

# CREATIVE MIND



ACTIVITY BOOK  
OF



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# CUPID AND PSYCHE

SUMMARY: Psyche, the youngest and most beautiful of three sisters, is set to marry the god Cupid. However, Psyche does not know the true identity of her bridegroom, who asks her to love him without ever seeing him. To the envy of her sisters, she breaks her promise, losing her beloved and her happiness. To win him back, she must undergo trials imposed to her by the goddess Venus.

ORIGINAL TITLE: THE GOLDEN ASS

ORIGIN: NORTHERN AFRICA

KEYWORDS: LOVE, TRIALS, ARROW, VENUS

GENRE: FAIRY TALE/MYTH\*

AGE: 7–8 YEARS

\* (Author: Apuleius, The Golden Ass)

# CUPID AND PSYCHE

In a long time ago, the vain gods hardly tolerated that human beings could compete with them in skill, cunning or beauty. Every instance of human conceit and vanity was severely punished.

Psyche was the youngest daughter of the king and queen of a faraway land.

As oftentimes happens, the gift of beauty had multiplied and doubled with each of the queen's births, so Psyche – being the third of three sisters – was of such splendor that people were enchanted when they saw her, and some even knelt before her as if she were the divine Venus.



Her parents, the king and queen could not be more proud of their ravishing daughter.

Venus, who considered herself the most beautiful of goddesses, decided to punish such presumption that a human could exceed her in beauty.

She summoned her son Cupid and ordered him to shoot the maiden with an arrow so that she would fall in love with a monster.

Cupid prepared his quiver with an arrow and waited for the maiden to pass by. Although he himself was a god, he became enchanted by her beauty as soon as he saw Psyche appear and, distracted, dropped his arrow, striking himself in the foot.



At once, his heart was overcome with a feeling so strong and so intense for this beautiful young maiden, that he became the living and breathing embodiment of his name – Cupid, the god of love.

The king and the queen were asked for Psyche's hand in marriage; however, Cupid did not want to reveal himself to the humans and asked that she be led to the top of a cliff. The parents were frightened, but since it was by divine will, they accompanied Psyche to the meeting place without hesitation.

Once she arrived, Zephyrus, god of the wind blowing from the east, passed by the cliff and took Psyche in his arms to lift her gently into the air, allowing her to float up to the castle where she would henceforth dwell.

There, invisible servants took care of her, fulfilling her every thought and wish. As soon as the sun set, Cupid appeared, yet Psyche could still not see him.

Cupid spoke to her: "My sweet bride, I ask this one thing: that you should never see me nor ask questions about me."

Psyche was so happy with the care and attention bestowed upon her, and the sweetness and love she received every day that she did not protest against Cupid's wish.

However, as the days, weeks and months passed by, Psyche began to feel a little homesick for her family and for the games and laughter she shared with her sister.

Therefore, when Cupid asked her if there was anything she wanted, she replied that she wanted to see them.

The god sensed danger in his heart, but he loved his bride so much that he could not refuse anything to her and welcomed her two sisters.

Once they arrived at the castle, they were struck by the magnificence of the rooms and furnishings, and how every little wish expressed by their sister was immediately fulfilled. They felt so envious about it that they began to fill Psyche's mind with doubt.

"Maybe your groom doesn't want to show himself because he is an ugly hairy monster!" taunted one of the sisters.

"I thought so, too! Maybe he even has a tail and horns and one of these days he'll eat you!" added the other with a fake worried expression.

"No, no, his skin is smooth and he doesn't have a tail..."

Psyche countered, but the two sisters added:

"Maybe he does have powers and can transform... how else can you explain his insistence to remain unseen?"

Poor Psyche did not know what to answer.

"You could wait until he falls asleep to look at him with a lantern..." they suggested, giggling smugly and disrupting the idyllic fairy tale that Psyche thought she was living in.

That same night, Psyche waited for her husband to fall asleep and lit the oil lamp she had prepared.

The flickering light illuminated the perfect face of Cupid. It was the most beautiful face Psyche had ever seen and she stood in astonishment and surprise, admiring it until a tiny drop of boiling oil slipped from the lantern and fell on the god's perfect skin. He woke up startled and, realising he had been discovered, vanished so instantly that he could barely feel the sadness.



It was such a sudden disappearance that Psyche had no time to even utter a word, but only to feel a pain unlike any other in her young life.

She could not stop the tears from flowing down her cheeks, but she soon realised that they could not win Cupid back.

Therefore, Psyche started walking from town to town in search of her groom. She continued until she finally reached the temple of Venus and surrendered herself to her.

“Neither your tears nor the miles that have burdened your feet are enough to bring Cupid back to you,” said the cruel goddess, unwilling to forgive Psyche, “You will have to undergo my trials and only then, perhaps, will you be able to see my son Cupid again.”

Psyche bowed her head to nod in acceptance, as she was so distressed that she did not have the strength to use her voice. Although she was aware that the trials would not be easy, she, at least, felt she had hope. Venus then led Psyche into a room half filled with a huge pile of grains.

“Here you must separate the oats from the grain by tomorrow morning,” Venus said as she went out, leaving an incredulous Psyche to look at that mountain of tiny seeds. Psyche was too tired to even muster the strength to cry when, suddenly, an army of ants appeared before her and began to work diligently, separating and arranging the seeds. By the morning, the room looked as the goddess had ordered.



