

Printable Nativity Scenes

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The following pages contain cut-out materials you can use to create a nativity scene featuring shepherds, the manger, Joseph and Mary.

However, you will notice that there are actually two Christmas nativity scenes you can create here. There is a baby in the manger with shepherds in the first scene and some wise men with a two-year old boy Jesus at the house in the second scene.

Why two scenes?

Contrary to popular opinion, the wise men never came to the manger to

see the baby Jesus at Christmas.

They came to Jesus' house about two years after his birth.

For a full explanation of other corrections in the typical Christmas pageant script, read the last page about "10 common misconceptions of the Christmas story"

You may combine the wise men figures

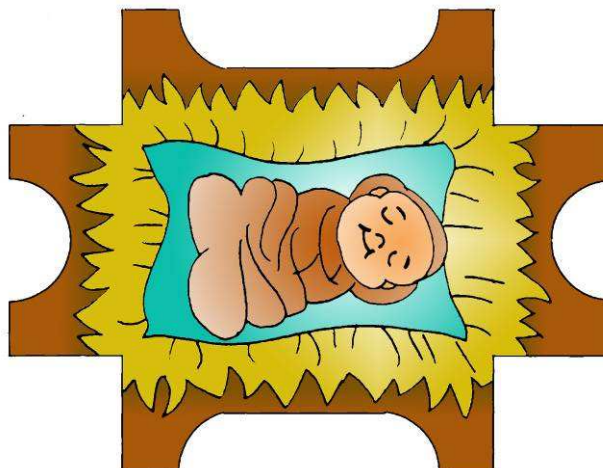
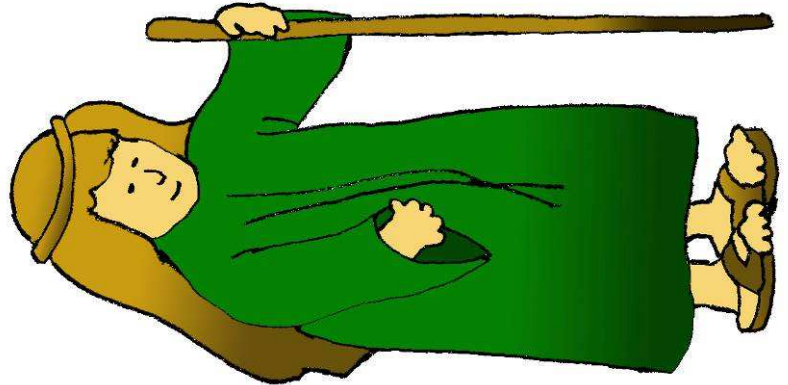
with the shepherds at the manger scene if you wish, but remember that the Bible, not Christmas carols, is the true source of the Christmas story.

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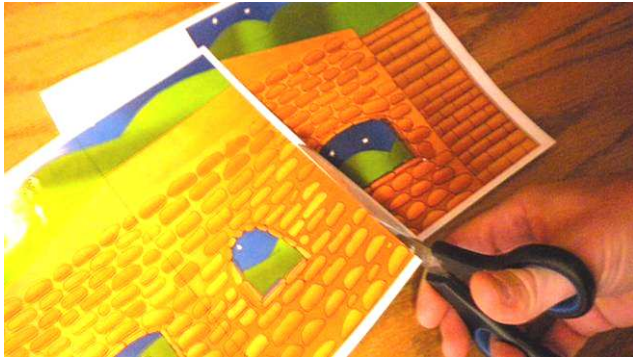
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You may also wish to download one of the dozens of other activities including a 3D printable model of Moses' Tabernacle or a 3D printable model of Noah's Ark.

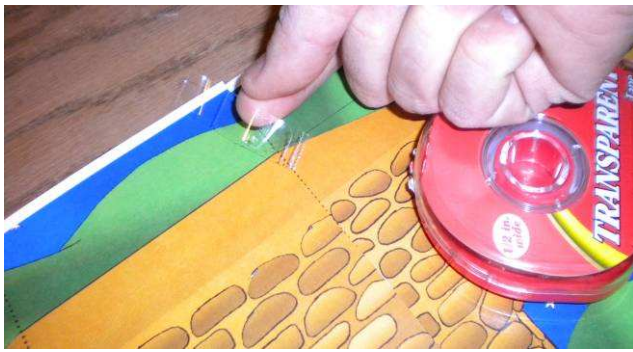


How to assemble the stable.

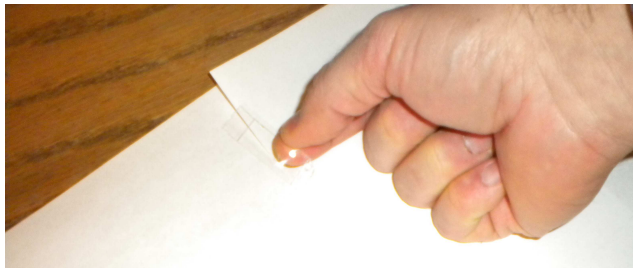
There are three pages to the manger scene stable—the roof and the two scenery pages. The picture to the right shows the stable fully assembled.



1. Cut off the right edge of the first stable page. See picture to the left.



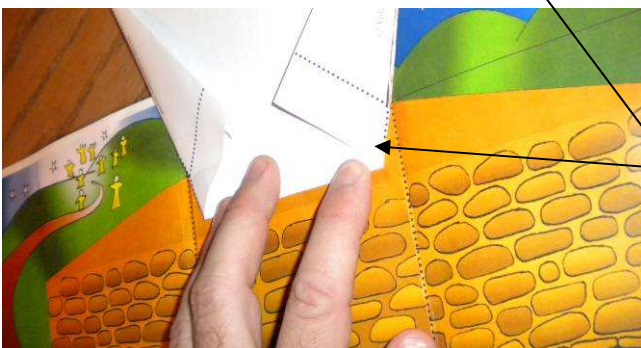
2. Tape the two stable pages together. Be careful to align them straight before taping. The two sheets should overlap about 4 inches.



