



OUR WORLD

A BALHAM LIBRARY • SPINE FESTIVAL
ANTHOLOGY



**For Balham Library
& all the superheroes who took part in SPINE Festival 2020.**



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About

SPINE Festival is a free festival focused on inspiring creativity which runs yearly in March for children, young people, and families across libraries in London boroughs. The initiative was developed by England's leading spoken word organisation Apples & Snakes in 1982. This year the theme was 'Our World' and children were invited to a range of activities including creating their own eco-superheroes and puppet making, to reflect on climate change and the wonders of our planet.

Safiya Kamaria Kinshasa is a British born Barbadian raised poet. She is a recipient of the Jerwood Arts | Apples & Snakes Poetry in Performance Programme 2020 and the New Voice in Poetry Prize. Her work is published in a range of journals and anthologies.

Helen Scully is an East London based artist who specialises in sculpture and illustration. Helen loves storytelling and believes that by sharing compelling stories we play an important role in caring for our world and each other.



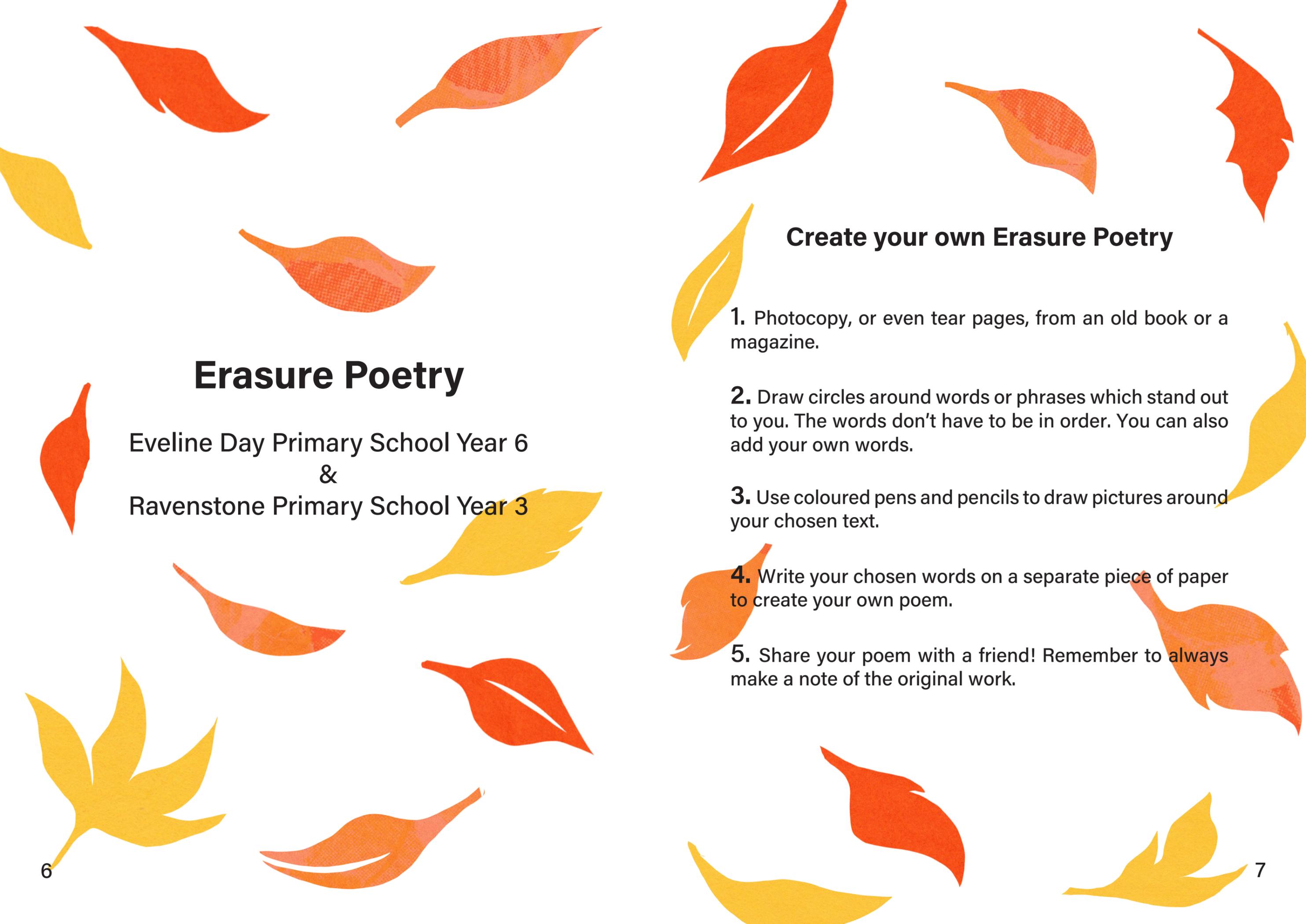
Editor's Note

As I edited this anthology, I was reminded of the extraordinary young minds who are determined to save our planet and how we have an obligation to demonstrate positive examples and provide nurturing spaces. Using the theme 'Our World' Helen and I planned exercises for weeks combining our skills in poetry and crafts. Our main priorities were to inspire participants to: delve into their imaginations, encourage them to explore their relationships with the environment, provide an equal space where everyone was given the opportunity to contribute, and document what emerged from the sessions without the pressure of creating a finished project. Little did we know, despite only having several short sessions (an average of 40 minutes each) over the course of two weeks we would end up with an awe-inspiring collection of poems and characters.