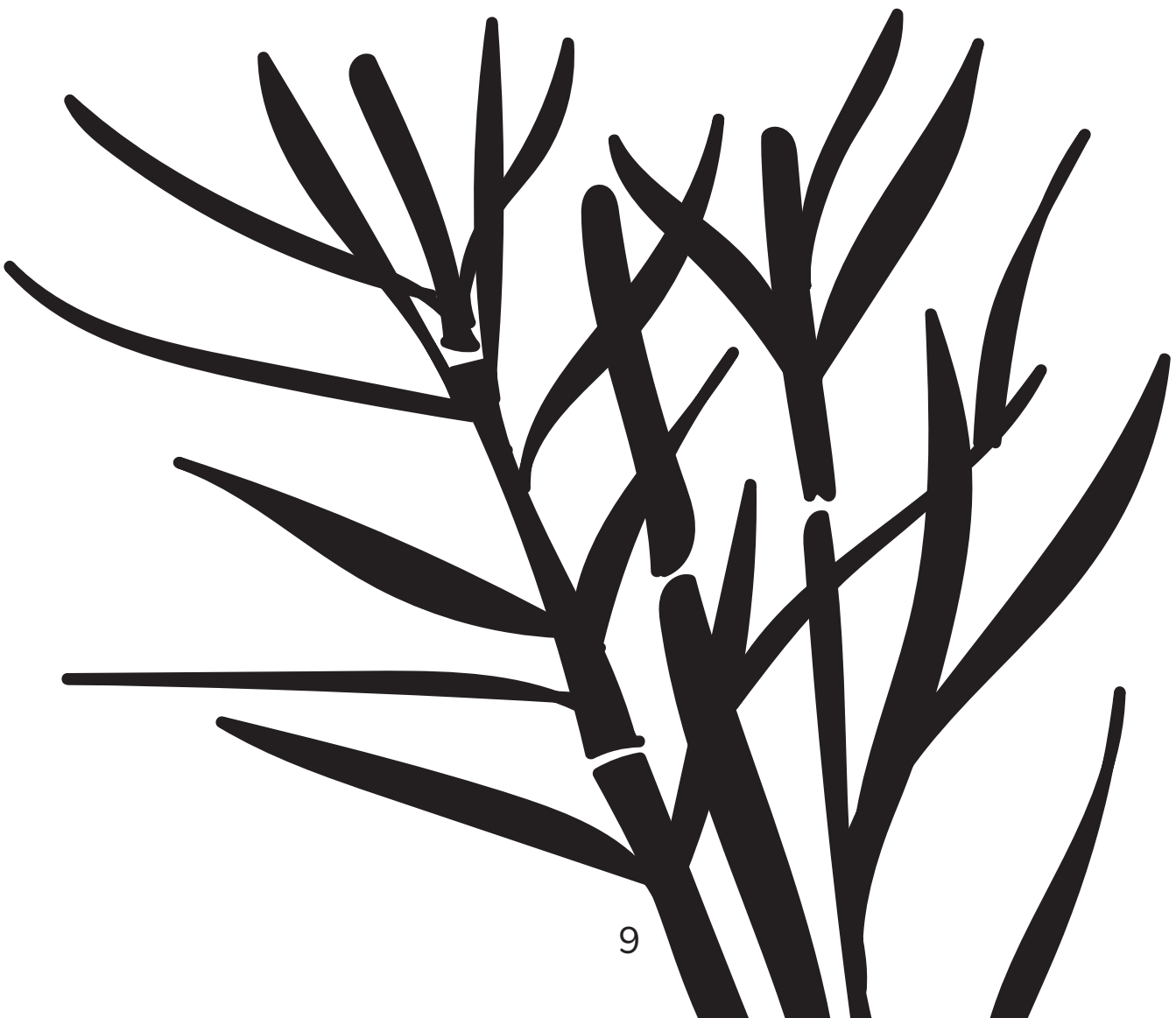
Venus then led the young girl to a large meadow where a flock of sheep with golden fleece was grazing.

“You will now have to gather their wool!” said Venus before disappearing.

Psyche brushed her hair back and was about to move closer to the sheep when a piece of green, supple reed leaned towards her and, swaying in the wind, seemed to whisper to her:

“These sheep are not like others, they can be very dangerous. Wait for the night to fall: they will retreat and pass through those bushes and brambles which will catch their wool...”

Psyche obeyed and waited for the sunset to fill her baskets with the soft, precious fleece that the sheep had unwittingly left in the branches of the bushes.



Venus took the wool and, without giving Psyche time to rest, said:

“Now I want the water of the spring that is on the cliff.”

Psyche looked at her, horrified, knowing that it was impossible to climb those very high and slippery rocks. Venus once again barely turned her gaze to her and disappeared.

With her head in her hands, Psyche felt defeated when she suddenly felt gusts of wind ruffling her hair and a noise like wings flapping loudly. She looked up and saw that a mighty eagle was approaching her.

The eagle of the god Zeus had come to her rescue. It took the water container and filled it for her in the spring. Psyche gave it to the goddess, convinced and happy that she had successfully completed all of the trials.

Unfortunately for her, Venus had one more in store for her, the hardest and most difficult, with which she hoped to get rid of her, once and for all.

“You will go to the Underworld and ask Persephone to endow you with some of her beauty.” Venus said, looking down at Psyche.

Psyche was heartbroken, as she knew that no human alive could access the Underworld. She felt she had no choice but to climb a high tower off of which she would throw herself. As she was ascending, however, she felt the tower vibrate almost as if it came to life and address her in a gentle voice.

“Don’t be afraid, my dear. Just follow my directions and everything will be easy. Get yourself two coins and three honey buns. In the nearest town there is a cave that leads to the Underworld. You must enter it without fear and proceed without stopping until you reach the River Styx. There, you will meet Acheron to whom you will give one of the coins to accompany you to the other side of the river. The other coin will serve you to make the return journey. Halfway down the river you will meet an old man who will ask you to come up to him, but you must not listen. As soon as you reach the other bank of the river, you will meet a three-headed dog named Cerberus to whom you will give the buns. You will then meet Persephone, bearing a vase for you to take. You must bring it back without opening it: it is important that you do not open it!”

Psyche thanked the magical tower and ran quickly up the stairs to the city and into the dark cavern.