3. Tape both the front and back sides. See pictures to the left.

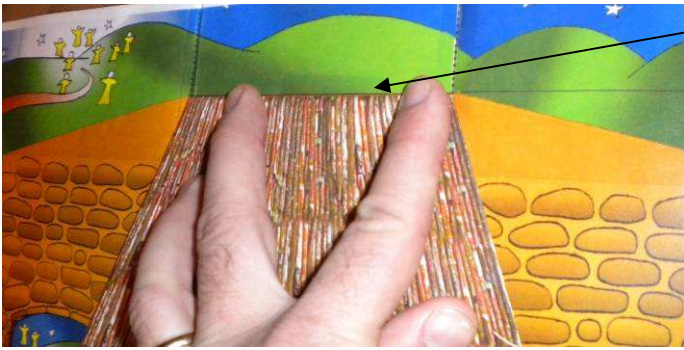


4. Fasten the roof to the walls. The top of the roof should align with the line printed on the wall as pictured to the left.

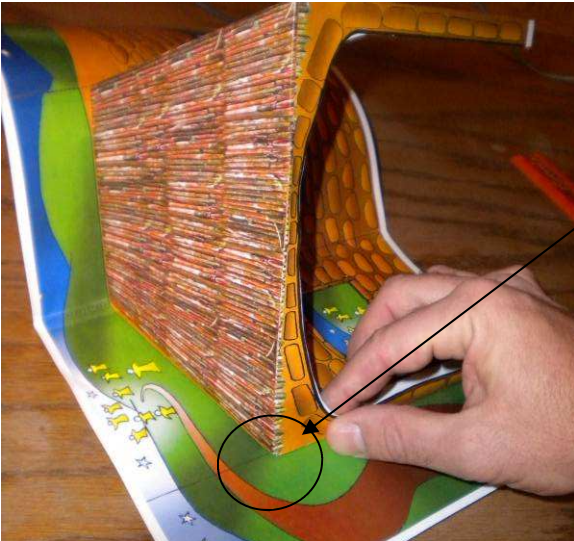


5. Fasten the roof to the walls. Tape the flap on the underside of the roof to the wall.

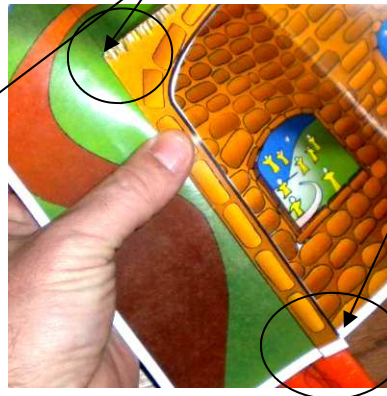
The flap is about 1 inch wide.



6. Put a piece of tape along the top edge of the roof line.

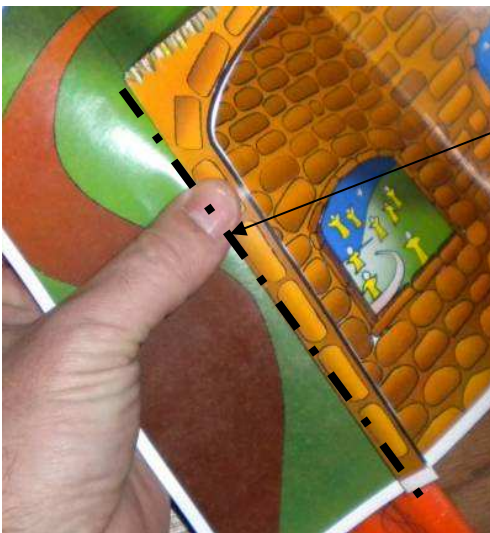


7. Align the sides of the house with the background scenery. The lines printed on the scenery page should align *approximately* with posts of the house.



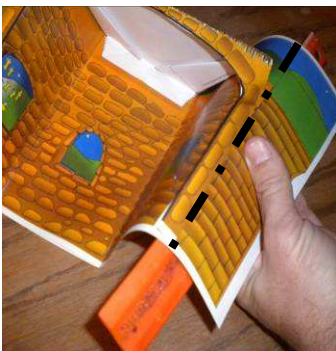
The bottom of the post should align *exactly* with the bottom of the scenery page.

Fasten the posts of the house to the scenery page with several pieces of tape.



8. After taping the posts of the house to the background scenery, gently fold the scenery out along the place where the two papers join. This gives the whole scene a more open appearance. You may find that a ruler helps fold the paper.

Folding the left wall.



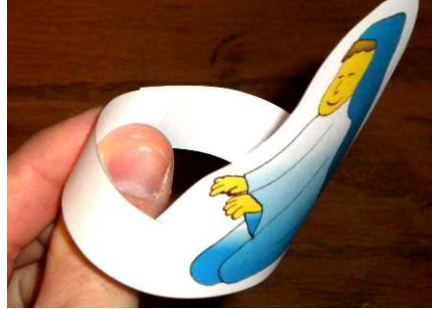
Folding the right wall.



The finished stable is now ready for people and animals.

How to make the people

1. Cut out each person, lamb and camel including the long band of paper at their feet. The cut-out can be approximate. Notice that the pictures here show a margin of about 1/4 inch of paper around Mary.
2. Create a circle with the band and fasten with tape.
3. The circle of paper should allow the figure to stand up.



How to make the manger

1. Cut out the manger. Be sure to cut precisely around the edges or it will not stand up straight.
2. Fold down each side at a right angle as pictured at the right.



Arrange the figures

The night of Christmas, Joseph and Mary were visited by shepherds. The angels in the distant hills told the shepherds they would find a baby wrapped in clothes, lying in a manger in Bethlehem, the city of David.

Some time later—perhaps two years— Magi (aka Wise Men) came from the east to worship the child. They came to see a boy who lived in a house. See page 10 for further explanation as to why two separate scenes are necessary to tell the full Christmas story.



A completed house

Two versions of Jesus' home are included here. Page 10 contains a single-sheet version shown here. Page 11 and 12 contain a larger house that is more true to scale with the figures that surround it.

