



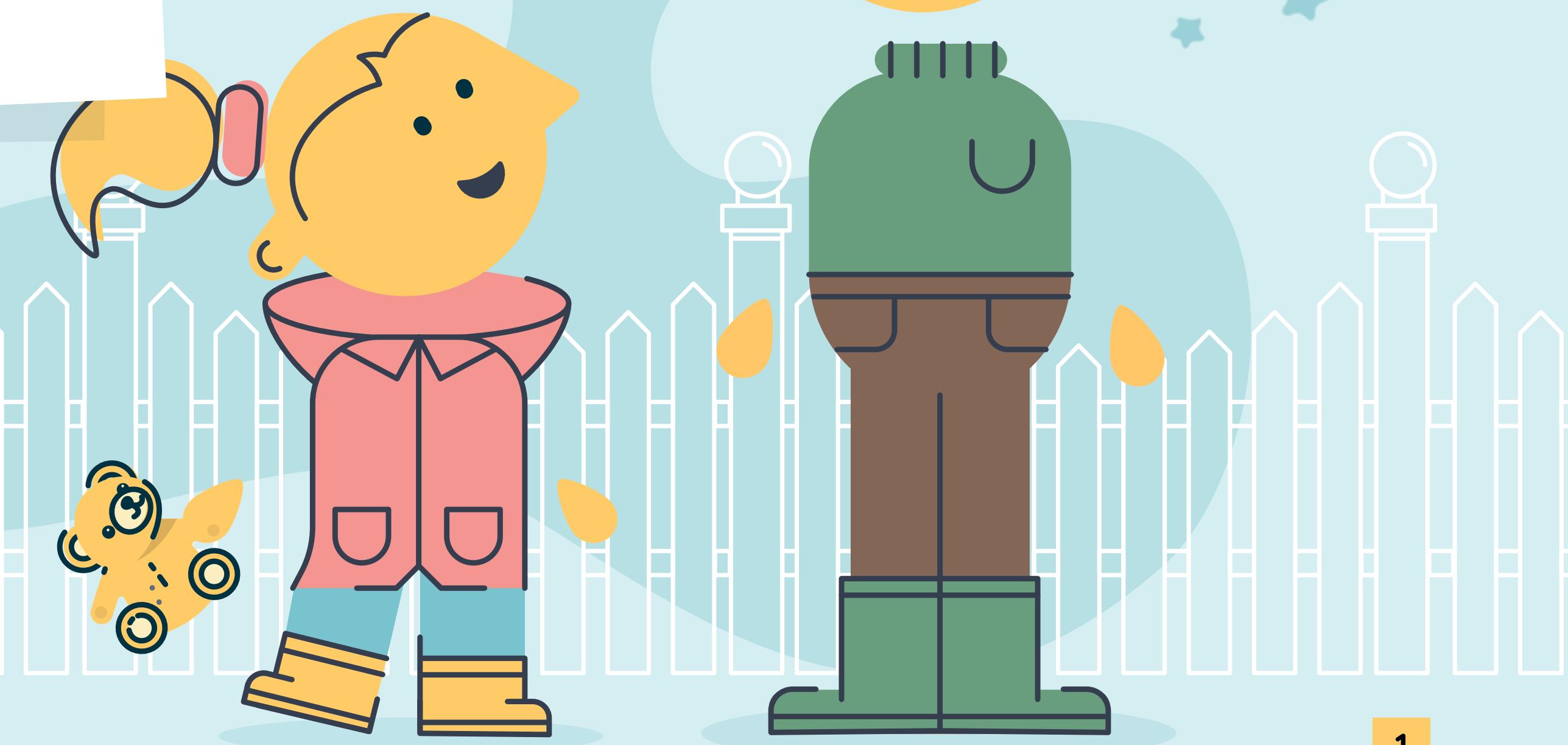
Ellie visits an allotment



Ellie excitedly pulled on her welly boots. Today, her friend Millie had invited Ellie along to visit her family's allotment. Millie's parents loved to grow fruits and vegetables, but their garden was just too small. Instead, they had a little plot of land in the nearby allotment where they could grow all the fruit and vegetables they wanted!

"Are you ready to go?" asked Millie's dad, Mr Martin.

Ellie nodded, she had her raincoat, welly boots and Mags - Ellie was ready for an adventure!





When all three arrived at the allotment, Ellie was amazed by all the different fruits and vegetables that were growing there.

Mr Martin explained that he and Millie had spent some time planting lots of seeds during springtime so there would be lots of vegetables ready to eat in the autumn.

This weekend, they would be harvesting all sorts of vegetables.

Millie showed Ellie the patch of squash, pumpkins and sweetcorn. Together, the girls carefully picked the vegetables and put them in a basket that Millie's dad was holding for them. The pumpkins were quite heavy, so they had to ask Millie's dad for help.



