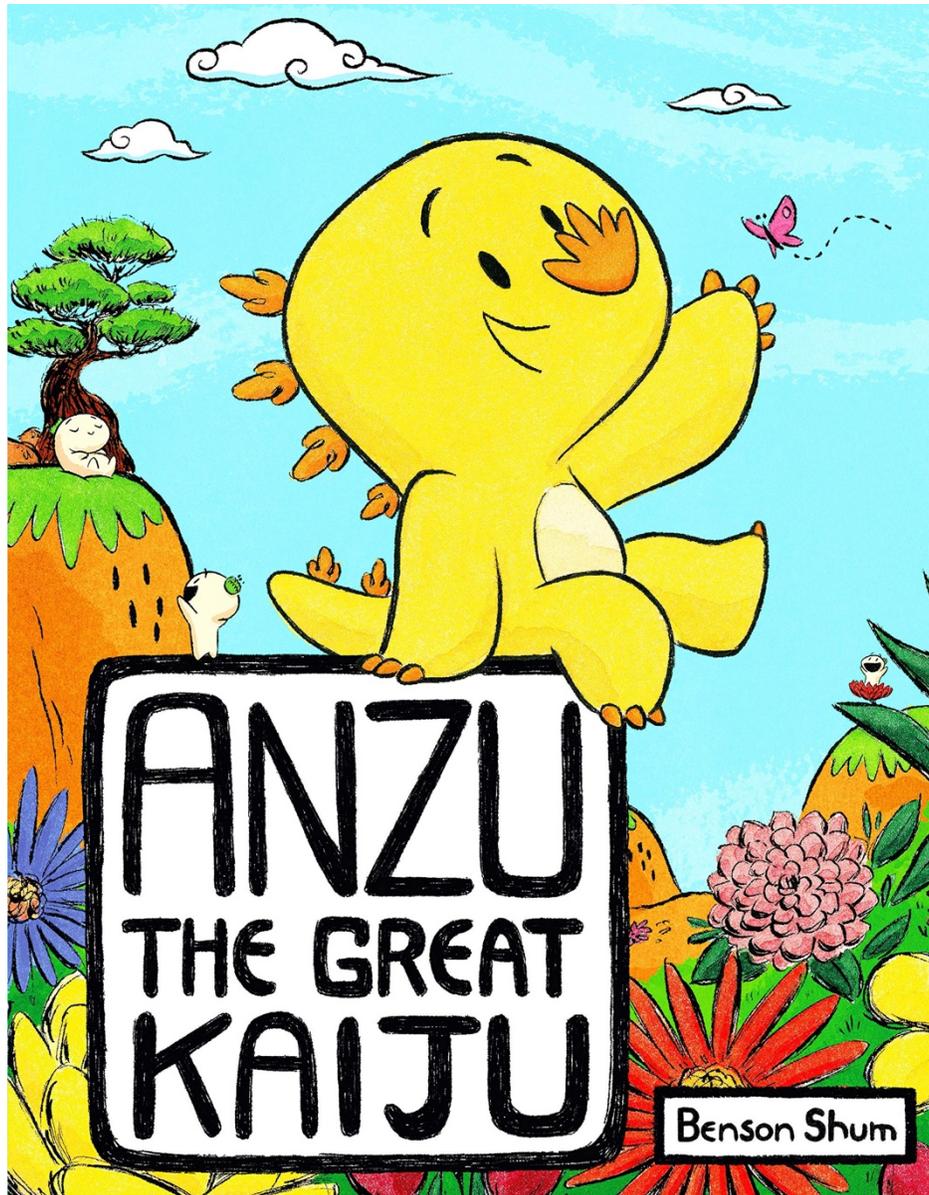


# Anzu the Great Kaiju

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen  
based upon the picture book  
written and illustrated by Benson Shum



Published by  
Roaring Brook Press  
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## **Benson Shum, Author-Illustrator**

Benson Shum is a children's book author and illustrator. He wrote and illustrated *Alex's Good Fortune* (A Lunar New Year book) and has illustrated a number of picture books like Adam Lehrhaupt's *Sloth Went* and Jennifer Sattler's *Go to Sheep*. Aside from writing and illustrating, Benson is also an animator at the Walt Disney Animation Studios, where he was a part of such films as *Frozen*, *Big Hero 6*, *Zootopia*, *Moana*, *Frozen II*, *Raya and the Last Dragon* and *Encanto*. Originally from Vancouver, BC, Benson now lives in sunny southern California. Visit him at [www.bensonshum.com](http://www.bensonshum.com).



