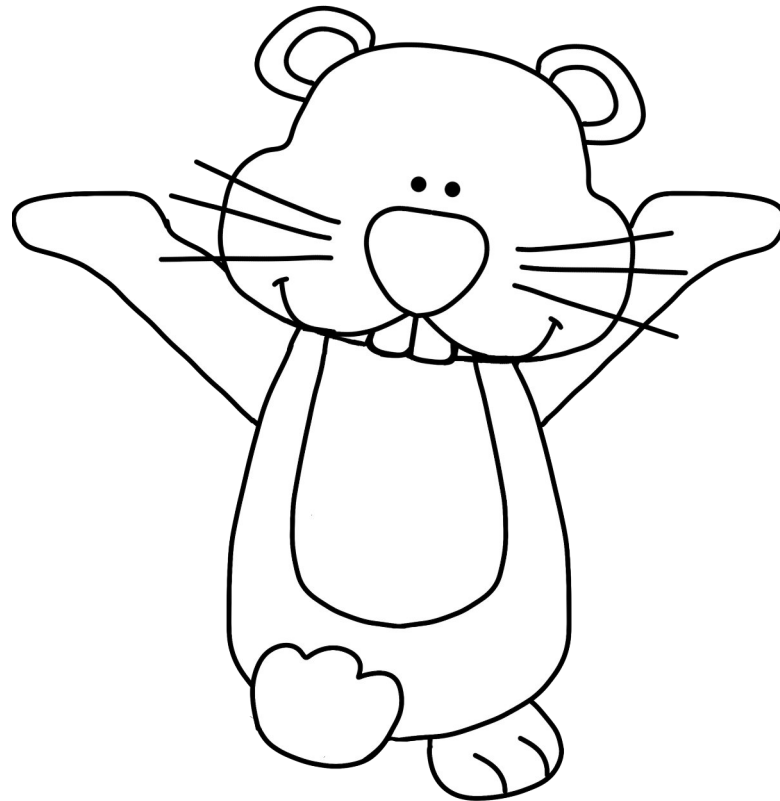


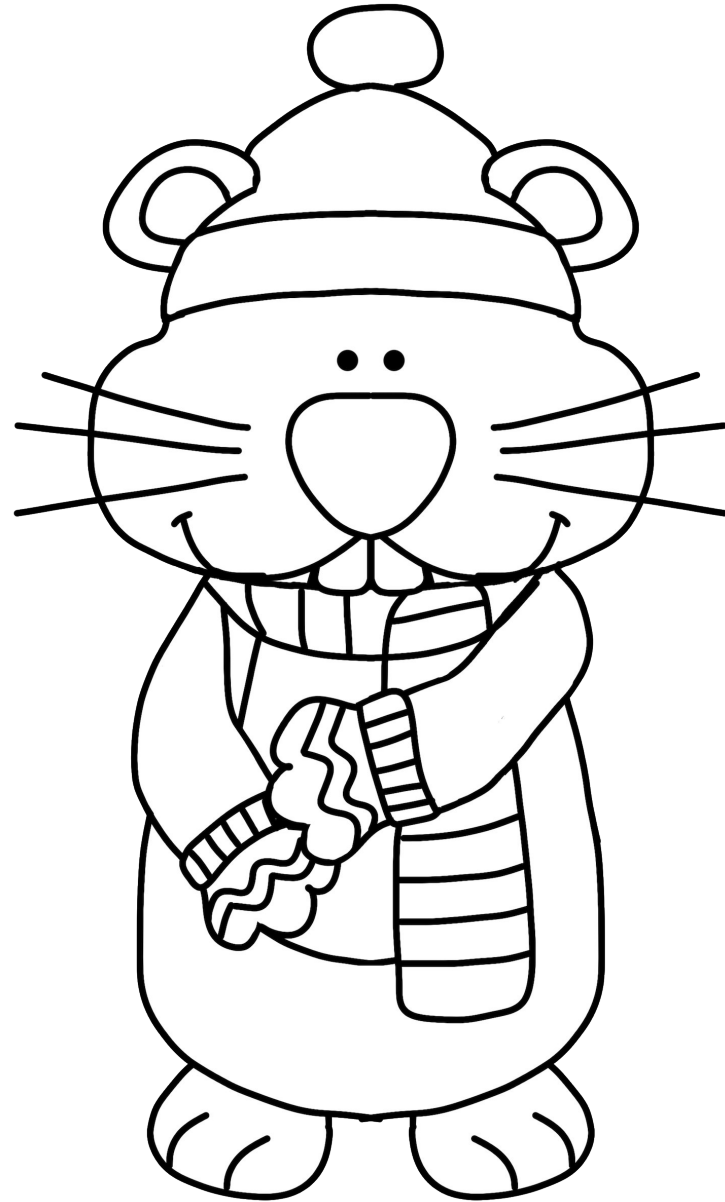
Groundhog Day

The text 'Groundhog Day' is written in a large, black, decorative font. The letter 'o' in 'Groundhog' and the letter 'D' in 'Day' contain a simple line drawing of a groundhog's head and front paws, appearing to peek out from behind the letter.

Every year on
2nd February

What is Groundhog Day?





Groundhog Day is a tradition celebrated on 2nd February in many parts of the United States and Canada.

On Groundhog Day, people watch a famous groundhog as it comes out of its burrow to forecast the weather.

Why would they do that?

Find out by reading on!



At Imbolc, people lit candles and fires and hoped for an early spring for good crops. Some people watched snakes or hedgehogs to forecast the weather!

Groundhog Day is closely linked to European traditions dating back many thousands of years.

In Scotland and Ireland, a pagan festival called Imbolc was celebrated on 1st February, midway between the longest night of winter and the spring solstice. Weather forecasting was part of the tradition.