Millie wheeled over to another planter full of tomato plants.

“You can tell which tomatoes are ready for us to pick because they are bright red,” explained Millie. “We leave the green ones to keep growing and check them again later.”

Millie’s dad came over to them and showed them that the basket was already almost full: “I have also picked all the onions, carrots and lettuce that were ready. Let’s quickly go to the orchard and pick some fruit as well,” suggested Mr Martin.





On the other side of the allotment, there were lots of fruit trees that anyone could go and pick fruit from.

“At this time of year, apples and pears are ready to be picked,” said Millie’s dad. “We like to use them to make our own juice.”

Ellie looked up at all of the fruit hanging from the tree branches: “How do we reach them?”

Millie’s dad chuckled: “I think I’m just tall enough to reach these branches. While I pick the apples and pears, why don’t you both see what other fruits are ripe?”



Ellie asked Millie what other fruits were growing in the orchard.

“Over summer we picked plums, but since it’s autumn now all of the plums have been picked or fallen off the trees,” replied Millie. “But there is also a patch of bramble bushes over

there where we pick blackberries to make jam. They grow everywhere!”

The bramble bushes were within reach. Both girls picked as many blackberries as they could and stored them safely in a pot so they wouldn’t get squashed.





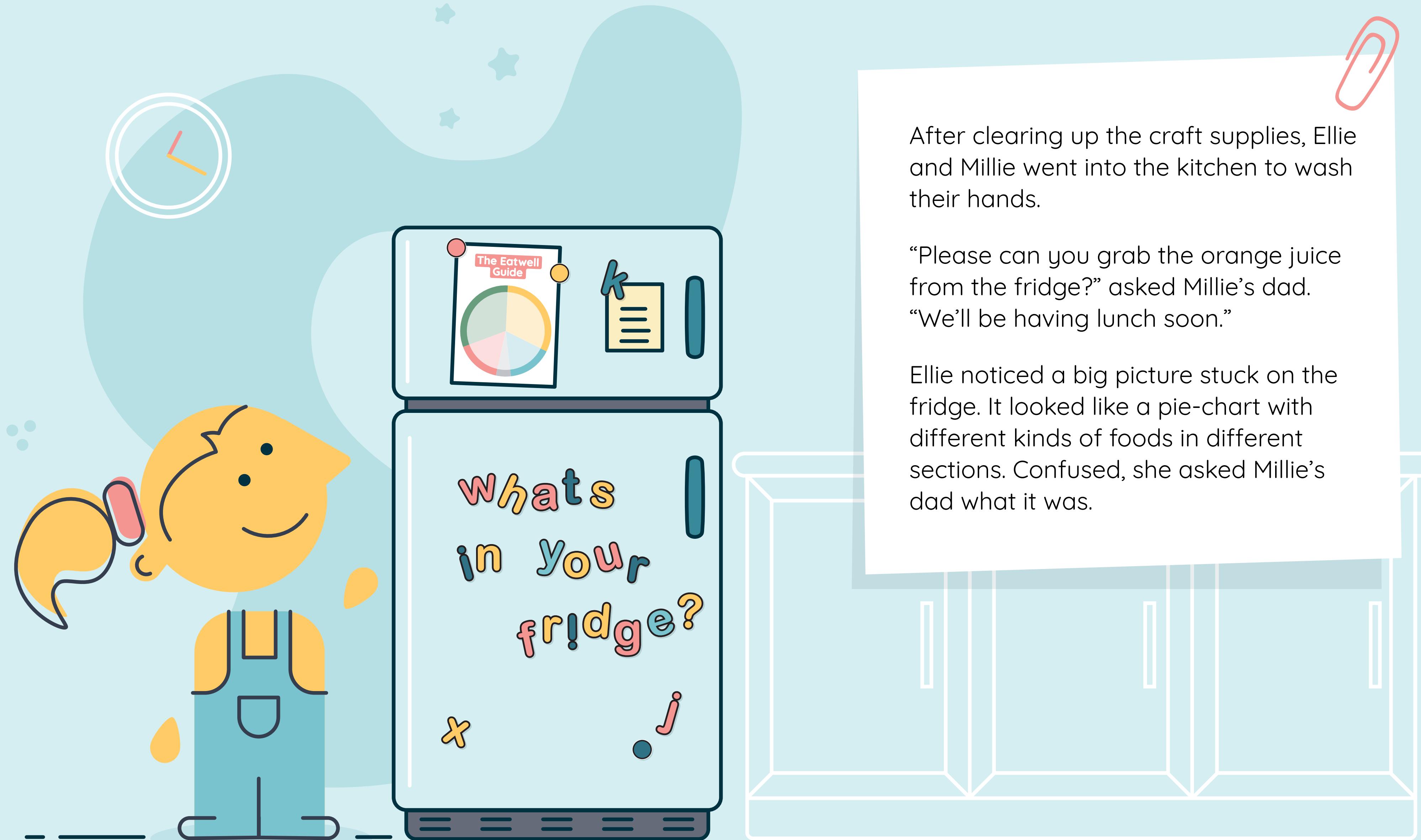
While returning to the car, Millie went to check on their strawberry plants. She explained that strawberries usually grow in summer, but they had a special type of strawberries that fruit in autumn.