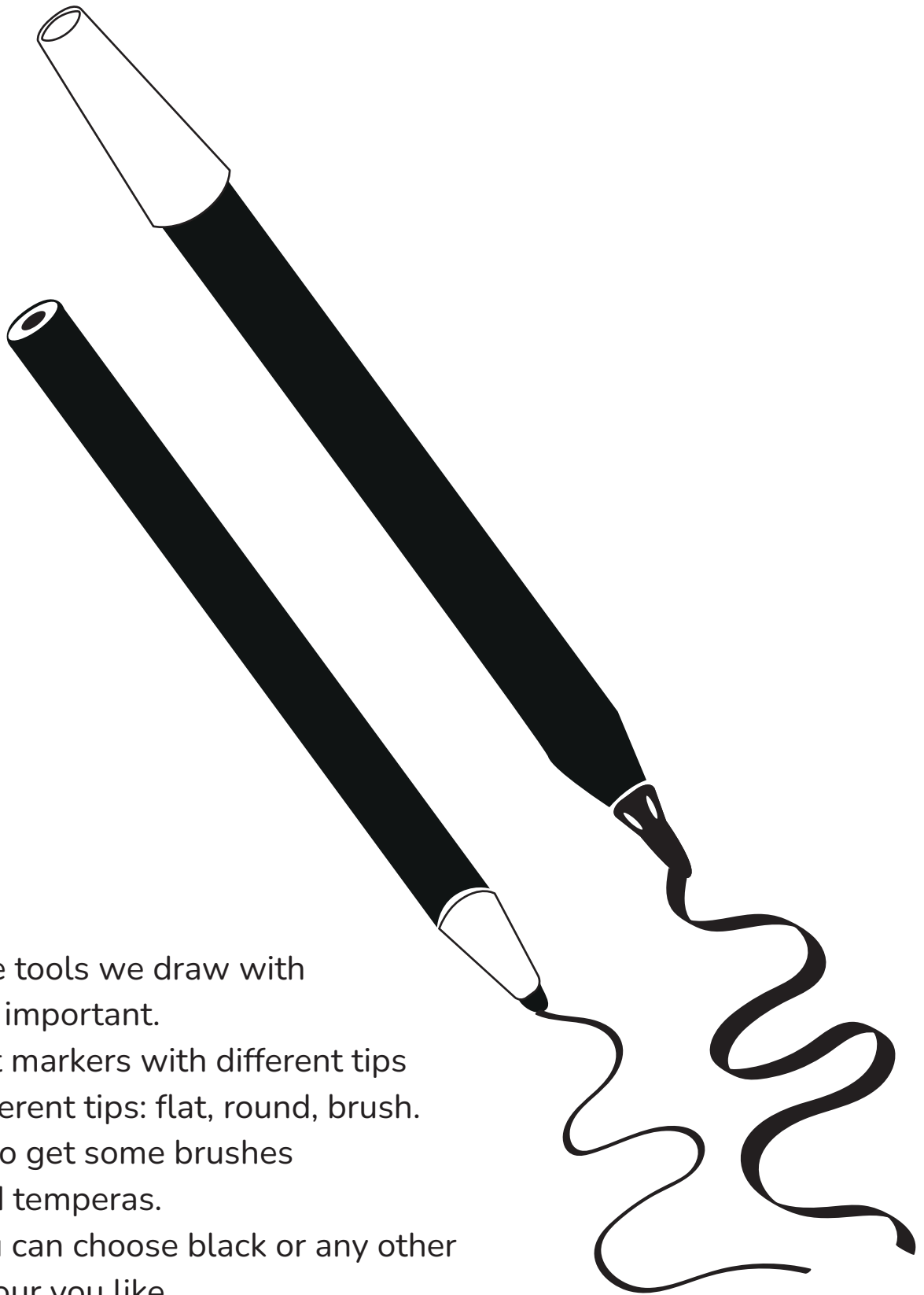
Psyche abided by every step of the tower's instructions, until she was clutching the vase that was so precious. However, when she reached the banks of the river, she saw her reflection in the water and was taken back by how withered her beauty had become from the pain and weariness she had experienced on her quest. Psyche thought it wouldn't hurt to open the vase and help herself to the beautiful essence that Persephone had enclosed in the vase.

"Just a little bit will do, enough for me to be beautiful again for Cupid..." she said to herself as she removed the cap. To her surprise, however, there was nothing beautiful concealed inside, no stars or gold dust, nor the colours of spring. The vase released something else entirely: the evil, poisonous breath of a lifeless sleep. Psyche fell to the ground. Unbeknownst to her, Cupid had followed closely all the misadventures and trials that Psyche had endured for him. He was immediately at her side and kissed her sweetly. It was a kiss so sweet that she woke up and finally felt joy pervade her heart again after such a long time. From that day on, Cupid and Psyche have never left each other's side again, experiencing an endless and infinite love.





