

## Fire Safety 101 at the Public Library

### Overview

During a class trip to the public library, students will learn about the fire department via discussion and by examining a poster for a fire safety puppet show that was performed at the Chapel Hill Public Library. Teachers can then work with their local fire department and/or library staff to teach students about the importance of fire safety. To culminate their exploration, students will create a puppet show to share fire safety tips.

### Grades

K-4

### Materials

- Poster for Jordan Joins the Fire Department puppet show, attached
- Video of “Chapel Hill Fire Public Safety Puppet Program - Johnnie Joins the Fire Department: A Puppet Musical,” available to stream here: <https://vimeo.com/76438231>
- Fire Safety Tips for Kids from PBS, attached
- Cutouts for puppets and props (optional) and art supplies for decorating them
  - Sample cutouts are attached, teachers can develop their own for distribution, or have students create originals depending on their age/abilities
- Popsicle sticks or straws
- Glue sticks
- If creating original puppets, art supplies such as:
  - Paper lunch bags, socks, paper plates, etc.
  - Glue, fabric glue, pipe cleaners, etc.
  - Markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc.
  - Yarn, fabric scraps, recycled items, and other materials for creating puppet faces, clothing and props
- Depending on the space used for the puppet shows, teachers may need to create a makeshift puppet theatre (i.e., a table with a sheet or large cloth hung in front)
- “Controlled burn to prompt Chapel Hill Public Library lessons in conservation, science, and math,” *News & Observer* article, attached (optional): <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/counties/orange-county/article197647589.html>

### Duration

Varies depending on availability of fire department/library representatives.

### Teacher Preparation

- It is highly recommended that teachers invite a representative from the fire department to talk to the class about their work, role in the community, and tips for fire safety as part of this activity. Teachers should contact their local fire department several weeks in advance.
- Once teachers have determined what topics the official will cover, teachers should work with students to generate a list of questions for the officials in advance. Teachers can use the list of sample questions within the lesson plan below as a starting point.

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*This lesson plan was created by Carolina K-12 and the Chapel Hill Public Library as part of the “Doing Democracy: Civic Engagement & Education at the Public Library” project, made possible by funding from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (IMLS grant number LS-00-17-0034-17).*

- If a fire department representative is unavailable, ask your librarians to assist with finding any age appropriate books about fire safety and/or information about your town's fire department. Or refer to attached reading suggestions.
- This activity can also be completing in class without going to the library. Teachers can use the attached fire safety tips sheet or find one online from their local fire department or national organizations like the Red Cross.

## Procedure

### **"Jordan & Maya Join the Fire Department"**

1. Ask students to review all the various ways that libraries serve the community that they have learned about. During the discussion, let students know that in many communities, libraries can serve as a place for the community to gather for any number of reasons. For example, many libraries host computer classes to teach people how to use different computer programs. Some libraries host information sessions that help people fill out their taxes or register for government services like Medicaid and Medicare. Libraries also work with other local government departments to educate people about various issues in the community.
2. Show students the attached "Jordan and Maya Join the Fire Department" poster. Discuss:
  - What do you see/first notice?
  - What is this poster advertising?
  - Where is this event taking place?
  - Why do you think the library is hosting a puppet show with the fire department?
  - Do you think you would like to go to this? Why or why not?
  - What do you know about the fire department?
  - What do you already know about fire safety?
3. After reviewing the poster, choose one or a combination of the following activities. If either option is unavailable, skip to the "Fire Safety 101" section.

### **Working with Your Local Fire Department (Option 1)**

4. If a member of your local fire department is addressing the class (highly recommended), introduce the fire department official at this point. Teachers should have already worked with the official to determine the content of the presentation. Allow students to ask questions during or after the presentation. Teachers should work with students in advance to prepare a list of questions. For example:
  - Why did you join the fire department?
  - What does your typical day look like?
  - How much training did you have to do to work for the fire department?
  - What is your favorite part of your job?
  - Are you ever scared?
  - Have you ever had to rescue a cat from a tree?
  - How is the fire department connected to the library?
  - What are some of the fire prevention or fire safety features in the library?
  - What tips would you give to someone who wanted to join the fire department?

### **Working with Your Local Library (Option 2)**

6. If no one from the fire department is available, ask your librarian to share some books about fire safety, the fire department, etc.

- Depending on student reading levels, teachers can place students into groups and assign each group a book to read together.
- If students are not quite ready to read by themselves, read the book aloud as a class. Ask the class questions about the book throughout to check for understanding.

### **Fire Safety 101**

7. After completing one of the options above, distribute the attached “Fire Safety 101” handout (for upper-grades) and review, or simply share this information verbally with younger students. If a fire department official is visiting, he/she can likely provide this overview rather than the teacher. Discuss:
  - Why is it important to make a fire safety plan with your family?
  - What number do you call if there’s a fire? When should you call that number?
  - Which of these fire safety tips do you think is the most important and why?
  - How can you teach your friends about fire safety?

