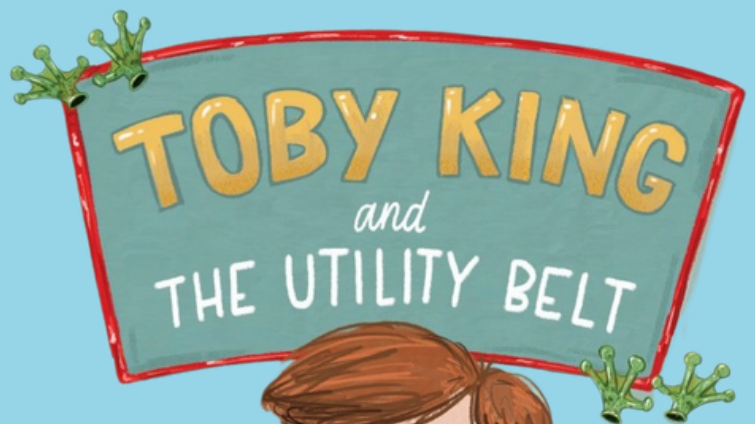
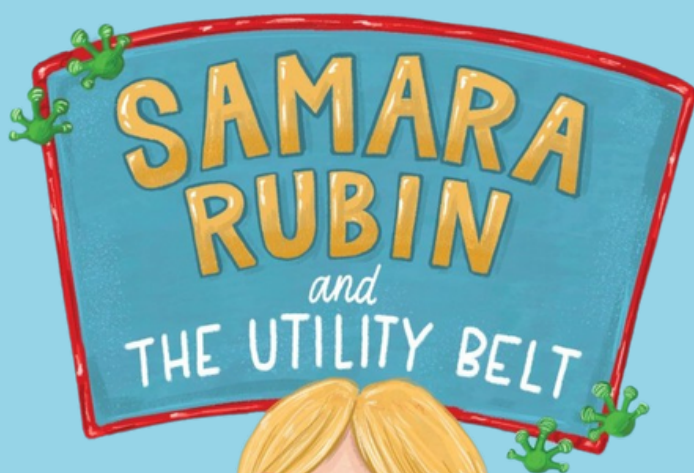


THE UTILITY BELT

TEACHER NOTES



Teacher notes by Romi Sharp



SAMARA RUBIN AND THE UTILITY BELT (BOOK 1) TOBY KING AND THE UTILITY BELT (BOOK 2)

Creators: Sharon Giltrow & Thu Vu

11 April 2026 (Book 1)

ISBN: 978-1-7645473-0-7

22 May 2026 (Book 2)

ISBN: 978-1-7645473-1-4

For ages: 6 to 12 years

Publisher: GiltWrote Publishing

Contact: sharongiltrowauthor.com

ABOUT THE SERIES

A speculative junior fiction series with magical tools, cute sidekicks, and a 'super' family. These books have something for everyone.

ABOUT THE CREATORS

Sharon Giltrow grew up the youngest of eight children in a century-old farmhouse, where she turned her bedroom into a library filled with other people's books. Today in her Perth home, she's filling the shelves with her own! An award-nominated children's author, Sharon writes stories that bring joy, laughter and connection to families everywhere.

Sharon Giltrow: sharongiltrowauthor.com

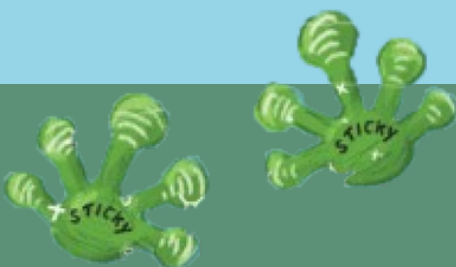
Instagram: [@sharongiltrow1](https://www.instagram.com/sharongiltrow1)

Facebook: [@sharongiltrowwriter](https://www.facebook.com/sharongiltrowwriter)

Thu Vu is a Vietnamese-American illustrator based in New Jersey. With a background in art education, she is passionate about creating illustrations that tell stories of inclusivity, family, and self-acceptance. She especially loves lighthearted, fun stories with a touch of humour. Her favourite things to draw? Expressive, animated characters brimming with life!

Thu Kim Vu: thukimvu.com/portfolio

Instagram: [@thu.vu.art](https://www.instagram.com/thu.vu.art)



ACTIVITIES

N.B. These questions and activities can be adapted to suit the experience and ability of students. Activities are linked to the [Australian Curriculum](#).