## **Marcie Colleen Curriculum Writer**

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a Master's in Educational Theater from New York University. In addition to creating curriculum guides for children's books, Marcie can often be found writing books of her own at home in San Diego, California. Visit her at [www.thisismarciecolleen.com](http://www.thisismarciecolleen.com).

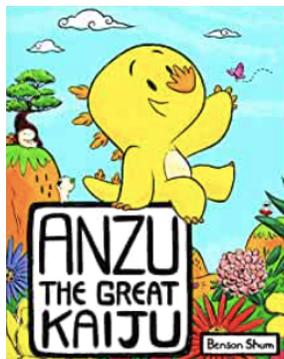
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## How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Anzu the Great Kaiju* is designed for students in kindergarten through second grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Anzu the Great Kaiju* into their curricula.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in English Language Arts.



**Title: Anzu the Great Kaiju**

**Author: Benson Shum**

**Illustrator: Benson Shum**

**Publisher: Roaring Brook Press**

**Date: January 11, 2022**

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An adorable picture book about a tiny monster with a big heart trying to follow in his family's footsteps.

All great Kaiju are born with a super power to strike fear in the heart of the city.

But Anzu is different.

Instead of mayhem, he likes May flowers.

Instead of striking fear, he prefers to be sincere.

Can Anzu find a way to make his family proud and stay true to his kind self?

### **Praise for *Anzu the Great Kaiju***

"[E]ngaging and heartwarming. . . A tongue-in-cheek bildungsroman spun around celebrating differences and the underrated superpowers of gentleness and sweetness."  
—*Kirkus*

"Shum's experience as an animator. . . is evident in the way he storyboards the narrative, pulls readers along with cinematic energy, and celebrates Japanese aesthetics—with everything from bonsai trees to golden picture frames to tiny creatures that look like adorable walking dumplings. [A] wholly original tale, which proves humorous, heartfelt, and as sweet as the flowers Anzu conjures." —*Booklist*



Named on the January/February 2022 Kids' Indie Next List by American Booksellers Association

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# English Language Arts

## **Reading Comprehension**

Before reading *Anzu the Great Kaiju*, help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, title page, etc.

- Look at the cover illustration. Describe what you see.
- How many characters do you see?
- How would you describe the large yellow kaiju center of the cover?
- Mimic what the kaiju is doing. How does it make you feel?
- Look at the illustration on the back cover. Describe what you see.
- Now take a close look at the front endpapers. Describe what you see.
- Looking at the title page, what THREE words would you use to describe the kaiju?
- Can you guess what the story might be about?

Now read or listen to the book.

- According to the text, what does a great kaiju do?
- What power was Anzu born with?
- What does it mean for a kaiju to be given their own city? Why is Anzu excited to have his own city?
- Why do you think Mom and Dad felt like he needed some lessons?
- What happens when Anzu tries to summon storms?
- What happens when Anzu tries to shake the earth?
- What happens when Anzu stomps? What happens when he roars?
- Why does Anzu wonder if he is a kaiju?
- What does Grandma tell Anzu to do? Does it work?
- What happens to his city when Anzu finally “ignites chaos”? How does this make Anzu feel?
- How does Anzu win back the joy and admiration of his city?
- Why does his family call him an “extraordinary kaiju”?

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about using the chart below.

Beginning	Middle	End
<p>"All great kaiju are born with a superpower to strike fear in the heart of their given city. Anzu wanted to be a great kaiju..."</p>	<p>Working to solve the conflict.</p>	<p>Resolution. How are things solved?</p>
<p>Introduce Anzu:</p>	<p>Describe the problem Anzu faces and how he works to solve his problem:</p>	<p>The ending (How things have changed...)</p>
<p>Enter the conflict:</p>	<p>The Climax, when everything changes or becomes out of control/heightened...</p>	
<p>"Anzu was born with the power of flowers."</p>	<p>"His city lay silent, still, and solemn."</p>	

- BONUS: Using the basic plot structure above, students can create an original story about another kaiju that looks one way on the outside and feels another way on the inside. Students can work individually or as a class. See the end papers of *Anzu the Great Kaiju* for inspiration.
- Art center ~ Provide a variety of art materials including crayons, pencils, markers, paint, scissors, colored paper, old magazines, and glue for students to illustrate the scenes for their stories.
- Drama center ~ Provide puppets, costumes, and props so students can recreate *Anzu the Great Kaiju* or their new stories.