### **Fire Safety 101 Puppet Show**

8. Next, tell students that they’re going to partner with their local library and fire department to perform a fire safety puppet show to teach their community about fire safety! (To garner student excitement, teacher can optionally play an excerpt from “Johnny Joins the Fire Department,” a puppet show commissioned by the Chapel Hill Fire Department. The video is available here: <https://vimeo.com/76438231>)
9. Teachers should determine whether students will be creating puppets out of cutouts provided (perhaps best for younger students) or if materials will be provided for them to create their puppets and props from scratch.
  - If providing cutouts, teachers should print (and perhaps to save time, cut out) blank puppet designs and props (examples attached.) If providing these for students, it is recommended to make extra in case students need to start over or want to create extra characters/props. Popsicle sticks or straws can be glued to the back of the cutouts to create puppets.
  - Alternatively, teachers can provide students with materials such as paper lunch bags, socks, and other arts and crafts materials so students can make their own puppets and props. This option will allow for more creativity, but will also be more time consuming and require additional materials.
10. Place students into groups of 3-5. Distribute the attached puppet show instructions handout (for older students; teachers can simply provide verbal instructions to younger students) and review the instructions as a class. Teachers should feel free to alter the instructions depending on their students’ needs. Assign each group one or two fire safety tips from the “Fire Safety 101” handout and ask them to write their assigned tip on the handout (older students only; younger students could be provided a strip containing their fire safety tip.) Instruct students to work on their script for the show before starting to work on their puppets and props. Once they know what characters and props they need for the show, they can begin their crafting. As students work, circulate throughout the room to answer any questions and to check on student progress. Teachers should determine beforehand how much time students have to complete their puppet shows and provide them with reminders of the remaining time.

### **Performing the Puppet Show**

11. Before performing the show, teachers should determine what to use for a theater. Some schools or libraries may already have [pre-fabricated puppet show theaters](#) that teachers can use. If one isn’t available, some options include making a [puppet show theater out of cardboard](#) or placing a table cloth over a table and having the students crouch behind it.

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12. Before starting the performances, remind students how to be respectful audience members by reviewing the following rules:
- Be respectful, watch and listen.
  - You should give the performance your full attention. (Don't think about or work on your own show during the performances.)
  - Sit quietly and don't talk to those around you.
  - If you have questions, write them down and save them until after the show ends.
  - Give your classmates a BIG round of applause at the end of their show.
13. If the fire department representative is able to stay for the performances and time permits, teachers may want to facilitate a brief discussion after each performance, pointing out the fire safety tips addressed and having the fire official comment. After all the groups have presented their puppet shows, discuss (again, with the fire department official weighing in and providing additional information):
- Why is it important that you learn about fire safety?
  - Aside from a puppet show, how can you teach people about fire safety?
  - How can libraries help you learn more about fire safety?
  - In what ways do libraries serve as important community centers?

### Optional Activity

- Read the attached "Controlled burn to prompt Chapel Hill Public Library lessons in conservation, science, and math" article from the *News & Observer* as a class. Discuss the following questions:
  - How are the fire department and library working together?
  - Why is the fire department overseeing a controlled burn?
  - How is the library helping to educate the community about the burn?
  - How might controlled burns actually promote fire safety?
    - *Controlled burning can be managed or controlled to reduce the intensity and magnitude of bigger wildfires by reducing the accumulation of flammable fuels.*
  - How might a controlled burn help the ecosystem?
    - *Wildfires cause fast nutrient recycling. An abundant supply of nutrients helps new seedlings, brush, and grasses to grow quickly and become established following a wildfire.*
- If reviewing the article as a class, teachers can ask students to incorporate a segment on controlled burns into their puppet show.



# JORDAN & MAYA JOIN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

featuring the Chapel Hill Fire Department

**MARCH 10 | 1-2PM**

**CHAPEL HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MEETING ROOM A**

**FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

# Fire Safety 101

Have you ever wondered what you would do if there were a fire in your home or school? I have. Here are some important prevention and safety tips.

## **Be Smart**

1. Don't touch matches. Stay away from lighters and candles, too.
2. Don't touch radiators or heaters. Ask a grown-up to turn a heater on or off for you. Don't stand too close to a fireplace or wood stove, either.
3. Don't play with electrical cords. And don't stick anything into an electrical socket.
4. Don't play around in the kitchen. If you want to cook something, be sure to check with a grown-up first.
5. Don't put anything over a lamp. Things thrown over a lamp (like blankets or clothing) could catch fire.

## **Be Prepared In Case of a Fire**

1. Make an escape plan. Work with your family to plan how to get out of your home if there is a fire.
2. Plan two ways out of every room. The first way out should be a door.
3. Choose a meeting place. Pick a safe and easy-to-remember spot outside your home where you will meet your family after you get out.
4. Practice! Every escape path needs to be planned and practiced with grown-ups.
5. Test smoke alarms. Help grown-ups remember to test smoke alarms monthly and to put in new batteries twice a year when the clocks change.

## **Be Safe**

1. Get out fast! When you hear the loud beep of the smoke alarm, get out of the house. Never hide or take time to grab your belongings or pets.
2. Follow your escape plan. After all, you've been practicing!
3. Feel a door before you open it. If it is hot, there may be fire on the other side. Try to get out another way.
4. Stay low to the floor. Since smoke rises, the safest air for breathing is down low.
5. Call 9-1-1 or the fire department. Be sure to do this after you get out of the house. Remember: Only call 9-1-1 if there is a real emergency.
6. Stay out! Once you're out, stay out. Don't go back for anything!

