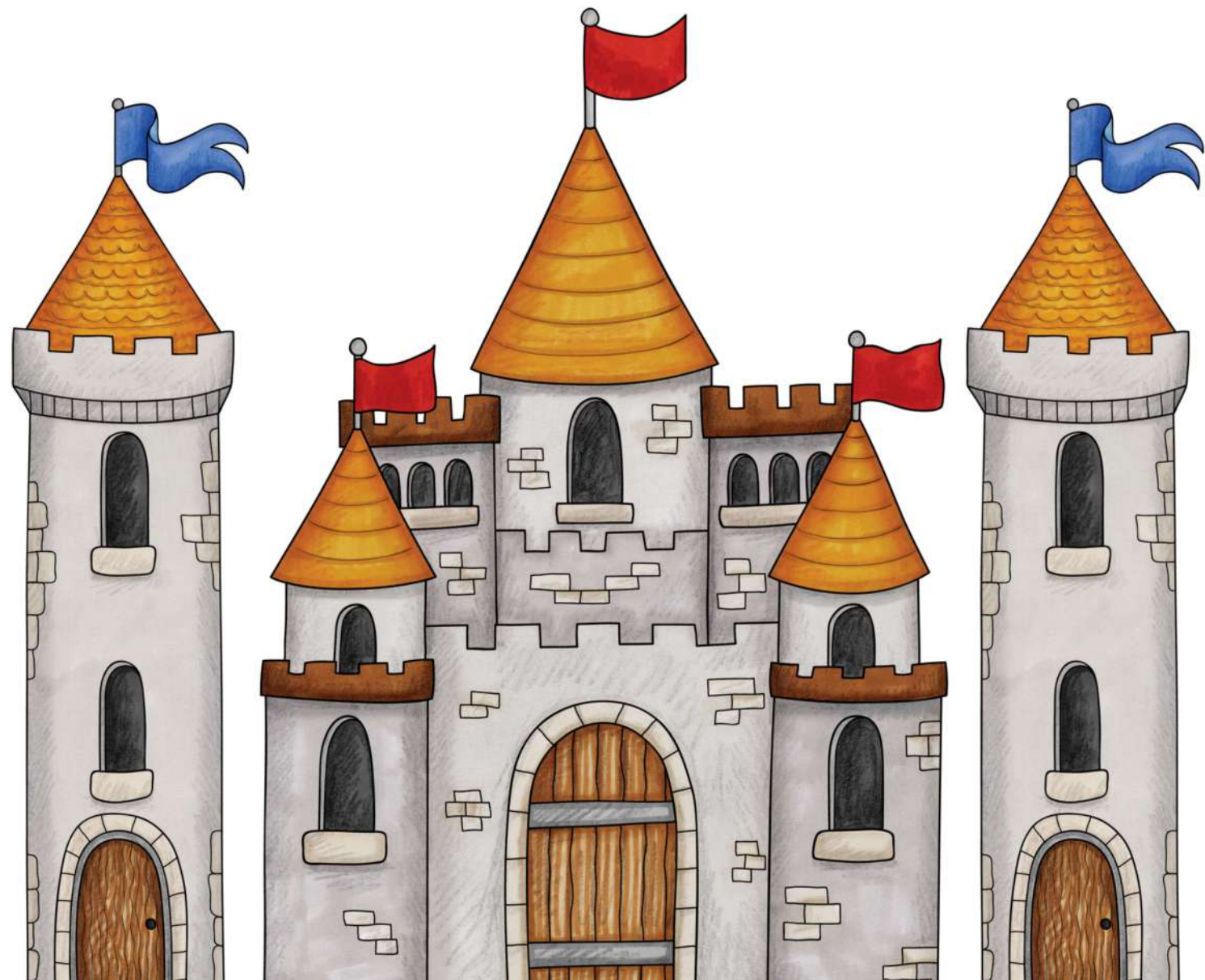


# CARDS & CASTLES





# PREPARATION

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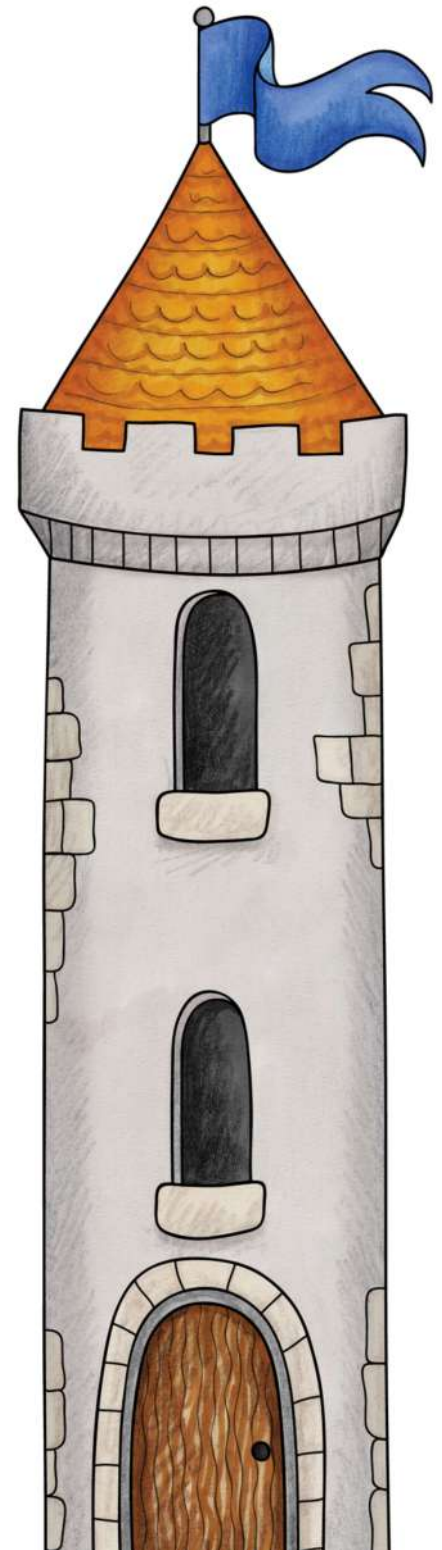
# THE BACKGROUND

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During this design challenge & team building activity, students will work together to build castles using only index cards. As they design their castle, they are not allowed to use verbal communication, move about the room, or use any additional supplies to help stabilize or attach the cards together.

If the students break any of the rules listed on the slides that follow, the troll (the teacher) will come knock their castle down, and they must begin again. The first team to complete their castle successfully wins. Introducing 1-2 challenges per day is typically appropriate as each challenge lasts about 15-20 minutes.

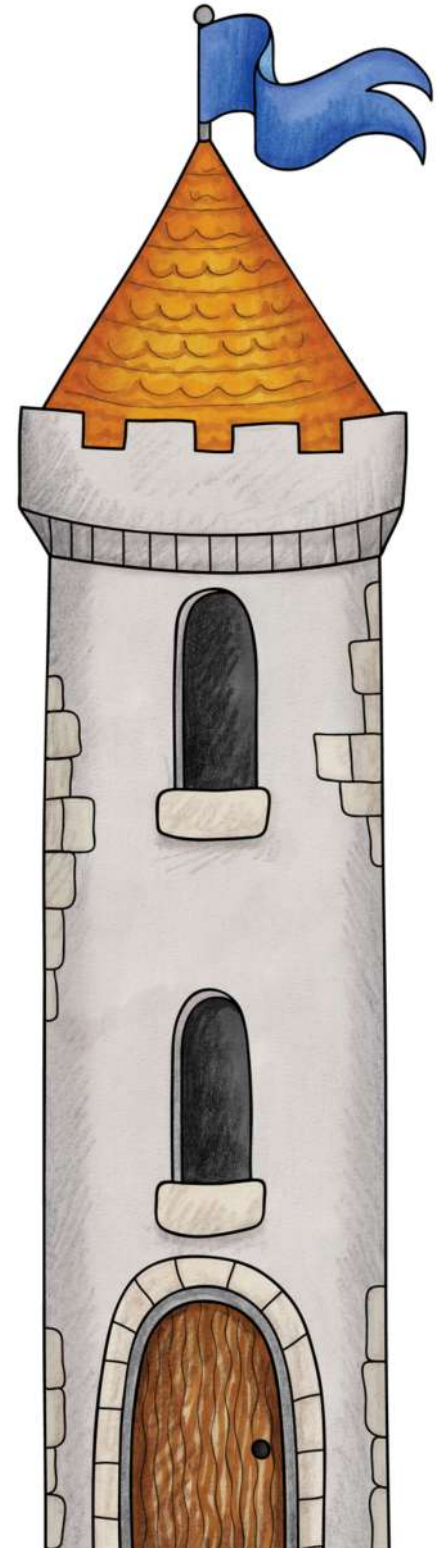
Topics of discussion that arise from this activity may include: teamwork, sportsmanship, non verbal communication, collaboration, strategy, recovery from disappointment, patience, and empathy.





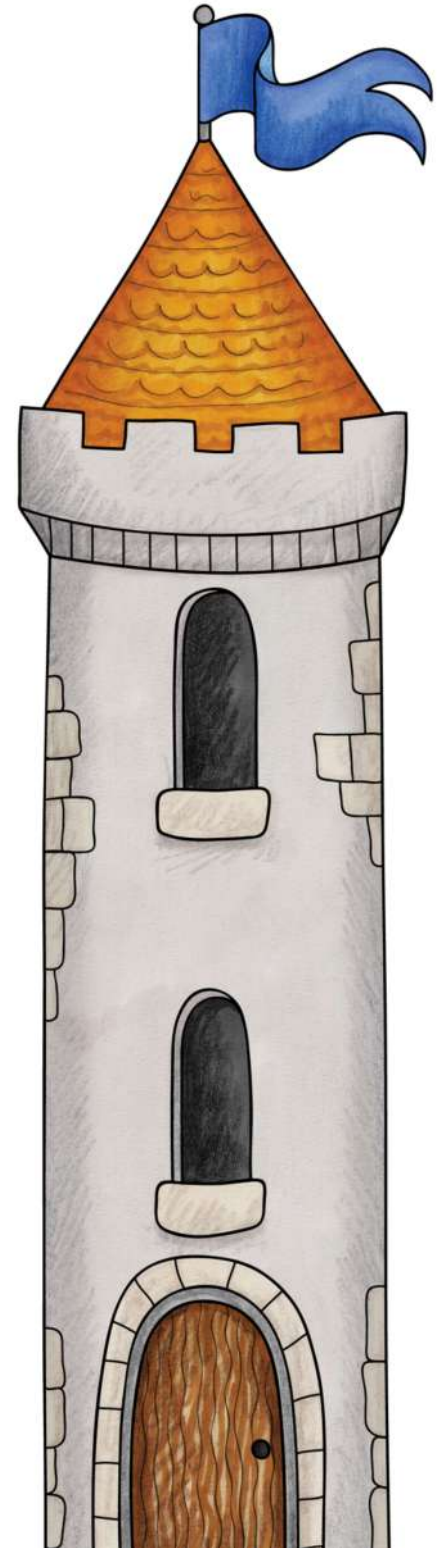
# THE SETUP


1. Help students create teams of 2-4 players.
2. Explain that teams may not move outside their safety bubble (arm's-length away from the spot they choose to sit). This reduces the risk of teams accidentally knocking down neighboring castles.
3. Provide each team with a stack of 3"x5" index cards (approximately 200 cards per team). Have extra cards handy just in case a team needs more cards.
4. Prior to showing teams the challenge, give students a minute to strategize with their team.
5. You may want to provide students with pencil and paper, or whiteboard supplies in case they want to communicate through writing or by drawing diagrams.



