

# Daniel in the Lions' Den

## Teacher's Notes

The story of Daniel in the lions' den pictures the final battle between our self-love and our conscience. Daniel trusted in the Lord and had the courage to obey Him, even when he knew that he would be punished. The Lord sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths, and Daniel was brought out safely and made second ruler in the kingdom.

Daniel 6 Lesson Plan		Materials Needed
<b>1. Welcome Activity</b> (2-3 minutes)	Guardian Angels p. 1	
<b>2. Focus on the Word</b> (5-7 minutes)	Read Daniel 6 and discuss p. 2	shortened version of text included on p. 3
<b>3. Learn by Doing</b> Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Prayer Windows pp. 4-6	scissors, pen or pencil, tape
	Rollback: Evil Brings Its Own Punishment pp. 7-9	Straight-sided cylindrical can with plastic lid (e.g. coffee can); rubber bands; 9 volt battery; tape; heavy tape such as packing or duct tape; 2 paperclips; object with a point sharp enough to pierce metal, e.g. screwdriver
<b>4. Closing</b> (2-3 minutes)	Recitation and Closing p. 10	Take Home Cards p. 11

## Welcome: Guardian Angels

*The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them.*

Psalm 34:7

*The Lord shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone.* Psalm 91:11

Read a statement from the list below. Decide if each statement is **true or false**, discussing responses with the group. Use the Guardian Angels quotations from the Writings for reference (see right margin).

1. Places are protected by specific guardian angels.
2. Guardian angels are like "perfect parents", keeping people safe from all harm.
3. Guardian angels protect the Word of the Lord from harm.
4. Guardian angels prevent bad things from happening.
5. All people are protected by guardian angels, regardless of their faith.

## New Church Concept Guardian Angels

Angels are sent to people to watch over them and to lead them away from evil affections and consequent thoughts, and to inspire them with good affections so far as they will receive them in freedom. By means of these they also direct the deeds of people by removing as far as possible evil intentions. See *Heaven and Hell* 391

To prevent people from getting into the spiritual meaning of the Word and perverting the genuine truth there, the Lord has placed safeguards on that meaning, which the Word refers to as angel guardians. *True Christianity* 208

The Lord governs people by means of spirits and angels. When evil spirits start to have dominion, angels set to work to ward off evils and falsities, and so conflict arises. People feel this conflict from perception and conscience. See *Arcana Coelestia* 227

## Focus on the Word

### New Church Concept Lions

A lion symbolizes truth in its power, as can be seen from the power of the lion, which surpasses that of every other animal on the earth. See *Apocalypse Revealed* 241. In the opposite sense, a lion means infernal falsity as to the power of destroying Divine truth, and thus the Word. By a lion is also meant the desire to destroy the truths of the Word. See *Apocalypse Explained* 782.

### New Church Concept Protection

Peace holds within itself trust in the Lord, that He governs all things and provides all things, and that He leads toward a good end. When people believe these things about Him they are at peace, since they fear nothing and no anxiety about things to come disturbs them. How far people attain this state depends on how far they attain love to the Lord. *Arcana Coelestia* 8455.1,2

