

I Wish Today Was My Birthday!

You tell this *story* while showing the children the folded paper with birthday cake and animals.

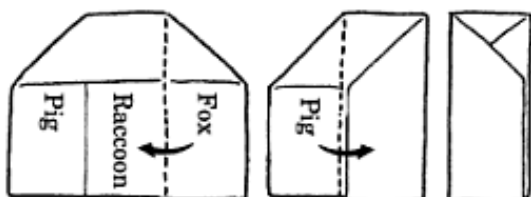
Start by showing the side with Raccoon in the middle, under the birthday cake.



Raccoon said, "Today is my birthday! I am five years old today!"

Pig and Fox said, "Congratulations, Raccoon! Happy Birthday!"

But Fox thought, "I wish today was my birthday. I wish, I wish, I wish."

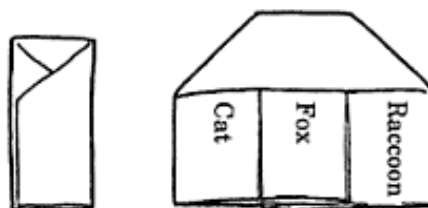


Close the paper, folding the Fox side in first, then the Pig side. Enclose the paper between your hands and wave them up and down while wishing.



But when you open your hands, take out the paper so that the other side faces the children.

Let's see whose birthday it is now. Open. Fox should be in the middle now.



Oh! It is Fox's birthday! How old are you today, Fox?

Fox said, "I am five years old!"

Cat and Raccoon said, "Congratulations, Fox! Happy Birthday!"

But Cat thought, "I wish today was my birthday. I wish, I wish, I wish."

Close the paper, folding the Cat side in first, then the Raccoon side. Again enclose it in your hands while "wishing," and take it out showing the other side.

Let's see whose birthday it is now.

Ah! Now it is Cat's birthday! How old are you, Cat?

Cat said, "I am five years old today!"

Pig and Fox said, "Congratulations, Cat! Happy Birthday!"

But Pig thought, "I wish today was my birthday. I wish, I wish, I wish."

And so forth. You control whose birthday it is next by folding that one's side in first, then turning the paper over.

Of course you can adapt the number of candles to the age of your listeners.

Comment

Young children are delighted and mystified by the way the "birthday animal" changes every time you open the paper. The mystery depends on how well you hide the fact that you are turning the paper over. How long will it take the class wiz to figure it out?

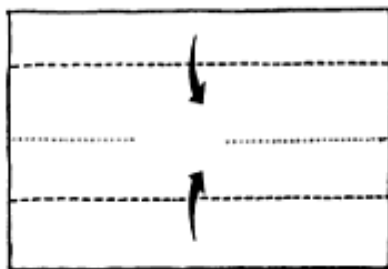
For working with large groups, you can make a big, sturdy version out of cloth with painted or appliquéd animals.

Children can make their own "magic changers," drawing in any four items they wish. Examples: four flowers wanting sunshine; four toys wanting a child to play with them; four adult moods a child could wish for!

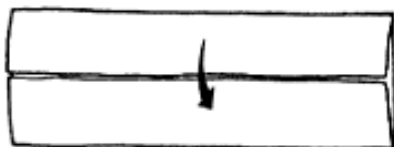
How To:

Materials: Plain paper, crayons or markers.

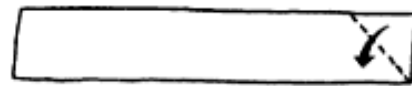
1. Fold the paper in half lengthwise. Open it; fold each long edge to the middle crease.



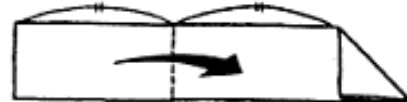
2. Refold along the original center crease.



3. Fold down the right corner. You are measuring off the width along one long side.



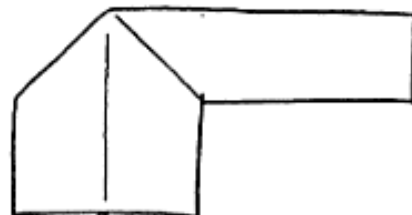
4. Fold the remainder in half, up to the measuring part.



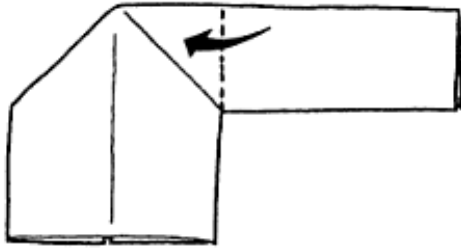
5. Unfold the right corner. Crease the left side up; unfold it.



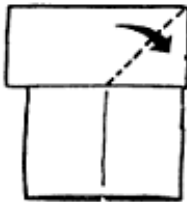
6. Open the left side with your finger. Press it down flat, using the creases.



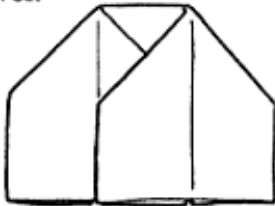
7. Fold the right side over the left, at the place shown.



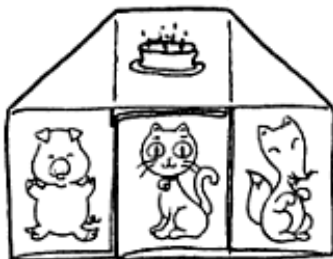
8. Crease down the upper (right) part, as in step 5. Unfold it, then open it and press it flat as in step 6.



9. This is the back view of the house. Turn it over.



10. Front view. Draw the first three animals. Draw a birthday cake on the roof.



11. Draw Raccoon on the flap behind Cat. Turn the house over and draw an identical cake on the roof of the other side.

