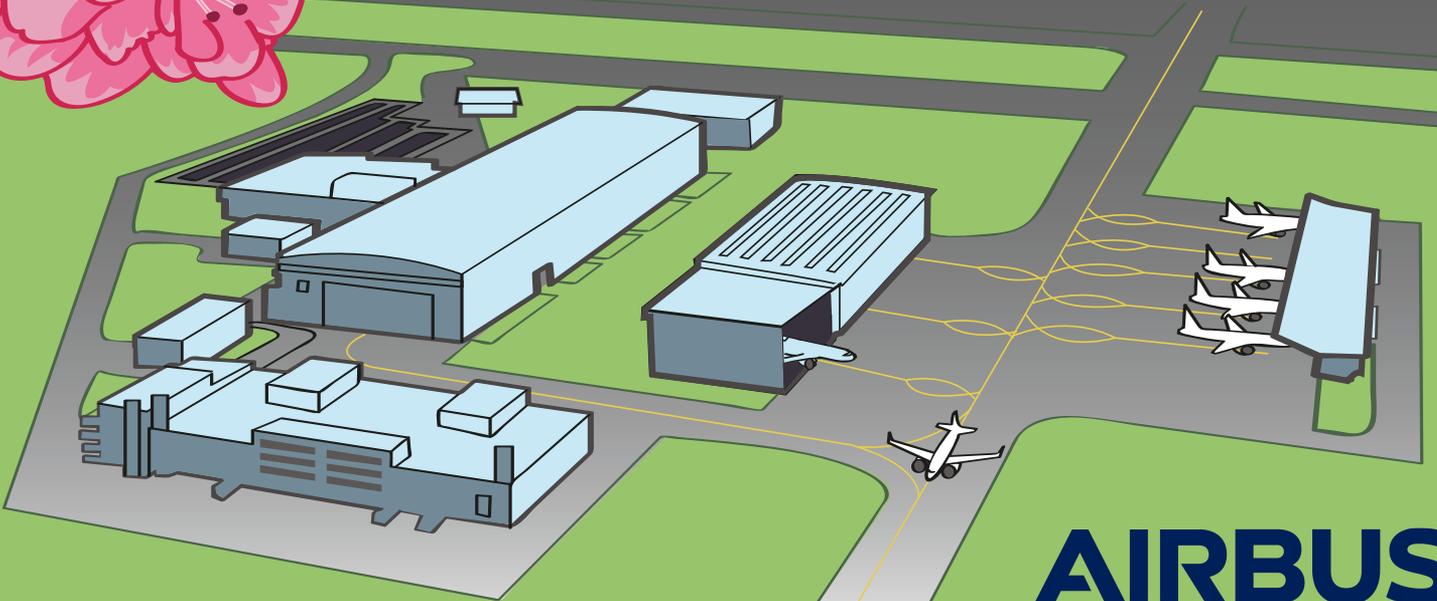


READY FOR TAKEOFF



AIRBUS

Story by Brenda C. Leverett

Illustration by Bronwyn Coffeen

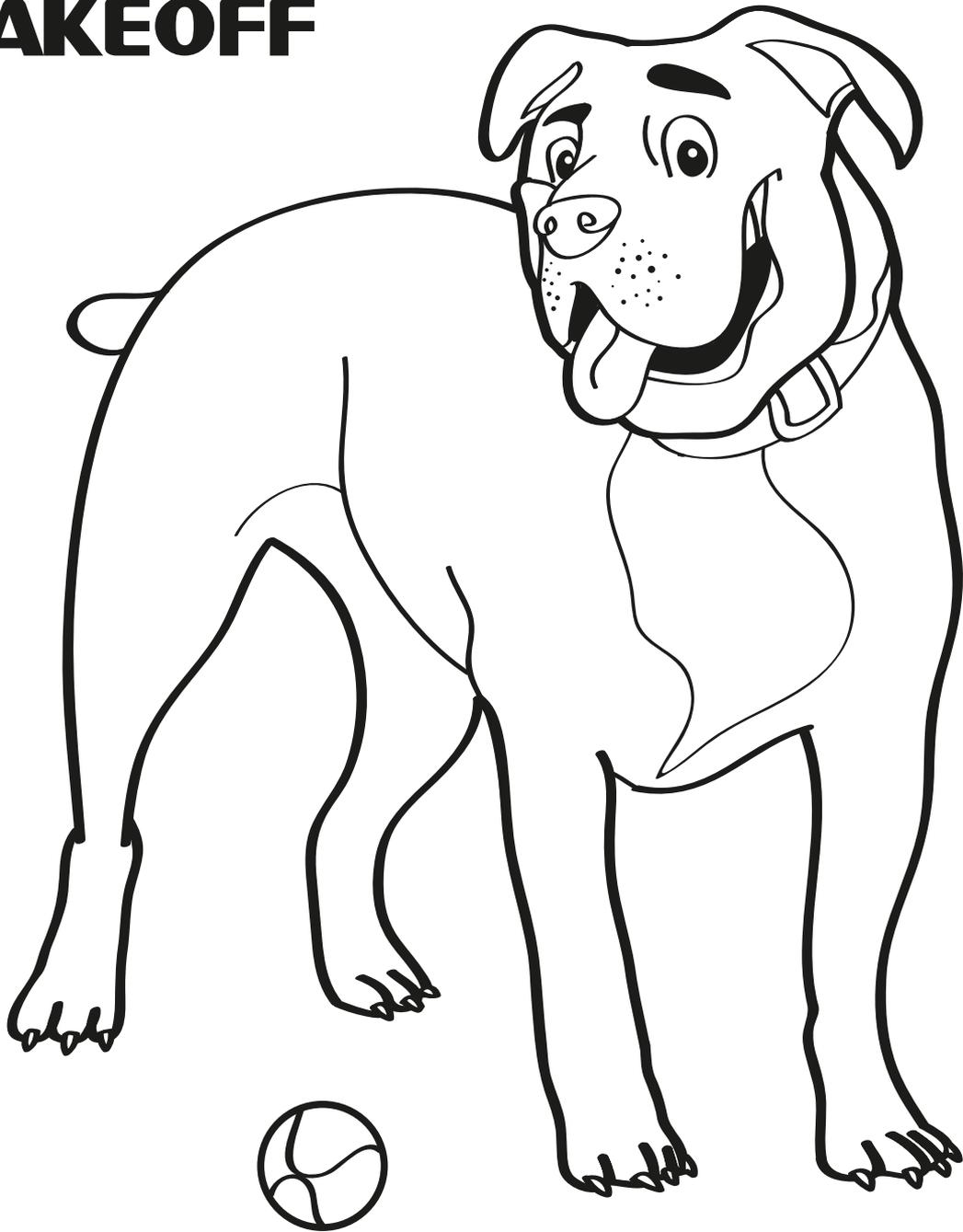


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READY FOR TAKEOFF



Hi everyone! My name is Rivet. I live in Mobile, Alabama with my family.

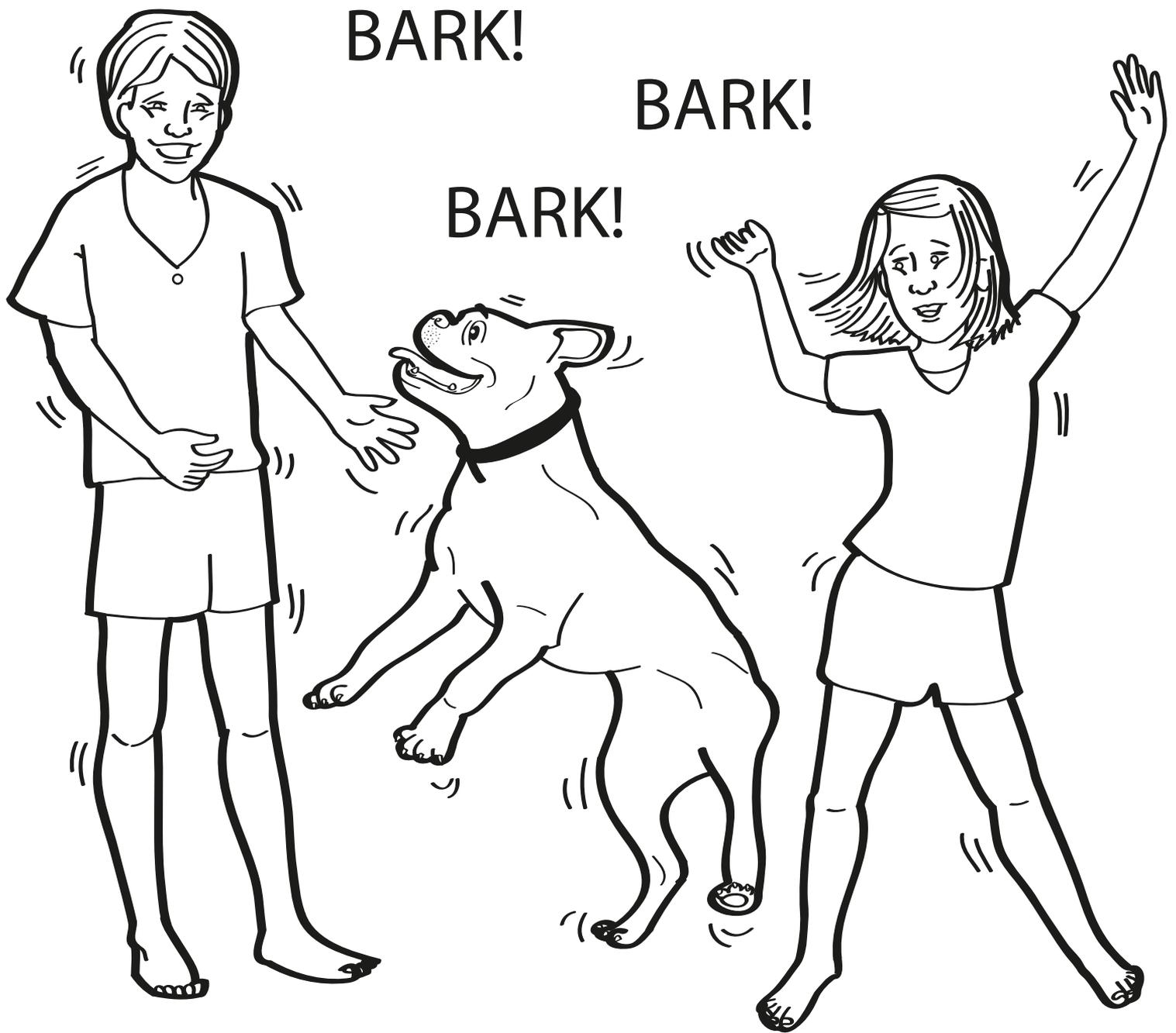
I have two humans, Jack (age 9) and Emily (age 6), and a mom and dad. Now, Mom and Dad are not really my parents. I am a dog—a 100%, pure-bred, Old English Bulldog. Jack and Emily feed me and play with me. And every day, I take them for a long walk around the neighborhood.



