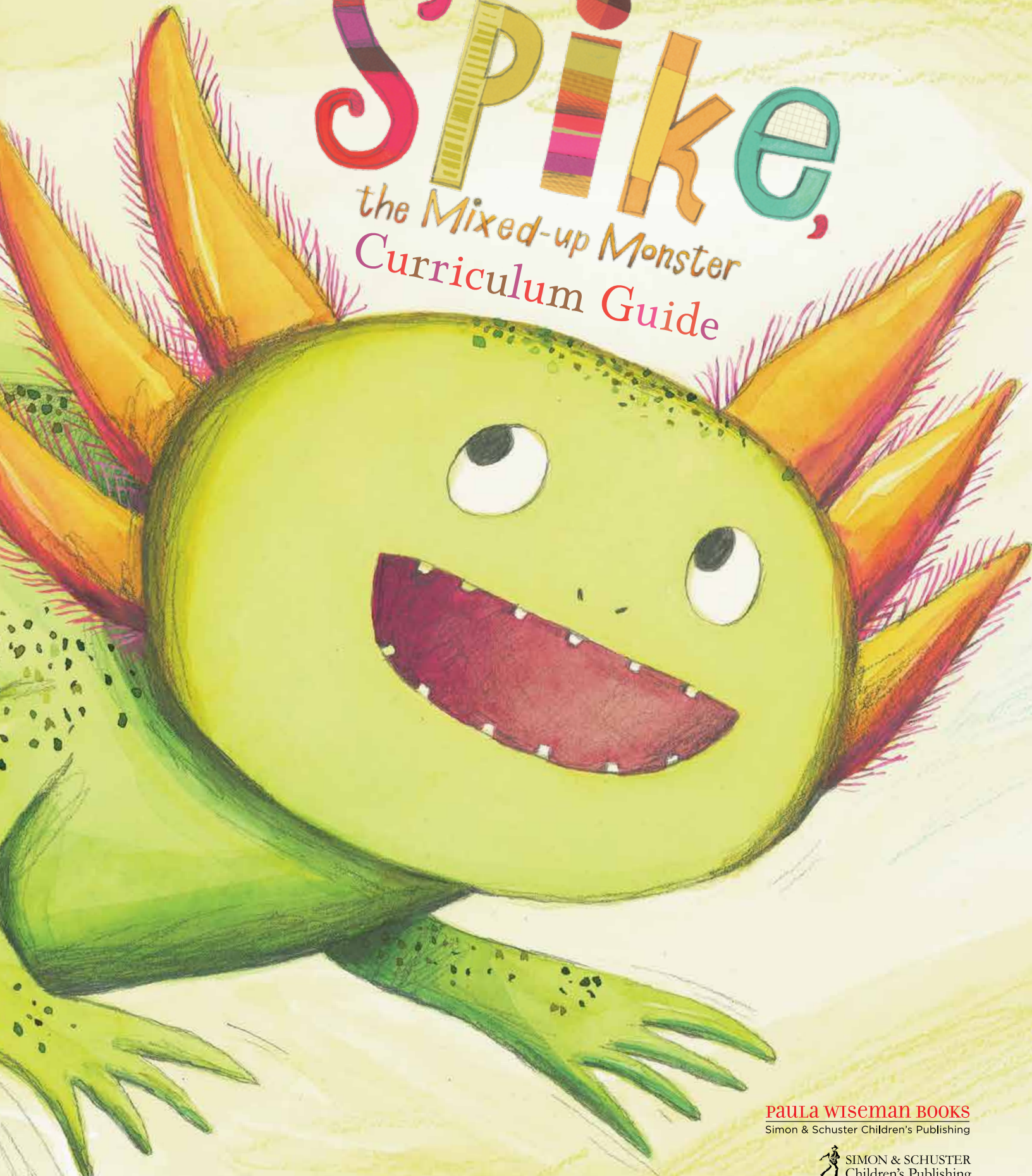


SPiKe,

the Mixed-up Monster
Curriculum Guide



Paula Wiseman Books
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

 **SIMON & SCHUSTER**
Children's Publishing

Meet Spike,

a lovable monster—and a real-life salamander—who’s looking for friends in this lively picture book that includes Spanish vocabulary.

Spike is a scary-looking salamander who keeps trying to frighten other animals—until he finds that using fear is not the best way to make friends. And since Spike lives in Mexico (he is an endangered species called an axolotl), this story is peppered with easy-to-understand Spanish words. In addition to a charming tale of friendship, this picture book contains nonfiction information about the axolotl and a Spanish/English glossary.

Use the fun-filled ideas in this curriculum guide to create your own Spike activities!

Susan Hood is the author of more than 200 books for children. A former content director of *Nick Jr. Magazine* and children’s book editor, she has written for parents and early childhood educators in *The New York Times*, *Nick’s ParentsConnect*, *Sesame Street Parent Guide*, *Working Mother*, and more. Visit Susan at susanhoodbooks.com.