This anthology explores strange, extraordinary worlds where rainbows stroll through cities and football matches are played with monsters to stop pollution. It also provides a valuable lesson that everyone can contribute something special no matter how small; for example, in nursery eco-superhero sessions, a toddler (who was originally too shy to speak) proclaimed, 'girls need to be saved for the planet to heal!'

Thank you to Apples & Snakes for hosting the festival and giving me this life-changing opportunity to work with some of the best people ever. Thank you Balham Library, especially Lucinda, Felicity and Alex. Thank you to my side-kick Helen Scully for being the most amazing person to work with, your love and care helped to make this project a success. And, to all the amazing children and young adults who participated in SPINE Festival. When I grow up, I hope to be like you.

Safiya Kamaria Kinshasa, 2020



Erasure Poetry

Eveline Day Primary School Year 6
&
Ravenstone Primary School Year 3

Create your own Erasure Poetry

1. Photocopy, or even tear pages, from an old book or a magazine.
2. Draw circles around words or phrases which stand out to you. The words don't have to be in order. You can also add your own words.
3. Use coloured pens and pencils to draw pictures around your chosen text.
4. Write your chosen words on a separate piece of paper to create your own poem.
5. Share your poem with a friend! Remember to always make a note of the original work.

A boy went into the cave

He liked scrunching the mud

He is probably lost

But he is happy

Oceans can get lost

When they are dark

They forget they are damp

But they are happy

Storm, skimming tremendous

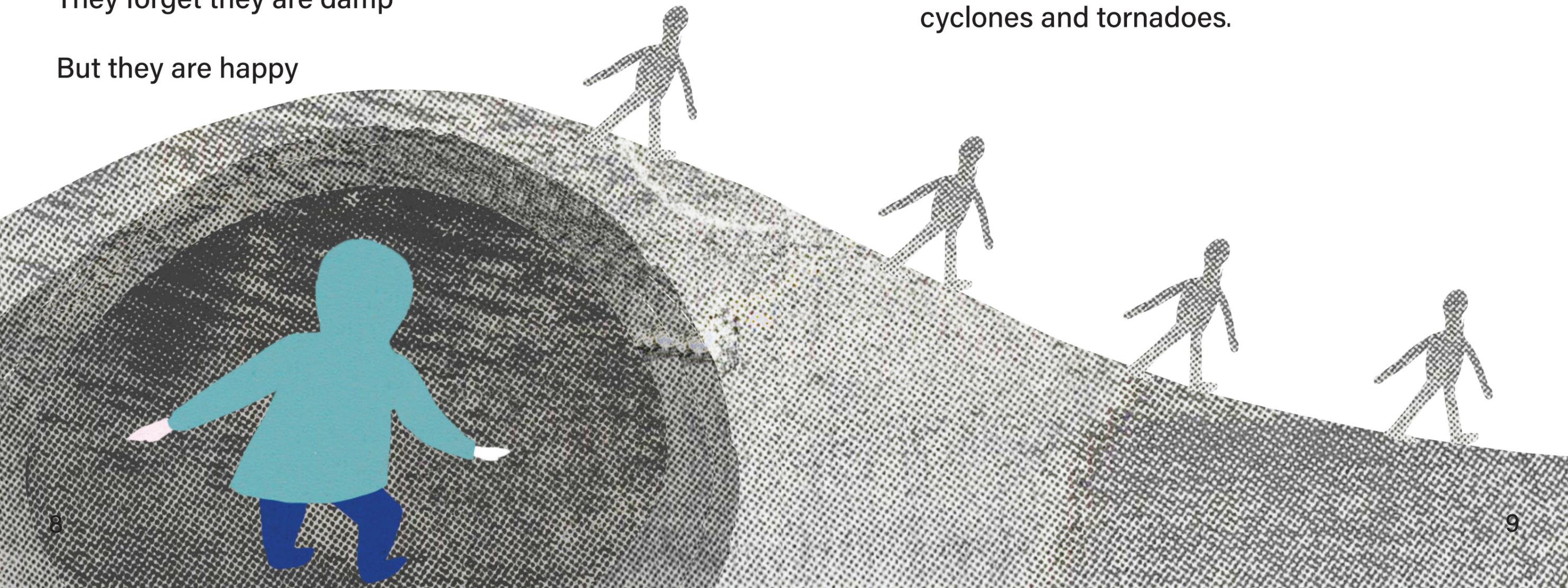
ghostly white, midnight

Cloud-men, frisking, shrieking

snow

thunder

cyclones and tornadoes.



A rainbow shines in the sky.

Skyscrapers are shouting,

People are talking, singing, laughing, sleeping...

mostly destroying.

Some people hold their breath.

Some people don't care.

