

# Digging for Gold

**Notes** This recipe can be used in groups with varying degrees of mental and physical capacity. I have used it in dementia care facilities as well as with active older adults who are gathering memories as performance and art-making material.

**From the kitchen of:** Lois Weaver

**Serves:** 0-12

## Ingredients

- 1 2 trays of Kinetic Sand (Kinetic Sand adds a valuable sensory experience but is expensive so regular sand will also do)
- 2 12-15 dollhouse-sized objects (pots, books, telephones, sewing machines, cars, sports equipment etc.)

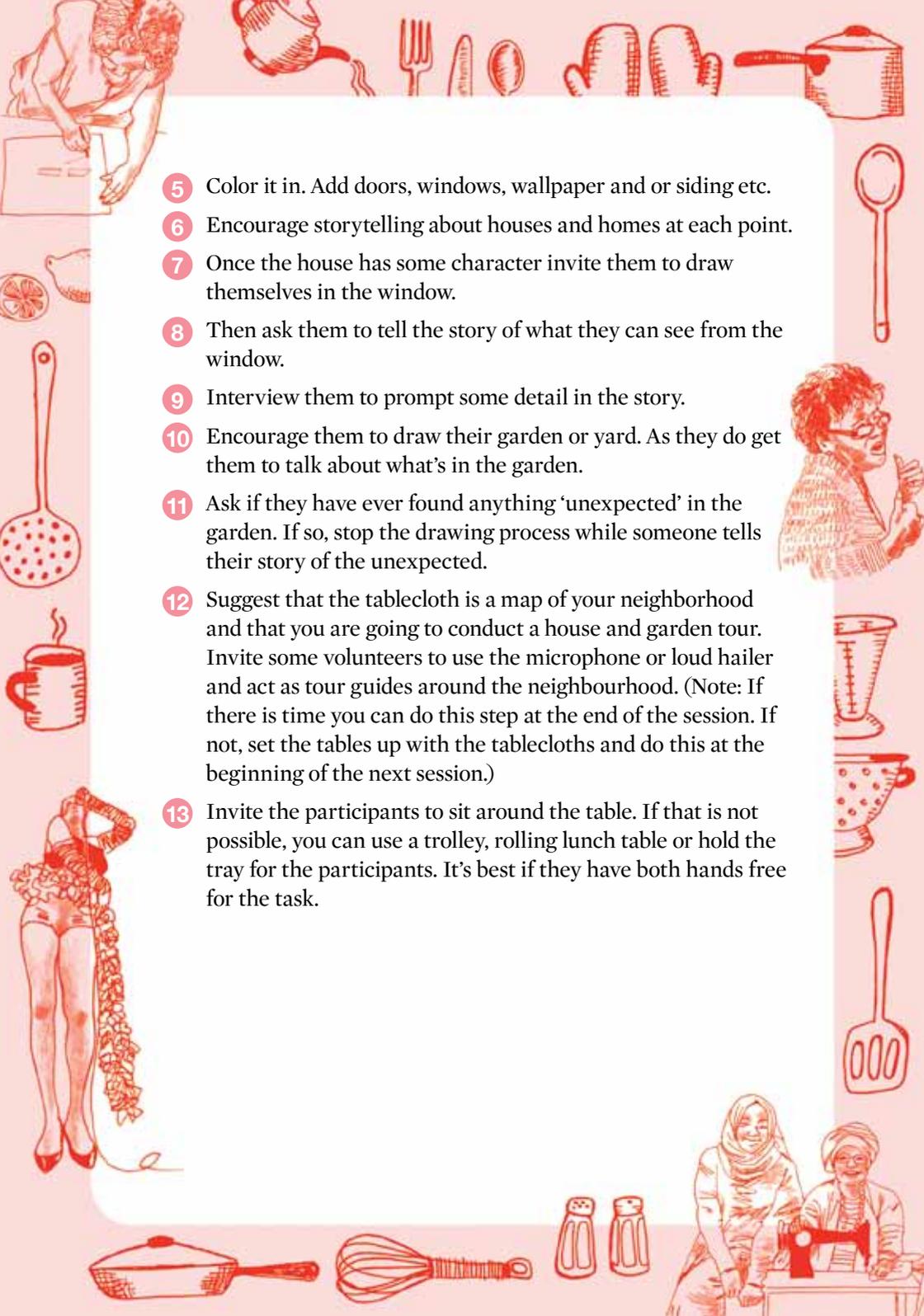
## Directions

- 1 Prepare the sand trays. Make sure your trays are large enough so that participants feel free to manipulate the sand without worrying about the mess. Also make sure the sides of the tray are not too high as this can make it difficult for some to reach over and into the sand. Tray 1 is only sand. In Tray 2, bury the small objects throughout. If you have the budget for the sand, you may want to add a 3rd tray so that the objects are buried further apart.
- 2 Invite the participants to sit around the table. If that is not possible, you can use a trolley, rolling lunch table or hold the tray for the participants. It's best if they have both hands free for the task.