Melissa Sweet has illustrated more than 80 children’s books, including the Caldecott Honor book *A River of Words: The Story of William Carlos Williams* by Jen Bryant. When she is not in her studio, Melissa can be found taking an art class, hiking with her dogs, or riding her bicycle. She lives with her family in Rockport, Maine. Visit Melissa at melissasweet.net.



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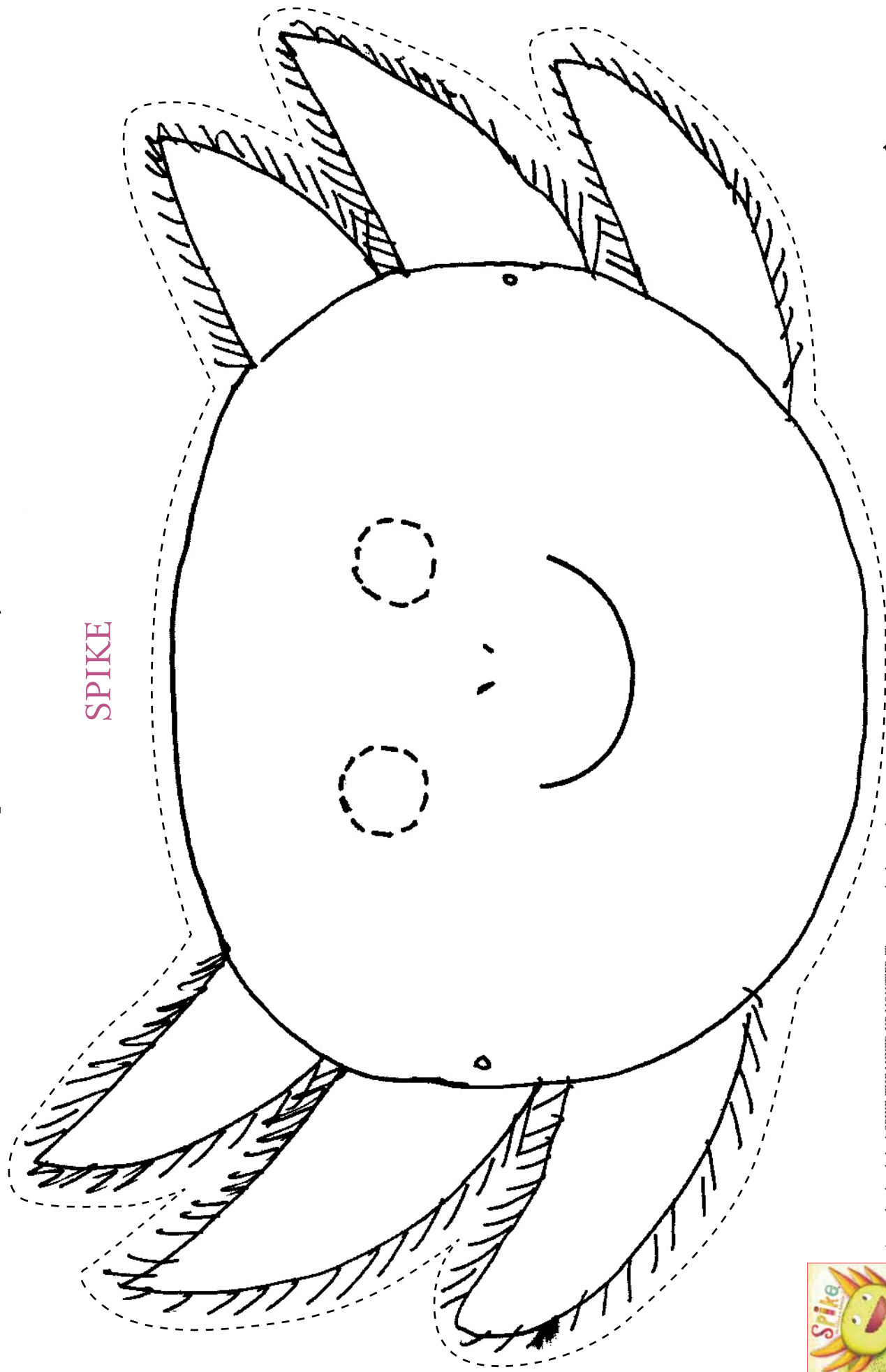
Words by
Susan Hood

Pictures by
Melissa Sweet

Activity 1: Make a Spike Mask

First, color the mask. Then ask an adult to help you cut along the dotted lines. Don't forget to cut out the eye holes so you can see! Then punch holes in either end of the mask and attach ribbons or string to tie the mask onto your face.

Use the masks for Halloween, dress-up or to reenact the story of SPIKE, THE MIXED-UP MONSTER.