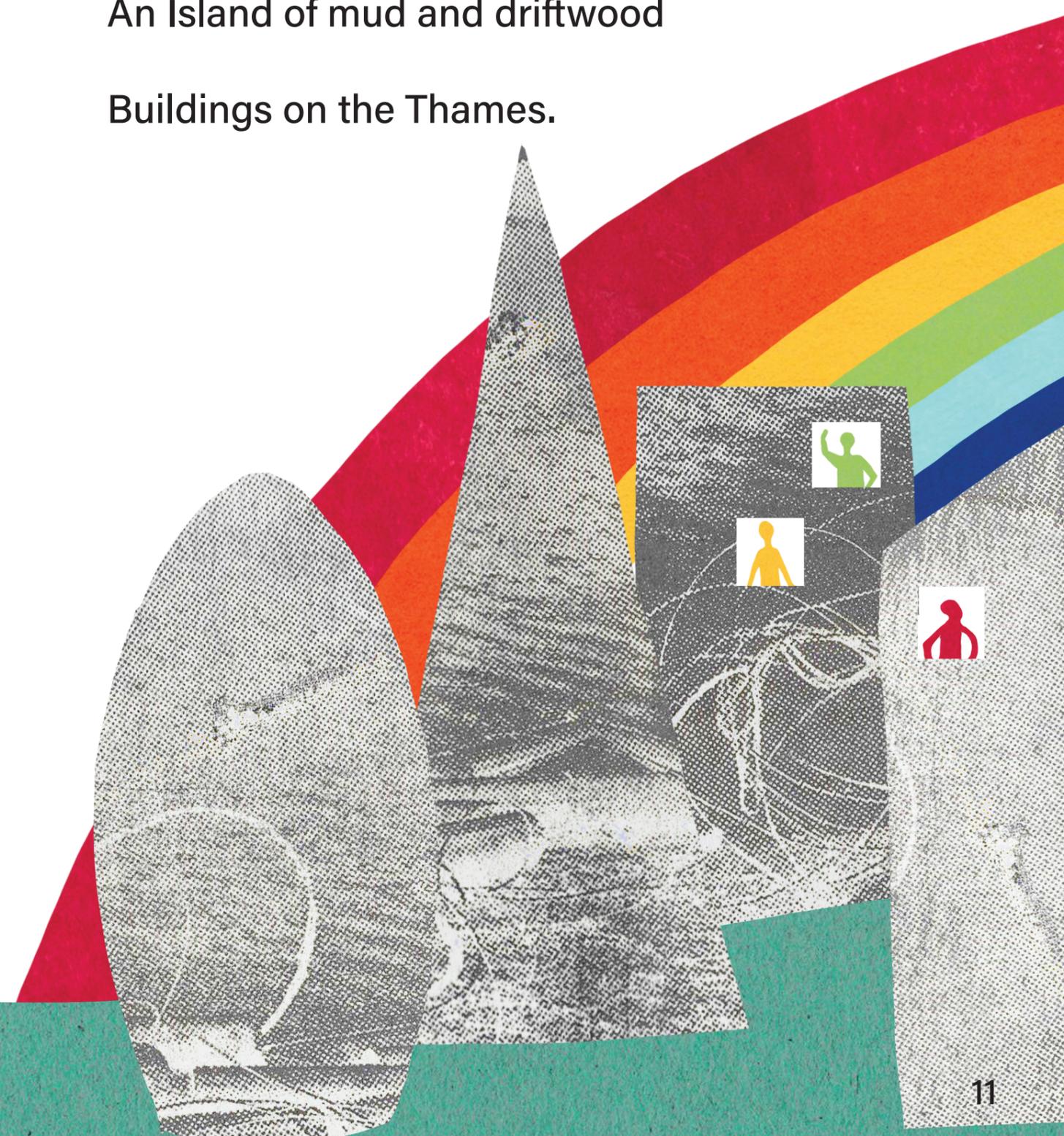
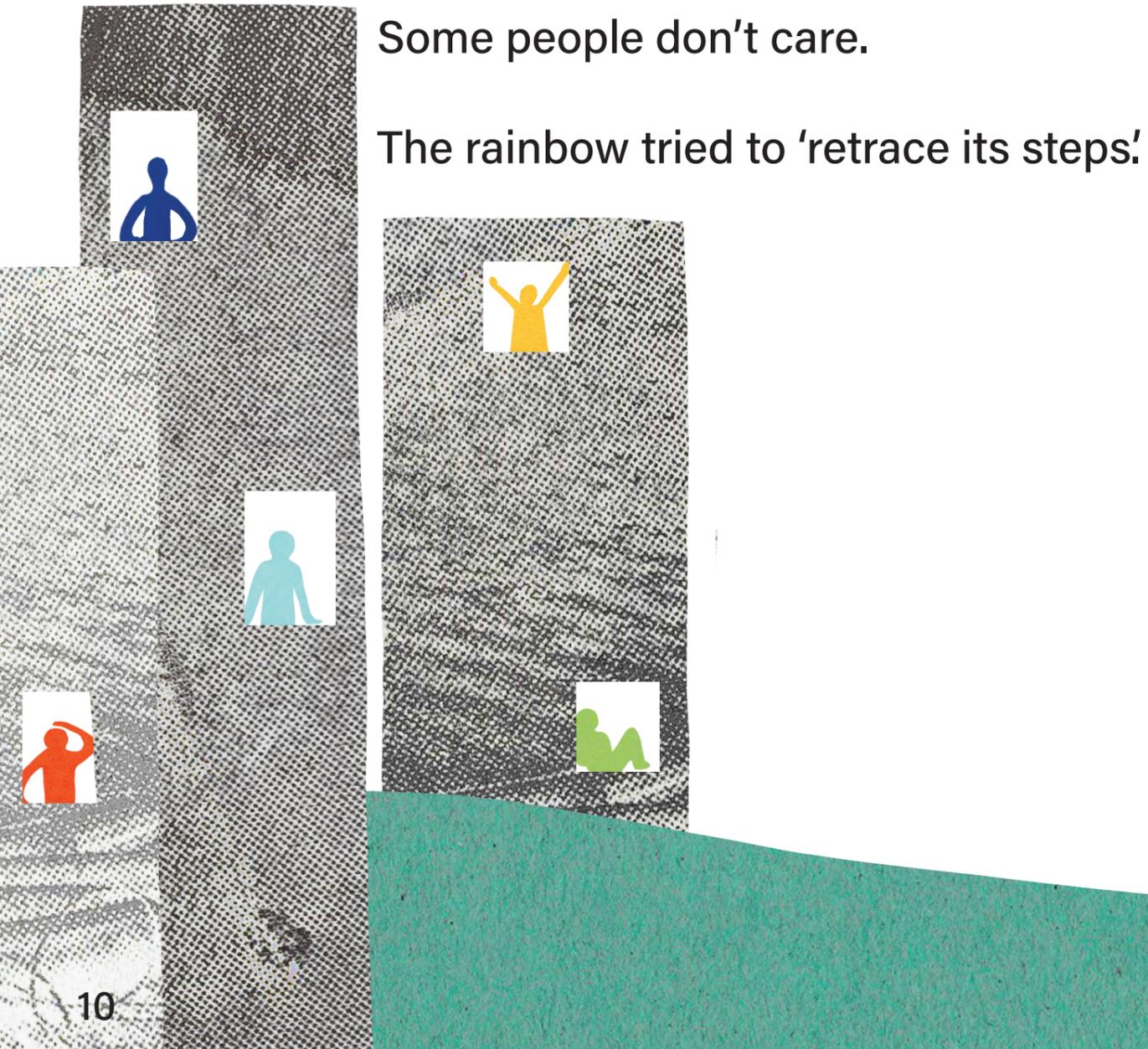
The rainbow tried to 'retrace its steps.'

