FINGER PHONICS

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P E P

The Positive Engagement Project

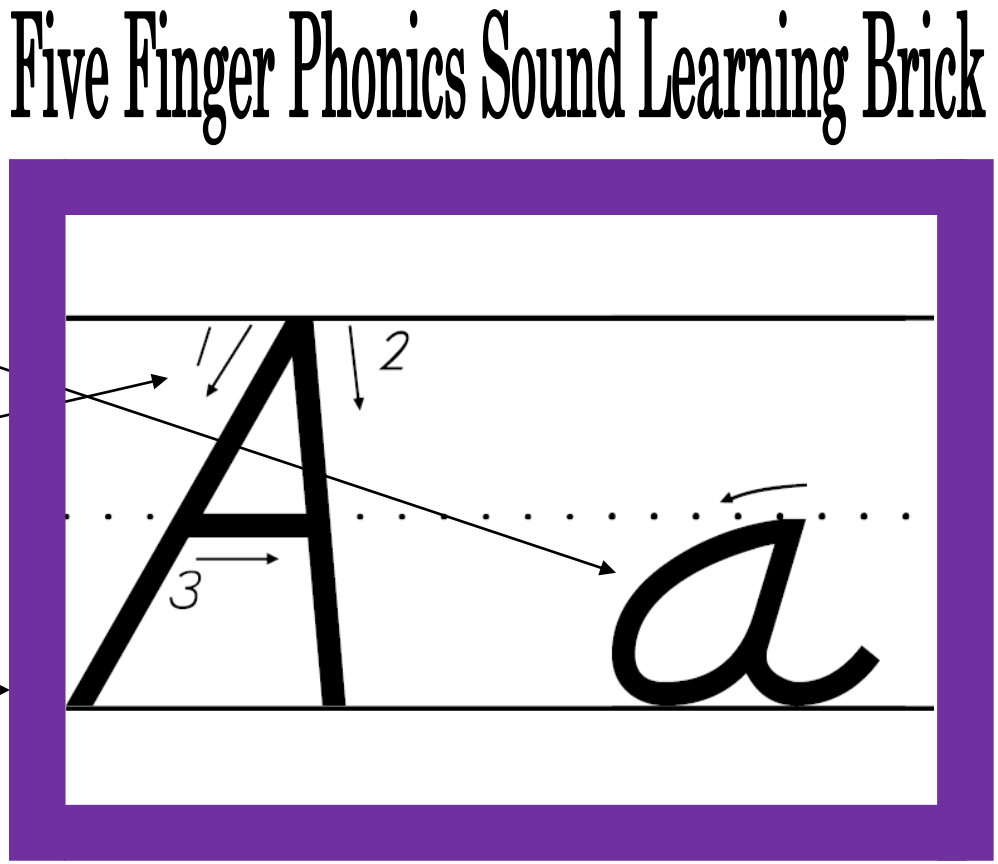
Making a difference...not a dollar.

Five Finger Phonics is a method to teach letter sounds in a way that students can truly use as they begin to read. The gestures associated with the images in **Five Finger Phonics** fully involve the student's eyes, ears, mouth and body as they learn phonemic awareness, the alphabet, and how to read, write, and spell. The key difference with **Five Finger Phonics** is that each body movement, or gesture, can be done on one hand (or less), where most programs incorporate full body gestures that generally ask the students to use both arms and sometimes get out of their seats and integrate their entire bodies. Full body gestures are fun, but can be difficult for a student to use as they hold a book and read. By creating gestures that can be done on one hand, we leave the other hand available to track the words in the book as they are reading.

The idea of **Five Finger Phonics** came over a decade ago when a classroom of twenty ESL Kindergarten students couldn't transfer the huge gestures into their everyday reading. It was with that in mind that **Five Finger Phonics** was created. If the reader could make the gestures with one hand, or less, then they could track with their other hand and never lose the flow needed to put the sounds together to read words. As you read you will notice that **The Positive Engagement Project** has outlined suggestions on how to use the images and gestures with your students.

What Are Five Finger Phonics Learning Bricks?

Five Finger Phonics Learning Bricks are a combination of images and movements, both used in conjunction to introduce and teach a letter sound. Letters are symbols and are very abstract for young children. The more abstract learning is, the less the students understand and remember. Our goal is to make this less abstract. The first card shows the sound and how it is written. Below is an example of the Aa card (notice there are two separate cards).



The Five Finger Phonics Sound Learning Brick shows the sound in both upper and lower case forms.

Penmanship strokes along with top, dotted middle, and bottom lines for each letter/sound.

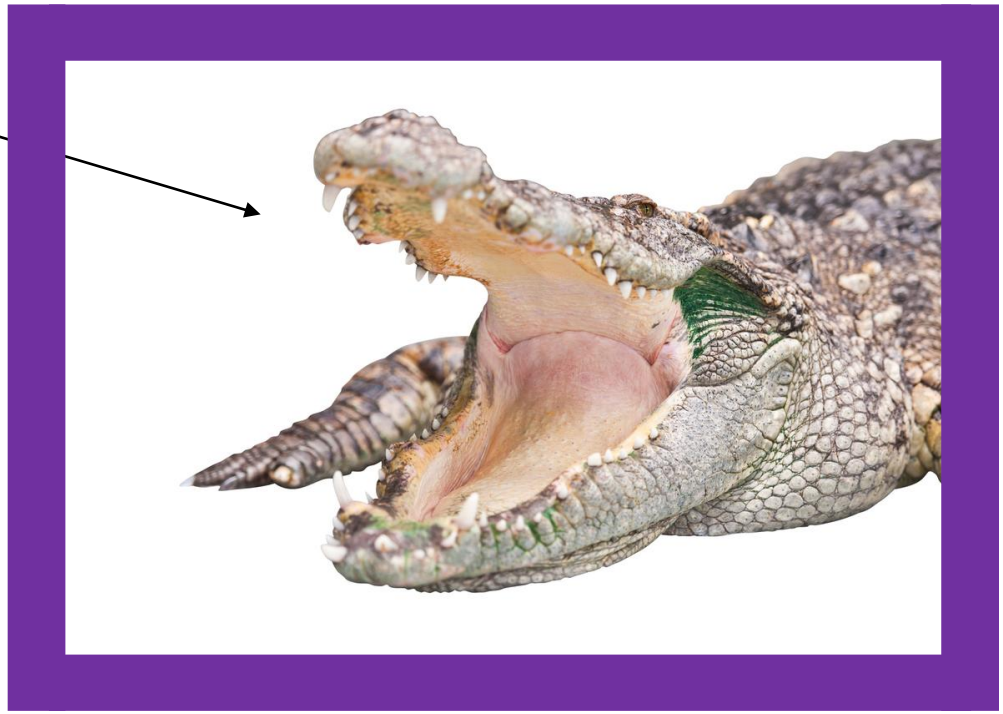
Colored boarder identifies if the letter/sound is a consonant or vowel. Vowels are identified in purple, while consonants are represented in red.

The second card has an image and gesture associated with the sound card (note: the vowels will have both short and long sounds represented by two different Image/Gesture cards.) The image on the card gives the student something concrete to associate with the sound. There is a nice collection of images ranging from animals to everyday items for the students to see. The image is directly linked to the physical gesture that is connected to the letter sound and image. There is a lot of research that states when a physical gesture can be connected, the brain remembers. Studies show that anytime we physically perform, memory is enhanced.

Five Finger Phonics Image/Gesture Learning Brick

The Five Finger Phonics Image/Gesture Learning Brick shows an image that is linked to the Aa sound brick.

Colored boarder identifies if the letter/sound is a consonant or vowel. Vowels are identified in purple, while consonants are represented in red.



What is on the back of a Five Finger Phonics Learning Brick Card?

The back of each **Five Finger Phonics Learning Brick Card** is equipped with the following: proper sound associated with letter /sound, smaller version of the visual on the front, a physical movement (done with five fingers or less), a list of visuals to show your students, a list of words that either start with the letter or have the letter (vowel) sound in the middle, food items to further engage the kids and to strengthen the letter sound, a story title or two to read to the class, a hook activity to introduce the letter and sound, hands on manipulative activity, and a song or two to sing for that letter/sound.

The activities on the back of each **Five Finger Phonics Learning Brick** are a few more tools for teachers to add to their extensive lists of activities for each letter and sound.

Why are there two cards for each sound?

The first card is the letter that represents the sound, upper and lower case, along with penmanship arrows. If the letter/sound is a vowel it will be bordered in purple; if it is a consonant sound, it will be bordered in red. The second card is the image/gesture card which has an image to be a visual cue for the students to what the sound is. Accompanying the image on the card is a physical gesture that acts as an additional cue to the students to the sound of the letter. The gesture for each letter/sound is written down on the letter reference page which also has some teaching suggestions and activities.

What if a letter has more than one sound?

For letters that have more than one sound we have created different images and gestures for each. If you just want to focus on the short vowels, then do not use the image and gesture card for the long vowels. We provide the cards and ideas, but we leave the professionalism up to you on how you choose to use these materials.

How should the cards be used?

For each letter of the alphabet we have a reference page of activities and the image/gesture explanation. Besides the suggestions on that page, we suggest you use a large portion of your classroom walls to post the Five

Finger Phonics Learning Bricks. When using the bricks, the teacher must understand that simply showing the picture, performing the gesture once or twice by the teacher is not going to get it done. It is imperative that we give our students the opportunity to teach and discuss with other students. The key is for the kids to verbalize (output for the students) the sounds and use the image and gestures. As any Kindergarten teacher will tell you, young students need massive amounts of repetition when learning their sounds; the gestures and activities make learning the sounds fun and help keep the students actively engaged.

By having students work in small groups of two or three, we are encouraging them to take risks they would never take if they had to speak in a whole group setting. Also, ELL research tells us that the best way to learn a new language is to speak it; that holds entirely true for all students. Turning your Five Finger Phonics Learning Bricks as an interactive alphabet allows all of our students a safe environment to speak, discuss, and teach. Even the shyest of students is more likely to discuss a concept if only one other person is going to hear.

Along with an image and gesture for each sound, we have included some fun activities to introduce the sounds to your students. The activities can be for individual, small, or whole group instruction and are also located on the letter/sound reference page.

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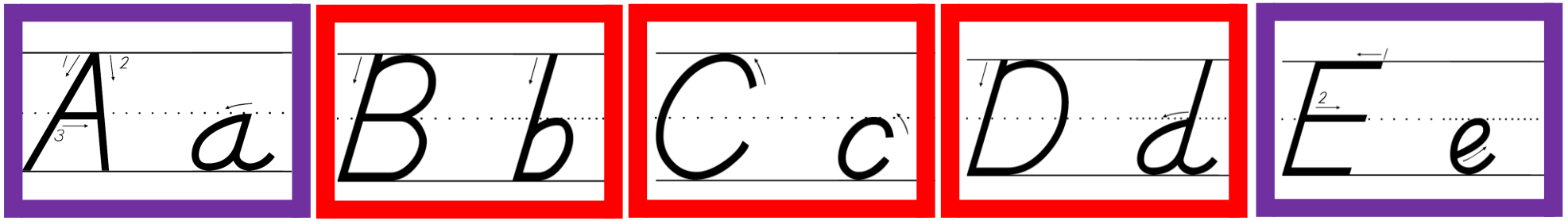
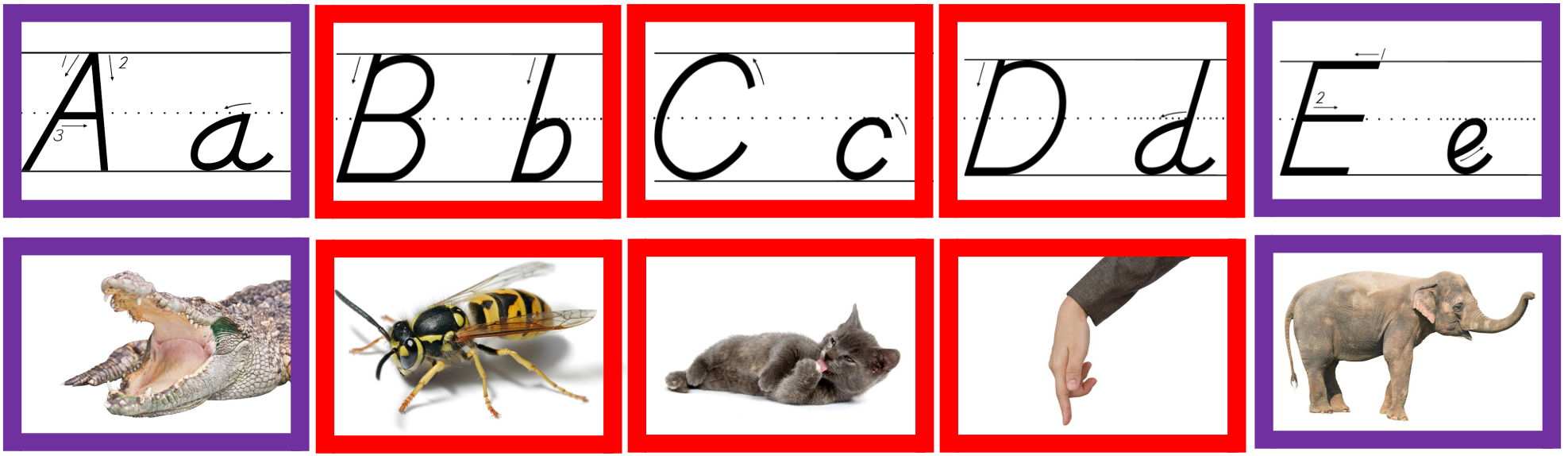
What would the Five Finger Phonics Learning Wall look like?

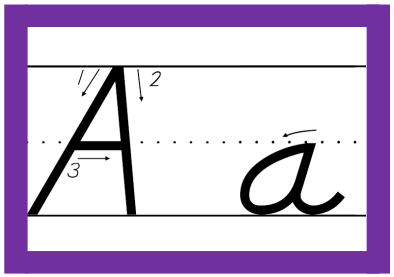
Create your alphabet on your classroom wall starting with only the sound cards like the example below.

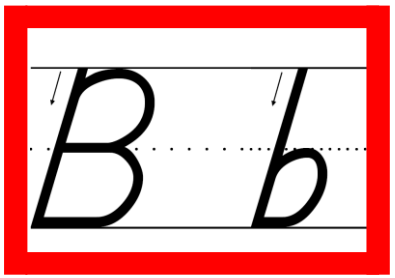


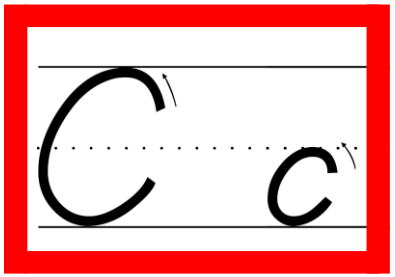
Kids should notice that some letters are bordered in purple and others in red. As you introduce certain sounds add the image/gesture card underneath the sound cards (the order in which you do this is up to you). This is your Five Finger Phonics Learning Wall.

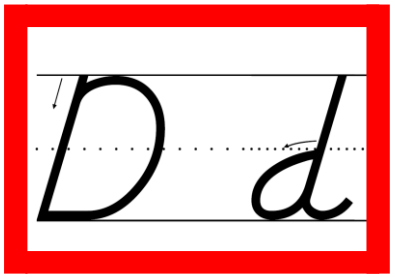


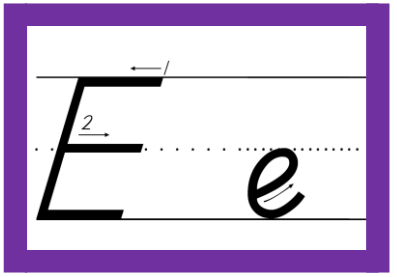
For letters that have more than one sound you can choose to add additional image/gesture cards.

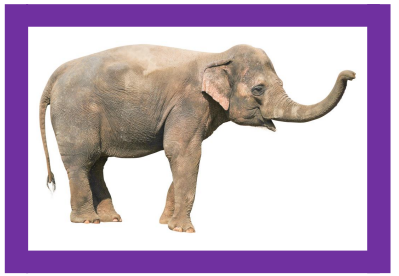












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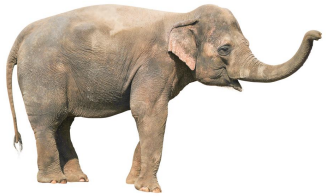
You can also use your Five Finger Phonics Learning Wall as a word wall. Depending on what skill you are working on, you could create a list of words starting with, ending with, or contain the sound in the middle.

A a	B b	C c	D d	E e
				
am	bag	can	dog	egg
apple	box	cat	down	elf
at	but		drum	

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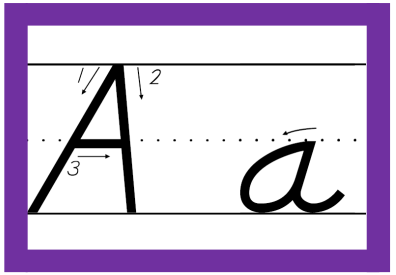
Question: What sound does short Aa make?

Answer: short vowel /a/ as in alligator

Gesture: Open and close hand like an alligator's mouth.



Visuals: alphabet, ambulance, animals, apples, astronaut, ax

Words with short vowel a in the middle: bat, black, can, dad, ham, fat, lap, man, rap, tap

Food Fun: applesauce, ants on a log (raisons on celery)

Stories: The Alphabet Tree by Leo Lionni, Alexander by Leo Lionni. Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr.

Hook: Sing alphabet song and then give each child Five Finger Phonics Alphabet (in this packet) to take home to practice.

Hands On: Cut an apple in half. Then on the cut surface carve out the shape of the letter "A". Have your child stamp the letter on a sheet of paper and say the short "A" sound each time they stamp.

Song: The Ants Go Marching On!