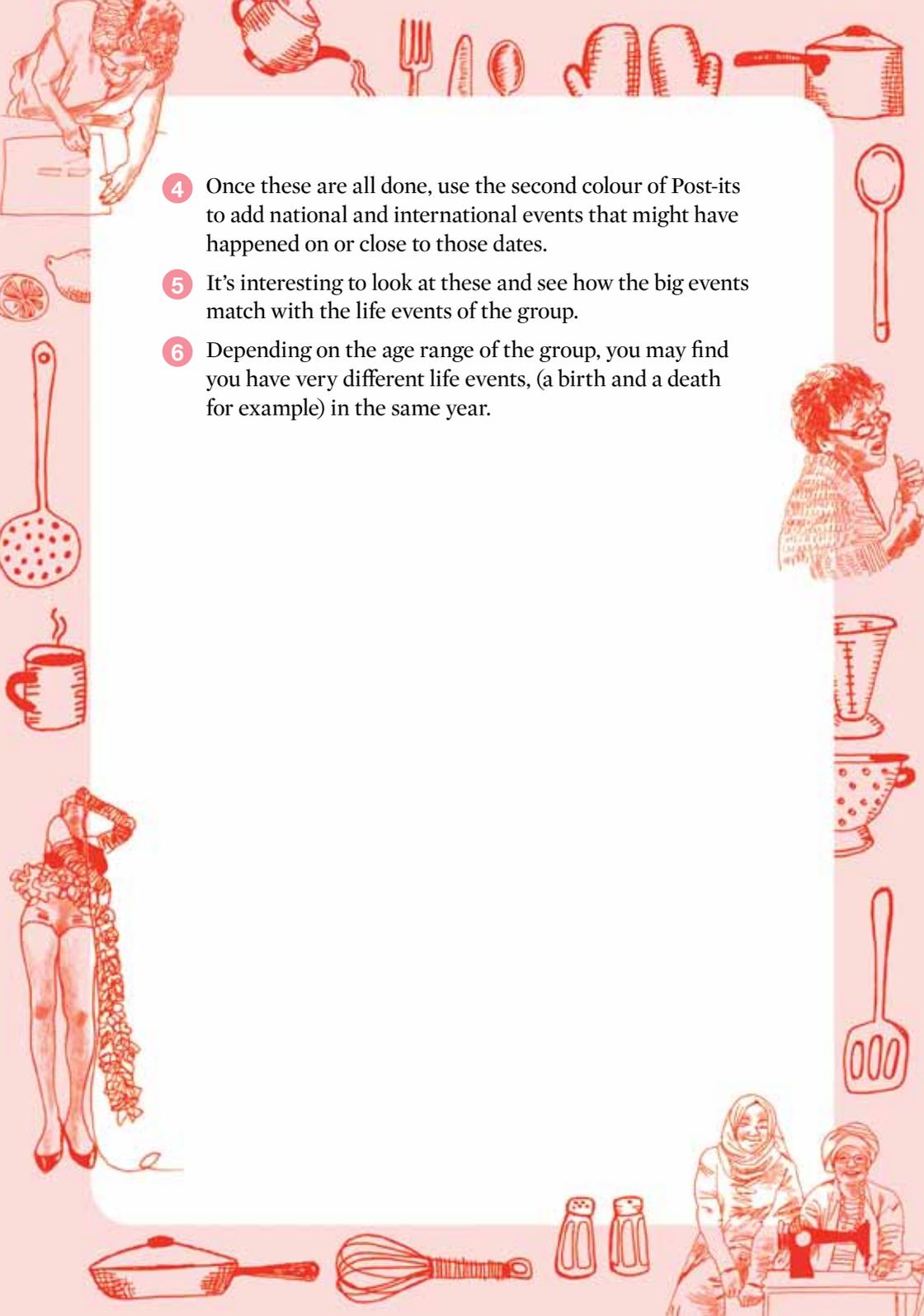
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- 5 Color it in. Add doors, windows, wallpaper and or siding etc.
  - 6 Encourage storytelling about houses and homes at each point.
  - 7 Once the house has some character invite them to draw themselves in the window.
  - 8 Then ask them to tell the story of what they can see from the window.
  - 9 Interview them to prompt some detail in the story.
  - 10 Encourage them to draw their garden or yard. As they do get them to talk about what's in the garden.
  - 11 Ask if they have ever found anything 'unexpected' in the garden. If so, stop the drawing process while someone tells their story of the unexpected.
  - 12 Suggest that the tablecloth is a map of your neighborhood and that you are going to conduct a house and garden tour. Invite some volunteers to use the microphone or loud hailer and act as tour guides around the neighbourhood. (Note: If there is time you can do this step at the end of the session. If not, set the tables up with the tablecloths and do this at the beginning of the next session.)
  - 13 Invite the participants to sit around the table. If that is not possible, you can use a trolley, rolling lunch table or hold the tray for the participants. It's best if they have both hands free for the task.