Now, let's look closely at the illustrations.

- Draw your own kaiju character.
- Then, in the style of the endpapers, create a list of your kaiju's superpowers.
- Display the finished drawings with superpowers in the classroom.

## Who is Anzu? ~ Character Study

How a character acts and what a character says can tell readers a lot about who the character is.

Read *Anzu the Great Kaiju* paying close attention to the character of Anzu. Scene by scene, record your thoughts, in a chart like the one below.

What he does	Why do you think he does what he does?	How would you describe him?	What might he say?
Example: He tries to be a great kaiju.	He wants to make his family proud and he thinks it's what he is supposed to do.	Determined, a little unsure, gentle	"I'll try!"
He has the power of flowers, creating flowers wherever he goes.	He is not like other kaijus.		

After gathering information regarding Anzu's character, use the scenarios below to write a new scene for *Anzu the Great Kaiju*. What would he do and say in one of the following situations?

- It's almost Anzu's birthday and he wants to throw a party for his family and his city.
- Anzu meets a few kaijus that are not kind to him because he acts differently.
- His city needs help.

### Critical Thinking

In fiction stories, a character or characters usually changes in some way. Do you think Anzu changed in the story? How?

Do you think any of the other characters changed in some way? If so, who and how?  
(*Analyzing, inferring, giving support to an idea*)

What do you think is the message of this story? (*Empathy, kindness, it's ok to be different, we are all unique and have our own superpowers*)

## **Writing Activities**

### **More Than a Kaiju ~ Point of View**

Either as a class or individually, explore each scene in *Anzu the Great Kaiju* from the point of view of Anzu's city.

- What are they thinking and doing?
- How do they feel?
- What would they say to Anzu?
- How do you think the city makes Anzu feel?

Advanced classes will be able to write *Anzu the Great Kaiju* from city's point of view. However, classes can also create captions and thought bubbles for the illustrations, imagining that the city is present through the whole story.

### **What is Your Superpower?**

Anzu learns that although he doesn't have the same destructive superpowers as the other kaijus, his superpower of gentle kindness is just as strong and important!

As a class, brainstorm some other possible superpowers.

Have the students write a story about having a superpower for good and not destruction. What are some situations in which they might need to use this superpower?

Each story should include a beginning (where they meet the pet), a middle with three different situations and an ending. *Anzu the Great Kaiju* can be used as a mentor text.

*Optional:* Create the story together as a class.

## **Speaking and Listening Activities**

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some other ways to bring *Anzu the Great Kaiju* to life in your classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills!

### **Talking About Feelings**

Anzu experiences many different feelings throughout the story. Look through the book, page by page, and ask how Anzu might be feeling at each particular moment. Keep track on a list of each emotion named.

Once the list is finished, have children choose one and make a sentence about that feeling.

Just like Anzu, we all feel various feelings at different times. It is ok to feel happy or sad or angry.

Ask children to share a time when they felt the same emotions as Anzu.

“Today I feel happy because we have pizza for lunch.”

“Last week I felt lonely because my brother went away.”

“Yesterday I felt worried because I lost my jacket.”

### **Listen and Share**

Sometimes understanding someone simply comes from listening to them and allowing them a chance to express themselves. Instead of expecting Anzu to act a certain way, it would be best to listen to him talk about what is bothering him.

With students sitting in a circle, hand one student a small plush doll. Explain that only the person who is holding the stuffed animal can talk. Everyone else’s job is to listen. When the stuffed animal is put down again, the teacher/classmates respond to that student, then the stuffed animal moves to the next person to talk (a volunteer or the former talker can pull a name from a basket).

Use the Listen and Share method for sharing sentences or personal stories about feelings.

### **Drama**

Create a TV commercial to encourage people to read *Anzu the Great Kaiju*.

## Language Activities

### Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is an imitation of a sound in words. In *Anzu the Great Kaiju*, onomatopoeia is used to describe the sounds of the various kaiju activities and superpowers.