**Read:** Daniel 6. A shortened version is included on page 3.

1. **King Belshazzar's reign ended shortly after writing appeared on a wall. The same night, King Darius** (pronounced Da-ri-us, or Dare-ius) **invaded from neighboring Media and became the new king of Babylon.**
2. **Darius made Daniel one of the top three rulers in Babylon. In fact, Daniel was so capable that Darius wanted to put him in charge of all Babylon. How did other jealous leaders plan to stop this?** They knew Daniel was faithful to his God and tried to trap him by getting the king to sign a law saying everyone should only worship the king.
3. **How did Daniel react to the law?** He remained faithful to the Lord and prayed three times, despite knowing the punishment for doing so.
4. **Can you think of a time when you, or someone you know of, courageously stood up for something right in the face of ridicule or danger? What happened?**
5. **How did King Darius feel about throwing Daniel into the lions' den?** He was broken-hearted. He tried to prevent it but could not under the law.
6. **After a sleepless night Darius ran to see Daniel. What can you remember of the story of Jesus being sealed in the tomb and rising again on Easter morning? What similarities do you see with the story of Daniel in the lions' den?** Possible answers include the following. The mouth of the tomb/den is sealed with a stone so the person inside can not be removed. One or more angels are guarding the tomb/den. People come at the first light of dawn. John and Peter run to the tomb and Darius runs to the den to see what had happened for themselves.
7. **Daniel pictures conscience. Sometimes false thoughts may trick us into locking up or "killing" conscience. What hope does this story offer for a new future?**
8. **When Daniel was rescued, the jealous leaders who tried to hurt him received the punishment they had intended for Daniel. How does hurting others, or trying to hurt others, hurt us?**
9. **King Darius was so impressed by Daniel's God that he made a new rule that everyone should worship Him. When we make conscience, which is the true ideas from the Word within us, the ruler in our minds we make the Lord first in our lives. This is the way to true eternal happiness.**

# Daniel in the Lion's Den

<sup>1</sup>It pleased Darius to appoint one hundred and twenty satraps to rule the kingdom, <sup>2</sup>with three governors over them, one of whom was Daniel. [A satrap was a provincial governor in ancient Persia.] <sup>3</sup>Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the governors and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. <sup>4</sup>At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct, but they were unable to do so. <sup>5</sup>Finally they said, “We will never find any basis for charges against Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”

<sup>6</sup>So the governors and satraps said to the king: “May King Darius live forever! <sup>7</sup>The satraps, advisers and governors have agreed that the king should issue an edict that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. <sup>8</sup>Now, O king, put the decree in writing so it cannot be altered.” <sup>9</sup>So Darius put it in writing.

<sup>10</sup>Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home. And in his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem, he knelt down three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before God, as was his custom. <sup>11</sup>Then the administrators found Daniel praying. <sup>12</sup>So they went to the king and said: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, O king, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”

The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.” <sup>13</sup>Then they said to the king, “Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” <sup>14</sup>When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.

<sup>15</sup>Then the men went to King Darius and said to him, “Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.” <sup>16</sup>So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”

<sup>17</sup>A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed. <sup>18</sup>Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

<sup>19</sup>At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den. <sup>20</sup>When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?”

<sup>21</sup>Daniel answered, “O king live forever! <sup>22</sup>My God sent His angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in His sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king.”

<sup>23</sup>The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. <sup>24</sup>At the king’s command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions’ den. And before they reached the floor, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

<sup>25</sup>Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth: “May you prosper greatly! <sup>26</sup>I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.”

<sup>28</sup>So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian. Daniel 6:1-26

(Daniel 6:1-28 adapted from the NIV)

## Prayer Windows

### Materials Needed

copies of the window images pp. 5-6, scissors, pens or pencils, tape

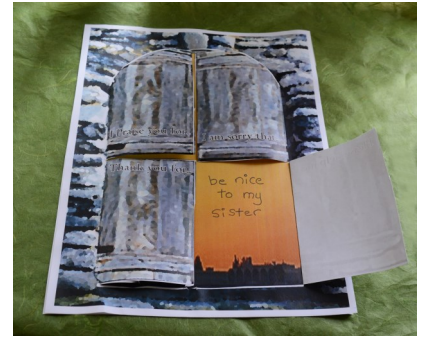
### New Church Concept Window

A person's understanding part, that is, his internal sight is called a *window*.  
*Arcana Coelestia* 655

### New Church Concept Prayer

Prayer is speech with God, and some internal view at the same time of the matters of the prayer, to which there answers something like an influx into the perception or thought of the mind, so that there is a certain opening of the person's interiors toward God. If prayer springs from love and faith, and if the person prays about and for things which are wholly celestial and spiritual, something like a revelation is present within prayer which manifests itself in the affection of the person praying in the form of hope, comfort, or some inward joy. See *Arcana Coelestia* 2535

Daniel prayed three times in his upper room, opening his window toward Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the center of worship for the Jewish nation. Turning toward Jerusalem means turning to the teachings of the church. Three means "complete and perfect". Students will write prayers that look through an "open window" toward the light of heaven.