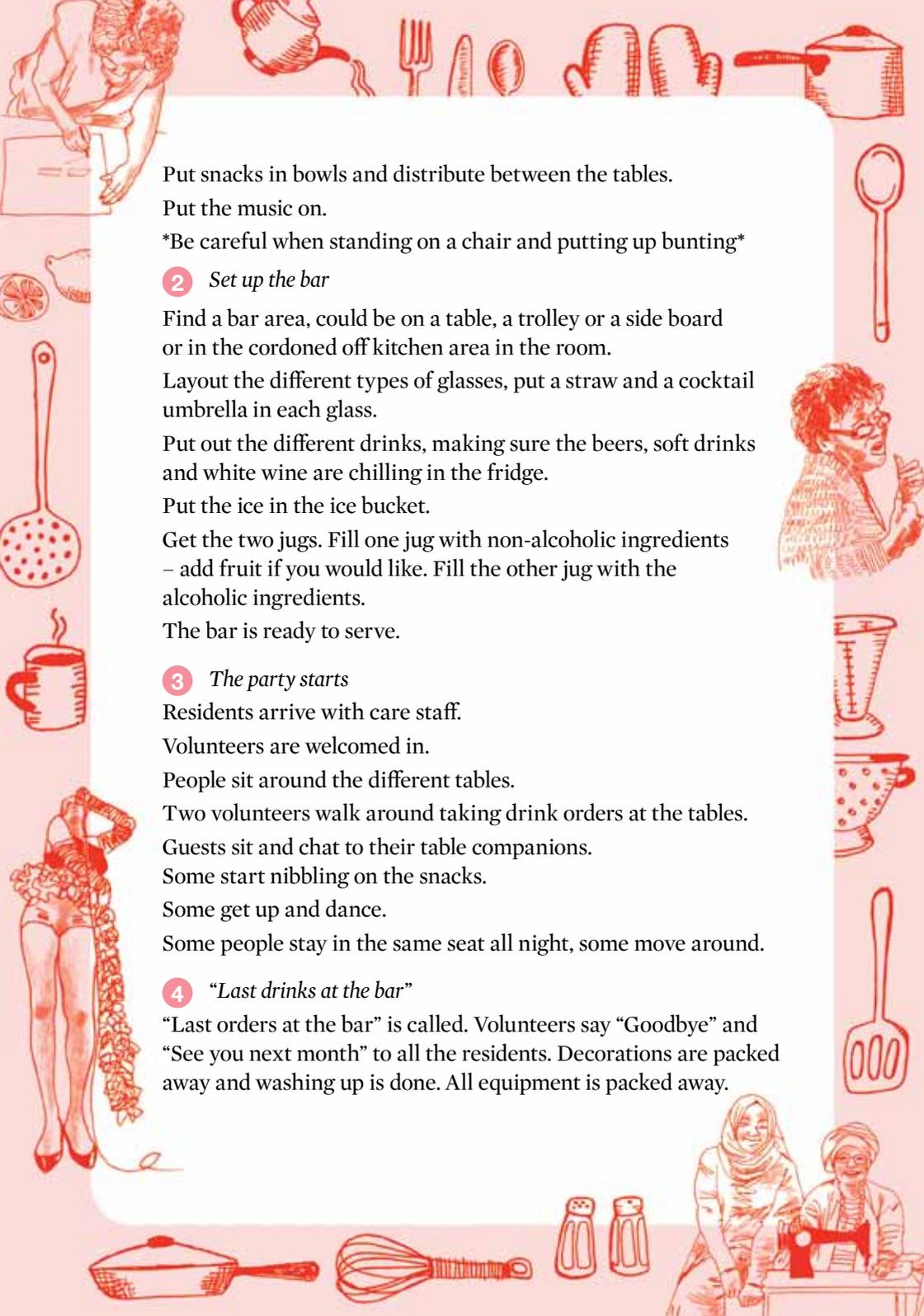


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- 4 Once these are all done, use the second colour of Post-its to add national and international events that might have happened on or close to those dates.
  - 5 It's interesting to look at these and see how the big events match with the life events of the group.
  - 6 Depending on the age range of the group, you may find you have very different life events, (a birth and a death for example) in the same year.









Put snacks in bowls and distribute between the tables.

Put the music on.

\*Be careful when standing on a chair and putting up bunting\*

## 2 *Set up the bar*

Find a bar area, could be on a table, a trolley or a side board or in the cordoned off kitchen area in the room.