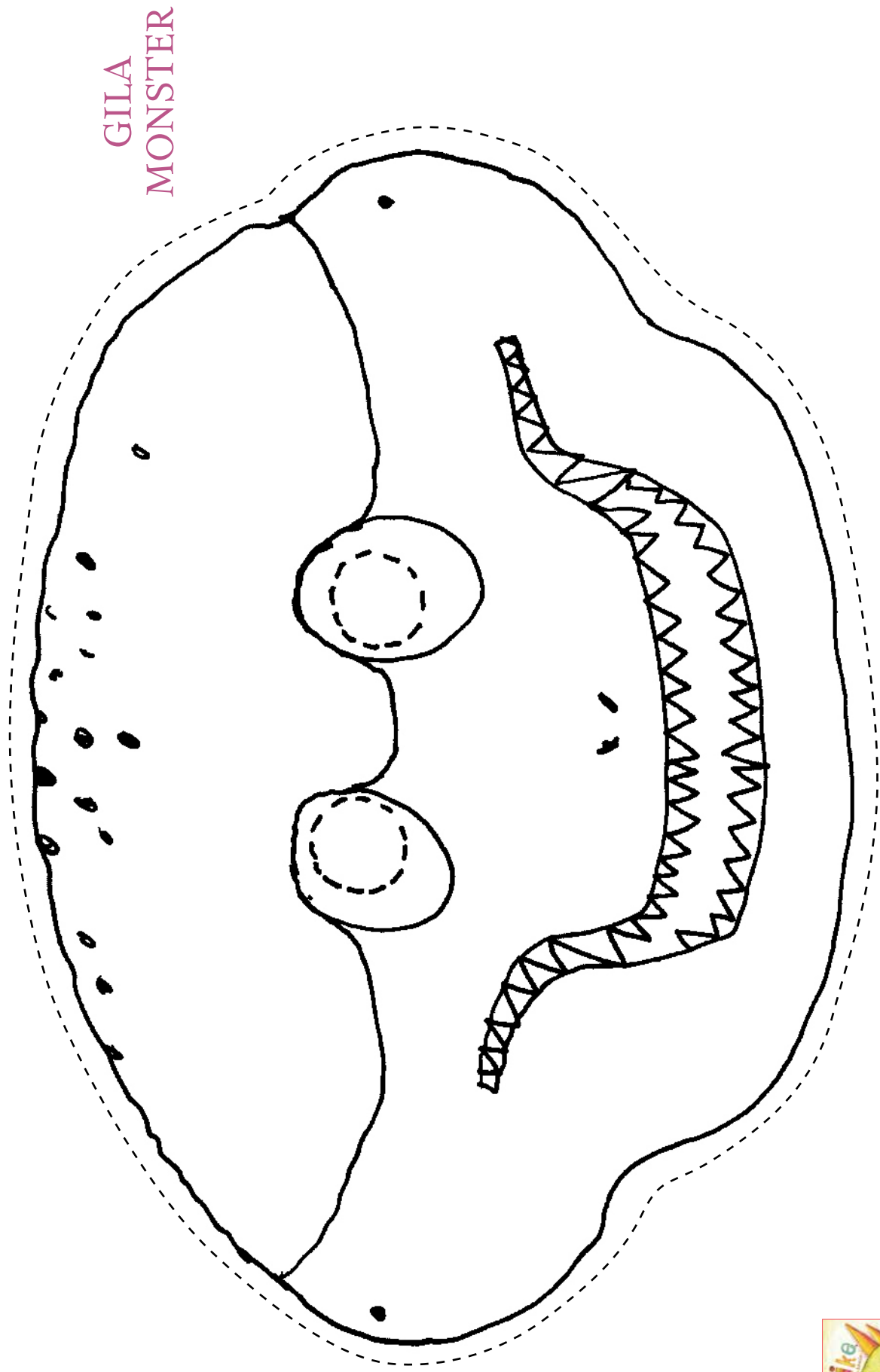


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Activity 2: Make a Monster Mask

First, color the mask. Then ask an adult to help you cut along the dotted lines. Don't forget to cut out the eye holes so you can see! Then punch holes in either end of the mask and attach ribbons or string to tie the mask onto your face.

Use the masks for Halloween, dress-up or to reenact the story of SPIKE, THE MIXED-UP MONSTER.



Activity 3: Make Your Own Halloween Card

Cut on the dotted lines, fold on the fold lines, sign and send to your friends!



FOLD
HERE

FOLD HERE



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Activity 4: Spike Scavenger Hunt Bookmarks

Print out the bookmarks below and cut them apart on the dotted lines.

Then look for each of these pictures in SPIKE, THE MIXED-UP MONSTER. Check them off as you find them.



Spike



Spike



Spike



Gila monster



Gila monster



Gila monster



flowers



flowers



flowers



el pato



el pato



el pato



lily pad



lily pad



lily pad



el campañol



el campañol



el campañol



mushrooms



mushrooms



mushrooms



el armadillo



el armadillo



el armadillo



Activity 5: “If You’re a Monster and You Know It” Song

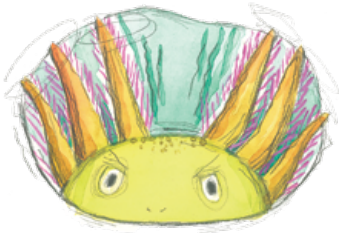
Sung to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands”

Sing Spike’s Monster Moves song and have kids act out the lines as they sing to get them up and moving!