## **And Remember...**

Stop, Drop, and Roll. If your clothing catches fire, remember to stop where you are and drop to the ground. Cover your face and mouth with your hands and roll over and over until the flames are out.

(Edited by Carolina K-12 from the following source: <http://pbskids.org/arthur/firesafety/> )

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## Fire Safety 101 Puppet Show

**Directions:** Congratulations! The fire department has picked your class to put on a puppet show at the public library about fire safety. Your group will design your puppets then write and perform a short puppet show that tells people about an assigned fire safety tip.



1. Write down the fire safety tip(s) your teacher gave to your group:

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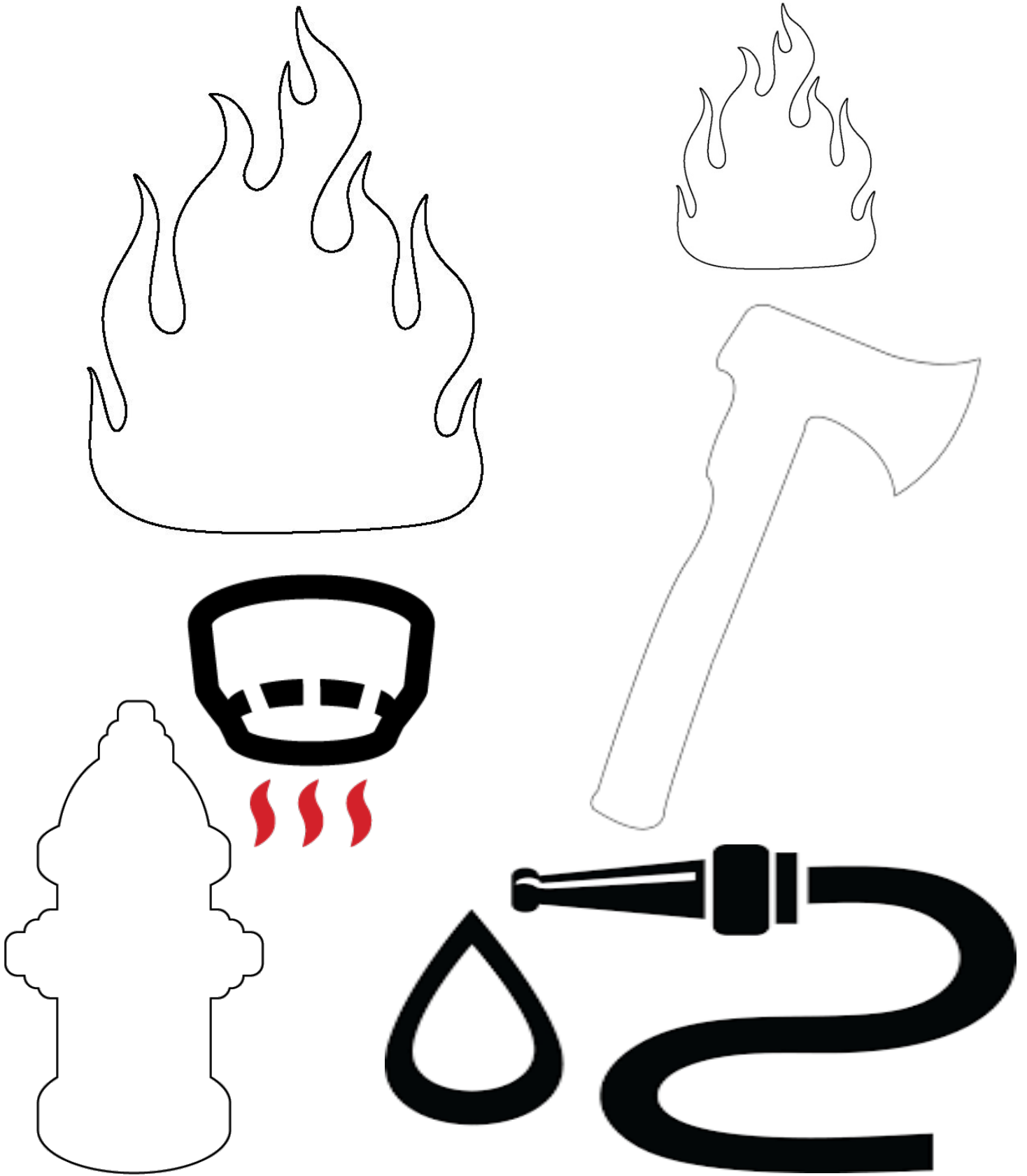
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2. Write down ideas for your puppet show in the space below. What characters do you want in your show? What should they say? Where does your puppet show take place? How will the puppets teach people about your fire safety tip? Remember, just like a story, the best puppet shows have a beginning, a middle and an end!

3. Color or make your puppet using the materials provided by your teacher. If your group is making their own puppets, be creative! The puppets can be people, animals, aliens, or whatever you want. Just make sure that they are wearing fire fighter hats or uniforms.