Layout the different types of glasses, put a straw and a cocktail umbrella in each glass.

Put out the different drinks, making sure the beers, soft drinks and white wine are chilling in the fridge.

Put the ice in the ice bucket.

Get the two jugs. Fill one jug with non-alcoholic ingredients – add fruit if you would like. Fill the other jug with the alcoholic ingredients.

The bar is ready to serve.

## 3 *The party starts*

Residents arrive with care staff.

Volunteers are welcomed in.

People sit around the different tables.

Two volunteers walk around taking drink orders at the tables.

Guests sit and chat to their table companions.

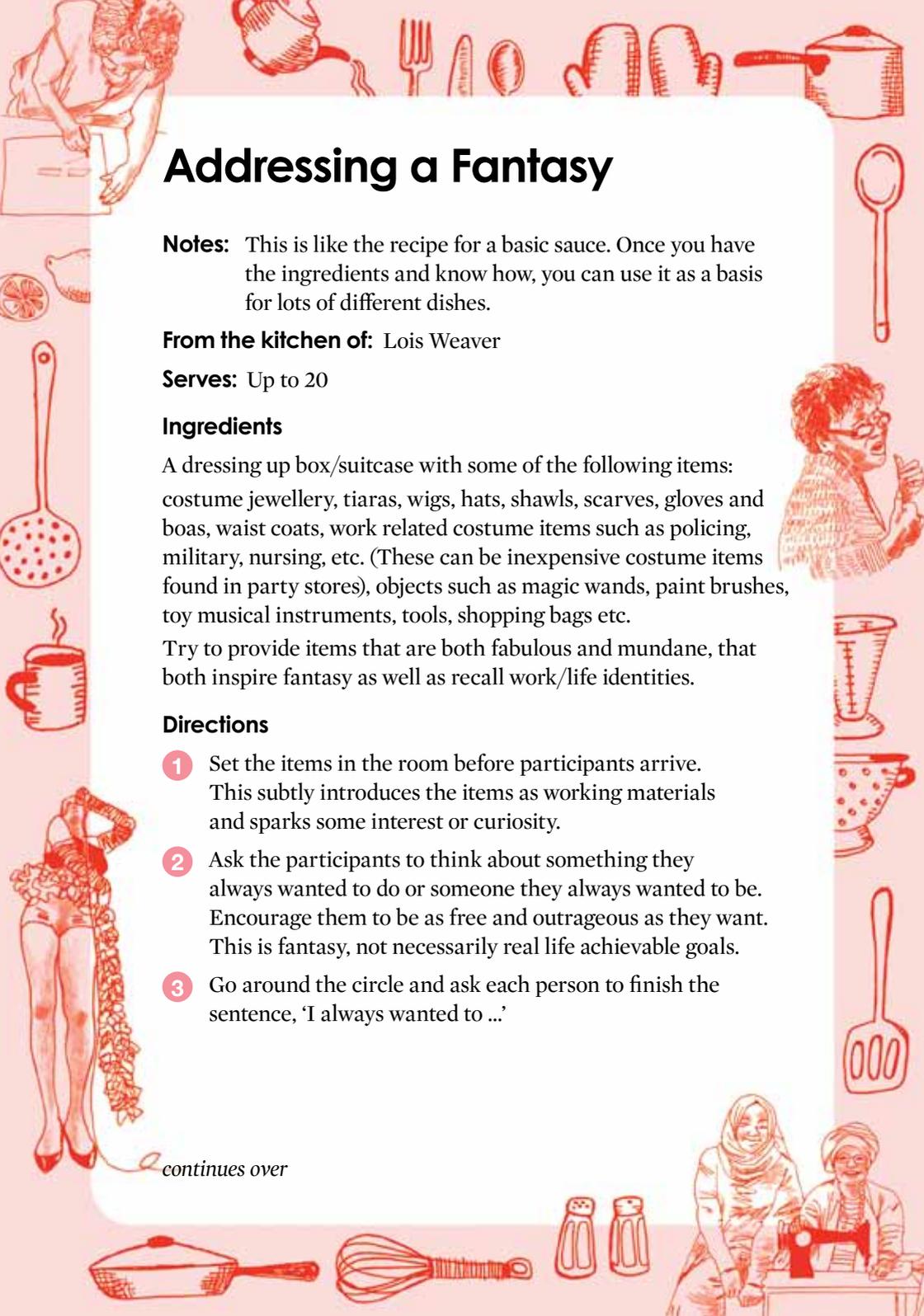
Some start nibbling on the snacks.