“Oh no!” said Millie. “It looks like the birds ate all of our strawberries again.”

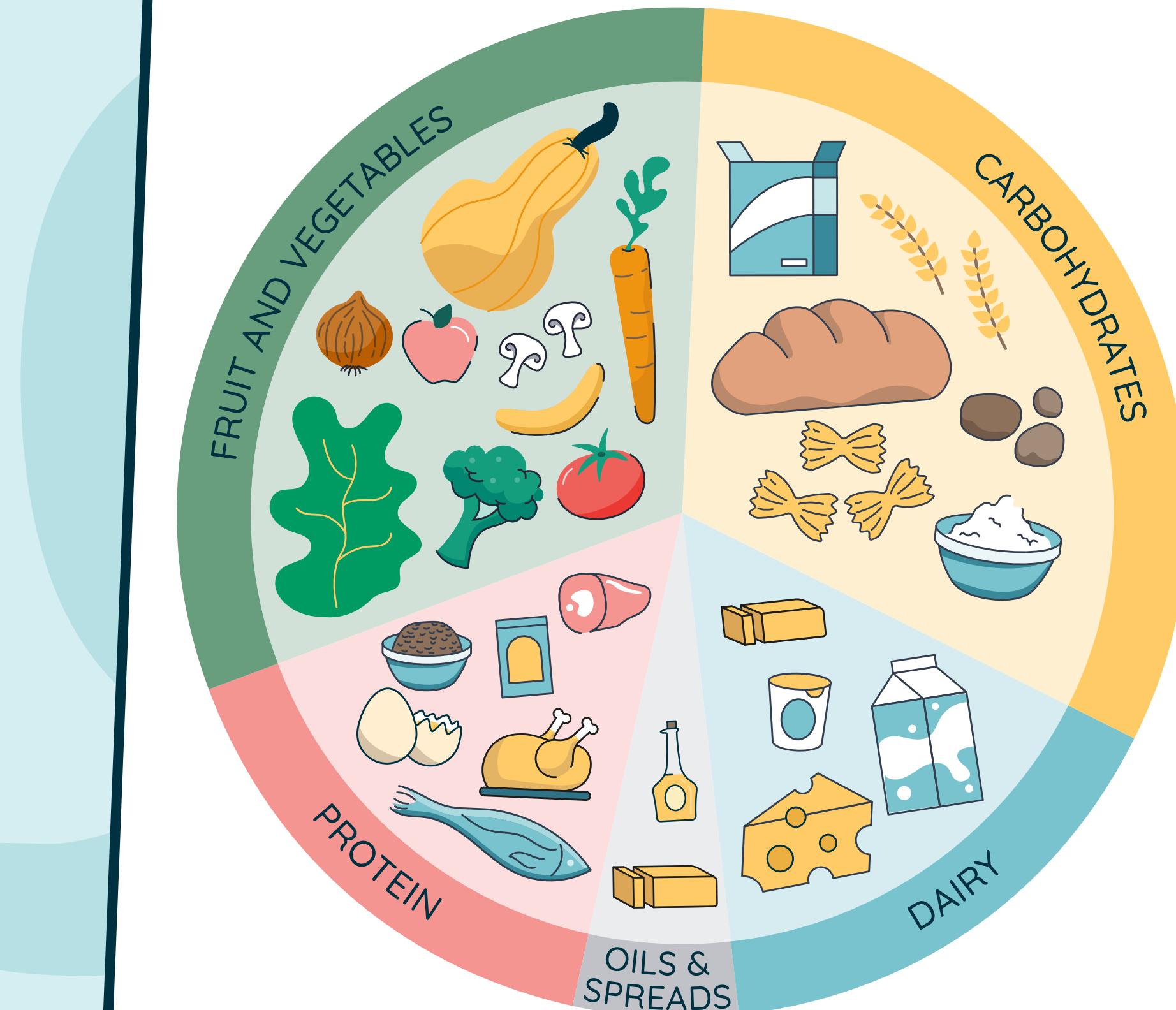
“I think we need a scarecrow,” suggested Mr Martin.

So, after they went back to Millie’s house, her dad found some old fabric, sticks from outside and lots of straw. Ellie and Millie had lots of fun making scarecrows while Millie’s dad washed and put away the freshly picked fruits and vegetables.





