

a SENSE of the RESURRECTION

AN EASTER EXPERIENCE FOR FAMILIES



amanda white

Dedication

This book is for Jesus.

Thank You for coming to earth to die for me--and more importantly, coming back to life so I could be with You forever.

Help me always point my children to You and to the life You offer them.

I'm amazed and in awe of You.

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

John 21:25

edited by Jessie Weaver, VanderbiltWife.com

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Introduction

The story of Jesus' death and resurrection is a hard one. People and churches have debated the details and even the veracity of it for centuries. Pastors and professors still don't know and understand every detail of this rich story.

So, why do we think we can or should relate this story to our children?

Well, for that very reason. It's not a story to be understood, dissected and fact-checked. It's a story to be experienced. A story to be awed by. A story to be believed in.

And children are the best at belief.

They believe in Santa, the Tooth Fairy and Mickey Mouse with a simple nod from you. Why not help them believe in the power that brought Jesus back to life? Why not lead them to belief in Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection? Why not bring them to maybe not a full understanding--but to full belief in what Jesus did for them on the cross and in that tomb 2000 years ago?

This ebook is not a dissertation, exegesis or commentary on the biblical account of Jesus' death and resurrection. It's an experience for parents to lead their kids through the story. We will not be learning every single detail of the story. There is so much historical and traditional background that our 21st-century brains can hardly understand it anyway. What we will be discovering is who Jesus is and why He came.

Each activity is designed either to make a memory with your children or to set up a memorial in your house. These memories/memorials will literally change the way your home looks so that you can't help but focus on Jesus, His death and resurrection during this holiday season.

These are not small craft projects or little devotions. They are big experiences that will help you lead your children into an understanding of and relationship with Jesus.

As you walk through the story with your children, use this ebook as a guide. But use your relationship with Jesus, your walk with Him and your heart to convey these truths to your children. Impress this story on their hearts and minds.

How To Use This Book

Each chapter of this book includes ...

Sense

Each activity, whether it's a memorial or a memory, involves one of the five senses. Let your child know which sense you will be using in the activity.

Scripture

Begin by reading the Scripture directly from the Bible. If you grew up in church, you may know this story "too well." Your kids, however, haven't heard it a hundred times. So, make sure you read each word of the passage so they can hear it exactly how it happened.

However, don't get bogged down reading each event from every gospel. I have marked the passage I think is the most clear and most appropriate for each activity. Please read them all to yourself beforehand, then you can judge, based on your kids' ages and attention span how much to read to them.

As you read the Scripture, instruct your children to imagine they are in the story and using the sense you mentioned earlier. When they recognize it, let them shout it out, "Hearing!" or "Smell!". They may notice other senses than the one you are focusing on that day--that's fine! It means they are really thinking about the story.

Activity

After you've read the Scripture, lead your children in the activity or craft. As you make the craft or journey through your experience, talk about the Scripture and the sense being used.

Depending on the age of your children and their understanding, your activity or craft may look different than the one in the book. It's OK! The point is not to do a perfect activity. The point is to experience God's Word.

Talk

This section is written in first person so you can literally read it to your children. It is a starting point and a conversation starter to help you and your children discuss, think about and understand this passage of Scripture. Don't worry if it's not a big theological discussion or if your kids start talking about superheroes and bumblebees instead. The idea is to get them talking and internalizing the Scripture.

Optional Printable Flag

If you're having a busy day or can't do the activity for a certain day or want to add another visual to your activity, each chapter includes a printable flag. Your kids can color them with crayons or do the suggested decorating ideas!

Full Supply List

Basic Supplies:

- scissors
- tape
- white glue
- water
- paintbrushes

Grocery Store Supplies:

- liquid soap
- reeds (or bamboo skewers)
- small mouth jars (baby food, spice jars, etc.)
- liquid potpourri (or essential oils)
- loaf of bread (possible matzo)
- picnic lunch including fish
- plastic spoons
- plastic egg

Craft Supplies:

- scrapbook paper
- ribbons
- stickers
- misc. decorations (sequins, beads, foam stickers, etc.)
- purple cellophane
- small canvas
- mod podge
- alphabet stickers
- twine
- paint
- red permanent marker
- colored duct tape

Recycled or Household Items:

- newspaper or book pages
- string/streamers/rope
- clear, sparkly/glittery materials (clear plastic bottles, old CD's, glitter foam, tinsel, aluminum foil, tin pie plates, etc.)
- empty tin cans
- nails
- hammer
- bowls/pans of water
- soap
- towels
- rice vinegar

Templates:

Rooster (included)

Suggested Supplies for Printable Flags:

- powdered drink mix
- green leaves
- watercolor paints
- brown paper bag
- purple tissue paper
- feathers
- red paint (or red button or red heart sticker)
- glitter
- duct tape, masking tape or mechanical tape

How to talk to your Kids About Death

The story of Jesus' death and resurrection is often glossed over for children. It is understandable as we don't want to make our children afraid of the story of Jesus. We don't want them to be introduced to themes of death and torture too early.

However, I do not believe the crux of this story can be glossed over. I believe children can and do understand and appreciate the story of Jesus' death and resurrection--even with all its big themes.

Here are a few tips to help you navigate conversations you will surely have as you travel through the story and these activities:

1. Don't explain everything.

When your children ask a question, you don't have to give every single detail. I don't explain that Jesus was probably naked and the whip He was beaten with had bones and glass attached to it. But I do tell my kids that people whipped Him and beat Him.

2. Don't worry about how much they understand.

Children only understand as much as they understand. (That's brilliant, isn't it?) When my son thinks of hammering, he imagines Handy Manny. He doesn't understand what nailing a railroad-sized-spike into someone's wrist would do. He knows it's bad. He knows it would hurt. But, he doesn't really understand it. And that's OK. He doesn't have to. I only want him to see the story with his 5 year old eyes.

3. Know your children.

If you have a sensitive child, you may need to skip over some details. When my daughter was younger, she'd back away from pictures of Jesus on the cross. It frightened her--but not because she was genuinely afraid. It was because she recognized the severity and seriousness of the story.

4. Focus on the good parts.

You don't have to say, "Jesus was whipped for you!" or "You were supposed to be nailed to the cross!" Instead, talk about how much Jesus loved the world, how He was obedient to His Father, how He cared for His followers and His family even in death. Focus on the resurrection and the wonderful interactions He had with His followers after He came back to life.

5. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to your children.

This may be *the* year your child understands and believes what Jesus did for him or her. Let the Holy Spirit speak to them. Let their hearts be broken. Let your children think about, mull over and wonder about the story. Let God do the work in their hearts.

Day 1 - Smell

Mary's Perfume

You SMELL the perfume to prepare your heart for Jesus' death.

Read it together:

John 12:1-8*

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:1-9

Luke 7:36-50



Make it together:

Supplies: reeds (or bamboo skewers), small mouth jars (spice jars, baby food jars, etc.), liquid potpourri (or essential oils), scrapbook paper, ribbons, stickers or other assorted decorations

- Decorate jars with paper, ribbons and stickers.
- Pour 1-2 inches of liquid potpourri into each jar.
- Place 4-6 reeds into each jar.
- Place one jar in each room of the house.

Talk about it together:

Jesus said Mary anointed Him to prepare Him for His death and burial. When she broke the jar and the perfume spilled out, the Book of John says, "And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume."

When we smell the perfume in our house, let's remember that Jesus died for us. We can try to say a quick prayer like, "Thank You, Jesus for dying for me!" each time we notice the perfume. Let's be like Mary and prepare our hearts for Jesus' death.

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Paint perfume box flag with scented paint. Mix one packet of powdered drink mix with $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water. Paint and let dry before displaying.

Day 2 - Hear

Triumphal Entry

You HEAR the truth of Jesus' mission: to save us from our sin!

Read it together:

Matthew 21:1-11*

Mark 11:1-11

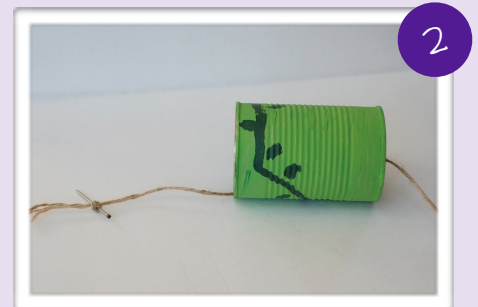
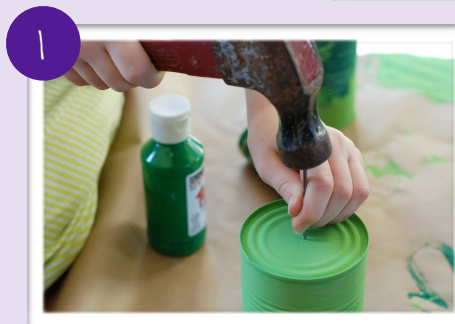
Luke 19:28-44

John 12:12-19

Make it together:

Supplies: assorted sizes of empty tin cans, paint, string, nail, hammer

- Paint cans as desired (with leaf motif or "Hosanna" would be fun!)
- Use nail to poke hole in one end of can.
- Place string through hole and tie around nail.
- Pull string from top to stop the nail and hang.