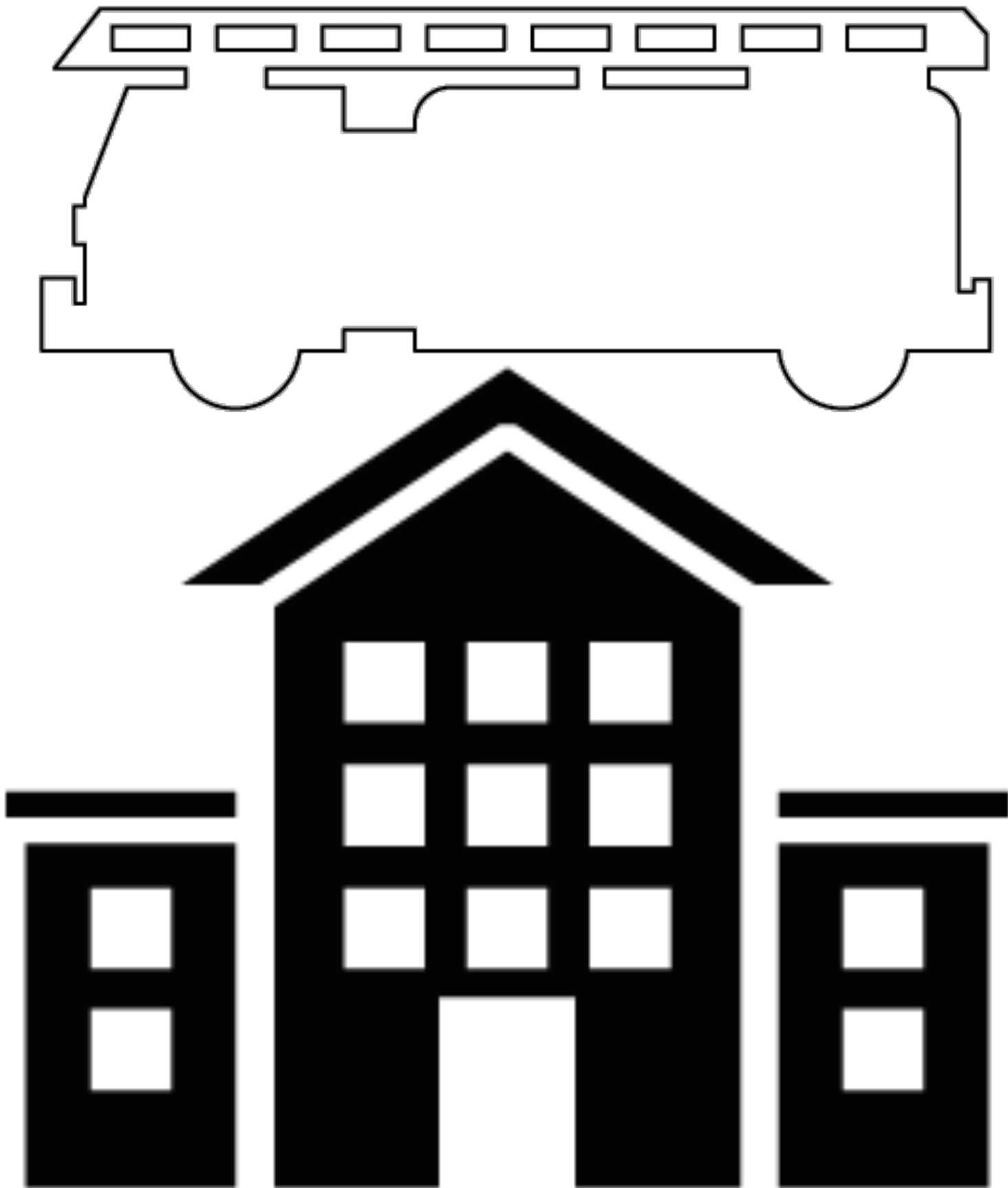
4. Perform your show!

