



Derby City Council

Voice of the Child ...  
so what difference will it make?

# 3 Islands

Children and young people with Special  
Educational Needs and Disability

**Name** ..... **Age**.....

**Today's Date** .....



# Guidance for Practitioners

## 3 Islands

### Purpose

- To enable the child or young person to have a voice which is listened to and acted upon.
- To enable the child or young person to give their view on the support they receive.
- To enable the child or young person to identify what help they would like and who from.
- To enable a child or young person to think about what they want, what they sometimes want and what they do not want.
- To enable the child or young person to give their views on actions for change.
- To enable the child or young person to review what has worked or not worked for them.
- To improve outcomes and evidence what difference listening to the child or young person has made.

### Overall Guidance

- This is a safeguarding tool to help the practitioner to understand the child or young person's relationships with others, their wishes and desires and identify any potential risks.
- For children and young people with visual impairment it may be necessary to modify the relevant worksheets to their preferred reading formats. For example: specific font and line spacing and coloured paper. The child or young person should be able to tell you their preferences, or you could speak to a specialist/ advisory teacher for visual impairment.
- Remove all expectations on how long sections should take but be clear from the onset how long the session will be. Attention spans and the amount of engagement will vary widely but all children and young people will benefit from an understanding of how long the session will take overall and what will happen.
- It is important to plan a safe space for children and young people to participate in this work and consider their level of development, preferred method of communication and functioning.
- The practitioner supporting the child or young person must be knowledgeable about their special educational needs and the possible effects this might have on their understanding and interpretation of the exercise.
- You are free of course to use this tool flexibly to meet the needs of the individual child or young person for example using a large piece of paper and coloured pens, photographs, toys.
- This tool can be used to explore the child or young person's relationship with people, animals, places or objects (for example: toy, comfort blanket). If you already know the child or young person you can explore whether any changes have happened with people, animals, places or objects.



- Children and young people with Autism may struggle with the concept of friends, some discussion may be needed to identify the people who are important to them.
- It might not be appropriate to use the 3 islands analogy with children and young people with Autism who might interpret the activity literally.
- For children and young people with visual impairment it may not be appropriate to use the visual resources at all. Speak to a VI specialist teacher for advice.
- If you already have concerns as a practitioner for example: domestic violence you can use this tool to explore the child or young person's views or concerns.

## **Action Plan and Review**

- The child or young person [with the support of the practitioner] should complete the action plan to identify the support they feel they may need. Practitioners should ensure their words are recorded and work progresses at a pace suitable to each individual child or young person and set a date to review progress.
- The child or young person with the support of the practitioner should complete the review form recording the child or young person's words.
- The action plan and review should be used in line with other plan processes as appropriate, for example Team Around the Family [TAF], Children in Need [CIN] Reviews and Child Protection Reviews. This tool should contribute to the overall plan for the child or young person.

## **Outcomes**

- The three islands technique helps gain an insight into a child's life without having to rely on question and answer interviews, which can be intimidating for some children.

## **References**

Developed by Kate Iwi, young people's services officer at charity RESPECT, UK.

## Guidance

What resources do I need?

- Worksheet 1 – 3 islands or Worksheet 2, 3, 4, 5,6
- Conversation summary
- Appendix 1 – Communication in Print or Visual Aids
- Action Plan and Review
- Photos/Pictures/Symbols
- Pens, crayons, paint
- Paper