# THE RULES

1. Create a team of 2-4 players.
2. Be the fastest team to build a castle matching the description.
3. You may only fold the cards once, or keep them flat. No cutting, tearing, taping, or gluing.
4. If you speak or make noise, your castle gets knocked down by the troll.
5. If you move outside your safety bubble, your castle gets knocked down by the troll.
6. The first team to complete their castle successfully wins the challenge.





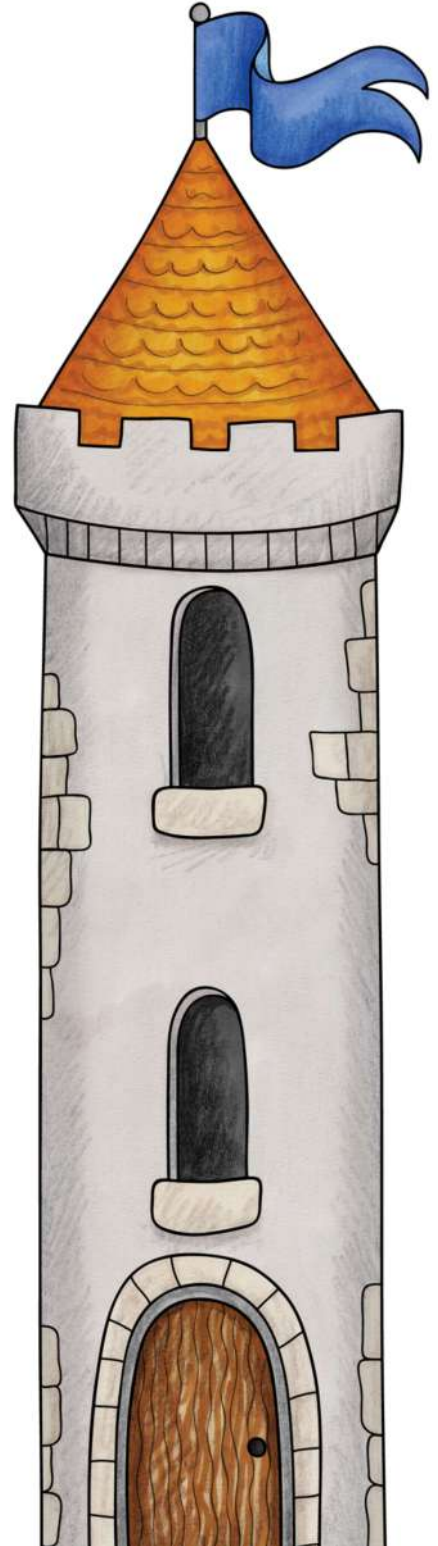
# CHALLENGES

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# CHALLENGE #1

**DESIGN A CASTLE THAT IS:**

2 feet tall, and is shaped like  
a square when looking at it  
from a bird's-eye view



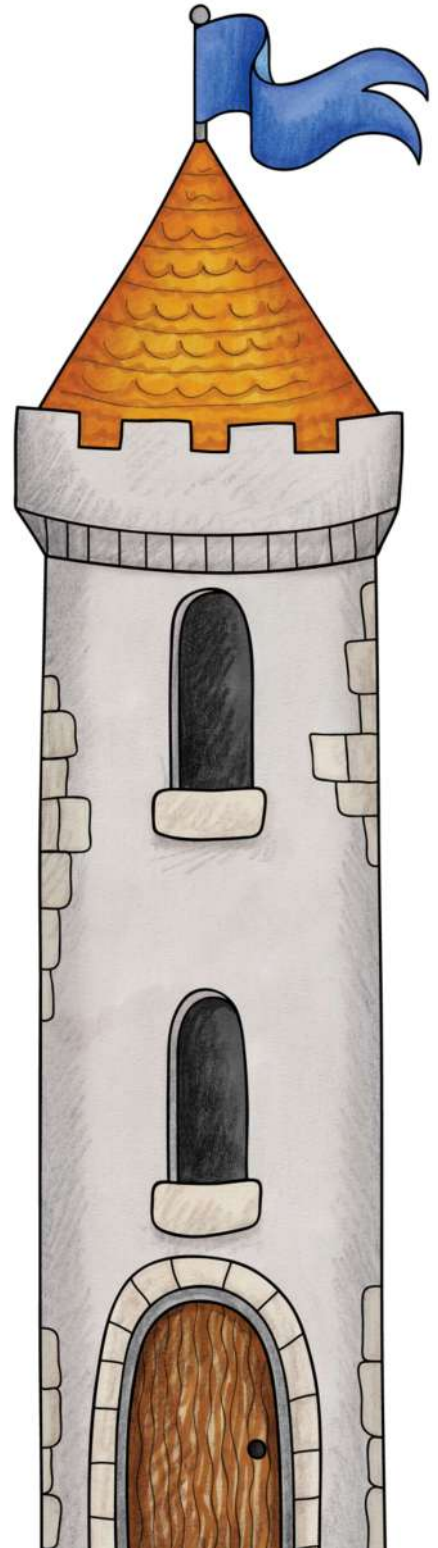


# CHALLENGE #2

---

**DESIGN A CASTLE THAT IS:**

1 foot tall with a bridge  
that is at least six inches tall,  
and at least one foot long

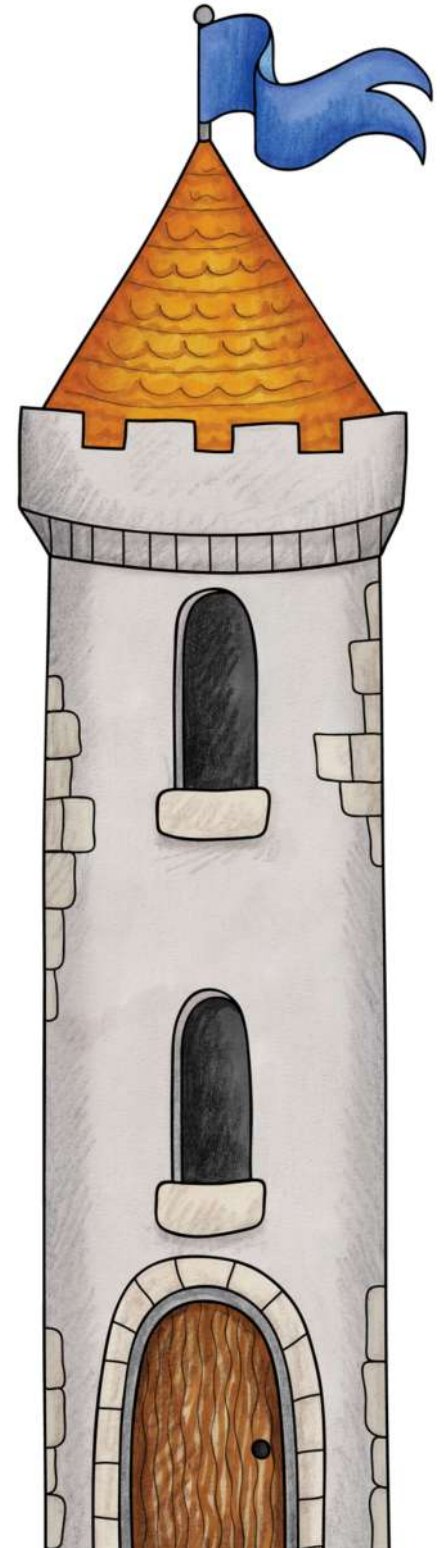




# CHALLENGE #3

**DESIGN A CASTLE THAT IS:**

3 feet tall with a doorway  
that is at least 6 inches tall

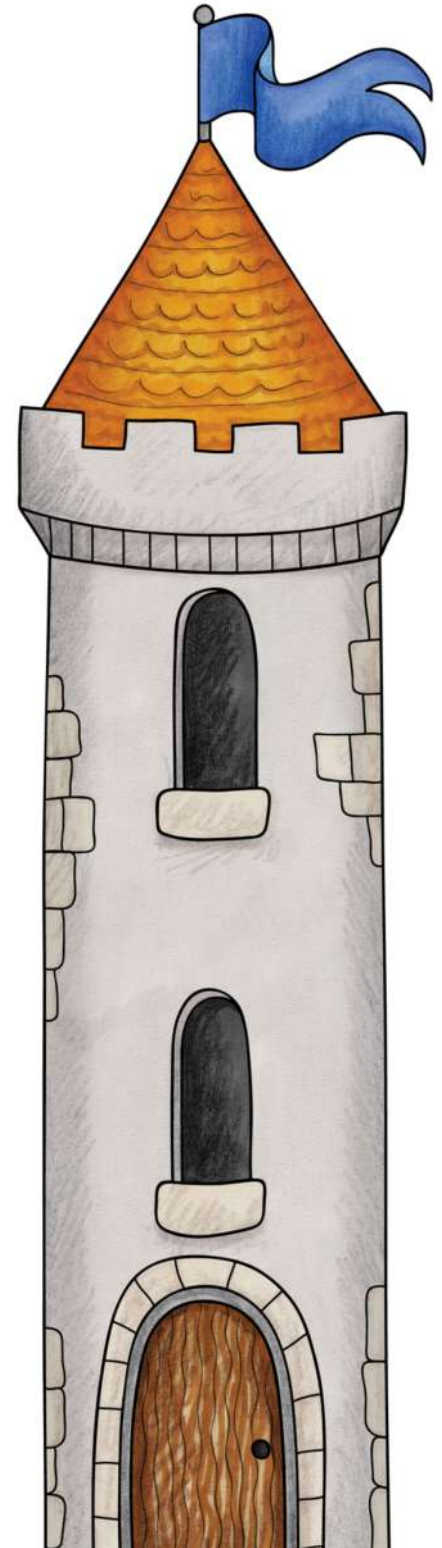


# CHALLENGE #4

---

## DESIGN A CASTLE THAT HAS:

4 towers that are each  
1 foot tall, arranged in a  
straight line, and connected  
by walls that are at least  
four inches tall