1

If you’re a monster and you know it, swoosh your tail!
If you’re a monster and you know it, swoosh your tail!
If you’re a monster and you know it and you really want to show it,
If you’re a monster and you know it, swoosh your tail!



2

If you’re a monster and you know it, shake your spikes!

3

If you’re a monster and you know it, bare your teeth!



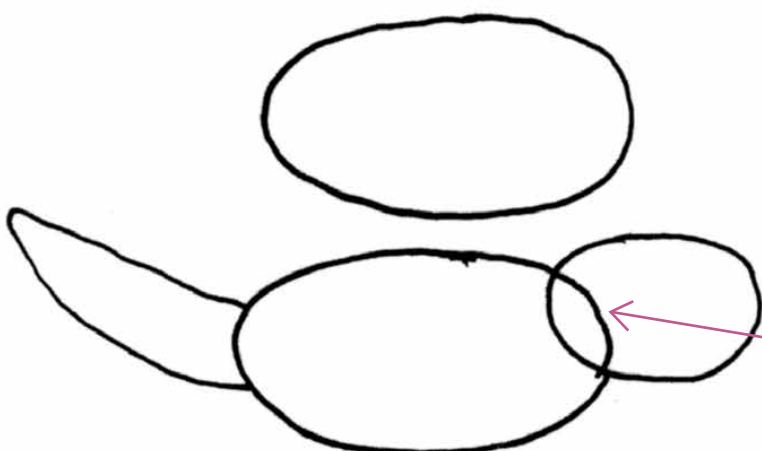
Bonus: Create other verses for the other animals
in the book:

If you’re a Gila and you know it, flick your tongue. . .
If you’re *el pato* and you know it, flap and fly. . .
If you’re *el armadillo* and you know it, dig and hide. . .
If you’re *el campañol* and you know it, run inside. . .



Activity 6: How to Draw Spike

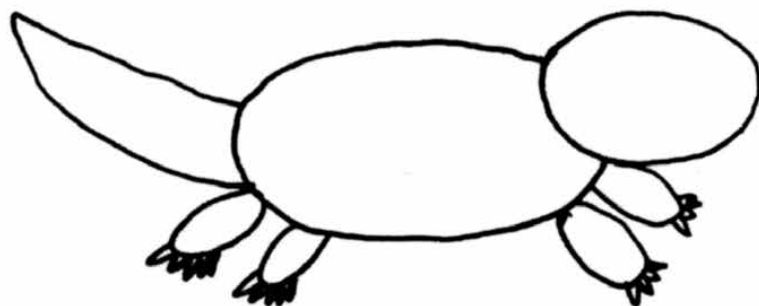
If you can draw ovals and triangles, you can draw Spike. Here's how:



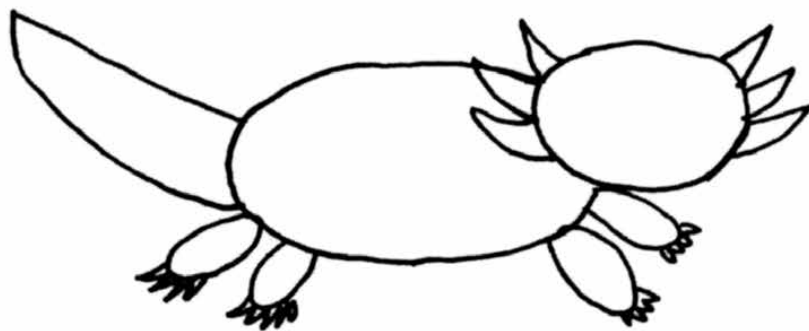
1. Draw an oval.



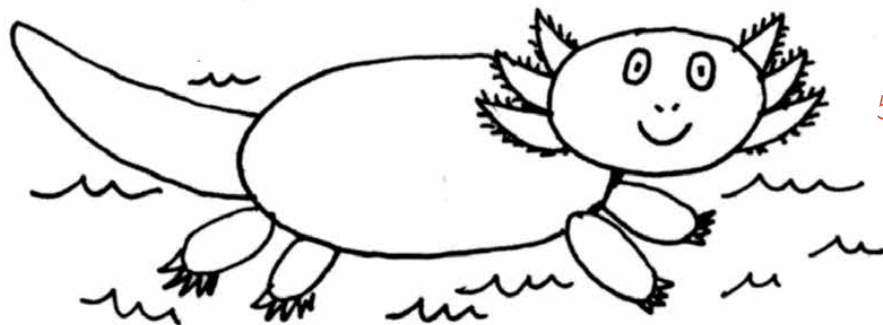
2. Add an oval head and a tail.
Erase this line.



