

Little Kit: or, The Industrious Flea Circus Girl

Book by Emily Arnold McCully

Unit study by Celia Hartmann and Wende

Bible/Character –

Being Industrious –

What does the word “industrious” mean? Someone or something that is industrious is hard working, diligent, and often times clever. The fleas were described in the professor’s advertisements as being “Industrious Fleas”. Do you think the fleas were industrious? They weren’t really industrious; they were made to appear industrious. Kit, however, was a truly industrious little girl. Have your child describe ways in which Kit was industrious. Kit had to be industrious in order to survive. As an orphan, there was nobody to feed, clothe, or shelter her. She had to make sure these things were taken care of. She sold bouquets of flowers and was quick to take on the job as the circus helper. All of Kit’s friends thought of her as an “excellent worker”. Ask your child if he/she is an “excellent worker”. In what ways could your child be more industrious? You may choose to use Ecclesiastes 9:10 for copywork:

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;”

→ Complete Ecclesiastes Copywork (choose between manuscript and cursive)

→ Complete Being Industrious Shutterfold

Deception –

While Kit did not come out and say that she was a boy, she let the professor believe that she was. And the professor deceived Kit into believing that his “artists” were famous people, not a bunch of fleas. There was an orphan in the Bible, Esther, who also pretended to be someone she wasn’t. Her uncle Mordecai heard that the King was looking for a new Queen, having a contest of sorts, and thought Esther had a chance of being chosen. But Esther was told to keep her Jewish origin a secret. Read about Esther to find out what happens! Ask your child if there are times when it is ok to deceive.

Lies and/or deceit hurt the people who tell them, the people who hear them, and the people about whom they are told. They make people think wrong things, and

then act in wrong ways because of what they think is true. If you are trying on purpose to make someone believe what is not true, you are lying. You are better to say nothing at all than to lie or deceive.

Ephesians 4:25 says:

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.

→ Ephesians Copywork Fold (both manuscript and cursive)

→ Deceptive Orphans Venn

Freedom -

Kit missed the freedom of living in the alley, as miserable as it was, and she felt for the fleas' lack of freedom too. Ask your child what he thinks freedom means. Some answers may be eating as much candy as he wants, or staying awake as long as he wants. Freedom is the ability to do what one wants as long as it does not hurt the person or property of another. God gives us freewill. The Ten Commandments tell us to give up wrongs, not rights. God's system is one of freedom and liberty, not bondage.

Kit had more freedom living in the alley than she did with the tyrannical Professor Malfetta. She could exercise her natural rights in the streets, including life, liberty, pursuit of happiness, freedom of speech, freedom to learn, freedom to travel, etc. Anytime a right is turned into a privilege, there is bondage. Professor Malfetta kept the fleas, and Kit, in bondage. He limited their food and their movement. He treated them harshly. What does the Bible say about freedom?

II Corinthians 3:17 says: Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

→ Freedom vs. Bondage Tab Book

Social Studies –

Orphans –

Little Kit was an orphan. An orphan is a child whose parents are both dead. Sometimes, a child will have family or friends that are willing to take care of him or her, but sometimes there is nobody willing or able. An orphan may then live on the streets, getting food and shelter any way possible, or he may be put in an orphanage, which is an institution for the care of orphaned or abandoned children. Throughout history, people have treated orphans harshly. Throughout the Scriptures, God shows his perpetual concern for orphans.

Exodus 22:22-23–

Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry;

Proverbs 23:10-11 –

Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

London, England –

This story takes place in England. Have your child locate England on a world map, in the continent of Europe. England is part of the British Isles, which also includes Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. What body of water is to the west of England? What body of water is to the east of England? What channel separates England from France? Locate London, England's capital, and also the most populated city in Europe. England is very industrialized, with oil production and car manufacturing being important to England's economy. Famous English landmarks are the London Tower and the London Bridge, and Big Ben.