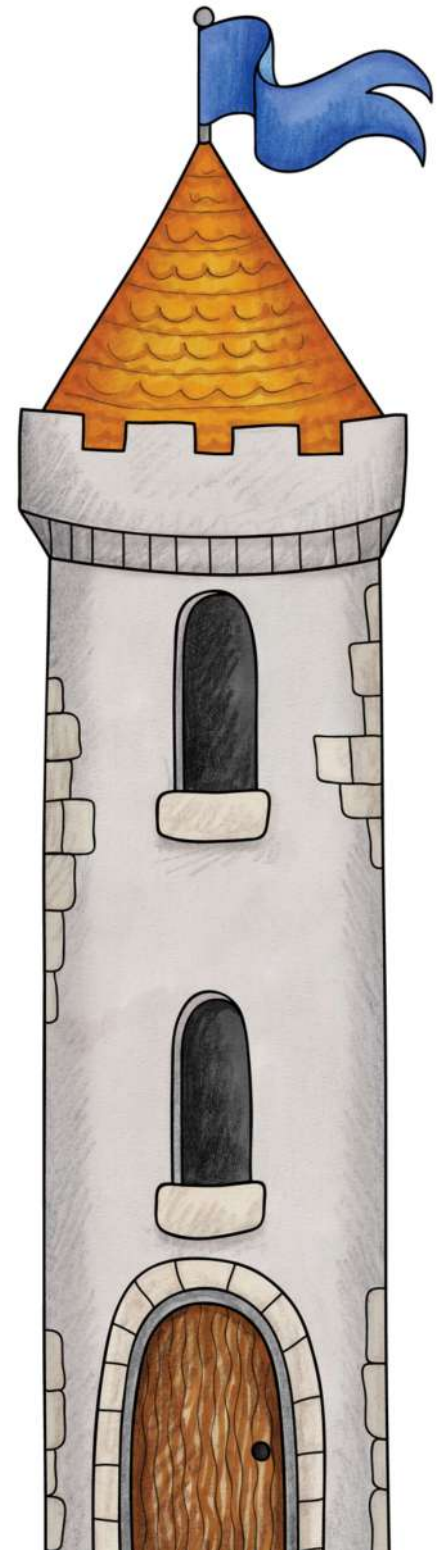


# CHALLENGE #5

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**DESIGN A CASTLE THAT HAS:**

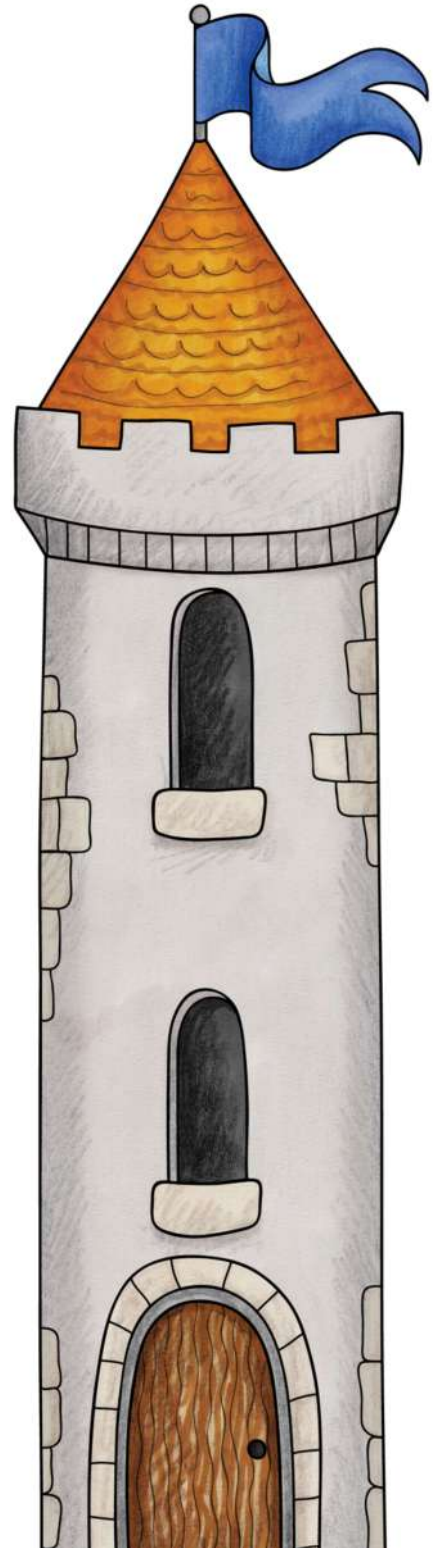
2 towers that are each  
2 feet tall, connected by a  
bridge that is 1 foot long



# CHALLENGE #6

## **DESIGN A CASTLE THAT IS:**

One and a half feet tall and has a circular shape with a 1 foot diameter when looking at it from a bird's-eye view



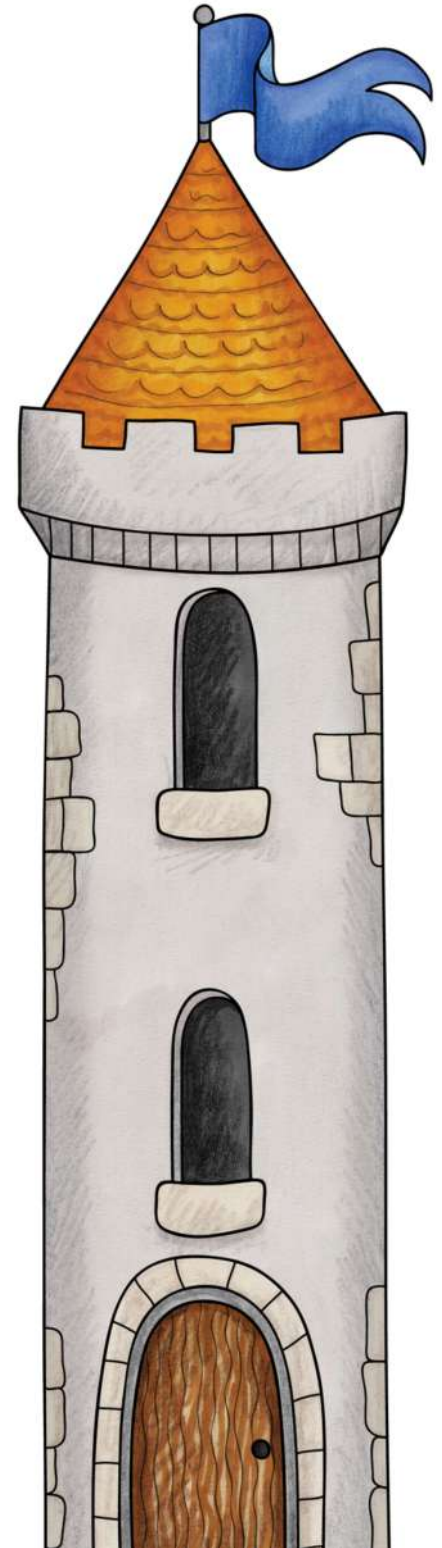


# CHALLENGE #7

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**DESIGN A CASTLE THAT HAS:**

4 towers that are each  
2 feet tall, connected by  
walls that are at least one  
foot tall

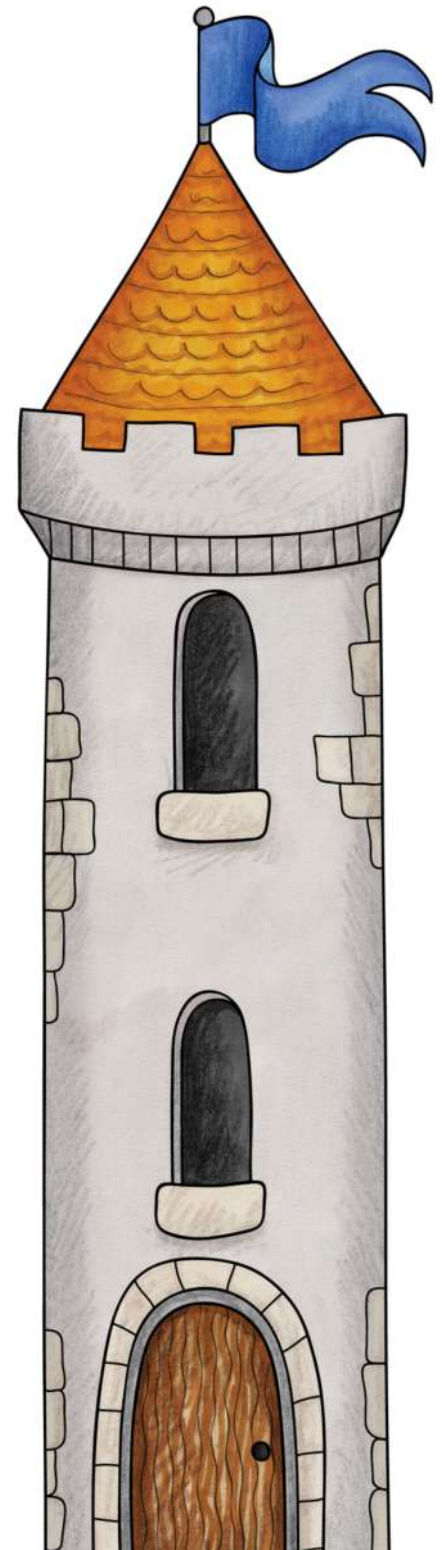


# CHALLENGE #8

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## DESIGN A CASTLE THAT HAS:

A square base with a perimeter of 4 feet, and a height of 2 feet with a one-foot tall tower built from the center of the base

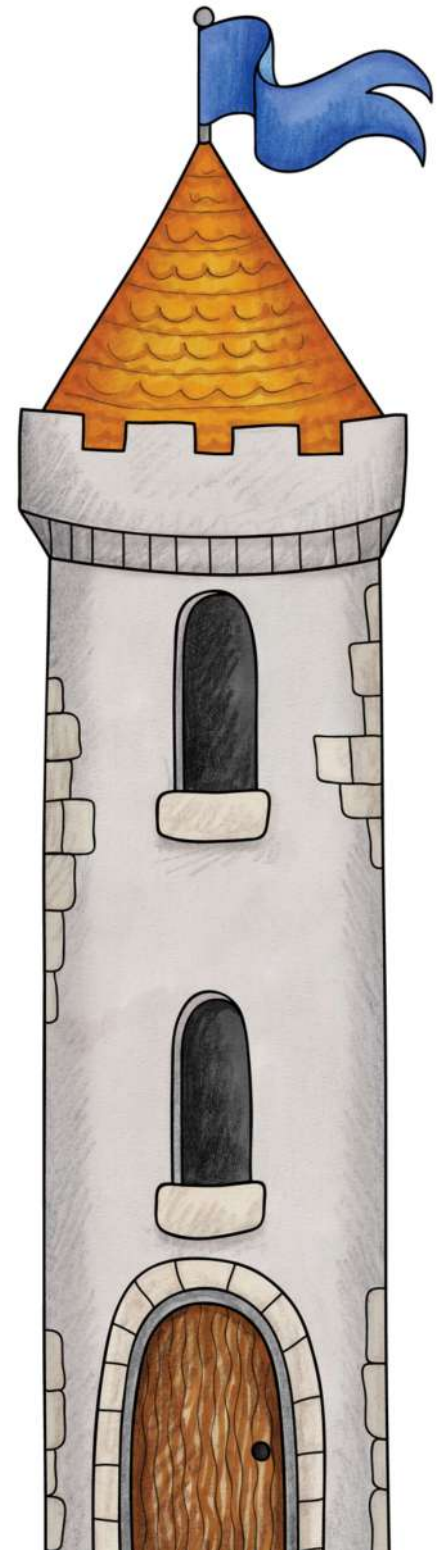


# CHALLENGE #9

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## DESIGN A CASTLE THAT HAS:

A circular base with a diameter of 2 feet that has two towers (one on each side of the circle) that are each one foot tall

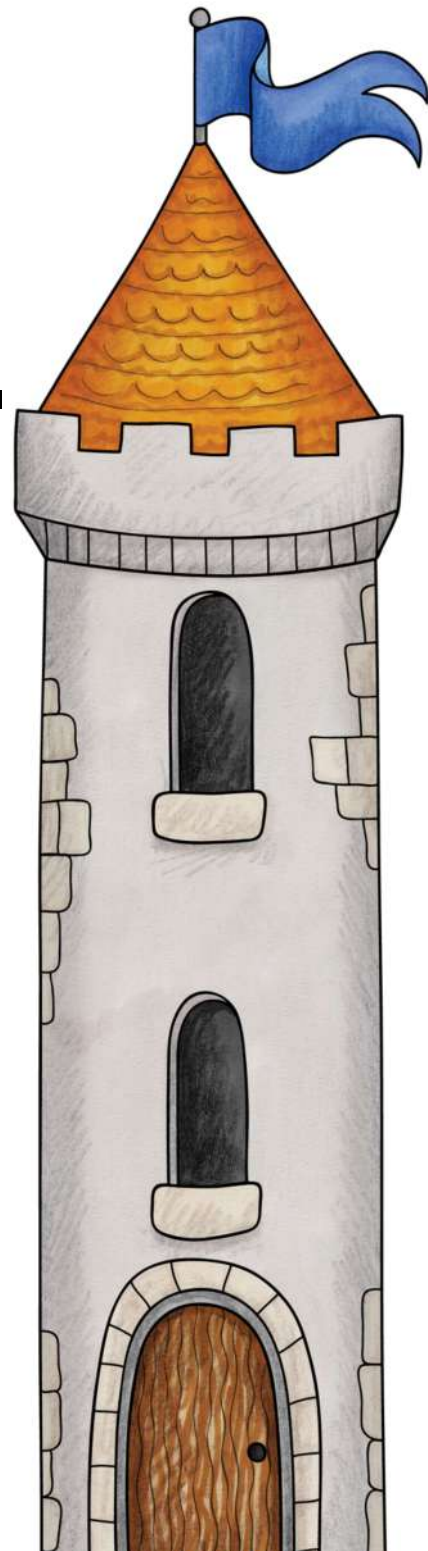


# CHALLENGE #10

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## DESIGN A CASTLE THAT HAS:

Two towers that are three feet tall, connected by a foot-long bridge that does not touch the ground



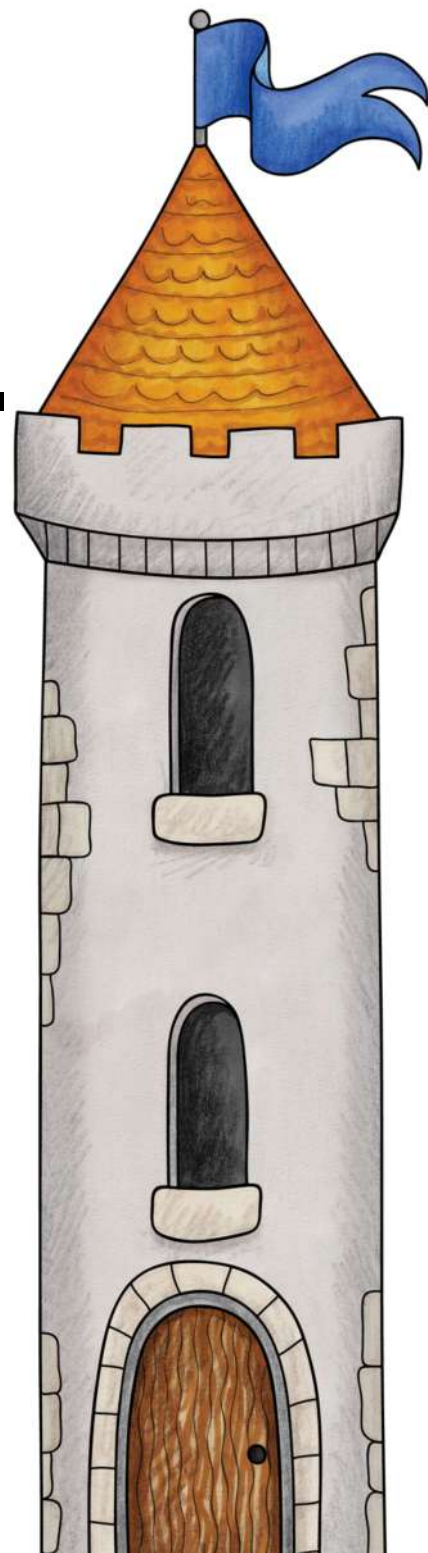


# CHALLENGE #11

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## DESIGN A CASTLE THAT HAS:

Six towers arranged in a zigzag pattern. Three towers must be two feet tall, and three must be one foot tall

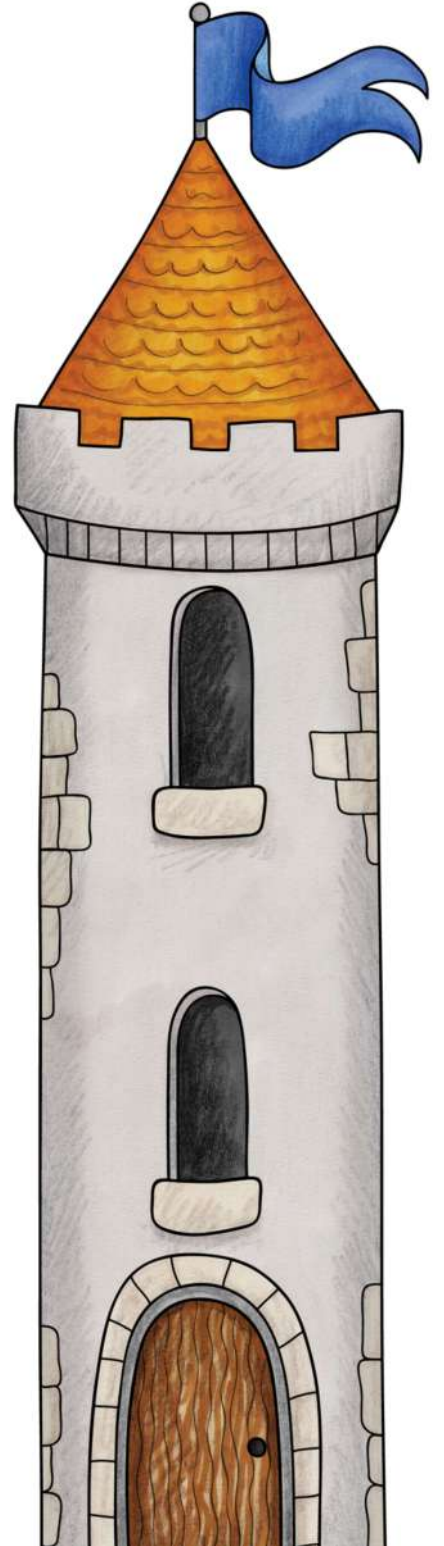



# CHALLENGE #12

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**DESIGN A CASTLE THAT IS:**

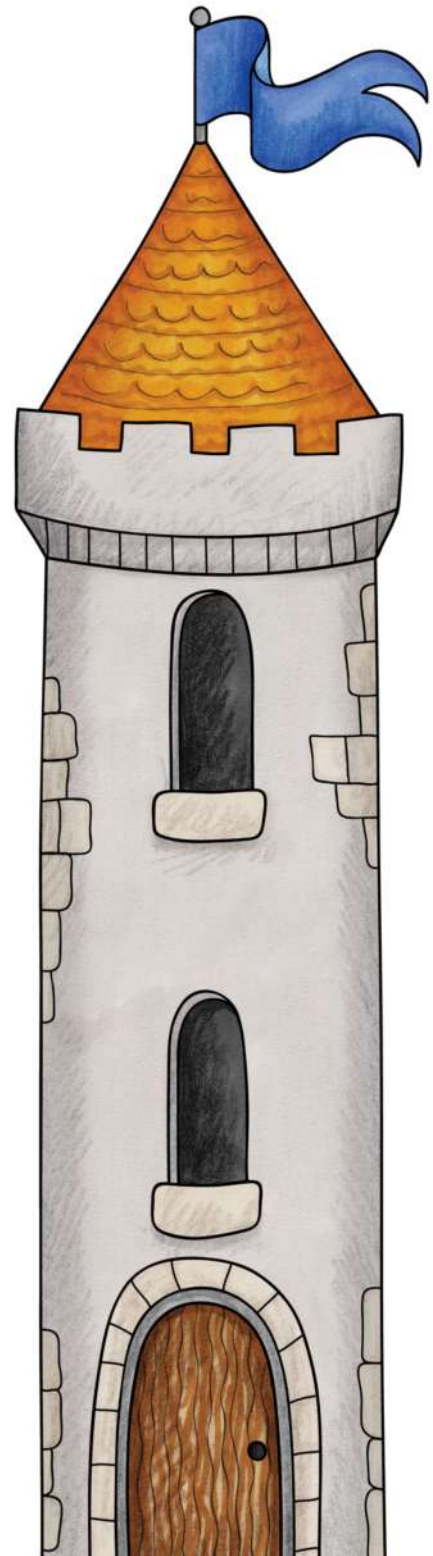
One foot tall and shaped like a  
star when looking at it from  
a bird's-eye view