## What I do?

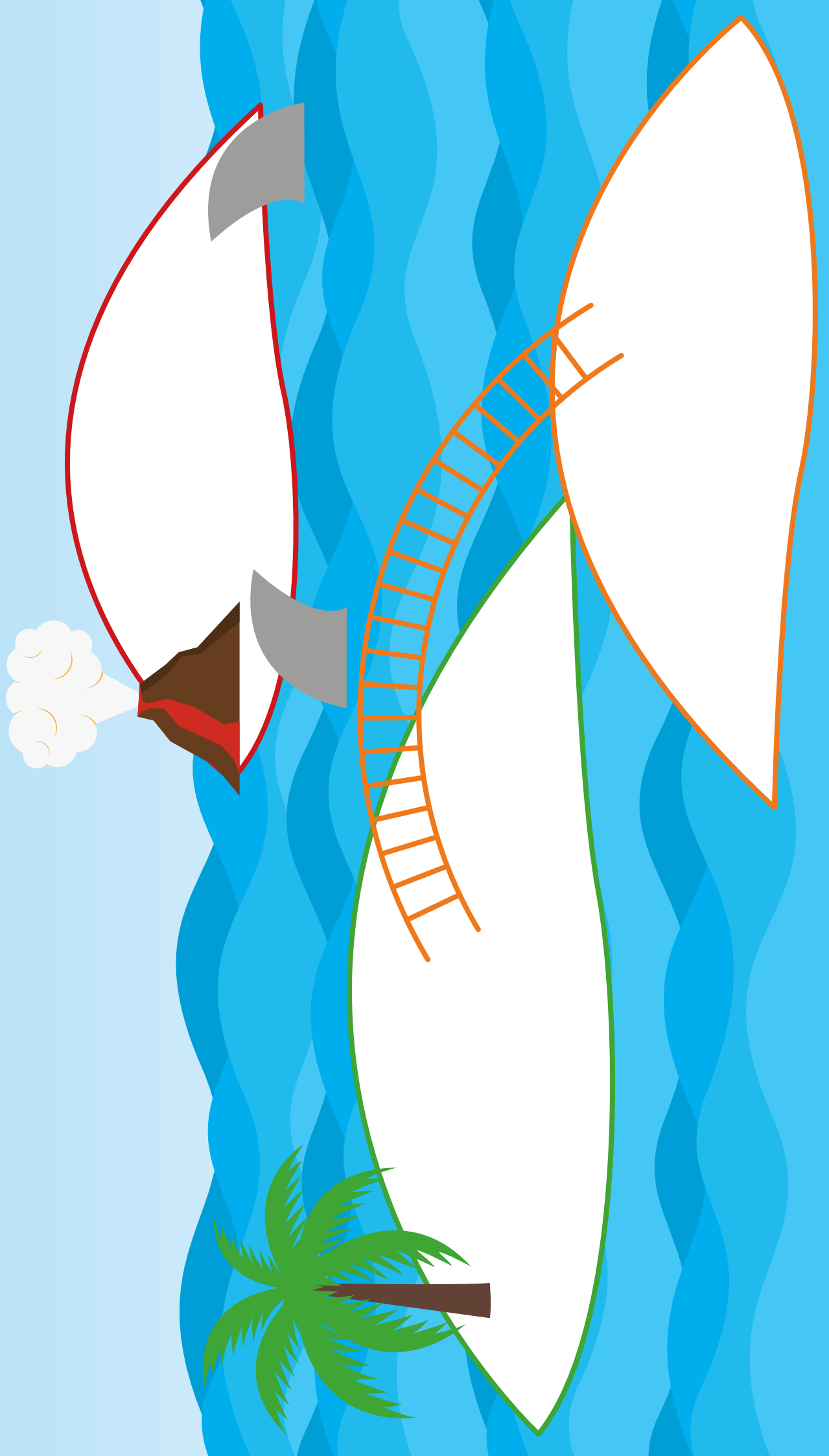
If you use worksheet one:

- the green island is where the child or young person wants to be and they can put anything and anyone they would like on their island with them.
- the orange island with the bridge to the green island is the place where the child or young person would like to be sometimes and can move across by the bridge. It also could be a place for visitors who can come over the bridge to their green island or it could be to have objects that they could have sometimes.
- the red island with the shark next to it is a place where the child or young person can put people, places and objects that they do not want to be part of their lives.
- A discussion needs to take place with the child or young person to explore the reasons for their choices and decisions. If the child or young person is not cognitively able then the discussion needs to take place with parent/carer or key worker who knows them best.
- Please use 'I wonder questions...' to help explore the child or young person's views for example: I wonder what made you put your dad on the green island.
- The child or young person should fill out the conversation summary sheet (the practitioner can support the child or young person but it is important that you write exactly what they say). If you discuss this with a parent/carer or key worker it should be recorded that it is their view and not that of the child or young person.