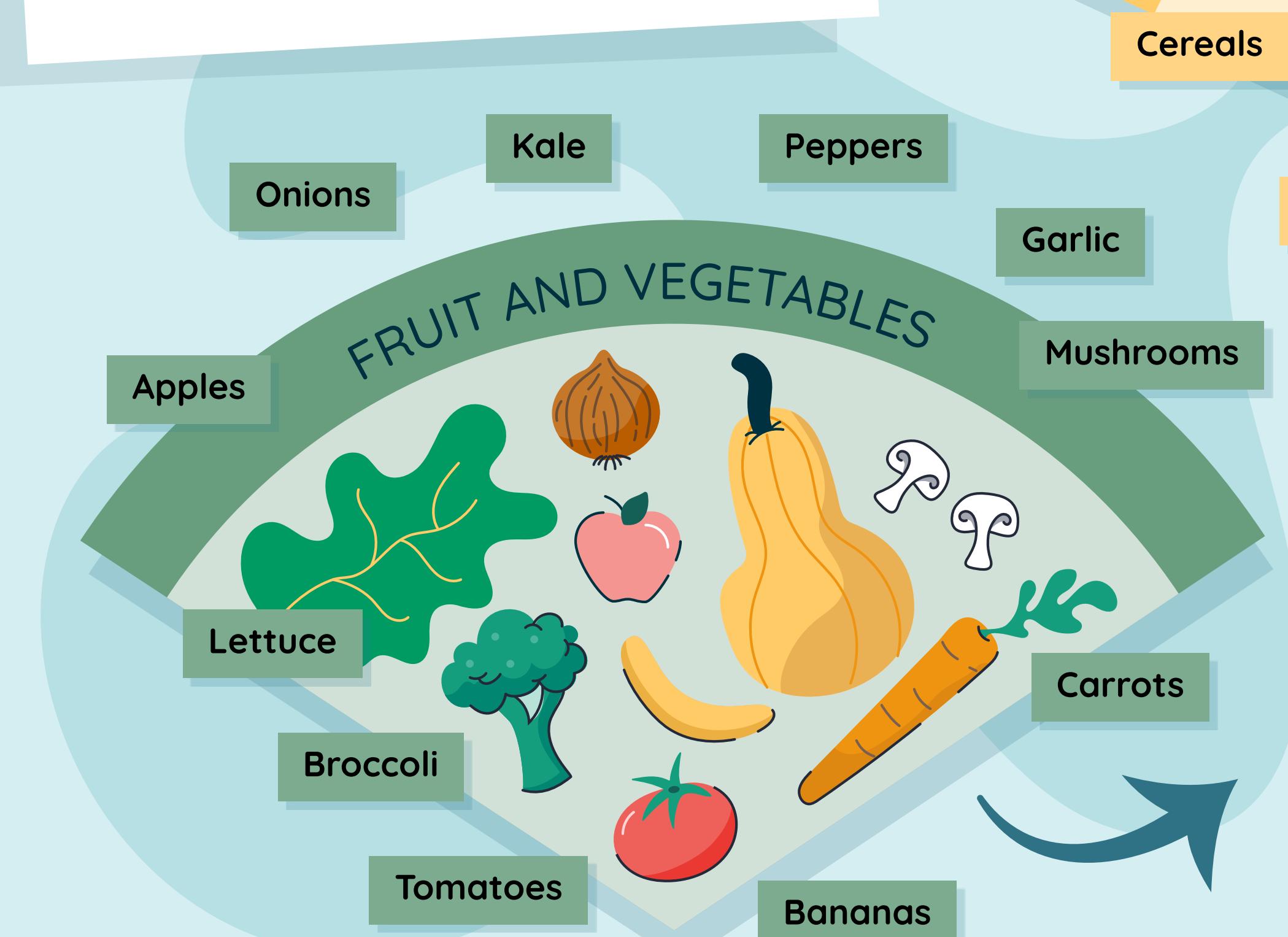