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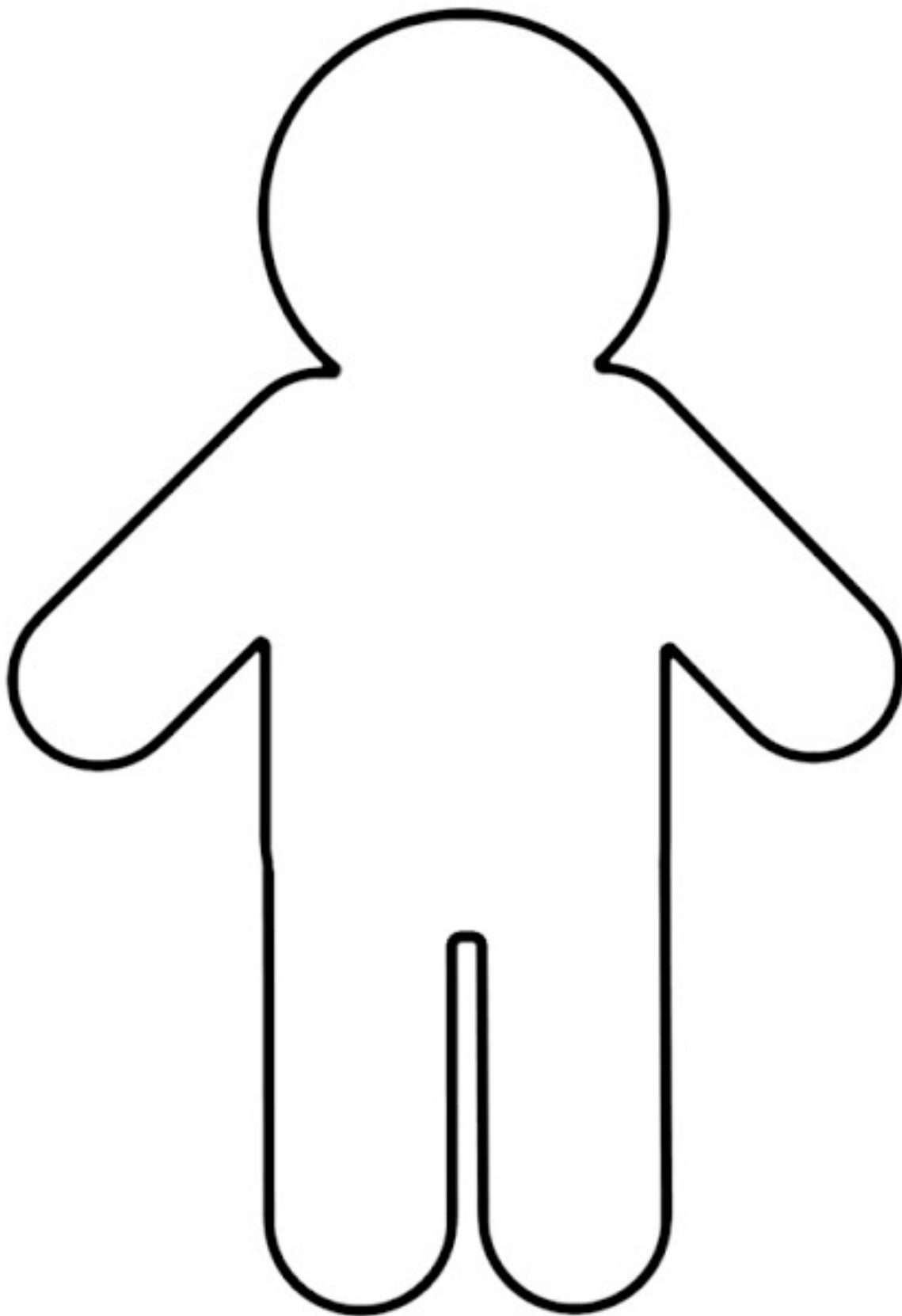


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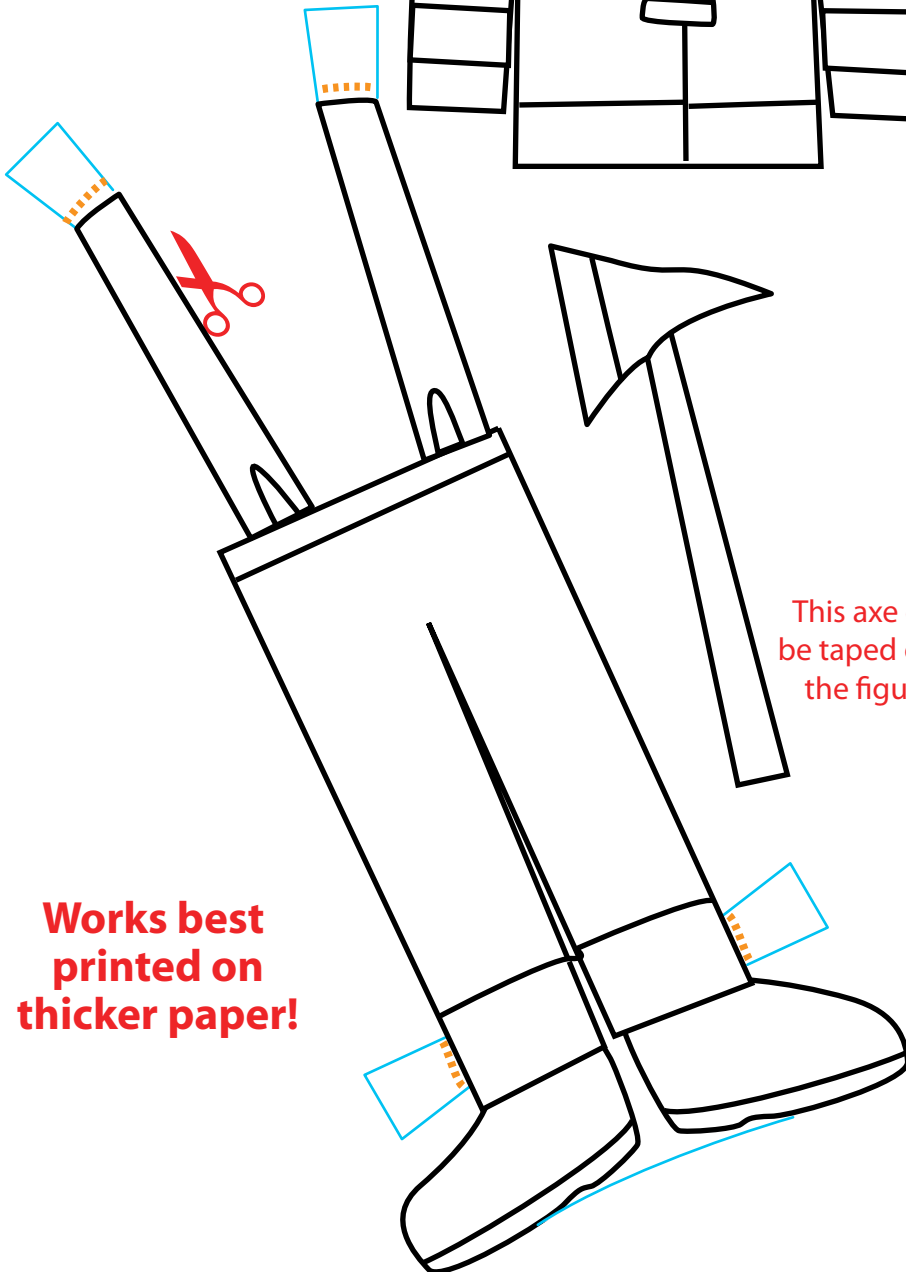
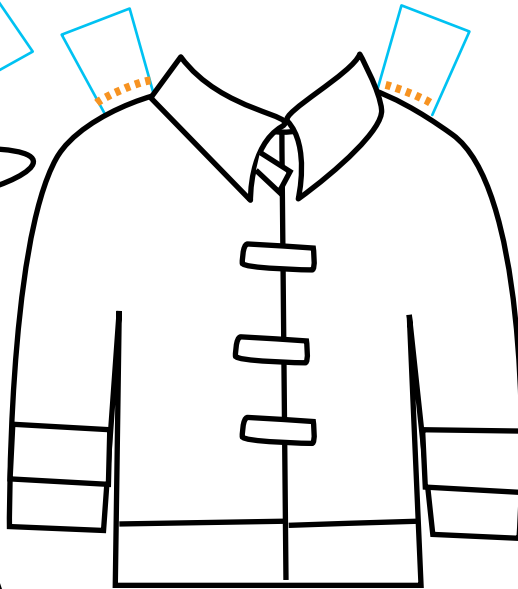
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# Paper Firefighter