## \*Important to note

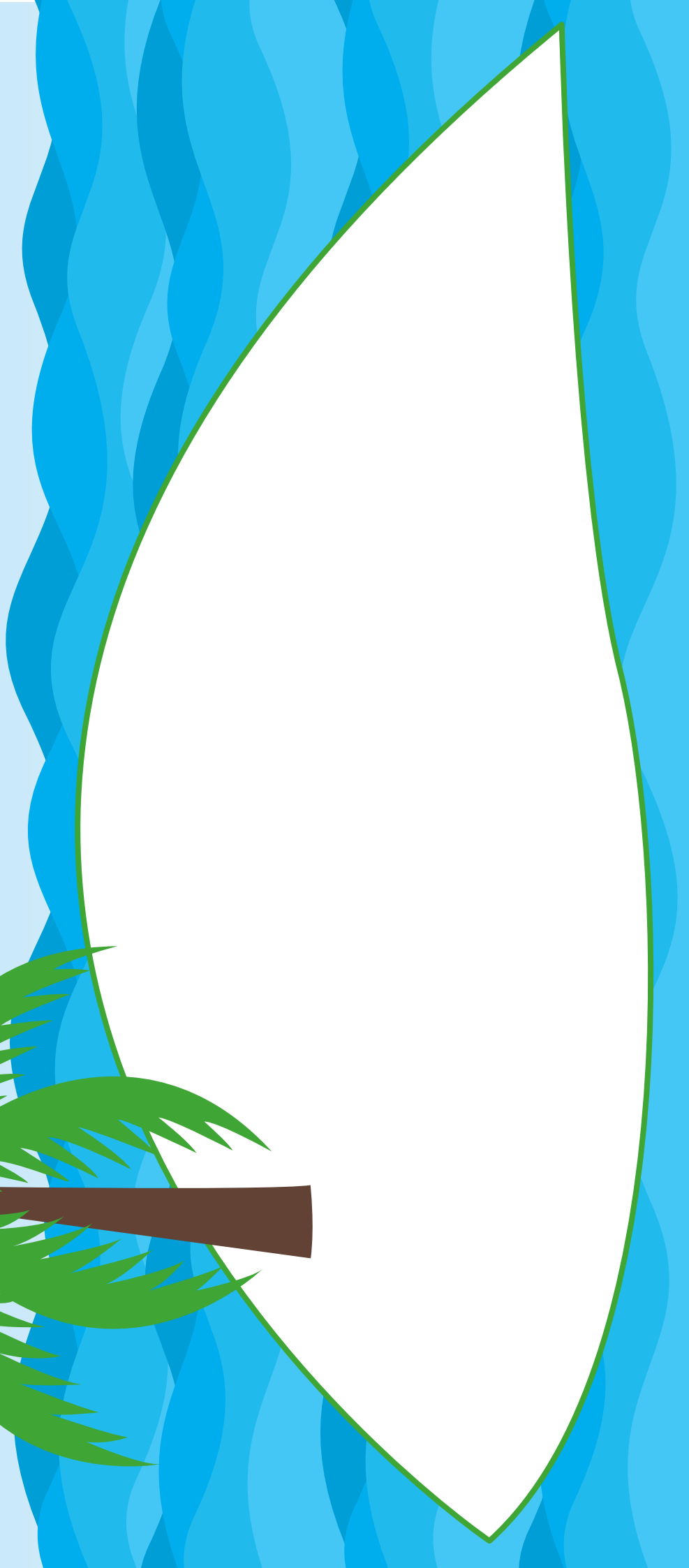
- Avoid interpreting what is drawn or shown to too literally. For example, if they draw a picture of a man and a woman fighting, this would not necessarily mean they have experienced domestic abuse. Drawings/modelling are a way for the child to express an emotional state or process something they have seen or experienced.
- Avoid questioning where the child places things. For example, you can ask why they have put their mother on the second island but you should not say: "Oh, but I would have thought mummy should be on island one?" The child may end up trying to please you [or displease you].
- There may also be immediate reasons why a child has put something on either the second or third island – for example, they may put their pet cat on island two because the cat scratched them earlier in the day.