- Discuss why writers use onomatopoeia, and perhaps why Benson Shum chose to use onomatopoeia when writing Anzu's story.
- Create a list of onomatopoeia from *Anzu the Great Kaiju*. What are some other sounds you can think of?
- As a class, create a soundscape for *Anzu the Great Kaiju*. Create your own onomatopoeia for the pages which do not include any already.
- Demonstrate how conductors use hand motions to set the tempo and noise level of an orchestra. Conduct the class in a musical symphony of Anzu's story.

### Vocab Detectives

*Anzu the Great Kaiju* contains a few words which may be new for students. Encourage them to use context clues from both the text and illustrations to infer meanings.

- While they read, ask students to look carefully for words they do not know. As soon as they come across a new vocabulary word, they should jot it down.
- Look up the unknown word in the dictionary. (Depending on the level of your students, a student volunteer can do this, or the teacher can.) Read the definition.
- Come up with a way to remember what the word means. Using Total Physical Response, students can create an action that symbolizes the word and helps them remember it.

# **Math**

## **Word Problems**

*For younger students, the use of pictures or props can be helpful in figuring out word problems. Note to teachers: Use the word problems below as inspiration to write your own, based on the illustrations in Anzu the Great Kaiju or any other book of study.*

The “and he always found beauty in small things” illustration:

- 1) How many butterflies do you see?

On a piece of paper, draw 1 butterfly.

Draw 6 more butterflies.

How many butterflies are there now?

Write the equation:  $\_\_\_ + \_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_$

What if three butterflies flew away? How many butterflies would you see?

Write the equation:  $\_\_\_ - \_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_$

The “BOOOOOM” illustration:

- 2) How many city dwellers do you see?

On a piece of paper, draw 5 city dwellers.

Draw 3 more city dwellers.

How many city dwellers do you have?

Write the equation:  $\_\_\_ + \_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_$

What if 4 city dwellers ran away and hid? How many city dwellers would be left?

Write the equation:  $\_\_\_ - \_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_$

## **Under Where? Spatial Sense**

Look at the “But Mom and Dad thought some hands-on lessons would be helpful first” illustration in *Anzu the Great Kaiju*.

Describe where Anzu is.

[examples: in between his parents, south of the sea monster, west of the mountain, on the land]

Describe where the X that marks the spot is.

[examples: north of Anzu, on the land, under the hills, between Anzu and the water.]

Have students choose another illustration in *Anzu the Great Kaiju* and discuss where things are spatially within that illustration.

Now look around your classroom.

- Describe where your desk sits.
- Describe where your teacher is sitting or standing.
- Describe where the chalkboard/whiteboard is.
- Describe where the clock is.
- Describe where the door is.
- Can you describe where anything else is?

### **Kaiju's Stompstotch**

A good kaiju stomps their way to destruction. This hopscotch activity will allow students to stomp and raise havoc too, while helping to improve motor skills, balance, and self-regulation behaviors. Additionally, this game will encourage them to learn about math concepts such as number recognition and counting, as well as elements of art including shape and line.

*This game can be created for indoor spaces through simply taping out the boxes on the floor and/or traditionally by drawing them on the pavement outdoors.*

Materials:

- Masking tape (for indoor version)
- Sidewalk chalk, markers, or dark crayons
- Beanbag or other soft, small item
- One dice

Set Up:

Create the ten hopscotch boxes. Eight of the boxes can represent a different city. Two other boxes can be flowers.

The goal of the game is to stomp on each city. If they fall on a box that is a flower, they lose one turn.

Students can help draw numbers in the squares. If they are not ready to write numbers alone, try lightly drawing the numbers first and then encourage them to trace over them.

How to Play:

1. Place the beanbag in one of the squares.
2. The first student rolls the dice twice and adds the two numbers together to know how many boxes they must hop to. (i.e.,  $2 + 4 = 6$ , hop six spaces).
3. The students hop their way through, counting as they go.
4. If they land on the box with the beanbag, they can check that city off their list! If they overshoot or fall short, they must start all over again.
5. Play continues until each city is stomped on by everyone.

## Science

### **Real Kaiju of Japan Research Project**

Kaijus are mythical beasts from Japanese folklore. But even though giant kaiju monsters like Anzu and his family might not be real, there are lots of interesting monster-like or mythical-seeming creatures in Japan that you very well could see if you visited.

