Symbol to Sound Identification

How to Help Your Child Learn the Sounds That Letters Make

Children need to learn the sounds that letters make. For example, they need to know that "m" sounds like "mmm" as in man. Teachers call learning the sounds that letters make Symbol to Sound Identification. The letter is a symbol. Letters just look like lines and circles until children learn that they stand for sounds. It helps if children already know the alphabet—the symbols—before they try to learn the sounds.

Knowing the sounds that letters make helps children learn to read by sounding out words.

There are many fun games that you can play with children to help them learn the sounds that letters make. Here are a few for you to try.

Which Picture Starts With This Sound?

Cut apart the letters and pictures.
Start with a few letters and pictures (Use 3 or 4).
Put the letters into a box or bowl.
Put the pictures that go with the letters on a table or floor. Let your child pick one letter out of the box and then find the picture that starts with that letter sound. For example "Kk" goes with the picture of the key. Put the letter and matching picture on one side of the table. Then have your child pick another letter.

If this is hard for your child, ask your child what sound the letter makes and remind him if he has forgotten. Then, encourage him to say the name of the item in the pictures and find the one that starts with the sound the letter makes.

As your child gets good at this game, use more letters and pictures when you play it. Finally, use all the letters and pictures, and see if your child can match the sounds all the letters make with the pictures that start with that sound.

Is There a Sssink at Our House?

Show your child a letter of the alphabet, like "s." Ask your child what sound "s" makes. If she doesn't know, say "sss." Let her carry the "s" around the house or yard looking for things that start with the "s" sound, like a sink, a sofa, or a sock. If she can't think of anything, ask if there is a "sssnail" in the house or a "sssnake" in the house. Exaggerate the "s" sound and ask her to say it with you. You can be "sssilly." Use each letter of the alphabet. There are suggestions for other things to find below.

Letter	Things Around the House
Aa	apple, animal, ant
Bb	bottle, bed, bathtub, butterfly
Cc	cat, can, coat, car
Dd	doll, dog, detergent, dish
Ee	elbow, elephant, elf
Ff	floor, food, father, face, foot
Gg	game, garage, garden, grass, gum
Hh	house, hammer, hand, hat, hair
Ii	ice, ice cream, ivy
Jj	jam, jar, jump rope, jacket
Kk	kitten, ketchup, key
Ll	ladder, leaf, lock, light
Mm	money, mail, mother, microwave, milk
Nn	nail, nose, neck, nickel
Oo	oatmeal, old, open
Pp	pants, paper, popcorn, pepper, purse
Qq	quarter, quart, quilt, quiet
Rr	red, ring, rock, rug
Ss	sack, salt, sink, spoon
Tt	table, tape, teeth, tongue
Uu	uncle, umbrella, upstairs, underwear
Vv	vacuum, vinegar, vase, vegetable
Ww	wagon, wall, watch, water
Xx	xylophone (x sounds like "z")
Yy	yard, yellow, yo-yo
Zz	zucchini, zebra, zipper

Just the Right Sound

Use the sheets of pictures and words with the missing first letter.

_ a t

Show your child the picture of the cat. Point to the space where the letter is missing. Ask, "Which letter is missing? Is it "c", "r", or "s"? Encourage your child to sound out the word, using the different letters to see which one is right (cat, rat, sat).

Keep going until your child gets tired. Then, play the game another day with new pictures.

Sound Step

Cut apart the *Sound Step* letters. Put half of them on the floor. Tell your child that you will make the sound of a letter, and he should step on that letter. Show him how to play the game to make sure he understands how to do it. Start slowly and repeat the sound of the letter until your child steps on the right letter. As your child learns how to play, you can go faster.

When your child knows the sounds these letters make, put them away and get out the other letters.

If your child gets really good at this game, you can put out all the letters at once. For a change, have your child make the sound of the letter, and you step on the correct letter.

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Which Picture Starts With This Sound?