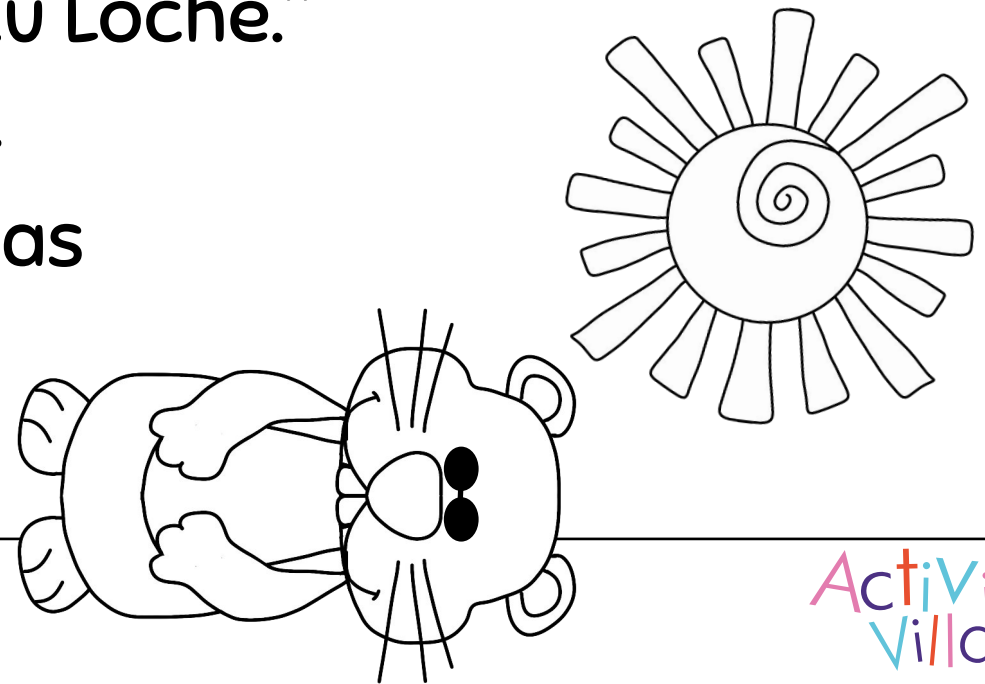


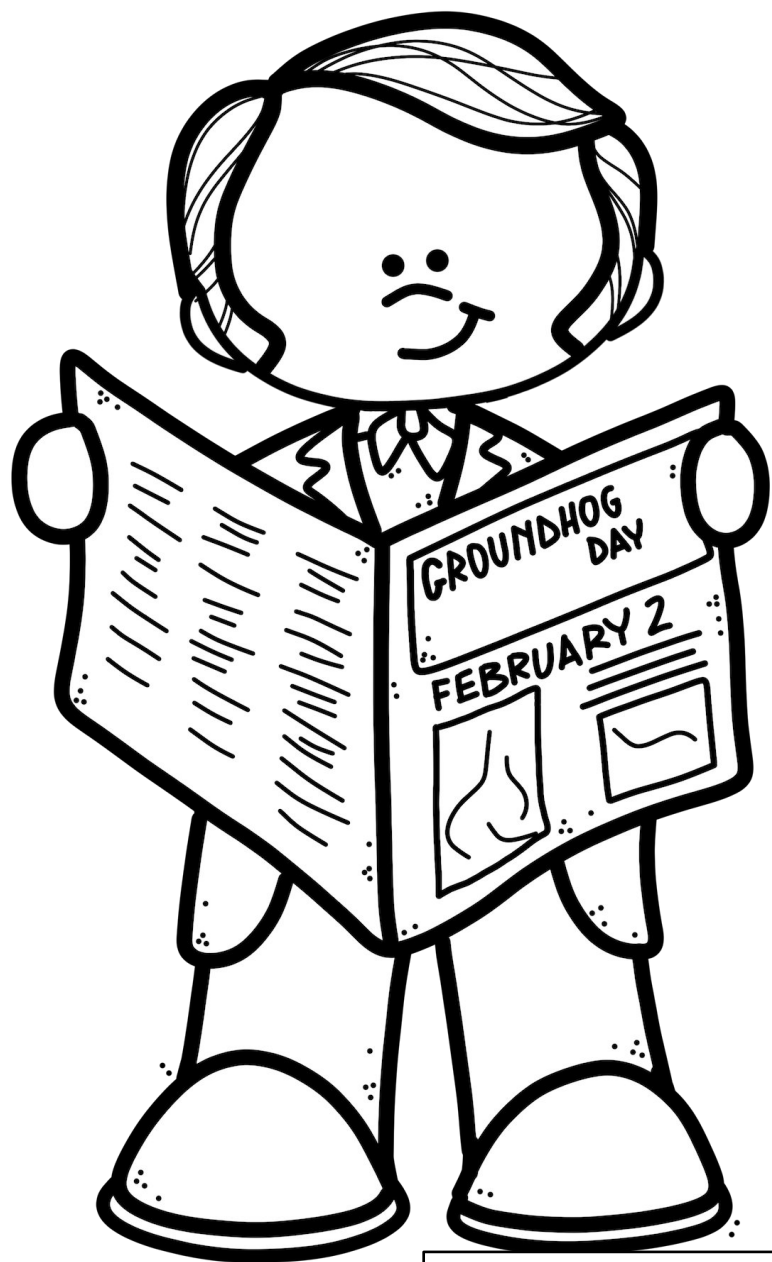
In Germany, too, there were similar traditions associated with Candlemas Day, a Christian holiday on 2nd February. People used hibernating animals like the bear or badger to predict the weather.

Many Germans moved to Pennsylvania during the 18th and 19th centuries, bringing their traditions with them.

“Sonnt sich der Dachs in der Lichtmeßwoche, so geht er auf vier Wochen wieder zu Loche.”

That means: “If the badger sunbathes during Candlemas week, for four more weeks he will be back in his hole.”