Some get up and dance.

Some people stay in the same seat all night, some move around.

## 4 *“Last drinks at the bar”*

“Last orders at the bar” is called. Volunteers say “Goodbye” and “See you next month” to all the residents. Decorations are packed away and washing up is done. All equipment is packed away.

A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring various kitchen items and a woman. At the top, there's a woman leaning over a counter, a pot, a fork, a knife, a spoon, and a whisk. On the right side, there's a large spoon, a woman's head and shoulders, a measuring cup, a bowl, and a spatula. At the bottom, there's a frying pan, a whisk, salt and pepper shakers, and a woman sitting at a table with a sewing machine. On the left side, there's a citrus slice, a spatula, a mug, and a woman in a costume.

# Addressing a Fantasy

**Notes:** This is like the recipe for a basic sauce. Once you have the ingredients and know how, you can use it as a basis for lots of different dishes.

**From the kitchen of:** Lois Weaver

**Serves:** Up to 20

## Ingredients

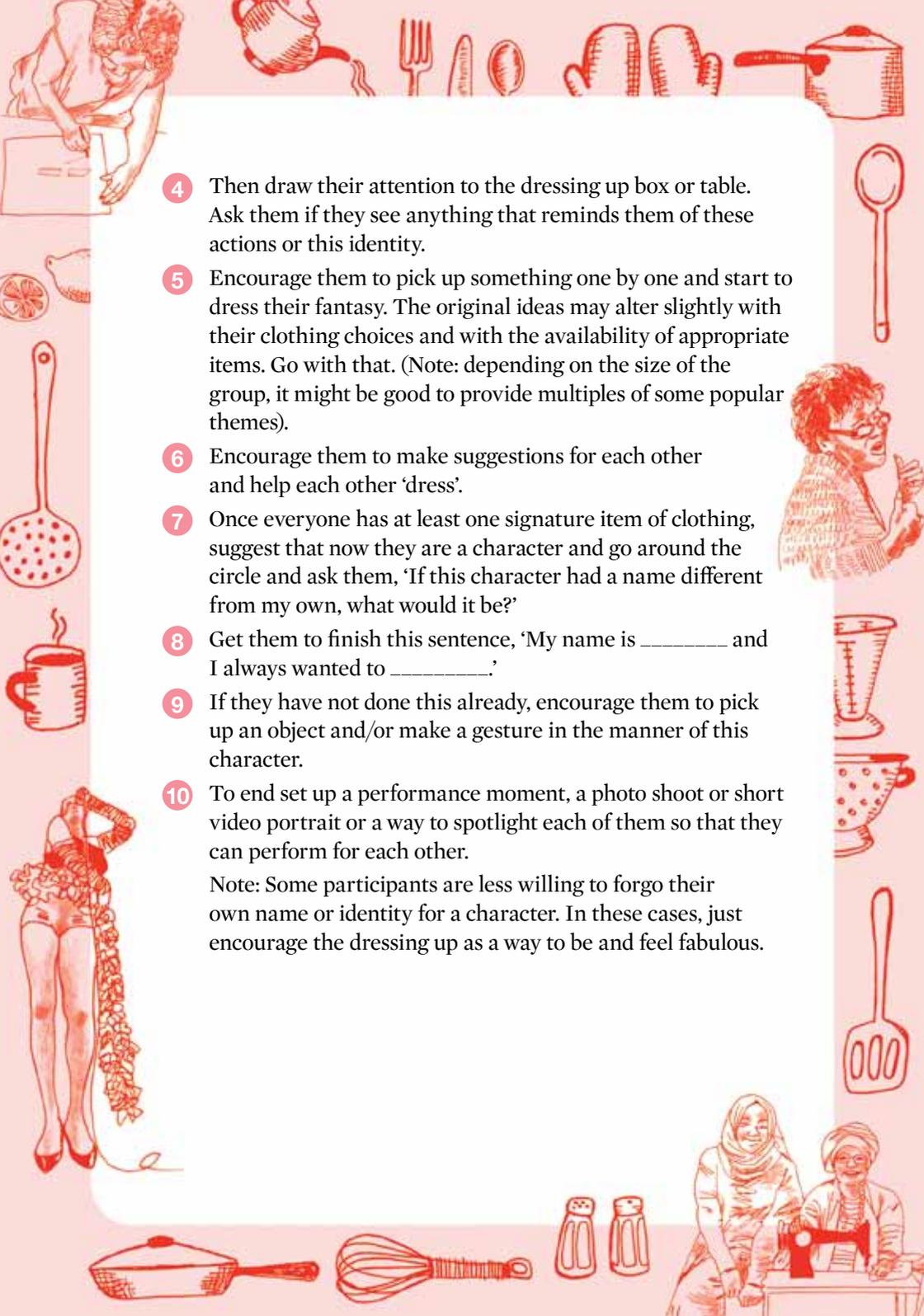
A dressing up box/suitcase with some of the following items: costume jewellery, tiaras, wigs, hats, shawls, scarves, gloves and boas, waist coats, work related costume items such as policing, military, nursing, etc. (These can be inexpensive costume items found in party stores), objects such as magic wands, paint brushes, toy musical instruments, tools, shopping bags etc.

Try to provide items that are both fabulous and mundane, that both inspire fantasy as well as recall work/life identities.

