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# 1.

Hello! My name is Terhi Capercaillie. I am a young female black grouse, and this is my first spring. I look almost the same as a wood grouse hen, but I am a bit smaller and have a stripe in my plumage, which is absent in the wood grouse hen.

Winter has just begun to turn into spring, and my mother told me that producing eggs requires a lot of energy and nutrients, so I should start gaining weight for egg-laying as soon as the average daily temperature rises above zero. The higher the quality of spring food I eat, the more and better eggs I will produce. The spikes of tussock sedge growing in the swamps are a special treat for me, as they are rich in protein.

Tussock sedge is a small white and soft plant. Do you see it around you?

**Play suggestion:** Tussock sedge tag. First, we agree on the area where the game will be played, then one player is chosen to be "the tag". The tag changes when the player touches someone and shouts "tussock sedge".

**Psst!**

Fill the entire movement circle and you'll grow strong like a capercaillie! 💪



Now you're on the level:

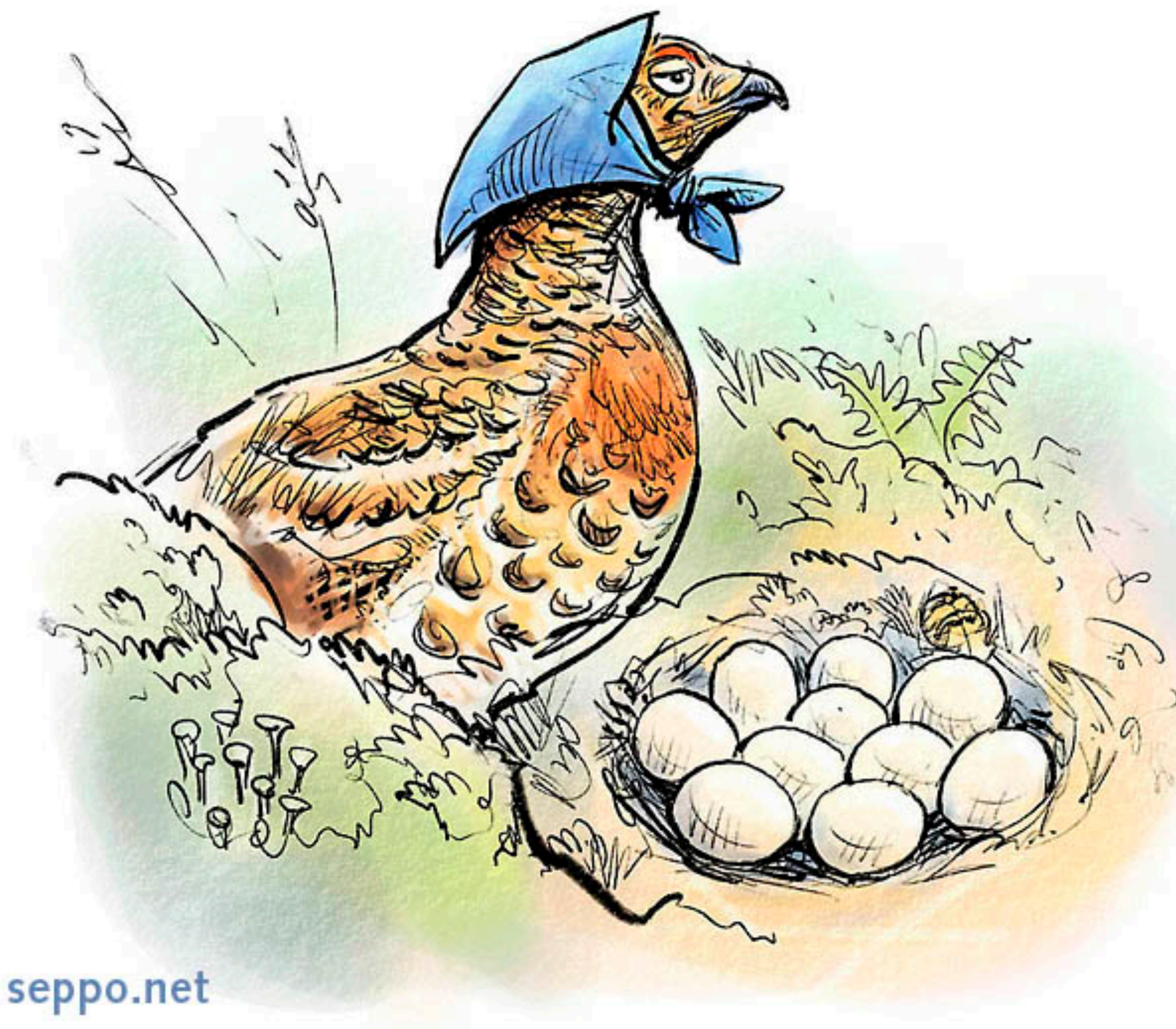
**Tussock sedge**

## 2.

In the last days of April, as the sunshine seemed warmer day by day, Terhi became enchanted by a handsome capercaillie male on its lek. It didn't take long before Terhi began her nest-building activities. She spent several days searching for the perfect nesting spot and found an ideal shallow depression in the ground, sheltered by bushes, where she started lining it with plants and feathers. Once the nest was ready, Terhi laid (count from the picture) beautiful eggs.