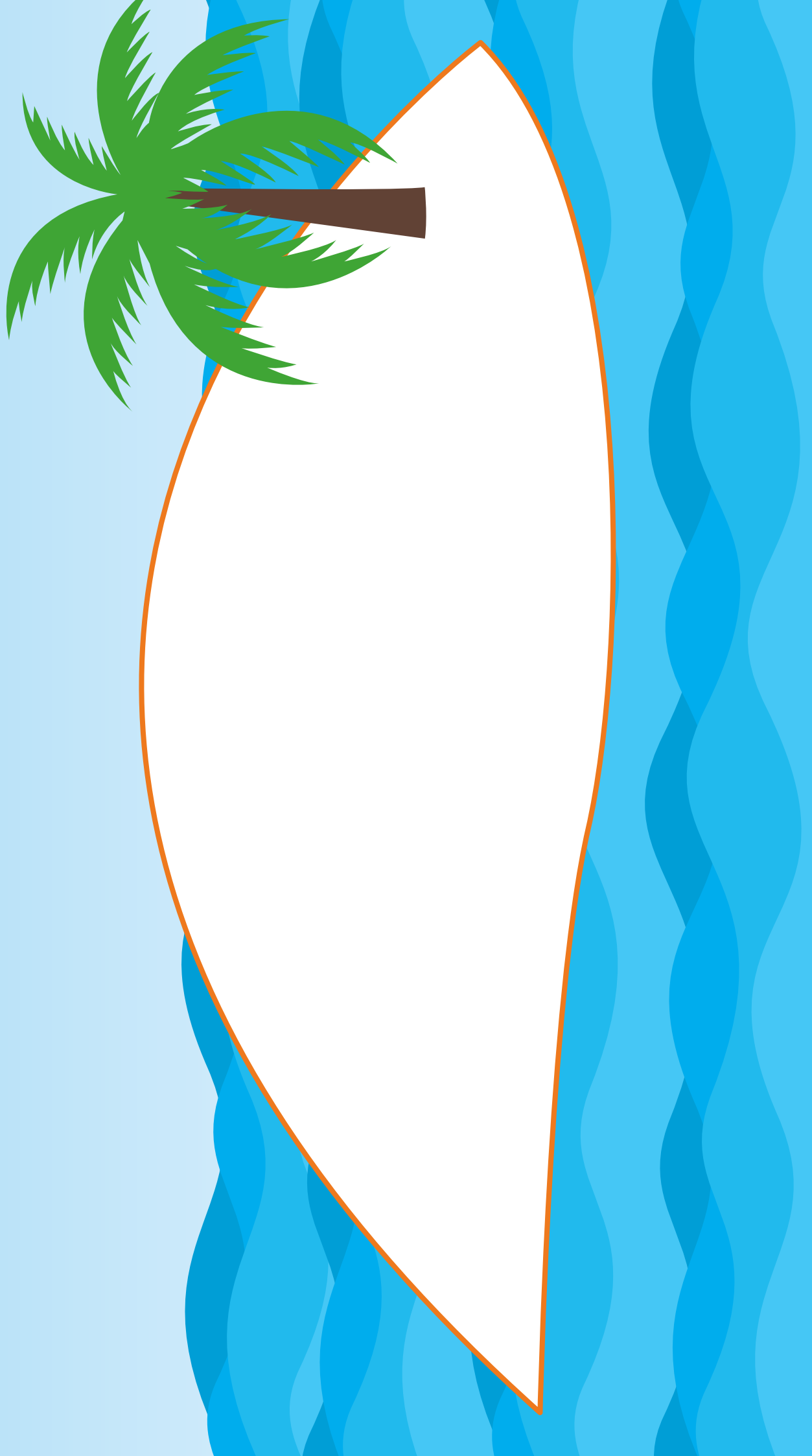




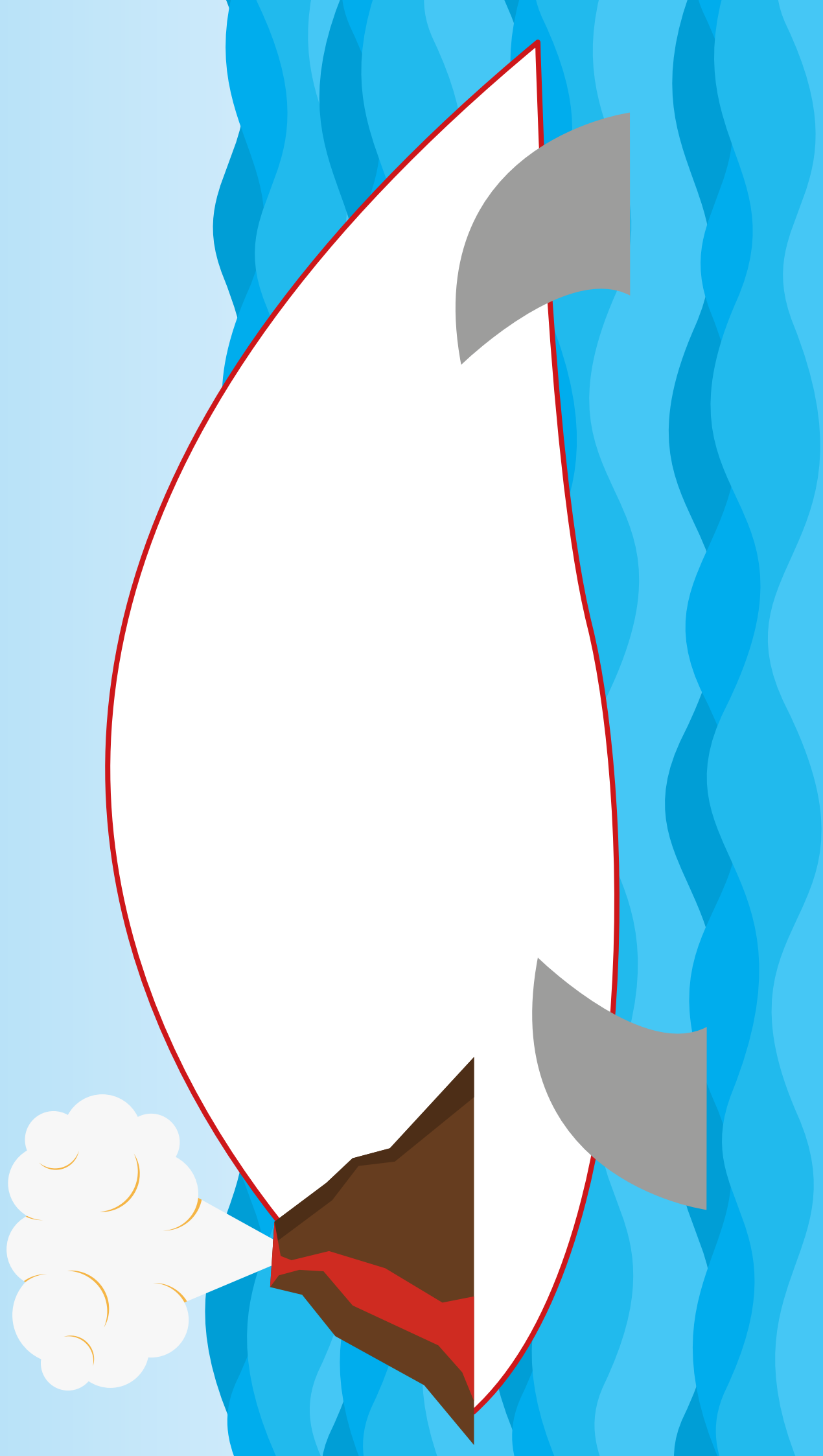














# Conversation Summary

**Island of what you want**  
(anything you want)

**Island of what you sometimes want**  
(anything you sometimes want... but not all the time)

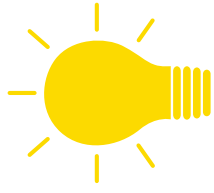
**Island of what you do not want**  
(anything you want to be far away from you and never see again)

Date .....





# Action Plan



Name .....

Date .....

What's going to help you?	How is it going to help you?	Who is going to help you?	When would you like it to start?
What else might help?			

# Review



Name .....

Date .....

How much has it helped you?

A lot

A little

Not at all

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