## Directions

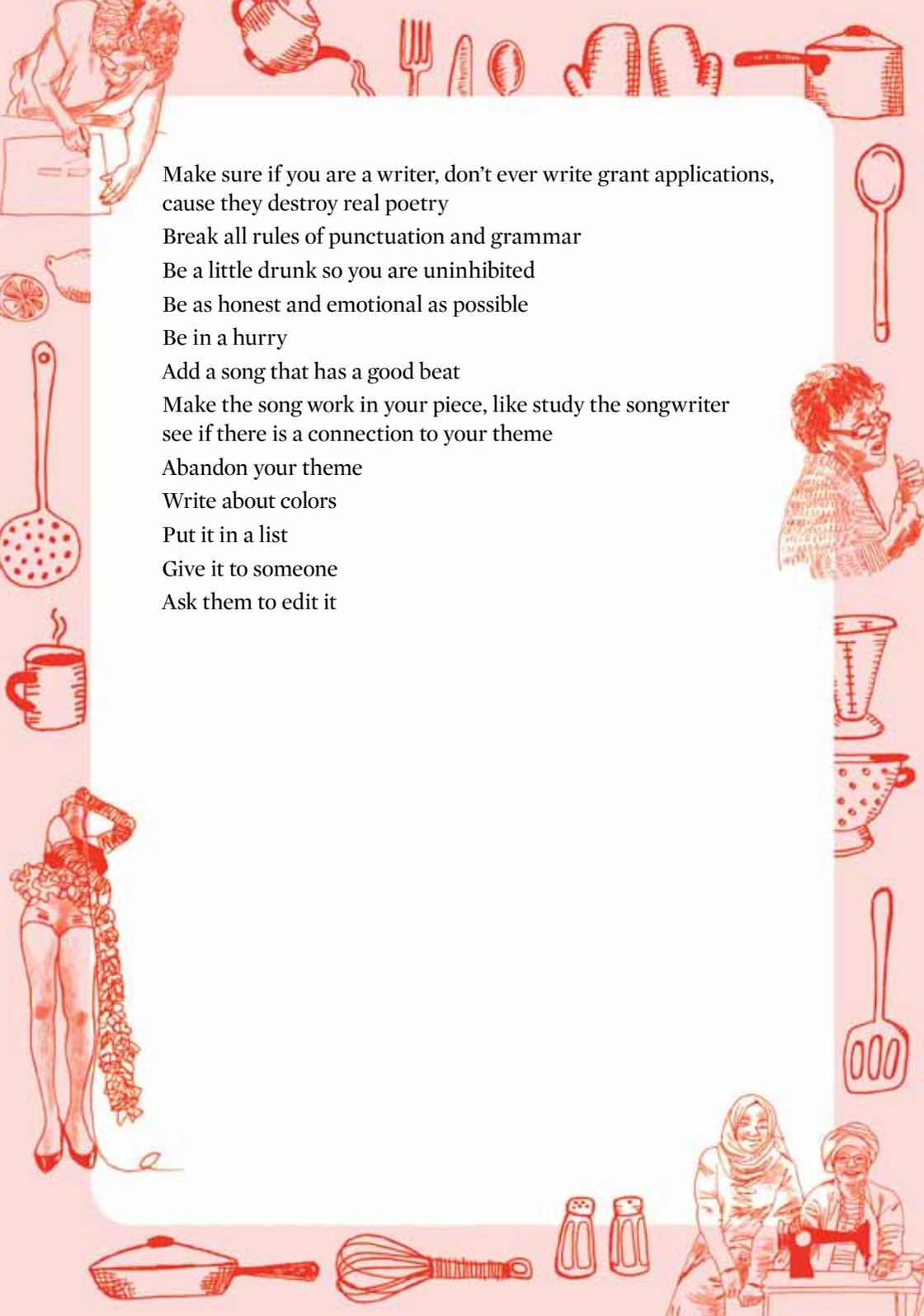
- 1 Set the items in the room before participants arrive. This subtly introduces the items as working materials and sparks some interest or curiosity.
- 2 Ask the participants to think about something they always wanted to do or someone they always wanted to be. Encourage them to be as free and outrageous as they want. This is fantasy, not necessarily real life achievable goals.
- 3 Go around the circle and ask each person to finish the sentence, 'I always wanted to ...'

*continues over*

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- 4 Then draw their attention to the dressing up box or table. Ask them if they see anything that reminds them of these actions or this identity.
  - 5 Encourage them to pick up something one by one and start to dress their fantasy. The original ideas may alter slightly with their clothing choices and with the availability of appropriate items. Go with that. (Note: depending on the size of the group, it might be good to provide multiples of some popular themes).
  - 6 Encourage them to make suggestions for each other and help each other 'dress'.
  - 7 Once everyone has at least one signature item of clothing, suggest that now they are a character and go around the circle and ask them, 'If this character had a name different from my own, what would it be?'
  - 8 Get them to finish this sentence, 'My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I always wanted to \_\_\_\_\_.'
  - 9 If they have not done this already, encourage them to pick up an object and/or make a gesture in the manner of this character.
  - 10 To end set up a performance moment, a photo shoot or short video portrait or a way to spotlight each of them so that they can perform for each other.

Note: Some participants are less willing to forgo their own name or identity for a character. In these cases, just encourage the dressing up as a way to be and feel fabulous.





Make sure if you are a writer, don't ever write grant applications,  
cause they destroy real poetry

Break all rules of punctuation and grammar

Be a little drunk so you are uninhibited

Be as honest and emotional as possible

Be in a hurry

Add a song that has a good beat

Make the song work in your piece, like study the songwriter  
see if there is a connection to your theme