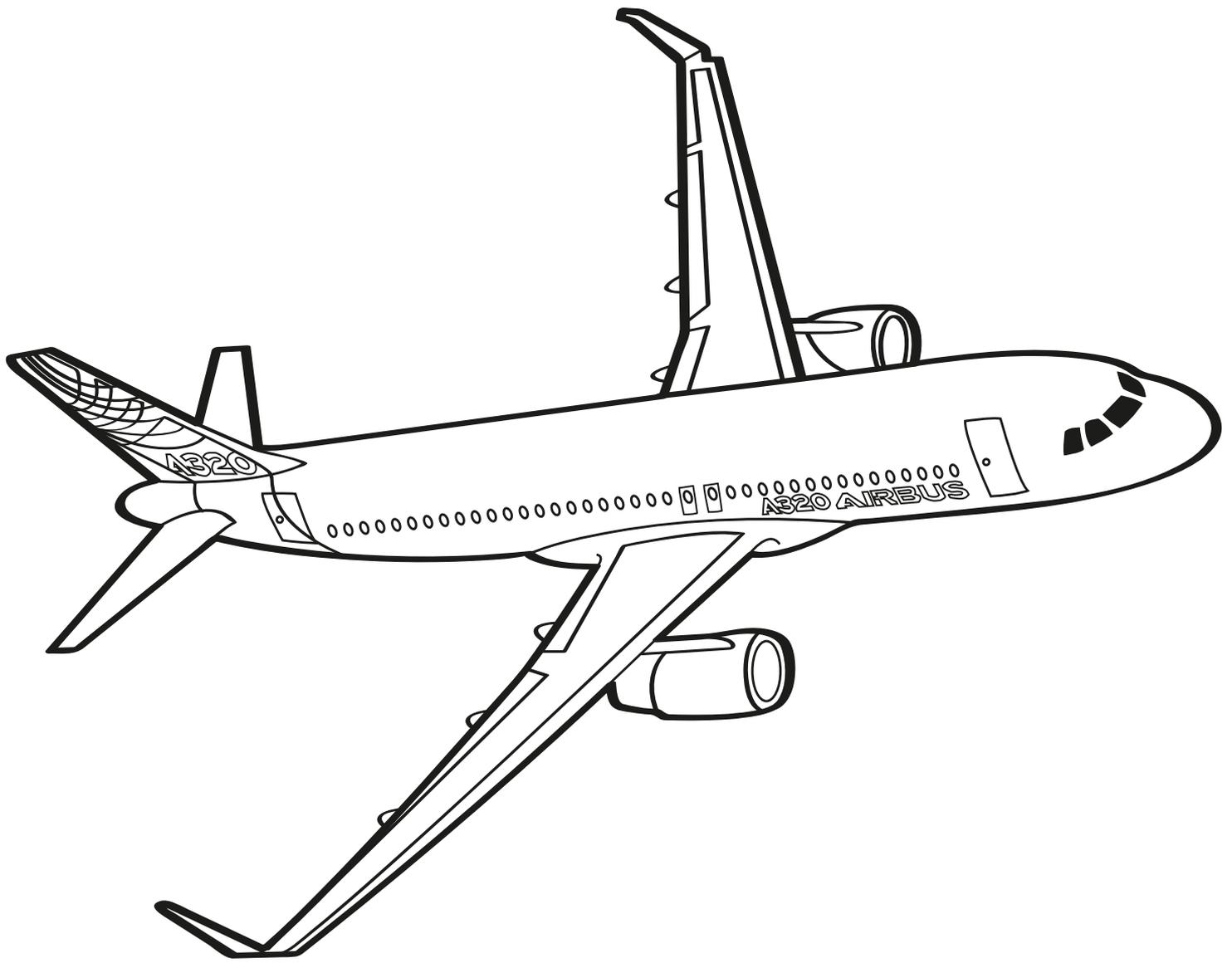
Jack and Emily call their parents Mom and Dad, and so do I. Not that I talk like humans. Of course I don't. I'm a *real* dog. But my humans and I understand each other just the same.



One day, Jack and Emily came outside, laughing and jumping around with excitement. “It’s coming! It’s coming!” They shouted happily.

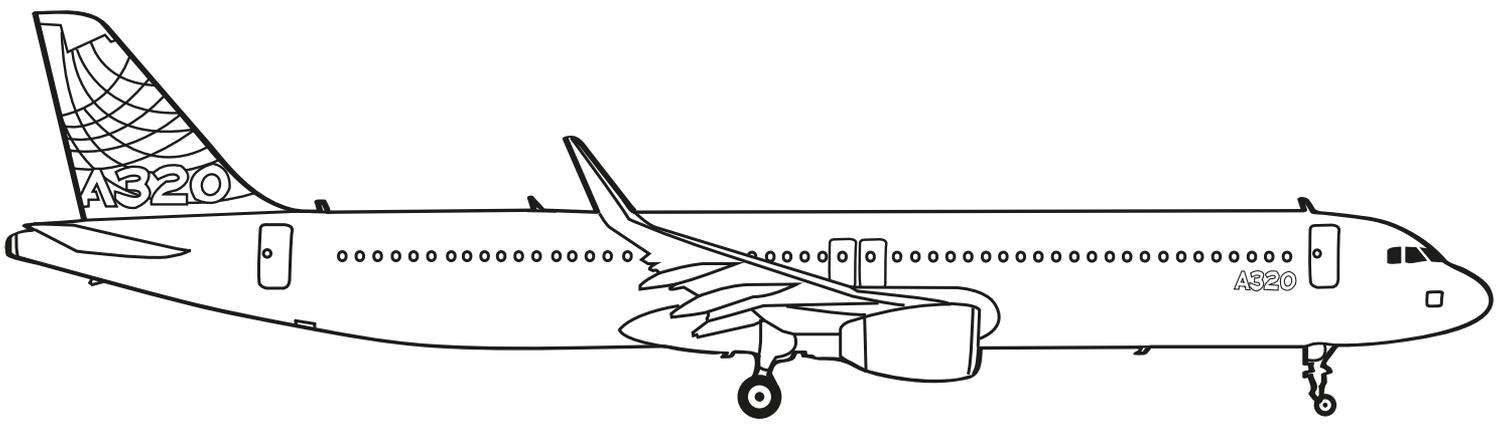


Naturally, I began jumping with them and barking my happy bark because I always do whatever they do. I did want to know what was coming, so I finally sat down and looked at them with my head tilted to the side.

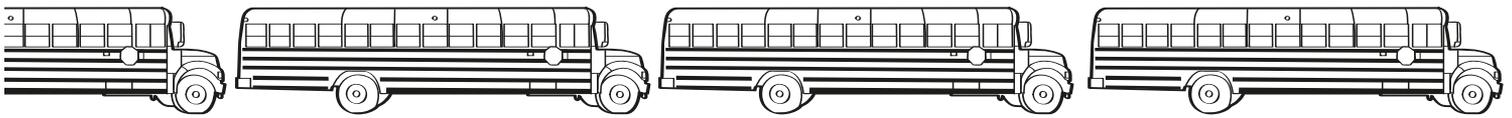


“The A320!” They both shouted. “It’s coming to Mobile.”