# REFLECTION



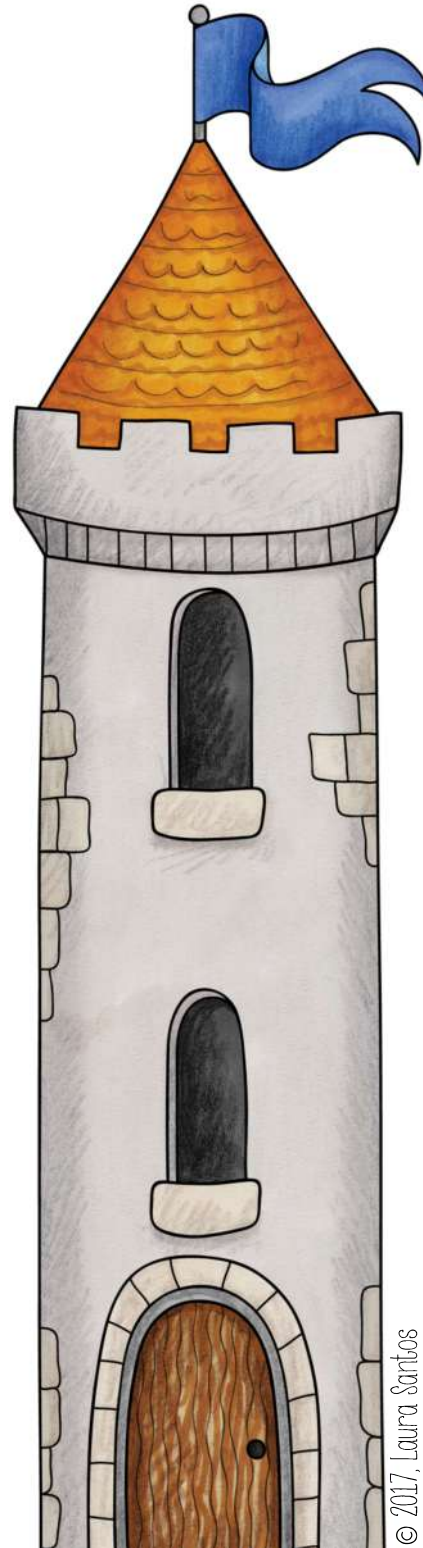


# THE REFLECTION

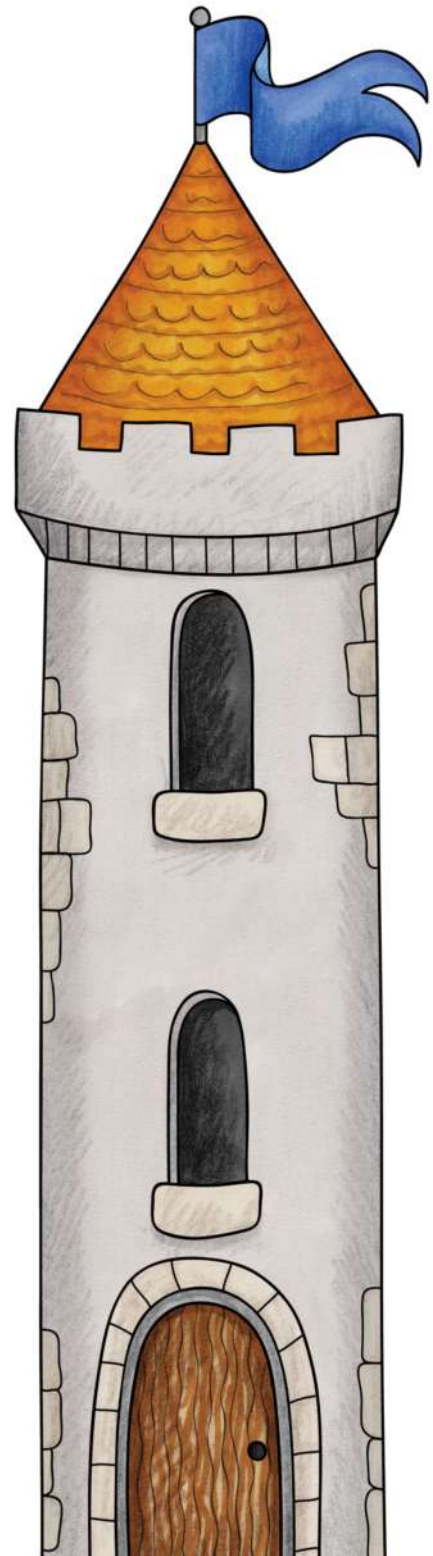
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If you so choose, you can use the discussion prompts on the following slides to help students reflect on the lessons learned after each challenge. The practice of reflecting can promote stronger collaboration skills, strengthen the classroom community, and help students make personal growth. It's possible you may want to ask all questions after each challenge, or pick and choose those you find appropriate for your class.

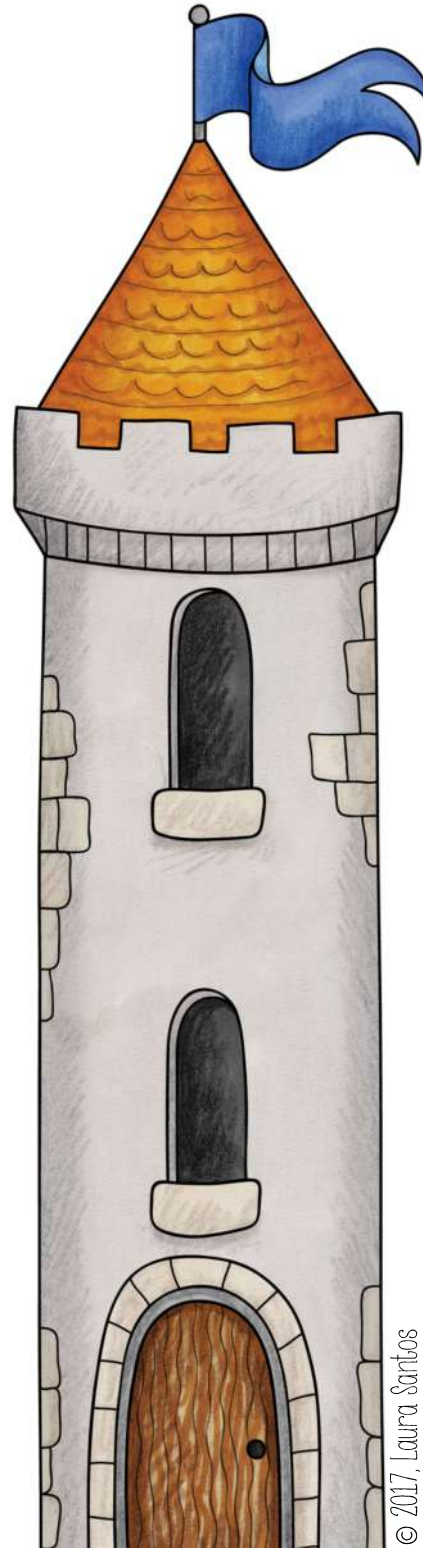
Using these prompts is especially helpful if you plan to use this activity at the beginning of the school year when you are establishing routines, and expectations for respectful behavior.

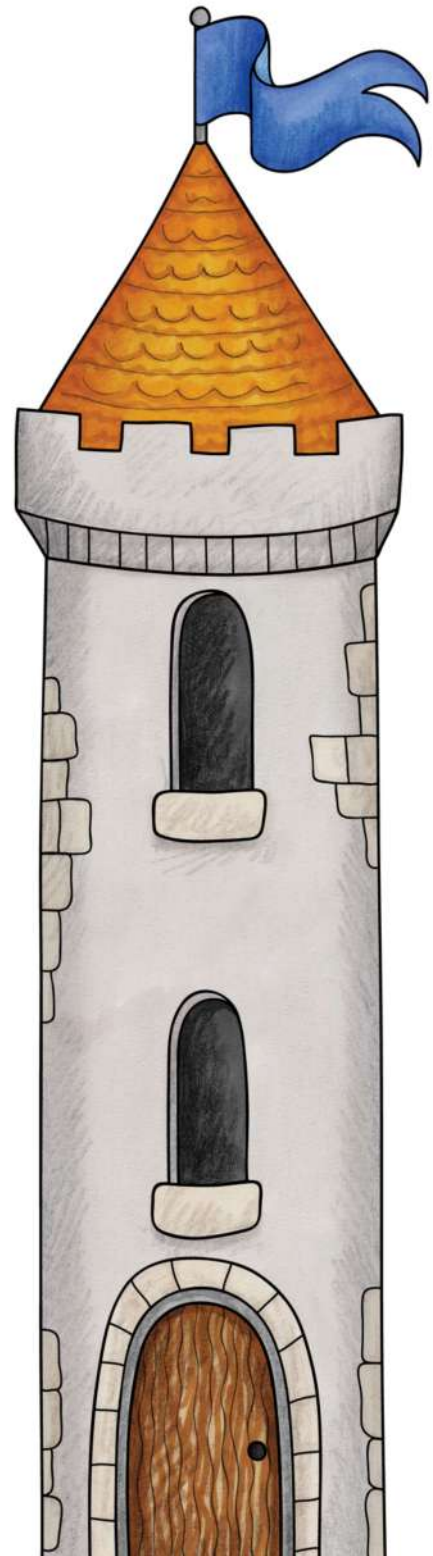




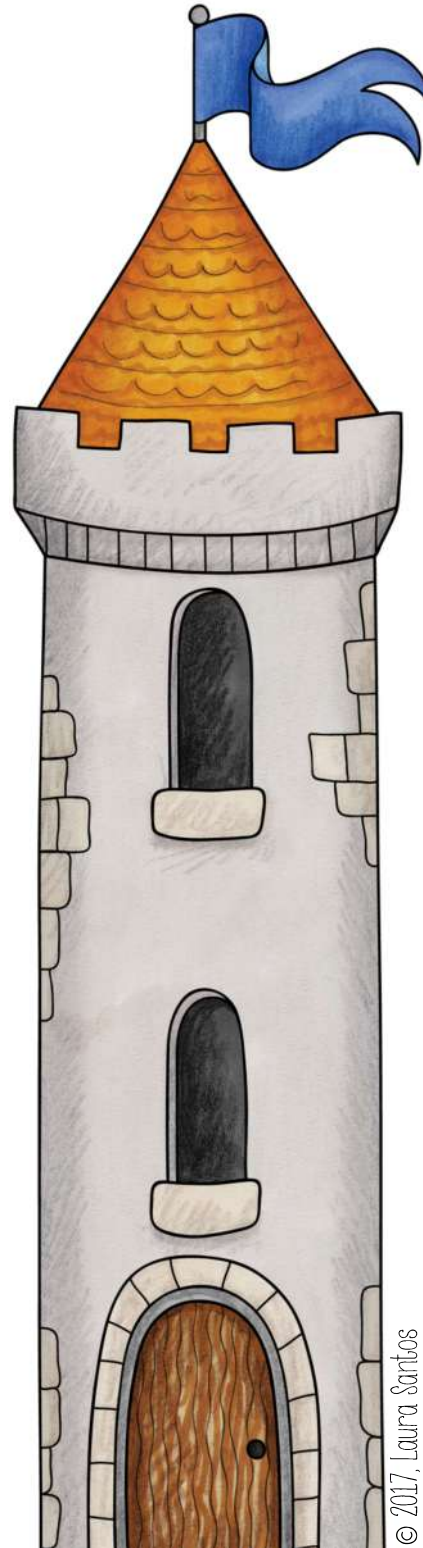


What helped you  
communicate  
with your team  
even though you  
couldn't speak?