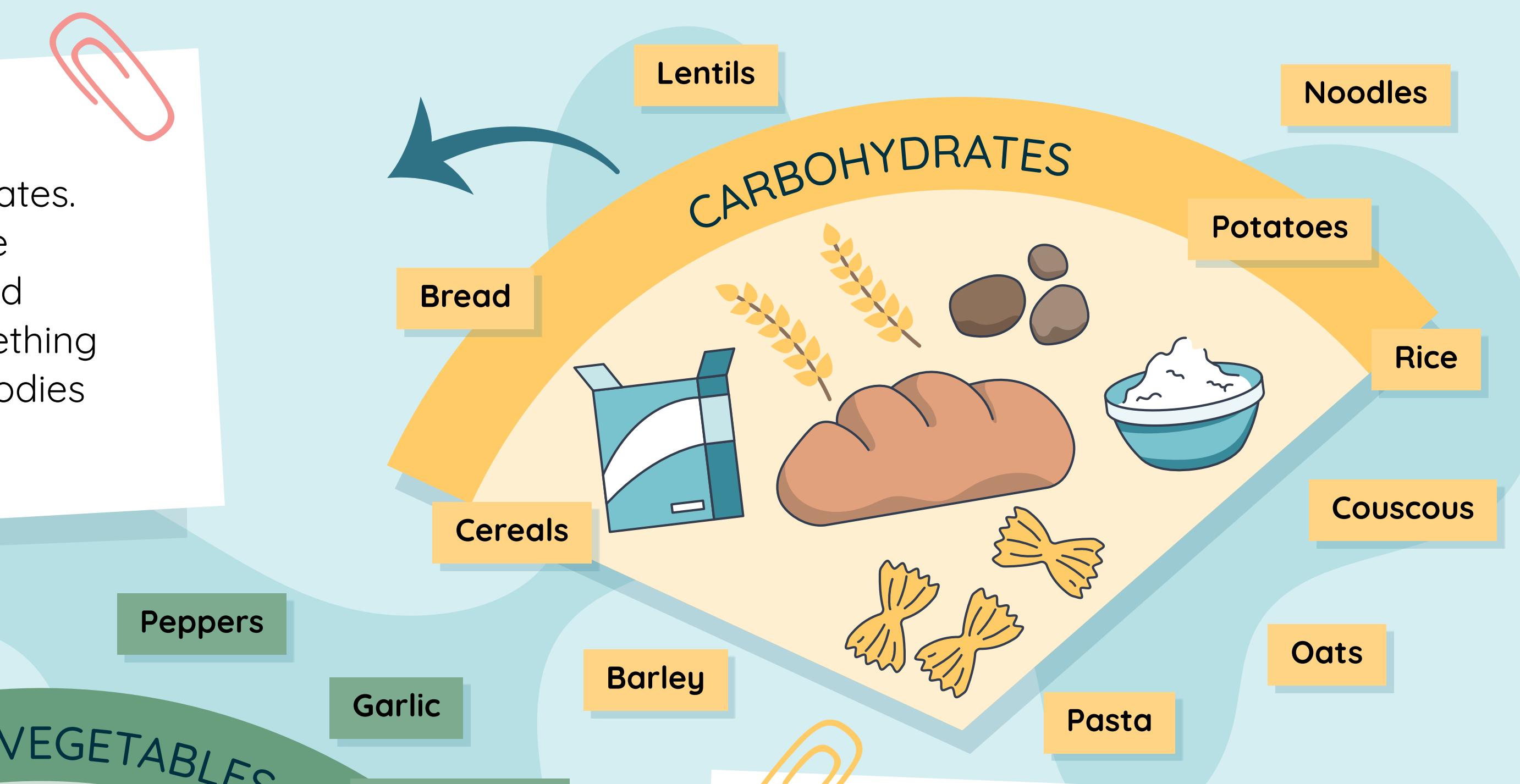
The Eatwell Guide