1. When Daniel heard that King Darius was tricked into passing a law stating every-one should worship him, he went home to his upper room, opened his window, and prayed three times toward Jerusalem. Daniel faced the choice between obeying his God and being thrown to the lions *or* obeying the king's law. With-out hesitation, he stayed true to God.
2. Daniel represents conscience—the part of us where the Lord is present through the true ideas we know from His Word. The "upper room" pictures the higher or spiritual part of our minds where we talk to the Lord. Opening the window pictures us opening ourselves to the light of heaven.
3. Through his actions Daniel shows what our conscience does when we are tested—it draws us to the Lord in prayer and brings true ideas about what's right to our minds. In listening to conscience and lifting our minds in prayer, the Lord can send guardian angels to protect us from false thoughts that attack us.
4. There are several different kinds of prayer including praising the Lord, confessing acts of unkindness or bad habits, asking the Lord for help, and thanking the Lord for all He does.
5. We are going to make a "Prayer Window" that uses these four ways we can approach the Lord in prayer. Give each student a copy of the two window pictures—one with closed shutters and one that is open (pp. 5-6), scissors, tape or a stapler, and a pencil or pen.
6. Start by cutting along the white lines on the shuttered window so the four shutters can open by being folded back. (See picture.) Place the shuttered window over the open window. Tape the edges of the pages together.
7. Look at the type of prayer shown on the outside of each window. Open one window at a time and write a prayer inside that begins with the words on the outside of the window. Alternatively, you could write one prayer that uses all four concepts. Keep the prayer window to remind you of some of the ways you can talk to the Lord.





## Rollback: Evil Brings Its Own Punishment

Students will make a can that rolls back to them when rolled away illustrating the spiritual principle that people who seek to harm others are actually harming themselves as well.

1. We're going to do an experiment and then talk about what it has to do with the story of Daniel in the lions' den. Work as a group on the experiment.
2. Use the *Rollback Hole Guide* from p. 8, to find the center of the plastic can lid. Punch a hole in the center of the lid with a sharp object, e.g. scissors.
3. Place the plastic lid on the bottom of the can. Use the hole as a guide to pierce a hole in the bottom of the metal can using a sharp object, e.g. screwdriver. **CAUTION**—this leaves a sharp hole on the inside of the can. Remove the plastic lid and set it aside.
4. Link enough strong rubber bands together to reach from one end of the can to the other end when the bands are taut. Tape the fastened rubber bands securely to the side of the battery. **IMPORTANT:** the rubber bands must be taut enough that the battery will not touch the can when stretched to the length of the can.
5. Slip the loop of one rubber band through the hole at the bottom of the can. Be careful working around the sharp hole.
6. Open a paperclip and slip it through the rubber band *on the outside of the can*. Loop the wire to securely fasten the rubber band to the paper clip and use heavy tape to fasten the paper clip to the outside of the can.
7. Open a paperclip and thread it through the hole in the plastic lid of the can. Hook the rubber band on to the paperclip and twist the paperclip over the band. Pull the end through the hole and flatten the clip. Use heavy tape to fasten the flattened paper clip to the plastic lid. Put the lid on the can.
8. Roll the can under your hand to see if the battery touches the side of the can. If it does, tighten the rubber bands.



### Materials Needed

straight cylindrical can with plastic lid (e.g. coffee can); rubber bands; 9 volt battery; tape; heavy tape such as packing or duct tape; 2 paperclips; copies of *Rollback Can*, p. 8; object with a point sharp enough to pierce metal, e.g. screwdriver

### Prepare in Advance

Print p. 8. Gather supplies. You may wish to punch the holes in the can (steps 2 and 3) before class begins.