→ Complete England Shutterfold

→ Complete England Flag Simple Fold

Mid-1800's –

This story takes place during the mid-1800's, called the Victorian Period. The period is named after Victoria, who became the Queen of England in 1837 at the age of 18 when her uncle, William IV died. She married her first cousin, Albert. Queen Victoria was a very influential figure in history. During the Victorian age, there were basically two classes of people, the very wealthy and the very poor. This time period came right after the Industrial Revolution in England, when machines started doing the work of people, putting many out of work. Many men,

women, and children had no option but to work in the factories for very little money and in extremely poor conditions. Poor children, especially, were treated very harshly, forced into workhouses or having no other option but to live on the streets. This, compounded with famines and wars, put a lot of stress on the English economy. The Victorian Age lasted until 1901. To give your child a good glimpse of what life was like for poor orphans in Victorian England, you may want to read and/or watch the following titles:

The Little Princess by Frances Hodgson Burnett

→ Complete Little Princess Report Form

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens

→ Complete Oliver Twist Report Form

If desired, store the report form in the pocket provided.

→ Complete Victorian England Hexagon Fold

Flea Circus -

A flea circus was a sideshow attraction in which fleas were encouraged to perform circus acts within a small housing. The audience was provided with special lenses to watch the performances. The first flea circuses were advertised in 1833 in England, performed by watchmakers to demonstrate their metal working skills. The shows continued on as main carnival attractions until 1930, and some flea circuses continued on in very small venues in the United States as late as the 1960s.

The first step in starting a flea circus was finding the fleas. The species of flea used was the human flea due to its strength. Female fleas were believed to be better performers than male fleas. Because fleas only live for a short time, new fleas had to be constantly trained. Flea training involved first teaching fleas not to jump. This was accomplished by keeping them in a container with a lid. Then the fleas were trained to wear a thin gold wire or silk thread around their necks. This wire was attached to props such as carts that the fleas could move using their strong legs. Fleas were trained to play football or to look like they were juggling by putting flea repellants such as camphor on the balls. The fleas would instinctively kick the balls away and appear to be performing.

Historical reports describe the process of “training” fleas to play instruments. Fleas were glued to the floor of the flea circus enclosure, instruments were then glued to the fleas, and the enclosure was heated. As the fleas would fight to escape, they would appear as if they were playing musical instruments.

Some flea circuses may appear to use real fleas, but don't actually contain any fleas at all. Acts have been performed using a variety of electrical, magnetic, and mechanical devices. Loose fleas in the exhibit add credibility to the show.

→ Complete Flea Circus T-fold

Science –

Fleas –

A flea is a bloodsucking wingless insect, usually less than 1/16 of an inch long. It lives entirely on the blood of the host it calls home. Hosts include man and other mammals, and sometimes birds. What were the fleas in the story fed? Turn to the page where the professor is rolling up his sleeve. The professor would let the fleas feed off his blood daily. This was a common practice for flea circus owners. Fleas are found in all parts of the world. The female flea lays hundreds of small white eggs in the hair of a host. The eggs hatch into larva in about 2 – 12 days. The larvae have biting mouthpieces, which they use to eat organic debris for a couple days before they cocoon and enter pupa stage. An adult flea then emerges, usually within a week. Adult fleas have broad, flat bodies, short antennae, and piercing and sucking mouthparts. They have 6 long powerful legs that enable them to leap high into the air.

→ Complete Flea Graduated Book

→ Complete Flea Life Cycle and Flea Anatomy Books

Magnifying Glass –

People viewed the flea circus under a magnifying glass. A magnifying glass is made of a piece of solid curved glass called a lens. As rays of light pass through the lens they bend inward. The angle of the rays traveling into your eye causes the picture you see to appear larger. Have your child collect some things that he can see through, such as eye glasses, a drinking glass, an ice cube, etc. Hold each item in front of a book and discuss what is seen. The words look different because light

bends as it moves through any clear object. The amount of bend depends on the shape of the object. Get different sizes jars and fill them with water. The water in the jar makes a solid curved shape. Look at a book through the jar. The curved shape makes the words appear larger, in a process called magnification. If you have a pet, and a magnifying glass, look over your pet to see if you can find any fleas. Hopefully you don't!

→ Complete Magnifying Glass Flap Book

Language Arts –

Vocabulary –

Waif – a homeless, neglected wanderer

Ragtag – ragged people

Novelty – something new, strange, or unusual

Feats – notable acts or performances

Gentry – the upper middle class; people of good family or breeding

Bootblacks – people whose business is to shine boots and shoes

Illusion – seeing something different from the actual object due to misrepresentation

Gruel – a semi-liquid food made by boiling meal in water or milk

Charges – someone or something entrusted with one's care

Tenants – one who holds or possesses land under another;

Torment – intense bodily pain or mental anguish

Haughty – exhibiting great satisfaction with oneself and disdain for others

Airs – looks; appearances; demeanor

Skulking – moving about in a hidden way

Balmy – mild and soothing

Cronies – friends

Chortled – chuckled

Ragamuffin – a child wearing very ragged clothes

Plight – a condition, state, or circumstance, usually of a dangerous or complicated nature

→ Complete Vocabulary Word Search Simple Fold

Homophones –

A homophone is a word identical with another in pronunciation but differing in spelling and meaning. Here is an example from this story:

Feat – “They perform feats you will scarcely believe.”