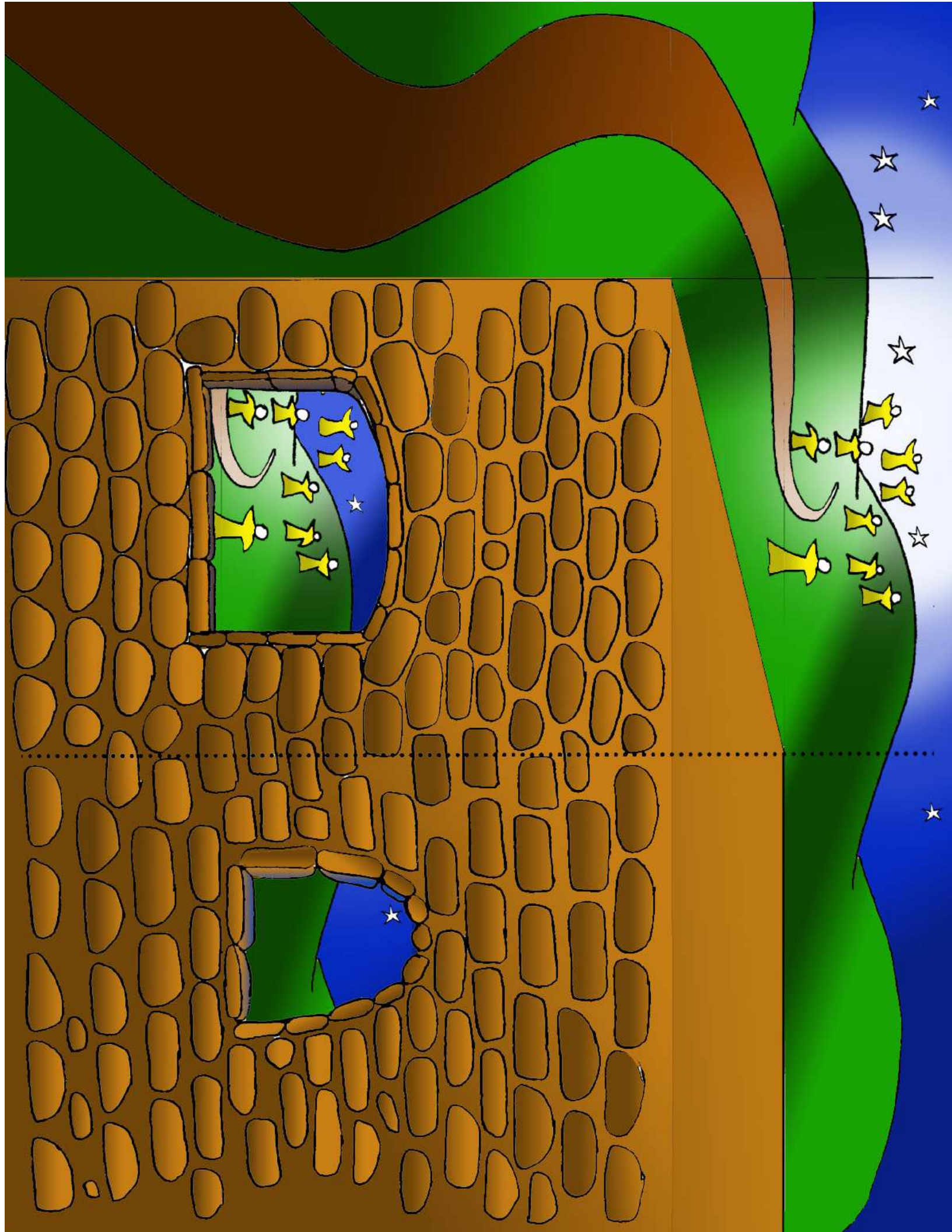
If you wish, you could also adapt this house as the inn that had no room for the Savior.

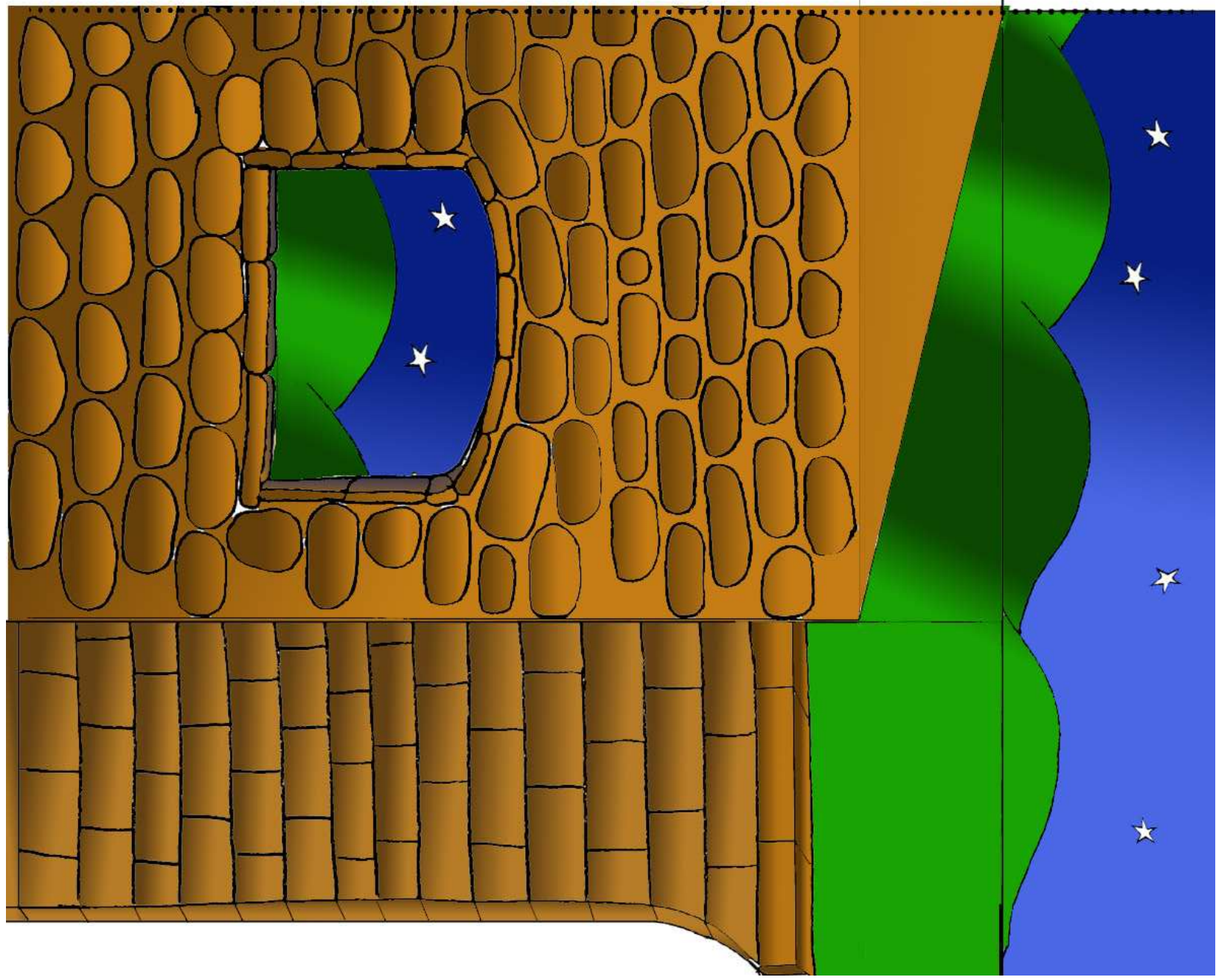


Scene #1—the manger when Christ was born.