DISCUSSION

Tuning in:

Ask students;

- Imagine they could create and use any tool that held the power of magic! What would it be? What magic could it perform? What else would you keep in a magical utility belt?
- Draw or make a pouch with a range of magical tools inside.
- Think about how each tool would help make their lives, or the lives of others', a bit easier. Would they use the tools for good or for greed?
- What might be the complications or impacts with using such magical tools?

Before Reading -

- Look at the covers of *SAMARA RUBIN and the UTILITY BELT* and *TOBY KING and the UTILITY BELT*. Ask, what do you notice? What kinds of tools and gadgets can you see? What do you think each might be used for? How do you think each of the characters feel? How does the cover make you feel?
- Read the blurbs and discuss. What might be the outcomes for Samara and Toby in their respective stories?



FURTHER DISCUSSION

After Reading -

- What did you learn about the characters from each story? How did both Samara and Toby change from one story to the next? Were your expectations different upon reading Toby's story? Do you think Toby is a bully? Why or why not?
- How do the characters show friendly and unfriendly behaviours? Resilience? Courage? Determination? Integrity? etc.
- Who are Samara's and Toby's sidekicks? What animal/s would you choose to have as a sidekick? Draw your own sidekick and label its special features.
- Name and describe some of the tools used in the stories. Which ones do you think were most helpful, or used to gain power? Which one/s are your favourite?
- How would you describe the characters' families and their particular situations? Can you relate? How does this make you feel?
- What do you like about the illustrations? How do they show certain emotions, energy and how the characters connect to each other?
- What kind of superhero would you like to be?



Comprehension: Test your Magical Knowledge Quizzes

Analysing, interpreting and evaluating: AC9E2LY05 AC9E3LY05 AC9E4LY05

Students can work in pairs to write and answer multiple choice questions based on the books and its themes. For example:

The Utility Belt Quiz –

Which of the following is NOT in Samara's utility belt?

1. Camouflage Drops
2. Fix it Spray
3. Scissor-matic Shears
4. Gecko Sticky Pads

Students might like to culminate all the quizzes as a class to share as a written activity, a set of cards, or online game (eg. Kahoot!).

Creative Writing: An Illustrated Guide

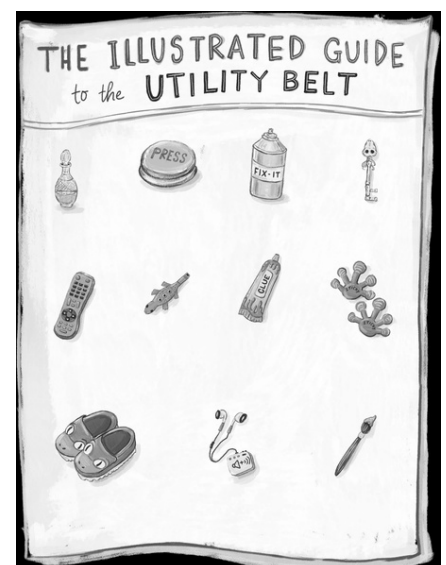
AC9E2LA03 AC9E3LA03 AC9E4LA03 AC9E2LA07 AC9E2LA08 AC9E3LA07 AC9E4LA12 AC9E2LE03 AC9E3LE03 AC9E3LE04 AC9E4LE03 AC9E4LE04 AC9E2LE05 AC9E3LE05 AC9E4LE05 AC9E2LY06 AC9E3LY06 AC9E3LY07 AC9E4LY06 AC9E4LY07

Students can plan and write their own short, innovative guide based on a section of ***Samara Rubin and the Utility Belt*** or ***Toby King and the Utility Belt***, such as, 'An Illustrated Guide to the Utility Belt', 'A Guide to the Madagascar Day Gecko', 'A (Magical) Guide to Dealing with Bullies', 'A Guide to the Horned Frog of South America', or a piece of their choosing.

Students can be guided to include descriptive and informative language, some literacy devices like onomatopoeia, puns and hyperboles.

Students can lay out the information like a guidebook or infographic with illustrations.

Share with the class.