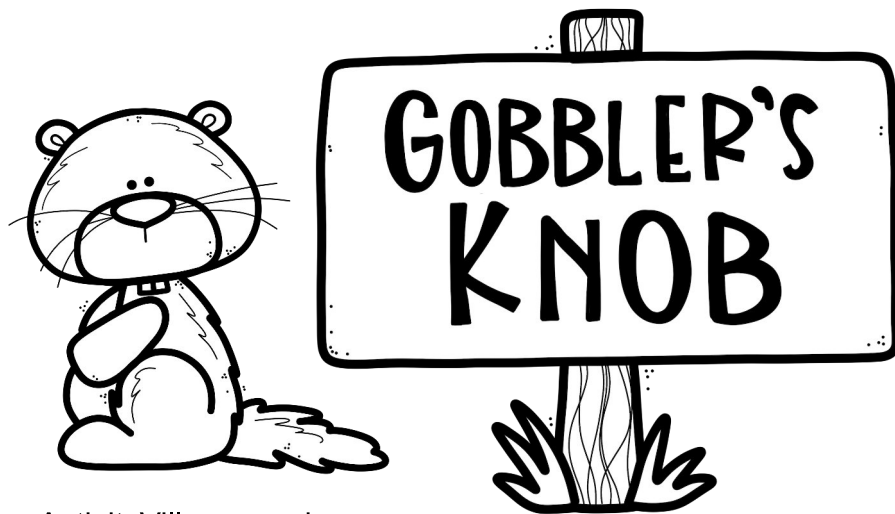
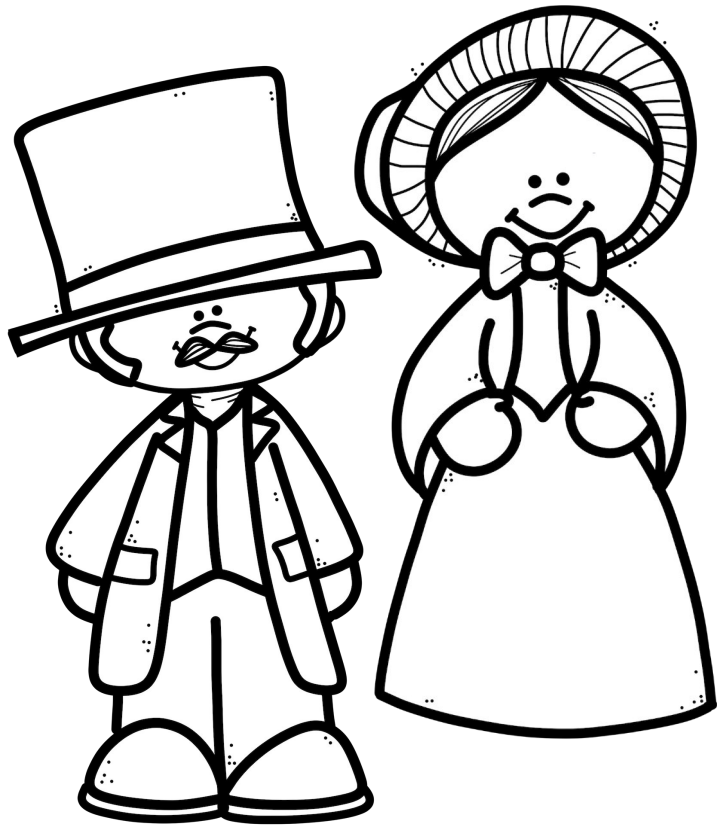




We know from a diary entry that Germans were using groundhogs to predict the weather in Pennsylvania as early as 1840.