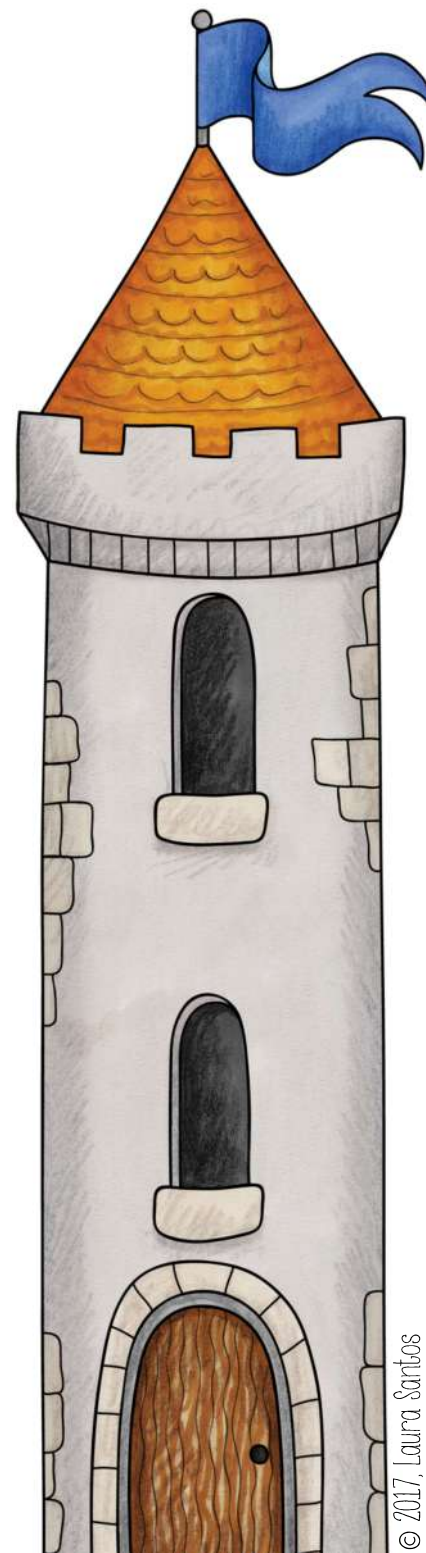
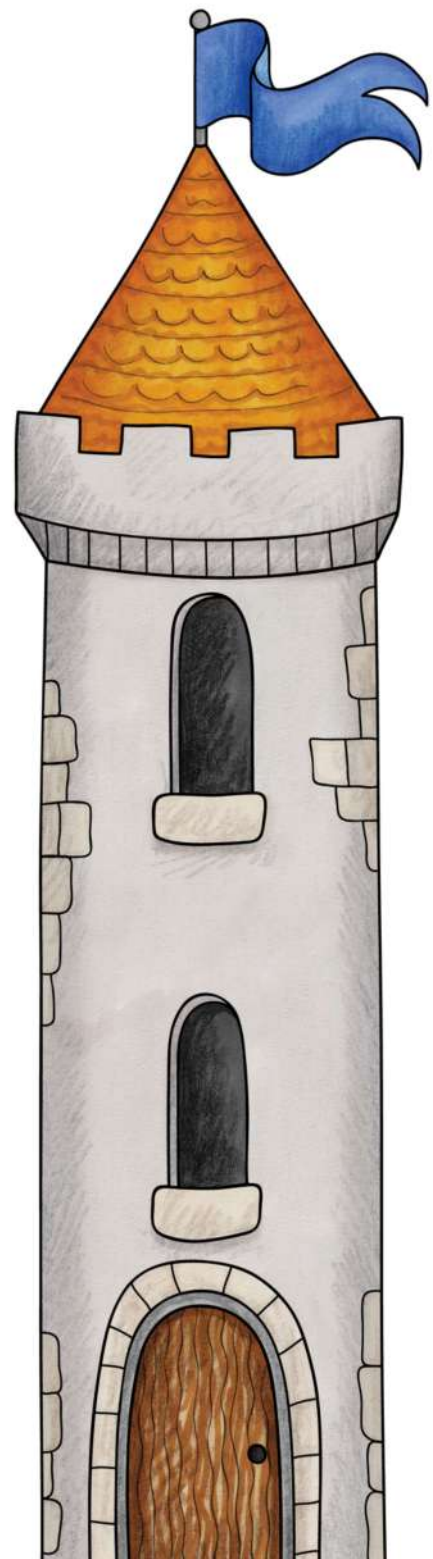




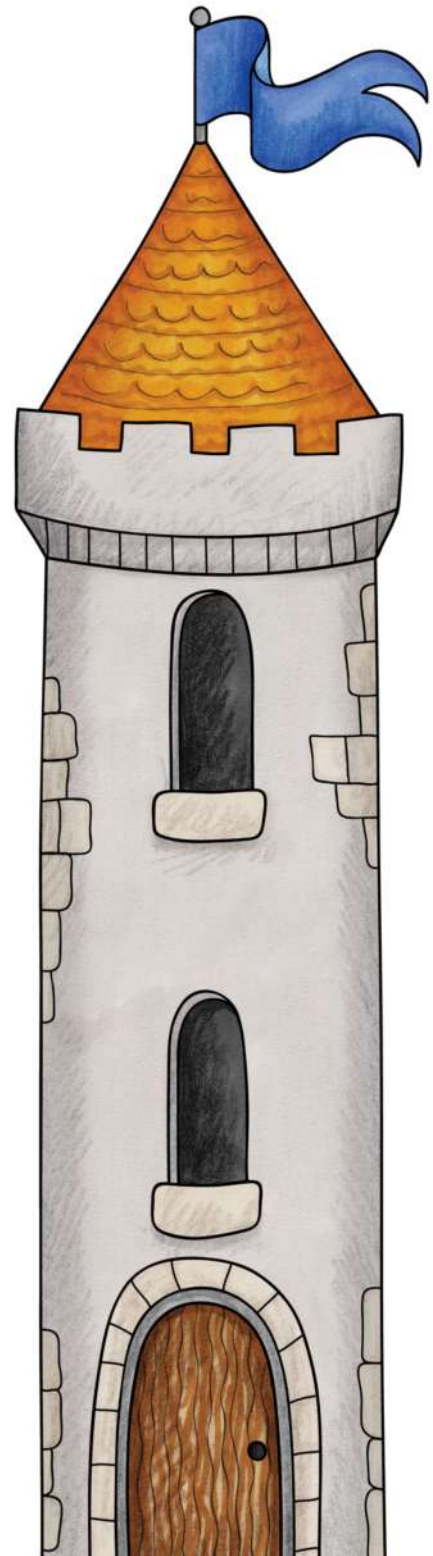
What did you do  
to stay calm, and  
respectful when  
something didn't  
go as planned?



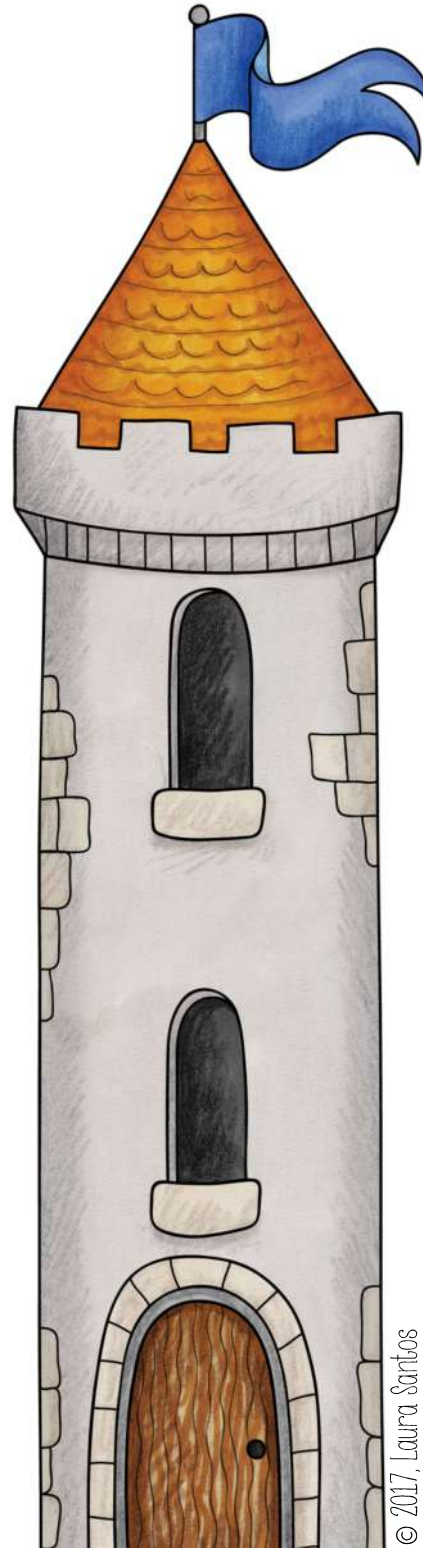
Was your  
planning time  
useful? What  
would you do  
differently  
next time?





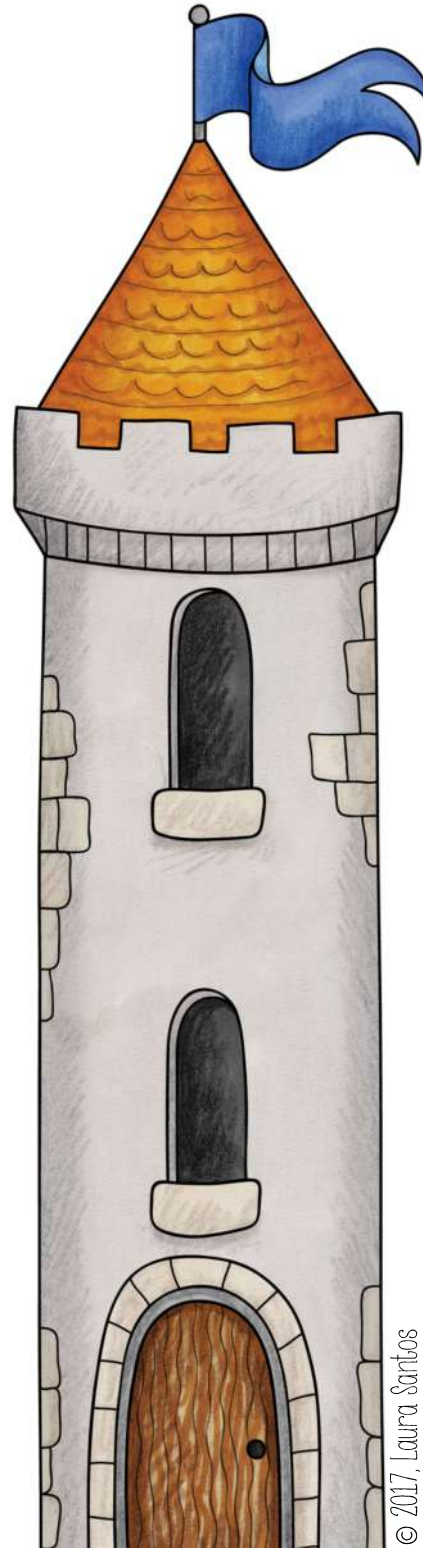
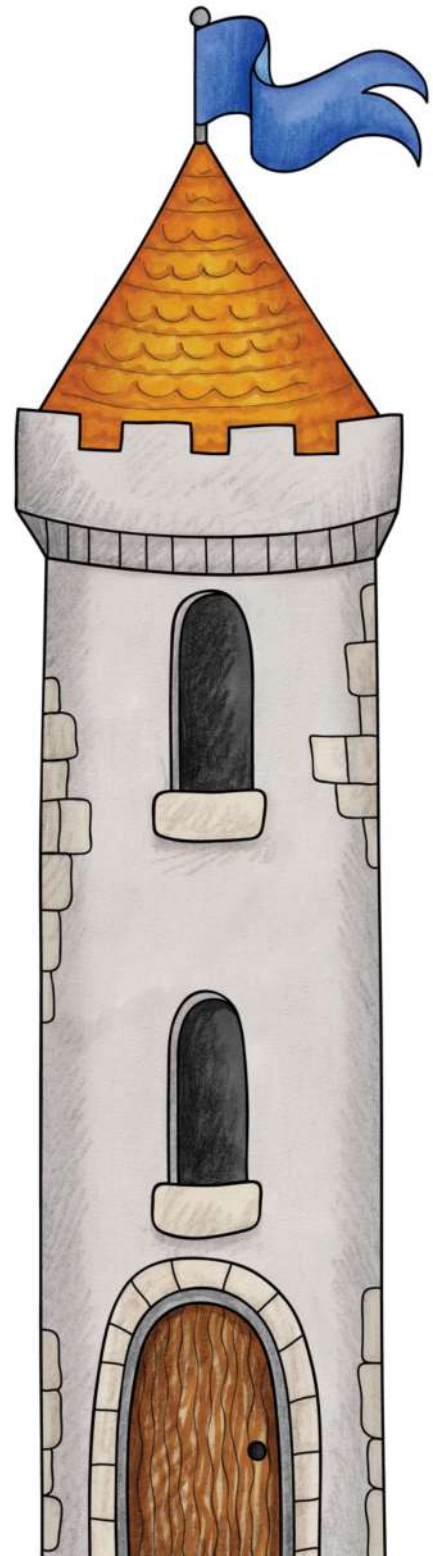