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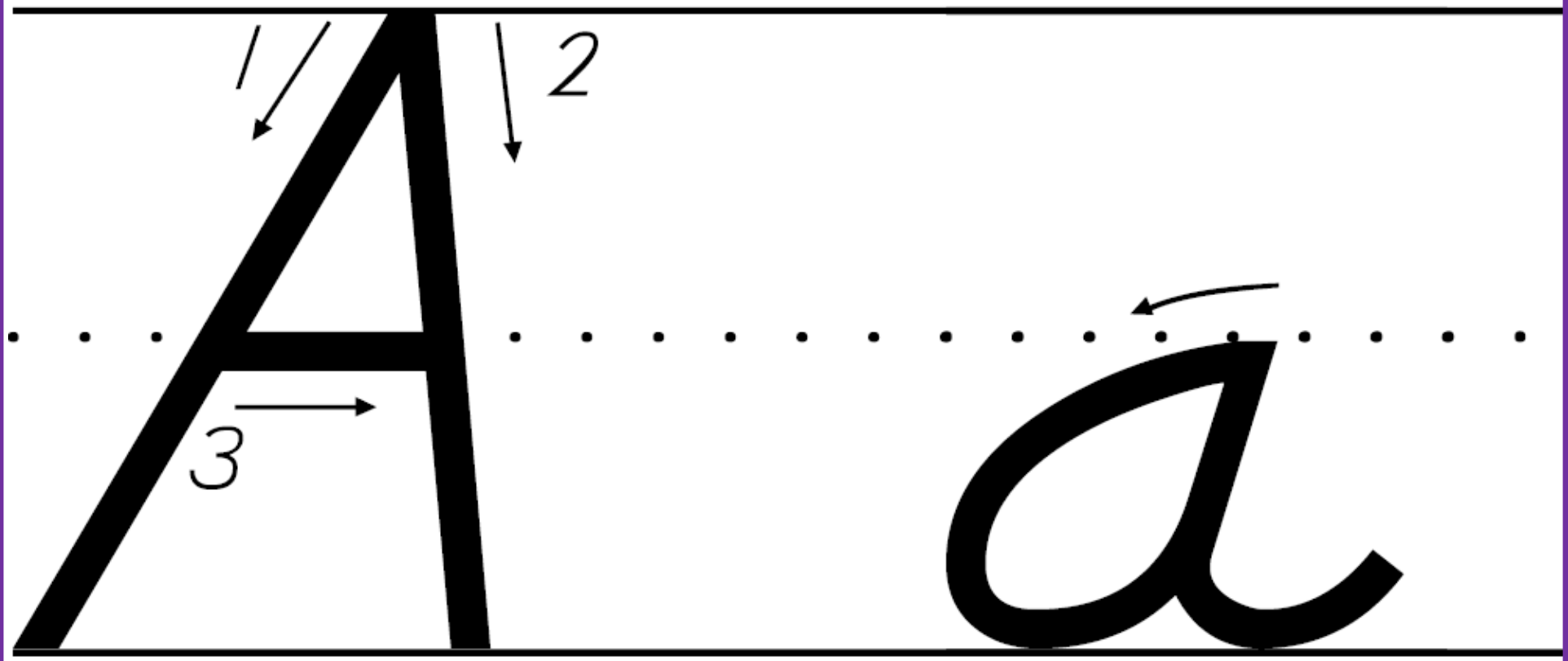

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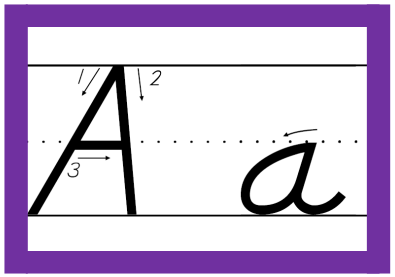
Question: What sound does long Aa make?

Answer: long vowel /a/ as in angel

Gesture: Hold your hand straight up (angel in the sky) and flip wrist downward holding two fingers in down position (looks like a capital A).



Visuals: acorn, alien, angel, ape, apron, apricots,

Words with long vowel a in the middle: cake, face, paint, race, take

Food Fun: angel food cake

Stories: The Alphabet Tree by Leo Lionni, Alexander by Leo Lionni. Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr.

Hook: Sing alphabet song and then give each child Five Finger Phonics Alphabet (in this packet) to take home to practice.

Hands On: Cut an apple in half. Then on the cut surface carve out the shape of the letter "A". Have your child stamp the letter on a sheet of paper and say the long "A" sound each time they stamp.

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Song: The Ants Go Marching On!

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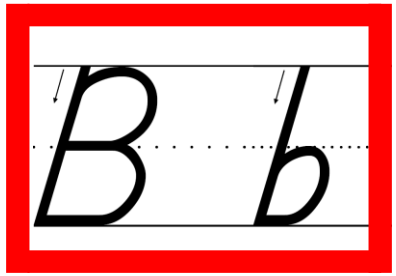
Question: What sound does Bb make?

Answer: /b/ "buh" as in bee

Gesture: Hold your hand out in a fist and let your pointing finger be the stinger of the bee.



Visuals: bag, ball, balloon, banana, baseball, bell, belt, bottle, box, brush, bug, bus

Words with b in the beginning: barn, bat, bear, bed, big, bike, bird, box, boy, bug, bus

Food Fun: buttered bread and honey (bees love honey)

Stories: Brown Bear, Brown Bear, by Bill Martin Jr., Baa Baa Black Sheep by Iza Trapani, and Berenstain Bears "B" Book by Stan Berenstain.

Hook: Let the kids blow bubbles outside and then spell the word "bubbles" on the board and ask them which letter they see the most.

Hands On: Make the letter "Bb" out of dry pinto beans.

Song: BINGO, Teddy Bear – Teddy Bear, and The Bear Went Over the Mountain

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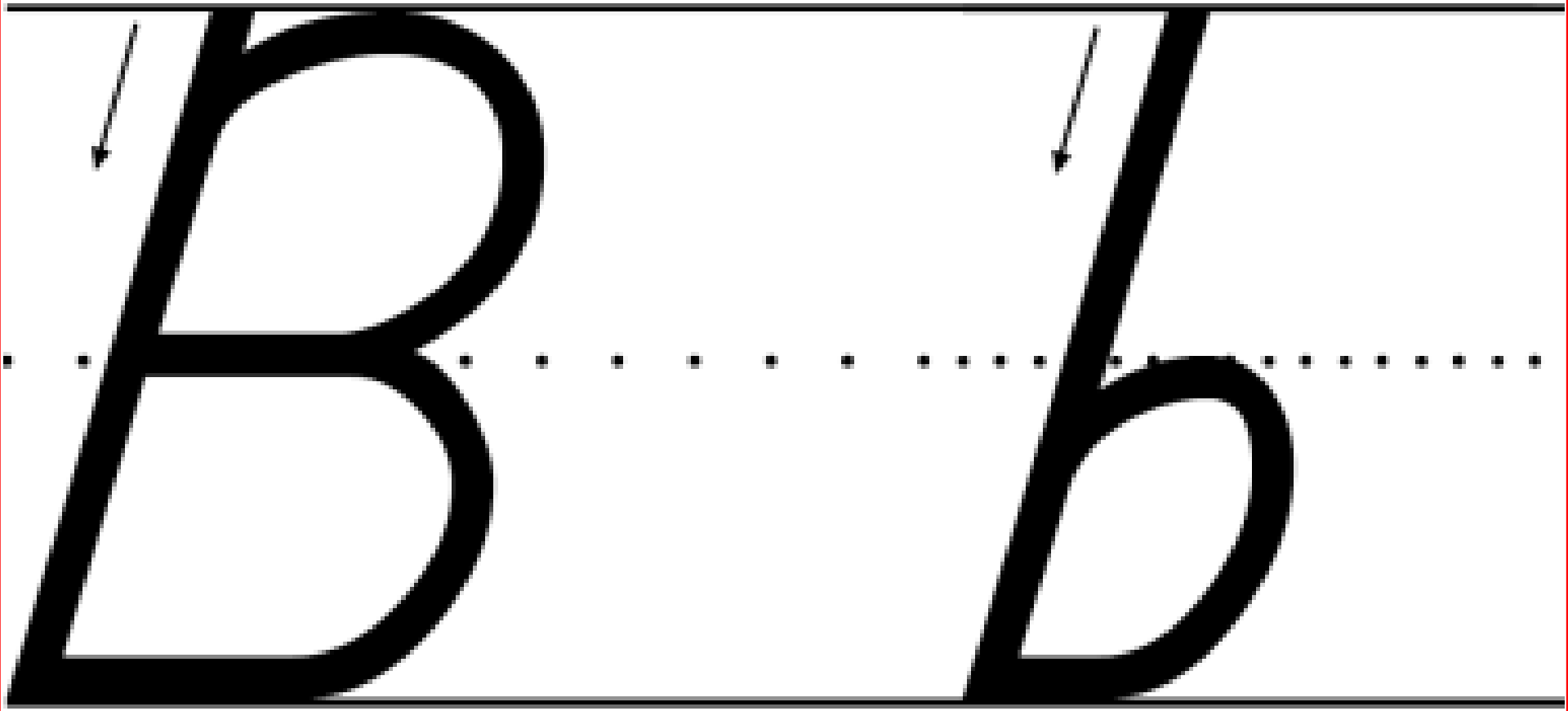

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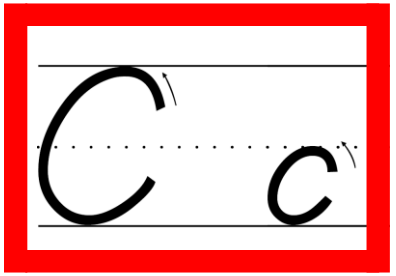
Question: What sound does Cc make?

Answer: /k/ sound as in cat

Gesture: Pull your arm across your face as if cleaning your paw the way a cat would.



Visuals: candy cane, carrot, cat, caterpillar, clown, cookies, cow

Words starting with c /k/ sound in the beginning: can, cap, cat, cook, cup, cut

Food Fun: carmel corn (cracker jacks)

Stories: Courduroy by Don Freeman, The Caboose Who Got Loose by Bill Peet, and Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina

Hook: Fill a cookie jar with objects that begin with the c sound as in cat (use some of the visuals on this page for the cookie jar). Name each object as it is removed from the cookie jar.

Hands On: Glue cotton balls in the shape of the letter "Cc".

Song: C is for Cookie (AKA The Cookie Monster Song)

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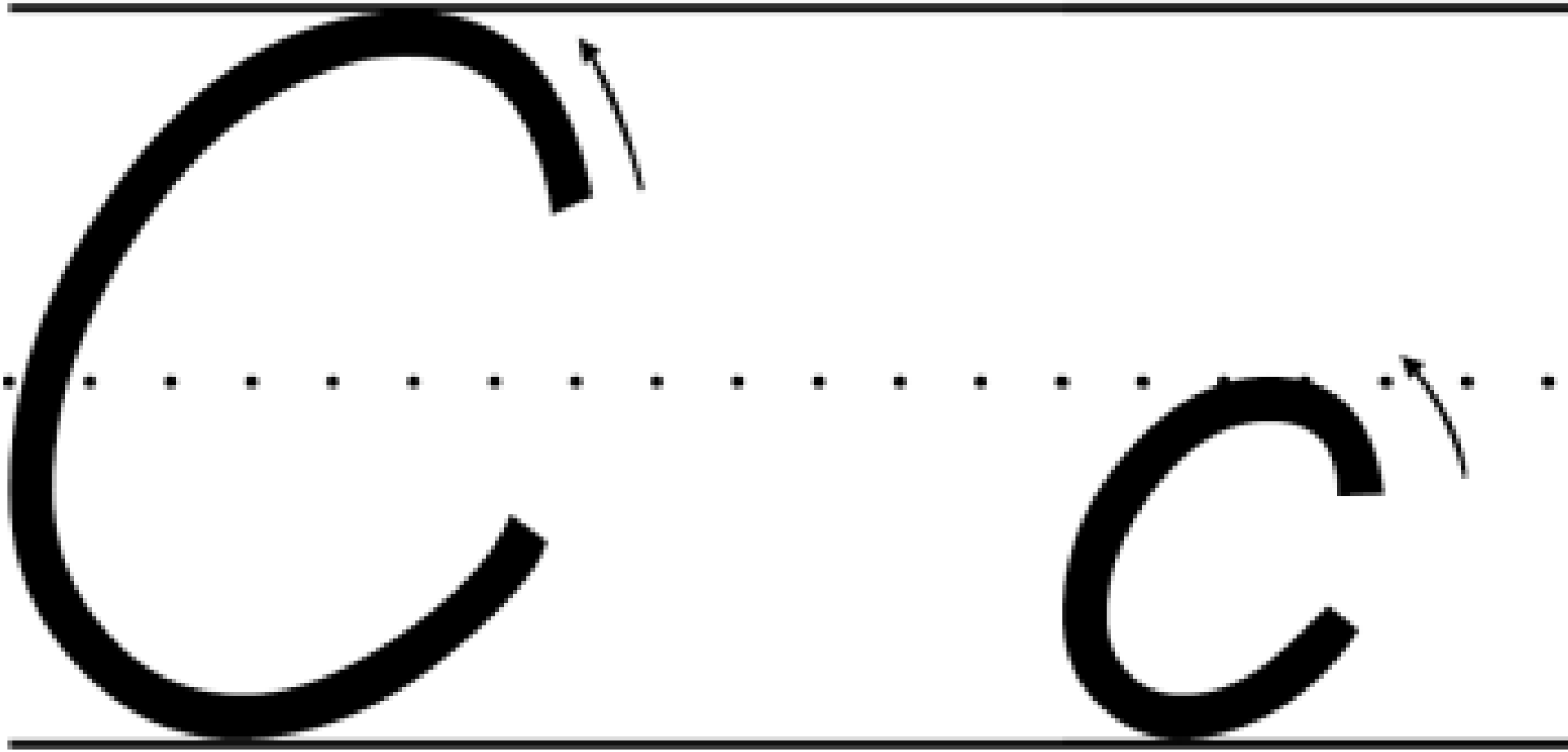

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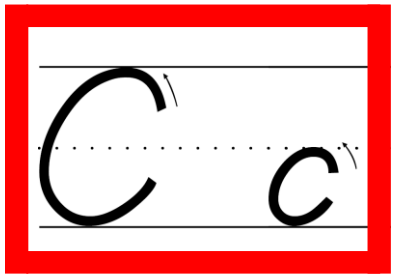
Question: What sound does Cc make?

Answer: /s/ sound as in cereal

Gesture: Pretend to hold a spoon and scoop up a bite of cereal.



Visuals: celery, cent, circle, Cinderella, circus picture, city, cymbal

Words with c /s/ sound in the beginning: cent, cereal, citizen, city

Food Fun: cinnamon spiced cider and a variety of cereals

Stories: Circus Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slobodkina and Tree Ring Circus by Adam Rex.

Hook: Have a circus day and let the kids bring in their own stuffed animals for the circus.

Hands On: Glue cereal pieces in the shape of the letter "Cc".

Song: The Circus Song by Thompson and Guernsey

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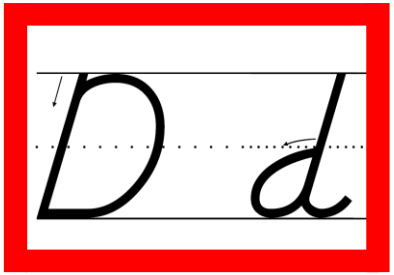
Question: What sound does Dd make?

Answer: /d/ "duh" as in down

Gesture: Point your finger down.



Visuals: daisy, diamond, diaper, dinosaur, dog, doll, dollar, donkey

Words with d sound in the beginning: dad, dig, dime, dish, dog, dot

Food Fun: doughnuts

Stories: Danny and the Dinosaur by Sid Hoff

Hook: Have a "Dd" dig in the sandbox or (playground). Hide things that begin with the letter d. Have the kids be "Detectives" to find them. Name each thing that the kids discover.

Hands On: Make the letter Dd out of playdough.

Song: Doggy, Doggy Where is Your Bone?

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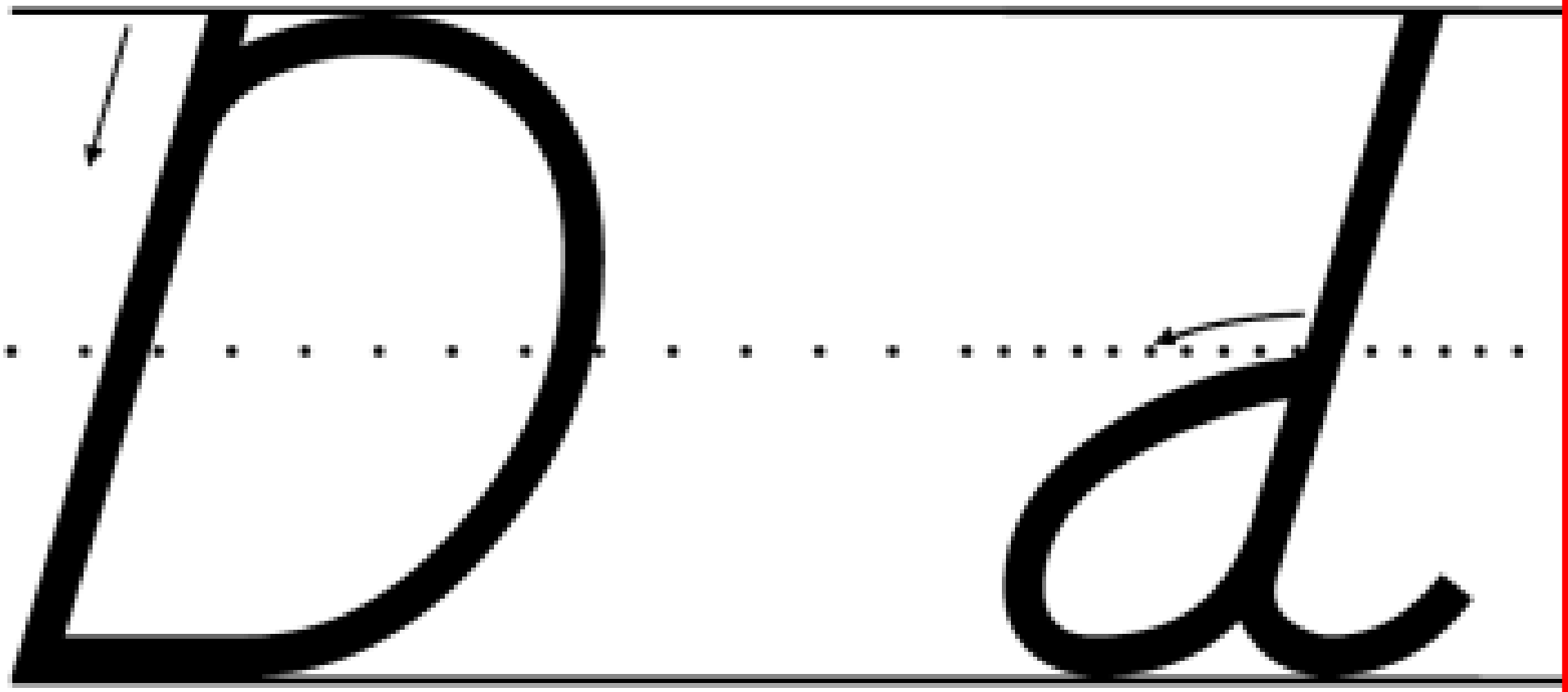

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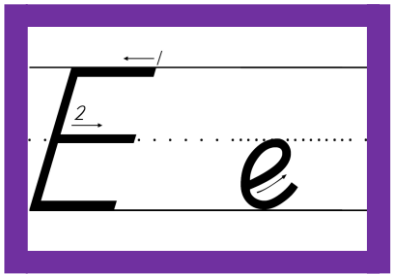
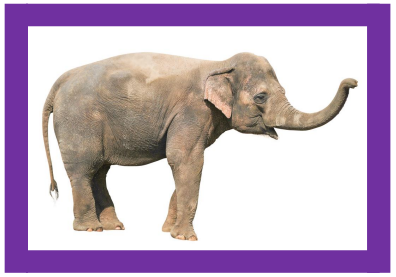
Question: What sound does short Ee make?

Answer: short vowel /e/ as in elephant

Gesture: With one arm (the elephant's trunk), move it up and down.





Visuals: egg, elephant, elf, envelope

Words with short vowel e in the middle: deck, dress, helmet, hen, men, ten

Food Fun: eggs (scrambled, hardboiled, sunny-side up)

Stories: Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss

Hook: With an egg carton full of plastic eggs, put a picture of something that begins with an Ee in all but one. Leave one plastic egg empty. Open each egg and name the picture. Point out the empty egg "does" have something in it that starts with an Ee….it's the word empty.

Hands On: Use some egg shells and crush them to glue on a letter Ee.

Song: An Eager Elephant (sung to If You're Happy and You Know it!)