Feet – “It was the first time Kit had gone anywhere except on her own two feet.”

Ask your child to think of other examples. (Flea/flee, be/bee, ant/aunt, etc.)

→ Complete Homophones Simple Fold

Literary Terms (Antagonist)-

An antagonist is the person or thing opposing the protagonist or hero of the story. When this is a person, he is often called the villain. Can your child pick out the antagonist in *Little Kit*? It was the nasty Professor Malfetta.

→ Complete Antagonist Side by Side Fold

Comma Usage –

Commas have many different uses. One way they are used is to separate individual words, phrases, or clauses in a series. A series must contain at least three items. If the words in a series are connected with *or*, *nor*, or *and*, no comma is to be used. There are a few examples of this use of commas in *Little Kit*.

Example 1:

The fleas frantically waltzed, fired a cannon, dueled, walked a tightrope, marched, played the instruments of an orchestra, pulled a battleship, and raced coaches.

Have your child look at the sentence and point out the commas. Explain how they separate each phrase/clause in the series.

Example 2:

She swept, took tickets, scrubbed the glass, and brushed the professor's coat and hat.

Have your child look at the sentence and point out the commas. Explain how they separate each phrase/clause in the series. Point out that there are no commas between coat and hat because it is not a complete series.

Example 3:

Kit ran to whisper the good news to the fleas: Whit, Myrtle, Violet, and the others she had named.

Have your child look at the sentence and point out the commas. Explain how they separate each name in the series.

Example 4:

"And there are lovely animals...sheep and cows, horses and pigs, chickens, dogs and cats."

Have your child look at the sentence and point out the commas. Explain how they separate each animal in the series, but they do not separate the animals connected with the word *and*.

→ Complete Comma Usage Simple Fold

Speaker Tags –

An author will use what is called a speaker tag to let the reader know who is talking. In the following sentence, "I'm going to the store," said Mom, the speaker tag is "said Mom." If the sentence is a question, for example "Do you want to go with me?" she asked, the speaker tag is "she asked." A story would get pretty boring if we used the same speaker tags over and over. So an author will vary the speaker tags. Some examples might be "he shouted" or "she whispered" or "Ben yelled." Speaker tags can not only tell us who is doing the talking, but also describe how the person is talking. This helps the reader to imagine the story more accurately and help them to properly read the story aloud. Notice in this story that author Emily Arnold McCully uses a variety of speaker tags. Have your child make a list of the various speaker tags throughout the story. They included: shouted; went on; blurted; murmured; crying; announced; warned; remarked; exclaimed; answered; cried; admitted; whispered; snarled; chortled; told; growled; Your older writer may want to make a notebook page (writer's tools) of words to use instead of "said"; the next time you find too many "said's" in his writing, have him refer to

his notebook and decide on some new words to use.

added	confessed	interrupted	parroted	taunted
answered	confided	jabbed	pronounced	teased
advised	complained	jived	protested	wailed
barked	demanded	jeered	quipped	whimpered
babbled	droned	leered	reported	yammered
blathered	gaspd	moaned	retorted	yelled
blurtd	growled	mumbled	scolded	yapped
begged	howled	muttered	scoffed	
cajoled	interjected	objected	simpered	

→ Complete Speaker Tag Mini-book

Math

Dozens –

The fleas performed a dozen shows a day. How many shows in two days? How many shows in a week? How many shows in a month? In a year? Practice 12's times tables.

Flea Word Problems –

Fleas could pull four hundred times their weight.

How much would a flea have to weigh to pull 400 ounces? ($400,400=1$ ounce)

How much weight could a flea weighing $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce pull? ($400 \times .25 = 100$ ounces)

How much weight could 5 fleas, weighing $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce each, pull? ($5 \times .25 = 1.25$; $400 \times 1.25 = 500$ ounces)

Fleas can easily jump 100 times their own height and 150 times their own length.