Choose one of the following the research:

- Japanese Spider Crabs
- Blue Whales
- Frilled Sharks
- Sika Deer
- Amami Rabbits
- Okinawa Habus
- Ryukyu Flying Foxes
- Ussuri Brown Bears
- Japanese Giant Salamanders
- Japanese Giant Hornets

Information to be gather must include:

- Size of the creature
- What it eats
- Where it lives

- Draw a picture of the creature
- Write 3 words that describe your creature
- Interesting fact #1
- Interesting fact #2
- Interesting fact #3
- What commonalities does this creature share with kaiju or monsters?

Once all of the needed research is done, students must create a poster visual with all of the necessary information and present their findings to the class.

OR

Make a book. Students will cut and paste or draw their creature and include the facts they have researched.

## Social Studies

### **Inclusion, Exclusion, and Building Empathy**

Do you think Anzu should be ashamed that he is different?

Look at the situation from Anzu's perspective. How would you feel being different?

What are the many ways that others make Anzu feel different?

What are some of the way others make Anzu feel comfortable? Can you think of other ways to help Anzu?

- Have you ever felt like you didn't fit in with others?
- What makes you feel better?
- How is Anzu like the other kaijus?
- How is Anzu different from the other kaijus?
- What makes you different from your friends or classmates?
- What makes you the same as your friends or classmates?
- Do you ever treat people differently because they look or act different than you? Why?
- Have you been treated differently because you look different than other people? Was this treatment positive or negative?
- How do you want to be treated by your classmates, friends and family?
- How should we act towards others?
- In what situations is it necessary to treat others differently than the way you

want to be treated? (*Others sometimes have different preferences than you*)

- What makes a good friend?
- What do you look for in a friend?
- What kinds of things do you do for your friends?
- Are you only kind to your friends?
- Do you help others even when they are not your friends?
- Provide an example of when you helped someone you didn't know. Did this make you feel good?
- How do you expect others to respond when you complete an act of kindness for them?
- What obligation do you have to help others?

### **Finding Commonalities/Uniqueness**

Anzu feels different from the other kaijus. But he also has a lot in common with them.

Finding what you have in common with other people is a good way to start a meaningful relationship. Here is a way to learn what you have in common with your classmates, while also celebrating what makes each of you unique.

Materials: A pen and two pieces of paper.

- This activity can be done as a whole class or in pairs.
- On one sheet of paper, you will have ten minutes to come up with a list of things in common. Completely obvious answers such as "we both have hair" or "we are both in \_\_\_\_\_ class" are not allowed!
- After ten minutes, switch to the other paper. You now have ten minutes to come up with a list of things that are unique to only one person.
- Share both lists with the class when finished.

### **All About Me; All About My Family**

Family is very important to Anzu. This project allows students the opportunity to get to know one another and serves as an introduction to family.

Students will make books that contain pages with answered questions and pictures about themselves and other loved ones in their lives.

Yarn is used to bind the pages together.

Each student should have a special day that he reads his book to the class.

- Pages in each book include:

A portrait  
I am called \_\_\_\_  
My first and last name is \_\_\_\_  
My address is \_\_\_\_  
I live in \_\_\_\_ (the country, a city, etc.)  
I live with \_\_\_\_  
I am good at \_\_\_\_  
My favorite snack is \_\_\_\_\_

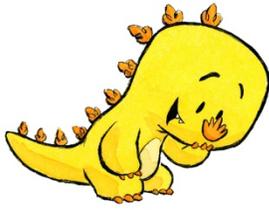
- In addition to the page about themselves, additional pages should be created about family and other loved ones in the student's life.