SCIENCE / STEAM

Use and influence of science: AC9S2H01 AC9S3H02 AC9S4H02

Science inquiry: AC9S2I01 AC9S3I01 AC9S4I01 AC9S2I02 AC9S2I03 AC9S3I02 AC9S4I03 AC9S2I04 AC9S3I04 AC9S4I04 AC9S2I05 AC9S3I05 AC9S4I05 AC9S2I06 AC9S3I06 AC9S4I06

Design and Technologies: AC9TDE2K01 AC9TDE4K01 AC9TDE2K02 AC9TDE4K02 AC9TDE2P01 AC9TDE4P01 AC9TDE4P02 AC9TDE2P02 AC9TDE4P03 AC9TDE2P03 AC9TDE4P04 AC9TDE2P04 AC9TDE4P05

Disappearing Colour Experiment: Camouflage Drops

Students can try this **supervised** experiment using Camouflage Drops to make colour disappear!

They will need: water in a jar, food colouring, food dropper, and bleach.

Students will predict, observe, record, and communicate what happens when small drops of bleach are squirted into the coloured water.

How and why does the colour disappear?

***Be sure to be careful not to spill or allow the bleach to touch your skin. Adult supervision necessary.**

Science involved: Bleach contains an oxidizer. It reacts with the colour molecules in food colouring. Although the pigment molecule remains, its shape changes so that it can't absorb/reflect light the same way, so it loses its colour as a result of the chemical reaction.

Further details can be found at:
ForgetfulMomma.com



SCIENCE / STEAM

(continued)

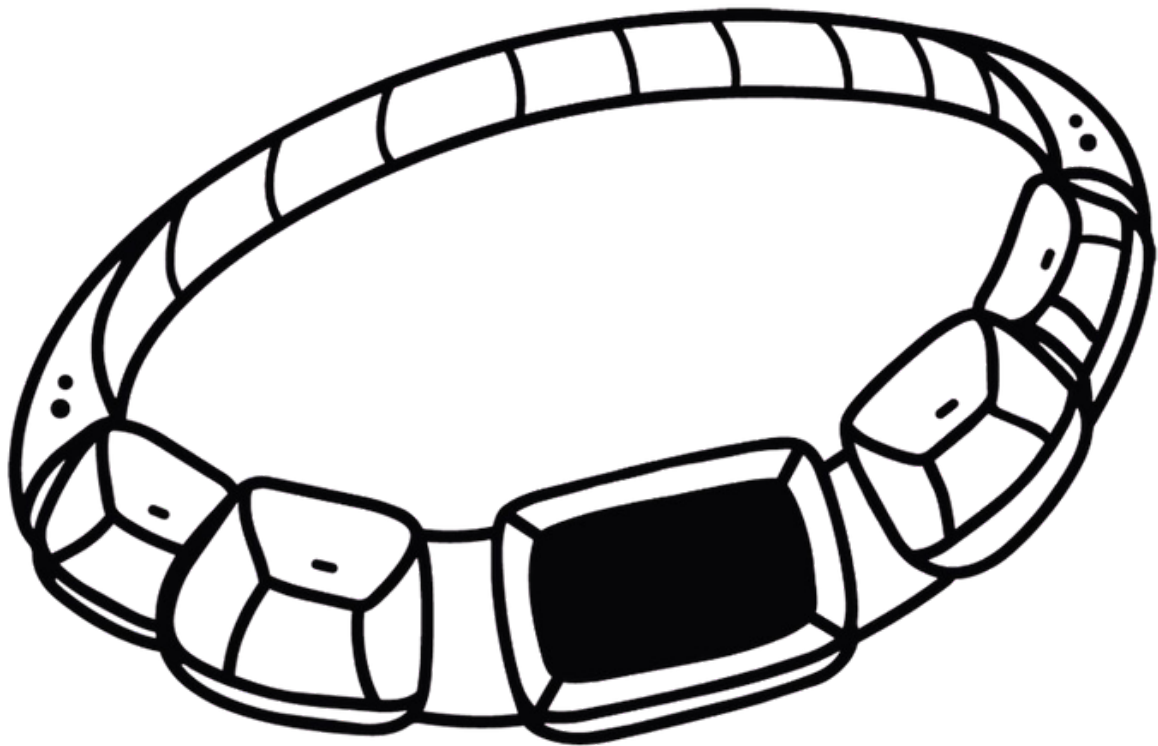
Other experiments and information for further explorations can include:

- *Precipitator* – Rain Cloud in a Jar. Find more at: funlearningforkids.com
- *Gecko Sticky Pads*. Learn about The Science of Gecko Sticky Feet
- Climbing Gecko Experiment. Learn how to make a 'gecko' climb a wall at Animal Jam Academy.
- *Bubble Portal* – Bouncing Bubbles. Find instructions at: One Little Project.
- *Gliding-suit* – STEM Challenge: Make a paper glider here: Twinkl, or a hoop glider here: Twinkl.
- *Rock Dissolver* – Learn about the composition of rocks at National Geographic, or make FIZZY, dissolving rocks via Science Sparks.