A a	B b
C c	D d
E e	F f
G g	H h

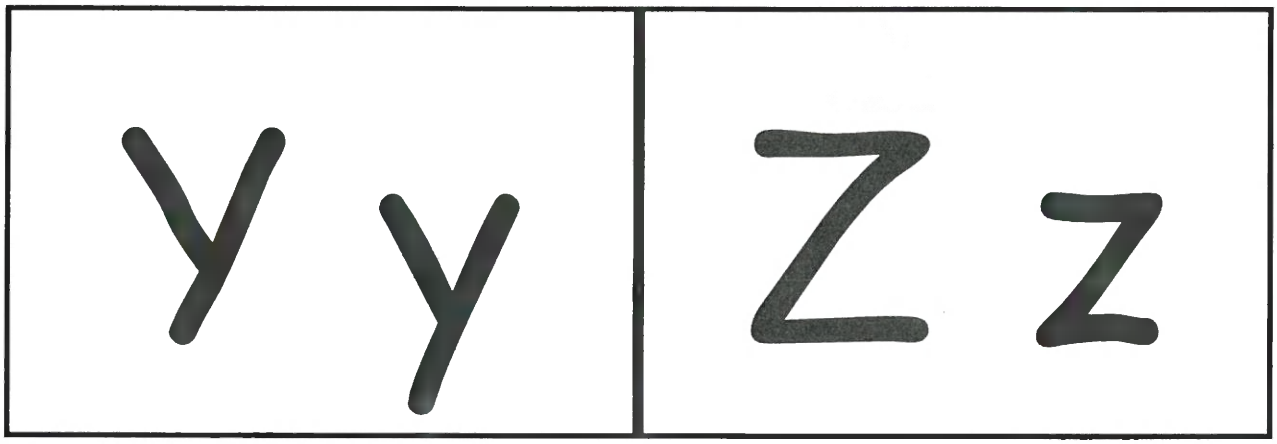
Which Picture Starts With This Sound?

I i	J j
K k	L l
M m	N n
O o	P p

Which Picture Starts With This Sound?

Q q	R r
S s	T t
U u	V v
W w	X x

Which Picture Starts With This Sound?



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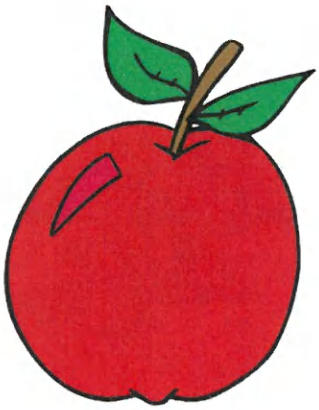