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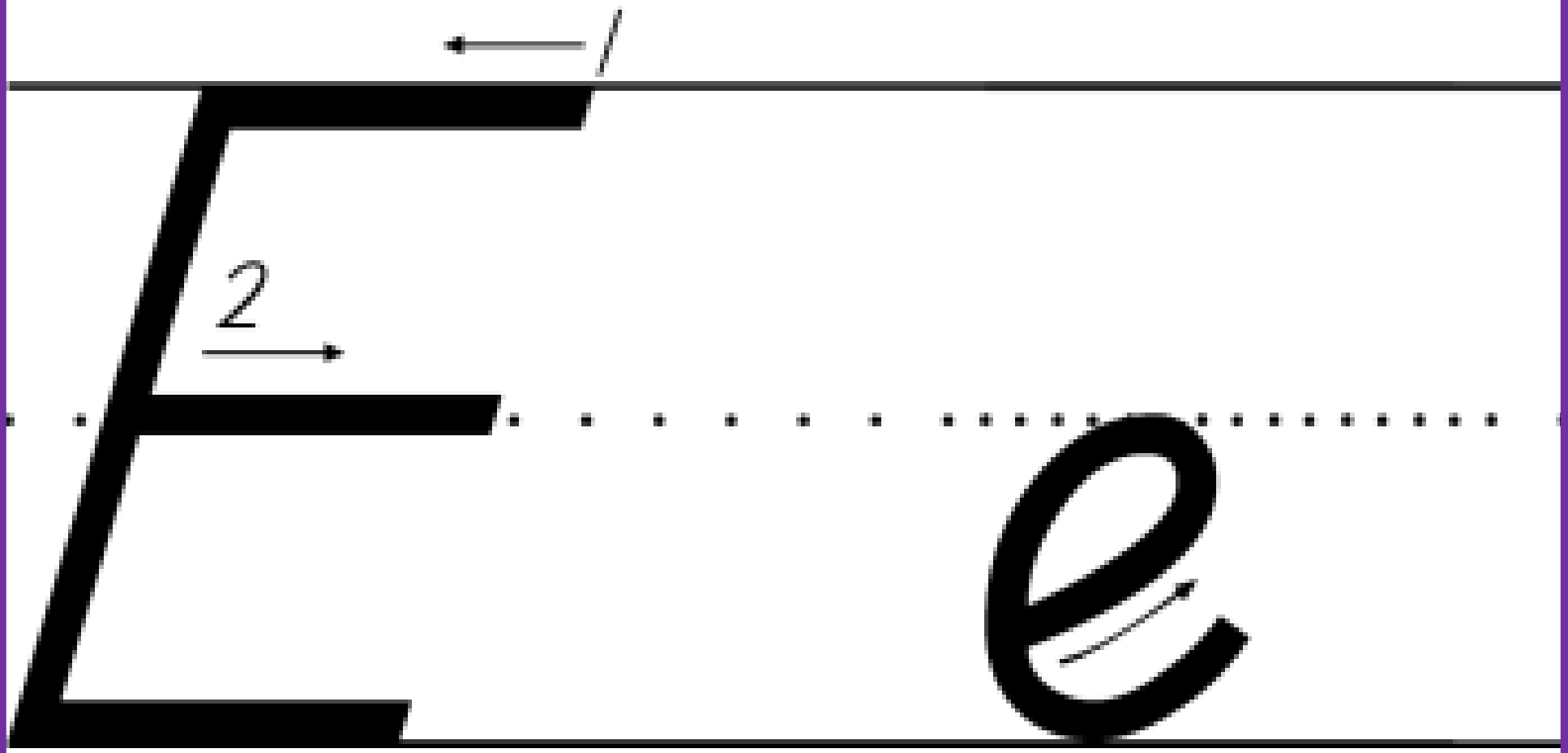

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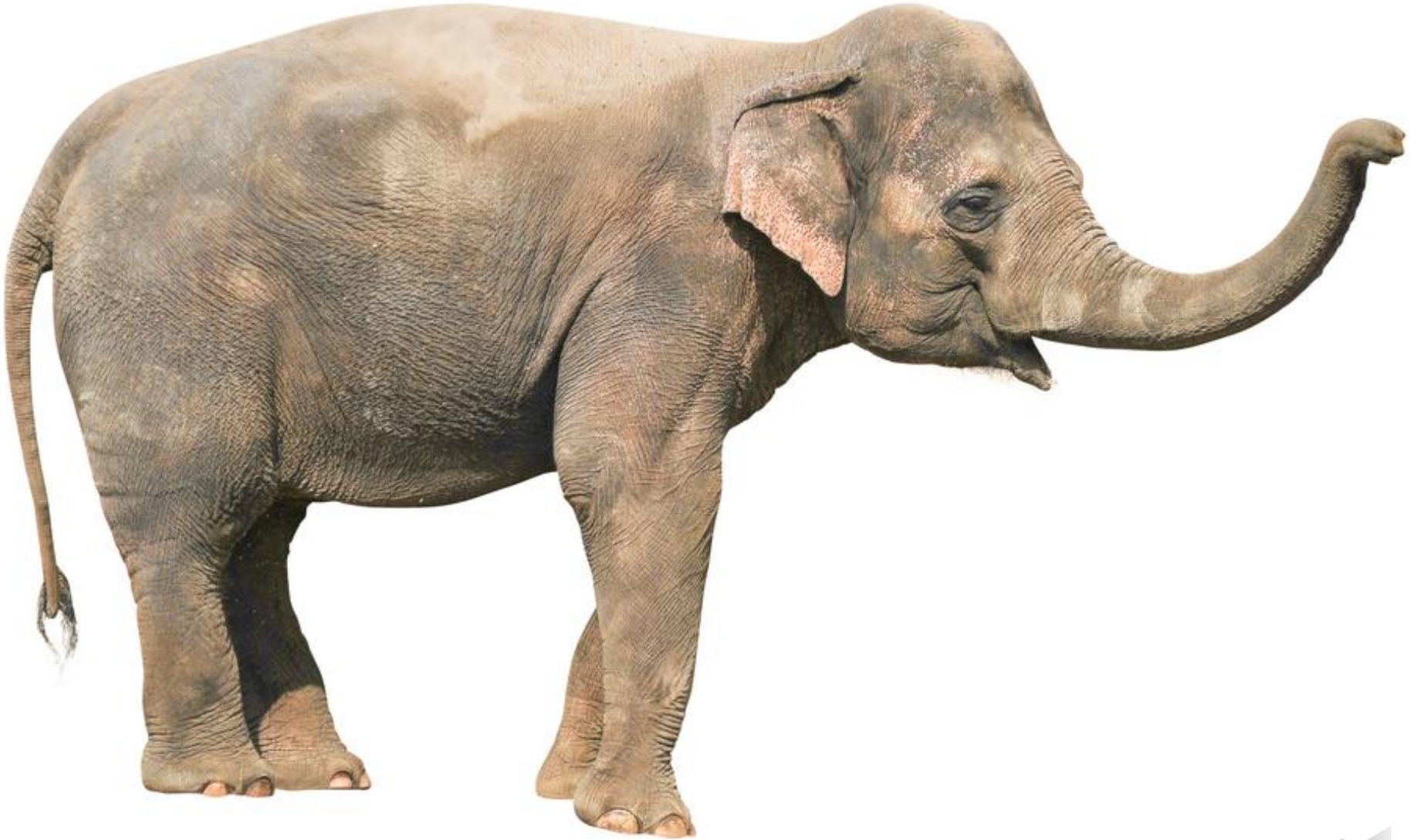

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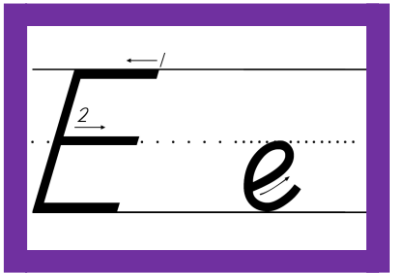
Question: What sound does long Ee make?

Answer: long vowel /e/ as in eagle

Gesture: Hold one arm out (like an eagle's wing) and make a flying motion.



Visuals: ear, earring, eagle, Easter egg, eel

Words with long vowel e in the middle: cheese, feed, feet, he, leaf, read, see, teeth

Food Fun: English muffins with cheese (long e for English and cheese)

Stories: Eat by Diane Paterson

Hook: With an egg carton full of plastic eggs, put a picture of something that has a long e sound in the middle of the words. Open each egg and name the picture.

Hands On: Use some "Eagle" egg shells and crush them to glue on a letter.

Song: Do Your Ears Hang Low?

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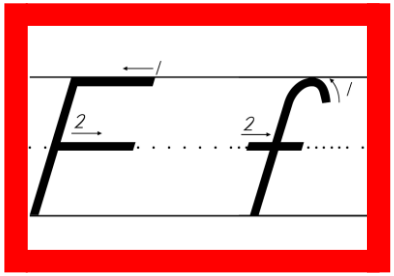
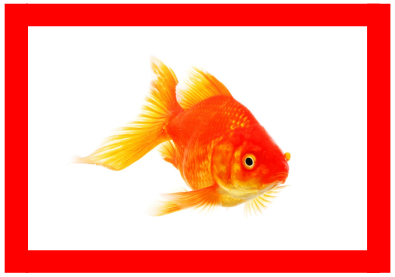
Question: What sound does Ff make?

Answer: /f/ as in fish

Gesture: Let one hand be a fish and swim back and forth in front of your chest.





Visuals: feather, fish, flag, flashlight, flower, football, fork, frisbee, frog

Words with f sound in the beginning: fan, fat, fish, five, flag, for, foot, frog, fun

Food Fun: Friendship Fruit Salad (each student can bring in a piece of fruit to prepare and mix together).

Stories: Fire! Fire! Said Mrs. McQuire by Bill Martin Jr., Frederick by Leo Lionni, and Do You Want to be My Friend? By Eric Carle

Hook: Fill a fishbowl full of things that begin with the Ff sound. Name each item as you pull it from the fishbowl.

Hands On: Make Ffs with student fingerprints.

Song: Farmer and the Dell

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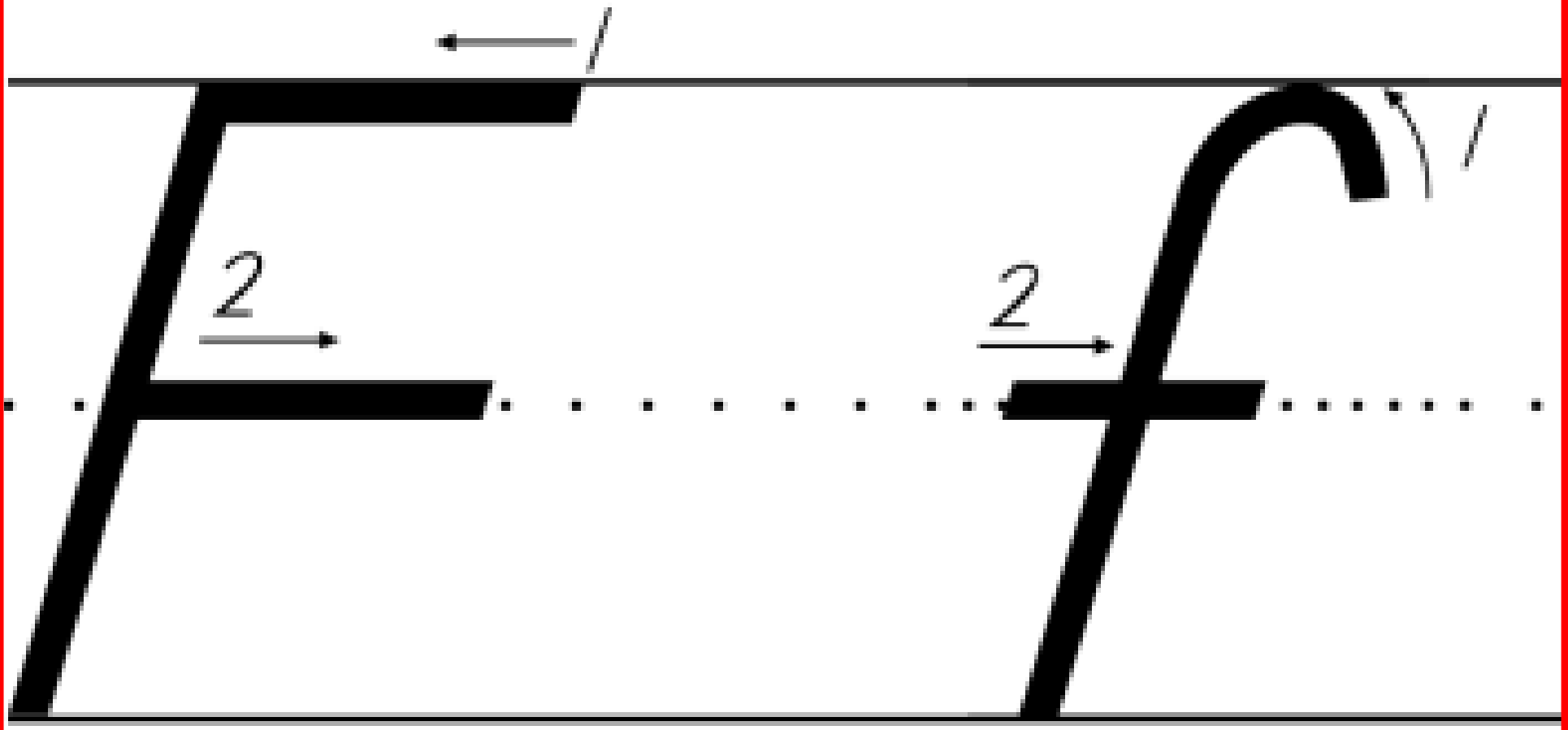

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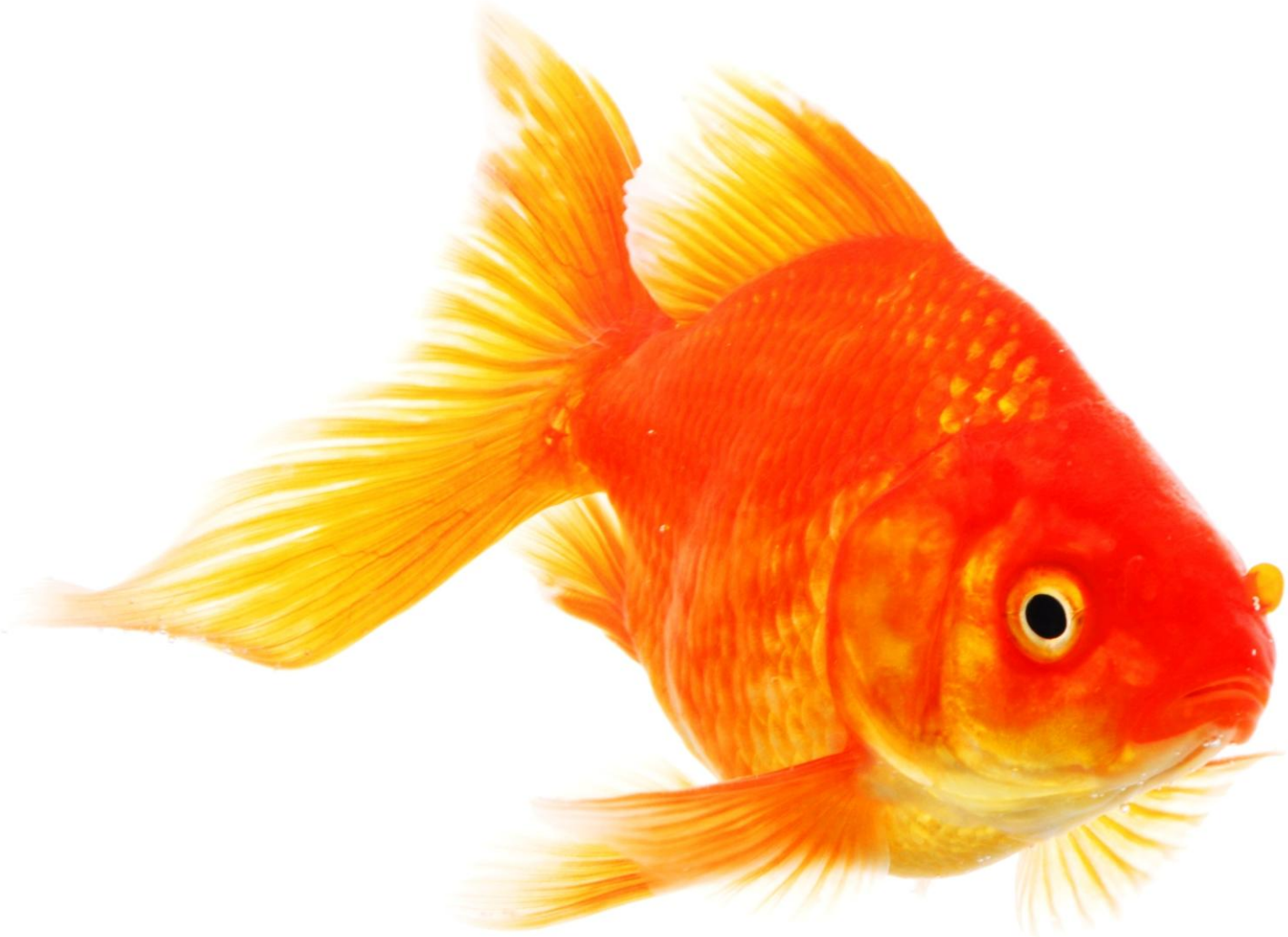
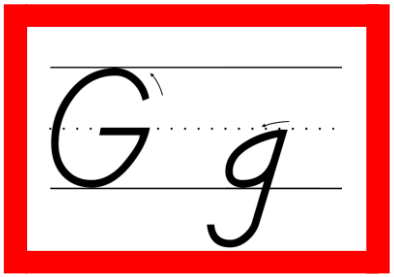


Question: What sound does Gg make?

Answer: /g/ "guh" as in gorilla

Gesture: Use one hand to pound your chest (gently) like a gorilla.



Visuals: ghost, glass, globe, glove, glue, gold, grape, guitar, gum

Words with g sound in the beginning: game, gate, get, gift, girl, give, go, goat, gut, gum

Food Fun: granola and banana yogurt (gorilla granola)

Stories: Carrie Hepple's Garden by Ruth Craft and Goodnight Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann

Hook: Make some special Gg seeing goggles that help you find things that start with the letter g.

Hands On: Glue gold glitter on the letter Gg.

Song: Goosey, Goosey Gander

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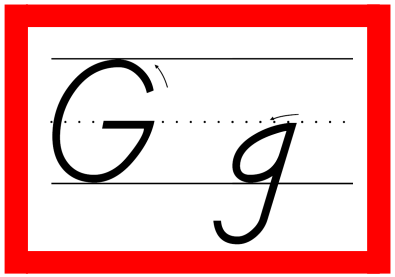
Question: What sound does Gg make?

Answer: /g/ "juh" as in giant

Gesture: Take one arm and stretch it as high as you can (to represent a giant).



Visuals: gel, gem, giant, giraffe, gym

Words with g sound in the beginning: gel, gem, germ, gentle, giant, giraffe, gym

Food Fun: gingersnap cookies

Stories: Ginger by Charolette Voake and The Gingerbread Man by Barbara McClintock

Hook: Set up a search for the Gingerbread Man.

Hands On: Make giant-sized Ggs on the blacktop with chalk for a giant to see.

Song: The Gingerbread Man Song

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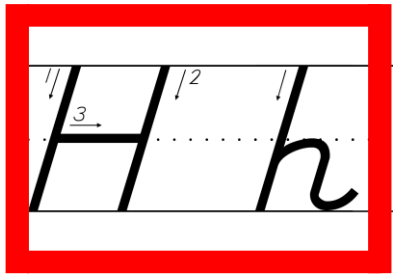
Question: What sound does Hh make?