### New Church Concept Evil and Punishment

With the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. Luke 6:38

Evil punishes itself, so that in evil there is the punishment of evil. Hence everyone brings punishment and torment upon himself, and rushes at the same time among the diabolical crew who inflict such torment. The Lord never sends anyone to hell, but would lead all away from hell. But as the evil spirit rushes into it himself, the Lord turns all the punishment and torment to good, and to some use. See *Arcana Coelestia* 696

continued on next page

## Rollback... continued

### New Church Concept The Lord Leads Everyone Toward Himself

The Lord is leading every spirit toward Himself through angels and through an inflow from heaven, but spirits who are absorbed in evil resist strenuously and virtually tear themselves away from the Lord. They are drawn by their evil—by hell, that is—as though it were a rope. Because they are drawn and want to follow because of their love of evil, it follows that they freely cast themselves into hell. See *Heaven and Hell* 548

They cannot be taken out of hell, because it cannot be given them to will good to anyone, but only, from fear of penalty, not to do evil, the desire to do it always remains. See *Arcana Coelestia* 7541.2-3

9. Finish the project by taping the *Rollback Can Wrapper* from p. 9 to the outside of the can. (You may need to resize the design by cutting it down, or using two copies of it, depending on the size of your can.)
10. Place the can on a hard surface—such as a bare floor. Give the can a push and see what happens! Experiment with pushes of different strengths to see how the can returns to you.
11. How do you think this experiment relates to an aspect of the story of Daniel in the lions' den? (Hint: What happened to the jealous leaders?)
12. Some jealous Babylonian leaders plotted to kill Daniel—a favored, conscientious, God-fearing leader. To rid themselves of him, they flattered the king into passing a law making it illegal for Daniel to worship his God. The penalty for violating the law was to be thrown in the lions' den.
13. At first their plan seemed to succeed. Daniel prayed to his God, they witnessed his act, and Daniel was thrown to the lions. But when Daniel's God miraculously protected him, the scheme came undone, and the jealous leaders received the punishment they had planned for Daniel!
14. This story illustrates the spiritual law that evil brings its own punishment. People who harm others actually harm themselves. For example, a person who lies is tormented by the worry that others will discover their lie.
15. Remember, though, that this law works the other way too! Evil brings its own punishment. Good brings its own reward!



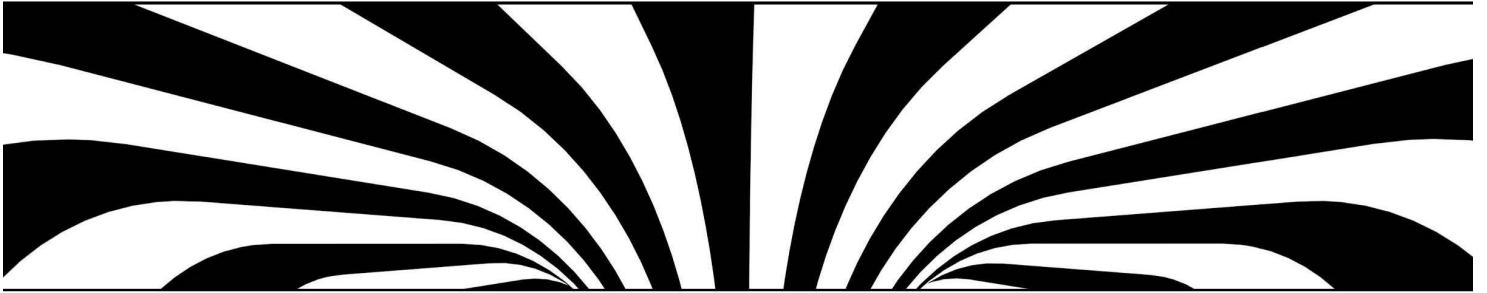
### Why Does the Can Roll Back?

When you roll the can it has kinetic energy—or energy it possesses because of its motion. As the can slows down, the energy is transferred into potential energy within the twisted rubber band inside the can. The twisted rubber band's potential energy is then transferred back to the can in kinetic energy as it untwists.