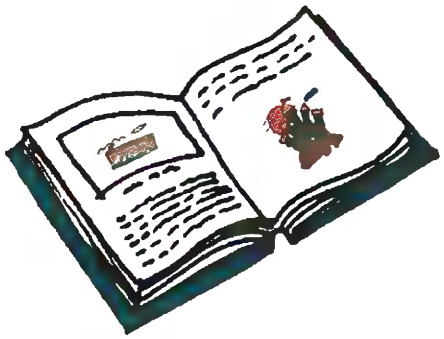

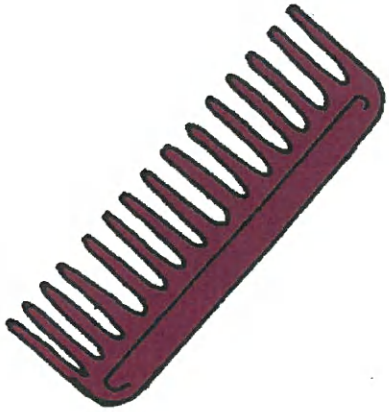

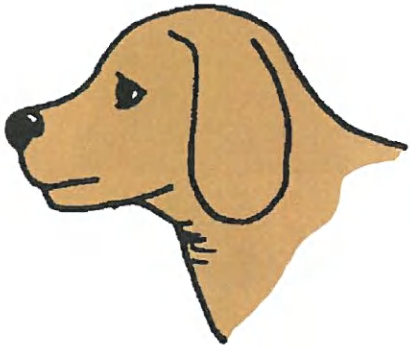

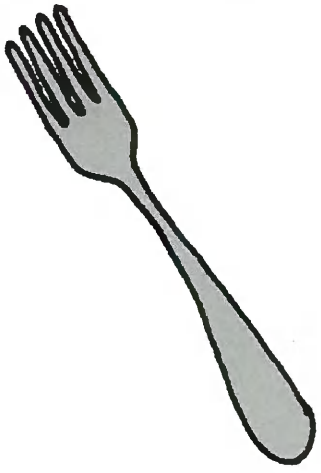

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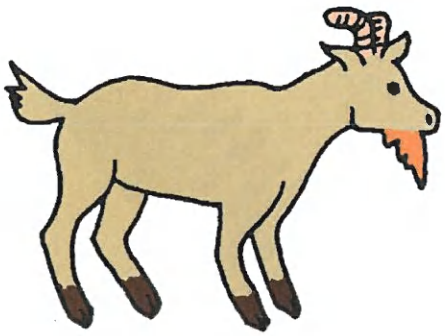

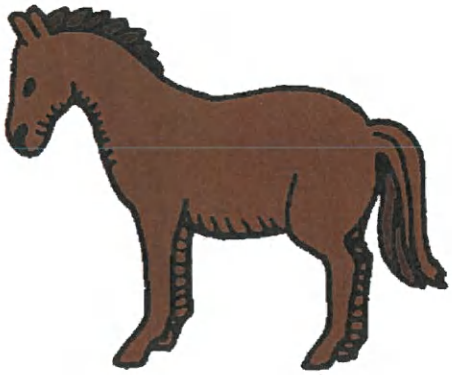

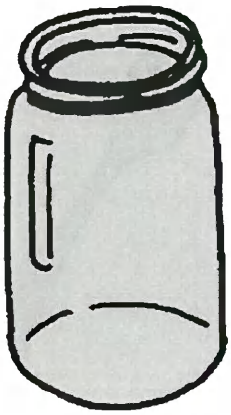

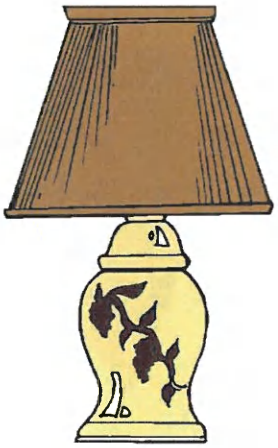

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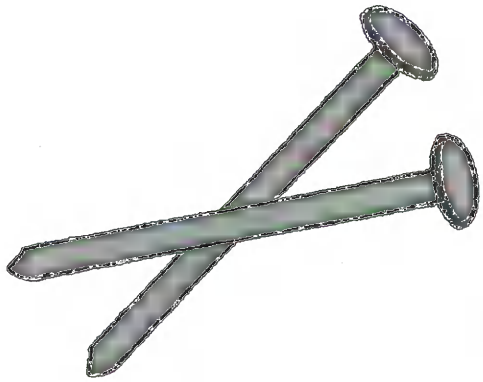

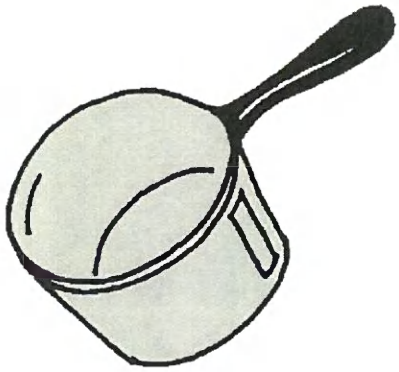

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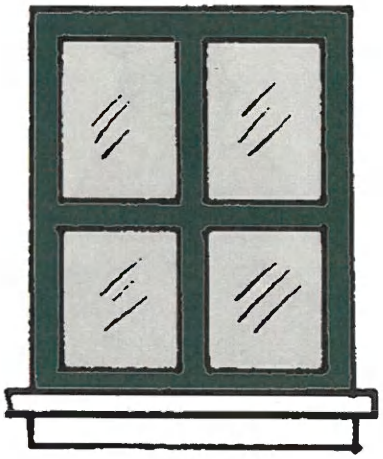