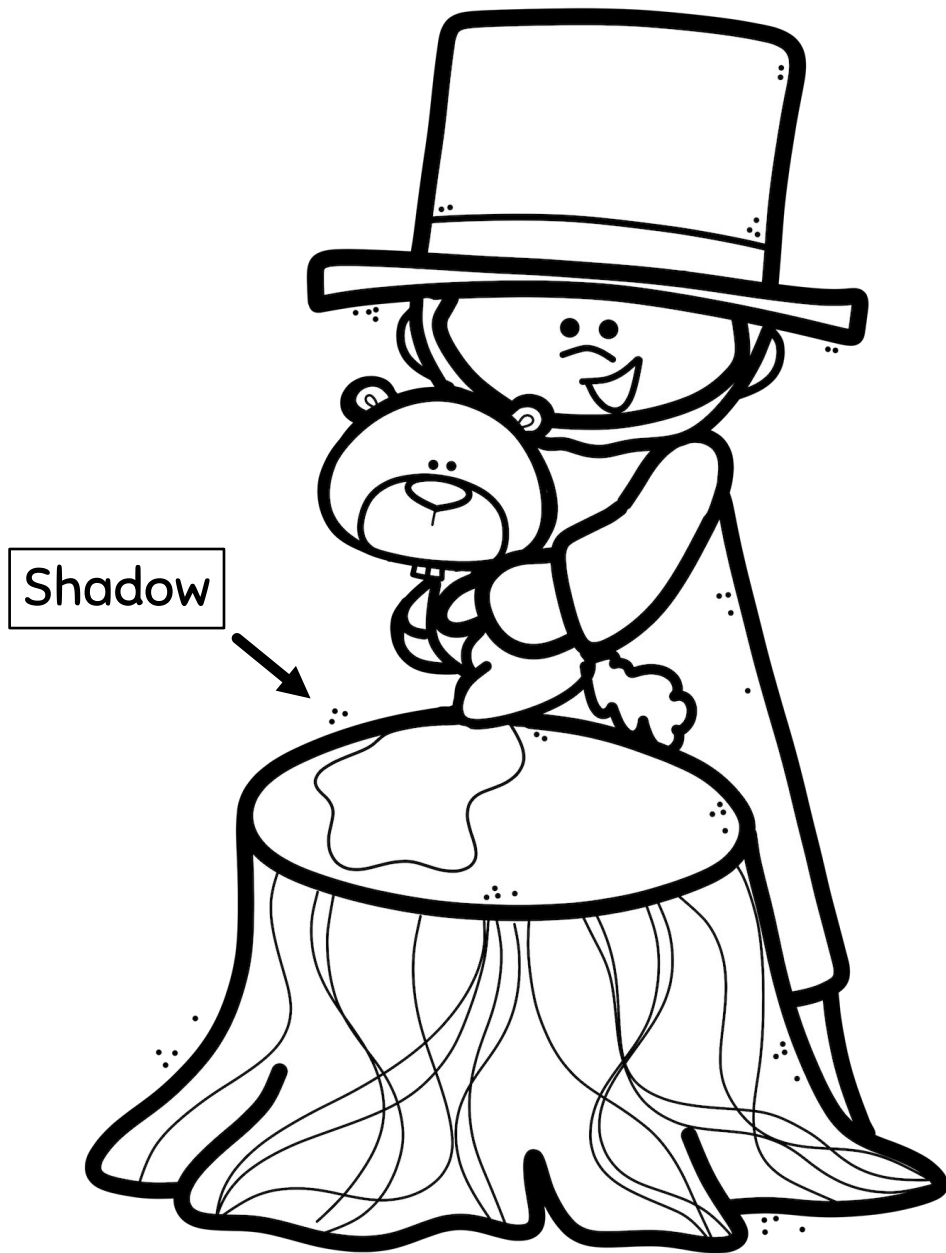
In 1887 a newspaper editor in the small town of Punxsutawney came up with the idea of holding a special event called Groundhog Day. He made his town famous!

This is Clymer Freas, editor of the Punxsutawney Spirit.