Talk about it together:

When everyone saw Jesus they started waving tree branches at him and shouting, "Hosanna!" which means "Save us!" Even though they were talking about being saved from the Romans, their words show us why Jesus really came. He came to save us from sin and death.

How would he save us? By dying on the cross for us. Everytime we hear our windchimes, let's say, "Hosanna!" and thank Jesus for saving us.

Do more together:

Download [Hosanna](#) or [Shout Hosanna](#) to have a dance party together.

Printable Flag

Collect green leaves from outside. Glue onto palm branches picture. Make sure to wave it in the air once or twice and shout "Hosanna!"

Day 3 - Feel

Washing Feet

You will FEEL Jesus, the Servant King.

Read it together:

John 13: 1-17

Do it together:

Supplies: bowls or pans of water, soap, towels

- Wash your kids' feet and have your kids wash yours! This can be a serious ceremony or it can be dramatic play. Either way will be memorable.



Talk about it together:

Was it funny to have someone wash your feet? What it did feel like to wash someone else's feet? What do you think it was like when Jesus washed the disciples' feet?

Jesus was really being nice to them, wasn't He? He was showing them how to love and serve other people. Jesus showed us how to be a servant and how to love others by dying on the cross for us. He is God, but He is also a servant!

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Paint picture of feet with watercolors. Feel the water with your fingers before painting.

Day 4 - Taste

Last Supper: bread

You eat and TASTE Jesus' body broken for you.

Read it together:

Matthew 26:26-30

Mark 14:22-26

Luke 22:14-20*

Do it together:

Supplies: a special loaf of bread (matzo would be perfect)



- After reading the Bible story make or heat up your loaf of bread and serve it as a special treat for your kids.

Talk about it together:

Jesus and His disciples were eating a special, traditional meal called "seder." This meal reminded them of many things God had done for the Israelite people in the past. Then, Jesus takes the bread in the meal and uses it to tell His friends what God was going to do very soon.

What did He do with the bread? That's right, He broke it. Jesus already told us that He is the bread of Life (John 6:35). So, He used bread to show us what would happen to His body--that it would be broken and hurt for us when He died on the cross.

When we eat this bread, let's imagine what it was like when Jesus broke the bread and explained this to the disciples.

Do more together:

Extra note:

The Passover seder meal is rich with meaning and symbolism. You might want to extend this activity and [celebrate a kid-friendly seder meal together](#). Or you may want to read about the original Passover in Exodus 12.

Printable Flag

Tear small squares from a brown paper bag. Glue to bread picture. It's ok for it to be uneven with torn edges!

Day 5 - See

You SEE the real royalty and recognize Jesus as King.

Read it together:

Matthew 27:11-31

John 19:1-16*

Make it together:

Supplies: liquid soap, water, purple cellophane

- Combine two parts soap to one part water.
- Cut cellophane in squares, hearts, strips or other shapes.
- Spread soap and water on window.
- Press cellophane into the soap mixture.
- Place in a cross shape.

Talk about it together:

The soldiers weren't putting the purple robe on Jesus because they thought He was the King; they did it to make fun of Him. They did not believe Jesus was the King of Kings.

When we see the purple cross on our window, let's remember that Jesus really is our King. Let's thank Him for loving us enough to be beaten, made fun of and even die for us.

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Glue purple tissue paper strips to the robe picture.

Purple Robe



Day 6 - Hear

Peter's Denial: rooster

You HEAR and remember to stand with and speak about Jesus.

Read it together:

Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75*

Mark 14:27-31, 66-72

Luke 22:31--34, 54-62

John 13:31-38, 18:1-18, 25-27

Make it together:

Supplies: small canvas or canvas panel, rooster template, scrapbook paper, Mod Podge, paint and brushes, alphabet stickers (optional)

- Paint canvas desired color.
- Use rooster template to cut rooster shape out of scrapbook paper.
- Once dried, put a layer of Mod Podge on the canvas.
- Place rooster on top of wet Mod Podge.
- Use alphabet stickers to spell "Remember." (Or after Mod Podge is dry, hand paint the words.)
- Put a final coat of Mod Podge over everything.

Talk about it together:

Just a few hours before Jesus' arrest, Jesus and his disciples had dinner (Remember the bread?) and Jesus told them he would be arrested and that all of his disciples would run away. The disciples couldn't believe this. Peter said, "Never! I'll die for you!" Jesus said to Peter, "Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you don't know me."

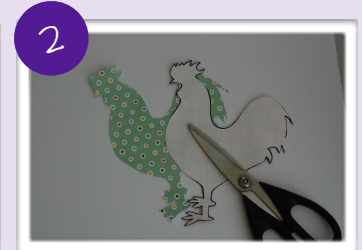
So, when Peter heard the rooster crow later that night, he remembered what Jesus said. And it made Peter sad. He had been so scared he forgot how much he loved Jesus, forgot all the great things Jesus had done for him!

Let's keep our rooster picture up to remember to tell everyone we know about Jesus. Let's remember never to be afraid to talk about all the great things Jesus has done for us!

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Glue feathers to rooster.



Day 7 - Feel

nails

You FEEL Jesus' sacrifice for you. His intimate sacrifice, His touch and care for you.

Read it together:

Matthew 27:32-44

Mark 15:21-32*

Luke 23:26-33

John 19:16-27

Do it together:

Supplies: red marker

- Draw a red dot in the palm of your hand.

Talk about it together:

In Jesus' time, criminals were nailed on crosses. We know that Jesus was not a criminal! In fact, He had never done anything wrong.

It was horrible to be nailed to the cross. It was painful and embarrassing. Why did He have to die like that? Why didn't He do a miracle and get off the cross?

He died on the cross because He loves you. He let them nail His hands and feet to the cross so He could die in your place. (Romans 3:23, 6:23, Romans 5:8)

We're going to put this red dot on our hands to remind us of the marks where the nails went into Jesus' hands. When we see them today, let's remember how much Jesus loves us!

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Glue a red button, place a small heart sticker or put a drop of red paint in the middle of the hand picture.



Day 8 - Taste

Vinegar

You TASTE the bitterness of sin. Jesus took the bitterness of your sin.

Read it together:

Matthew 27:32-50

Mark 15:21-37

Luke 23:33-49

John 19:23-30*



Make it together:

Supplies: rice vinegar

- Let everyone in the family taste a spoonful of vinegar.

Talk about it together:

Jesus drank the vinegar just before He died. Let's try some and see how it must have tasted. Was it good? Yuck! No way!

Not only did Jesus drink the vinegar, the Bible shows that Jesus took all our sin, sickness and shame into Himself. It's like He drank our sin. It's like he took the cup of our sin and put it into Himself. (2 Corinthians 5:21, Isaiah 53:5)

When you remember how horrible the vinegar tastes, remember how horrible sin is. Remember that Jesus took that bitterness, that sin into Himself. He drank it for you.

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Color mouth. Cut or tear pieces of sandpaper to glue to the tongue. Discuss how the vinegar must have felt on His tongue.

Day 9 - Hear

Earthquake

You HEAR the power of Jesus and recognize Him as God's Son.