Wet mud is summer,

Summer is also a mountain,

An Island of mud and driftwood

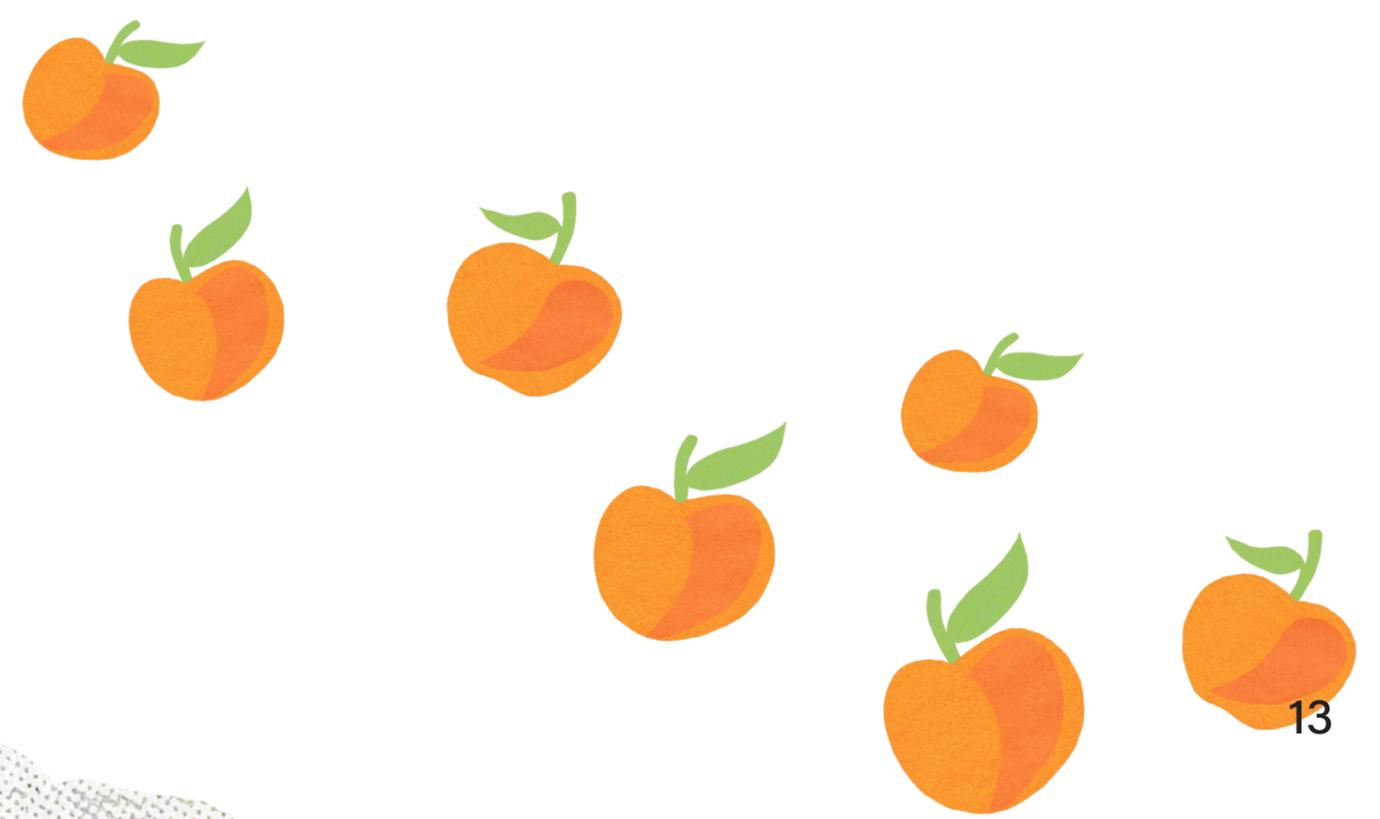
Buildings on the Thames.