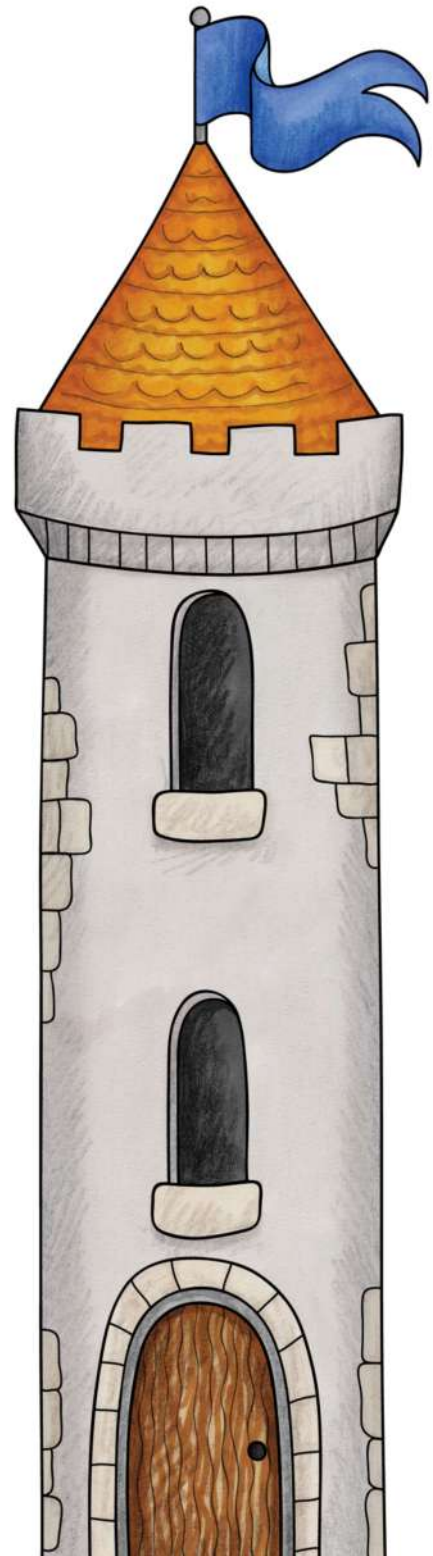
What did you do  
if teammates  
had different  
ideas about the  
best way to win  
the challenge?



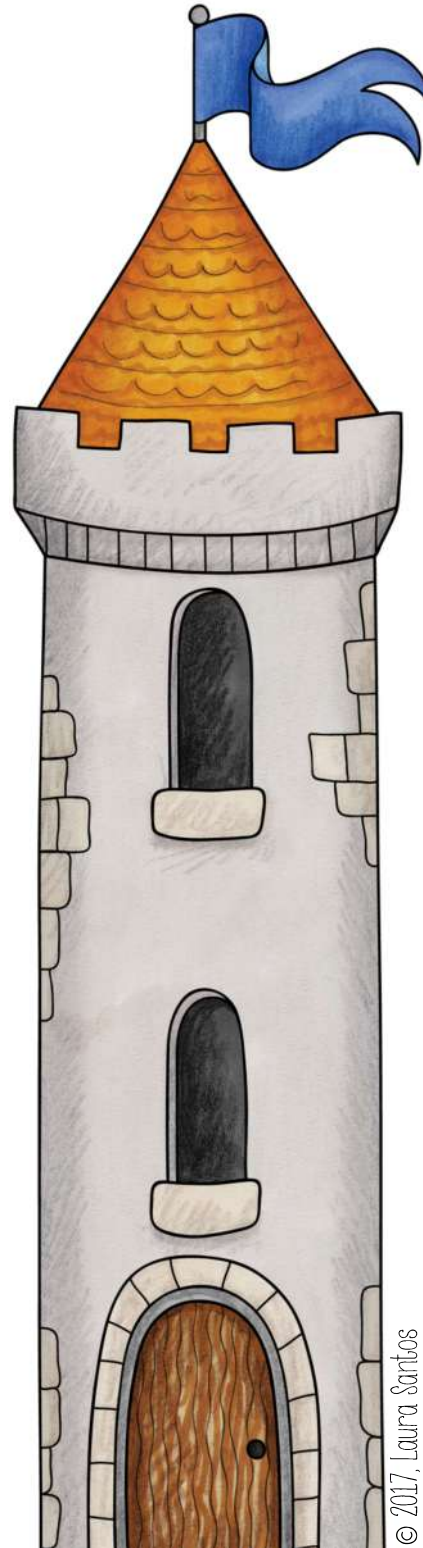


How did your  
team react when  
you knew who  
the winner was?  
Would you change  
anything  
next time?

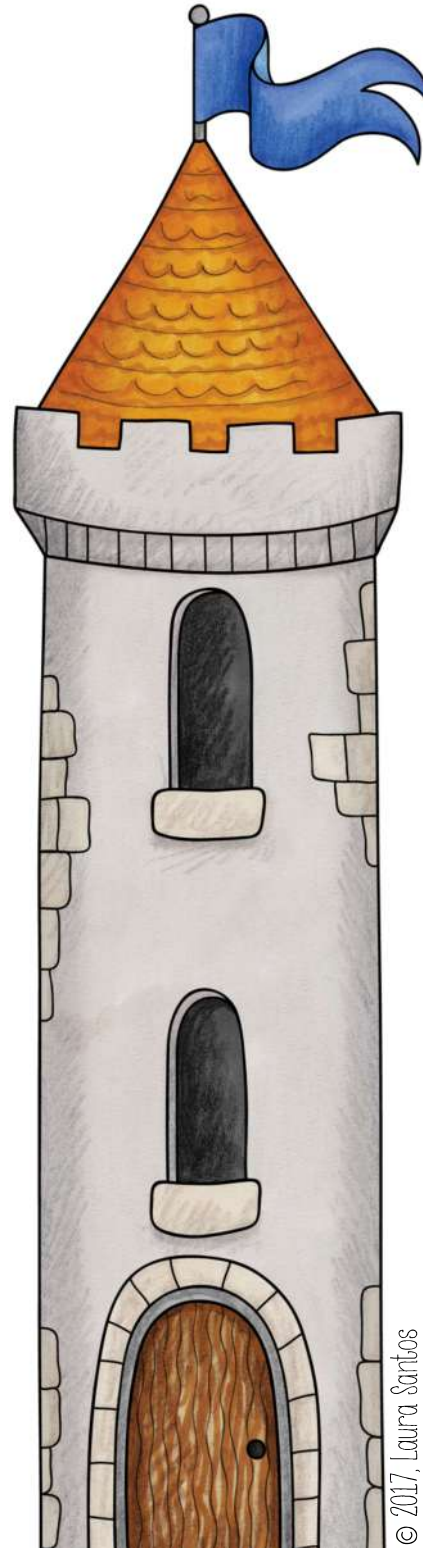
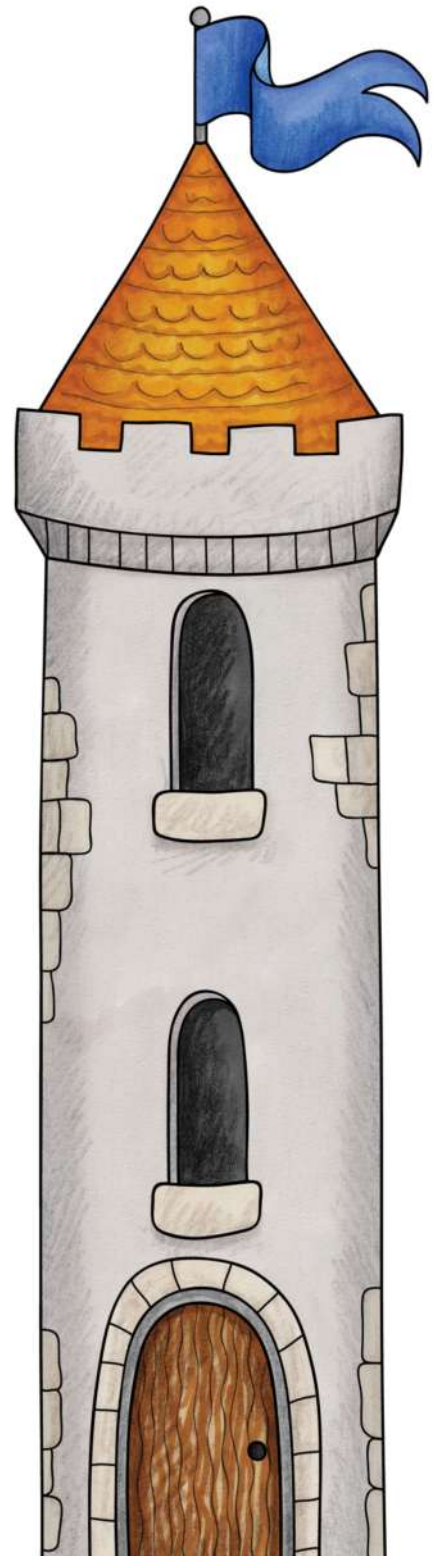