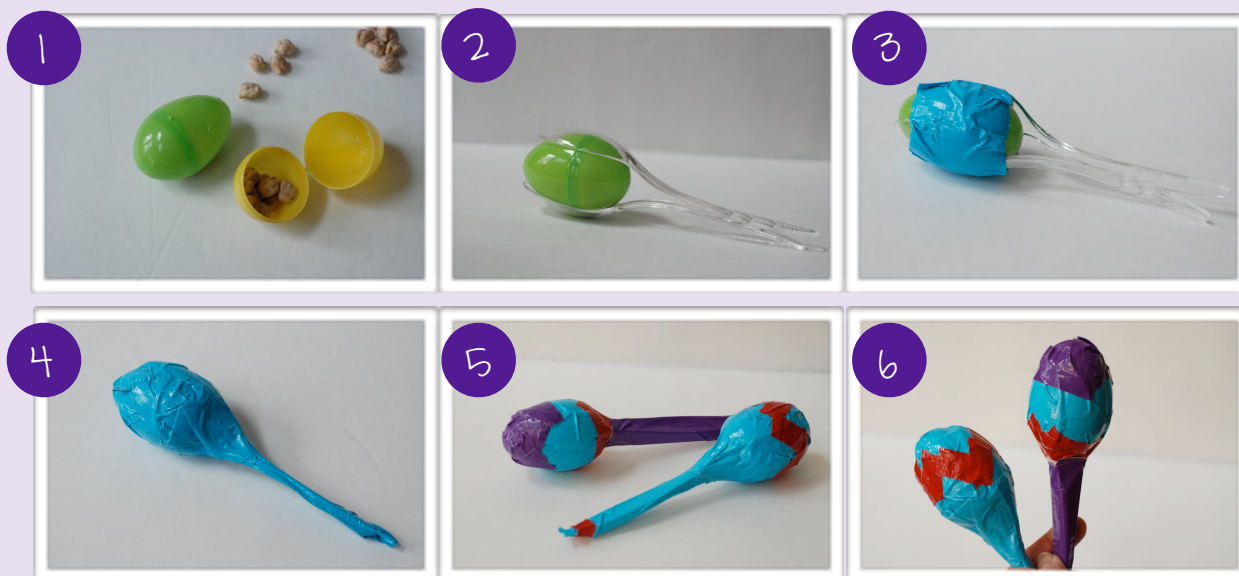
Read it together:

Matthew 27:50-56*

Mark 15:38-39

Make it together:

Supplies: colored duct tape, 2 plastic spoons, plastic egg, small rocks or beans



Talk

about it together:

There are a lot of noises in this part of the story-Jesus shouted, the curtain was torn in two, there was an earthquake and tombs broke open. When the Roman centurion saw what happened, he was so amazed it made him realize that Jesus really was God's Son and not just a normal man.

Our noisemakers today will remind us of the noises at Jesus' death. When we hear how loud they are, let's be like the Roman soldier and say, "Jesus is God's Son!"

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Glue small rocks or soft dry dirt to the rock picture.

Day 10 - See & Feel

**You SEE and FEEL the finality of death--
the death that should have been yours.**

Read it together:

Matthew 27:57-66*

Mark 15:42-47

Luke 23:50-56

John 19:38-42

Make it together:

Supplies: string, streamers or rope

- Use the string to close off a doorway, hallway or other entry of your house.

Talk about it together:

When Jesus died, no one expected Him to come back to life. The disciples went away sad. Joseph of Arimethea wrapped Him with linen cloth and spices, which is how the Jewish people took care of dead bodies. Pilate sent Roman soldiers to guard the tomb so no one would steal his body. They sealed the tomb so no one could get IN.

Jesus was dead. He really died. This death is what sin brings. (Romans 6:23) It's the death we are supposed to have. But Jesus took our sin (remember the vinegar?) and died in our place.

We're going to seal up one of the doorways in our house to remind us of Jesus being dead and sealed up in the tomb. We'll keep it up for several days so we can remember that Jesus was dead for 3 days.

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Use tape (duct tape would be great!) to cover the tomb picture.

Sealed Tomb



Day 11 - Sight

Angel

You SEE the dawn, the empty tomb, the bright and shining angel. You SEE the miracle of LIGHT from DARK

Read it together:

Matthew 28:1-10*

Mark 16:1-8

Luke 24:1-12

John 20:1-19

Make it together:

Supplies: clear, sparkly, glittery materials (clear plastic bottles, old CDs, glitter foam, tinsel, aluminum foil, tin pie plates, etc)

- Use round materials as a base for a suncatcher.
- Glue and attach as many sparkly, glittery pieces as possible.
- Hang in window to reflect the light.

Talk about it together:

I want you to imagine what those women saw when Jesus came back to life on that Sunday morning.

First it was dawn, which means the sun was just coming up. The sun is super bright!

Second, they saw a tomb with no rock in front of it. It wasn't dark inside anymore!

Third, they saw a bright, shining man--an angel!

Jesus came back to life to show us how our hearts can go from dark to light! That resurrection morning was a bright picture of what Jesus does in our hearts--He defeats dark death and makes us alive in His light!

When we see the bright light shining off our suncatchers, let's remember resurrection morning and how Jesus came back to life!

Do more together:

Printable Flag

Line the angel with white glue. Then pour glitter on top. Shake off excess glitter. Dry before displaying.



Day 12 - Taste

Fish

You will TASTE Jesus' love and provision

Read it together:

John 21

Do it together:

Supplies: picnic lunch including fish (anything from tuna sandwiches, frozen fish sticks or a big piece of salmon!)

- Have a picnic lunch with your family. This should be a celebration of all you've experienced as a family with the Sense of the Resurrection.

Talk about it together:

After Jesus came back to life, He appeared to many other people besides the women at the tomb. This day, He appeared to the disciples as they were fishing. And even though the disciples were the fishermen, Jesus is the one who got all the fish for them!

Jesus also used this time to remind the disciples (especially Peter) what He had planned for them. They weren't going to be ordinary fishermen the rest of their lives. They were also going to tell others about Jesus.

Jesus has the same plan for you. He loves you so much, he wants you to taste the love, goodness and plan He has for you. Just as the disciples tasted the fish and knew Jesus' love and care for them, you can remember that Jesus came back to life to have a real friendship with you.

The story of Jesus' death and resurrection is only the beginning of the story of your relationship with Him.

Do more together:

Printable Flag

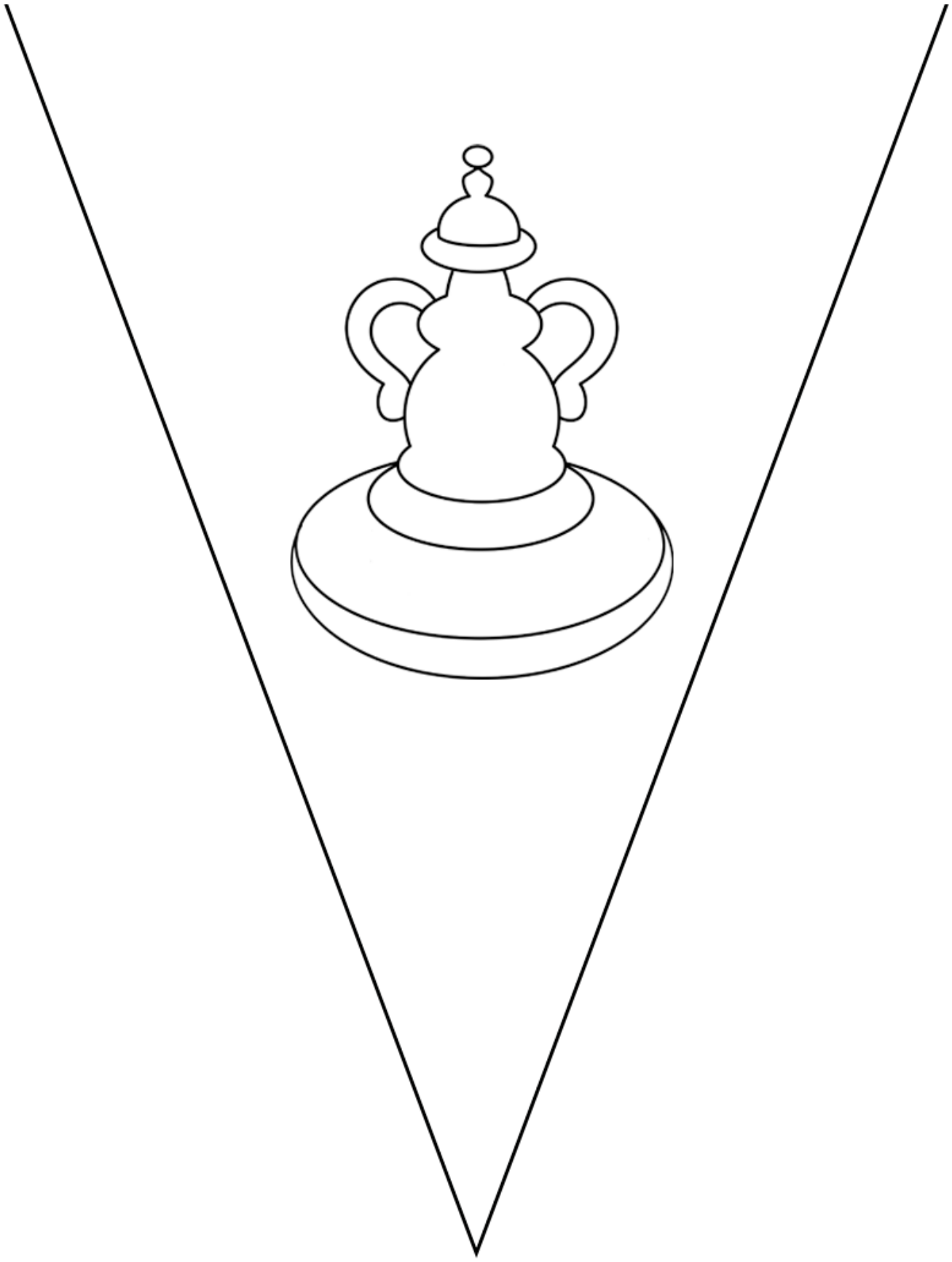
Glue sequins to recreate scales on the fish picture.