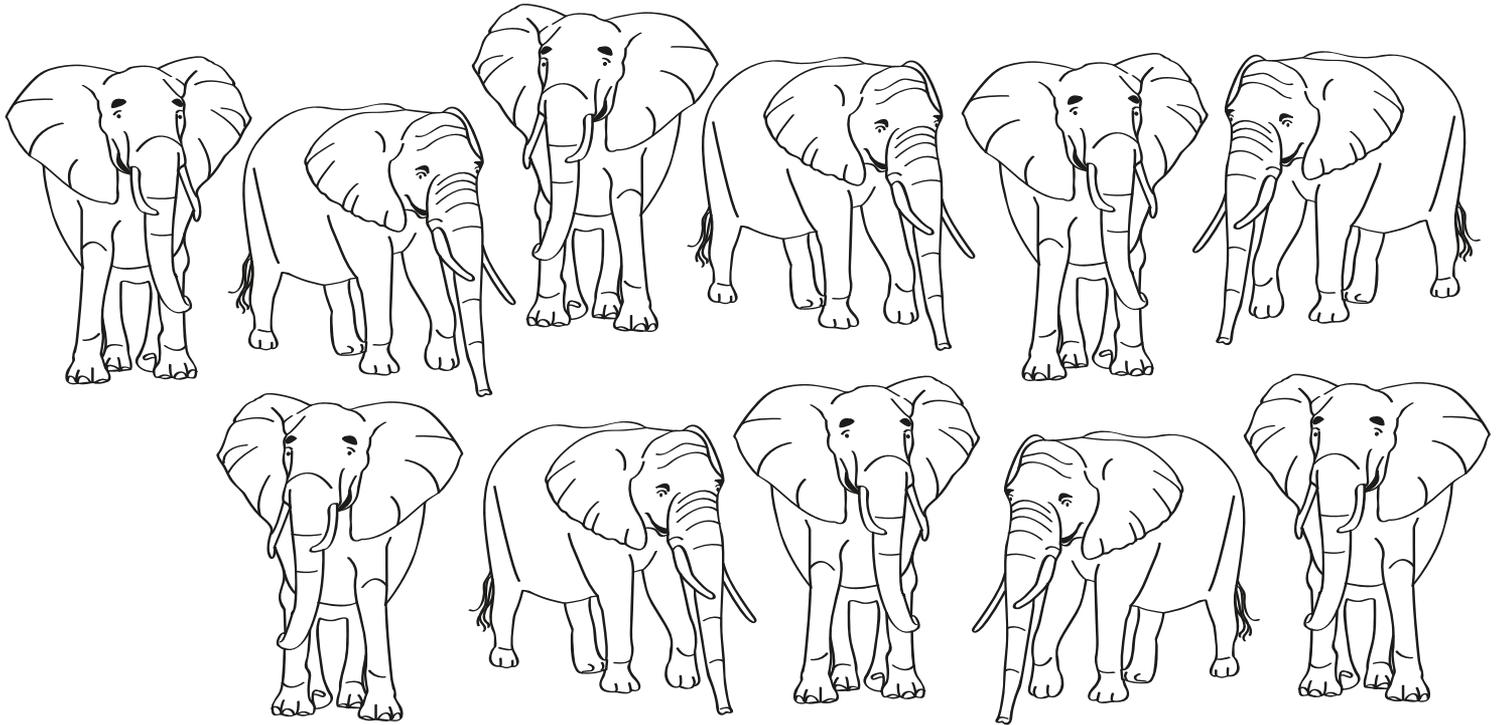
“It’s an airplane that flies thousands of people every day all over the world – and we’re going to make them here!”



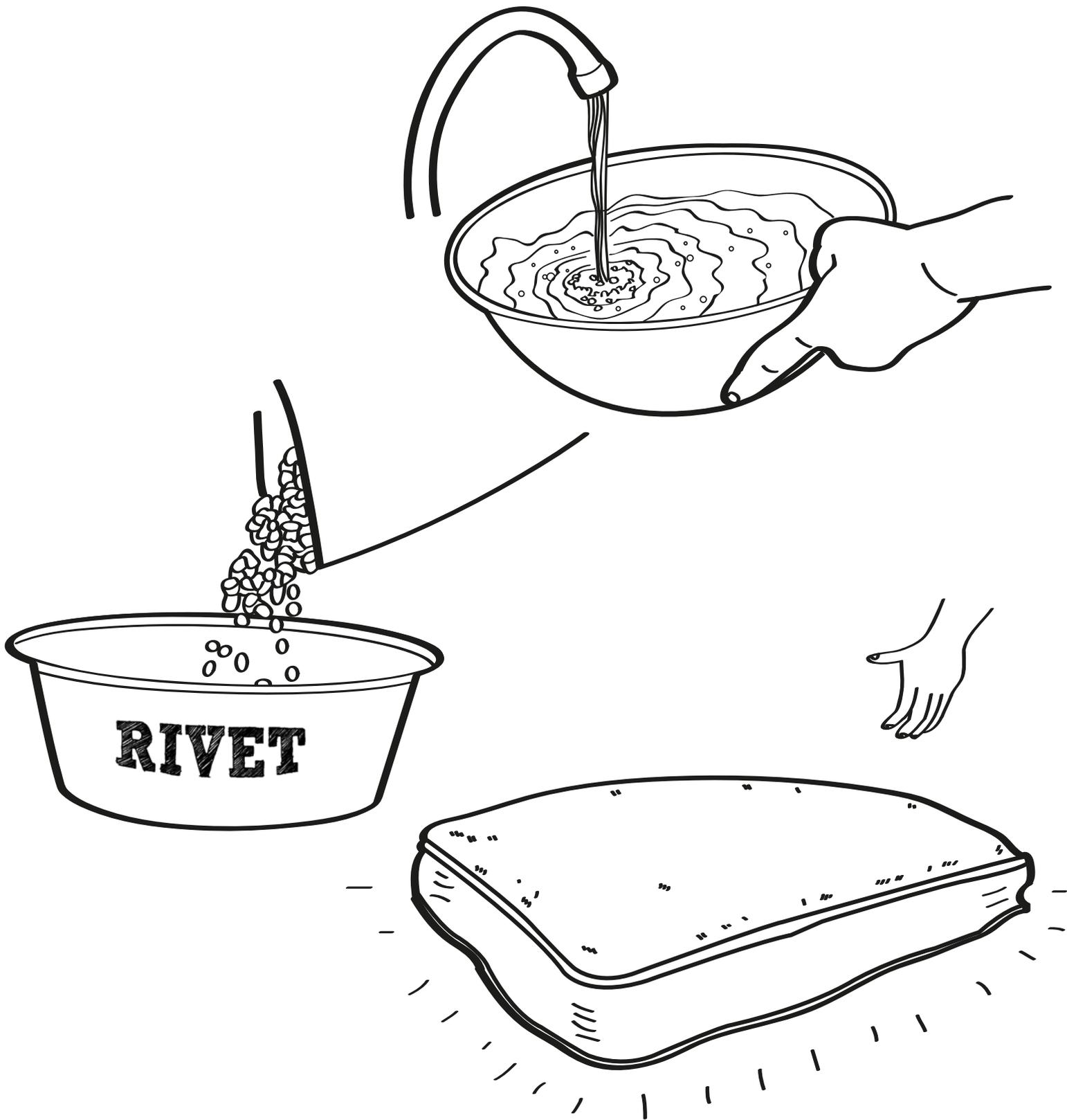
The Airbus A320 is over 120 feet long and over 38 feet high.
That is just as long as 3 1/2 school buses lined up.



And what do an A320 and 11 elephants have in common?
They weigh the same – 170,000 pounds!