Answer: /h/ "huh" as in hand

Gesture: Hold your hand in front of your mouth.



Visuals: hamburger, hammer, hamster, hat, heart, helicopter, horse, hose, house

Words with h sound in the beginning: hair, hand, hat, hen, hip, his, hit, hog, hook, hut

Food Fun: hot dogs or honeycomb

Stories: Old Hat, New Hat by Stan Berenstain and Arthur's Honey Bear by Lillian Hoban.

Hook: A hat full of objects that begin with Hh.

Hands On: Use a hole punch and have kids make a tactile Hh and then glue the cut out holes from the hole punch on Hh.

Song: Hokey Pokey and Hickory Dickory Dock.

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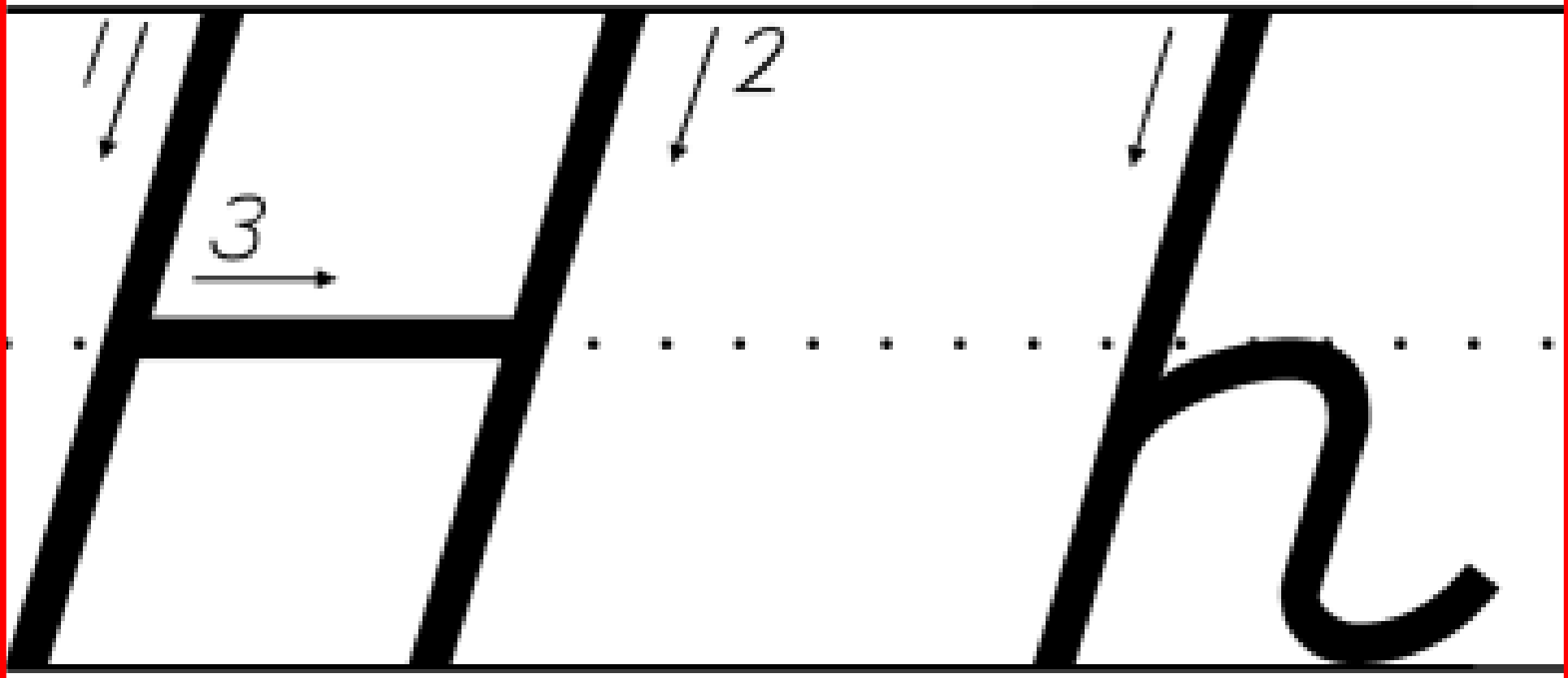

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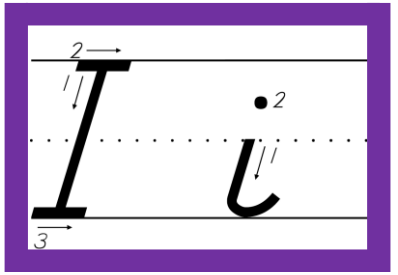
Question: What sound does short Ii make?

Answer: short /i/ as in inside or in

Gesture: point to your mouth (food goes "inside" here)



Visuals: igloo, iguana, ink, insect, inside (things)

Words with short vowel i in the middle: chick, kiss, fish, milk, pig, this, wig

Food Fun: insect cups (chocolate pudding, crushed oreos, gummy worms (or any other gummy insects you can find to be in the pudding-oreo dirt mixture)

Stories: Inch by Inch by Leo Lionni

Hook: Have a large box in the classroom and sit inside it as you start naming some of the I visuals with your students. You could also cross over into math and have kids estimate how many marbles are in a jar, focusing on what's INSIDE.

Hands On: Kids can use different types of ink to make the letter Ii.

Song: If You're Happy and You Know It

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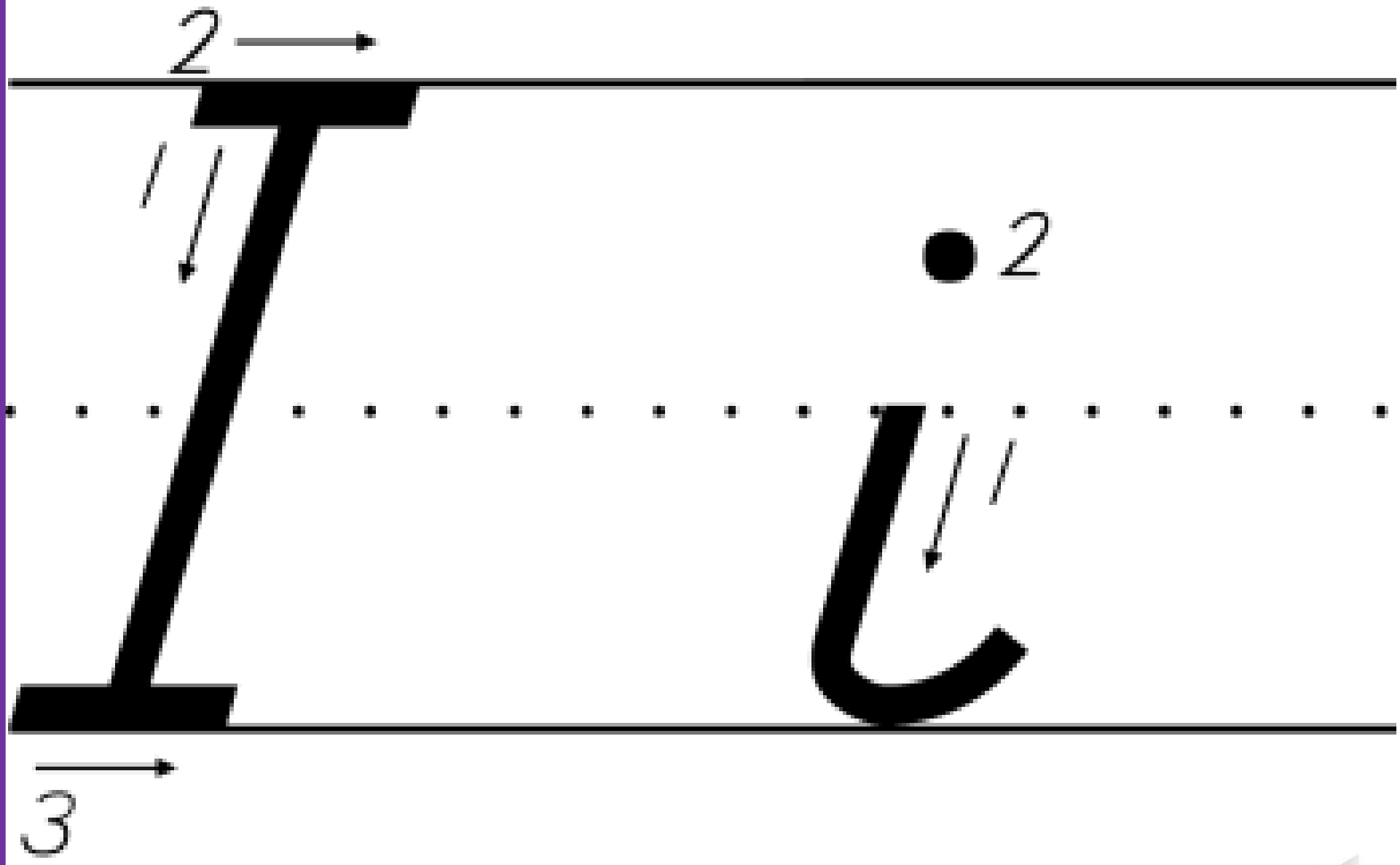

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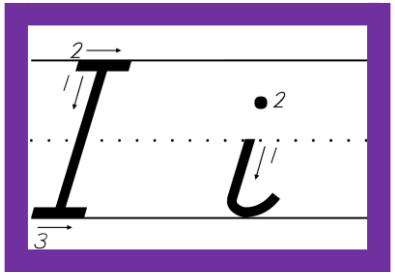
Question: What sound does long Ii make?

Answer: long /i/ as in ice

Gesture: Shake one hand like it was as cold as ice.



Visuals: ice, ice skate, icicle, iris, island, ivy

Words with long vowel i in the middle: bite, five, I, like, line, shine, size, smile

Food Fun: ice cream or (if in winter) put some icing on cookies or cupcakes

Stories: Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber

Hook: Brainstorm a list of as many things you can do with ice (ice skating, make icee slushies, keep drinks cold, build igloos, etc…).

Hands On: Kids can use an ice cube to write the letter Ii on the sidewalk or on butcher paper.

Song: I Believe I Can Fly by R. Kelly

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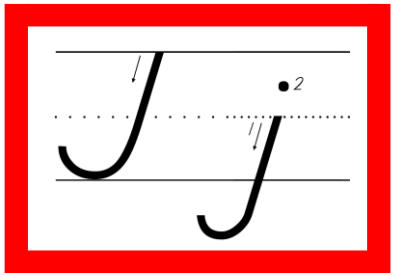
Question: What sound does Jj make?

Answer: /j/ "juh" as in juice

Gesture: Pretend to hold a juice in your hand and bring it to your mouth for a sip.



Visuals: jack-in-the-box, jack-o'-lantern, jelly beans, jewelry, juice, jump rope

Words with j sound in the beginning: jacket, jam, jet, jog, joy, jug, jungle

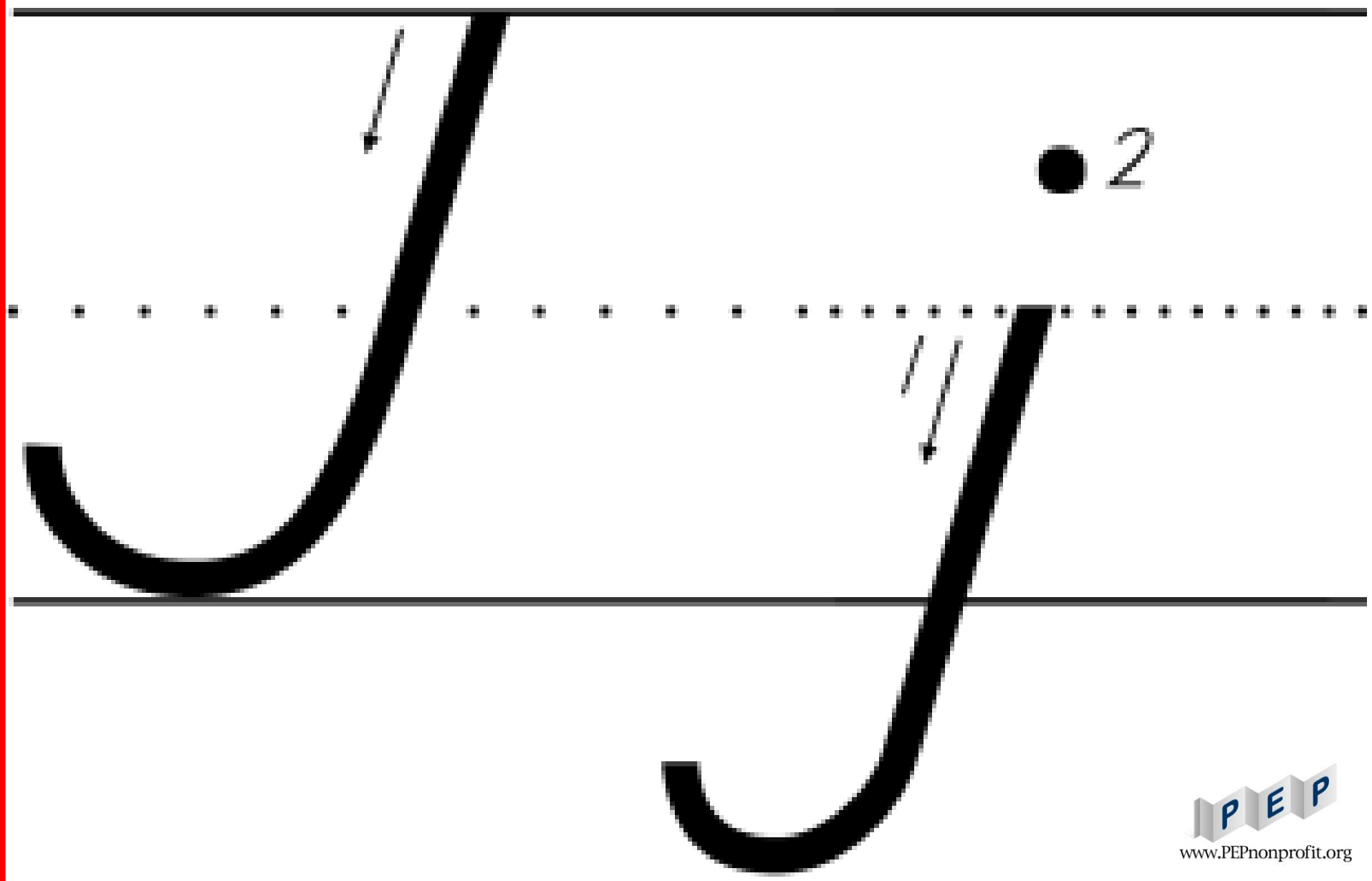
Food Fun: jell-o and different types of juice

Stories: Jack and the Beanstalk and Little Jack Horner

Hook: Have a bunch of "Jj" junk on your desk and invite students to bring in one piece of "Jj Junk" to add to the pile.

Hands On: Use jelly beans to trace the letter Jj.

Song: Jim Along, Josie, Jingle Bells, and Jacob Jingle Heimer Schmidt



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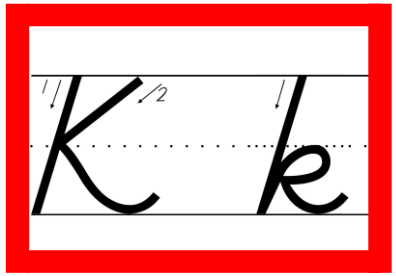
Question: What sound does Kk make?

Answer: /k/ "kuh" as in karate

Gesture: Move your hand in a karate chop motion.



Visuals: kaleidoscope, kangaroo, kazoo, key, king, kite, kisses (chocolate), kiwi fruit, koala bear

Words with k sound in the beginning: kick, kid, king, kiss, kit, kite

Food Fun: make kabobs using different types of fruit (kiwi for sure)

Stories: Katy No Pockets by Emmy Payne and Klippity Klop by Ed Emberley

Hook: Use a kettle to contain various items that start with the letter k. Wear a karate outfit and demonstrate some karate (or show a small part of Kung Fu Panda).

Hands On: Glue popcorn kernels to make the letter Kk.

Song: Let's Go Fly a Kite and Koala Bear

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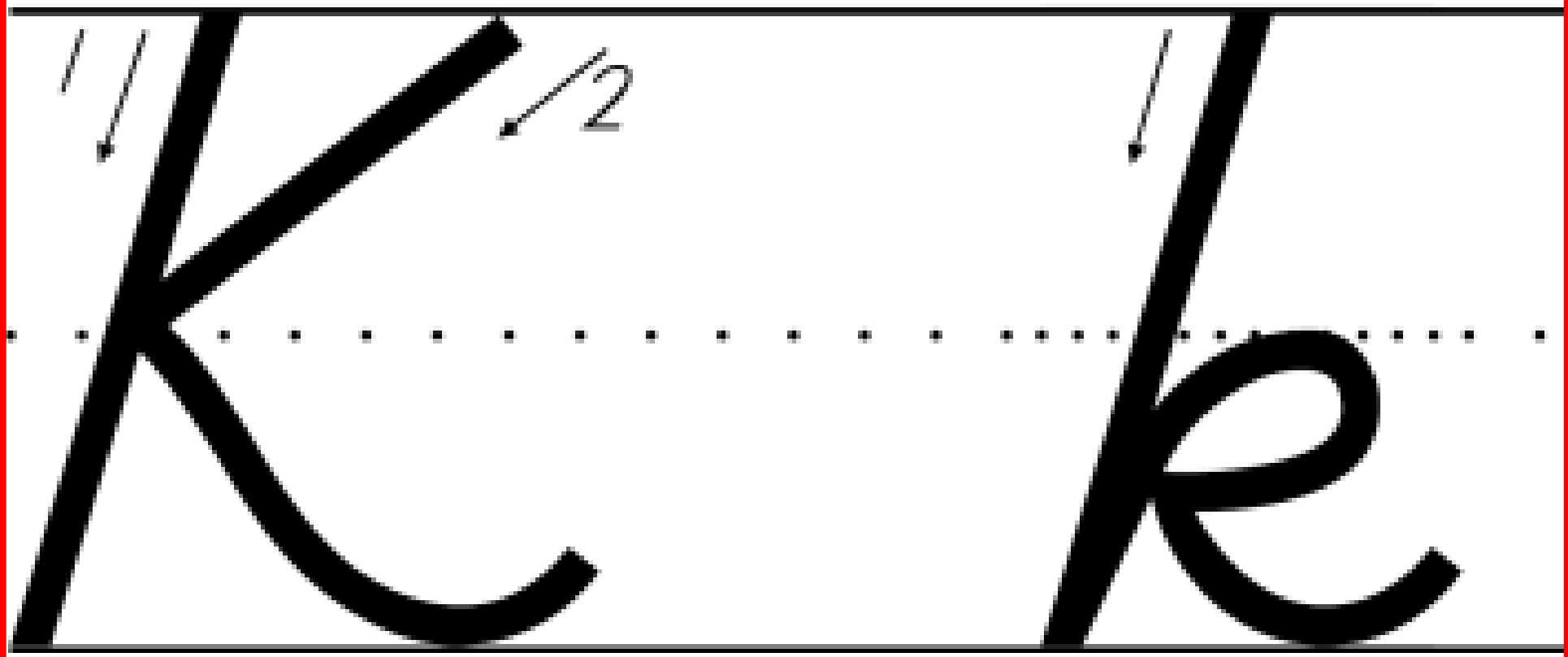

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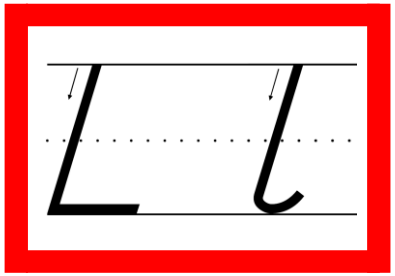
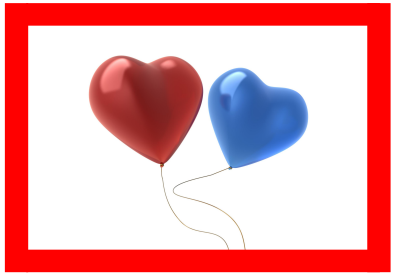
Question: What sound does Ll make?