How tall is a flea that can jump 8 inches high? ($8,100=.08$ inches)

How tall is a flea that can jump 7 inches high? ($7,100=.07$ inches)

How long is a flea that can jump a distance of 12 inches? ($12,150=.08$ inches)

How long is a flea that can jump a distance of 15 inches? ($15,150=.10$ inches)

If a six-foot tall man had the same leg power as a flea, how high could he jump?
($6 \times 100 = 600$ feet)

A flea can live up to 2000 days. How many years is that? Round off to nearest half year. ($2000 \div 365 = 5.5$ years)

Have your child make up their own word problems.

Art –

Watercolors –

The artwork in this book was done using watercolors on watercolor paper with pastel highlights. Have your child paint a picture with watercolors, and try to mix the colors to resemble those in the story. The author especially uses a lot of blues, greens, and oranges.

Make a Circus Poster –

When a circus or act came to town, the promoter would often display large posters to announce the shows. Throughout the story we can see parts of the Flea Circus poster. Ask your child to describe what kind of information should be included on the poster. The most important things to include are what, where, and when. The promoter would also be wise to include bright colors and/or interesting pictures to catch your eye. Have your child design a Flea Circus poster. Use it as a cover for your lapbook.

Clothing Design –

With your child, examine the pictures of the dressed fleas. They wore intricate costumes with all kinds of fancy trimmings. Can you imagine trying to dress something so tiny? They must have dressed the fleas while looking through a magnifying glass. Encourage your child to design tiny clothes to dress a tiny insect (could use plastic toy insect). Take a photo of your creations for your lapbook.

Showing Light –

Look at each of the candles throughout the story. Examine how McCully showed the illumination, with tiny speckles of white surrounding the flame. Practice drawing a candle and show its illumination.

Flea Jokes –

Your child may enjoy some flea jokes!

What did one flea say to the other when they came out of the movies? “Shall we walk, or take a dog?”

Why did the little dog almost itch to death? He was so gentle, he wouldn’t hurt a flea.

What do you call a rabbit with fleas? Bugs Bunny.

What did the hungry flea say to his friend? Let’s go out for a bite.

How do you start a flea market? You start from scratch!

What is the difference between a dog and a flea? Dogs can have fleas but fleas can’t have dogs!

Why was the mother flea so upset? All her children were going to the dogs!

Did you hear about the dog that went to the flea circus? He stole the show!

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Commas are used to _____
individual words, phrases, or clauses in a series.

A series must contain at least _____ items.

If the words in a series are connected with
_____, _____, or _____, no comma is to be used.

In the following sentences, insert commas where they belong.

Example 1:

The fleas frantically waltzed fired a cannon dueled walked a tightrope marched played the instruments of an orchestra pulled a battleship and raced coaches.

Example 2:

She swept took tickets scrubbed the glass and brushed the professor's coat and hat.

Example 3:

Kit ran to whisper the good news to the fleas: Whit Myrtle Violet and the others she had named.

Example 4:

"And there are lovely animals...sheep and cows horses and pigs chickens dogs and cats."

Cut on solid lines. Valley fold on dotted line. Glue title graphic to cover.

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Wherefore putting away
lying, speak every man
truth with his
neighbor: for we are
members one of
another. Ephesians 4:25

Being
Honest

Wherefore putting away lying,
speak every man truth with his
neighbor: for we are members
one of another. Ephesians 4:25

Being
Honest

Cut on solid lines. Valley fold on dotted lines. Glue title graphic to cover.