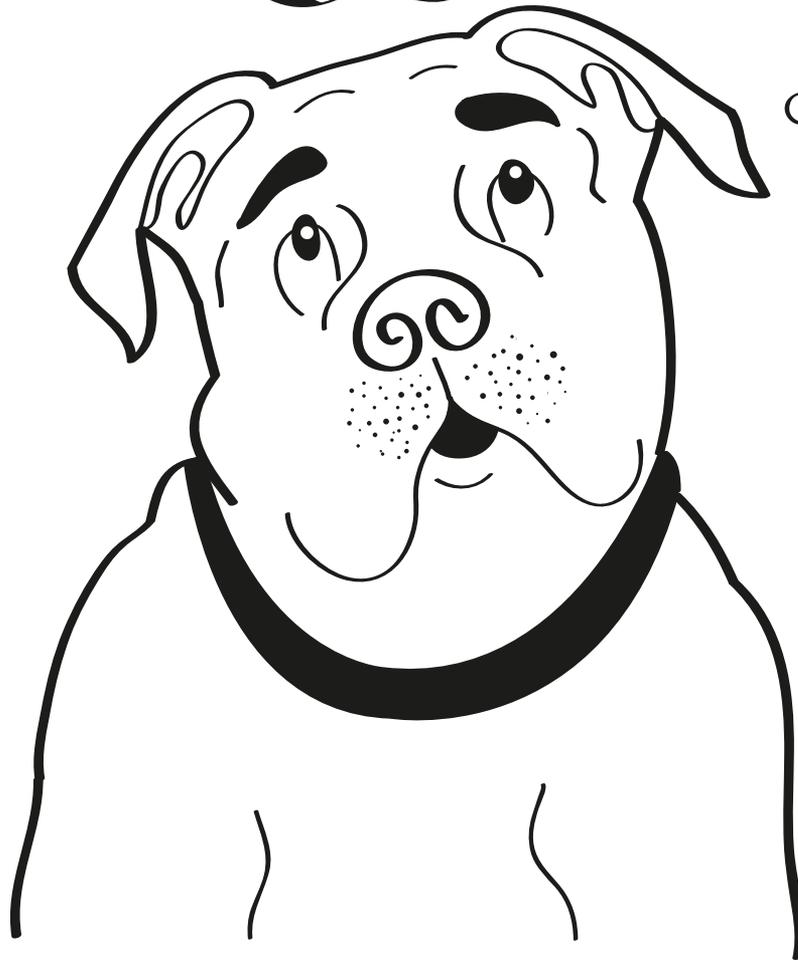
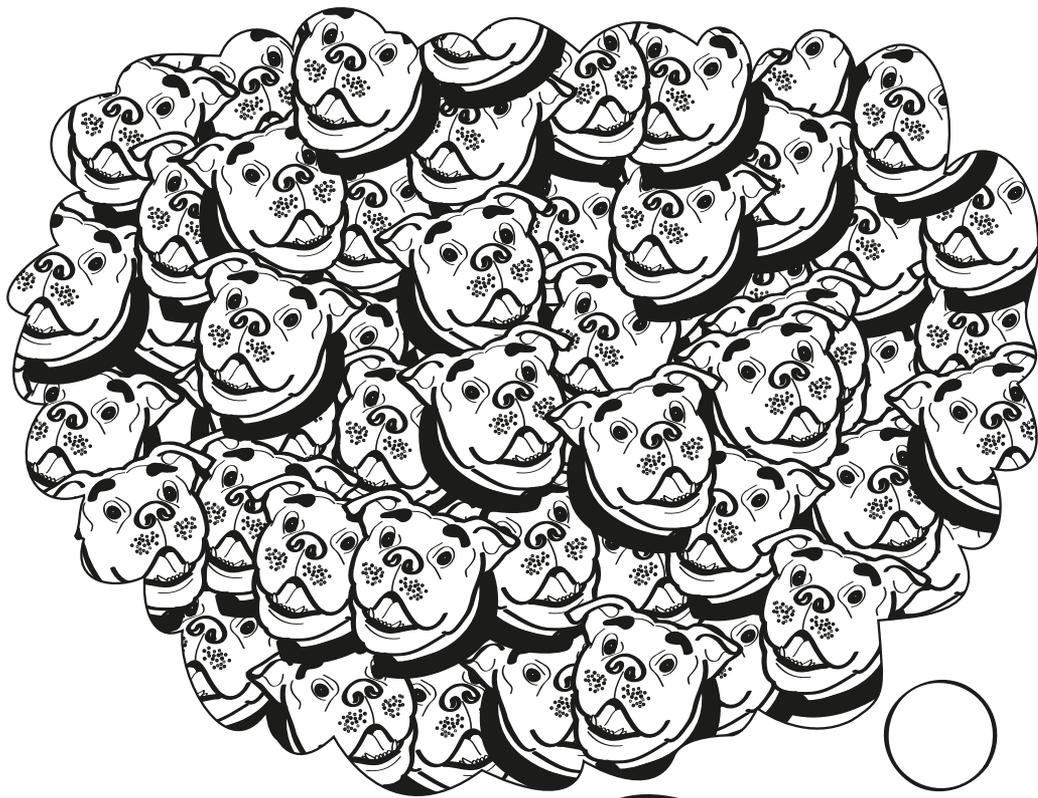


“When it gets here, it will mean many jobs for many people,” Jack explained.
“And it’s big,” Emily added. “Mom showed me a picture.”
“And you know what else Mom said?” Jack asked. “It has about one million rivets.”
“Rivets?” I gave a sharp bark. “What do you mean?”

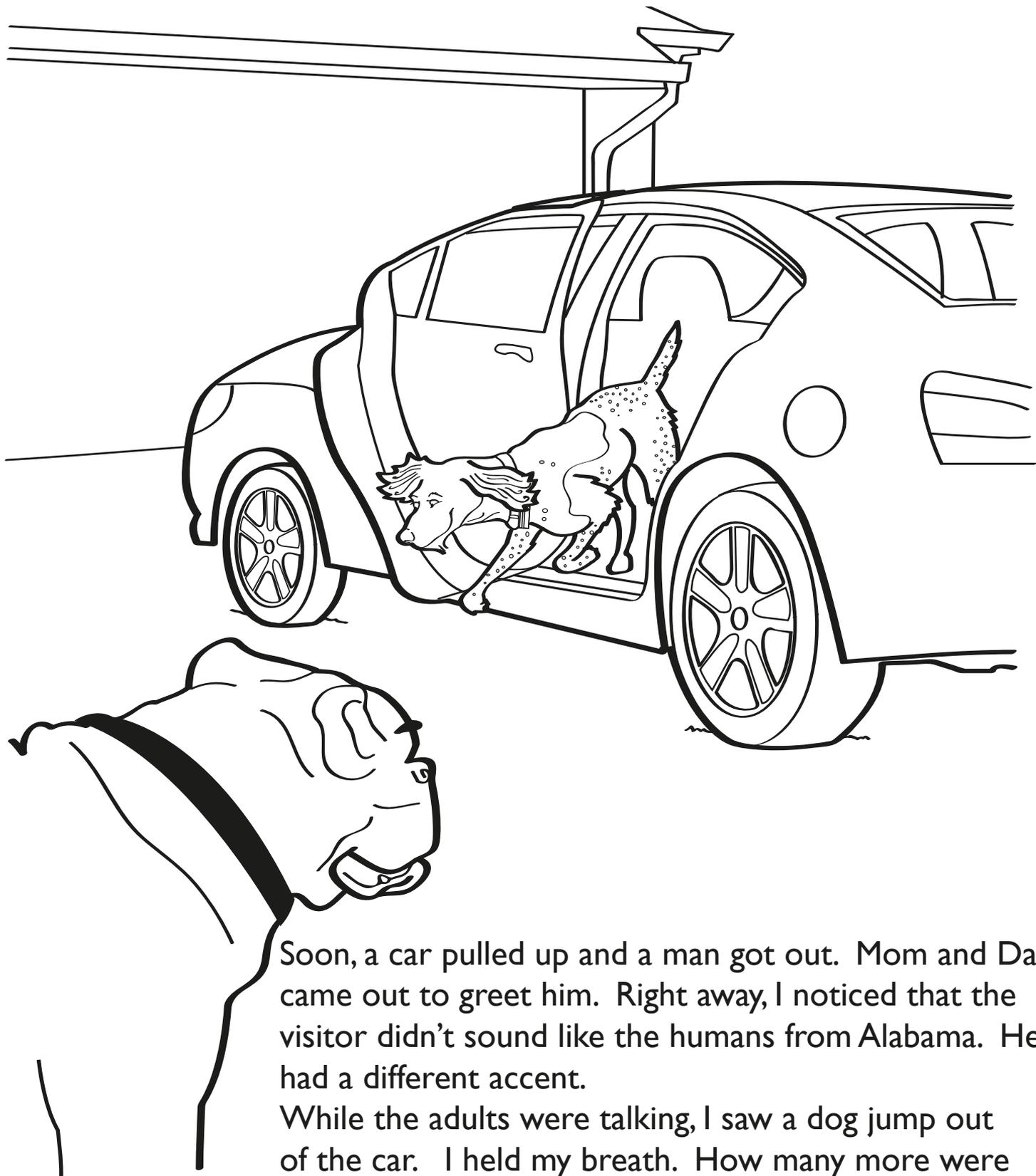


Before they could tell me, Dad called from the house. “Children, hurry up and get everything ready,” he said. “Our guests will be here soon. And don’t forget to put out extra dog food and water bowls.”

I sat and watched while Jack ran to get my food dish and refill my water bowl, and Emily brought an extra bed.