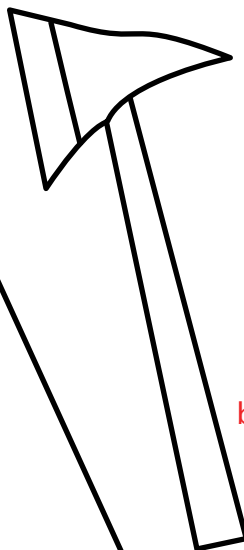
Color these and then ask a grown-up to help cut them out. Cut carefully on the blue and black lines. Be sure not to cut the tabs off!



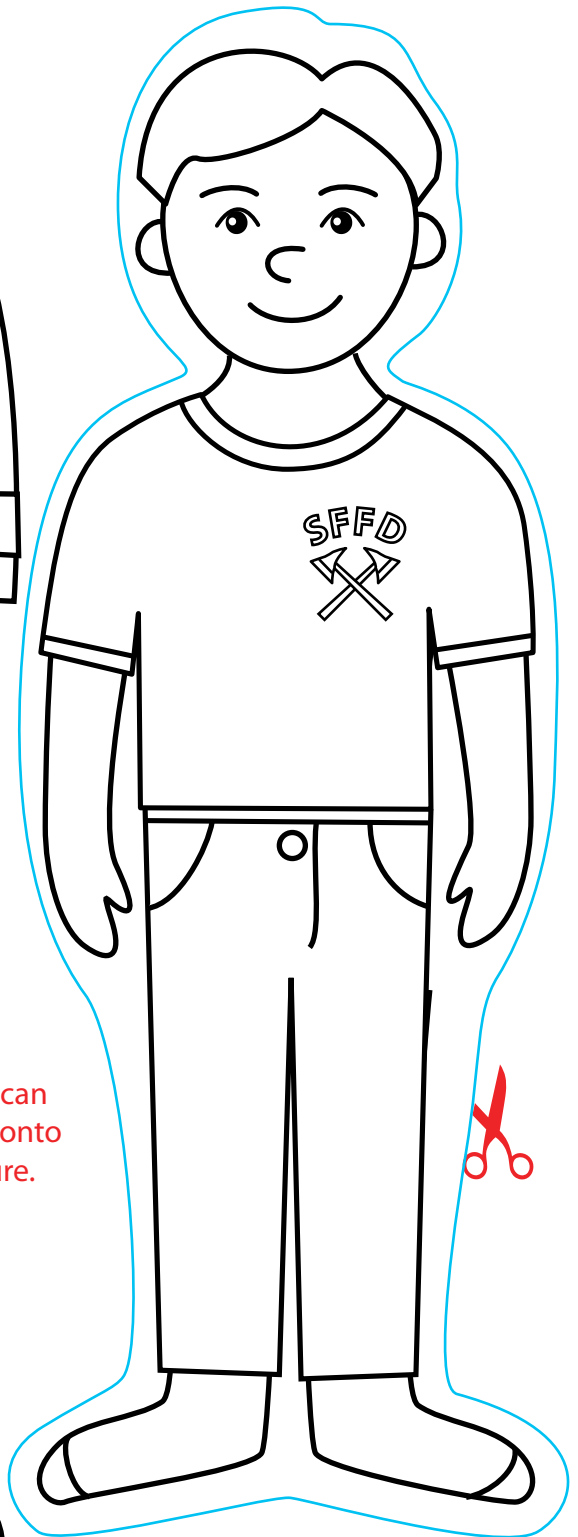
Fold tabs on  
the dotted lines!