# ACTIVITIES

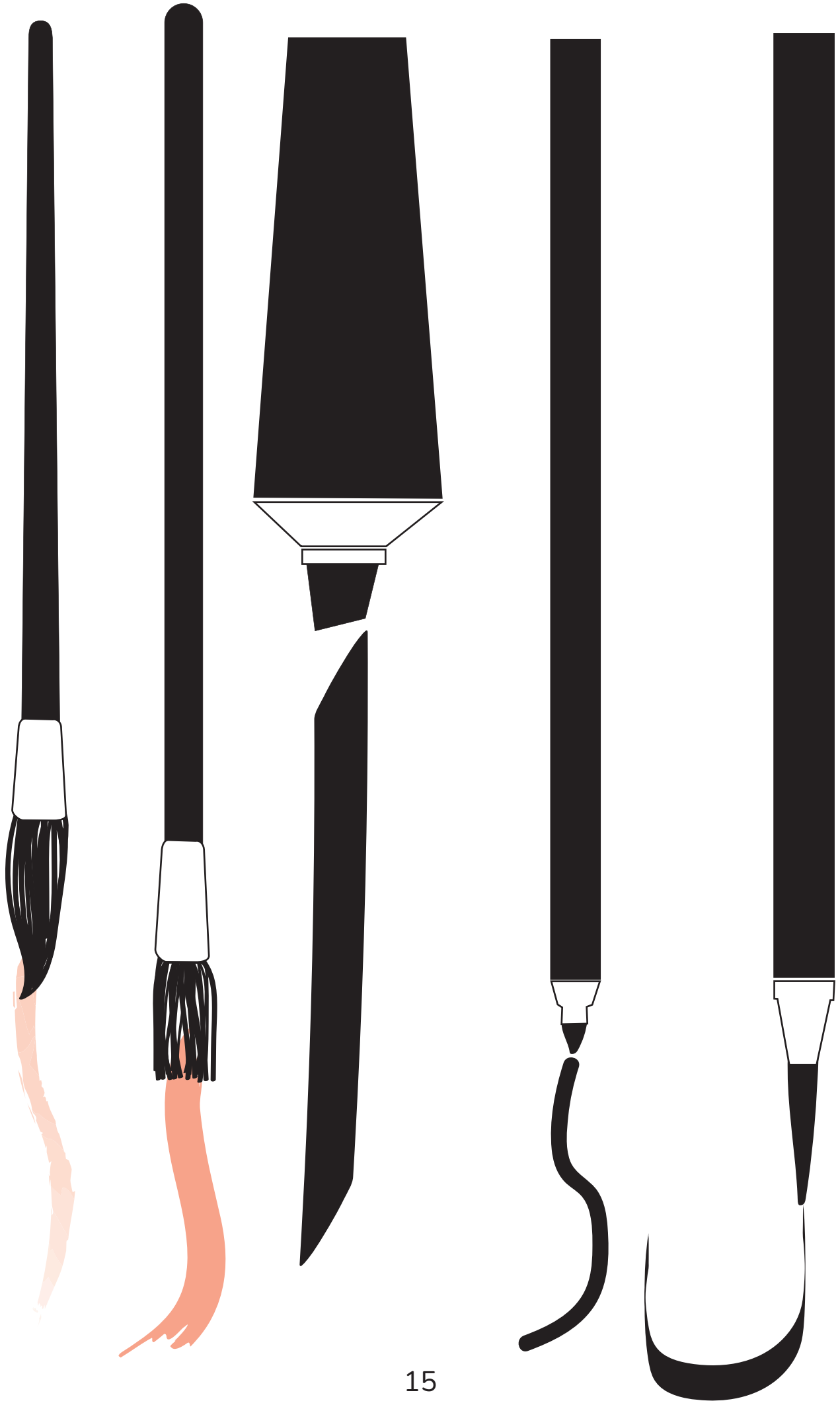


The tools we draw with are important.

Get markers with different tips  
different tips: flat, round, brush.

Also get some brushes  
and temperas.

You can choose black or any other  
colour you like.



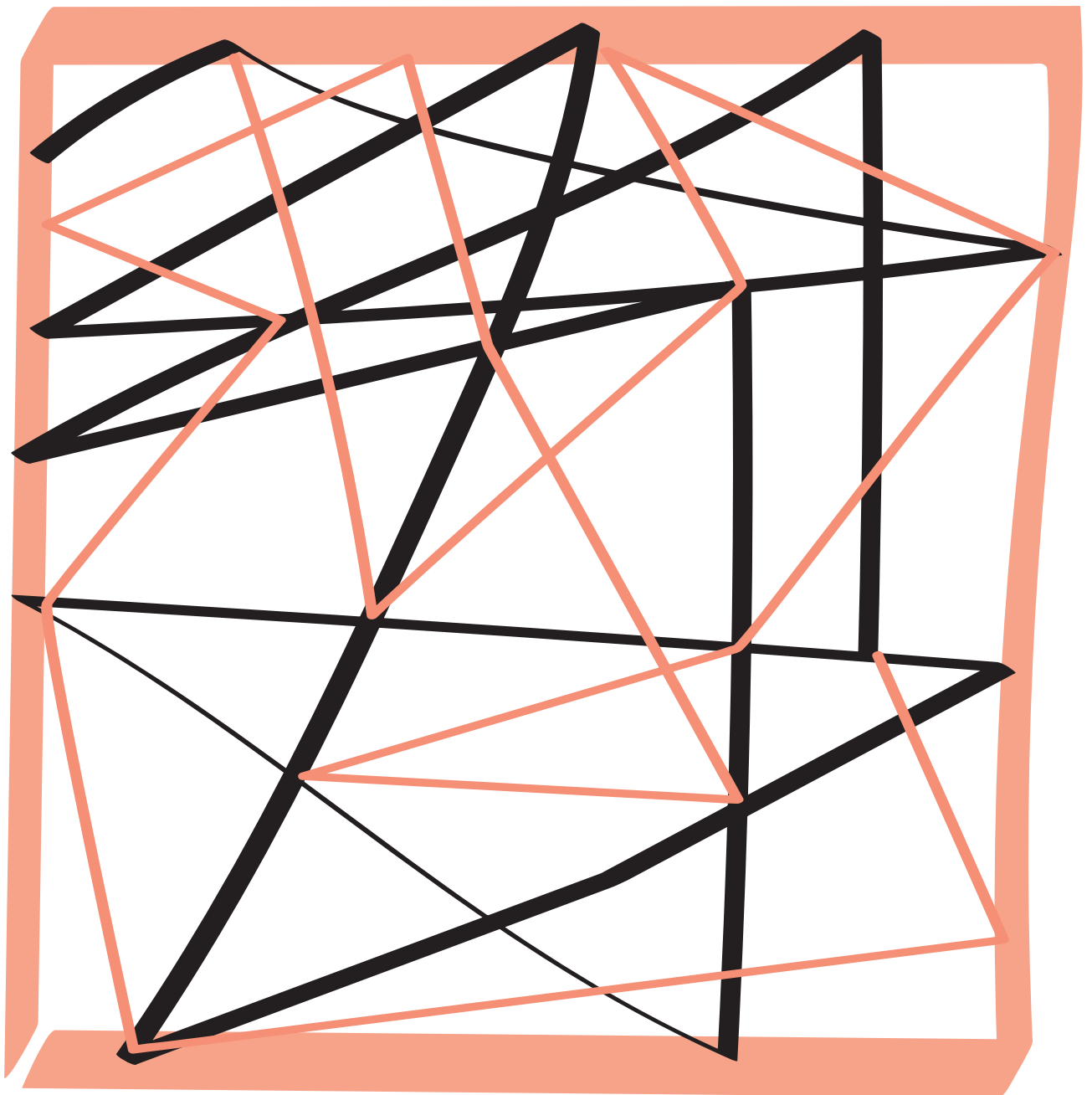
Use your sketchbook: draw a frame and then, alternating between the various tools, draw continuous lines trying to go as straight as you can.