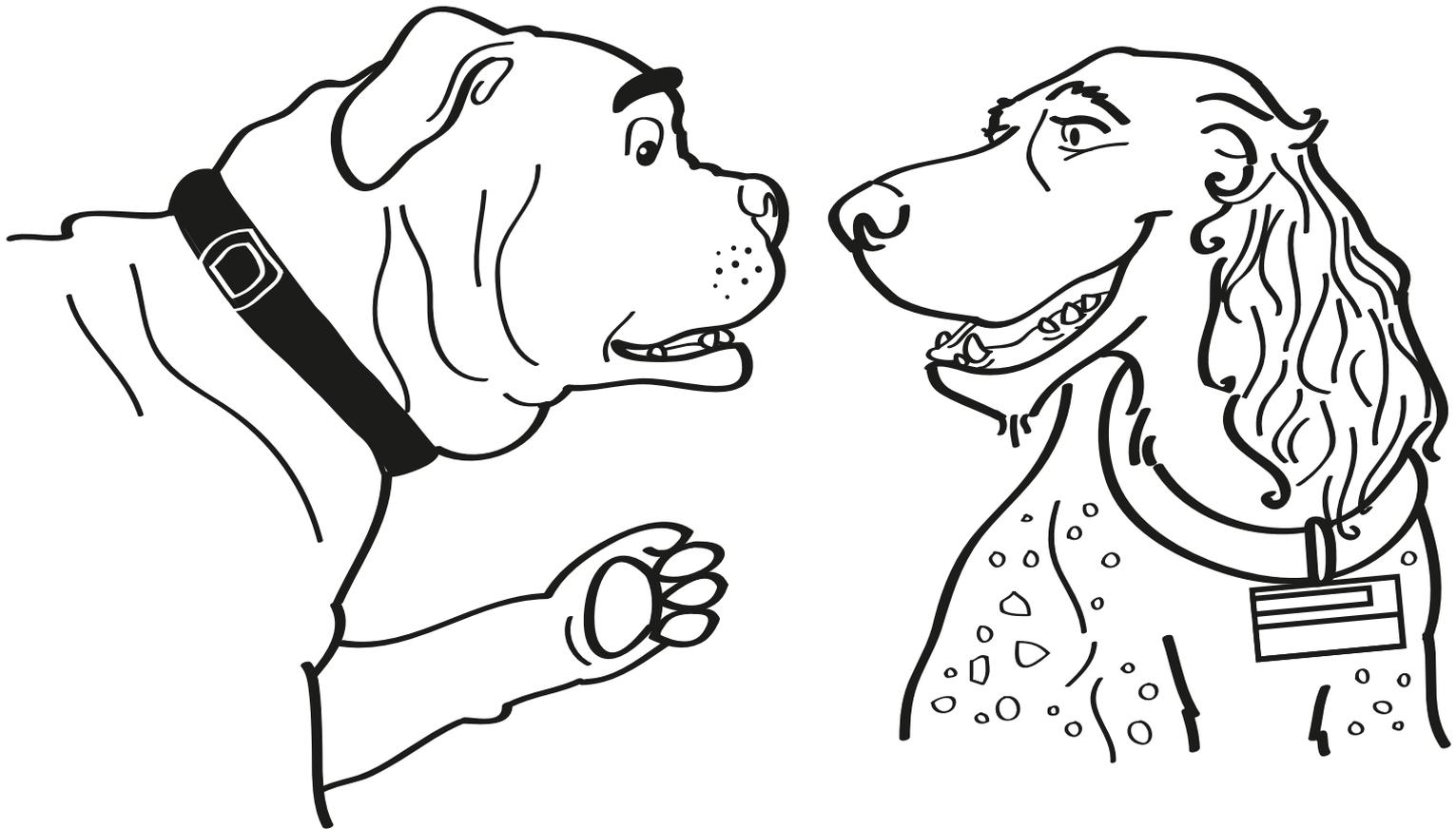
A million Rivets, I thought. There aren't even a million people in all of Mobile. Where will they put all of them? There will be dogs named Rivet all over the place.



Soon, a car pulled up and a man got out. Mom and Dad came out to greet him. Right away, I noticed that the visitor didn't sound like the humans from Alabama. He had a different accent.

While the adults were talking, I saw a dog jump out of the car. I held my breath. How many more were inside?

When no other dogs followed him, I began to relax. It was just one and it didn't look anything like me. Maybe Rivets from other countries looked different. I decided not to be too relieved. Maybe he was just the first one.



The new dog noticed me and walked over. I asked him, “Are you a Rivet?” “A rivet? Of course not,” he said. “I am a Long-Haired German Pointer. A rivet is a piece of metal that holds other pieces of metal together. I know because we use over a million rivets in our airplane, the Airbus A320. What did you think a rivet was?”

“Well, I thought—never mind,” I said quickly. I was just happy that my humans were not going to replace me. “What’s your name?” I asked. “I’m Clint,” he said. “I’m from Hamburg, Germany, where I am the official ‘Airbus Canine Ambassador’ for Germany.”



I knew there were seeing-eye dogs, and guard dogs and police dogs, but I didn't know dogs had other jobs. "What do you do?" I asked.

"You can come with me to the new Mobile facility and I'll show you," said Clint.



Bright and early the next morning, Rivet and Clint, along with their humans, drove along Airbus Way to the new site.

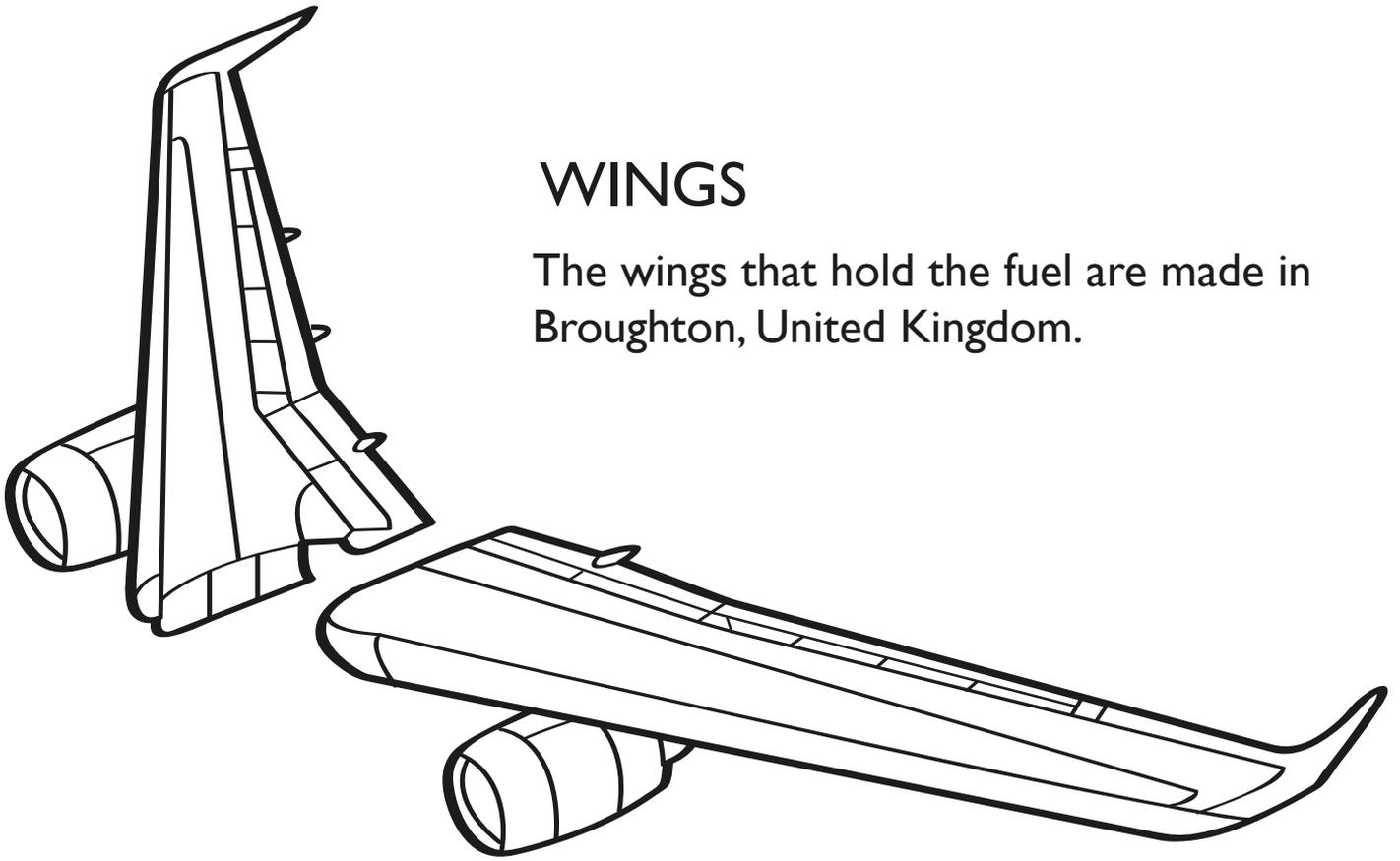
As we walked through the Main Gate, the security officer stopped and checked my mom's and Mr. Stephan's badges. He saw Clint's badge and waved us in too, "Welcome to Airbus!" he said.



“Is this where they will build the Airbus A320?” I asked.