Answer: /l/ "lll" as in love

Gesture: Place your hand over your heart or make the "I love you" sign in sign language.





Visuals: lace, lamb, leaf, lemon, letter, licorice, lime, lion, lipstick, lollipop

Words with l sound in the beginning: lap, lake, laugh, leaf, leg, let, like, lion, log, lunch

Food Fun: make a lemon and lime drink and use licorice as straws

Stories: Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus, The Grouch Ladybug by Eric Carle, The Happy Lion by Louise Fatio, and Dandelion by Don Freeman

Hook: Have the students who have lunch boxes/bags show the class something from their lunch. Then, show your Ll lunch items from your lunch box/bag (leaf, lemon, licorice, lime, lollipop, and some lemonade).

Hands On: Make the letter Ll from long licorice ropes.

Song: Here We Go Loopy Loo and Mary Had a Little Lamb

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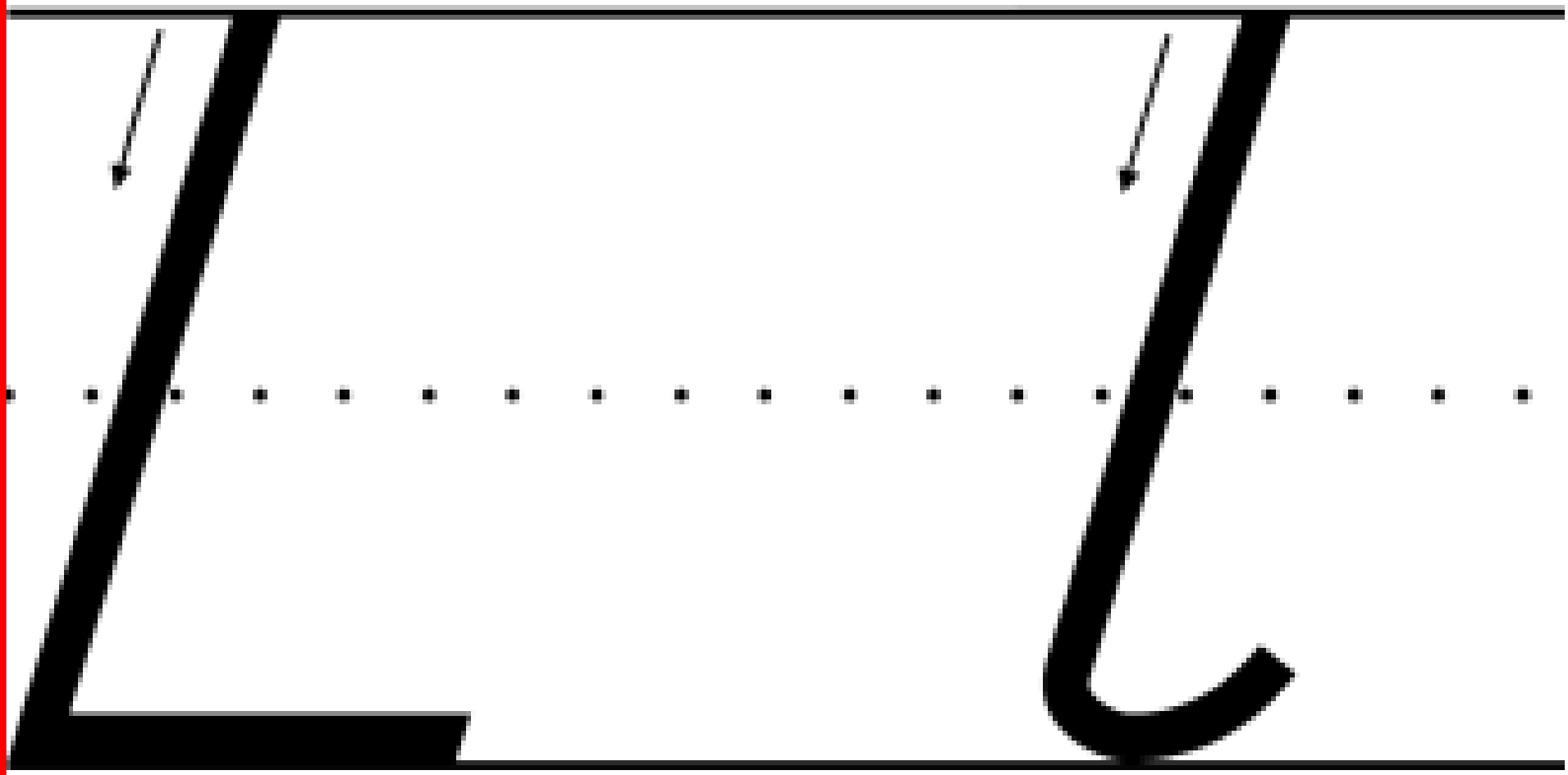

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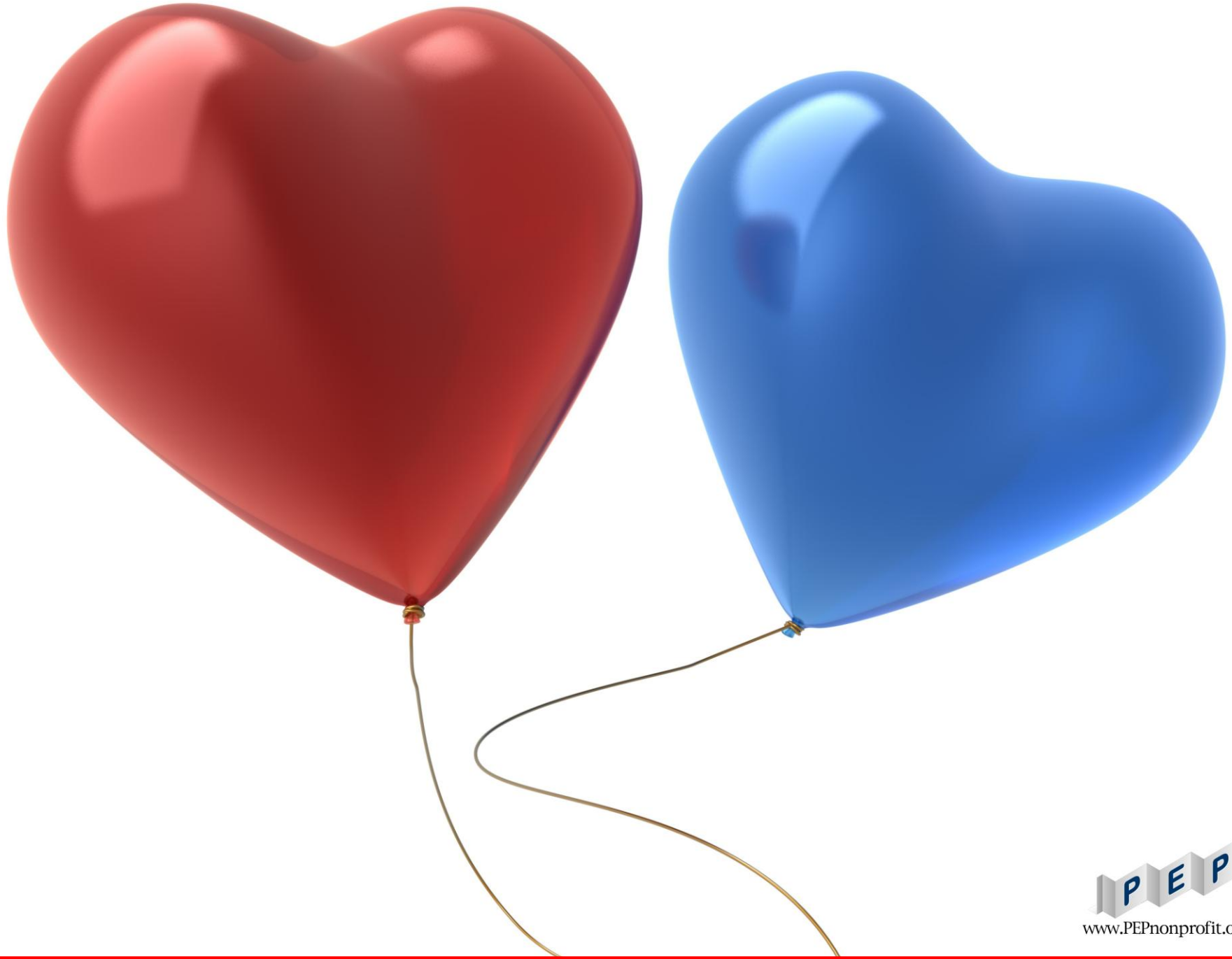
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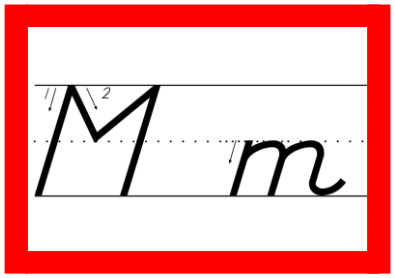
Question: What sound does Mm make?

Answer: /m/ "mmm" as in money

Gesture: Rub your thumb and next two fingers together.



Visuals: macaroni, magnet, map, marbles, marshmallows, menu, milk, mirror, mitten, money

Words with m sound in the beginning: mad, man, map, mat, milk, mom, moon, mop, mouse, mouth, mud, mug

Food Fun: marshmallows and milk

Stories: Morris's Disappearing Bag by Rosemary Wells and Make Way For Ducklings by Robert McCloskey

Hook: Bring in a mirror and ask it magical "Mirror, Mirror" questions about M things. "Mirror, Mirror on the wall what's the tastiest M of all?"

Hands On: Use macaroni pasta to form the letter Mm.

Song: The Muffin Man and Five Little Monkeys Jumping on a Bed

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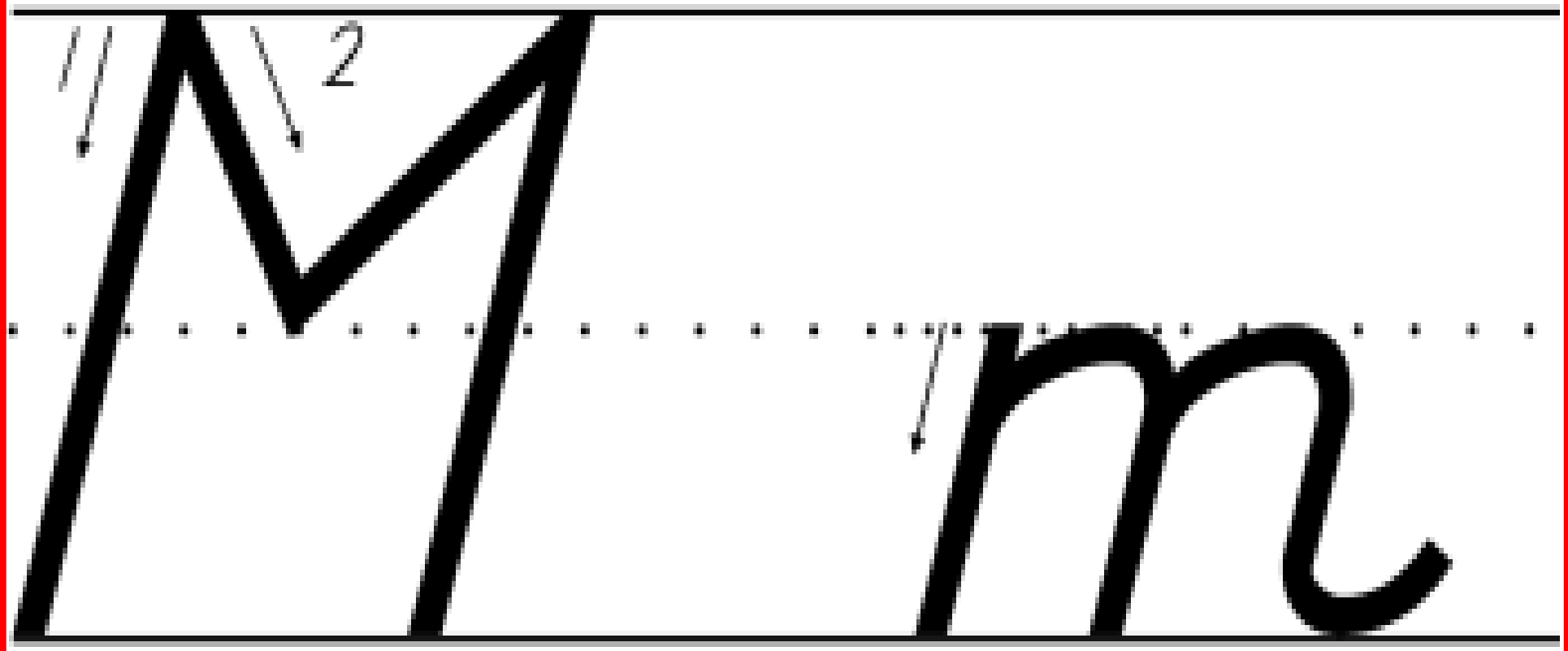

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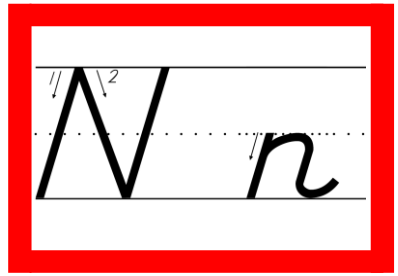
Question: What sound does Nn make?

Answer: /n/ "nnn" as in nose

Gesture: Curve your thumb and pointing finger (to look like a lower case n) and put it over your nose.



Visuals: nail, napkin, needle, nest, newspaper, nutcracker

Words with n sound in the beginning: net, nice, night, nine, no, nose not, nut

Food Fun: make a noodle nest from melted butterscotch chips, coconut, and chow mein noodles

Stories: Too Much Noise by Ann McGovern, There's a Nightmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer, and Never Talk to Strangers by Irma Joyce

Hook: Go on a nature walk and try to identify Nn things. Plant a few Nn items on your walk for more fun.

Hands On: Use noodles and nuts to make the letter Nn.

Song: I'm a Nut

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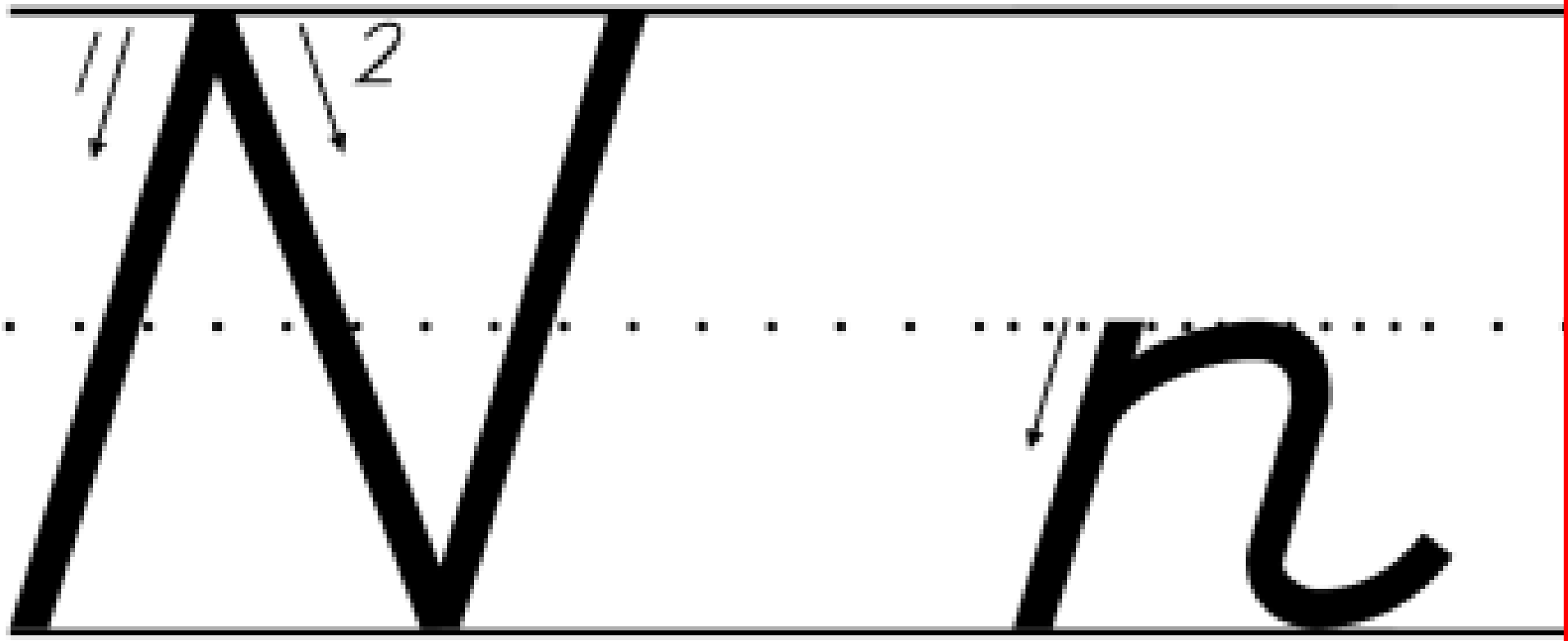

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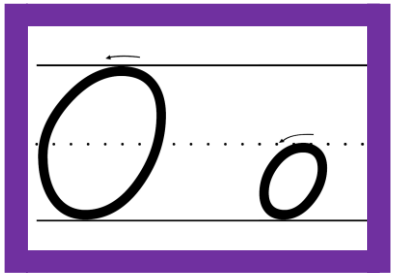
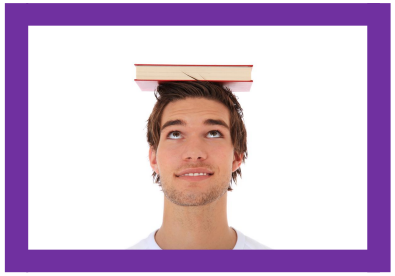
Question: What sound does short Oo make?

Answer: short /o/ as in on

Gesture: Lay your hand flat on top of your head.





Visuals: octagon, octopus, olives, ostrich, otter, oxen

Words with short vowel o in the middle: dog, donkey, dot, frog, hop, log, mop, rock, socks

Food Fun: omelettes or olives

Stories: Push, Pull, Empty, Full: a Book of Opposites by Tana Hoban

Hook: Turn the lights on and off for a few seconds and have the kids figure out what is going on. If they can't make sense of it, tell them it involves the letter Oo and do it some more until someone gets it.

Hands On: Make a layered art project of many different things glued **on** top of each other making the letter Oo.

Song: Play an opera song and see if the kids have can name the type of music.