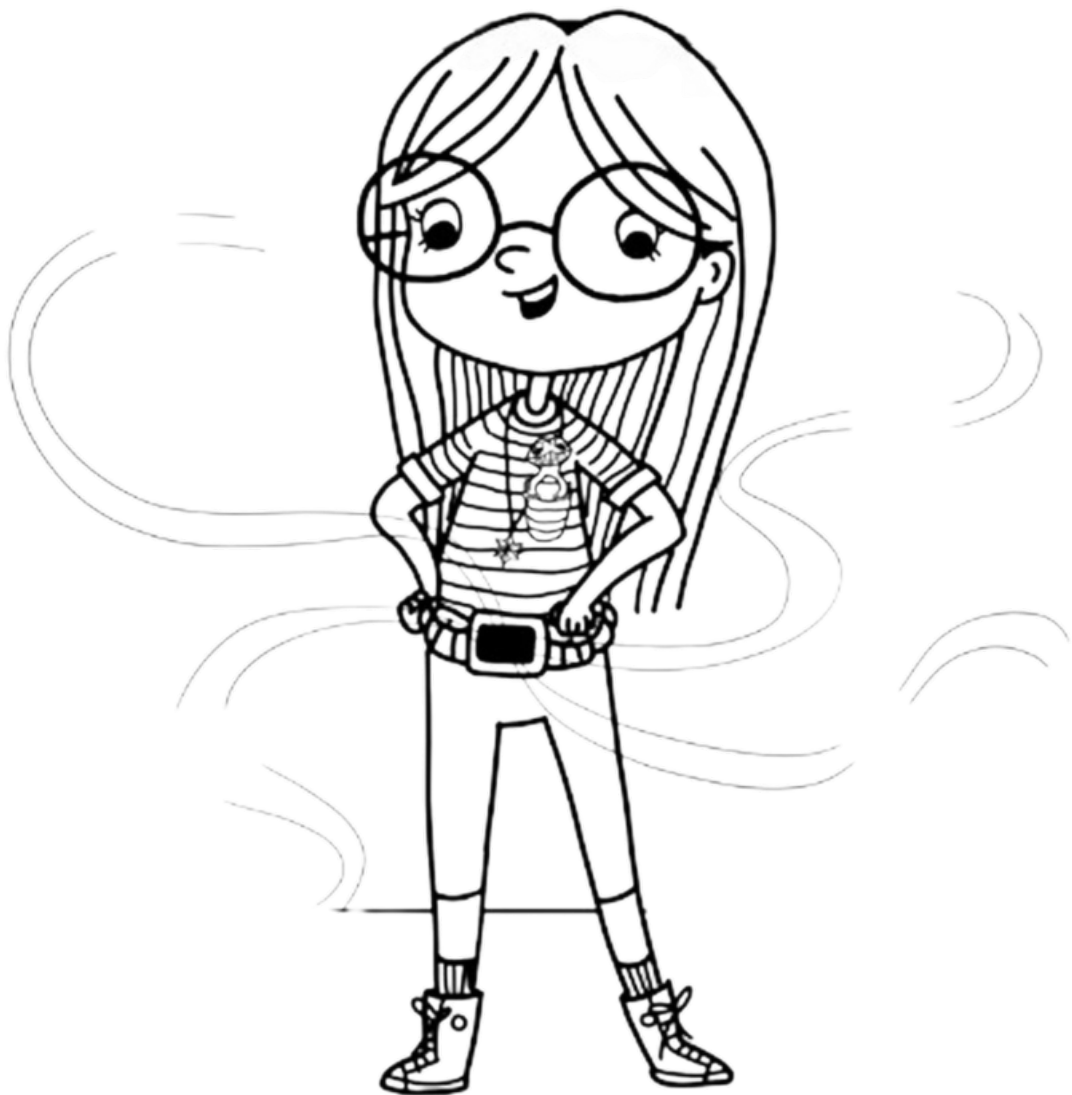
UTILITY BELT

Design and make your own magical utility belt.
Label each object you add to it.