Whatsoever thy
hand findeth to
do, do it with
thy might;
Ecclesiastes 9:10

Being
Industrious


Whatsoever thy hand
findeth to do, do it
with thy might;
Ecclesiastes 9:10

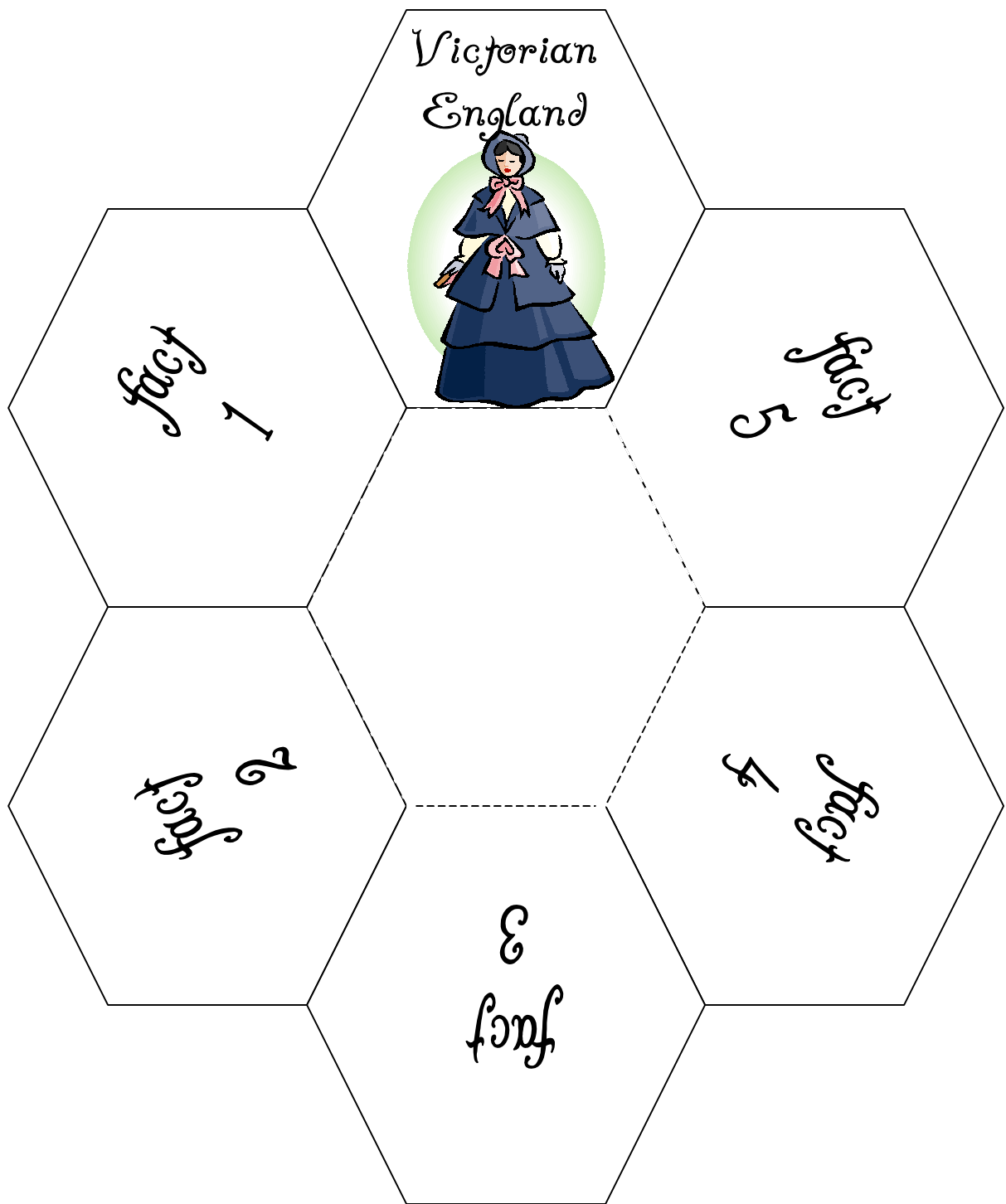
Being
Industrious

Cut on solid lines. Valley fold on dotted lines. Glue title graphic to cover.

Cut out as one piece on solid outside lines. Fold in half on dotted line, with text on the outside. Fold sides so cover ends up on top. Under tabs, write the characteristics of Esther, the characteristics of Kit, and then write what they had in common under "both".

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<i>Esther</i>	<i>Both</i>	<i>Kit</i>
		 <i>Deceptive</i> <i>Reckless</i>



Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines, ending with cover on top.

Under each flap, record a fact you learned about Victorian England.

Cut on solid lines.
Valley fold on dotted lines.

Choose one of the title
graphics and glue to cover.

Use other graphic to
decorate lapbook.

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What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

Flea Circus



**Flea
Circus**





FLEA

What do they eat?

What kind of body covering?

Where do they live?

How many legs?

Vertebrate or Invertebrate?

What kind of mouth?

Live Birth or Eggs?