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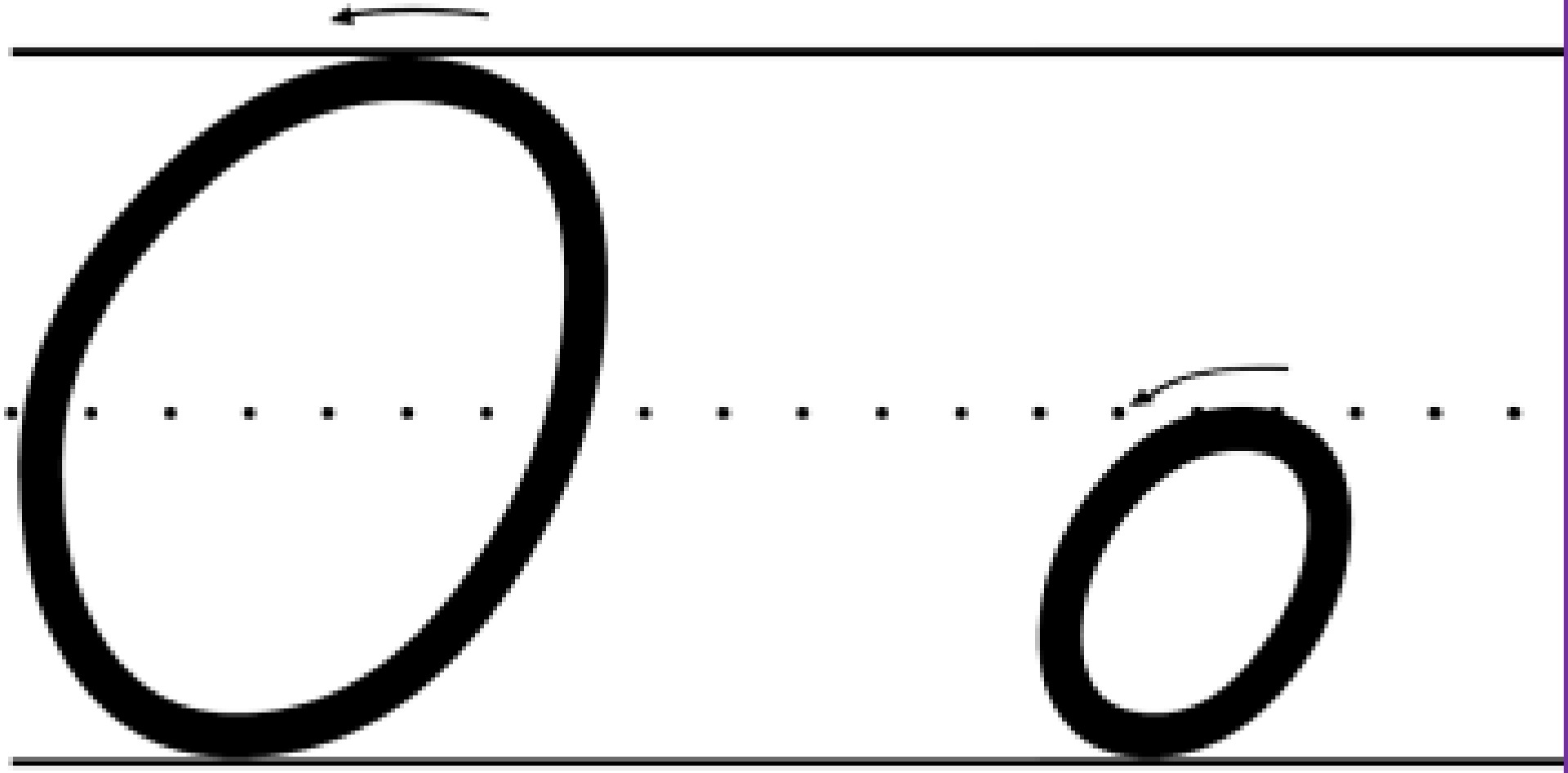

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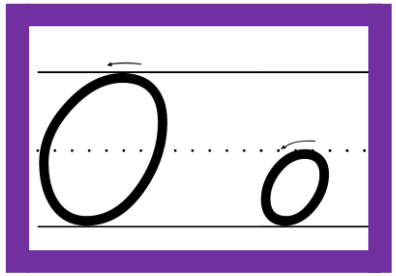
Question: What sound does long Oo make?

Answer: long /o/ as in open

Gesture: Use one hand to form an O and then pretend to push open a door.



Visuals: oatmeal, opal, open sign, oval

Words with long vowel o in the middle: bone, hope, nose, rope, rose, sofa, those

Food Fun: oatmeal and OJ (orange juice)

Stories: Over in the Meadow by Tana Hoban and The Old Woman folktale

Hook: Have all of the kids form a circle by holding hands. Once you have your circle created, see if anyone can name the letter the entire class is making.

Hands On: Use cherrios or any O shaped cereal to glue to make Oo.

Song: The Bear Went Over the Mountain

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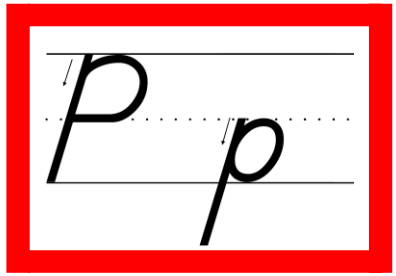
Question: What sound does Pp make?

Answer: /p/ "puh" as in paint

Gesture: Pretend to make a brushstroke up and down.



Visuals: paint, peach, peanut, pear, pen, pencil, penny, perfume, potato, puppet

Words with p sound in the beginning: pan, pen, pet, pig, pink, pot, pumpkin, purple

Food Fun: peanut butter and pretzels

Stories: Ping by Marjorie Flack, Pierre by Maurice Sendak, and The Three Pigs folktale

Hook: Make popcorn with the children. Have them listen to the sound as it pop and have them imitate it with their lips.

Hands On: Have the students finger paint the letter Pp on some pink or purple paper.

Song: Peter, Peter Pumpkin Eater and Peanut Butter and Jelly Song

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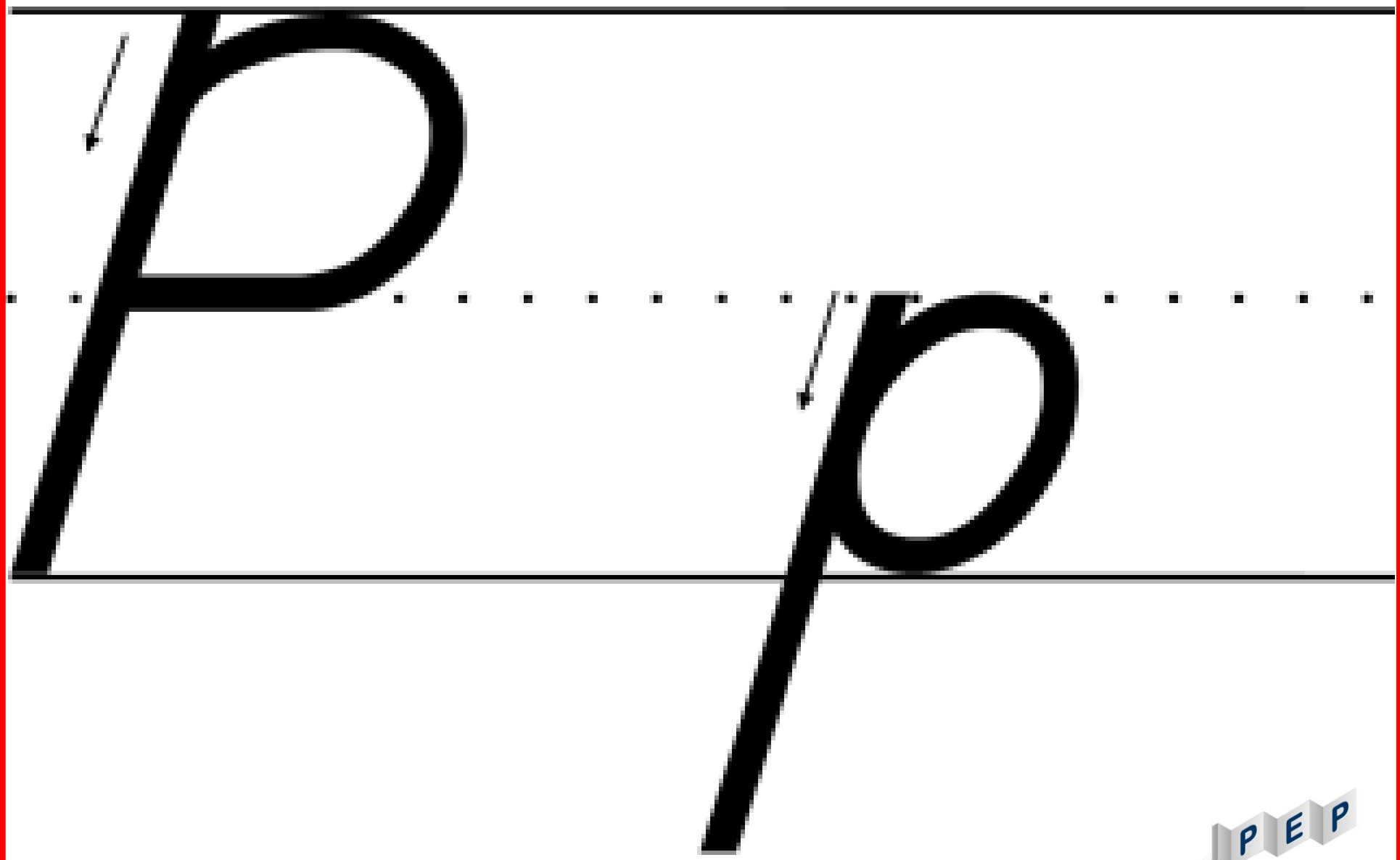

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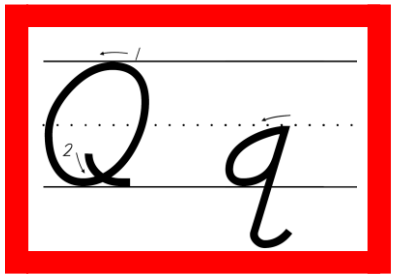
Question: What sound does Qq make?

Answer: /kw/ as in queen

Gesture: Hold your hand arched on top of your head like a crown for a queen.



Visuals: quarter, quartz rock, question mark, quill, quilt

Words with q sound in the beginning: quail, quarter, queen, quiet

Food Fun: make quesadillas

Stories: The Quarreling Book by Charlotte Zolotow

Hook: Bring in a quilt and describe how each square of it was handmade. Have kids make a picture of a Qq word to make a paper quilt.

Hands On: Make quarter etchings/rubbings in the shape of the letter Qq.

Song: Old MacDonald Had a Farm….focus on the duck part.

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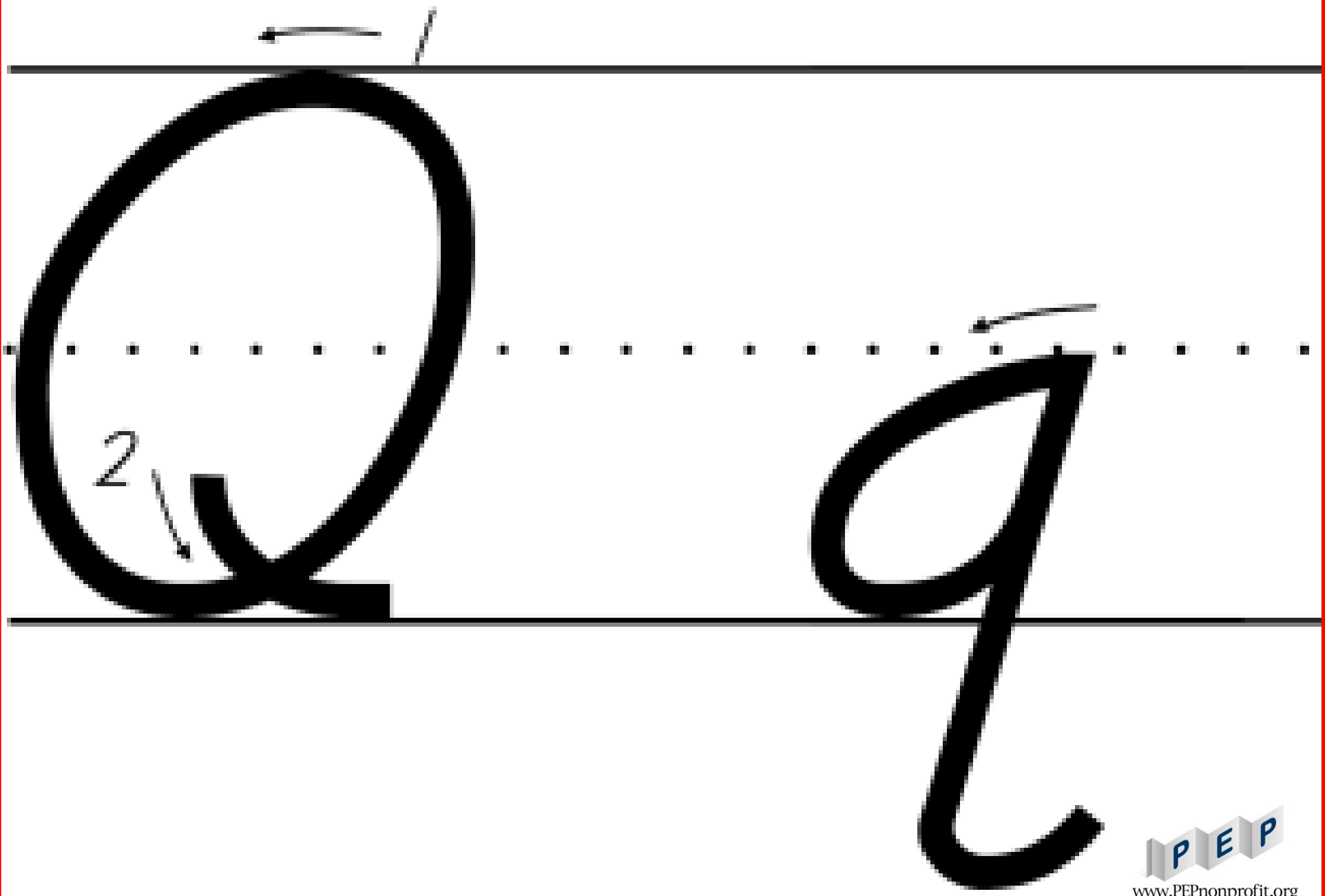
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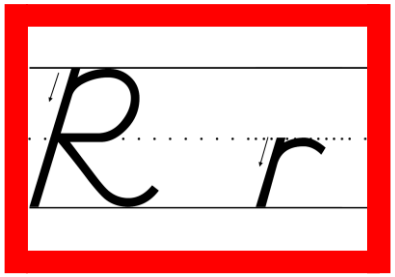
Question: What sound does Rr make?

Answer: /r/ "rrr" as in rabbit

Gesture: Using one hand, put bunny ears behind your head.



Visuals: rabbit, radio, rake, rice, ring, rocks, rope, ruler

Words with r sound in the beginning: ram, ran, rat, red, ring, rope, rub, run

Food Fun: rice pudding topped with raisins

Stories: Little Red Riding Hood and Rumplestiltskin

Hook: Hold a Rabbit Road Run Race outside. Designate a running course that will be known as the Rabbit Road Run Race.

Hands On: Use rice to cover some cut-outs of the letter Rr.

Song: Ring Around the Rosie and Rain, Rain, Go Away

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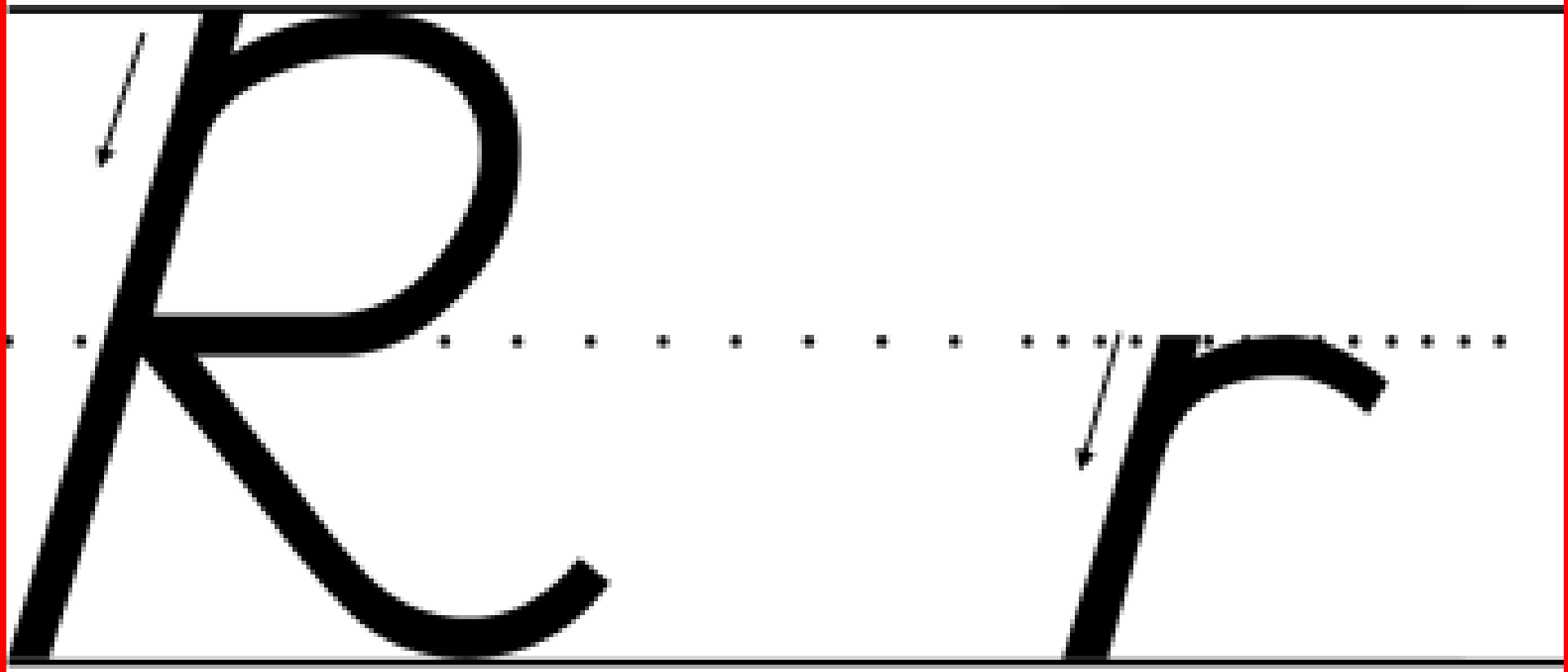

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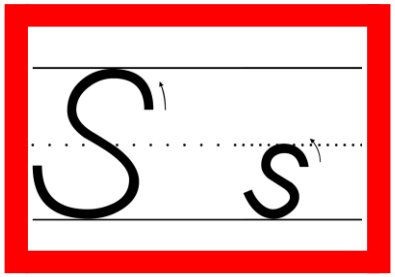
Question: What sound does Ss make?

Answer: /s/ "sss" as in snake

Gesture: Using one arm, swerve it back and forth like a slithering snake.



Visuals: sand, salt, scissors, seeds, skates, soap, socks, soup, spaghetti, sponge, spoon, stamp, star, string

Words with s sound in the beginning: said, saw, say, see, seven, sing, sit, six, so, socks, soon, sun

Food Fun: make stone soup

Stories: Space Case by James Marshall, Swimmy by Leo Lionni, Stone Soup folktale

Hook: Put a suitcase full of objects that begin with the sound of s in the front of the classroom. Have kids name the s things as you take them out.

Hands On: Make the letter Ss by gluing salt onto an S shape.