3. Add oval legs and triangle toes (four toes in front and five in back).



4. Add triangle spikes.

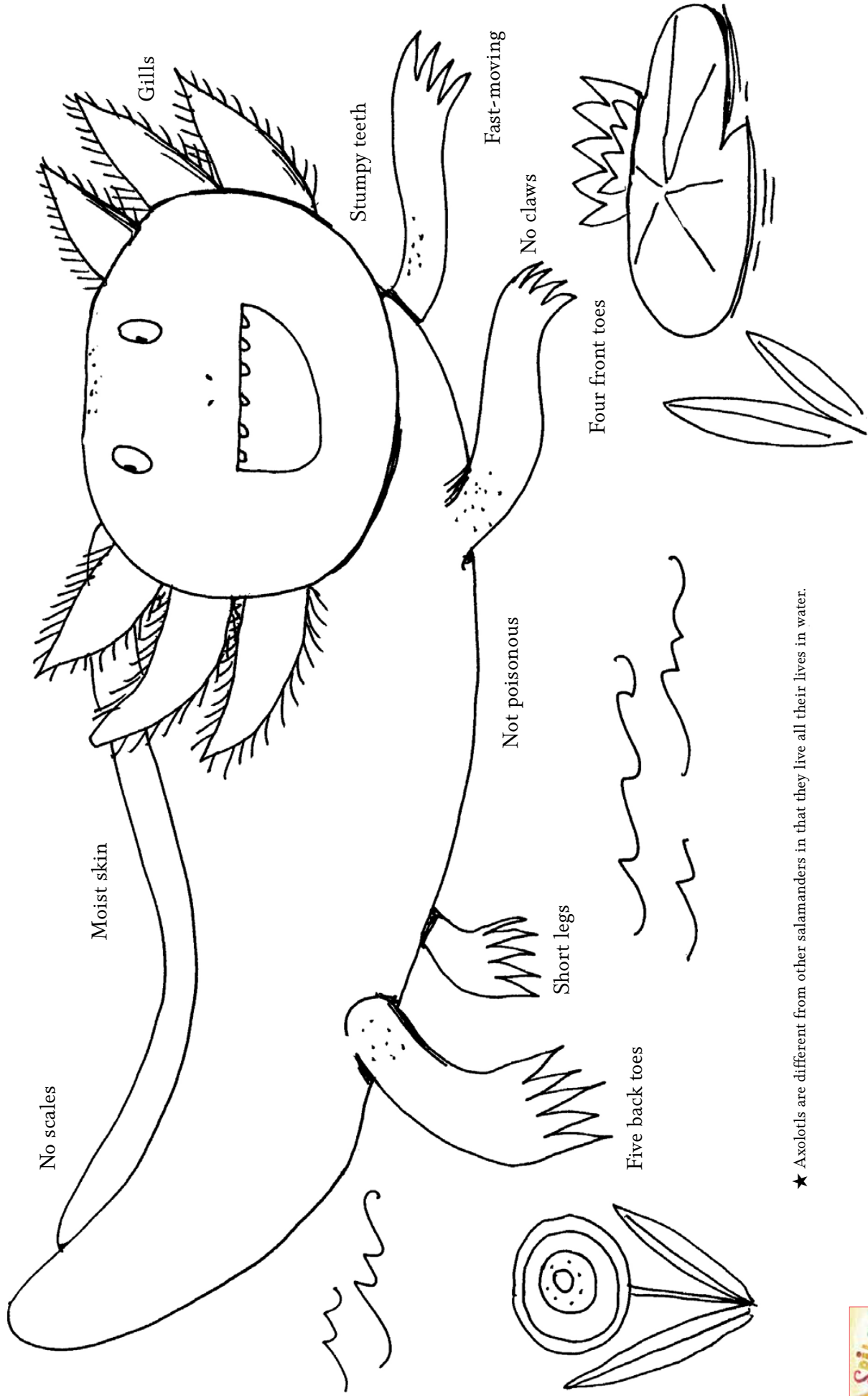


5. Add little lines to spikes.
Draw a face. Add water.



Activity 7: Spike Coloring Page

Color in Spike using pictures from the book as a guide.