The people of Punxsutawney hiked to a part of town called Gobbler's Knob (great name 😊) and used a groundhog to predict the weather.

If the day was cold and clear, the groundhog would see its shadow and want to go back to bed for a few more weeks! That first year, it predicted ...



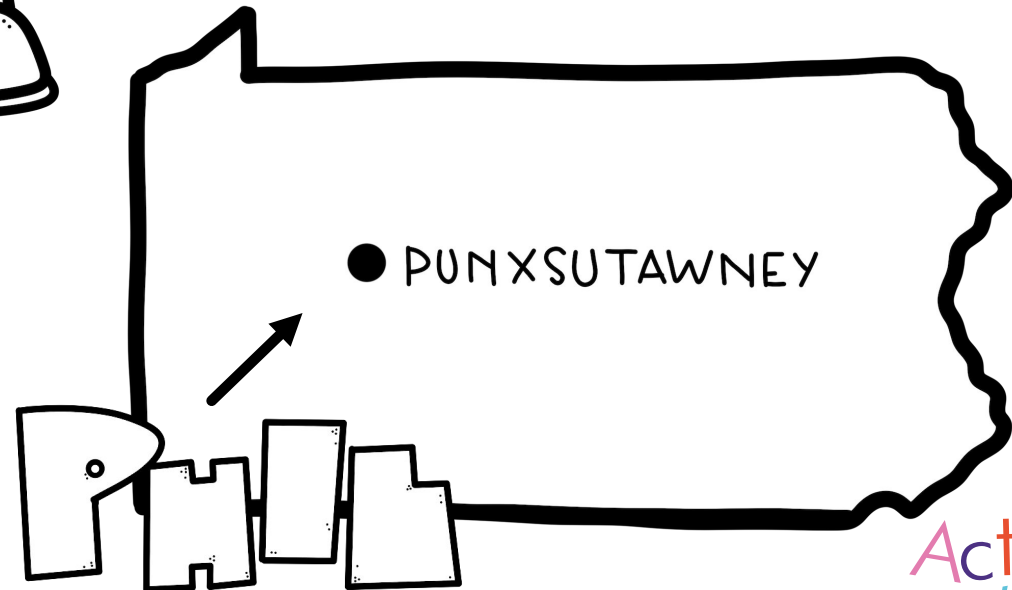
... more WINTER!