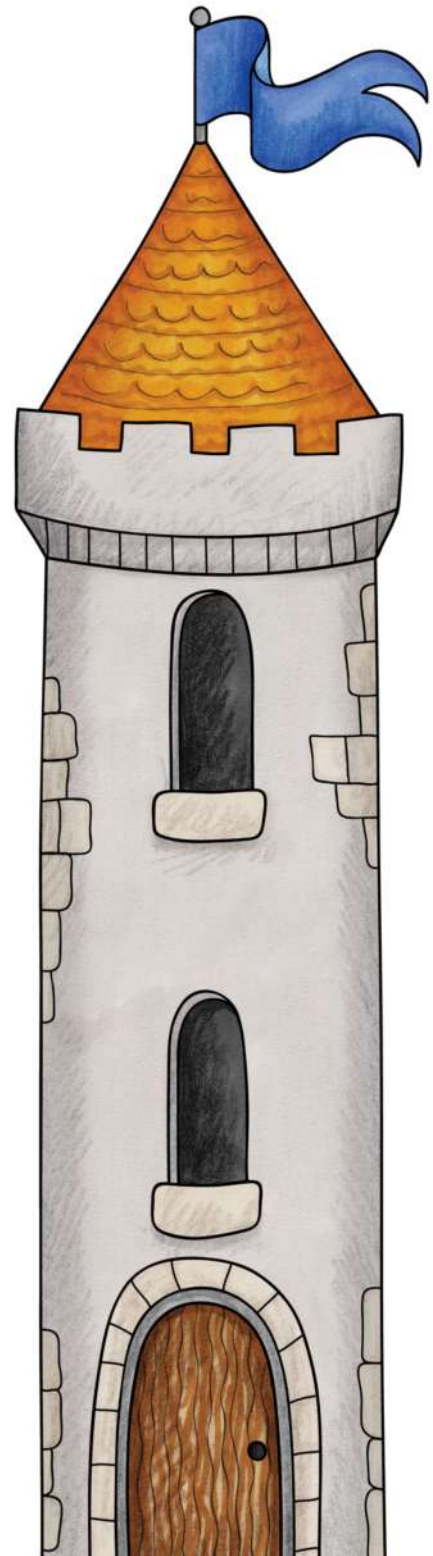
Who stood out to  
you as a leader?  
What made that  
person stand out?



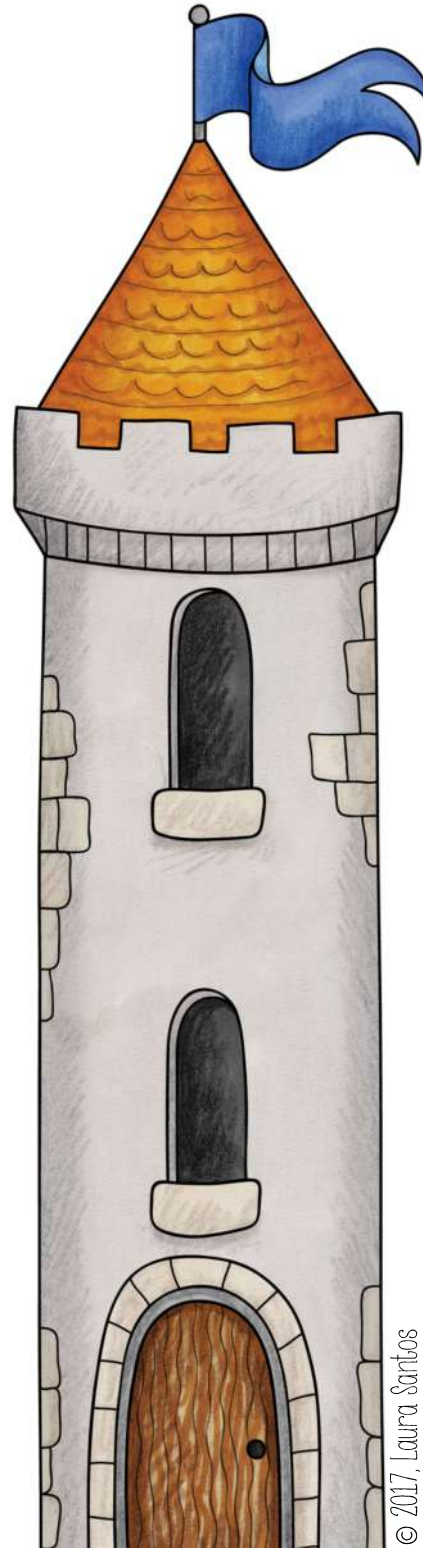
Did anyone on  
your team do  
something  
especially helpful  
during the  
challenge? Explain.







What is your goal  
for the next  
challenge? What  
do you need to do  
to achieve this?







# TIDY UP TIME

Please carefully unfold and stack all your index cards. Once you have a neat pile, place them in our storage bin.

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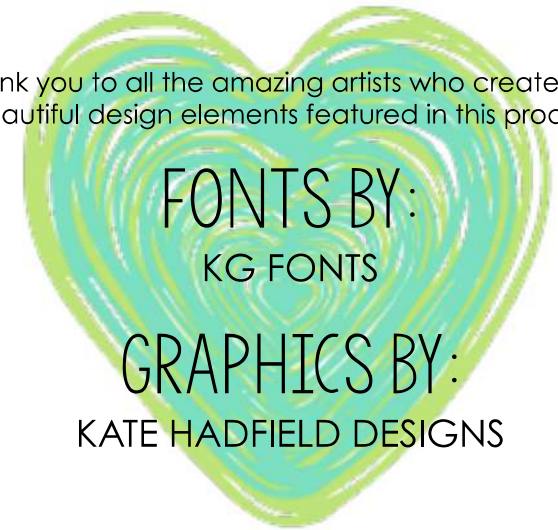
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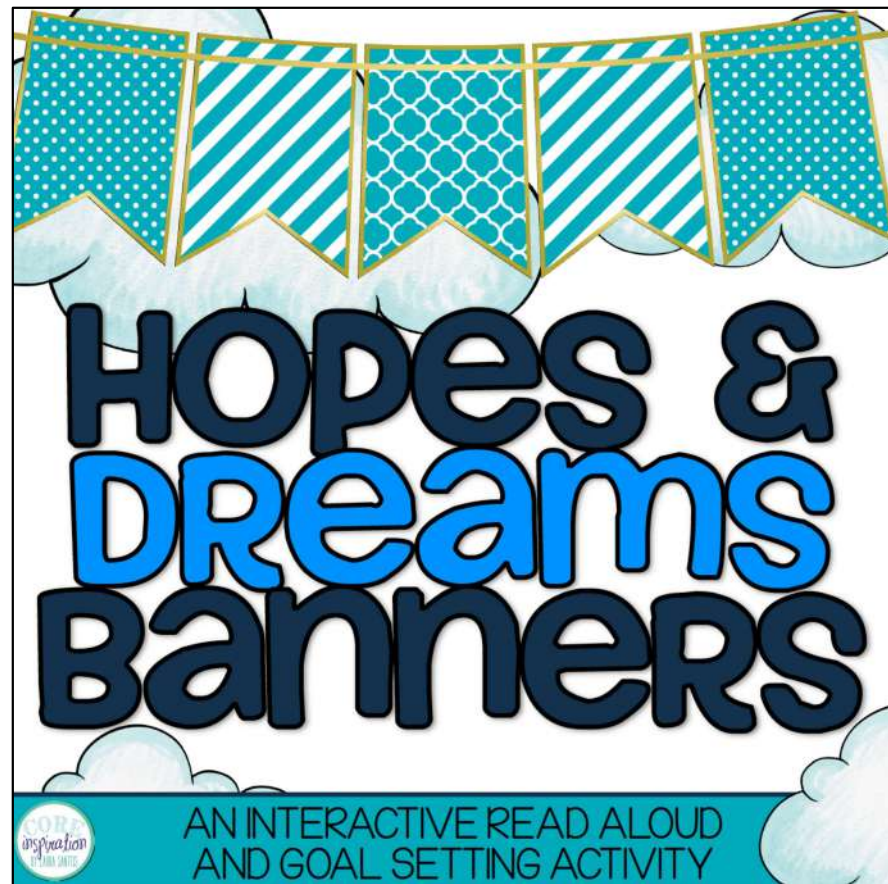
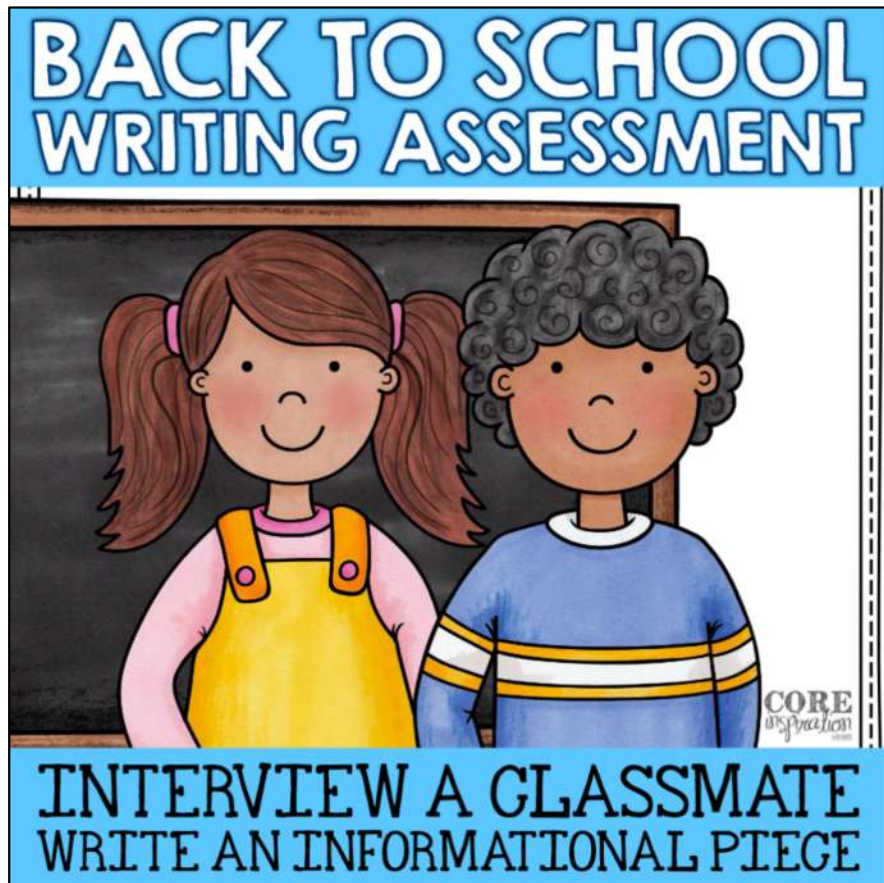
WANT A PEEK INSIDE MY  
CLASSROOM? VISIT MY BLOG:





# RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

You may also enjoy my other back to school resources:



Learn more about how I use these resources in my classroom.