"This is the Eatwell Guide," explained Millie's dad. "It tells us how much of what we eat each day should come from different food groups."

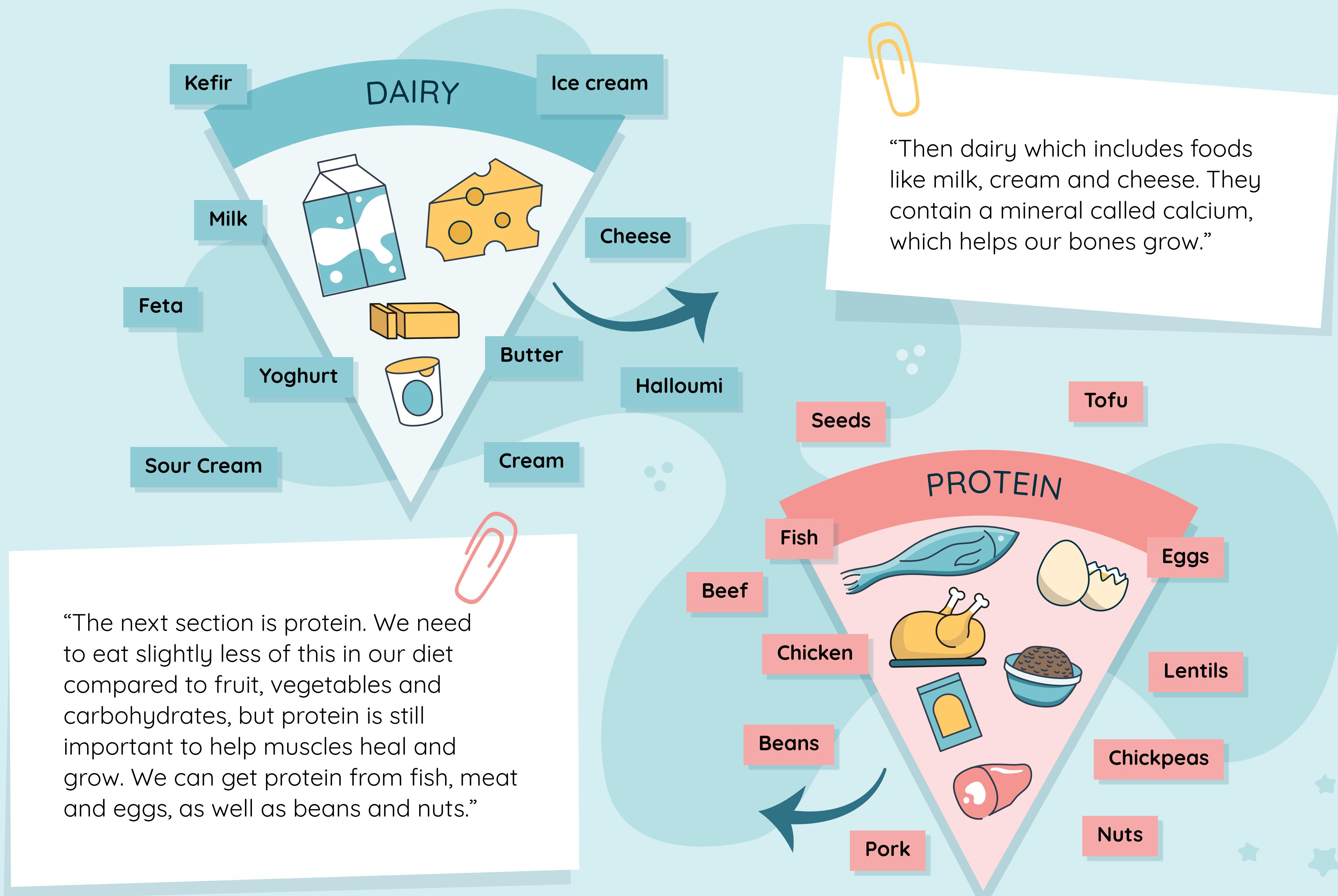
Millie's dad pointed to each of the sections of the guide.

“First, we have carbohydrates. This group is for foods like potatoes, bread, pasta and cereal. They contain something called starch, which our bodies use to make energy.”



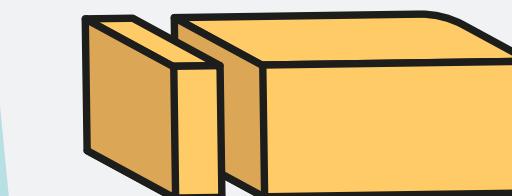
“Next is fruit and vegetables. Experts say we should be having at least 5 different types of fruit and vegetables every day - like apples, cucumbers, lettuce and broccoli. They contain fibre, which helps keep your digestive system healthy.”

“My favourite fruit is an apple!” said Millie.
“Especially those growing in the orchard.”



OILS & SPREADS

Lard



Butter

Sunflower oil

Olive oil

Sesame oil

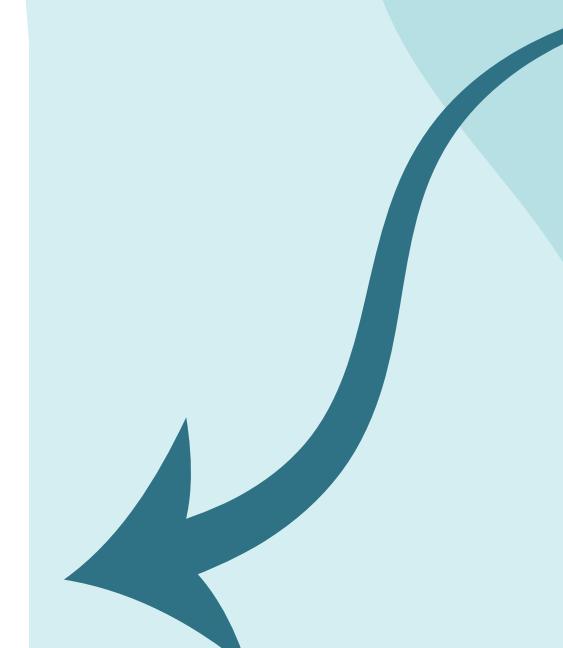
Veg oil

Coconut oil

Ghee

Margarine

“The smallest section is for oil and spreads. They contain important fats which provide us with certain vitamins that help us regulate our immune systems and keep us warm. But we can't eat too much of these foods as too much fat is not good for your health.”