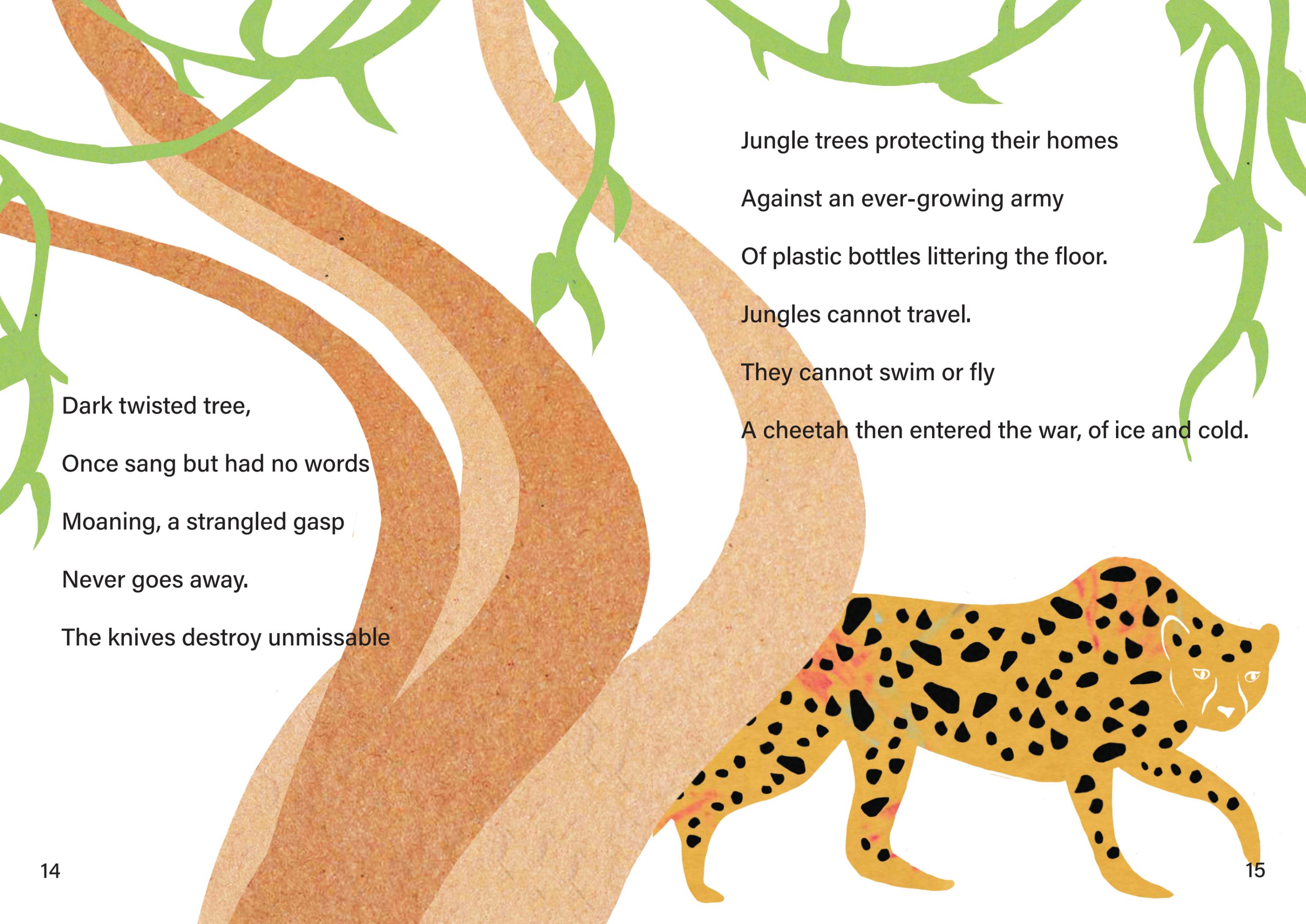




A giraffe can also be a bird.
 Its head spends a long time in the sky,
 so it must know how to be one.

down
 down hill
 down go the peaches
 like in the sky
 there can be oranges in the sky too
 imagine huge drums that sound like thunder
 bringing magic snowflakes
 and tornadoes into the city
 snowflakes and sunflowers are the same thing





Dark twisted tree,
Once sang but had no words
Moaning, a strangled gasp
Never goes away.
The knives destroy unmissable

Jungle trees protecting their homes
Against an ever-growing army
Of plastic bottles littering the floor.
Jungles cannot travel.
They cannot swim or fly
A cheetah then entered the war, of ice and cold.



The sun is a woman in a gold dress.
She is ignored,
because there is a man
in a grey suit next to her
throwing a tantrum.



We can bake bread on some floors
Some floors are so hot
Everyone can break bread
Everyone can eat.



Famous oceans are quite cold and hungry.

Like white cliffs.