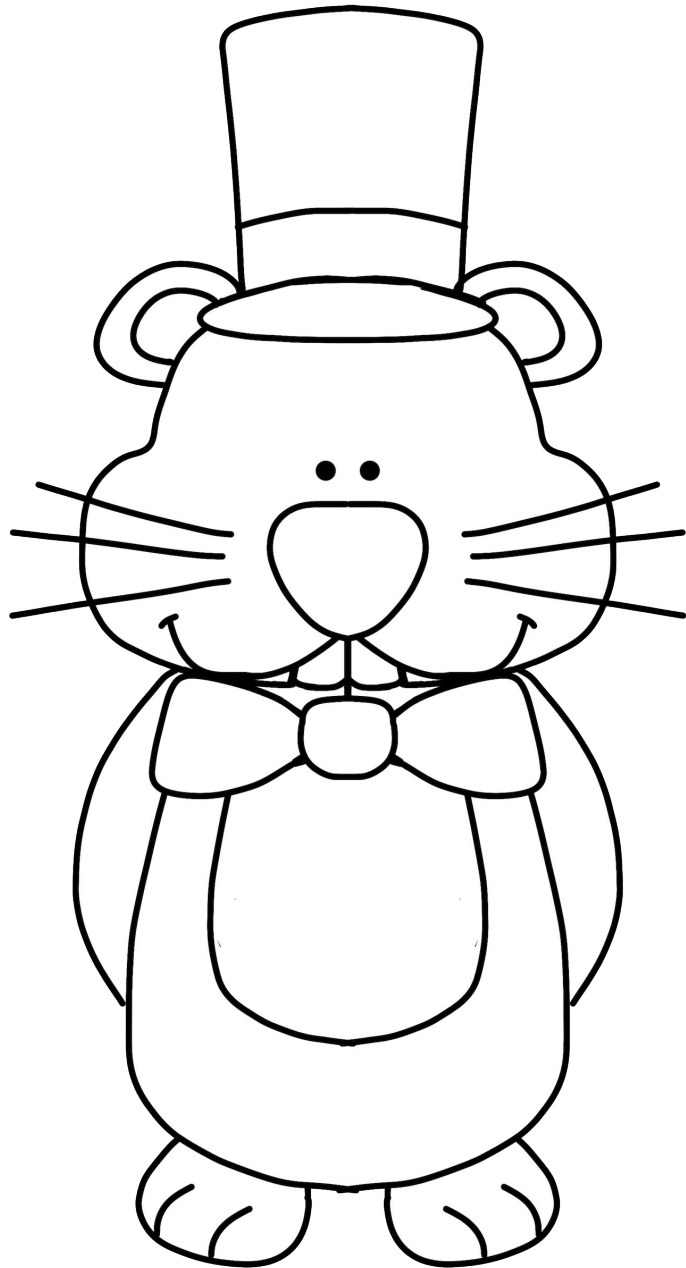
If it had been a cloudy, warmer day, the groundhog wouldn't have had a shadow and he would have predicted an early spring.

And that's how it works! In fact, it isn't a very accurate way of predicting the weather, as you might have guessed! We have much better ways today.



Every year since then, the people of Punxsutawney have repeated the tradition. In 1961, their weather-forecasting groundhog was given the nickname Punxsutawney Phil.