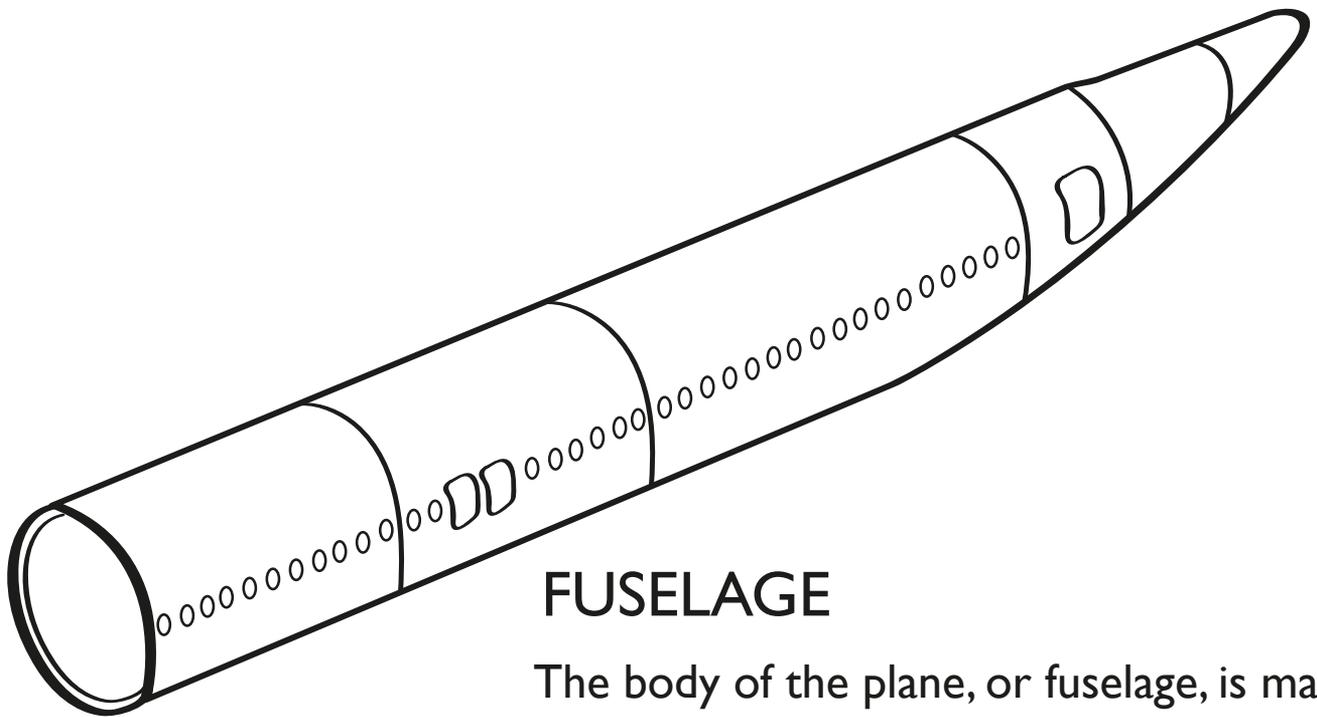
“Yes, this is where the most important part of building the airplane takes place,” Clint said.

“The parts of the Airbus A320 are very specialized. They are made in different places all over the world.”



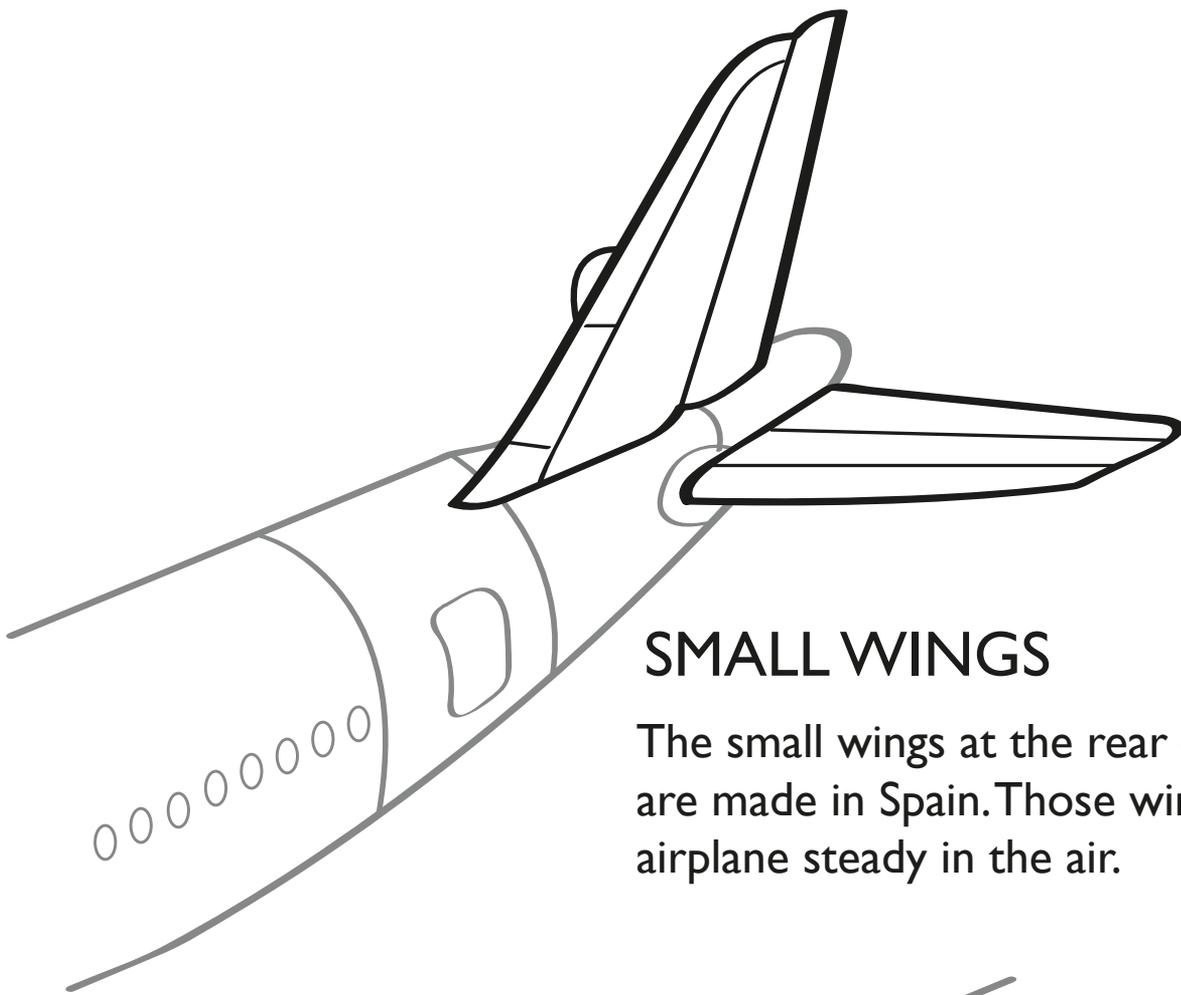
WINGS

The wings that hold the fuel are made in Broughton, United Kingdom.



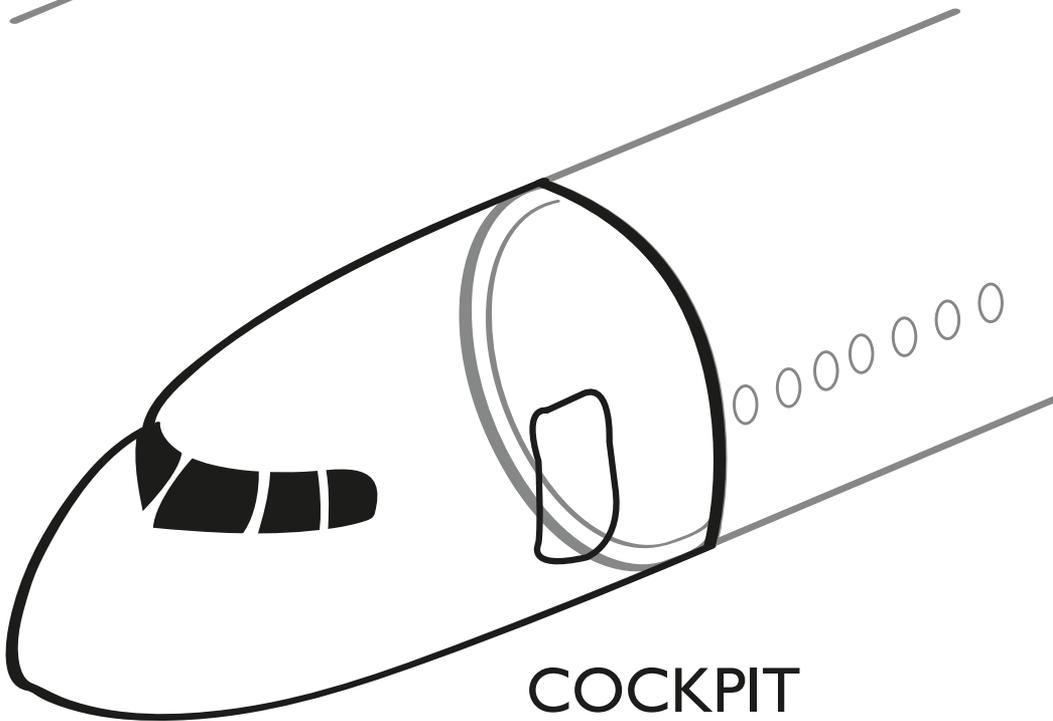
FUSELAGE

The body of the plane, or fuselage, is made in Hamburg, Germany.