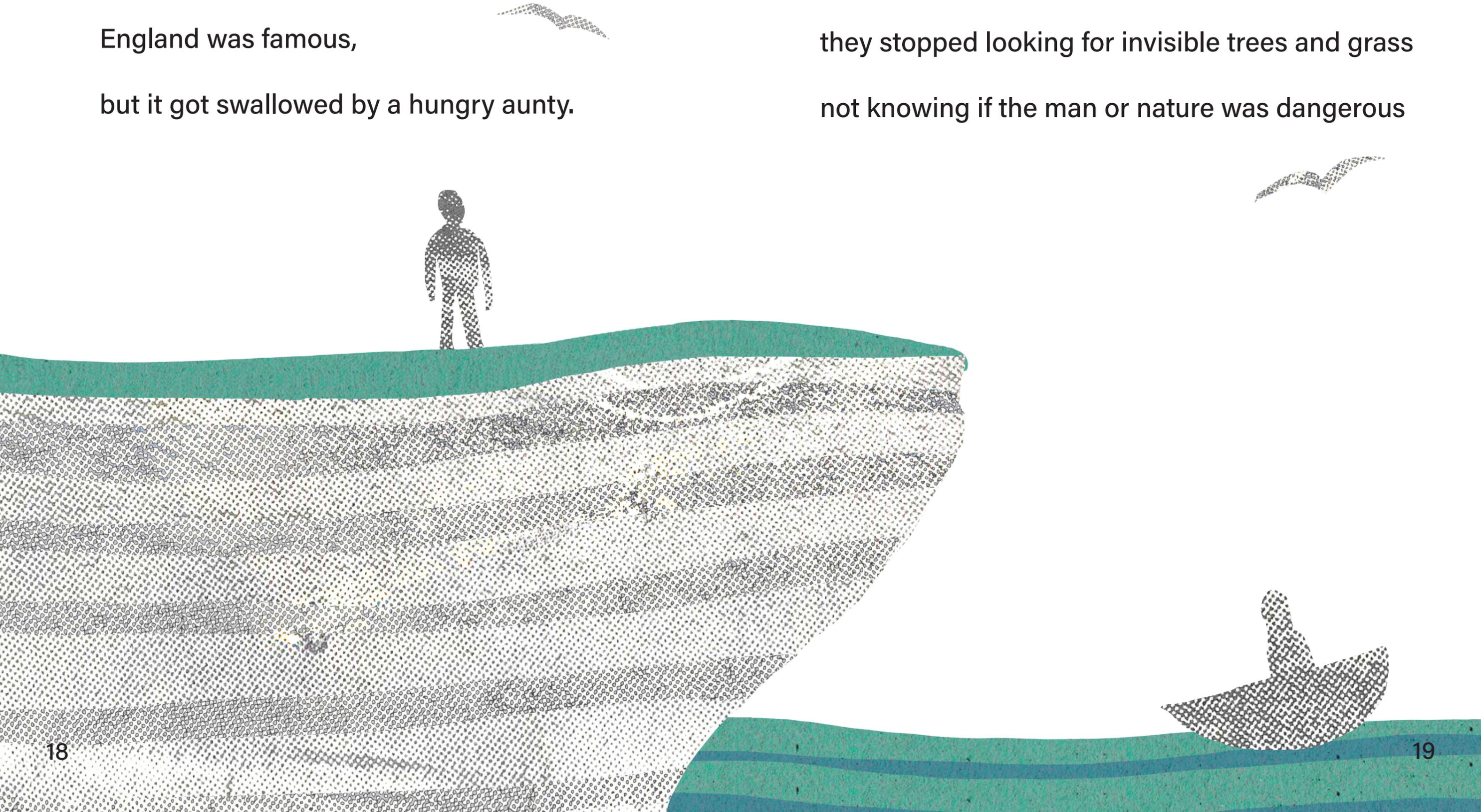
England was famous,

but it got swallowed by a hungry aunty.

desperate tides found a man

they stopped looking for invisible trees and grass

not knowing if the man or nature was dangerous



September's laughter was fairy liquorice blossoms

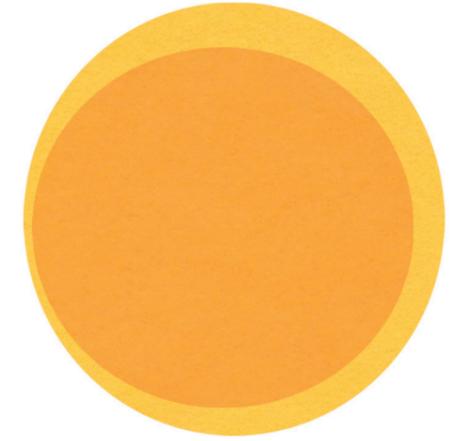
and bolts of sunshine

her voice became throaty like halloween

September became a shadow

Hollow Queen...

She wore an orange dress



Smartly dressed flowers

Their strange and mysterious grace

A mystery

Their ferocious intellect puzzling for a moment

They used to be pleasing and warm





The city was suspicious.
It desperately tried to retrace its steps.
The city was reported invisible.
All the people saw was a hand
Trying to grab the moon

Each day the earth spins
Each night the streets howl
Each day the earth spins
Each night the streets howl
Each day the earth spins
Each night the streets howl
Each day the earth spins
Each night the streets howl
Each day the earth spins
Each night the streets howl
Whether we are here or not



Eco Superheroes

by Rutherford House
&
Balham Children's Centre



Create your own Eco Superhero

- 1.** Decide who your Superhero is and give them a mission to protect the environment. For example, my hero is Charlie the tiger, Charlie's mission is to protect all the animals in the jungle.
- 2.** Choose a superpower for your superhero. Charlie has supersonic hearing, so he is first to know when danger is coming.
- 3.** Create a sidekick for your superhero. They could be an animal or person to help your hero save the day. Charlie's sidekick is a little girl called Jen, Jen always brings snacks so Charlie never gets hungry.
- 4.** Finally, give your superhero an archenemy. Charlie's archenemy is Chopper, an evil machine that wants to cut down all the trees in the jungle.