SAMARA RUBIN

Create a Character Profile about Samara Rubin.
Write about her likes, dislikes, appearance, fears,
positive qualities.



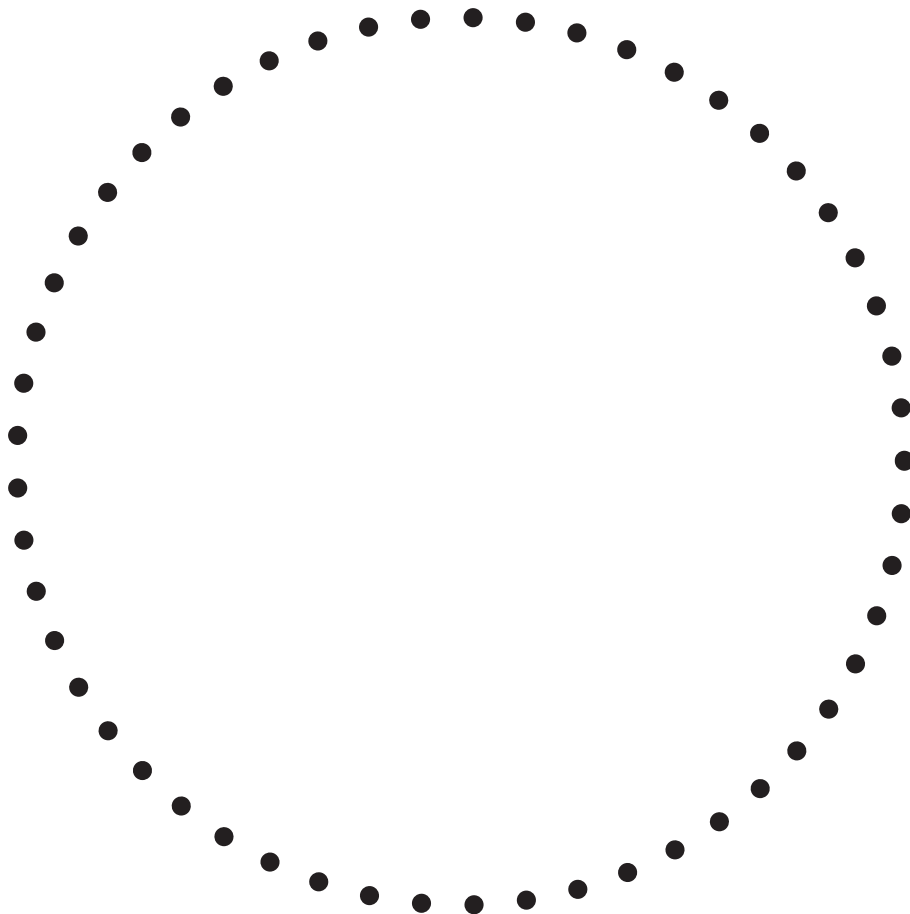
TOBY KING

Create a Character Profile about Toby King.
Write about his likes, dislikes, appearance, fears,
positive qualities.