Scene #2—the wise men visit the house when Christ was a boy.





#3 Fold top flap third.

#2 Fold diagonal lines second

#2 Fold diagonal lines second

Fold sides in first.

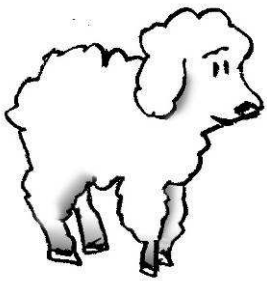
#1 Fold sides in first.

#3 Fold the roof edge (above)

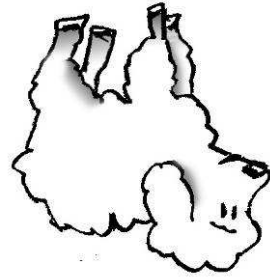
#4 Cut out this doorway.



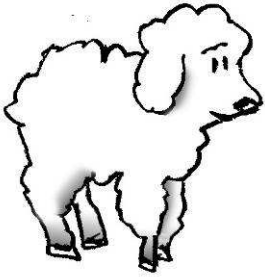
1. Fold outside edges.
2. Fold diagonal lines along the sides of the roof.
3. Fold the top edge of the roof.
4. Fold along the roof line.
5. Cut out this white region.



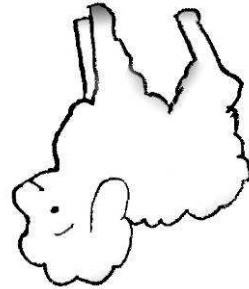
A large horizontal rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing.



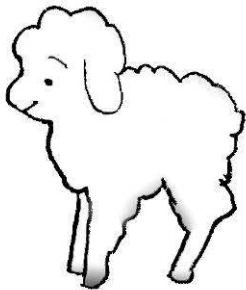
A large horizontal rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing.



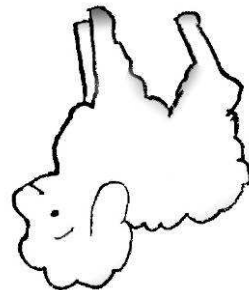
A large horizontal rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing.



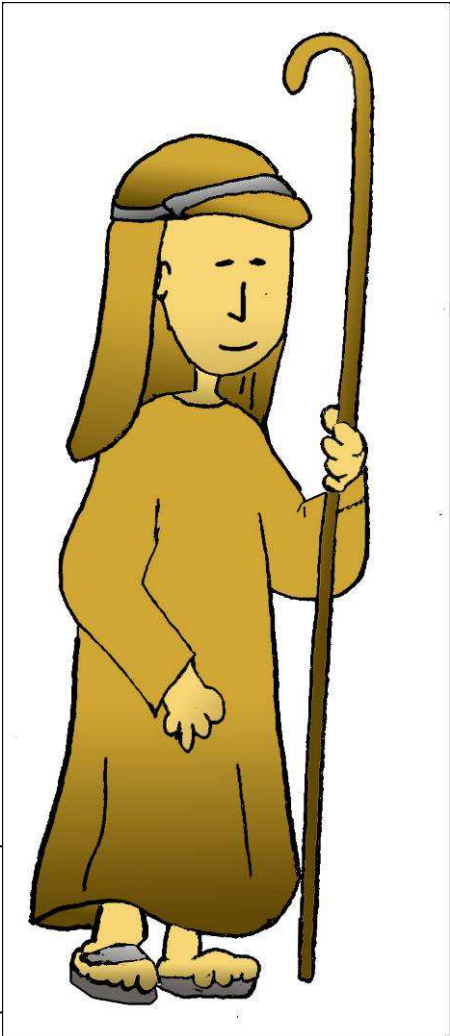
A large horizontal rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing.