### **I Am Extraordinary!**

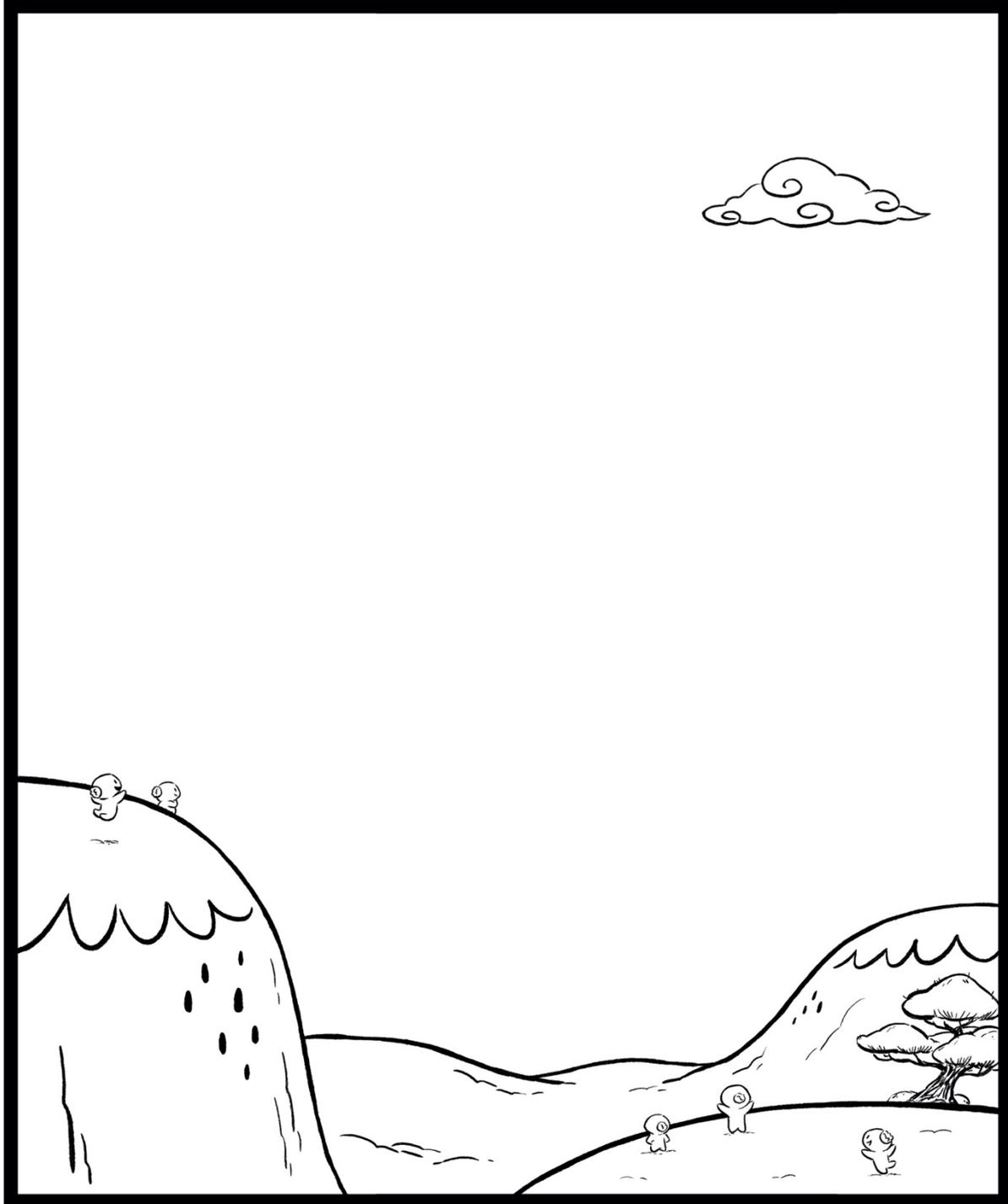
Anzu might look like a regular kaiju on the outside, but he soon learns that he is quite extraordinary on the inside. Just like Anzu there are more things about us than just what we look like. Just like Anzu, we can be more.

The Project:

- Have each student lay down on a large piece of paper while someone traces their body with a pencil.
- Once the student has the silhouette of their body, they should write words that describe what they look like on the outside.
- On the inside of the outline, they can write what they are like on the inside; the things that make them special or their superpowers.
- Finished silhouettes can be displayed with the title "I am Extraordinary!"