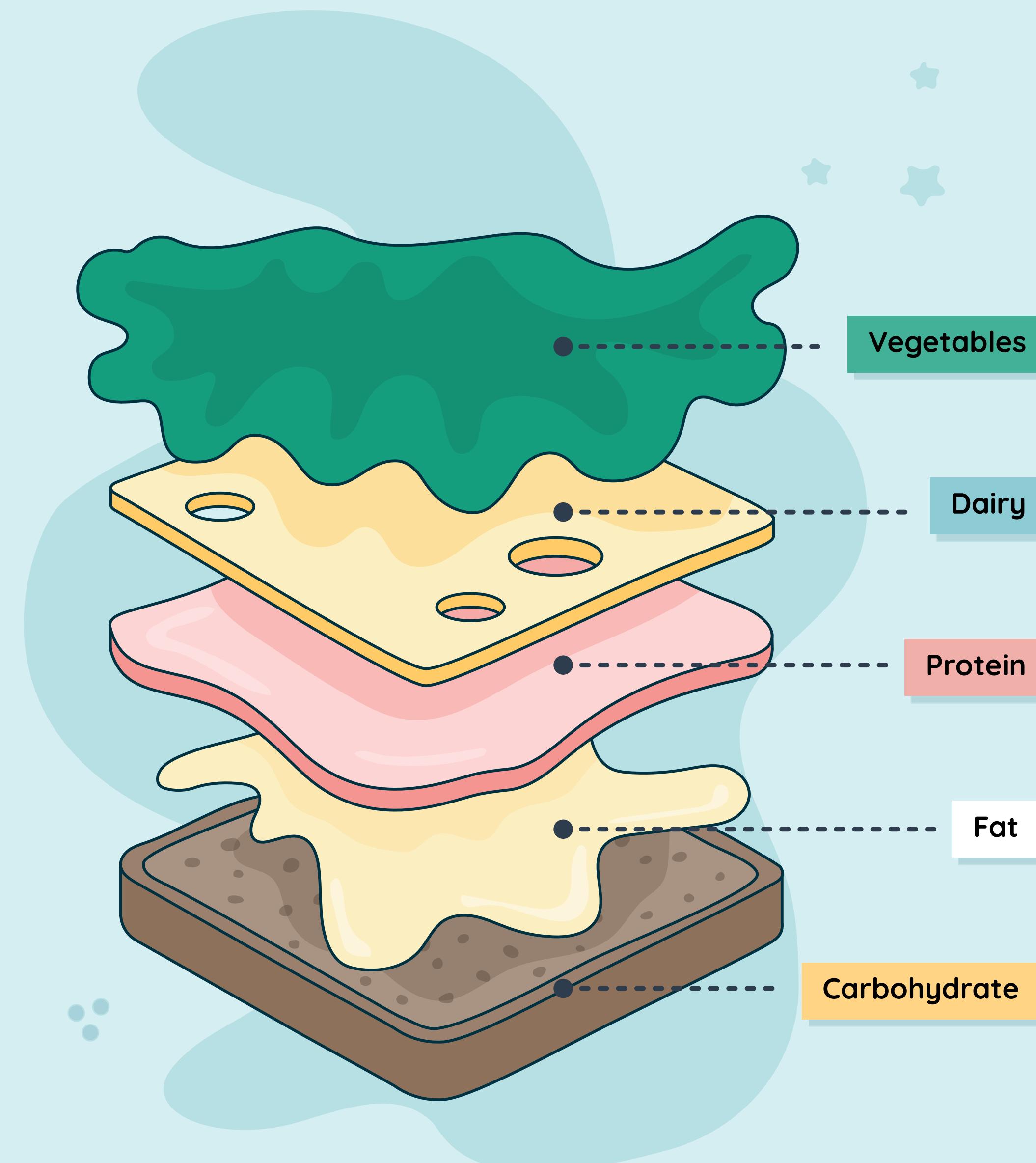


“What about this section?” asked Ellie, pointing to the picture of sweets and crisps in the corner.

“Those foods contain a lot of sugar and, or, salt,” replied Millie’s dad. “They are very tasty but they are also not good for us if we eat too much. Sugar in high amounts is bad for your teeth and too much salt is not good for your heart.”

“Eating a balanced diet isn’t about cutting out every unhealthy food, it’s about understanding what nutrients your body needs and making sure you eat foods that meet your needs. A treat now and then isn’t the end of the world.”





Millie's dad gathered ingredients from the cupboard and the fridge in order to make lunch.

"Would you like to help me make a balanced lunch?" asked Mr Martin. "We can use some of the things we picked from the allotment."

First, Ellie chose some wholegrain bread.

Next, Millie chose some butter and spread it onto the bread.

Both girls decided to put in some slices of ham and cheese.

Finally, Ellie chose some lettuce for her sandwich and sliced cucumber on the side, whereas Millie preferred tomatoes instead.





After lunch, all three of them headed back to the allotment with their newly made scarecrows.