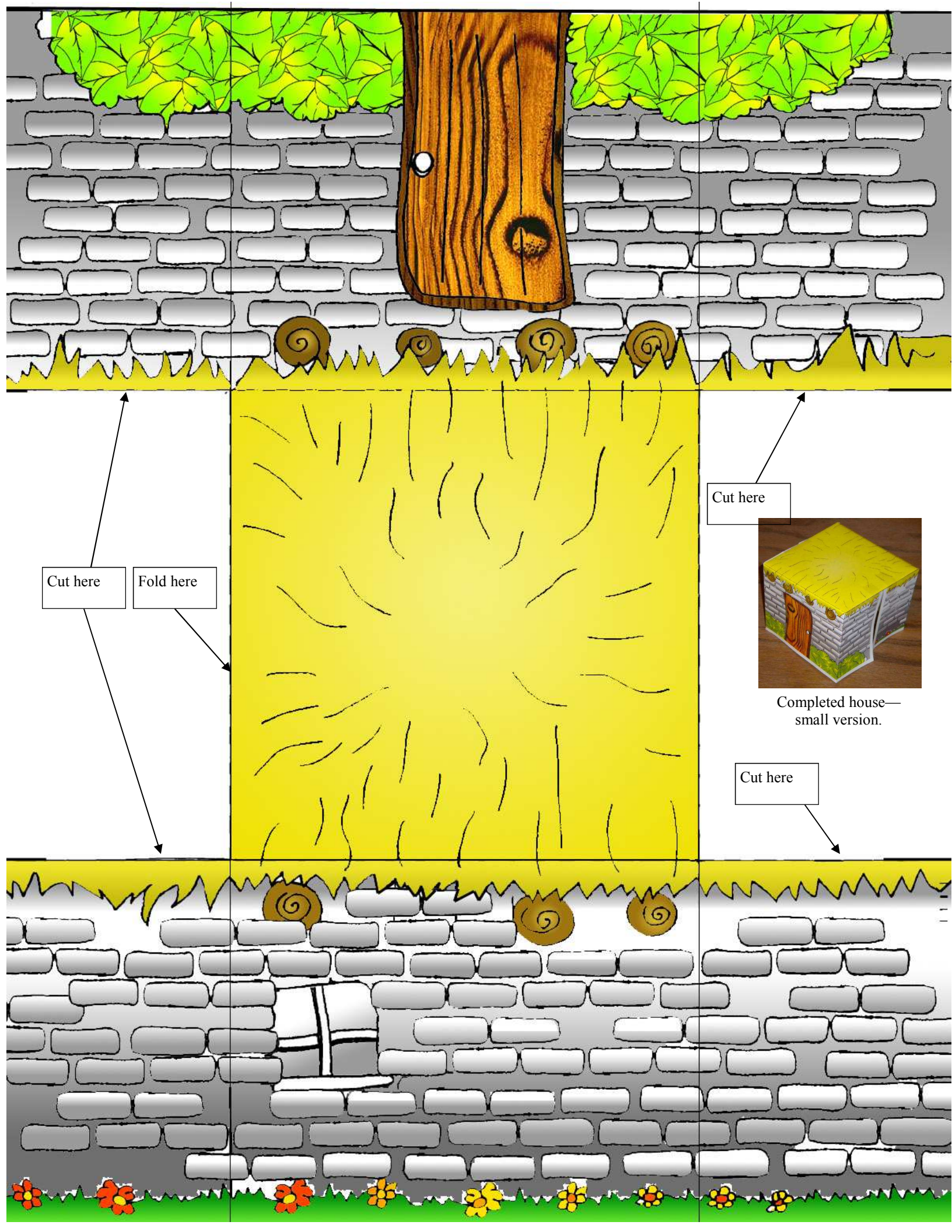


A large horizontal rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing.



A large horizontal rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing.





Cut here

Fold here

Cut here



Completed house—
small version.

Cut here

This piece can be thrown away.

Cut this page on this line. Match this edge with the line printed on the roof on the other house page