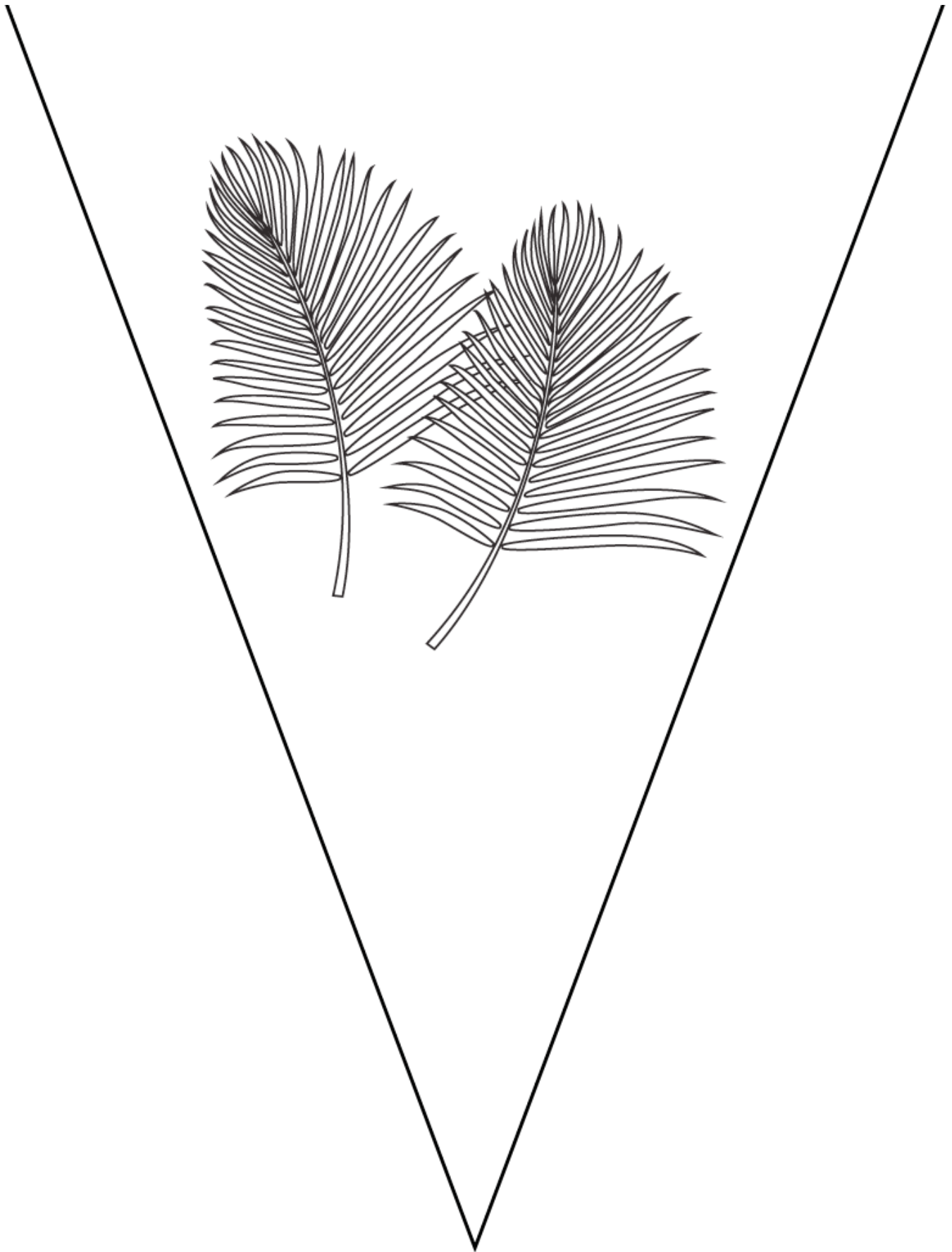
Instructions for creating Your Printable Flag



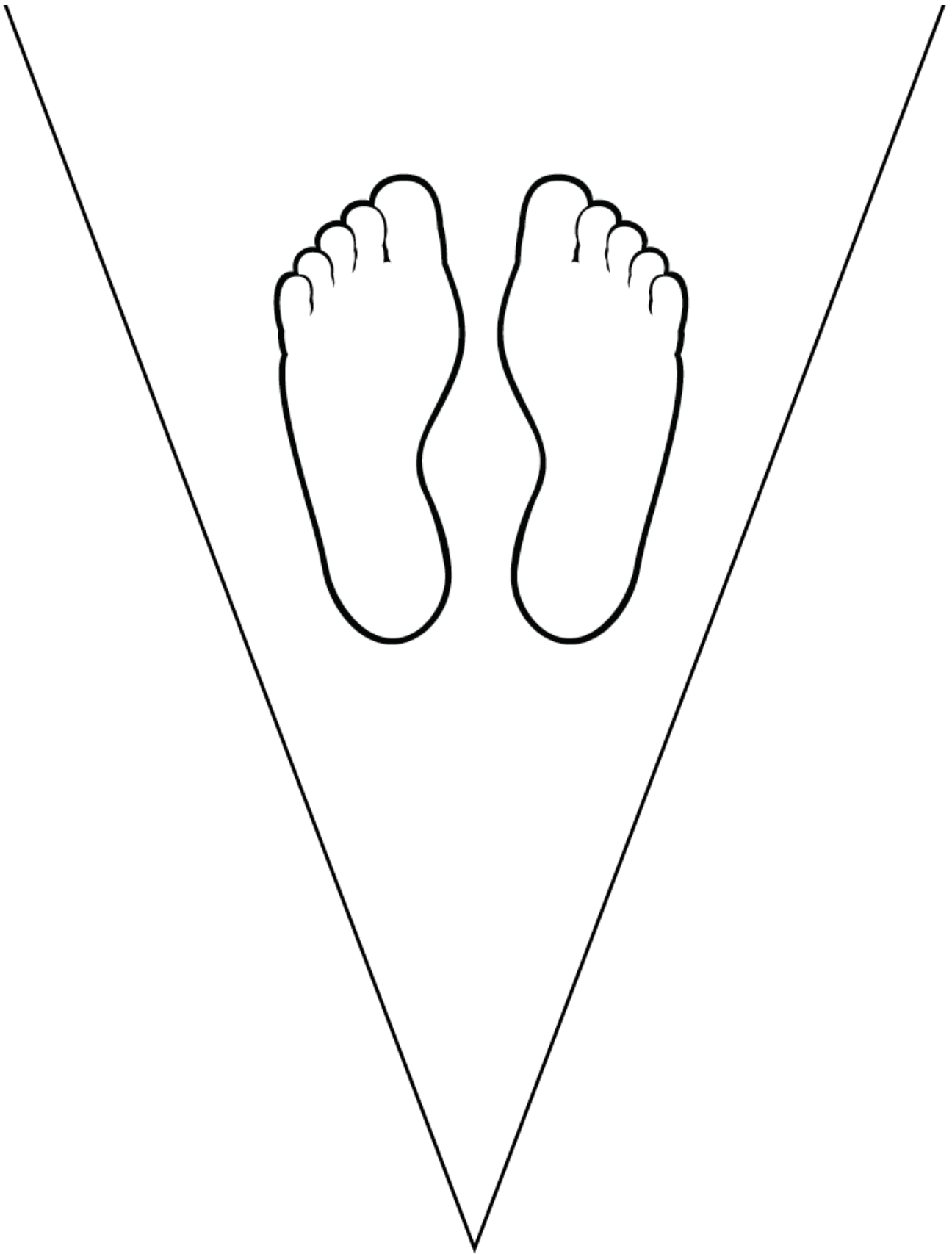
1. Print and decorate.
2. Cut along lines.
3. Tape directly onto string or ribbon. Or punch holes in top corners and thread.
4. Use as an Easter decoration and a memory tool to review the story.