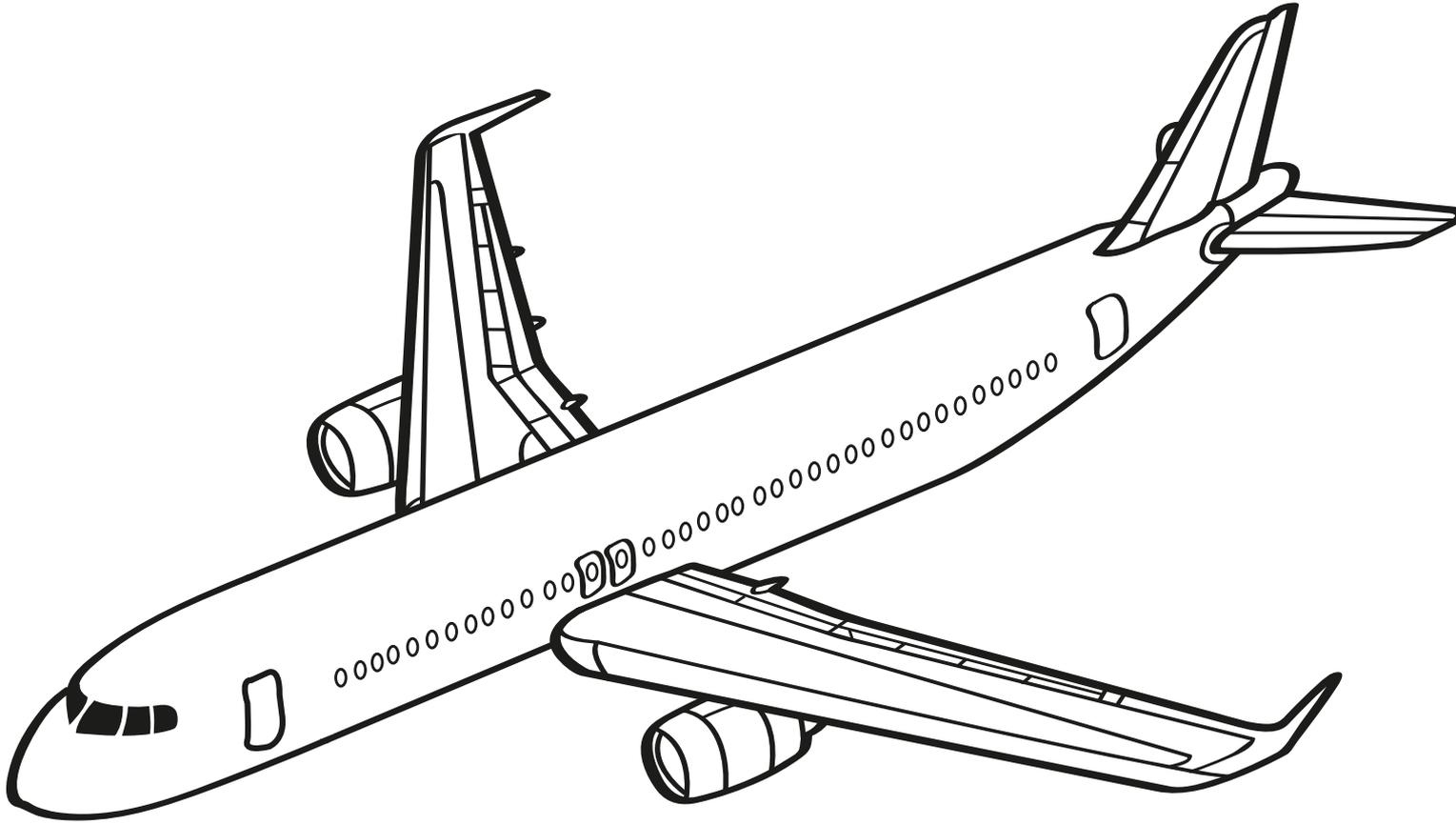
SMALL WINGS

The small wings at the rear of the plane are made in Spain. Those wings keep the airplane steady in the air.



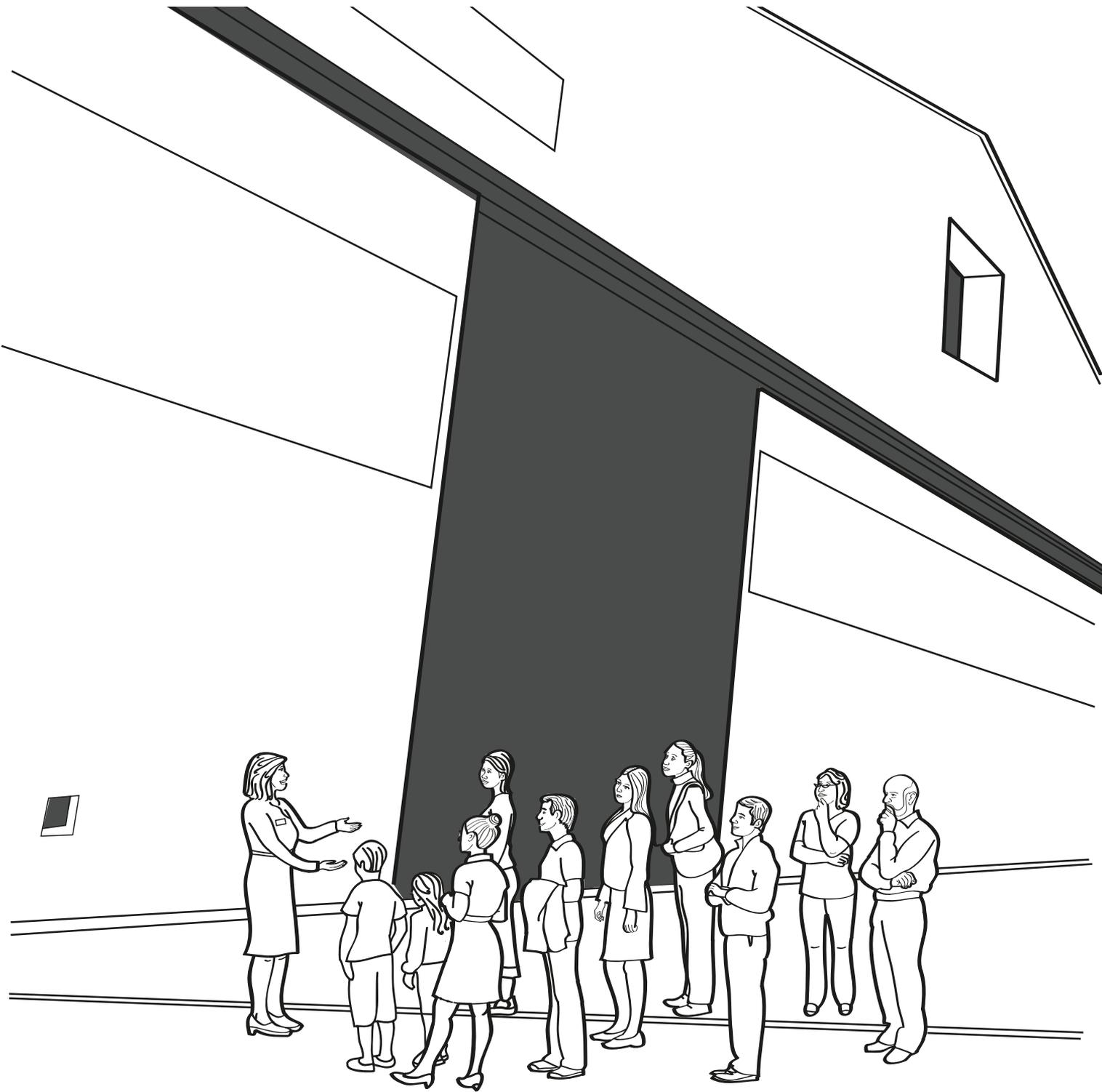
COCKPIT

The cockpit, where the pilots sit and fly the plane, is made in Méaulte, France and then attached to the front part of the fuselage in Saint-Nazaire, another town in France.



When all of the different parts arrive in Mobile, they will be put together—
“With rivets!” I said.

“Yes,” Clint agreed. “They will use many, many rivets.”



As we walked up to a HUGE gray building, there was a group of humans standing together listening to a lady.

“What are they doing?” I asked.