Imagine you are the spider in the story building its own web. With the second tool, draw lines trying to connect the created corners.

Draw each line without ever removing your hand from the paper.

Proceed with other tools and lines.

If you want, alternate between two colours.

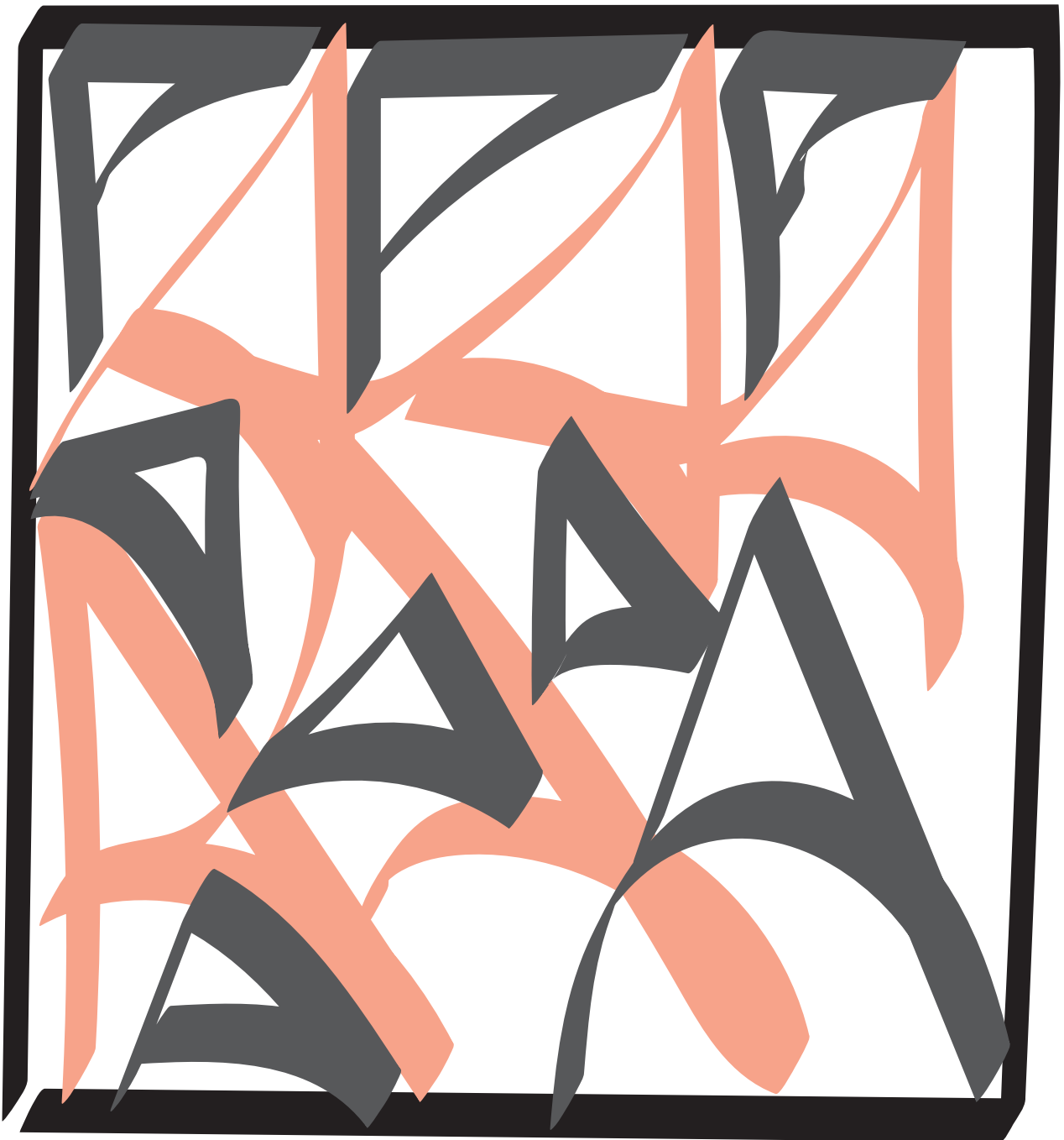




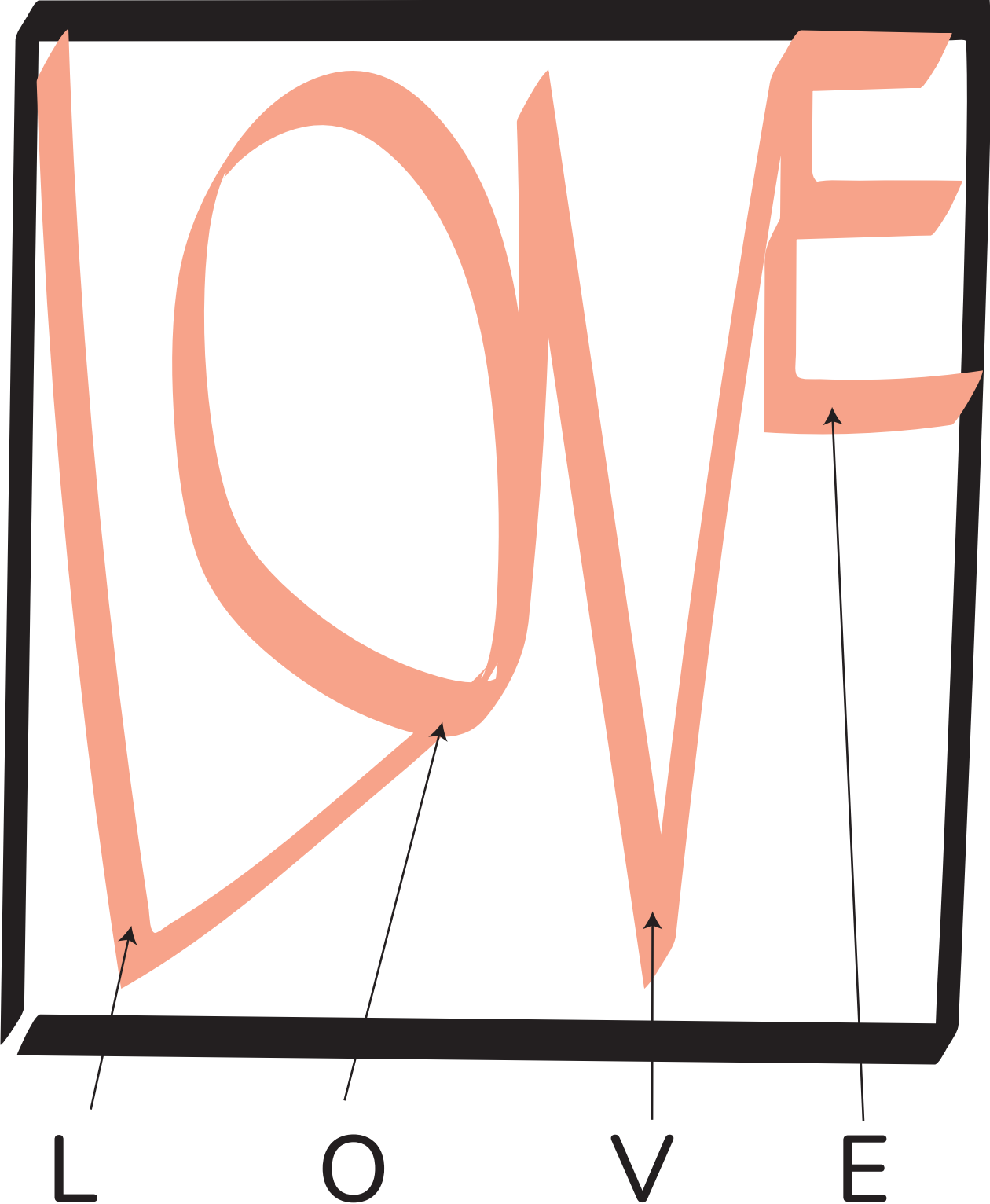
Draw another frame. Now try drawing the same letter many times, by making a single line and without ever removing your hand from the paper.