# Rollback Can Wrapper

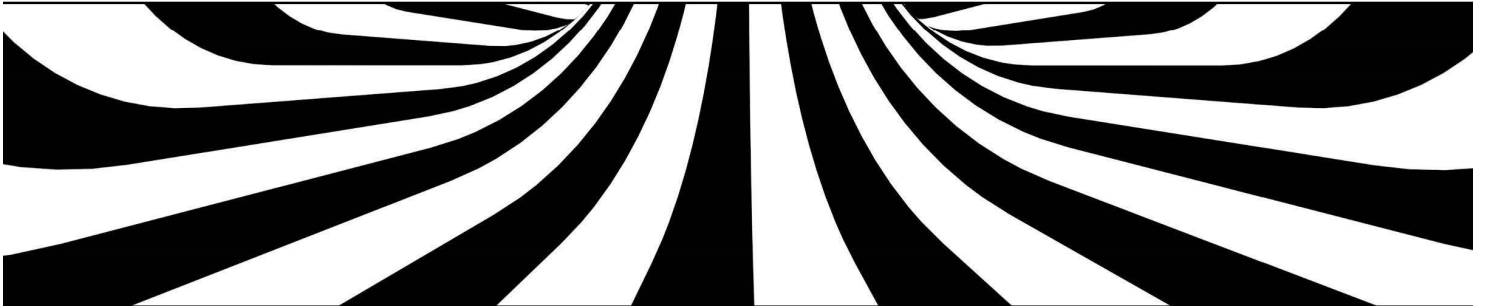
GIVE, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU. FOR WITH THE SAME MEASURE THAT YOU USE, IT WILL BE MEASURED BACK TO YOU. LUKE 6:38



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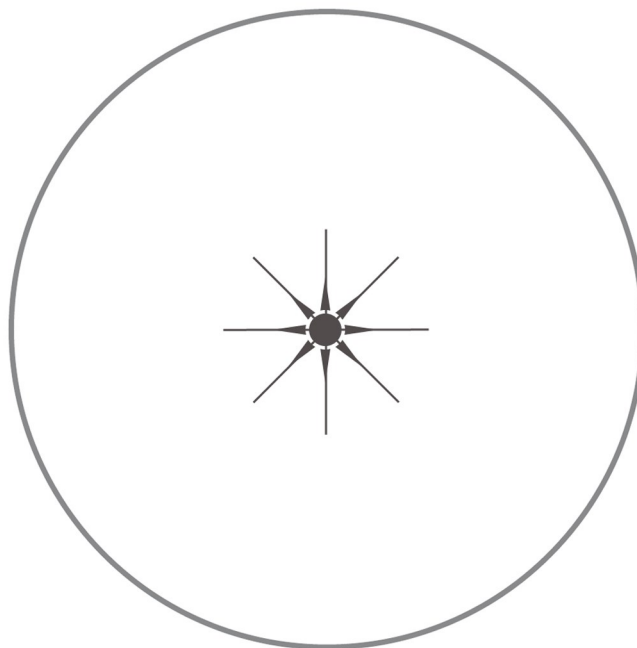


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*Hole  
Guide*



Cut out the wrapper  
and the guide.

## Recitation and Closing

The Book of Daniel contains beautiful prayers. We are focusing on one quotation during the close of each lesson. Most of the quotations were spoken by Daniel after he received the power to explain Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2). They are arranged in an order that reflects the story for each week. The quotation for lesson three was spoken by Nebuchadnezzar after he recognized the Lord as the true God (Daniel 4).

For this lesson, focus on quotation 6: "I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers. For You have given me wisdom and might." Read the verse aloud and invite the students to repeat it with you.

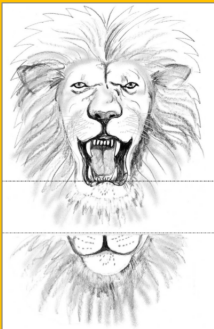
What "wisdom" and "might" does the Lord give us?

### Closing

Daniel is one of the true heroes in the Word. Daniel's name means "God is my judge". The story of Daniel in the lions' den pictures the final battle between our self-love and our conscience. Daniel trusted in the Lord and had the courage to obey Him, even when he knew that in he would be put into a den of lions. The Lord sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths, and Daniel was brought out of the den and made second ruler in the kingdom.