Song: Skip to My Lou and Simple Simon

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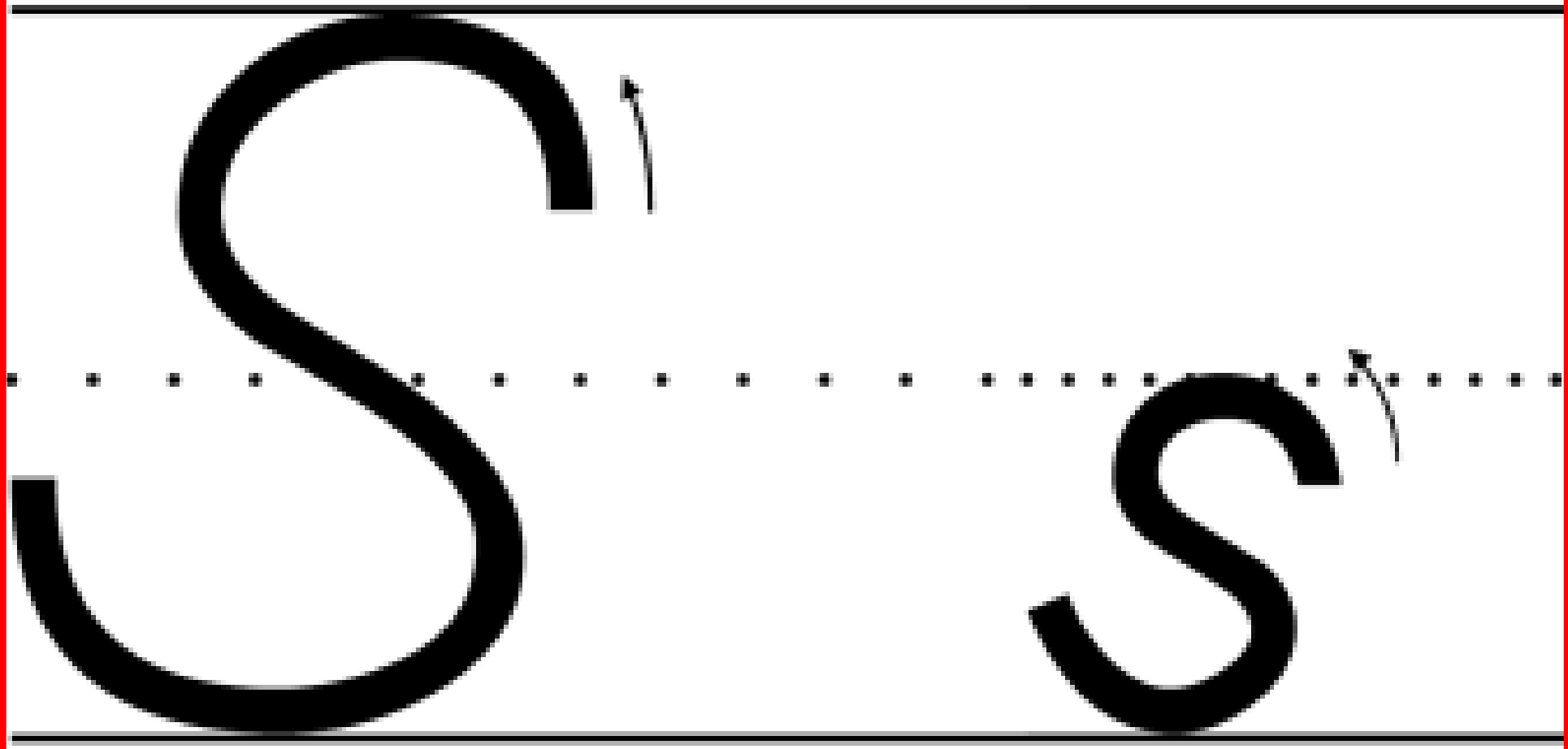

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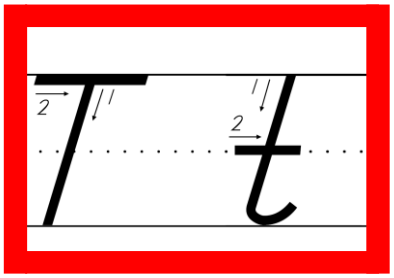
Question: What sound does Tt make?

Answer: /t/ as in two

Gesture: Hold up two fingers.



Visuals: tape, teapot, tissue, tomato, toothpick, triangle, truck, turkey

Words with t sound in the beginning: tap, teacher, ten, tiger, to, top, toy, two

Food Fun: make tortillas, tacos, or tostados

Stories: The Enormous Turnip by Leo Tolstoy, Tikki Tikki Turnip by Arlene Mosel, Teeny Tiny folktale

Hook: Fill a treasure trunk with things that begin with the sound /t/ to display.

Hands On: Use toothpicks to make the letter Tt.

Song: Turkey in the Straw, Teddy Bear Teddy Bear, and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

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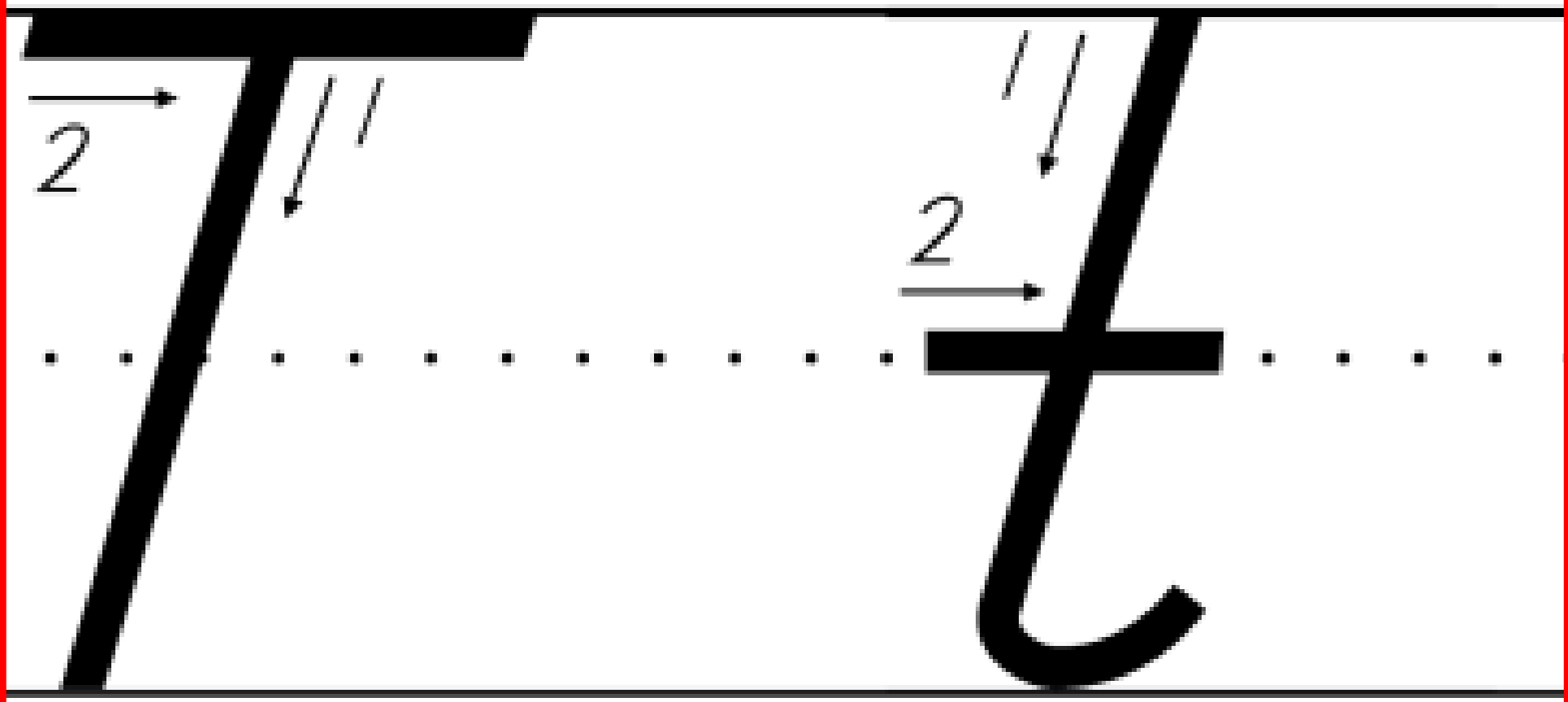

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Question: What sound does short Uu make?

Answer: short /u/ as in up

Gesture: Cup your hand in the shape of the letter U and lift it UP.

Visuals: umbrella, underwear, unhappy

Words with short vowel u in the middle: bun, bus, but, fun, hut, nut, puppy, run, sun

Food Fun: upside cake

Stories: Great Day for Up by Theo Selig and Umbrella by Tara Yashima

Hook: Before class, turn things in the classroom upside down (chairs, nametags). Put other things up high on the walls (pencil boxes, jackets).

Hands On: Let kids use their fingers to trace the letter Uu underwater. Place a Uu sheet under a clear tub filled with water for kids to trace.

Song: Under the Sea and Up, Down, Touch the Ground

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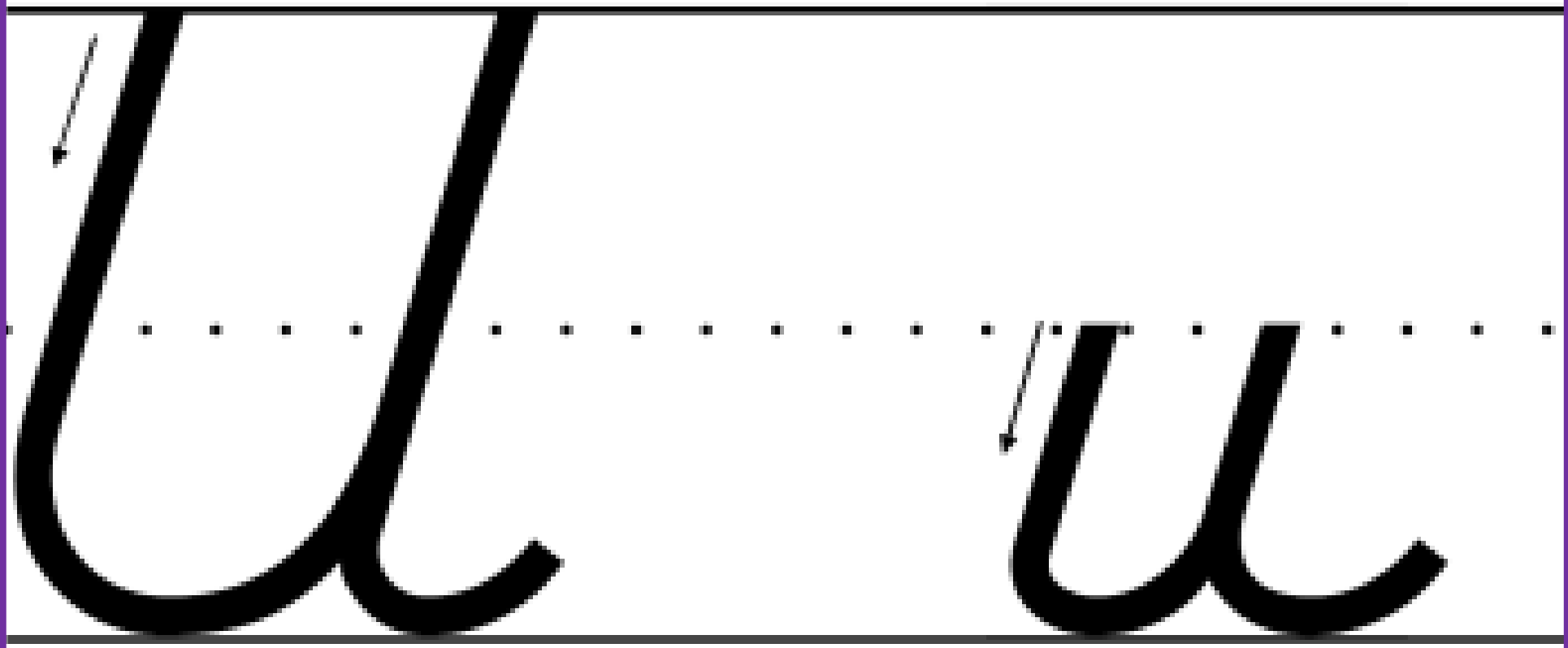

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Question: What sound does long Uu make?

Answer: long /u/ as in unicorn

Gesture: Point your finger and put your head on your forehead like a unicorn.

Visuals: unicorn, unicycle, uniform, ukulele

Words with long vowel u in the middle: cute, dude, huge, June, rule, tune

Food Fun: unicorn cones (pointy sugar cones) filled with a treat

Stories: Unicorn Dreams by Dyan Sheldon and Little Lost Unicorn by Lorna Hussey

Hook: Have all the kids wear jeans and a white shirt on the same day. Call it the Unicorn Uniform for room _ _ as you discuss long U words and visuals.

Hands On: Using glitter (from a magical place where unicorns live) to glue on a large letter Uu.

Song: The Unicorn Song by The Irish Rovers and The Unicorn Song from the movie Despicable Me

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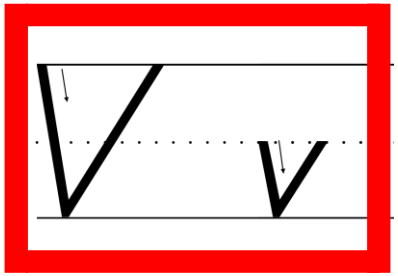
Question: What sound does Vv make?

Answer: /v/ as in violin

Gesture: Pretend to play the world's smallest violin using only your thumb and pointing finger, rubbing them together.



Visuals: vacuum, valentine, vase, vegetable, violin, volcano

Words with v sound in the beginning: van, vanilla, vase, very, vet

Food Fun: taste different kinds of vegetables

Stories: Mrs. Vinegar by Simon Stern

Hook: Make a large valentine with pictures of objects that begin with Vv sound on it.

Hands On: Spread some vanilla pudding on a plate and have kids use their fingers to write the letter Vv.

Song: It's a Volcano by Ron Brown

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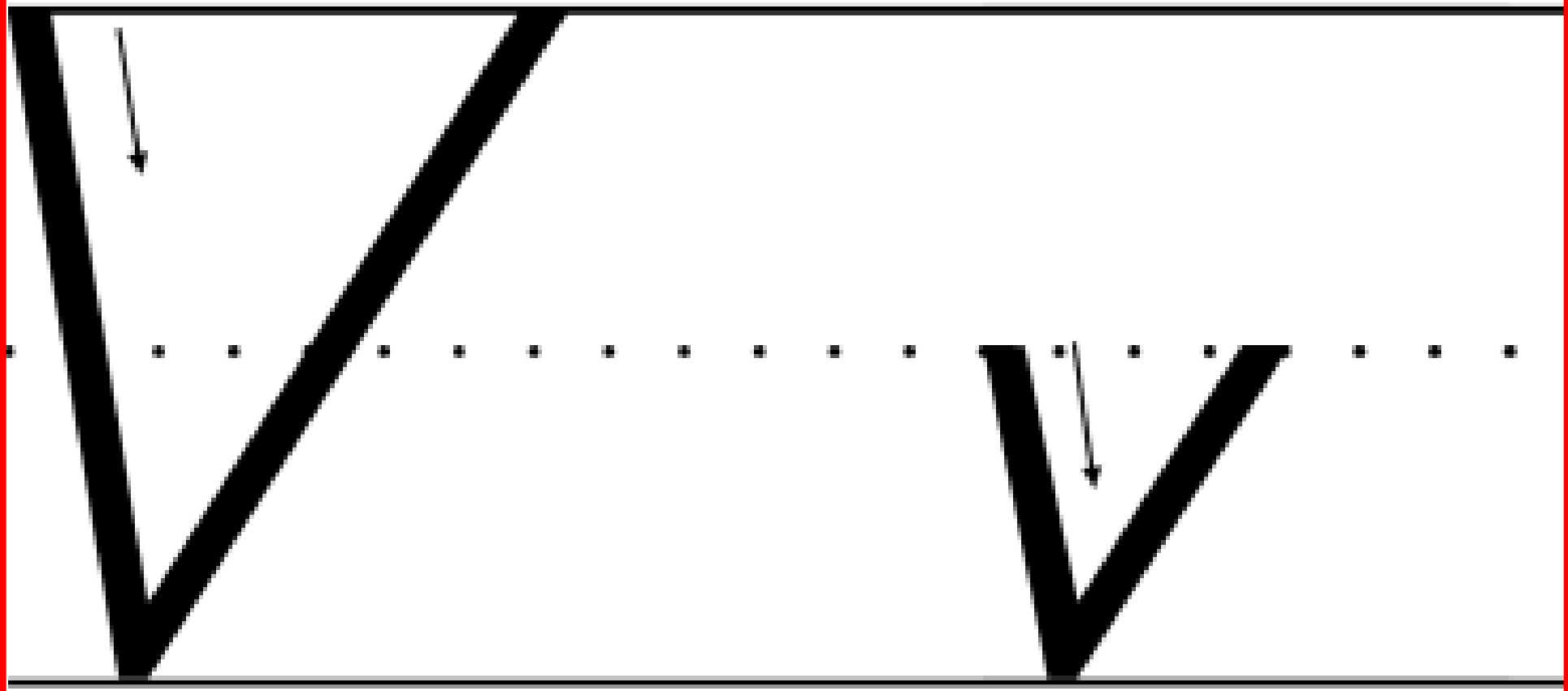

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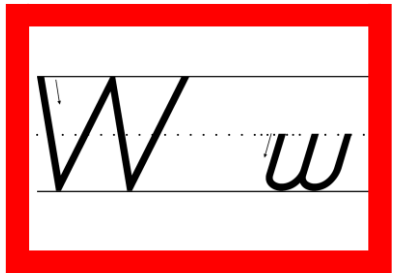
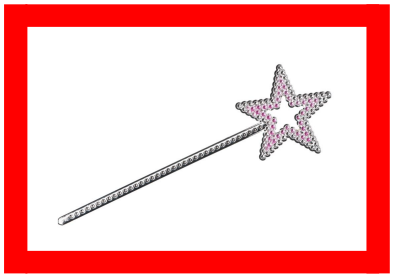
Question: What sound does Ww make?

Answer: /w/ "wuh" as in wand

Gesture: Pretend to wave a magic wand.





Visuals: waffle, wagon, wallet, wand, water, web, wheel, window, witch, wood

Words with w sound in the beginning: walk, wand, water, web, well, when, white, wiggle

Food Fun: watermelon and water

Stories: Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak, The Funny Little Woman by Arlene Mosel, and The Three Wishes folktale

Hook: Dress for a Wacky Wednesday and let kids come to class dressed in a wacky way.

Hands On: Cut the letter Ww from some wallpaper.