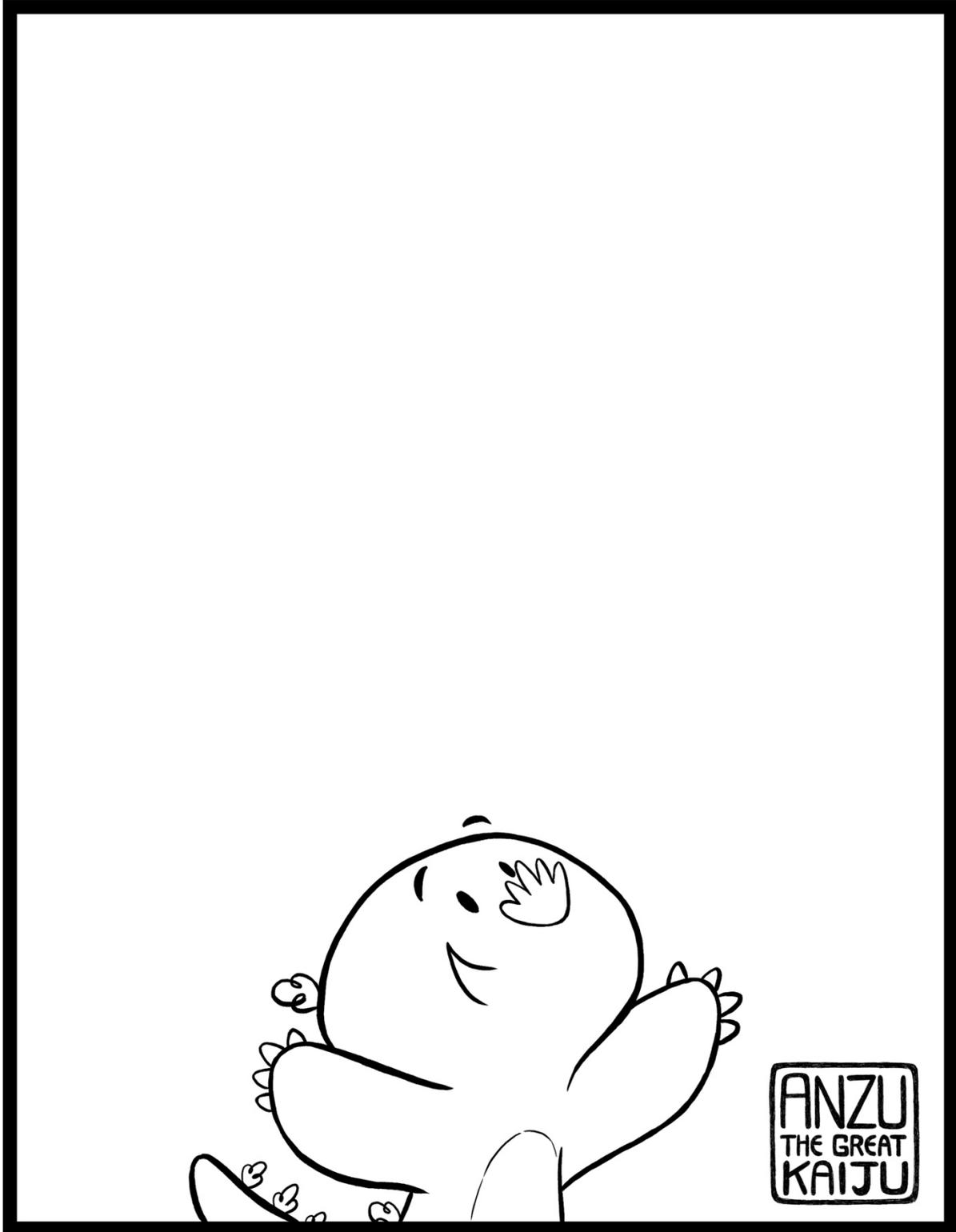
Like Anzu, a kaiju is a giant creature with extraordinary powers. Draw your own kaiju!



From the book Anzu the Great Kaiju by Benson Shum

[www.bensonshum.com](http://www.bensonshum.com)

Draw your own flowers!



From the book Anzu the Great Kaiju by Benson Shum

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# Word search!

- |         |        |               |         |
|---------|--------|---------------|---------|
| Anzu    | Beauty | Bloom         | Sincere |
| Family  | City   | Extraordinary | Swoosh  |
| Gentle  | Flower | Great         | Vines   |
| Heart   | Good   | Boom          | Stomp   |
| Grow    | Happy  | Kaiju         | Joy     |
| Helpful | Wilt   | Proud         |         |
| Love    | Plants | Shwack        |         |
| Roar    | Shazam | Smash         |         |