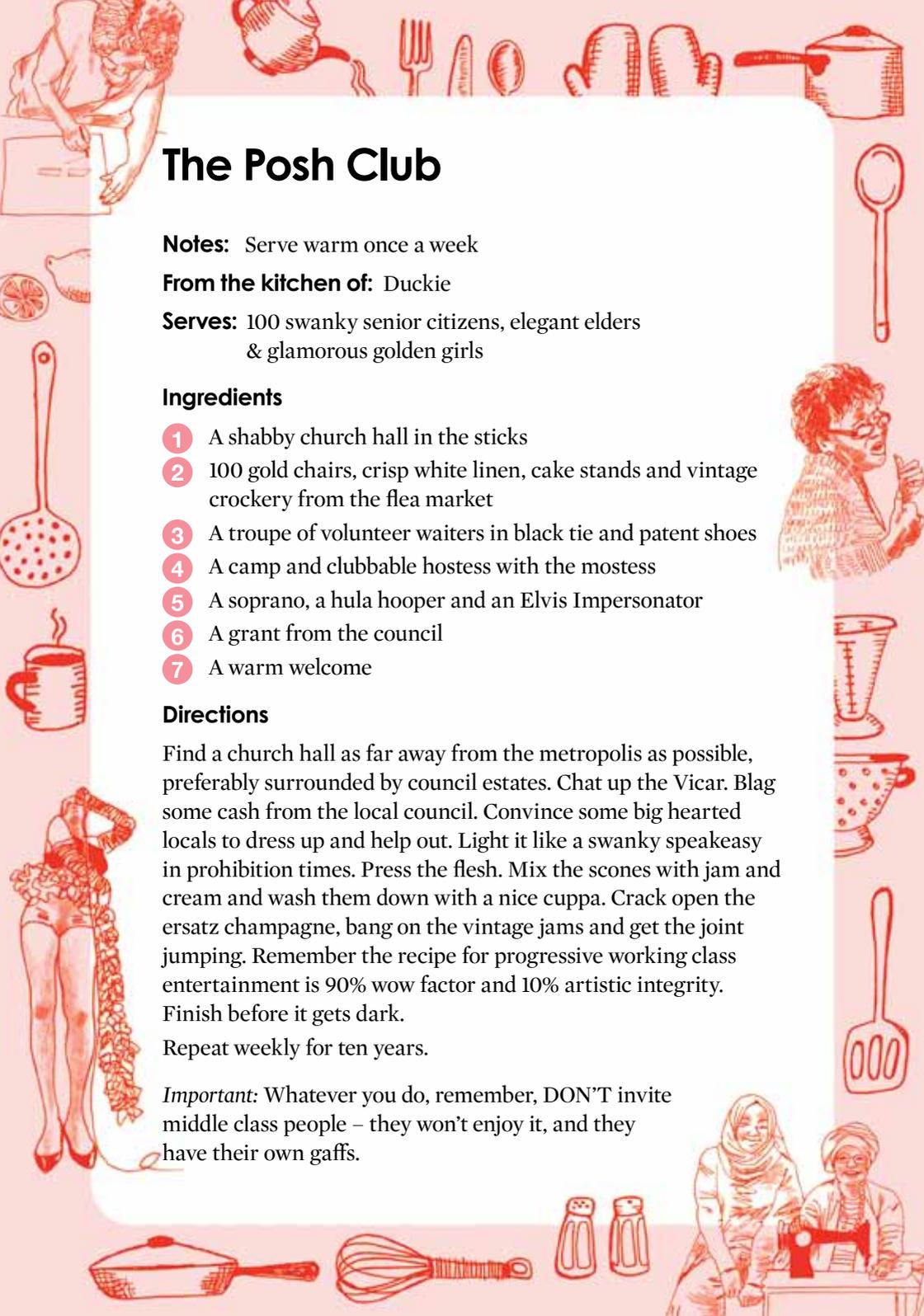
Abandon your theme

Write about colors

Put it in a list

Give it to someone

Ask them to edit it



# The Posh Club

**Notes:** Serve warm once a week

**From the kitchen of:** Duckie

**Serves:** 100 swanky senior citizens, elegant elders  
& glamorous golden girls

## Ingredients

- 1 A shabby church hall in the sticks
- 2 100 gold chairs, crisp white linen, cake stands and vintage crockery from the flea market
- 3 A troupe of volunteer waiters in black tie and patent shoes
- 4 A camp and clubbable hostess with the mostess
- 5 A soprano, a hula hooper and an Elvis Impersonator
- 6 A grant from the council
- 7 A warm welcome

## Directions

Find a church hall as far away from the metropolis as possible, preferably surrounded by council estates. Chat up the Vicar. Blag some cash from the local council. Convince some big hearted locals to dress up and help out. Light it like a swanky speakeasy in prohibition times. Press the flesh. Mix the scones with jam and cream and wash them down with a nice cuppa. Crack open the ersatz champagne, bang on the vintage jams and get the joint jumping. Remember the recipe for progressive working class entertainment is 90% wow factor and 10% artistic integrity. Finish before it gets dark.

Repeat weekly for ten years.

*Important:* Whatever you do, remember, DON'T invite middle class people – they won't enjoy it, and they have their own gaffs.