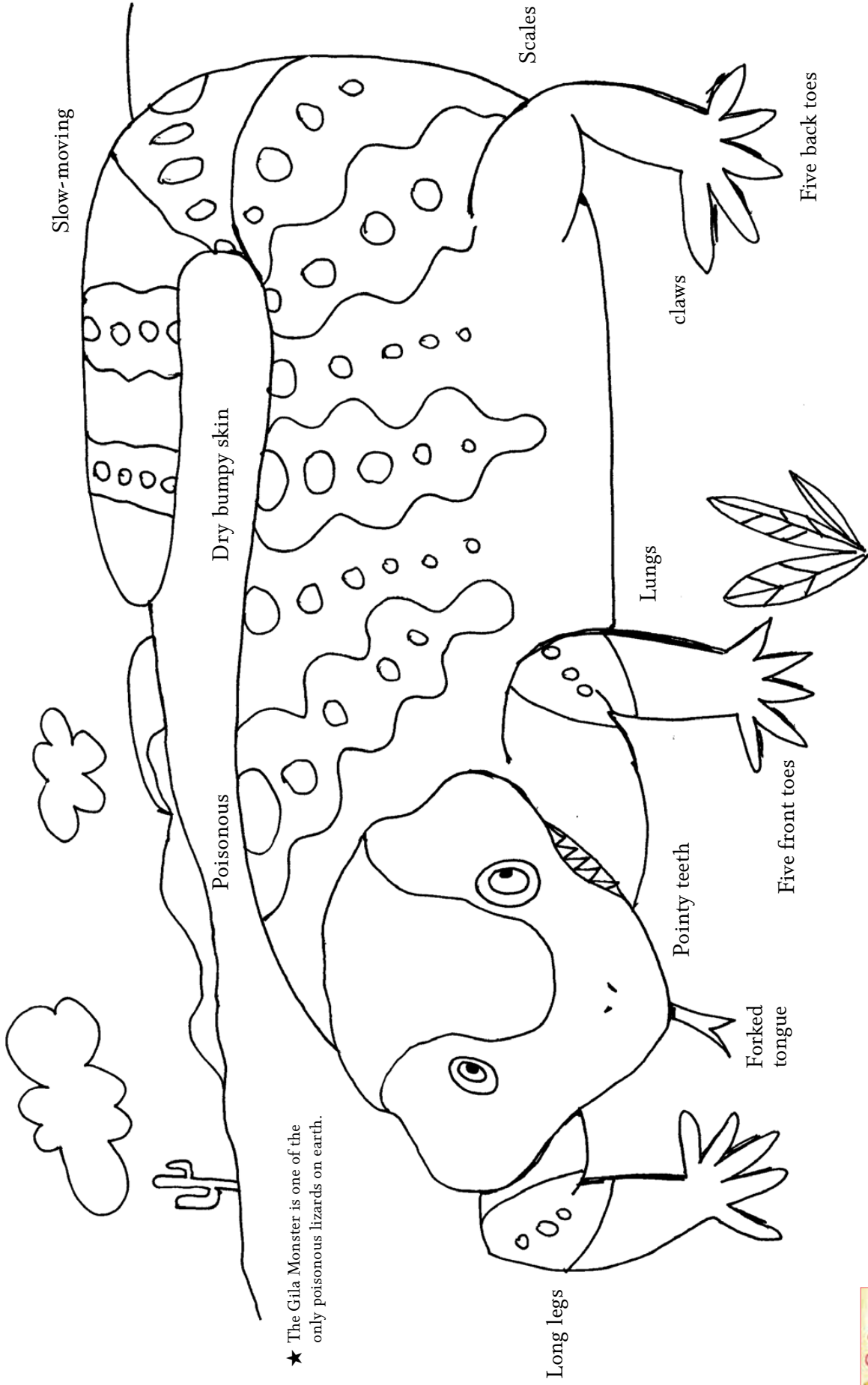
★ Axolotls are different from other salamanders in that they live all their lives in water.



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Activity 8: Gila Monster Coloring Page

Color in the Gila Monster using pictures from the book as a guide.