Circle one:

Mammal

Bird

Fish

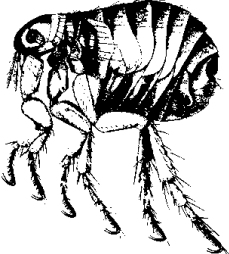
Insect

Reptile


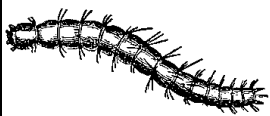
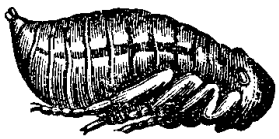
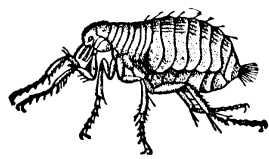
What kind of animal?

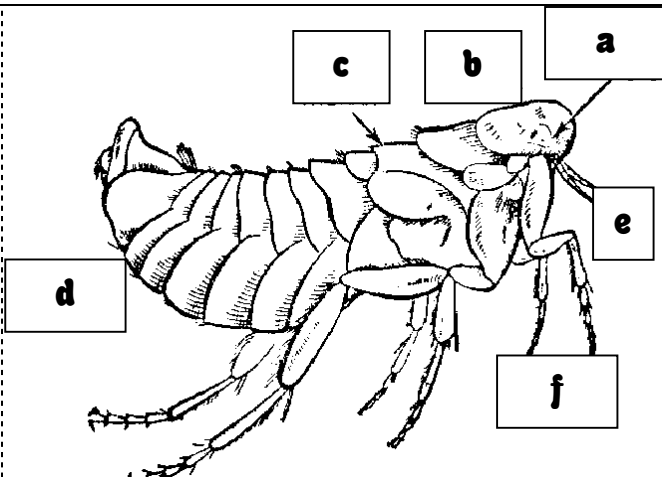
Cut on solid lines. Stack with smallest on top. Staple where marked.



Egg	Larva	Pupa	Adult
<h1>Lifecycle of a Flea</h1>			

Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines.
Glue pictures under correct flaps.

			
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>___ Abdomen</p> <p>___ Thorax</p> <p>___ Head</p> <p>___ Compound eye</p> <p>___ Mouthpiece</p> <p>___ Legs</p>	
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Cut on solid lines. Valley fold on dotted line.
Glue title graphic to cover.

Parts of a Flea

| B O N D A G E |

VS.

| **f**reedom

freedom

Describe Freedom:

List some ways Kit was free:

B O N D A G E

Describe Bondage:

List some ways Kit was in bondage:

Cut on solid lines. Stack with cover on top. Staple on left hand side.

Flea Jokes	Flea Jokes	Flea Jokes	Flea Jokes
What did one flea say to the other when they came out of the movies?	Why did the little dog almost itch to death?	What do you call a rabbit with fleas?	Why was the mother flea so upset?
Flea Jokes	Flea Jokes	Flea Jokes	Flea Jokes
What did the hungry flea say to his friend?	How do you start a flea market?	What is the difference between a dog and a flea?	Did you hear about the dog that went to the flea circus?

Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines. Write punch lines inside matchbooks.

Cut on solid lines.
Mountain fold on dotted lines.
Record answers under flaps.

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**WHO WAS
BUTTERBOTS
ANTAGONIST?**



**WHAT
IS AN
ANTAGONIST?**

**MY LIST
OF**

HOMOPHONES

Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines.

¿verdad, "snooping"
from my soap opera?

**How
Kit
was
Industrious**

**How
I
Am
Industrious**

Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines. Write definition under top flap. Describe how you and Kit are industrious under side flaps.

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<p> Գտնել նախնական և այլ բառ What can be </p>		<p> Գտնել բառ նախնական և բառ առաջին </p>
<p> Գտնել նախնական և նա What </p>		<p> Գտնել նախնական և նա What does the word mean? </p>
<div data-bbox="560 892 982 1354"> </div> <p>MAGNIFYING GLASS</p>		

Cut on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines. Record answers under flaps.

The Little Princess

Main Characters:

Setting:

Favorite Part Of The Story:

How Was Sara Similar To Little Kit?

List Ways Sara Was Industrious:

What Did You Think Of The Story?