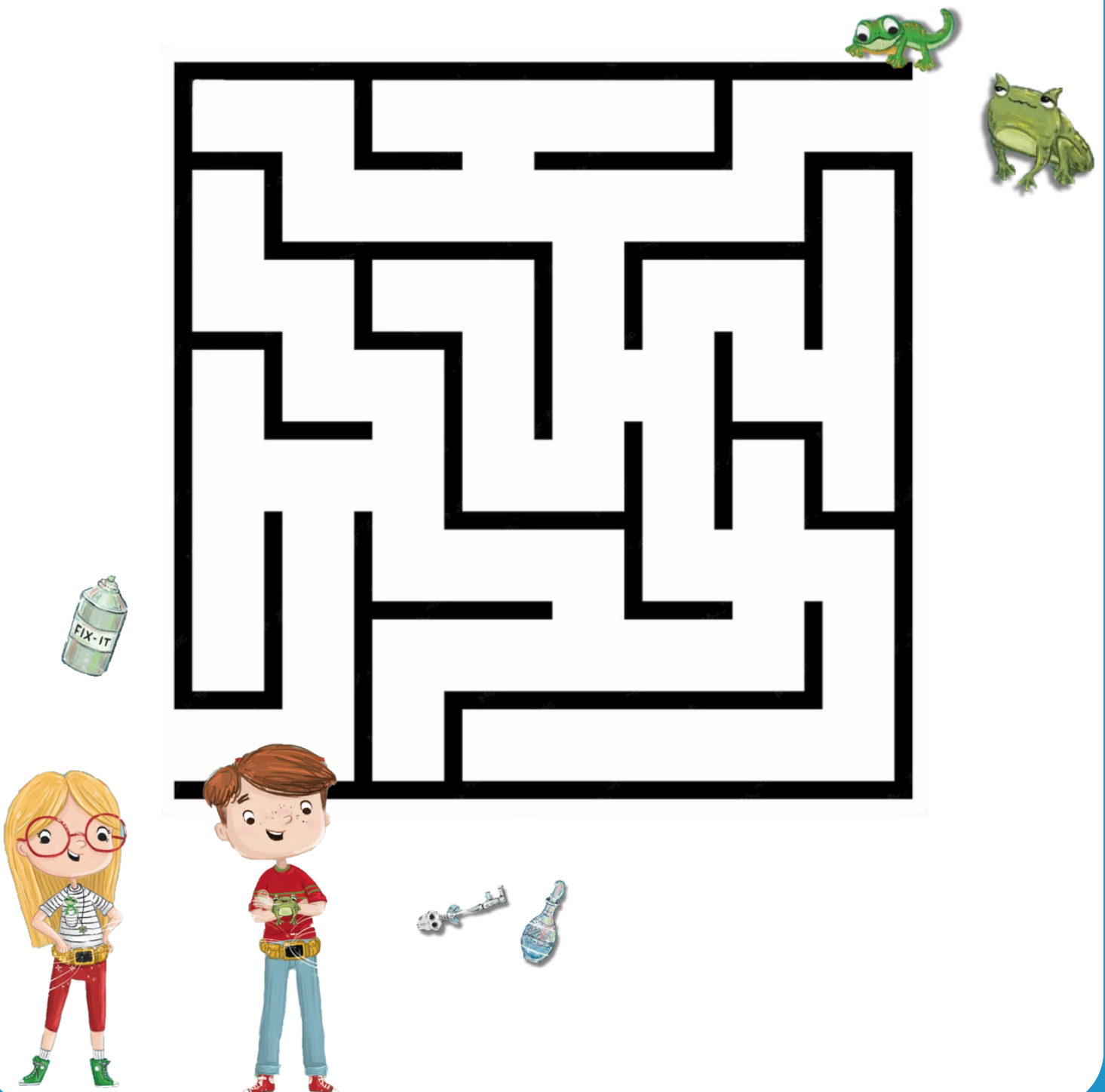
SIDEKICKS

Who is your sidekick?
Draw your favourite sidekick animal and
write about their special features.



MAZE FUN!

Help Samara and Toby use their magical tools to find their way to Madi and Kenji.



WORDSEARCH

Find the UTILITY BELT words in the puzzle.

Hint: Words are forwards, backwards and diagonal.



E	S	I	M	E	R	S	A	G	R	M	B	A	T	B
S	B	R	G	C	R	O	A	R	A	M	A	S	E	C
O	Y	Y	G	C	M	A	A	R	O	A	A	R	R	G
J	T	S	O	J	T	I	A	A	I	G	T	S	E	B
B	R	Y	B	O	T	M	B	E	K	I	I	T	S	E
B	G	G	B	I	O	K	G	G	A	C	R	I	T	L
M	A	A	L	A	M	F	T	G	C	T	E	C	O	T
T	B	C	E	U	K	U	R	M	A	D	I	K	R	L
R	B	S	R	E	E	T	A	A	E	R	E	Y	E	T
U	S	A	T	I	N	I	E	C	M	Y	O	A	R	C
L	O	E	O	D	J	L	O	I	S	A	A	E	A	D
R	S	L	O	U	I	I	U	A	M	M	R	L	L	M
I	A	A	L	D	T	T	S	O	O	S	Y	T	R	I
N	T	E	S	M	O	Y	B	O	O	U	G	C	U	T
R	A	A	E	G	A	L	F	U	O	M	A	C	A	S

SAMARA
MAGIC
CAMOUFLAGE

TOBY
TOOLS
RESTORER

UTILITY
MADI
STICKY

BELT
KENJI
GOBBLER



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Written to the Australian Curriculum.