The story of Daniel all takes place in the kingdom of Babylon, which represents a state of selfishness. We, too, spend much of our lives fighting selfishness. The Lord is with us in each of our battles, guarding and protecting our freedom to choose Him, and a life of heavenly happiness.

Give students a Take Home Card (p. 11) as they leave.



#### In the Lion's Mouth

New Church teachings describe hell as being like one huge lion, wanting to attack. The teeth of such a lion represents false ideas that want to tear up and destroy truth (*Arcana Coelestia* 9052.3).

For example, it is true that the Lord loves all people. The hells might try to destroy that truth by telling us that we are worthless, and even the Lord couldn't love us. This is false! An angel closed the lions' mouths to protect Daniel, and angels help us to fight such falsities.

Write something false over the lion's open mouth above. Then fold the picture on the dotted lines to close the lion's mouth to symbolize shutting away that falsity so it cannot harm you.

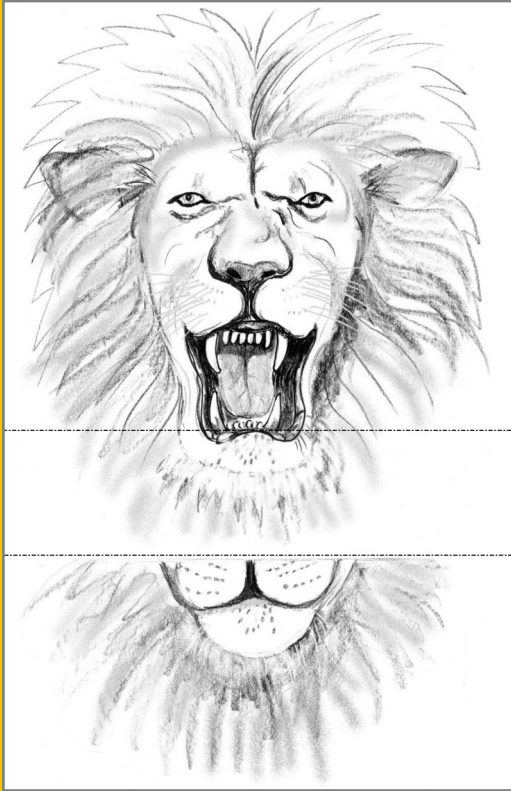
## Prayers in Daniel

1. Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His.
2. He reveals deep and secret things. He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him.
3. How great are His signs and how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. And His dominion is from generation to generation.
4. He gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who have understanding.
5. And He changes the times and the seasons. He removes kings and raises up kings.
6. **I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers. For You have given me wisdom and might.**

*Daniel 2:20-23; 4:3 adapted*

# Jake Home Cards

Cut the Take Home Cards apart and give one to each student.

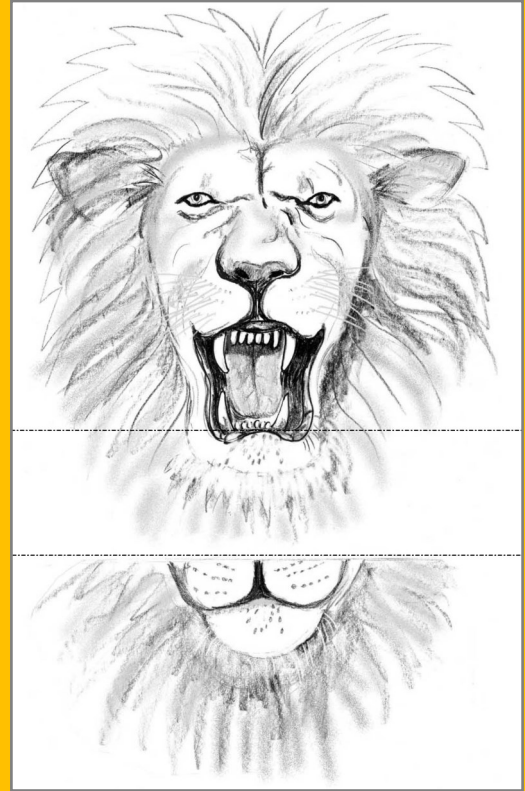


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