Apple-Man

Mission

To protect the natural world and help all the plants grow.

Superpowers

Apple-Man has special seeds which can make trees grow anywhere - even underwater!

Fun fact

Apple-Man can eat apples, but he prefers grapes.



Snail

Mission

To help everyone get outside and enjoy nature.

Superpowers

Snail has the power to make people slow down and spend more time in gardens and parks.

Sidekick

Snail's best friend is an old pair of trousers.



Space- Shipter

Mission

Space-Shipter is a shape shifter who lives on Nebula and fights for planet Earth to have cleaner air.

Archenemy

Slimy Globster - A giant made from slime, who only eats bogeys and loves pollution.

Superpower

Every weekend Space-Shipter plays football against Slimy Globster, if he wins the game Slimy Globster cannot pollute the air.



Pidgeon

Mission

Pidgeon's mission is to look after the city and make sure all plastic is recycled.

Superpower

Pidgeon has a beak made of metal, which keeps him safe from poison and sharp objects. Pidgeon wears a high visibility jacket and bobble hat, so anyone who needs help can see him.

Archenemy

Plastic bottle dude - An evil magician who lives in the sewer, and casts spells on people to make them throw plastic into the street.



The Pirates

Mission

To fight against criminals who pollute the beaches and the seas.

Superpower

The Pirates make delicious hot chocolate which has the power to put their enemies to sleep instantly.

Archenemy

Marine Scream - She climbs on top of a rock in the middle of the sea and screams out pollution.

Crab-Man

Mission

To keep the beaches clean and free from plastic bottles.

Superpower

Crab-man uses his super crushing pincers to destroy any plastic he finds on the beach.

Sidekicks

Crab-Man has two best friends, Seagull and Rocky. On Saturdays they love to go surfing and eat cake.



Blue Whale

Mission

Blue Whale is a sea guardian, who swims around clearing up all the plastic in the ocean.

Superpower

Blue whale has a super vacuum which sucks up all the plastic in the sea. Blue whale also has the power of invisibility.

Archenemy

The Demon Fisherman, who hunts all the animals in the sea.



The Fish Princess

Mission

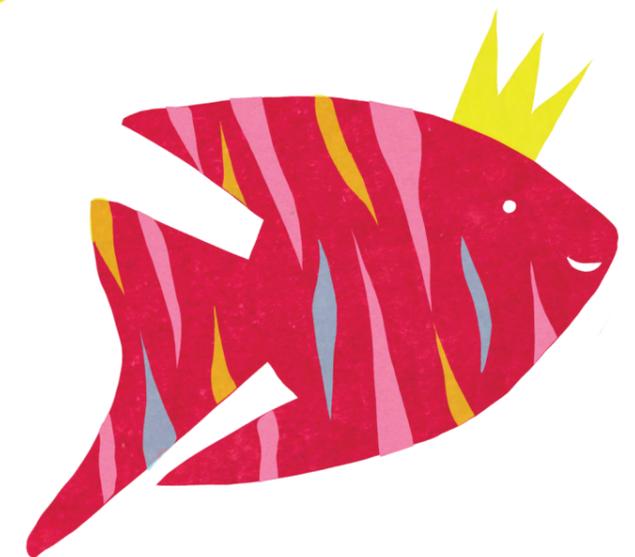
To help all of the creatures in the sea live together in harmony.

Superpower

The Fish Princess speaks all the languages of the sea.

Sidekick

A mermaid who is not very helpful, and talks a lot when Fish Princess is trying to do her homework.



Polar Bear

Mission

Polar Bear is the mightiest bear who watches over and guards the Kingdom of Ice.

Superpower

Polar Bear has the power to refreeze melting ice caps. He can also roar snowballs at his enemies to make them cold and wet.

Archenemy

Wrath is a ghost who comes out at night and melts the ice as he floats across it.



Penguin

Mission

To protect all of the animals that live in the Kingdom of Ice.

Superpower

Penguin has lots of cool gadgets: a laser watch which flashes when it detects danger and an enchanted phone to warn the animals.

Fun Fact

Penguin is brilliant at fixing things, especially bikes and playstations.



Cat-Girl

Mission

To fight against pollution and keep Balham clean!

Sidekick

Cat girl lives in Balham with her sidekick and best friend, who is a banana.

Superpowers

Cat girl has a bright yellow bullet proof umbrella.

Archenemy

Pollution pig, an evil pig who loves pollution and can divide himself in two, so he can make double the trouble!



Banana

Mission

To support Cat-Girl in her battles against evil.

Superpowers

Banana gives Cat-Girl regeneration powers, and never ever goes mouldy.

Fun fact

Banana likes to play basketball and tennis, and is a very good swimmer.



SAVE THE WORLD

Danger Warning Person

Mission

To send out a warning signal when the world is in danger, so everyone can work together to save the world.

Superpowers

A powerful button which sends important messages across the sky. The button also triggers a warning alarm, it sounds like wasps and lasers.

Archenemy

The Executor - A super villain, who lives inside your TV, and plays your favourite TV shows to distract you from the horrible things happening around the planet.