Alternate between upper and lower case letters.

Do this several times by alternating different tools and colours. Try to match the letters in some points, as in the previous drawing.



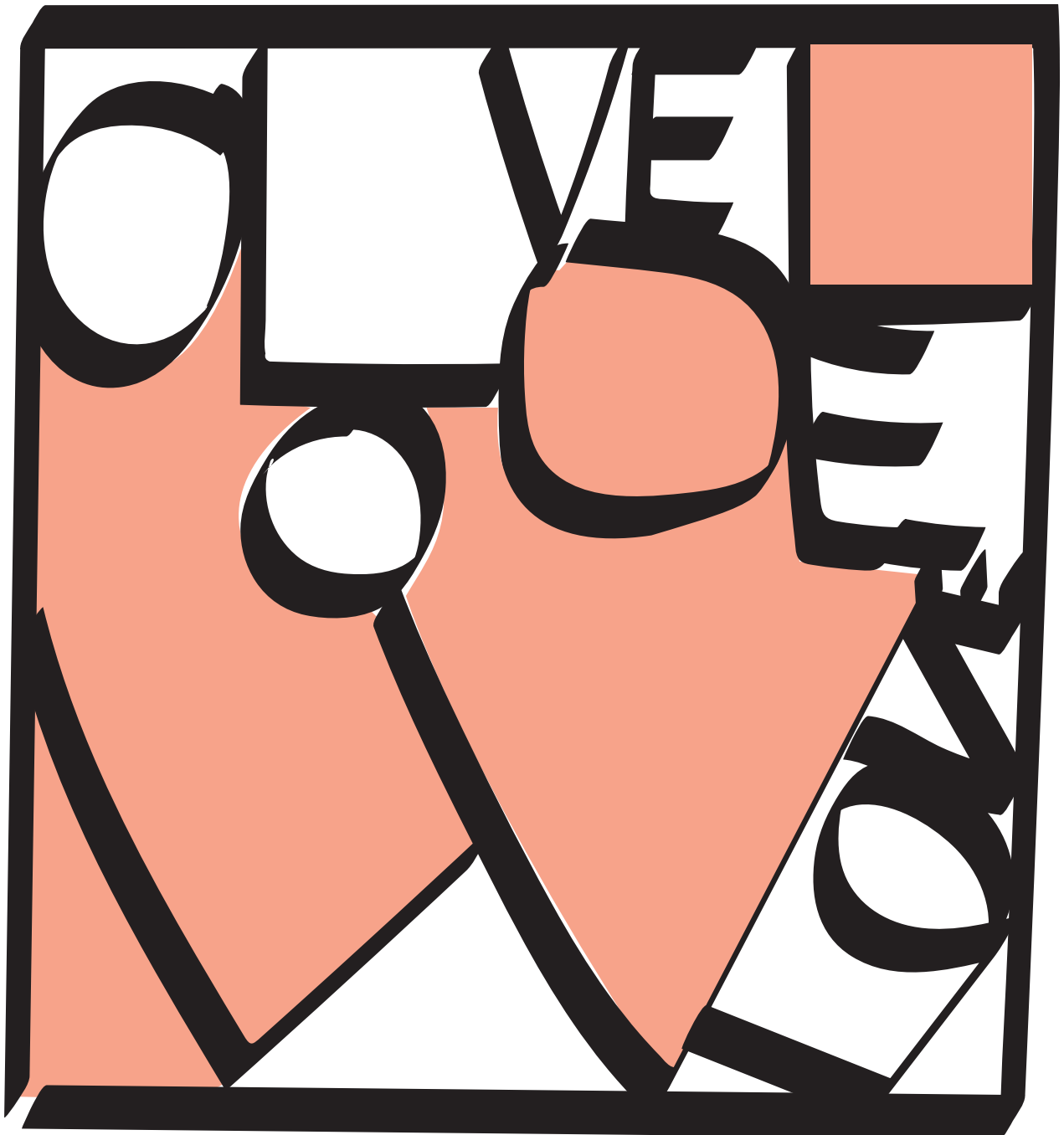
Draw another frame. Now try drawing the key word: **LOVE**. Use the letters in block letters. Never remove your hand from the paper. Don't worry if it isn't readable; that's not the point of this game. Create your own way of drawing this word.