Fold

Do not cut beyond this

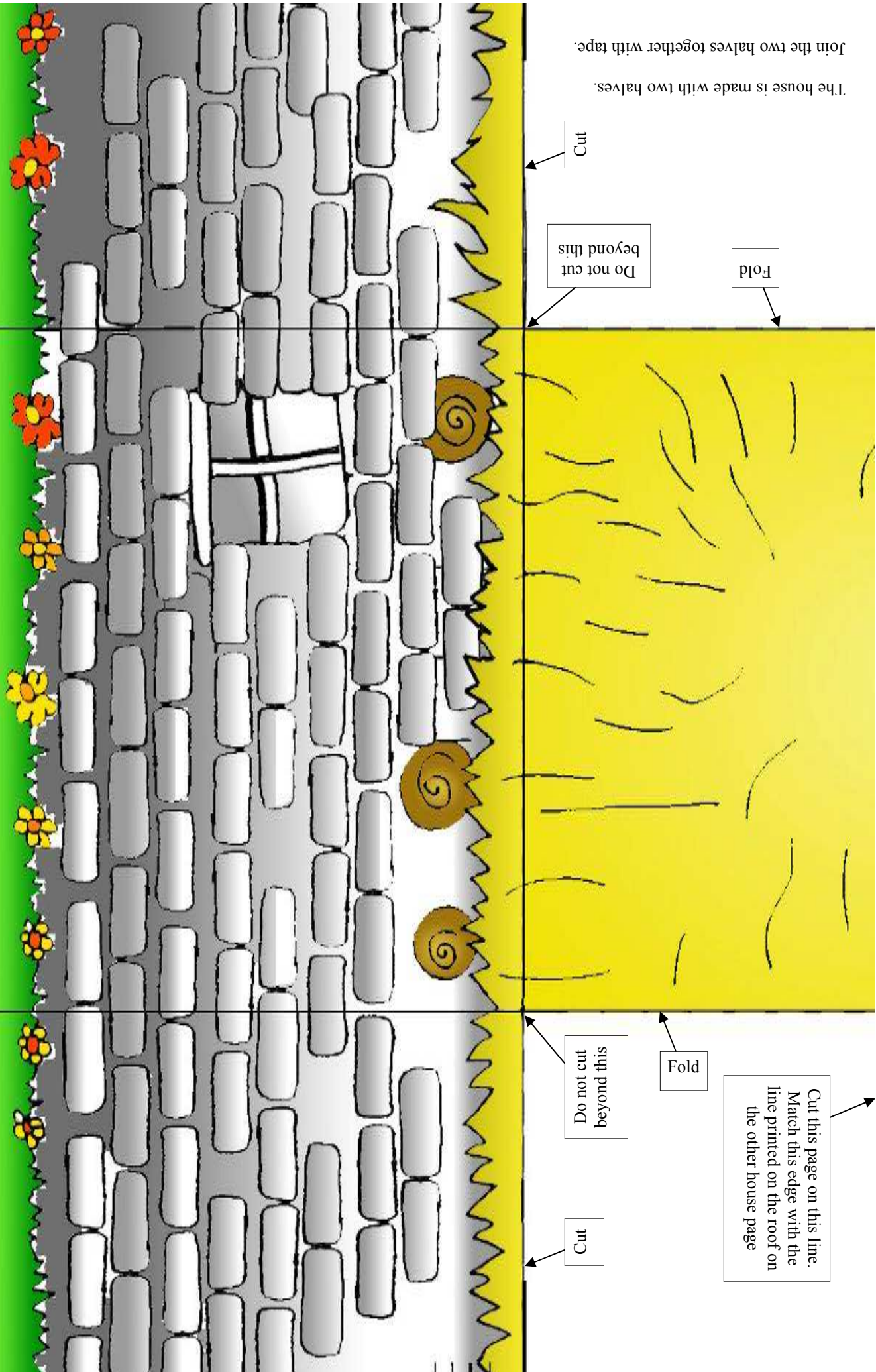
Cut

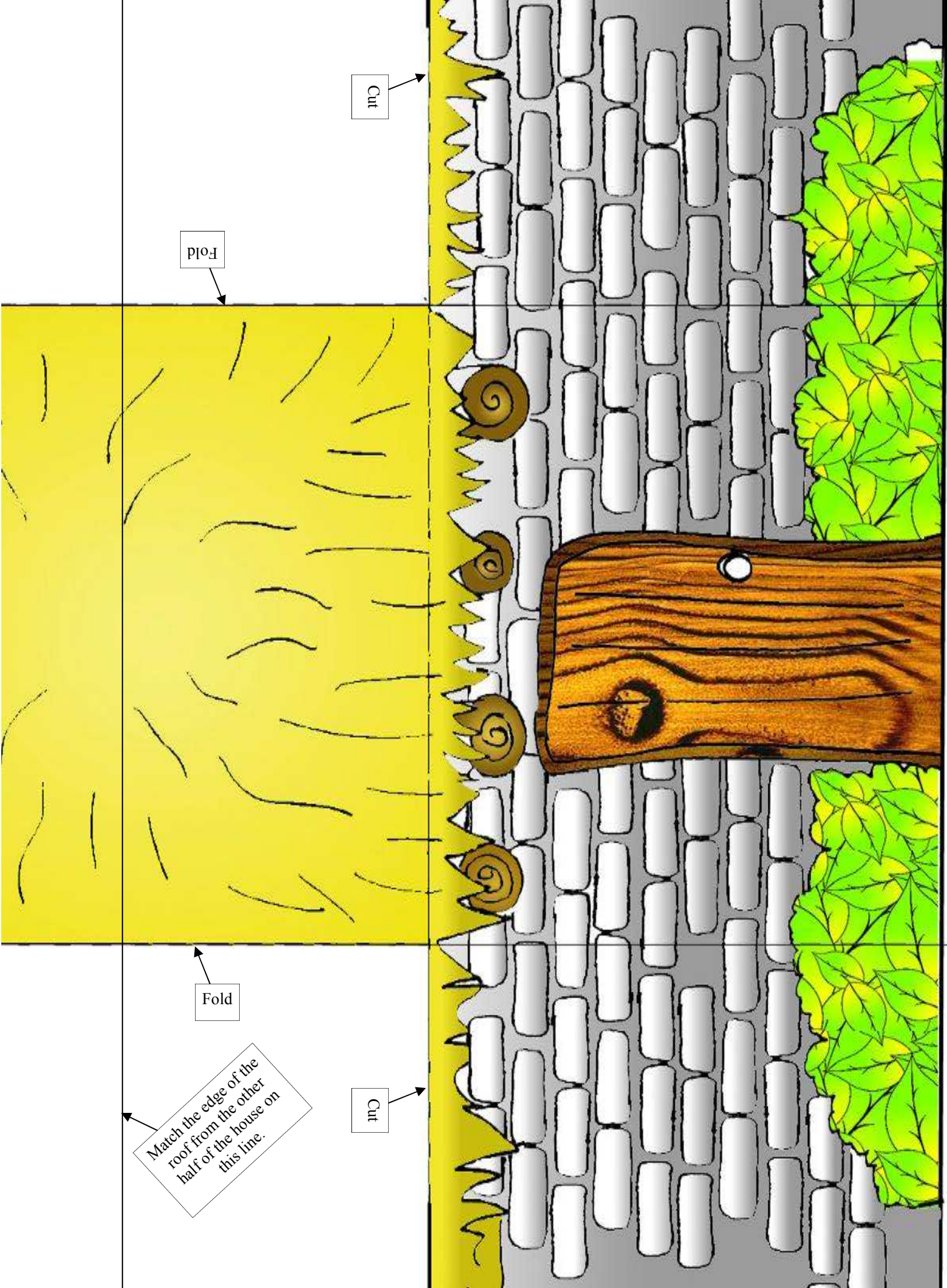
Fold

Do not cut beyond this

Cut

The house is made with two halves. Join the two halves together with tape.





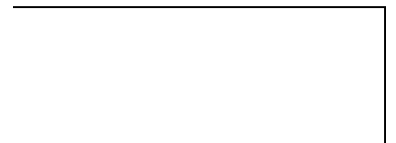
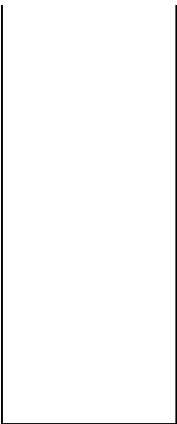
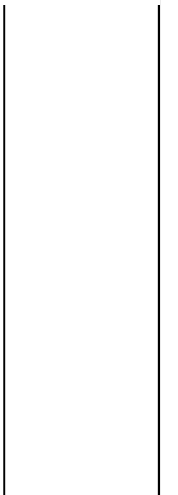
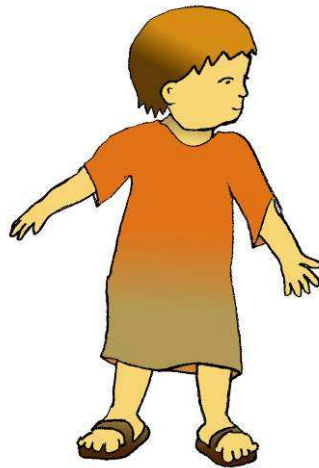
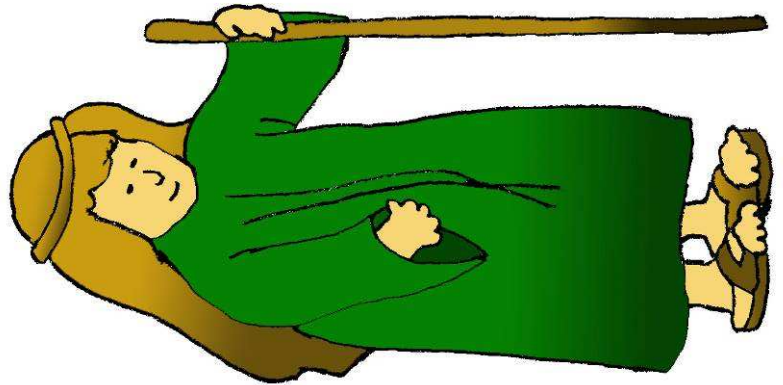
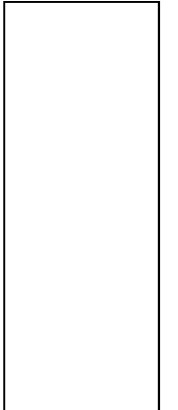
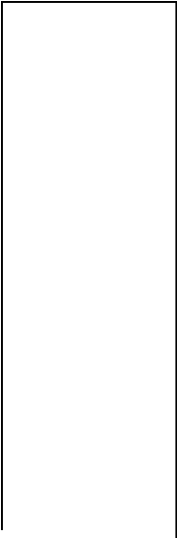
Cut