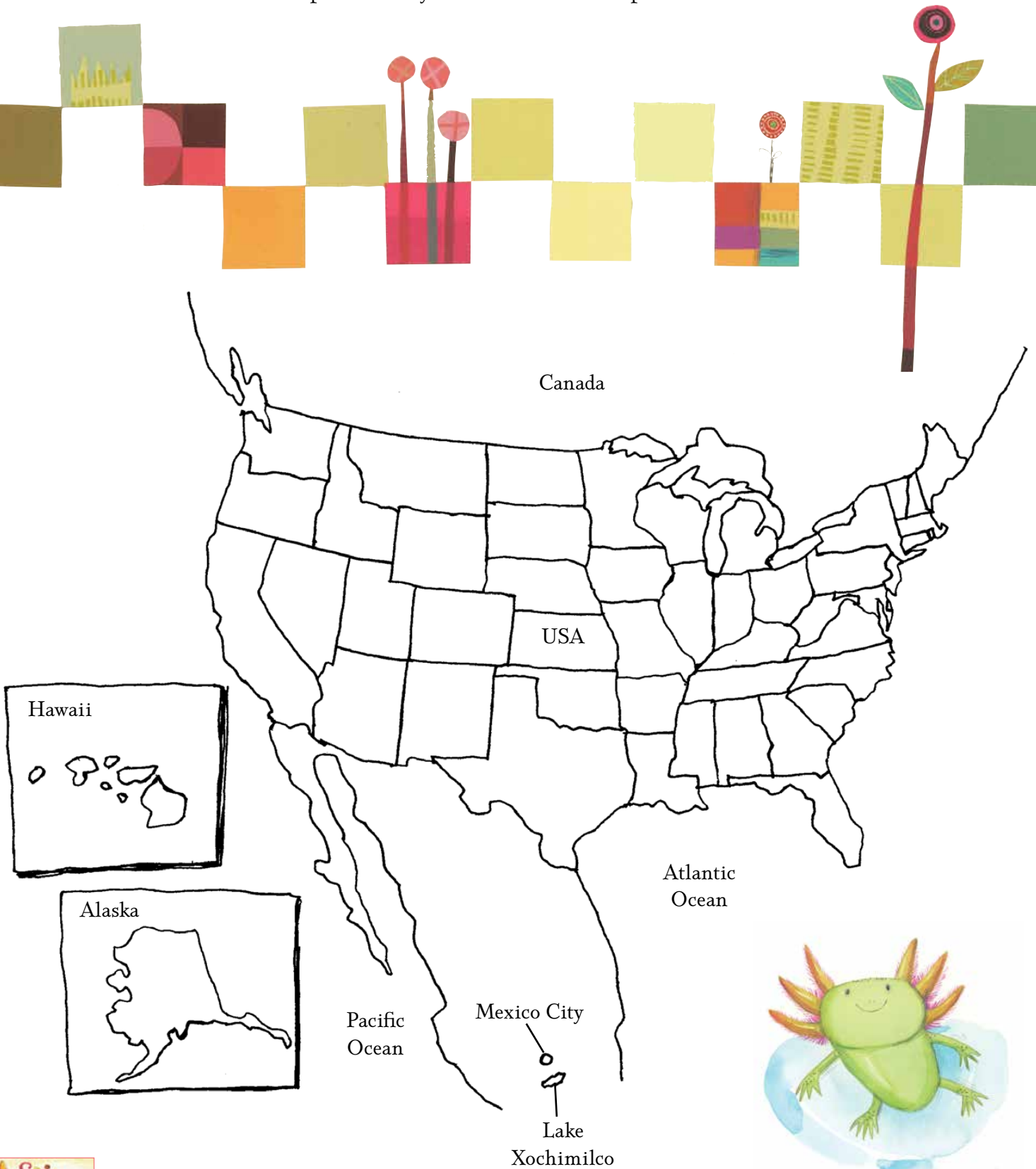
★ The Gila Monster is one of the only poisonous lizards on earth.



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Activity 9: Where in the World?

Wild axolotls only live in one place in the world—Lake Xochimilco (SO-chee-MEEL-koh) in Mexico. Look at the map. Where do you live in relation to Spike? Make an X there.