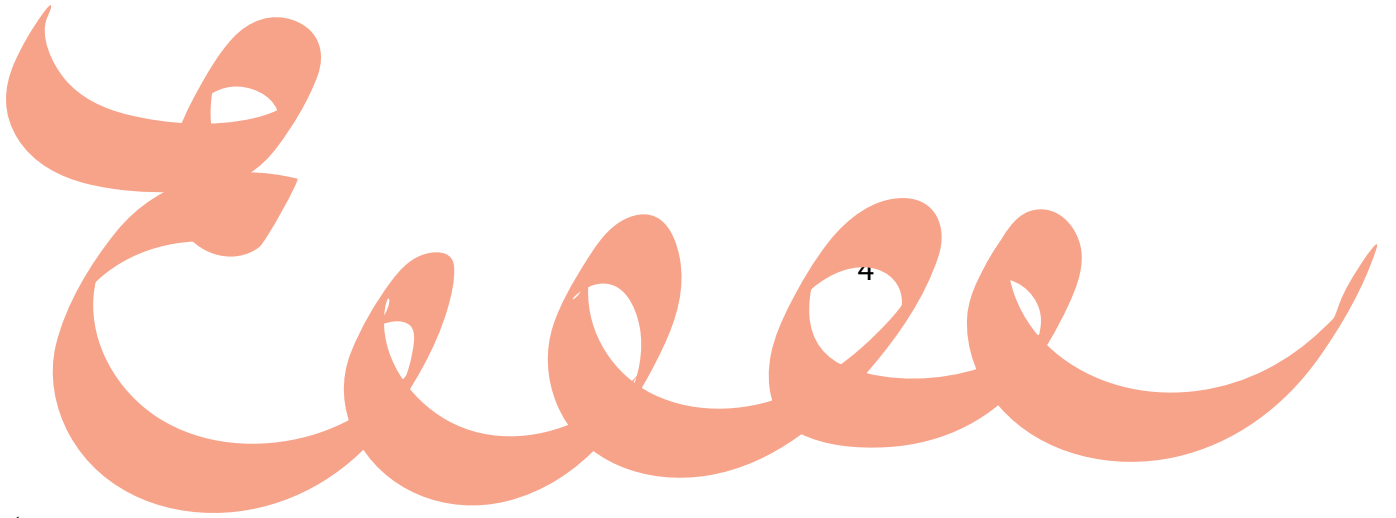


In another frame, using two different colours, write the key word legibly. Draw each letter legibly. With the second color, write the letters in the remaining empty spaces. Try to create a pleasing and harmonious composition.



In another frame, using two different colours,  
write the key word legibly several times.  
With the second color, write the letters  
in the remaining empty spaces.  
Try to create a pleasing and harmonious composition.



