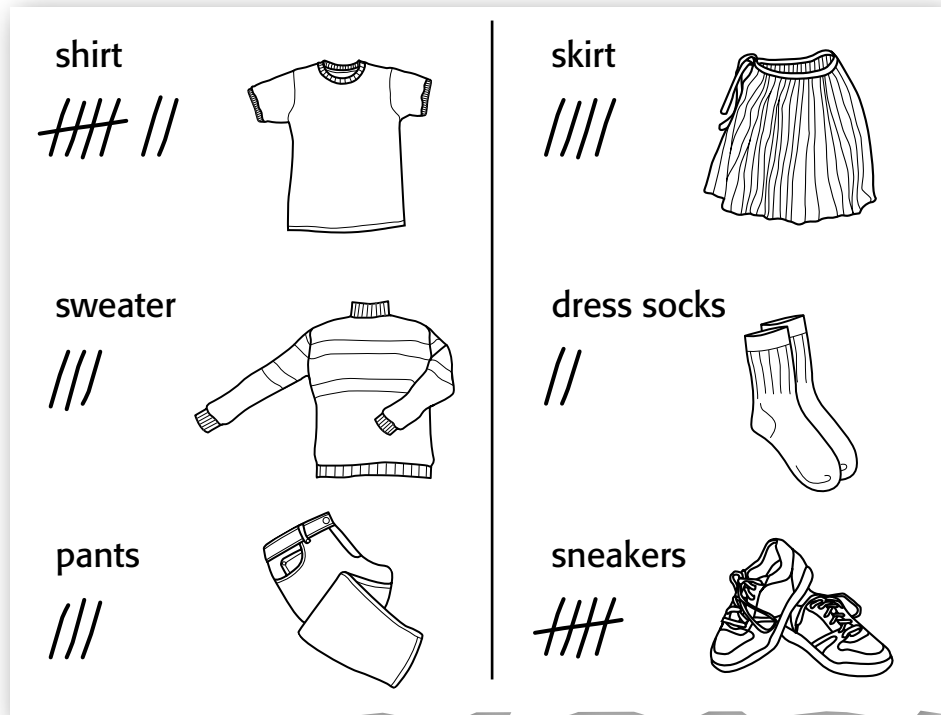
Your child will notice different types of clothing by sorting clothing in drawers and recording what he or she wears for the week.

Materials

- drawing paper
- marker

Engage your child in an activity that helps him or her recognize different kinds of clothing while learning basic math concepts. Say: *If you were visiting Dilly's World, you would notice the clothes the characters wear. Dilly loves her sandals while Rosalita wears special shoes for dancing. And did you notice that Bruno Buzzbee wears four sneakers! JT has many different T-shirts from places around the world. What kind of clothes do you think Chuck Wood will have on? (shorts, shirt, a superhero cape, his special belt with tools in it). Now let's talk about the clothing you are wearing today. Then I will help you sort your clothing in drawers.*

- Ask your child to name the different kinds of clothing he or she is wearing.
- Use your child's words to begin a chart on paper. Form columns on the chart, and head each column with a clothing word. Add the names of other types of clothing on the chart too.
- Point to each word on the chart. Read the word and ask: *Did you wear a shirt today?* If yes, then have your child make a mark under the clothing name. Continue with the next article of clothing.
- Your chart might look something like this:



- Help your child arrange the clothing in his or her drawers or closet by type. Put all of the shirts, pants, socks, and so on together.
- Keep the clothing chart for a week. Each day ask your child to name the types of clothing he or she is wearing and mark the chart. At the end of the week, have your child determine what was worn the most during the week.

Oral Language/Social and Emotional

See if your child can recognize family voices, including his or her own voice.

Materials

- tape recorder and tape

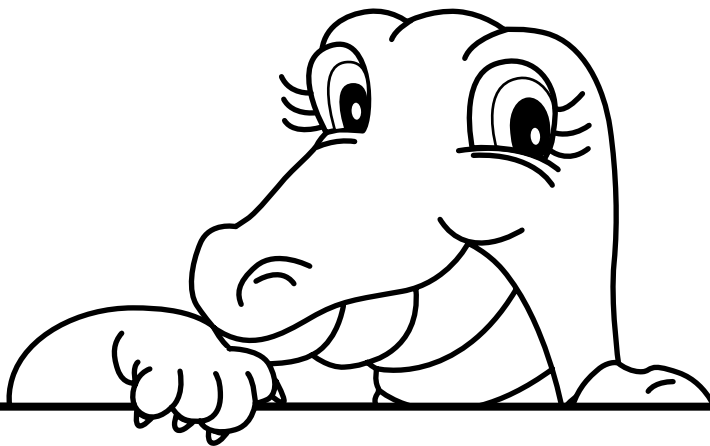
Is It Me?

Beforehand make available a tape recorder. Ask your child and each family member to talk about himself or herself without identifying a name. Don't reveal the order to anyone. Try to make the recordings where no one else can hear. Record on tape what each person says. Once the tape is completed, say to your child: *Once Manny Salamander used a tape recorder to record himself rapping and rhyming. He played the recording to hear how he sounded. Our family used a tape recorder too to record our voices. Let's hear how everyone sounds.*

- Play the tape for your child. Begin by talking about how special each person's voice is. Say: *As we get to know family and friends more and more, we can tell who someone is just by hearing his or her voice.*
- Play the tape, pausing after each family member speaks to ask: *Who is speaking? How can you tell?* After your child guesses, have the speaker reveal himself or herself.



Name _____



My Name

Trace your name.
(Write child's name here.)

Write your name.

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Name _____

Mirror, Mirror

Look in the mirror. Can you see yourself?
Draw what you see.



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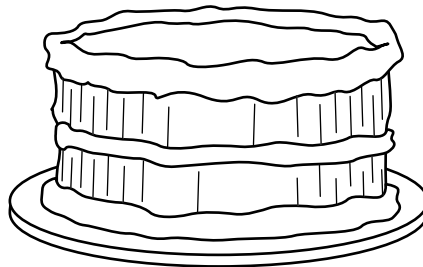
Name _____

Happy Birthday!

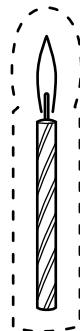
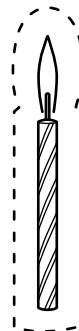
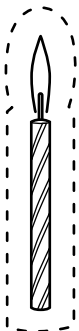
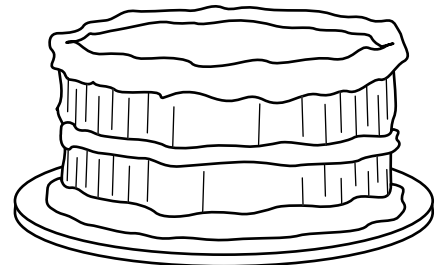
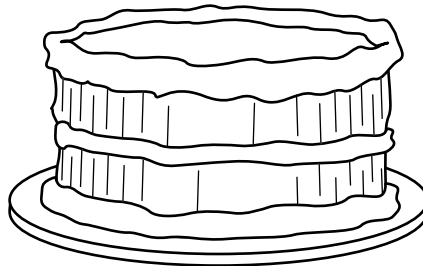
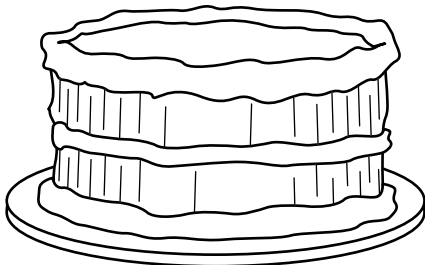
How many



for each



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