Works best  
printed on  
thicker paper!



This axe can  
be taped onto  
the figure.

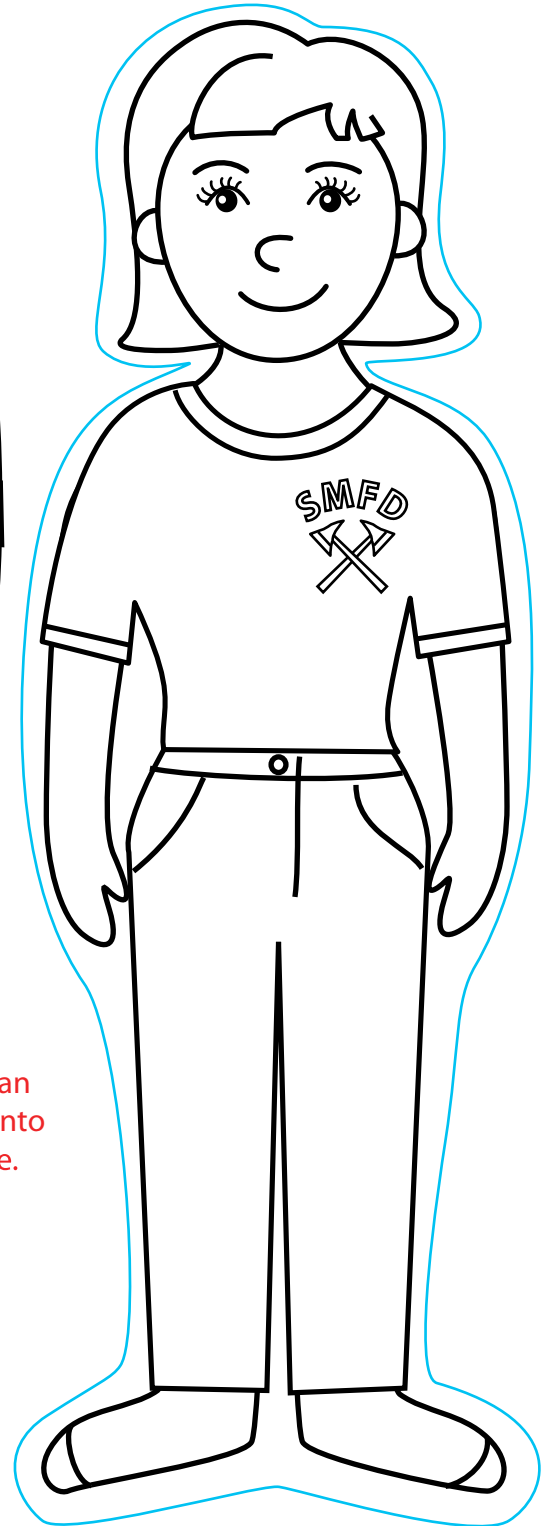
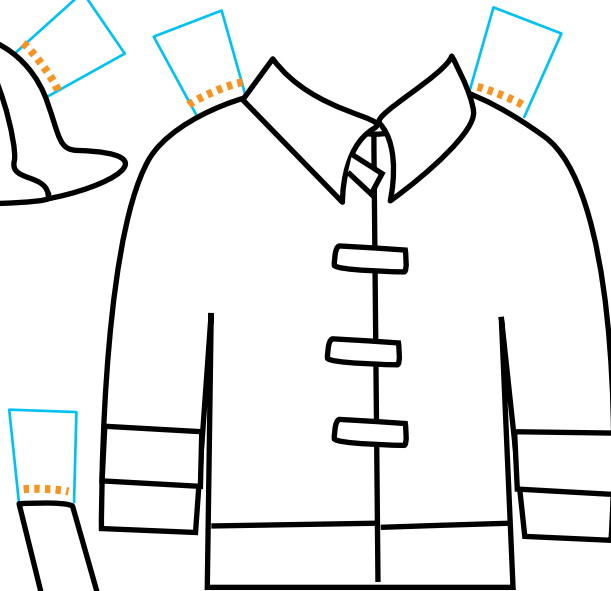