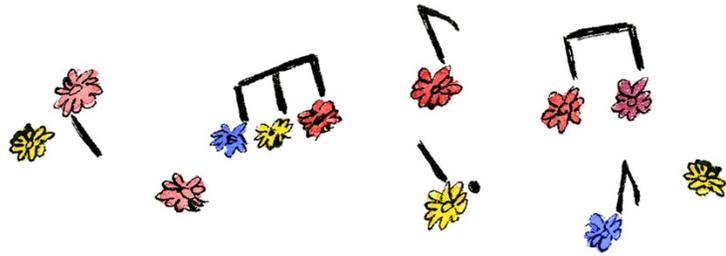


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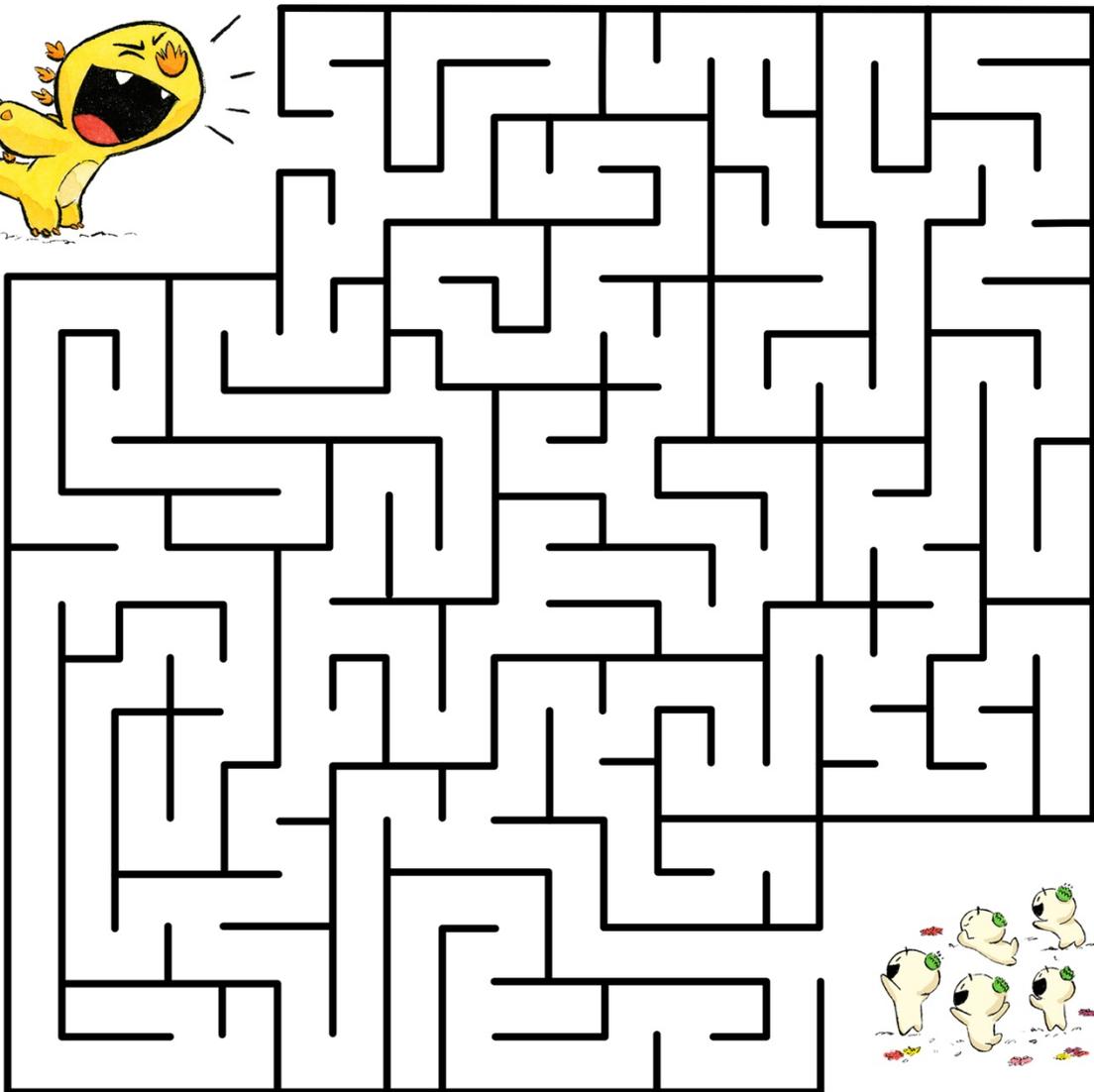
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# ANZU THE GREAT KAIJU



Can you help Anzu find his friends?



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