Timmy the Owl

Mission

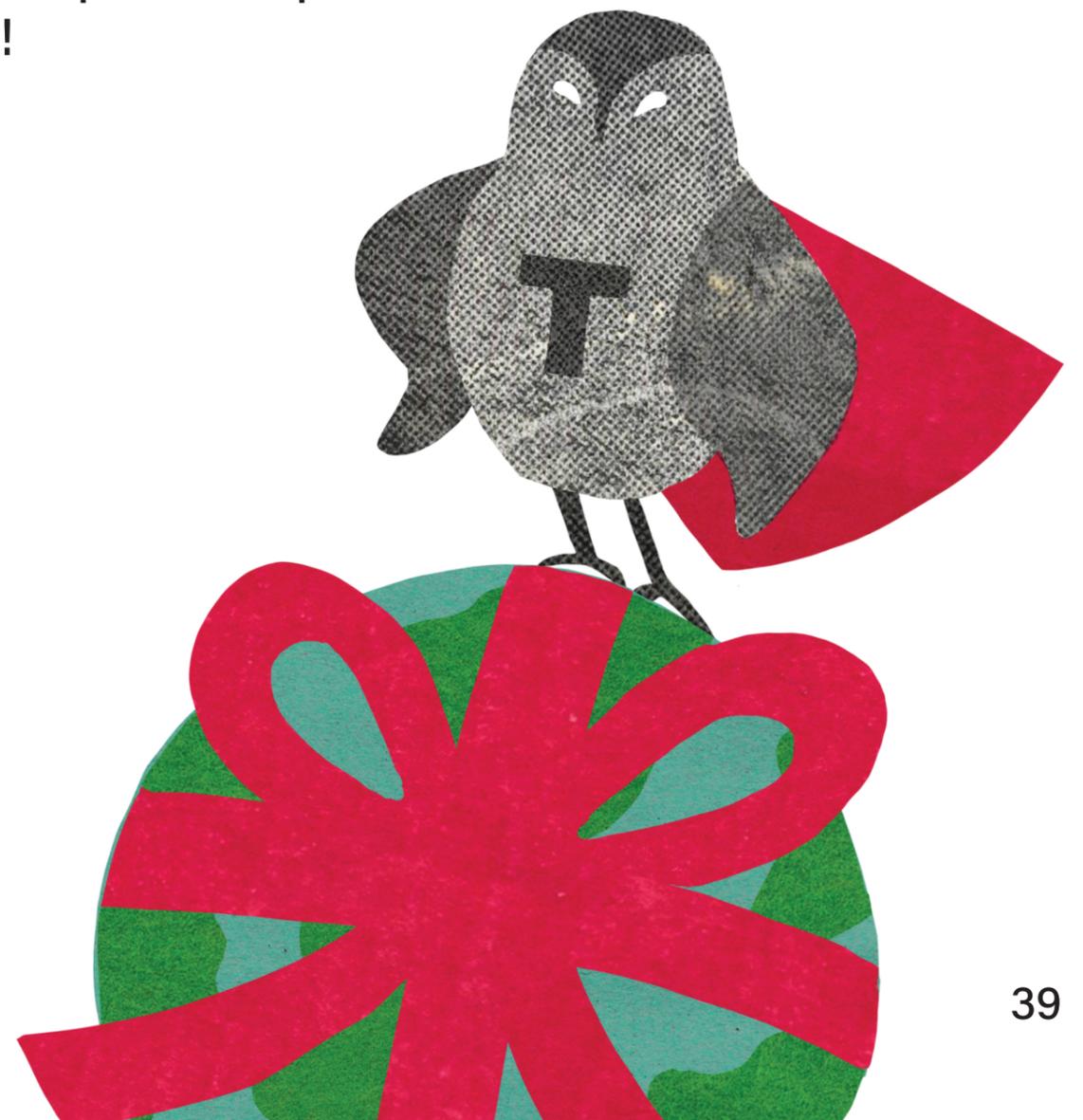
To watch over the forest and protect all the animals who live there.

Superpower

Timmy has sharp, poisonous claws to fight with.

Archenemy

The Tree Cutters - aliens who plan to put Earth into a box, wrap it like a present and sell it for lots of money!



Environmental Poetry

by Burntwood School Year 9



Create your own Environmental Poetry

- 1.** Describe your current emotions as a type of weather. For example, do you feel like a sunny day, or a blizzard? Or both.
- 2.** Describe your current feelings as objects in a landscape. For example, 'An unopened box of cereal in a forest full of flowers'.
- 3.** Keep writing different examples, then choose your favourites. Think about why you have chosen them.
- 4.** Write a poem about the objects and the landscape that they are in and the weather as if these scenes were your emotions.

To London we bring our blue energy,
our loudness, our pride and our spice.



We bring our kindness.
We bring our peace.
London would be grey and lifeless without us.



At this moment I am...

A single atom in an endless void

The sun and its pigeons

A burning snowflake

A raindrop determined to fall on a black rose

An ocean turning into a graveyard of litter

A river stealing your fish

A waterfall of thoughts inside a corpse

A glass in the Sahara desert

A bouquet of flowers in an endangered forest

A balloon in an endangered sky

A very fast giraffe in Antarctica

A happy kangaroo in what's left of a rainforest

A hippo in Madagascar

A snake in a jungle

At this moment I am...

A parrot watching my home burn

A free horse running in the wild

A tiny spider in a meadow

A butterfly in my garden

A dandelion seed running with the wind

An attack helicopter in London

A lost duck in Tooting

A tree in Sainsbury's

A fluffy scarf caught in barbed wire

The shell of a snail

An open door

An empty ballroom

A clear shelf

A cardboard box labelled with a question mark

The first page of a book

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