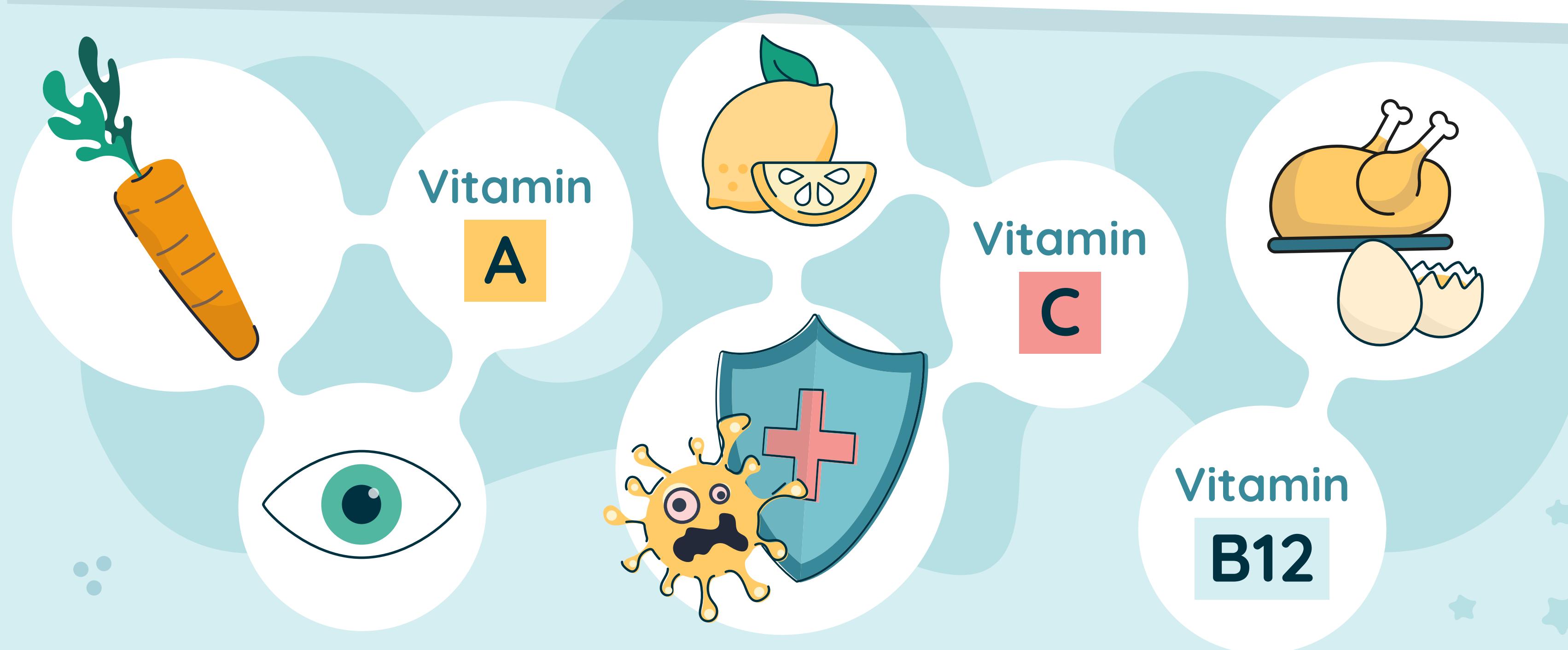
Ellie however, was a little distracted:
“Mr Martin, what are vitamins? My mum said orange juice has lots of vitamin C but are there any other vitamins?”



“A vitamin is a very tiny kind of nutrient your body needs in small amounts. There are many different vitamins, and they all do very different things,” explained Millie’s dad. “For example, vitamin A helps you see and vitamin C supports your immune system, helping to prevent you from getting ill.”

“The most important thing about them is that your body can’t make them, so you have to get them from food. Carrots contain vitamin A and citrus fruits like oranges and lemons contain lots of vitamin C.”

“Certain vitamins, like B12, you can get from animal products like meat and eggs,” explained Mr Martin.





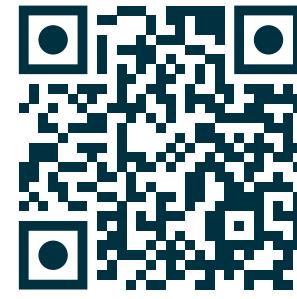
Ellie thought about her classmate, Fabian, who was a vegetarian. Ellie wondered if he was getting enough vitamin B12.

Millie's dad explained about special types of foods that are 'fortified', such as breakfast cereals and different kinds of milk alternatives that contain added vitamins D and B12 to help people get enough in their diet.

"Or else some people take vitamin supplements," said Mr Martin.

At the end of the day, Ellie was excited to bring home some of the fruit and vegetables that she and Millie had picked together – and after all she had learnt from Mr Martin, Ellie was keen to help her mum and stepdad cook a balanced dinner that night – although not before she had dressed herself up as a scarecrow!





For more stories featuring Ellie,
her family, friends and teddies,
as well as accompanying
teaching resources, visit:
www.abpischools.org.uk



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