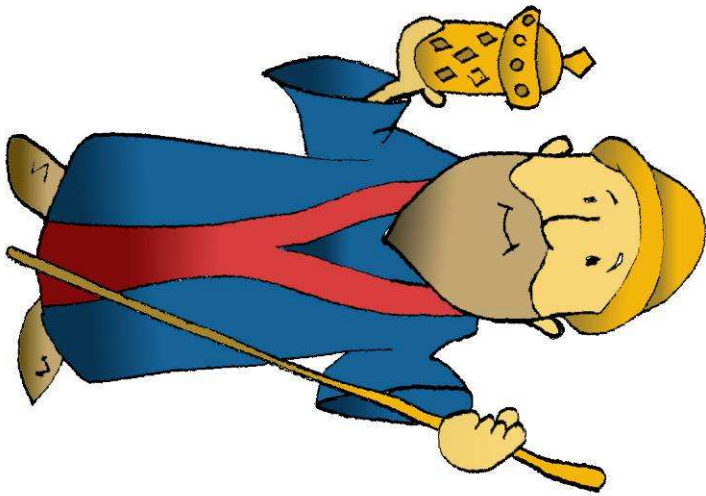
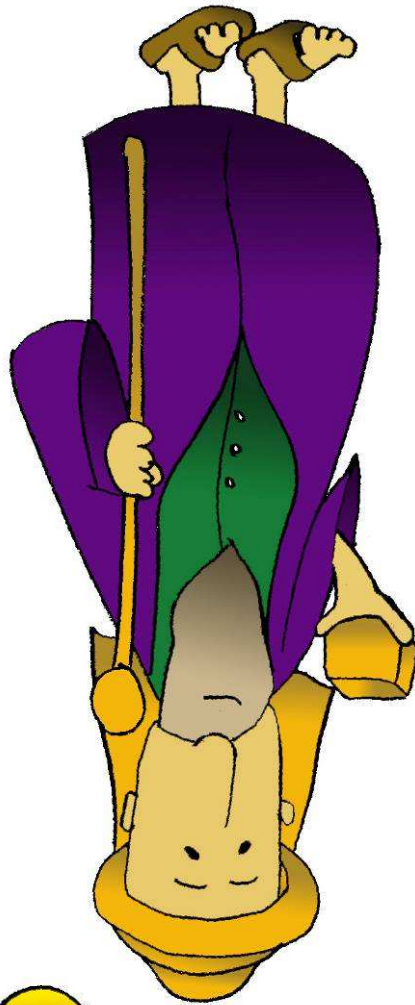
Fold

Fold

Cut

Match the edge of the roof from the other half of the house on this line.





Empty rectangular box for labeling.

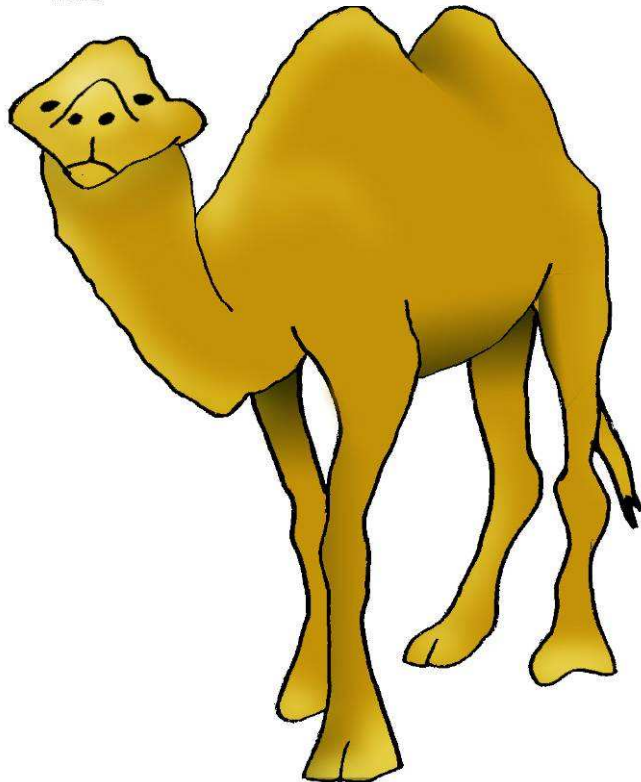
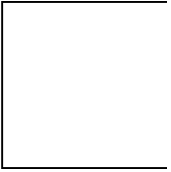
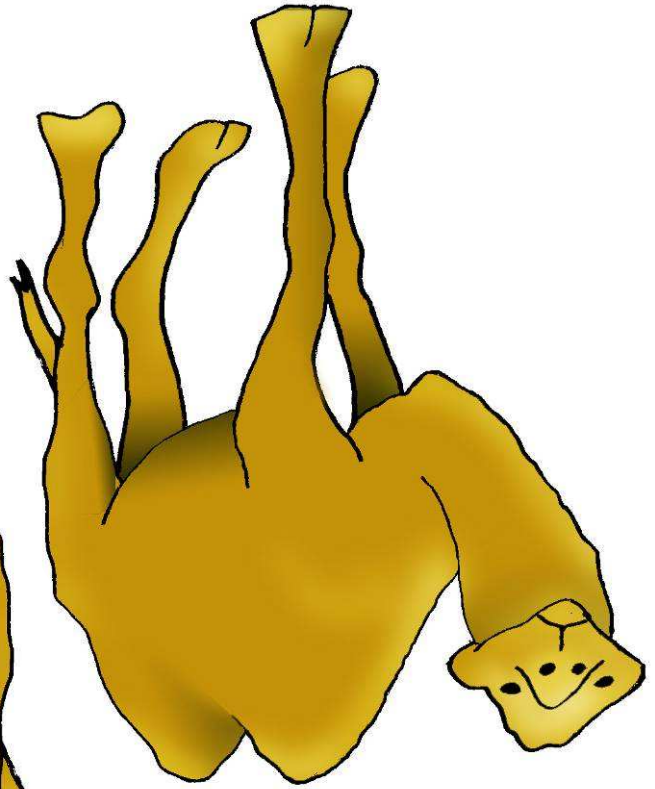
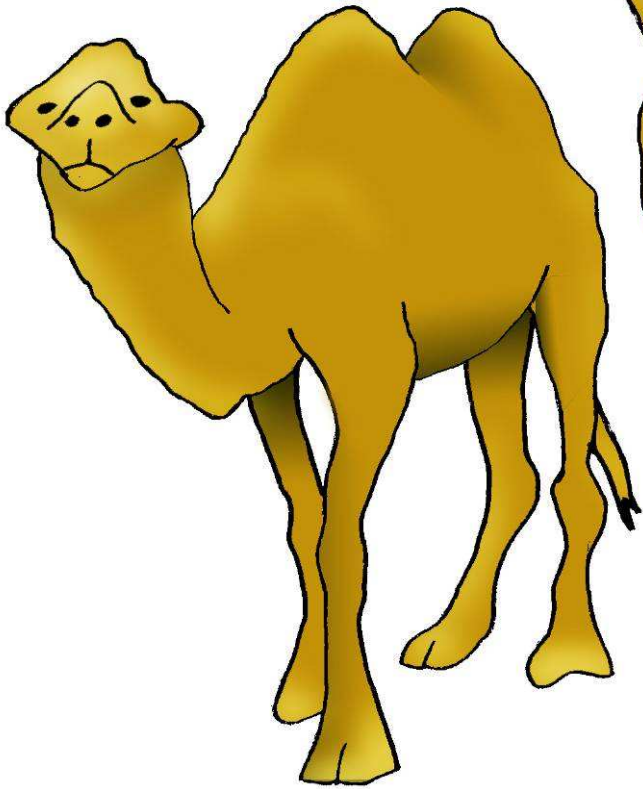
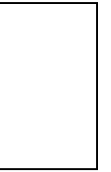
Empty rectangular box for labeling.