The future daddy wasn't interested in nest-building and instead hid in the dense forest thickets.

**Play suggestion:** Choose one female grouse from the group and the rest will be male grouse. The male grouse will hide in the forest, and the female's task is to find the hidden males.



Let's count together:  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5,  
6, 7, 8, 9, 10



Now you're on the  
level:

**Egg-laying**

## 3.

Terhi must continue to stock up on energy and nutrients also during egg-laying, and she needs to have enough strength for incubation as well. She lays one egg each day, and Terhi stays in the nest for a couple of hours, covering the egg or eggs lightly with moss, fallen leaves, or other debris when she leaves. The egg-laying period usually lasts just under or around two weeks.

Before the big incubation task, now is a good time to have a snack at the shelter. Do you also have blueberries, lingonberries, and cranberries as snacks, just like Terhi?

**Geocache:** Terhi has hidden a geocache near the shelter. Can you find it? You can use a geocaching mobile app to help you.

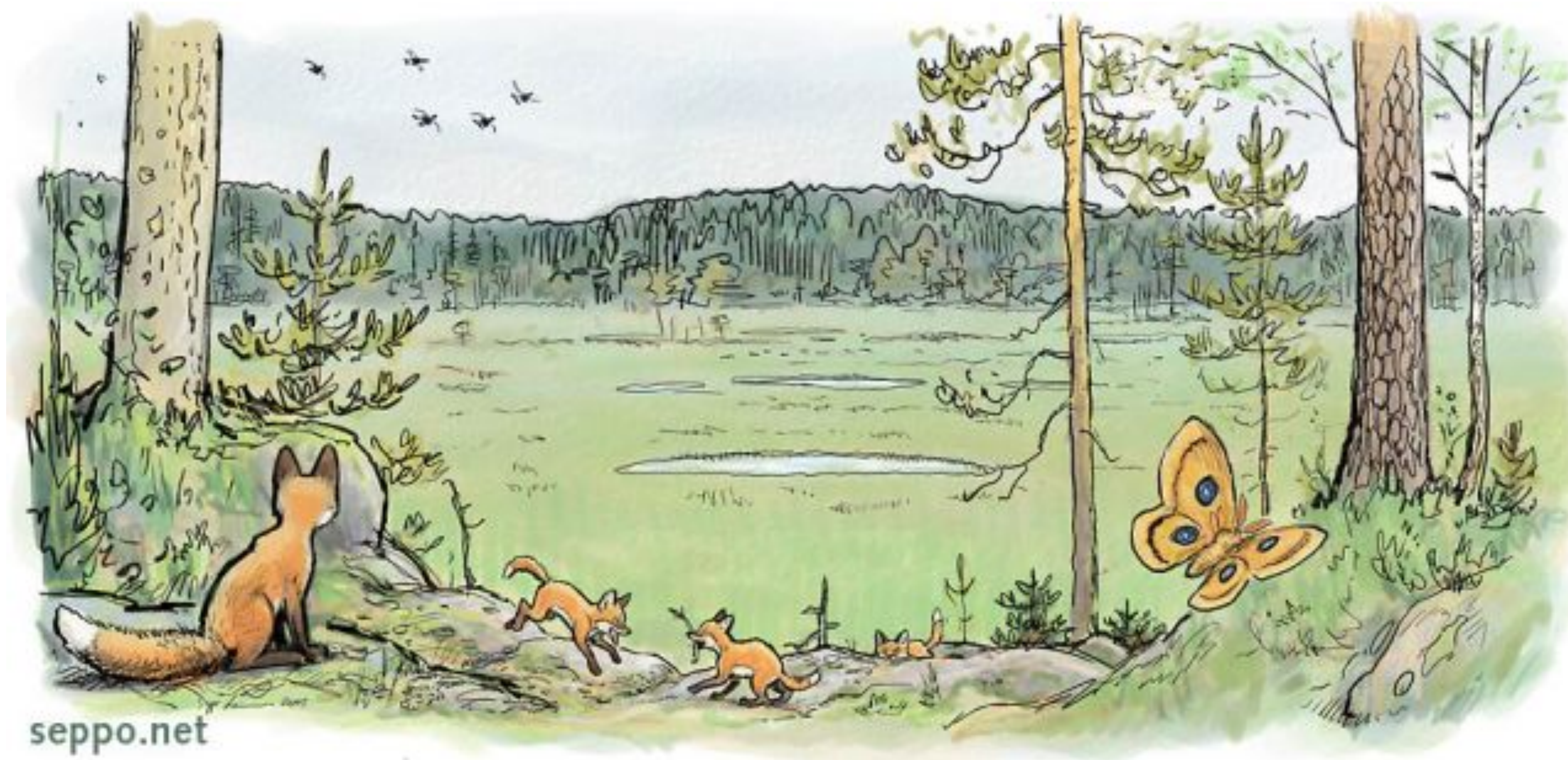
Now you're on the level:

**Fueling up**



## 4.

Terhi's incubation task begins several hours before the last egg is laid. She takes incubation breaks, especially at dawn and dusk. However, if it's raining continuously, Terhi prefers to stay in the nest all day. She takes breaks about four times a day, each lasting 20 minutes. During the breaks, Terhi goes to eat and relieve herself. Since the breaks are usually taken during twilight, Terhi doesn't cover the eggs, but there is always the risk of a nest thief, like a fox, visiting and stealing the eggs from the nest.



Now you're on the level:

**Incubation**



**Play suggestion:** Shadow Hunter. Who can keep their shadow safe the longest? The player whose shadow the hunter manages to leap onto becomes the next shadow hunter.

## 5.

Incubation has lasted for 20 days, and Terhi can't wait for the chicks to hatch!

About three days before the chicks hatch, Terhi begins to hear sounds from inside the eggs. At the tip of each chick's upper beak, there is a small tool called an **egg tooth**, which it uses to tap holes into the widest part of the eggshell and push its way out.

All of Terhi's chicks hatch within a few hours, and the last to hatch is the smallest chick, which Terhi names Tarmo. One of the eggs is a "water egg," which didn't contain a chick.

The fluffy chicks are allowed to dry in the warmth of the nest, taking their time to recover from the effort of hatching. When the chicks hatch, they have a small reserve of food, called the **yolk sac**, so they don't need to search for food immediately.



**Play suggestion:** The forest is loaded. The traditional "The ship is loaded" game can be adapted to a forest environment. The game can be made more challenging by requiring the items to start with a specific letter, for example: birch, cranberry, heather, bear, stone, spruce, adder, fly.