Oliver Twist

Main Characters:

Setting:

Favorite Part Of The Story:

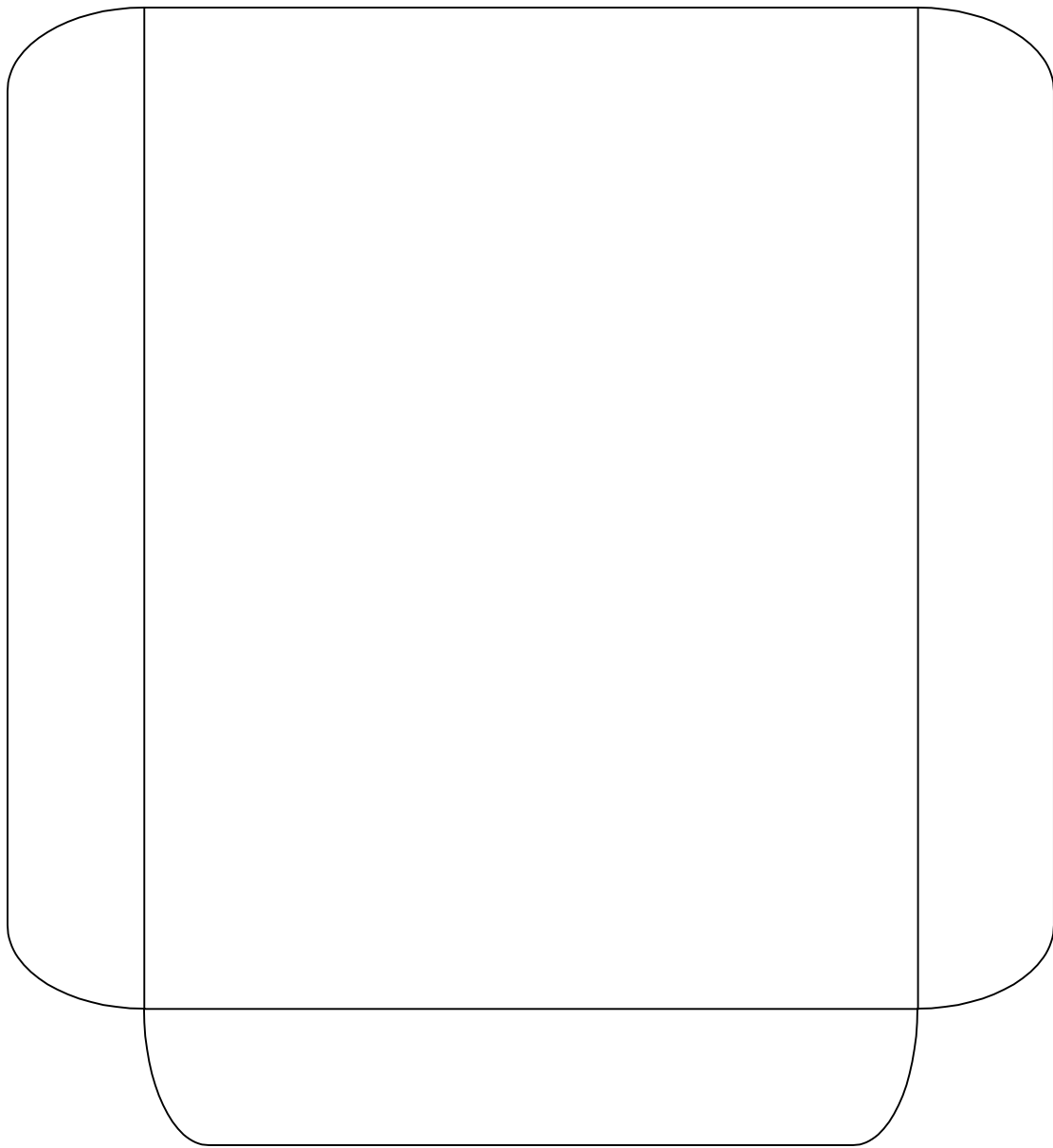
How Was Oliver Similar To Little Kit?

List Ways Oliver Was Industrious:

What Did You Think Of The Story?

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Cut pocket out as one piece. Fold under tabs and glue into lapbook.
Use to store book/movie reports. Draw your favorite scene from book/movie on pocket.

My list of
other ways to
say "said".

Speaker
Tags

Cut book on solid lines. Mountain fold on dotted lines.

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

VOCABULARY WORD SEARCH

Locate these words in the puzzle above:

Waif
 Ragtag
 Novelty
 Feats
 Gentry
 Bootblacks
 Illusion
 Gruel
 Charges
 Tenants
 Torment
 Haughty
 Airs
 Skulking
 Balmy
 Cronies
 Chortled
 Ragamuffin
 Plight

Cut on solid lines.

Valley fold on dotted line.

Cut out and glue title graphic to cover.

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