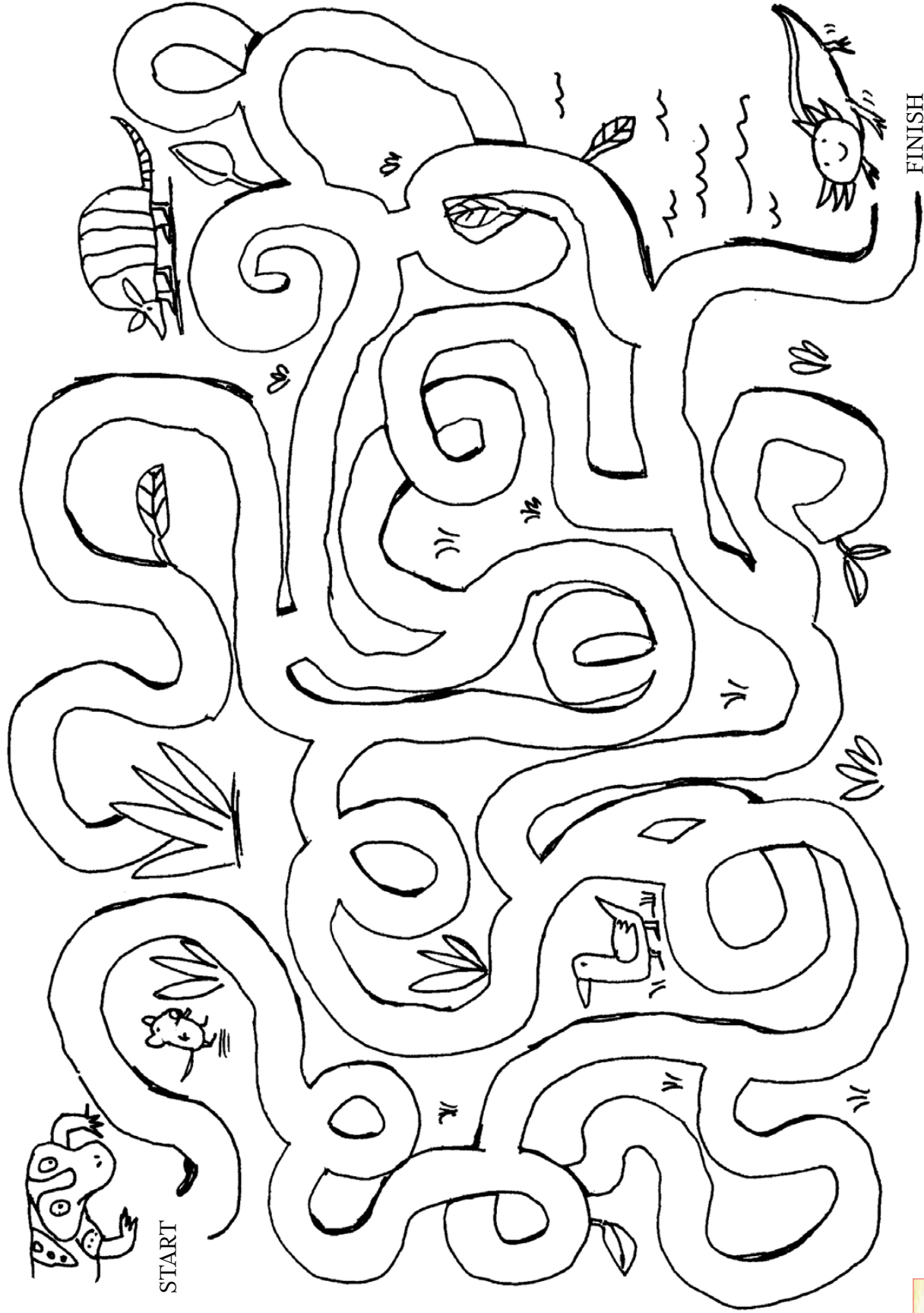


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Activity 10: Monster Maze

Draw a line from Start to Finish to help the Gila monster visit Spike. Do not cross any lines along the way.



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Activity 11: Make Your Own Holiday Card

Decorate the card, then cut on the dotted lines, fold on the fold lines, sign and send to your friends!

Activity 11: Make Your Own Holiday Card

Decorate the card, then cut on the dotted lines, fold on the fold lines, sign and send to your friends!

Warm wishes for the holidays!

¡Felices fiestas!

FOLD HERE

FOLD HERE



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Common Core—Related Activities

This portion of the guide has been aligned with the Common Core Curriculum Standards for K–3. The following standards are examples from first grade. To find the coordinating standard for your grade level, consult the Common Core website: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details: 1, 3

RL1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RL3: Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

Craft and Structure: 4, 6

RL4: Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.

RL6: Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: 7

RL7: Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

Questions That Align with the Common Core

1. Describe Spike and his friends who live in and near the lake.
2. Find a piece of evidence from the story that shows how Spike feels about himself as a monster. What is his problem (or conflict)?
3. How do the other animals react to Spike and his monster moves? Why?
4. Describe these other animals. Are they indigenous (native) to a habitat near you? Why or why not?
5. When the armadillo says to Spike, “You’re cuter than a bug’s behind,” does he mean that literally or is he being funny? How can you tell the difference?
6. What is the point of view of this story? How would it be different if another animal was the focus of the story (like the Gila monster)?
7. How do the illustrations help to create a mood for this story? What description would you use for the mood? How could the illustrator change the mood by her use of color?
8. Why do you think the author used Spanish words and English words to tell this story? Which word in the story is your favorite to say?
9. What problem does the Gila monster have? How does Spike help him? Find a piece of evidence directly from the story that shows why the other animals avoid the Gila.
10. What does the word *adiós* mean? How can you figure it out even if you don’t speak Spanish?



Reading Standards for Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details: 1, 2

RI1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RI2: Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

Craft and Structure: 4

RI4: Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: 7

RI7: Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.



Questions From the Nonfiction Text that Align with the Common Core

1. Is Spike a real type of animal? What type? Where does he live in the wild?
2. In two sentences, summarize what this section of the book is about. Why do you think the author decided to include it in the book?
3. Explain why axolotls are critically endangered.
4. Where does the word *axolotl* come from? What does it mean in its original Aztec language? Do you think it is a good word to describe this creature?
5. Why do scientists want to study axolotls? What do they hope to learn? How could their research help people?
6. Where do axolotls come from?
7. The text tells us that Gila monsters are venomous. What does this mean? How can you figure out the meaning of a word you don't know?
8. What do some people believe about Gila monsters even though it isn't true? Why did they get such a bad reputation? Do you think this makes it easier or more difficult for their survival?
9. Why do you think the author included real photographs of these animals in this section? What can illustrations do for your comprehension or understanding of a text?
10. Describe the defense systems of an armadillo. What weaknesses must it try to compensate for?

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards in Writing

Text Type and Purposes: 2, 3

Production and Distribution of Writing: 4, 5

Research to Build and Present Knowledge: 7

Writing Project

Research an animal that is part of your natural habitat and write a short fiction piece inspired by *Spike, the Mixed-up Monster*. At the end, include a nonfiction section that reveals interesting facts for your readers as well. Be sure that your sources are believable ones, and take your piece of writing through the entire process—drafting, editing, revising, and producing final copy. Collect student pieces together for a fantastic anthology.

The Common Core portion of the guide written by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, author and reading specialist.

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