# Paper Female Firefighter

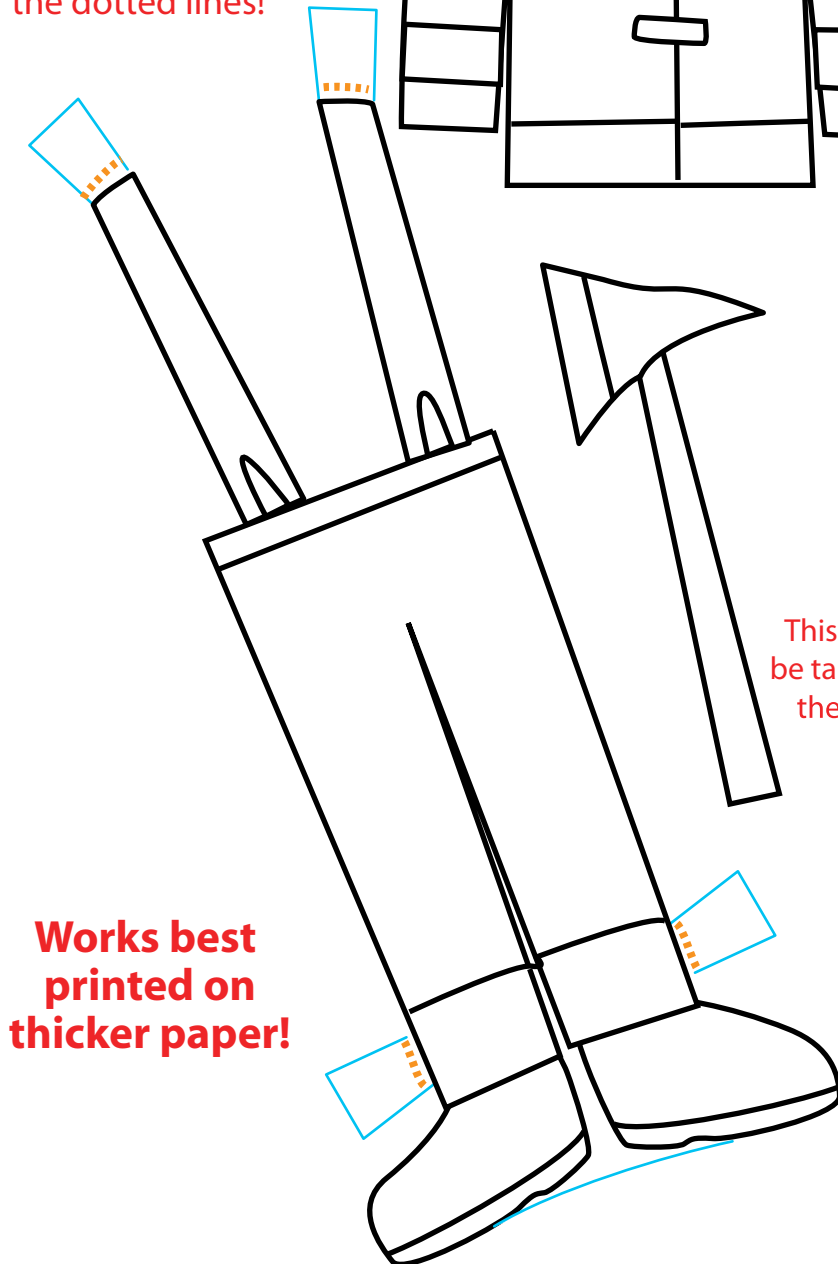
Color these and then ask a grown-up to help cut them out. Cut carefully on the blue and black lines. Be sure not to cut the tabs off!



Fold tabs on  
the dotted lines!



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## Controlled burn to prompt Chapel Hill Library lessons in conservation, science, math

BY CLIFF BELLAMY | February 01, 2018

This spring, visitors to Chapel Hill Public Library will see a prescribed burn, or controlled burn, on the grassy sloped area above the library's circular drive. The library will use the burn as a jump-off to teach lessons in conservation, science, and math.

The library sits in the center of Pritchard Park, a 34-acre wooded area. The N.C. Forest Service and the Chapel Hill Fire Department will conduct the burn to help maintain the health of the Pritchard Park ecosystem. The burn will be an extension of Chapel Hill's [Explore More at Pritchard Park](#), which encourages visitors to explore the surrounding wooded area, said Assistant Library Director Meeghan Rosen.

The controlled fire will help cull invasive species of plants, and rejuvenate native grasses, according to a town press release. The burn also will help improve wildlife habitat and control insects.

The prescribed burn will occur sometime in February or March. Weather forecasting and site conditions will determine the date of the burn.

On Feb. 8, the library will offer a class related to the burn. Johnny Randall, director of conservation at the N.C. Botanical Garden, and Chris Hirni, N.C. Forest Ranger for Orange County, will present information about the role of fire in the environment. Hirni also will share details of the Pritchard Park burn plan and site and safety preparations. Chapel Hill Fire Department and Parks & Recreation Department personnel will be on hand to answer questions.

The controlled burn is part of several ongoing programs the library and town have implemented to encourage residents to explore the park, Rosen said. "We're turning our lens every month to a slightly different topic, and this month's topic is fire ecology," Rosen said.

The library recently received federal funds to create a space to explore nature, Rosen said. Two months ago, town workers had to remove a large, diseased tree on Franklin Street. That tree was chopped up and moved to Pritchard Park to create more play space, she said.

The library, with the local Audubon Society, also has installed bird feeder stations and nesting locations. This year the library began lending backpacks with binoculars, magnifiers and a scavenger map to help families explore the park, Rosen said. A garden to encourage pollinators is in the near future, she added.

The Town of Chapel Hill will share updates and details about the burn in upcoming notices on social media and other platforms.

Source: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/counties/orange-county/article197647589.html>