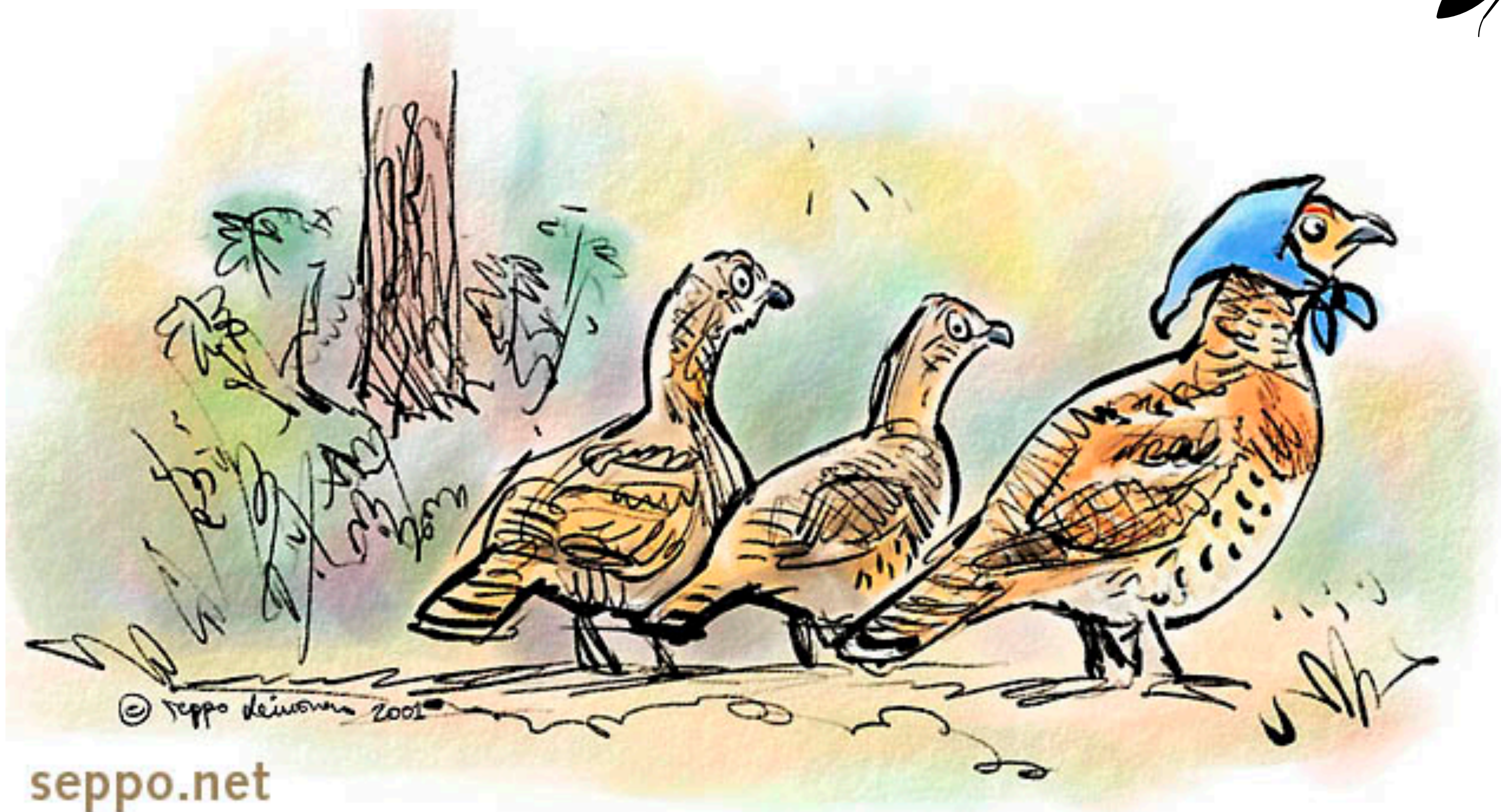
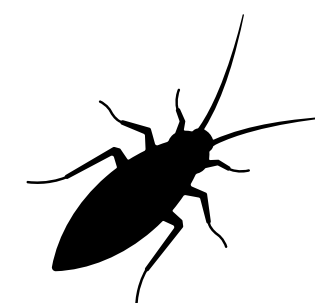
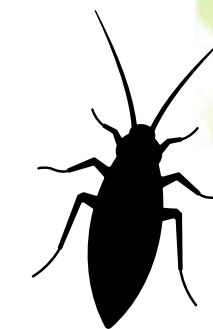
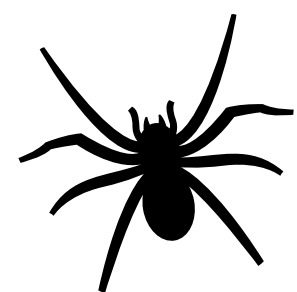
Now you're on the level:

**Hatching**

## 6.

Capercaillies, which belong to the grouse family, are precocial species, meaning their chicks hatch fully covered in down, with their eyes open, developed legs, and the ability to feed themselves. The chicks learn to fly at just two to three weeks of age. At one week old, little Tarmo the grouse can already fly a few meters. **How far can you jump?**

Mother Terhi leads her chicks to good feeding spots and protects them from danger. The chicks eat a lot of protein to grow, and the mother doesn't need to teach them what to eat. Tarmo's favorite treats are spiders, grasshoppers, ants, flies, and mosquitoes. **Can you find these along the path?** Once the chicks have grown enough to survive on their own, they gradually begin to become more independent.



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Now you're on the level:

**Chick**



7.



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Autumn is a time of great change in Tarmo's life. Right after separating from his mother and siblings, he began searching for a suitable place to live. Tarmo saw older male capercaillies on the autumn lek and decided to join them. On the lek, the dominant males fight for dominance, dance, and sing with their distinctive calls. This time, Tarmo is still in the audience, but he wants to practice for the next time so he can find a beautiful capercaillie female in a couple of years.

On the field ahead of you, you can see lekking displays around the time of May Day and in mid-September.

How would you dance if you were a grouse?



Now you're on the level:

Lek



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## 8.

In the autumn, Tarmo decides to start eating for the winter and tries mushrooms and aspen leaves for the first time in his life. Since Tarmo eats plant-based food, he also needs to consume small stones that go into his gizzard, also known as the "**stone crop**". The stones grind the plant material into a fine texture, effectively acting as Tarmo's "artificial teeth." Tarmo spends the winter in a winter flock with other grouse, eating plenty of branch food.