Empty rectangular box for labeling.

Empty rectangular box for labeling.

Empty rectangular box for labeling.

Empty rectangular box for labeling.



10 common errors of the Christmas story

The story of Christmas has many traditions that are not part of the Biblical record. Christmas carols mention a Little Drummer Boy, cattle lowing softly, a baby that doesn't cry, a silent night and a still town, three ships carrying Joseph and Mary.

Although it is interesting to know the details of the story correctly, it is more important to know the Savior who was born that day. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15).

1. Wise men did not come to the manger.

Matthew 2 tells the story of the Magi who came from the east to see the child. They saw the guiding star two full years before coming to see the child. They came to see a child (a young boy), not an infant.

Matthew 2:016 "When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi."

Matthew 2:11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother

2. The shepherds did not see the star.

The angels appeared to the shepherds and told them the sign they should seek is a babe wrapped in clothes, not a star. The story of the shepherds in Luke 2 makes no mention of the star. Matthew 2 mentions that the Magi were following the star. Apparently they could see something special in the heavens that nobody else noticed. They were from a class of astronomers who watched the movement of the planets and seasons.

3. The star did not appear in the eastern part of the sky.

The phrase that causes the confusion of where the star was placed is found in Matthew 2:1-2

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

They saw his star while they were still living in the eastern part of the world. They were looking at the heavens where they lived in the world of ancient Babylon which is east of Jerusalem. The verse does not tell us where the star was located, but where the Magi were located.

4. There may not have been three wise men.

There were more than one Magi. There were three gifts. The Bible does not say how many men were in the group.

Matthew 2:11 "Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh."

5. Jesus was most likely not born on December 25.

The Bible doesn't state what date or month in which Jesus was born. If an arbitrary date of the calendar were picked, there would be a 1/360th chance of being correct. (The Jewish calendar has 360 days). However, there are other details that might help us say that his birth was NOT in the winter.

Luke 2:8 "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night." Shepherds stayed in the fields in spring, summer and fall. Jesus was probably not born during the winter.

Luke 2:1 "In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world." The easiest time to make everyone travel is during the warmer months of the year when there are longer days and better weather. Caesar probably did not ask for the census to be taken in winter.

It wasn't until A.D. 440 that the church officially proclaimed December 25 as the birth of Christ. This was not based on any historical evidence but on a pagan feast. Saturnalia was a tradition inherited by the Roman pagans from an earlier Babylonian priesthood. December 25 was used as a celebration of the birthday of the sun god. It was observed near the winter solstice.

6. The names of the three wise men are not Balthazar, Gaspar, and Melchior.

These tradition names do not come from the Bible, but from writings centuries later. The Bible does not even mention that there were three wise men, let alone give their names.

7. The angels did not sing to the shepherds.

Read the text carefully...

Luke 2:13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

Does the verse use the word "singing" or "saying"? As a matter of fact, in no occasion in the Bible do we ever read that angels sing.

8. The birthplace was probably not a barn.

It might be assumed that Jesus was born where animals were taken care of because he was laid in "a manger" – or a feeding trough. The structure itself may have been a cave rather than a barn. Apparently, caves are a common place near Bethlehem to house animals. However, it is not known how long Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem before she gave birth. The typical Christmas scene is that Joseph desperately seeks for a room at the local hotel while his wife-to-be is already in labor pains. The truth is that the Bible says

Luke 2:5 He went there ... (to Bethlehem) While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born"

9. Jesus was not an only child.

Catholic teaching says that Mary remained a virgin her entire life. How strange to contradict the Bible with traditions that are clearly false.

Matthew 12: 46 While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him.

Matthew 13: 56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

10. Mary didn't ride a donkey to Bethlehem.

The Bible says Joseph "went there to register with Mary" (Luke 2: 5) however, there is no mention of how they traveled – donkey, camel or on foot. Perhaps it was on a donkey. Perhaps not. Perhaps they were so poor that they had to walk which the most common form of travel.