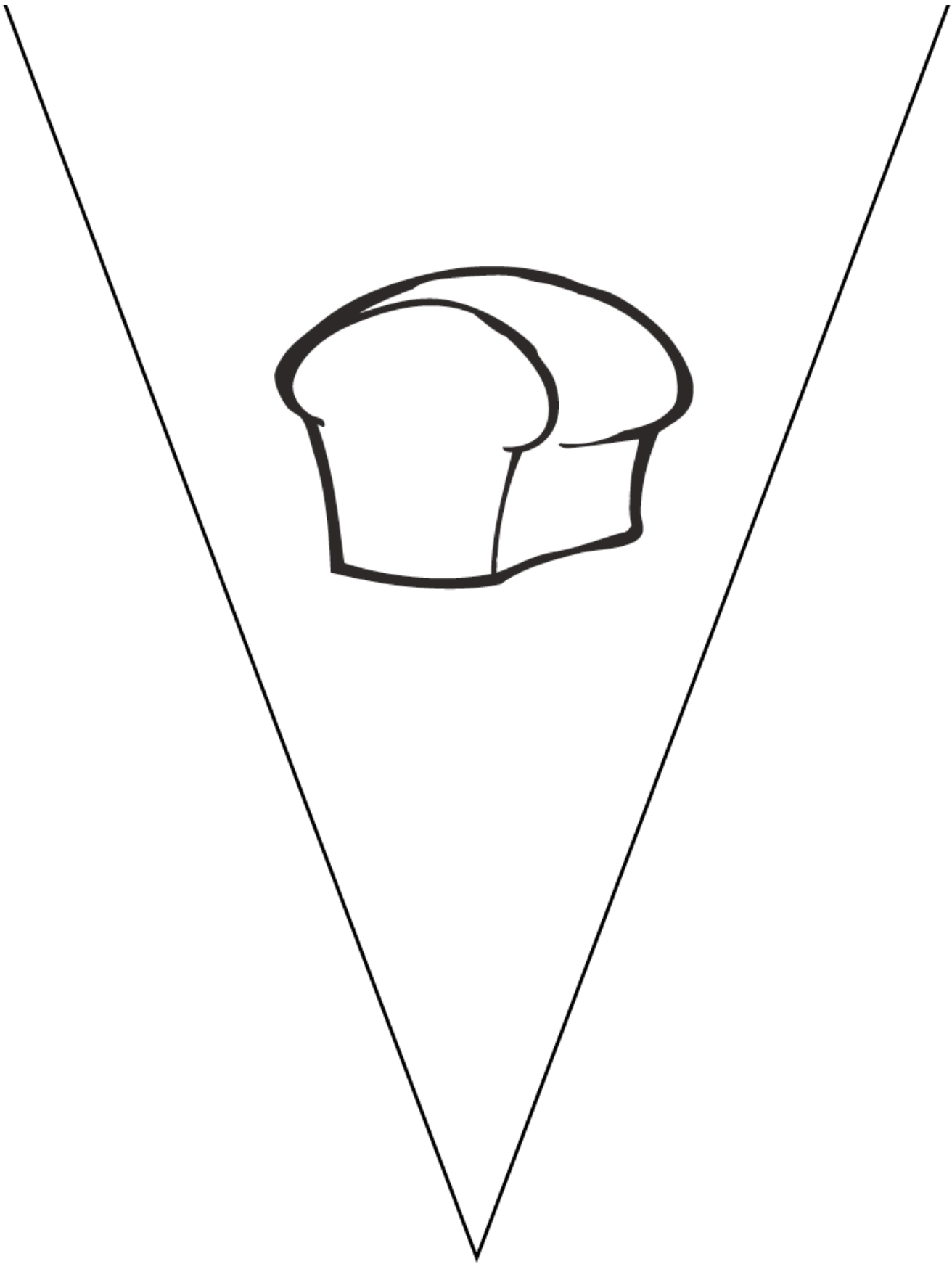
Day 1 - perfume box



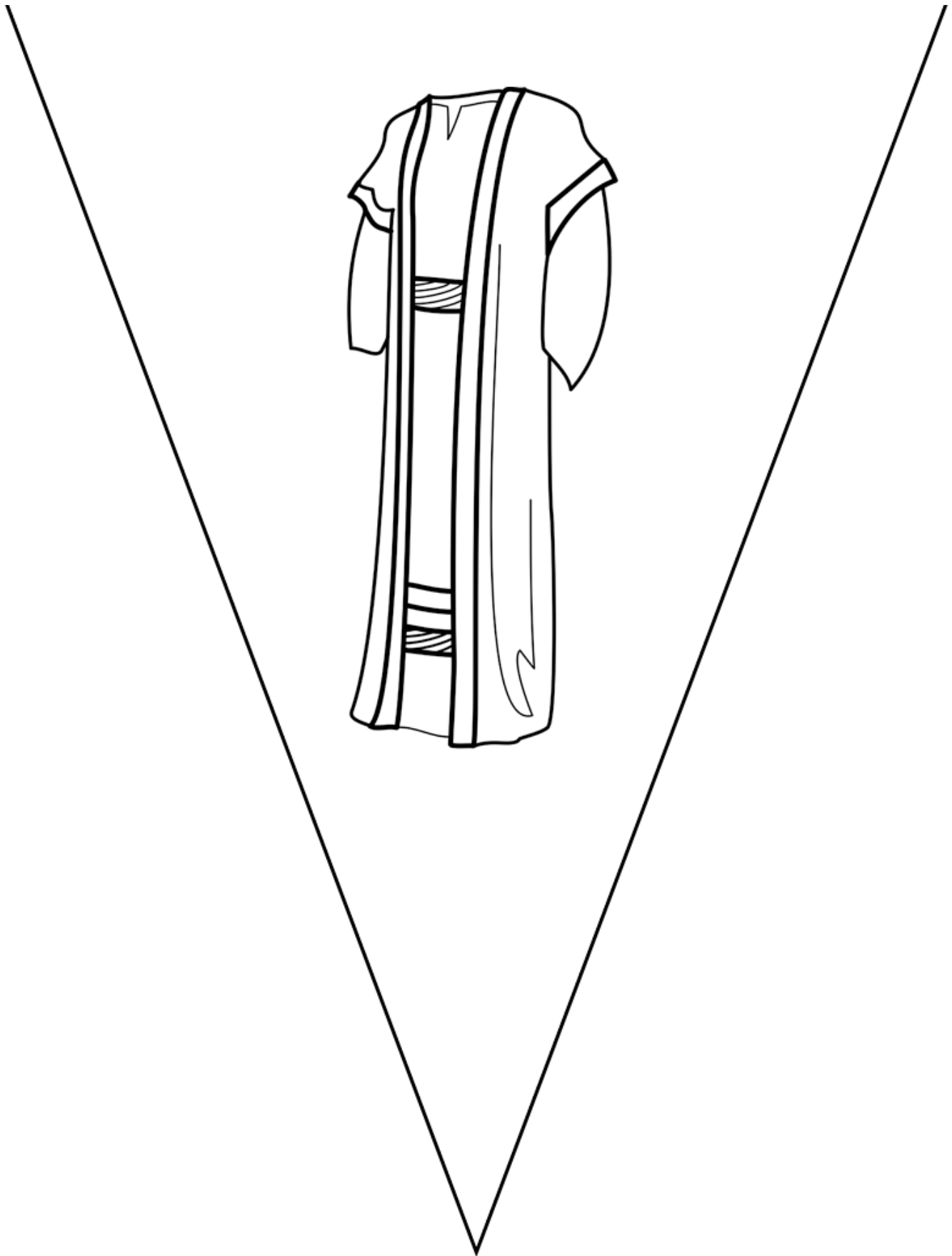
Day 2 - printable flag palm leaves template