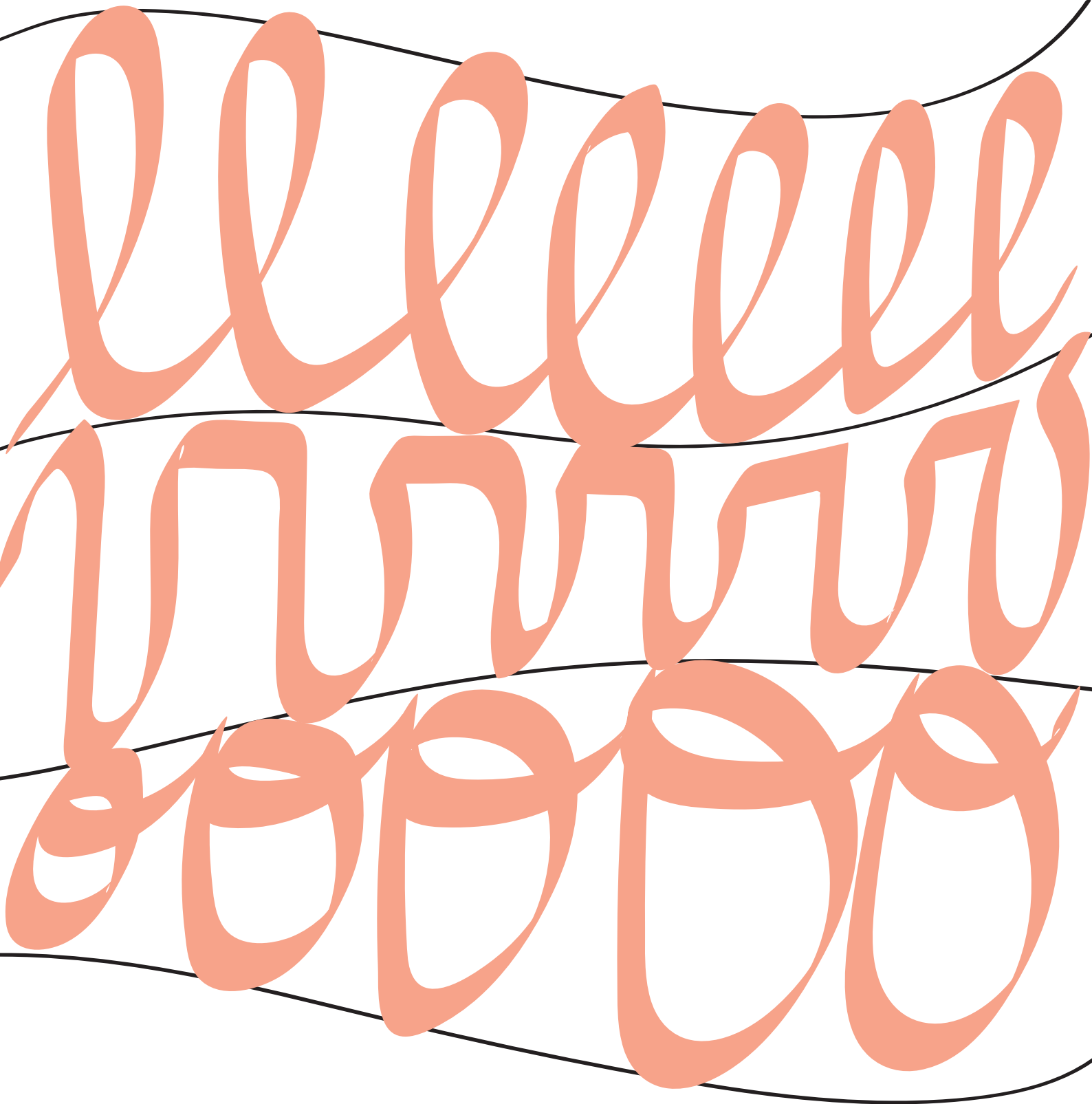


On your album, draw examples of the letter “e”, all connected.

Draw on your scrapbook examples of the letter «e»  
by going around the paper.



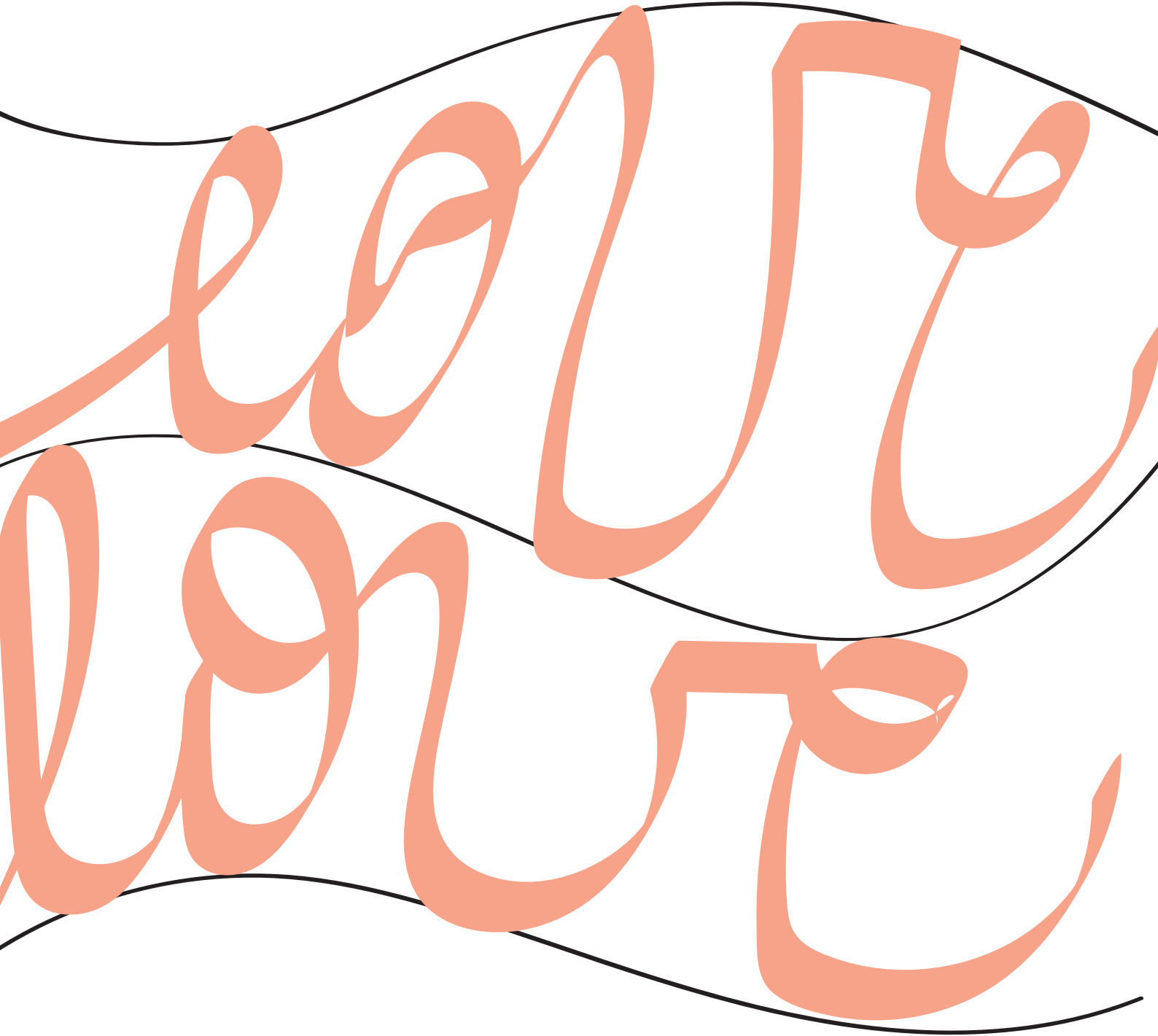
Draw black lines on your sketchbook,  
like the ones you see here.  
Do this on several pages, drawing the letters within  
the spaces by adapting them to height and movement.



Draw black lines on your sketchbook like the ones you see here.

Do this on several pages.

Now draw the word inside the spaces by adapting the letters.







On your sketchbook write the word by stretching the letters without ever removing your hand from the paper. Do this many times, alternating the tools, the color, the position of the letters.



On your sketchbook write the word by using various tools including different colours.

love

love

love



Co-funded by  
the European Union

All content is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

The STORIAS project is co-financed by the ERASMUS+ programme of the EU.  
Its content reflects the views of the authors, and the European Commission  
cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information  
therein.

(Project code: 2021-1-FR01-KA220-SCH-000029483)