Weather and snow conditions permitting, Tarmo has learned to protect himself from the winter cold by using snow burrows. Snow is warmer in cold weather than the air, and it prevents the heat radiating from the grouse's body from escaping, while also shielding from the wind. No other bird group has adapted to snow as well as grouse.

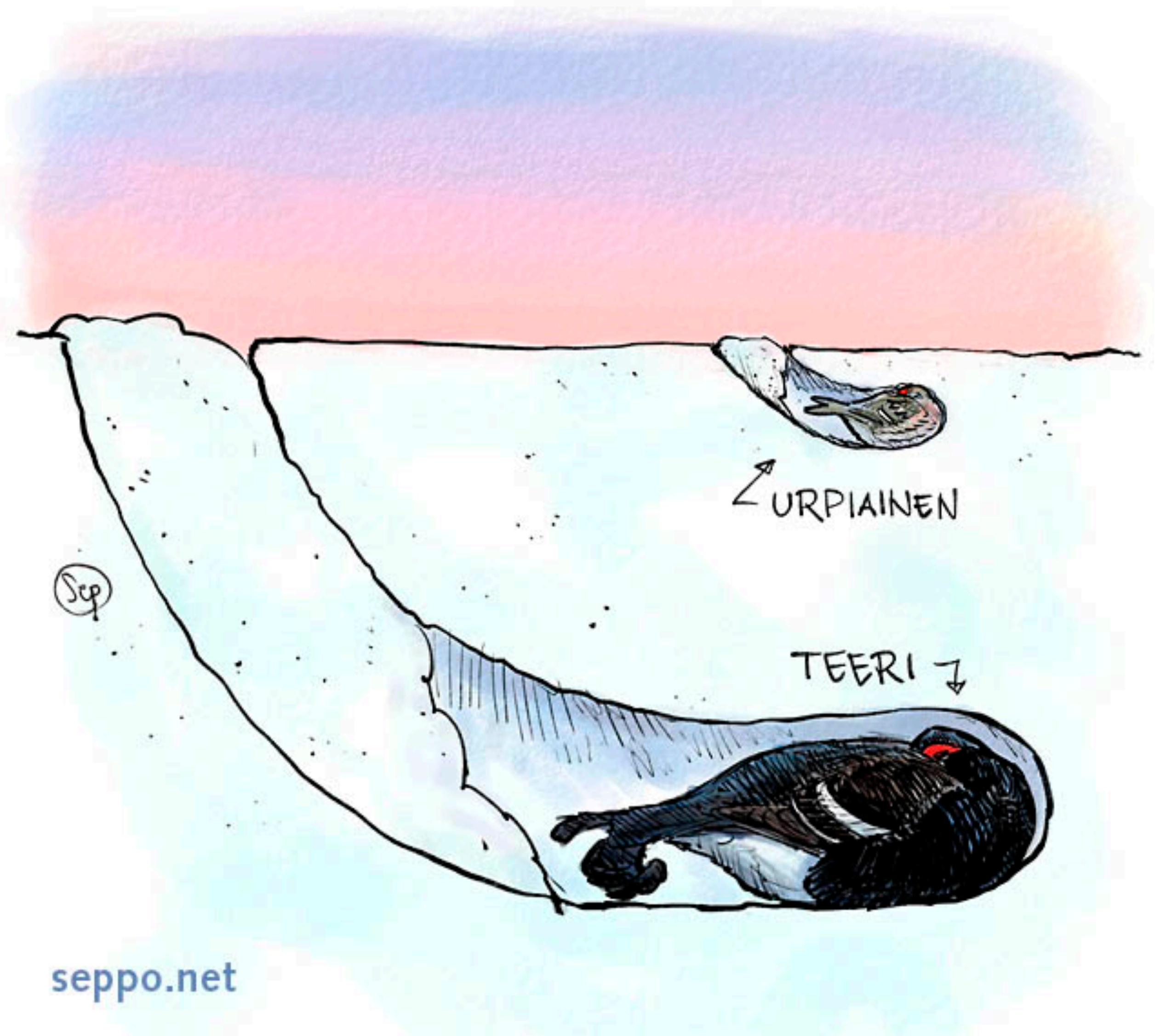
**Play suggestion:** Shape a grouse out of snow or make yourself a grouse snow burrow, like in the picture.

**Geocache:** Tarmo dropped a geocache nearby during his morning flight, can you find it? You can use a geocaching mobile app to help you.

**Hooray!**  
You made it all the way to the final level! What name would you give this level?



Tarmo reflects on the past year with gratitude, closes his eyes, and begins to sleep. **Thank you** for being with Tarmo during his first year of life.



Sources for all of the signs:

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Suomen luonto - lasten suuri luontokirja, V. Ovaskainen. 2016