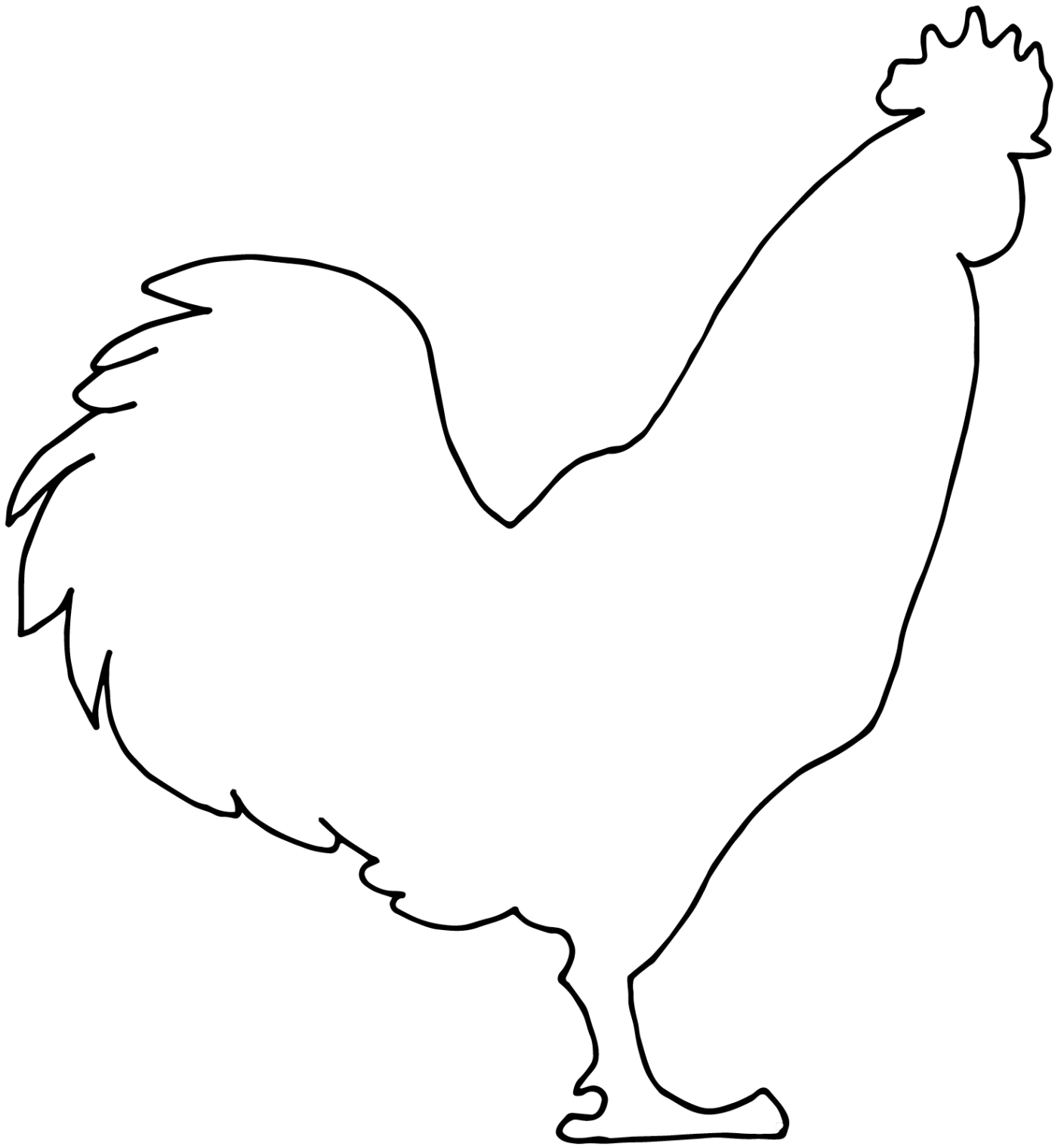
Day 3 - printable flag feet template



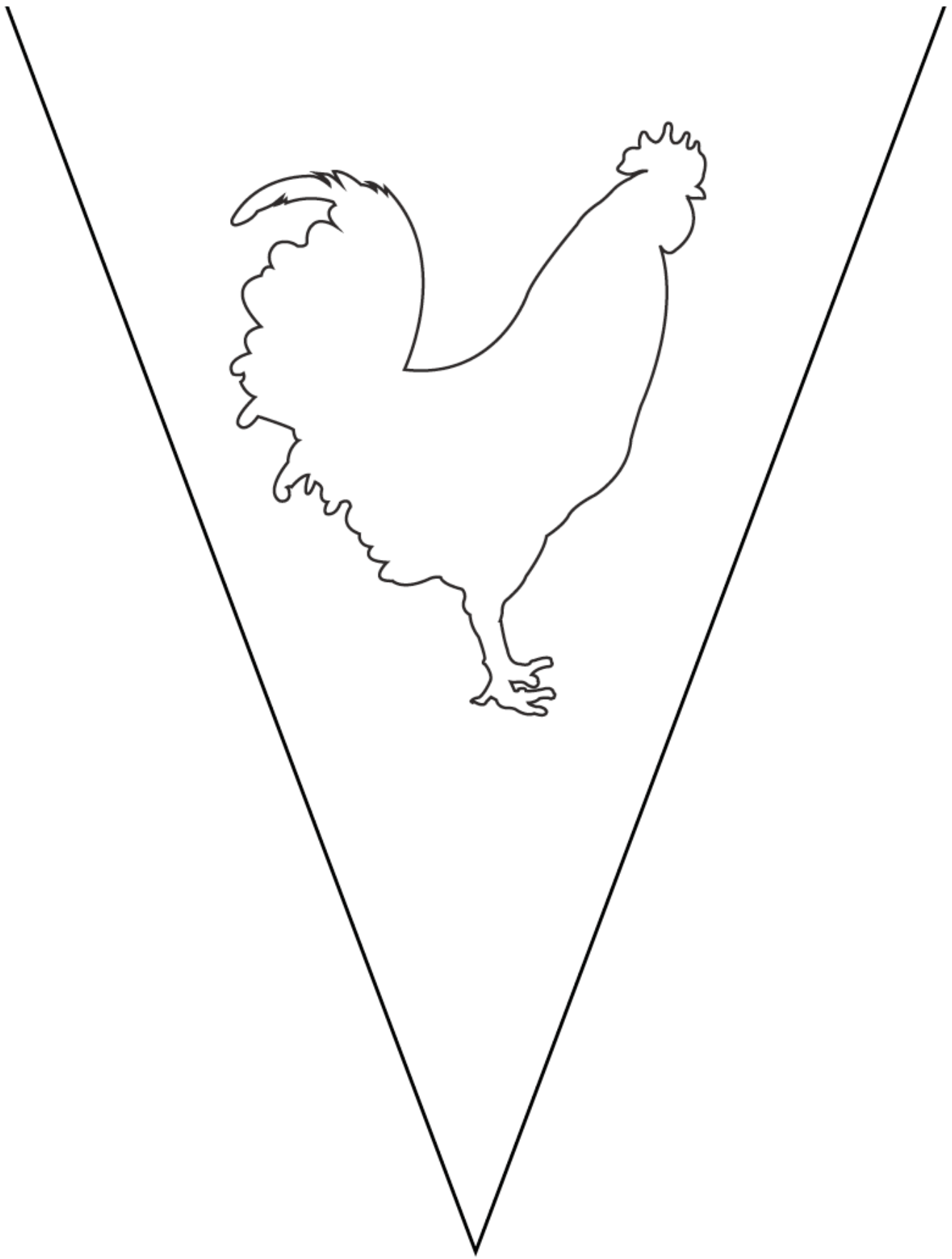
Day 4 - bread template



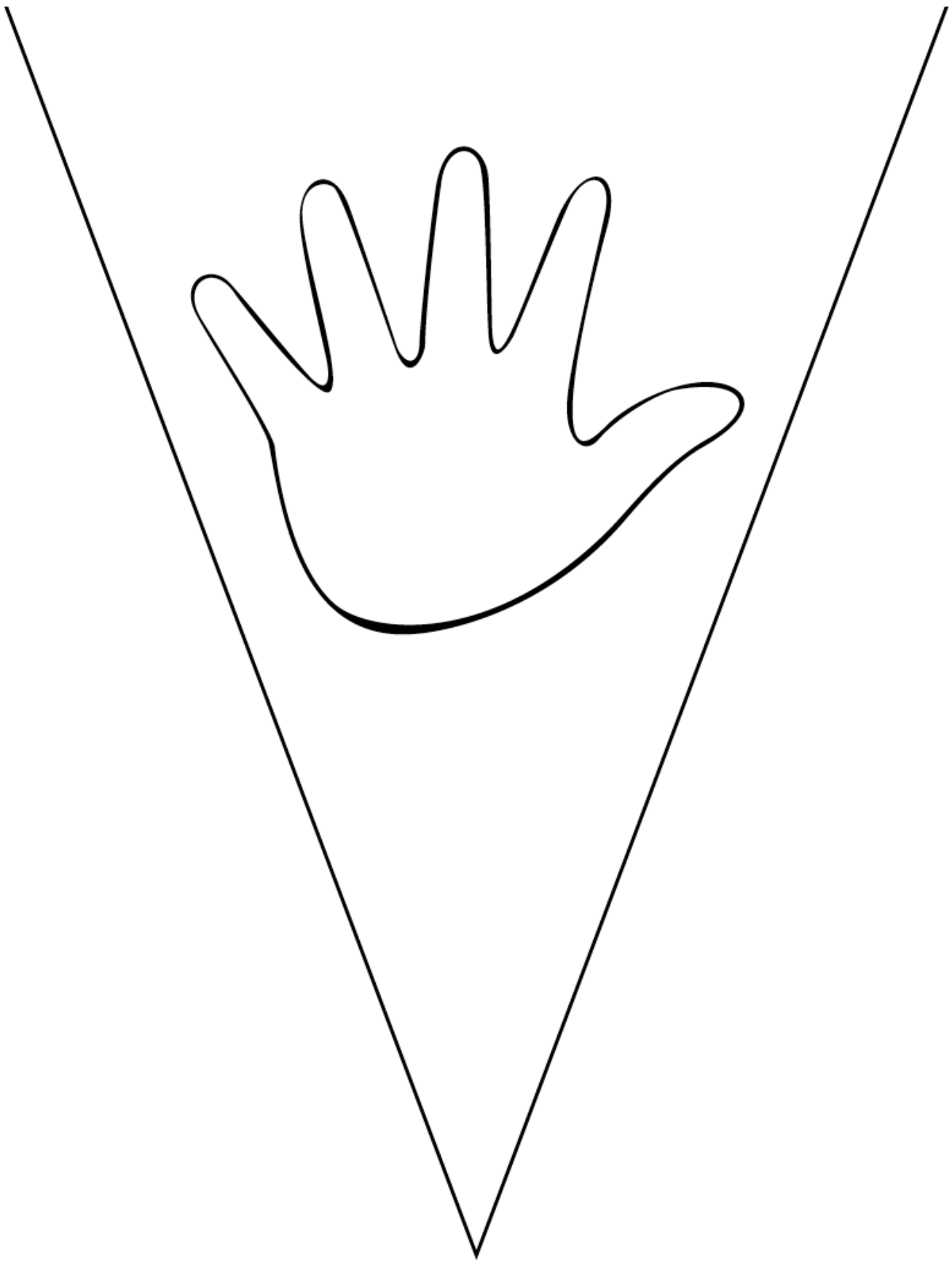
Day 5 - printable flag robe template



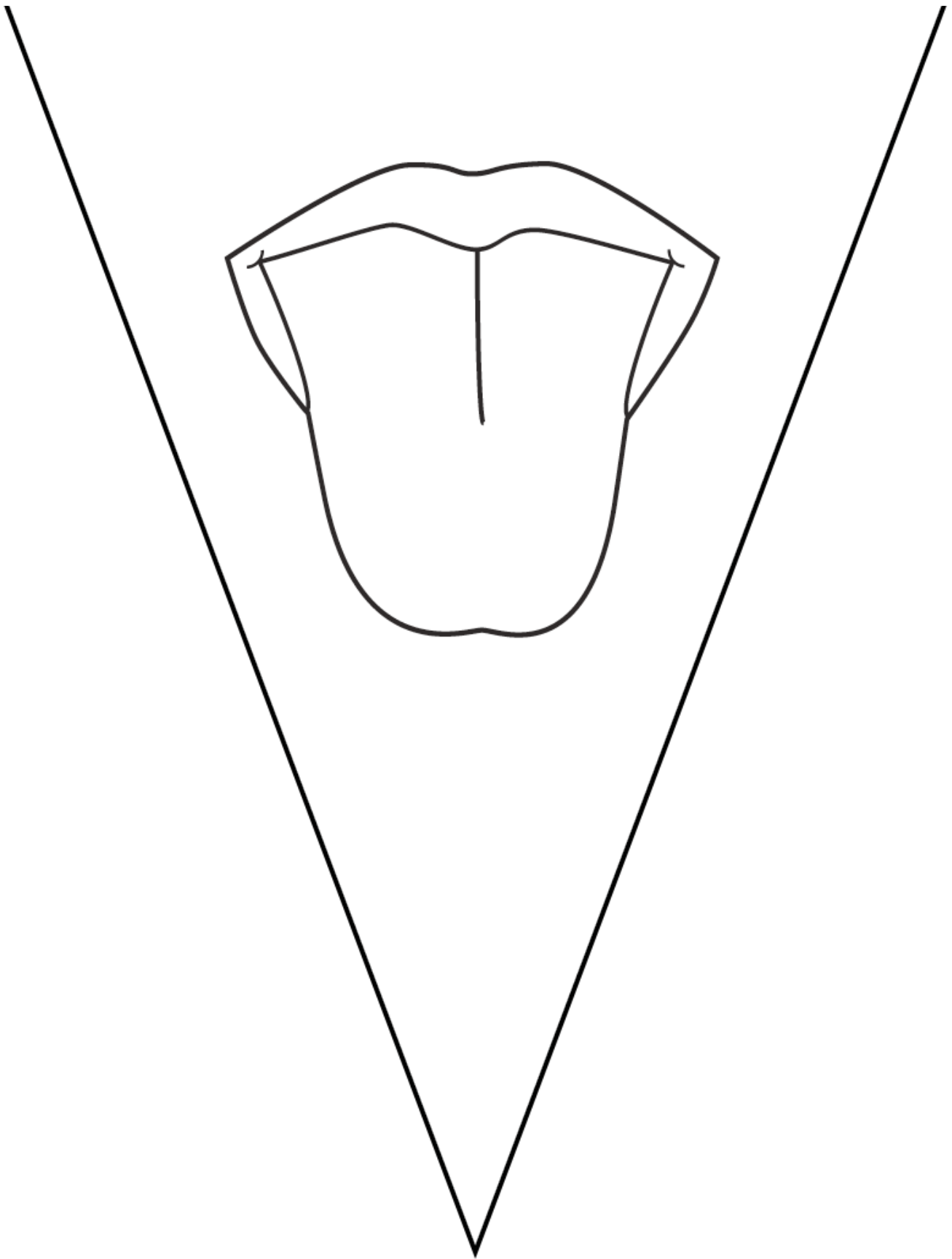
Day 6 - rooster template for canvas



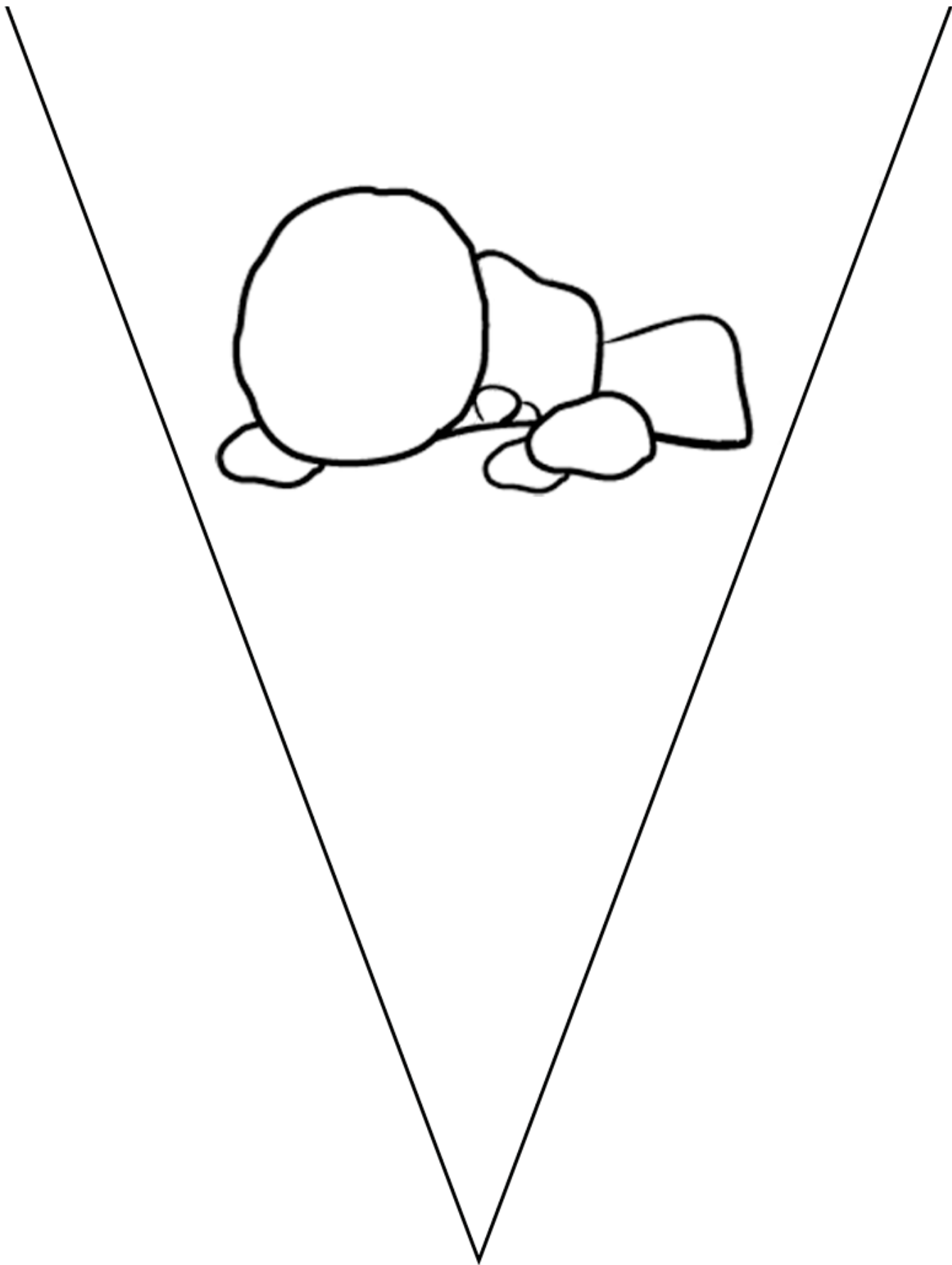
Day 6 - printable flag rooster template



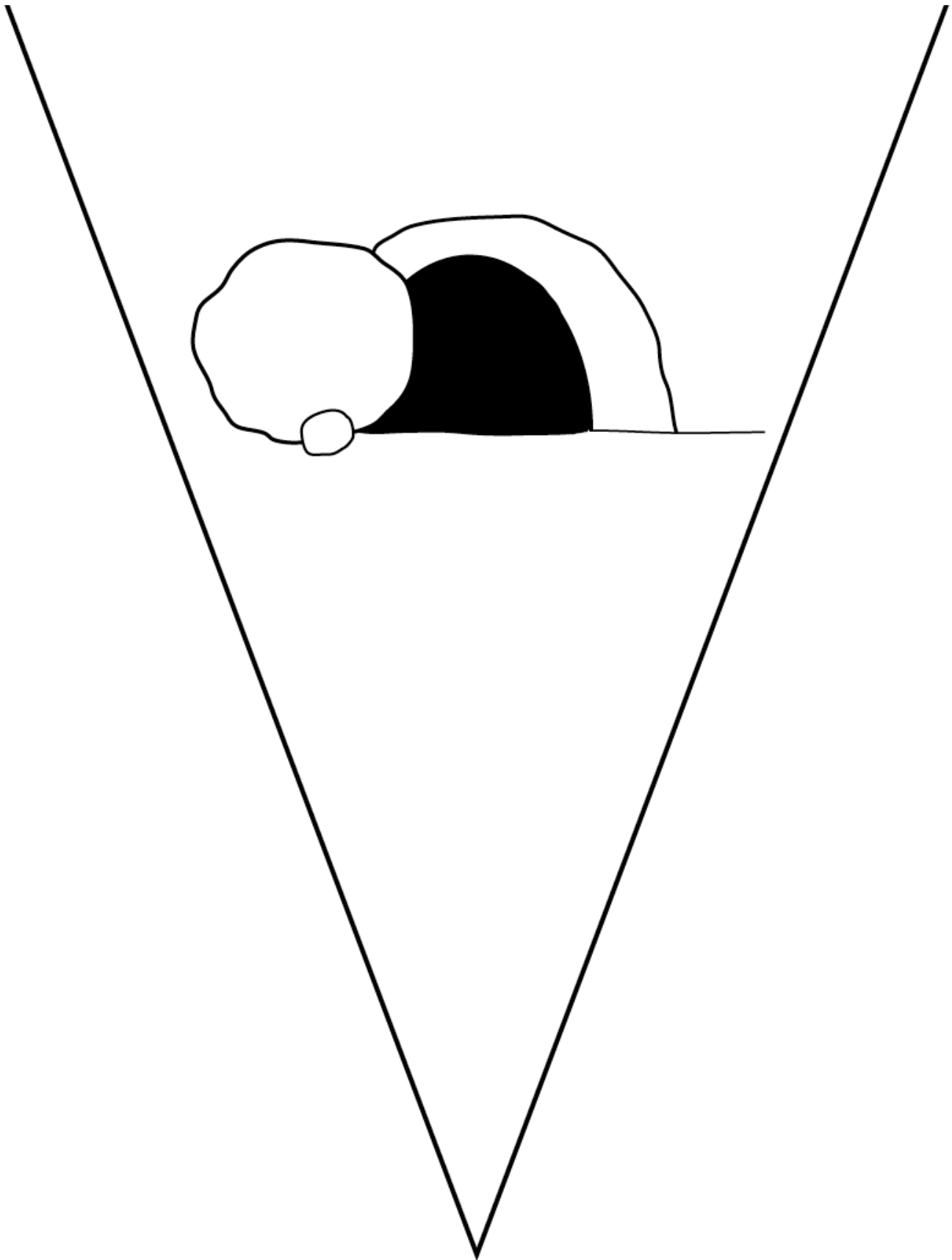
Day 7 - printable flag hand template



Day 8 - printable flag mouth template



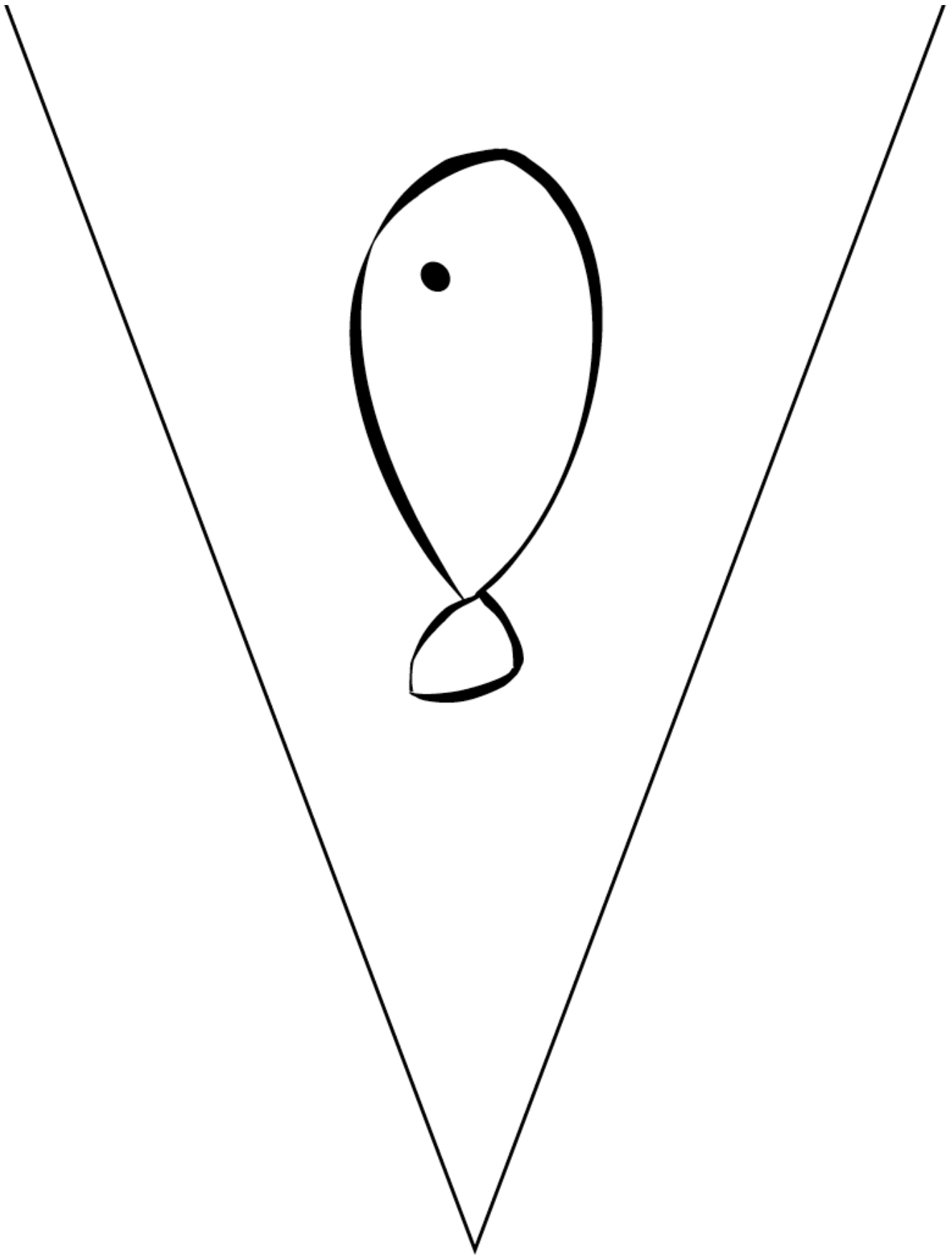
Day 9 - printable flag rocks template



Day 10 - printable flag sealed Tomb template



Day 11 - printable flag angel template



Day 12 - printable flag fish template

About the Author

Amanda White is just a girl who wants her kids to know about Jesus. She grew up loving God, the church and all things creative. She and her husband, Les were full-time children's ministry folks for the first few years of marriage--they traveled the country doing puppet shows, magic tricks and singing songs to lead kids to God and His Word. Then a few church jobs came and went and two kids came along and ministry became home-based and family-focused.

Amanda started a blog, ohAmanda.com to tell her story of motherhood and leading her kids to the Lord. This led to an ebook, [Truth in the Tinsel: An Advent Experience for Little Hands](#) and thousands of families learning to impress God's Word on their kids' hearts.

You can read Amanda's almost-daily musings and fun ideas at ohAmanda.com. Get to know her even more on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) (in that order)!