Song: Willaby Wallaby Woo

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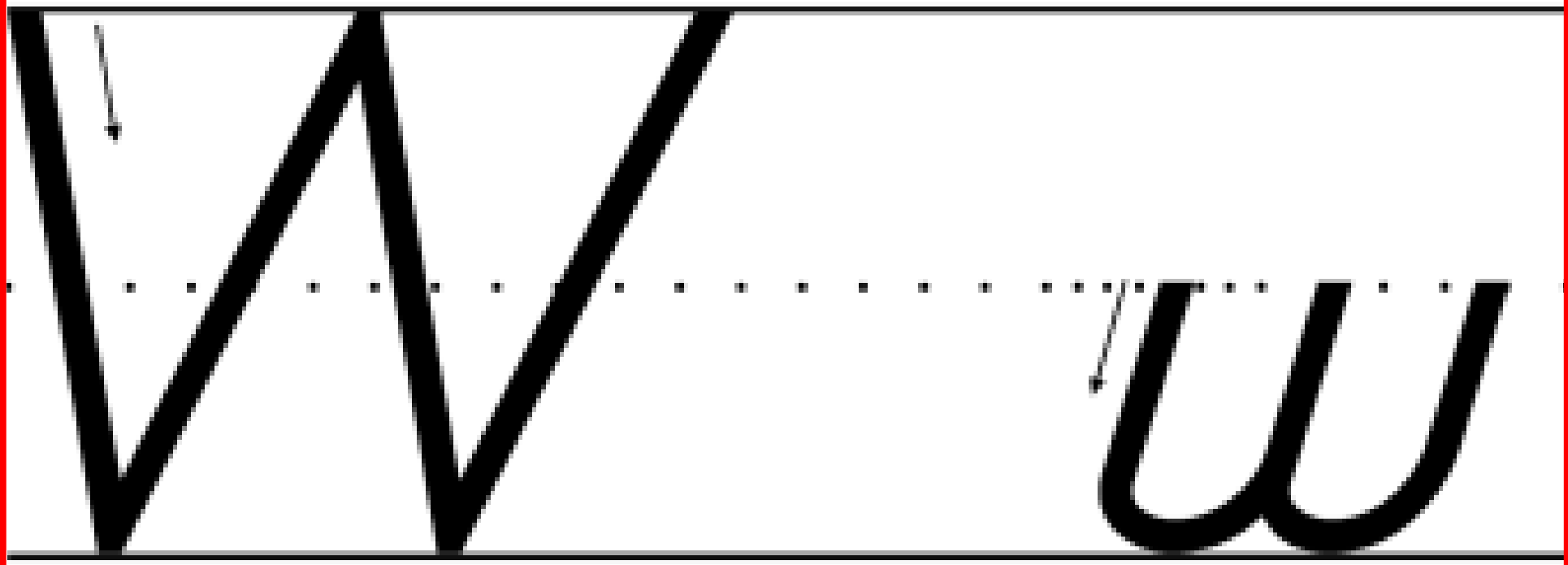

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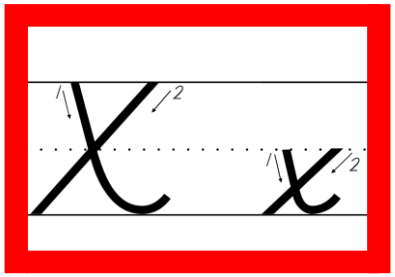
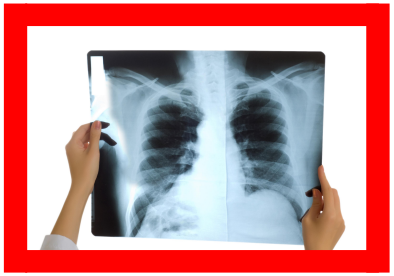
Question: What sound does Xx make?

Answer: /x/ as in x-ray

Gesture: cross your pointing and middle fingers like an X.





Visuals: x-ray (words ending with x: ax, box, fox, six, wax)

Words with x sound in the end: ax, box, fix, fox, six, wax

Food Fun: x marks the spot pirate golden nuggets (chicken nuggets)

Stories: Fox in Socks by Dr. Seuss

Hook: Create a treasure map with X marking the spot. As a class, follow the map and look for things that have the letter Xx in them (beginning or end).

Hands On: Have students write the letter Xx all over (and in) a box. They can use markers, pencils, crayons, or a stamp to leave their X.

Song: The X Song from Sesame Street

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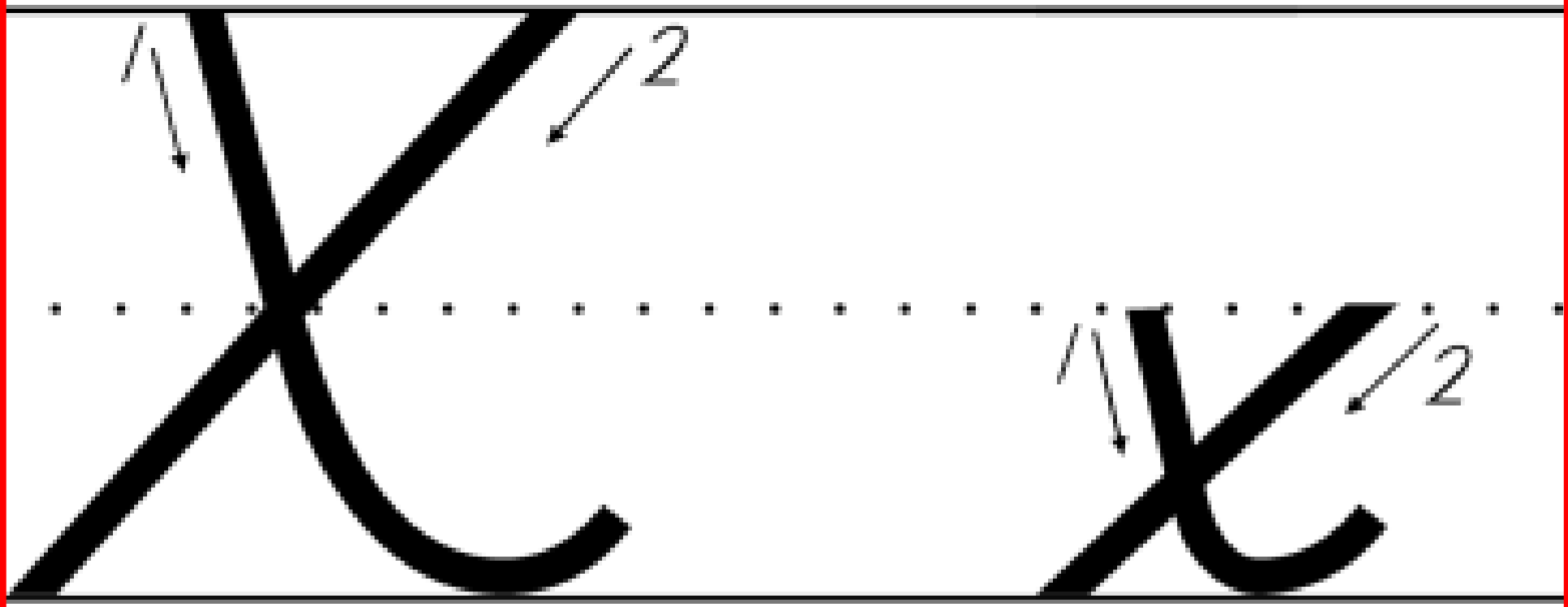

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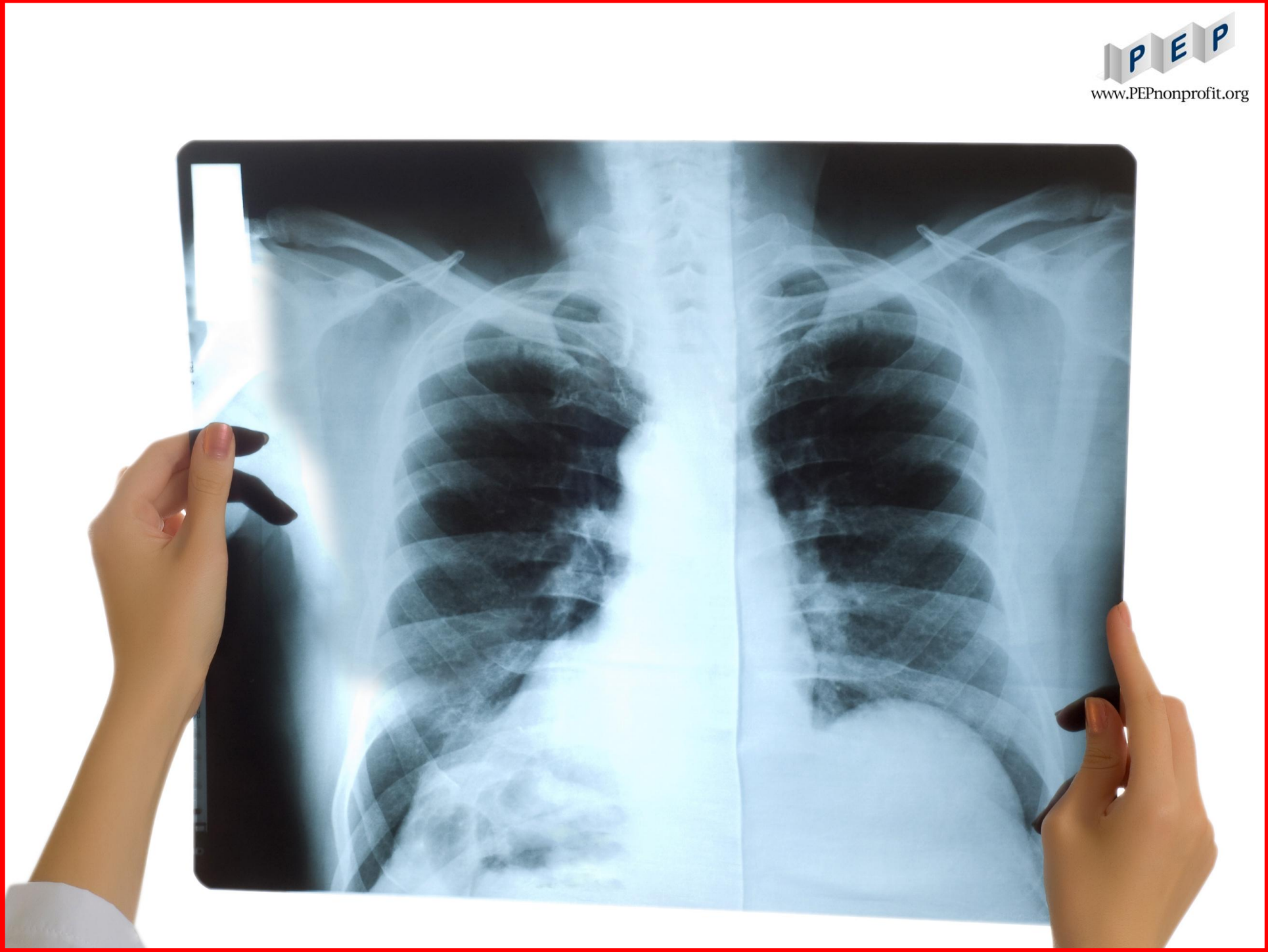
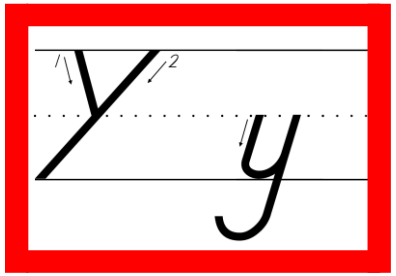


Question: What sound does Yy make?

Answer: /y/ "yuh" as in yo-yo

Gesture: Hold out hand, palm up, and pretend to dangle a yo-yo up and down.



Visuals: yam, yellow yarn, yo-yo, yogurt

Words with y sound in the beginning: yam, yellow, yes, you, your young

Food Fun: yogurt

Stories: Yummers! by James Marshall

Hook: Hide things that begin with the letter Yy in the school yard. When the kids find and identify them, bring the collection back to the classroom.

Hands On: Make the letter Yy using yellow yarn glued to yellow paper.

Song: Yankee Doodle

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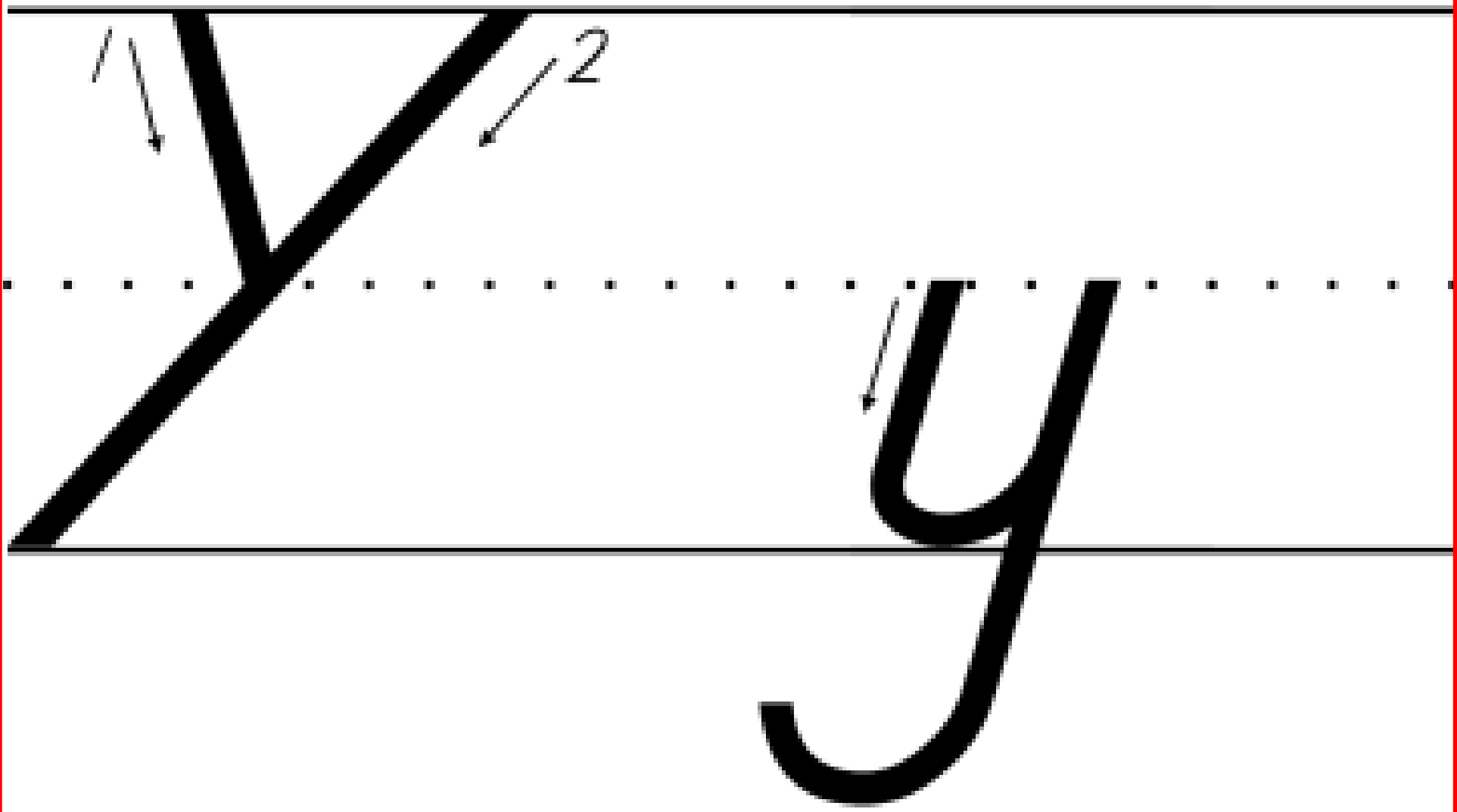

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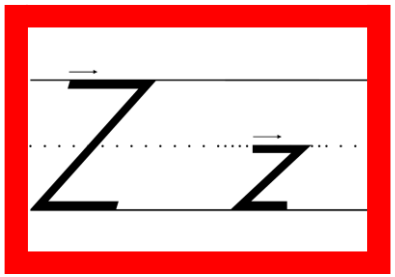
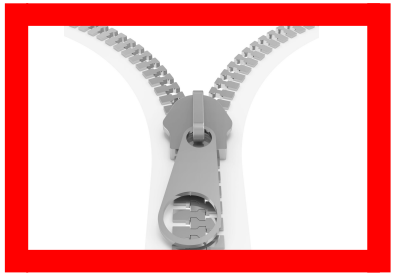
Question: What sound does Zz make?

Answer: /z/ "zzz" as in zipper

Gesture: Pretend to pull down your JACKET zipper.





Visuals: zebra, zero, zipper, zucchini

Words with z sound in the beginning: zebra, zero, zigzag, zipper, zoo, zoom

Food Fun: zucchini

Stories: If I Ran the Zoo by Dr. Seuss

Hook: Set up a Zz Zoo by setting up "cages" around the classroom with Zz things as the inhabitants.

Hands On: Create an art project of the letter Zz in a zigzag formation.

Song: Zippity Do Dah and Zero to Hero

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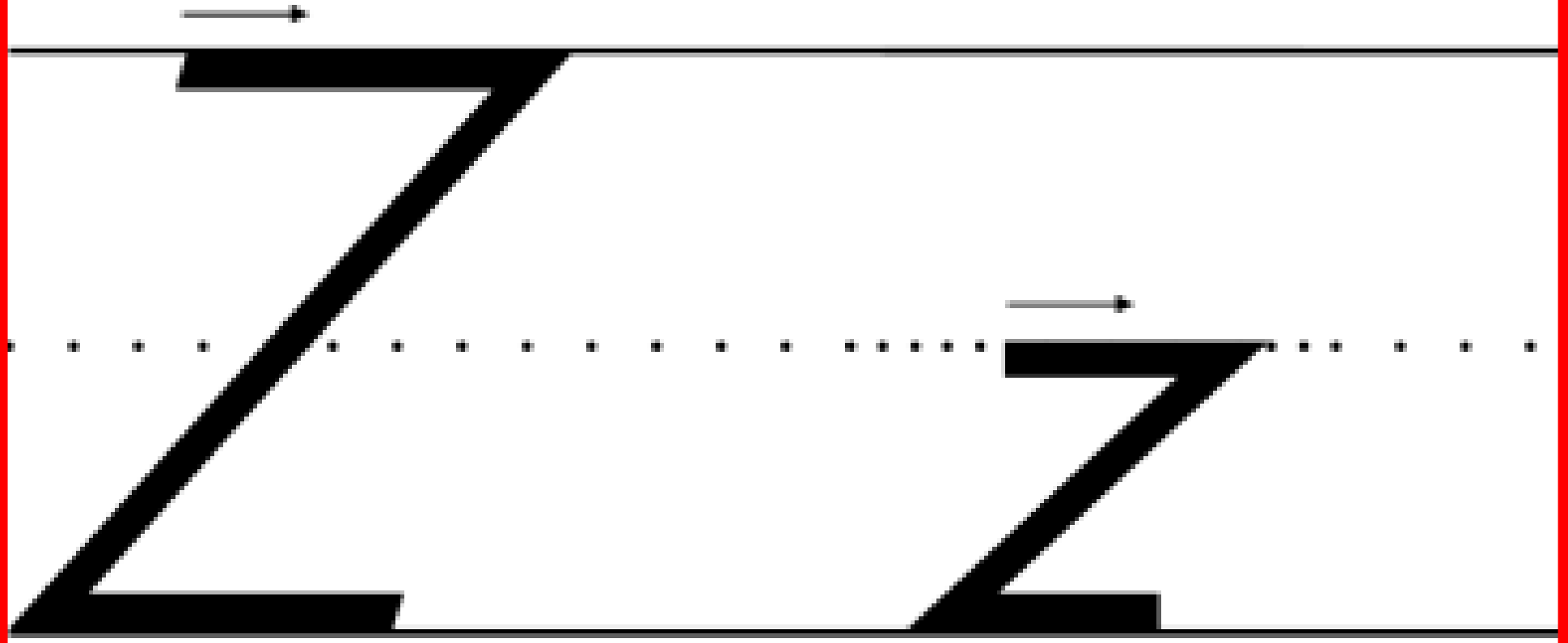

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