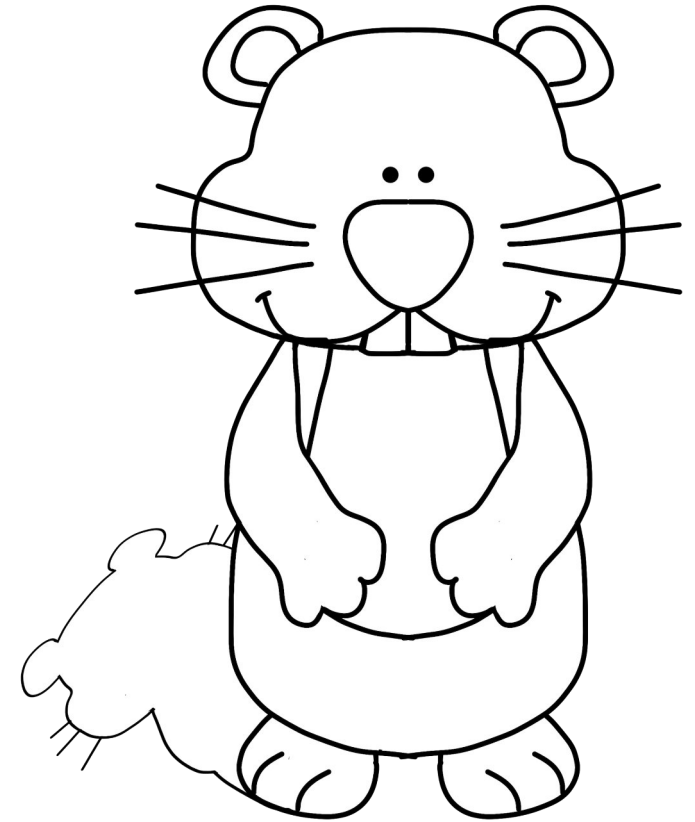
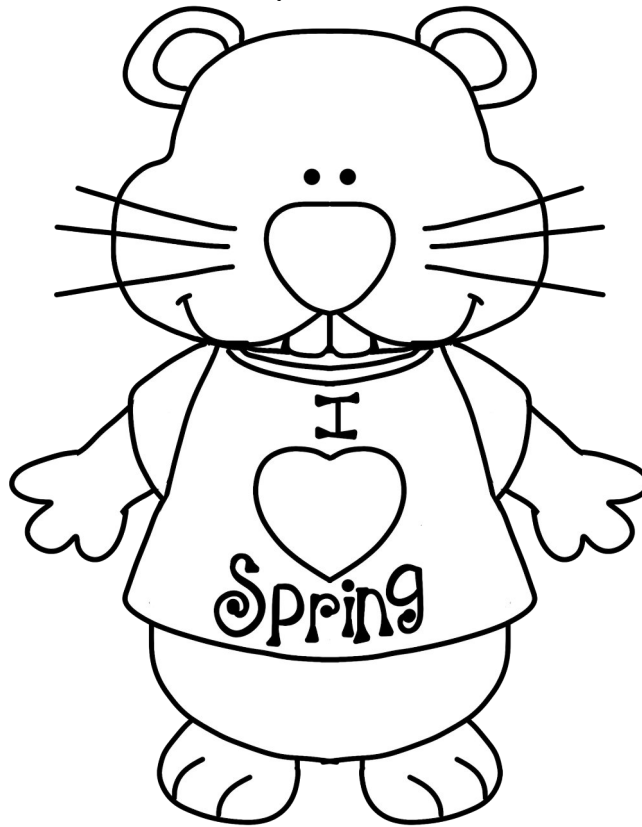


In 1993 the movie Groundhog Day was released and the town, and Phil, became very famous! Now thousands of people visit every year on 2nd February, or watch the live stream online.

The tradition has spread, too. There are other famous groundhogs forecasting the weather, some with much more success than Phil!

My name is Sir Walter Wally and I forecast the weather in Raleigh, North Carolina.

My name is Staten Island Chuck and I'm really good at forecasting weather for New York City.

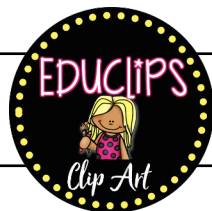




So now you know a little bit more about the traditions of Groundhog Day.

Here's one more interesting fact.

Punxsutawney Phil has his own special language, which only the president of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club can understand! The language is called Groundhogese. I wonder how it sounds?



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