Clint looked at the group of humans and then back at me and said, “They are on a tour of the Airbus facility, just like you are. I am your tour guide and she is their guide. Why don’t we follow the group and you can learn even more about Airbus and the A320 airplane?”



The human tour guide, Ms. Lynn, welcomed everyone to the Airbus Facility in Mobile. “We are so excited everyone could join us for the tour today! Welcome to Airbus!” she said. We walked through ALL of the buildings. They were sooooo BIG!

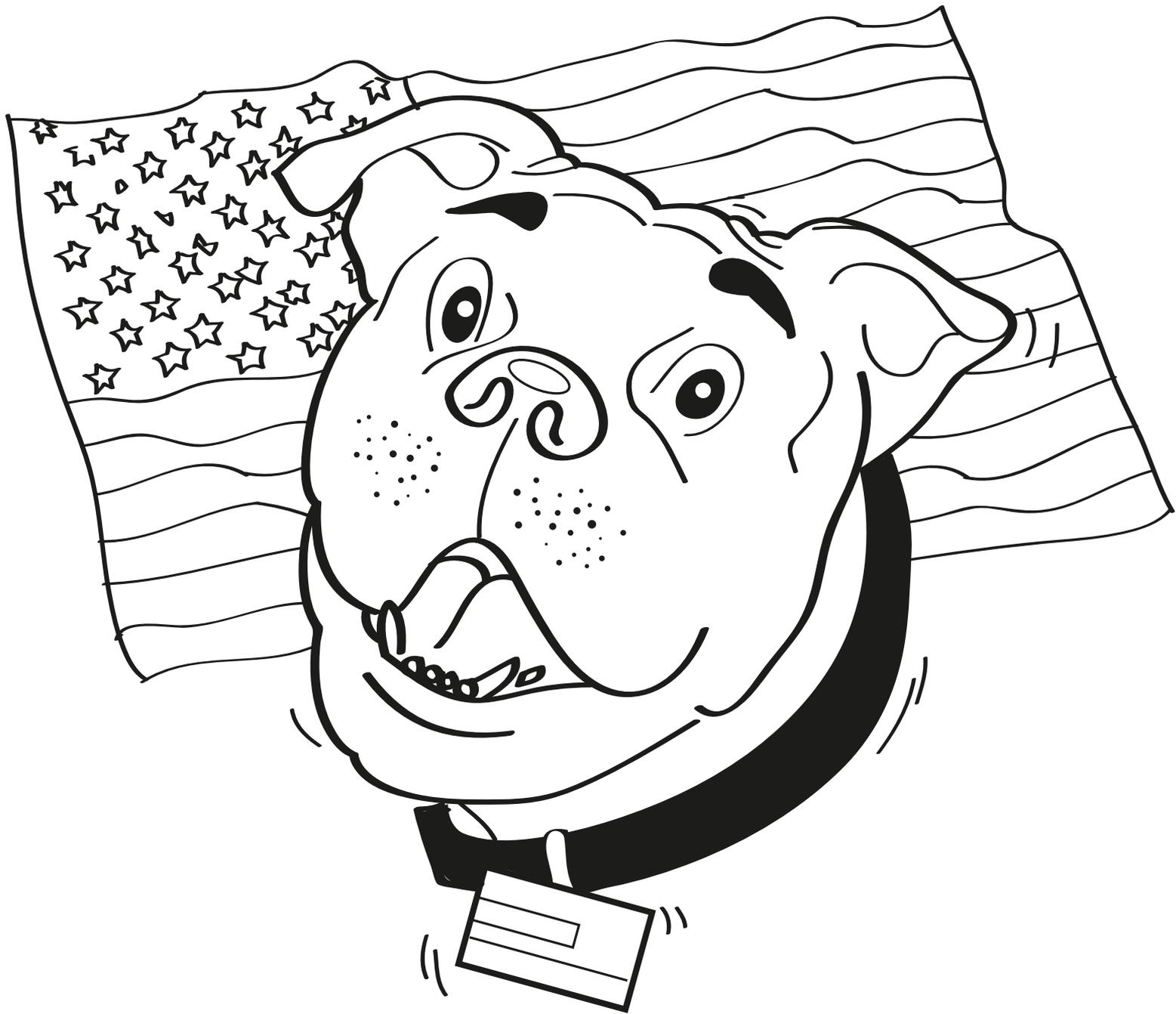


We saw human workers everywhere and everyone was so friendly. The most fun was seeing the A320 and its million rivets! I learned so much.

While we were eating our lunch, I looked at Clint, somewhat confused. “But what do you do?” I asked. “I didn’t see any other dogs on the tour today.”



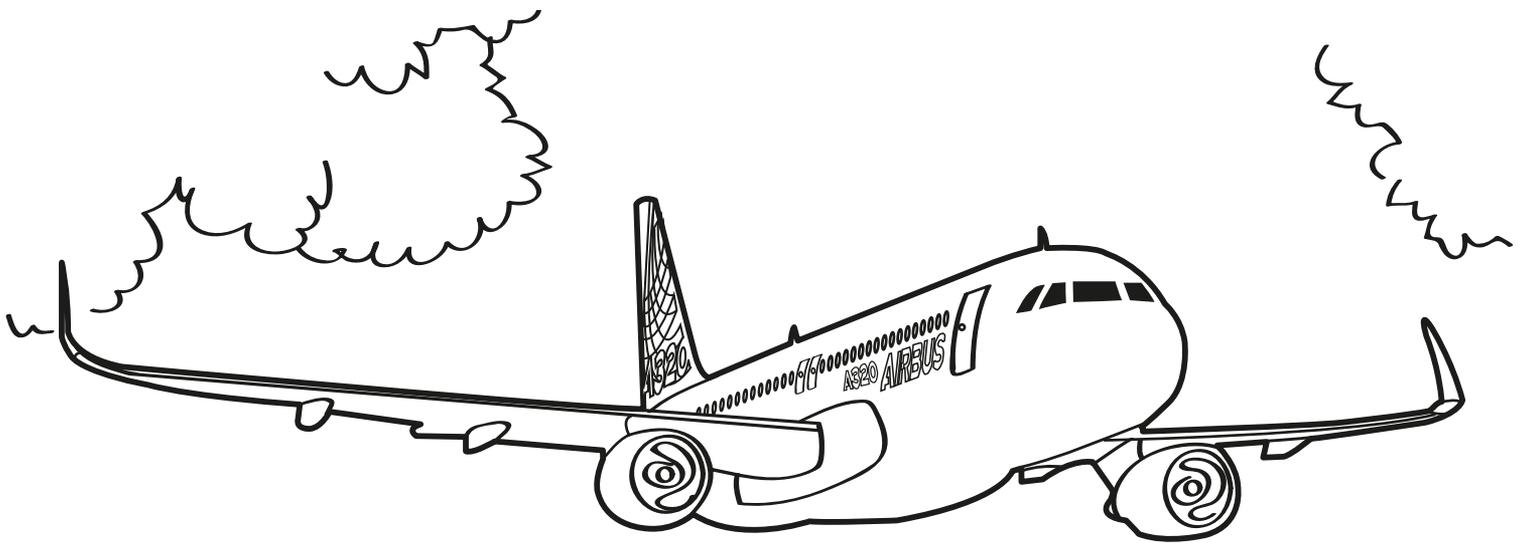
“Well, you see, I am the canine ambassador for the Hamburg facility in Germany. My dad works for Airbus and sometimes I go with him when he visits other Airbus facilities around the world. Just like today, I tell my canine friends about our company and what great airplanes we build!”



“Could I be the ambassador for Mobile?” I asked.

“Of course you can, Rivet,” said Clint. “Hopefully one day you will visit me in Germany and tell my friends about Mobile and Airbus in the United States.”

I walked through the Main Gate with my head held high – I was now the official Airbus Canine Ambassador of Mobile, Alabama.



I learned so many things about Airbus, the new Mobile Facility and the A320. Here are some of the fun facts:

- On July 2, 2012, Airbus announced that it would assemble A320 airplanes in Mobile, Alabama. This will be the first U.S. Airbus Assembly plant.
- A320s, A319s and A321s will be assembled in Mobile.
- The airplane parts (nose, fuselage, tail, wings) will come from Europe and arrive in Mobile via a big ship. These parts will be transported to the Airbus site by vehicles built especially for our parts.
- Hangar 9 is the building where the airplane parts are put together – with RIVETS. It is as long as almost three football fields!
- The A320 is one of the most popular airplanes ever! A320s are more spacious, so humans are more comfortable on flights and the airplane can hold more luggage when families go on vacation.
- Ms. Lynn said that Airbus was a “green” company. This was confusing to me. Clint explained that this meant Airbus is environmentally conscious. Airbus engineers continuously work to improve the airplanes to be more friendly to the environment – the A320 uses 15% less fuel today than it did 20 years ago because of design improvements in the wings and engines.
- The airplane (A320) is over 120 feet long and is over 38 feet high! That’s hard for me to describe but maybe this will help: That’s equal to 3½ school buses long and almost as tall as a four-story building.

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