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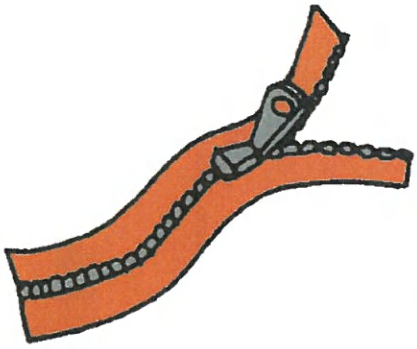
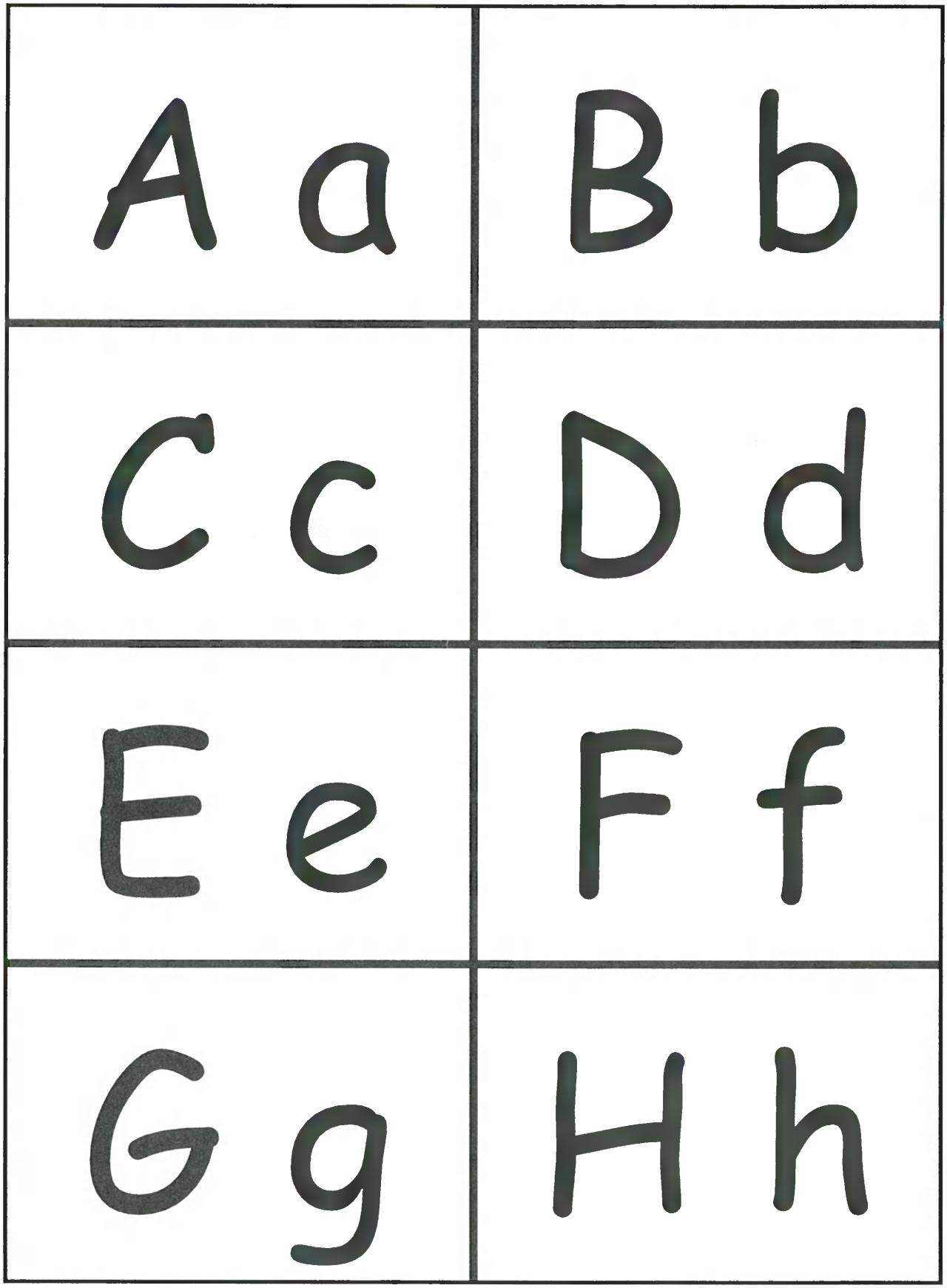


Is There a Sssink at Our House?



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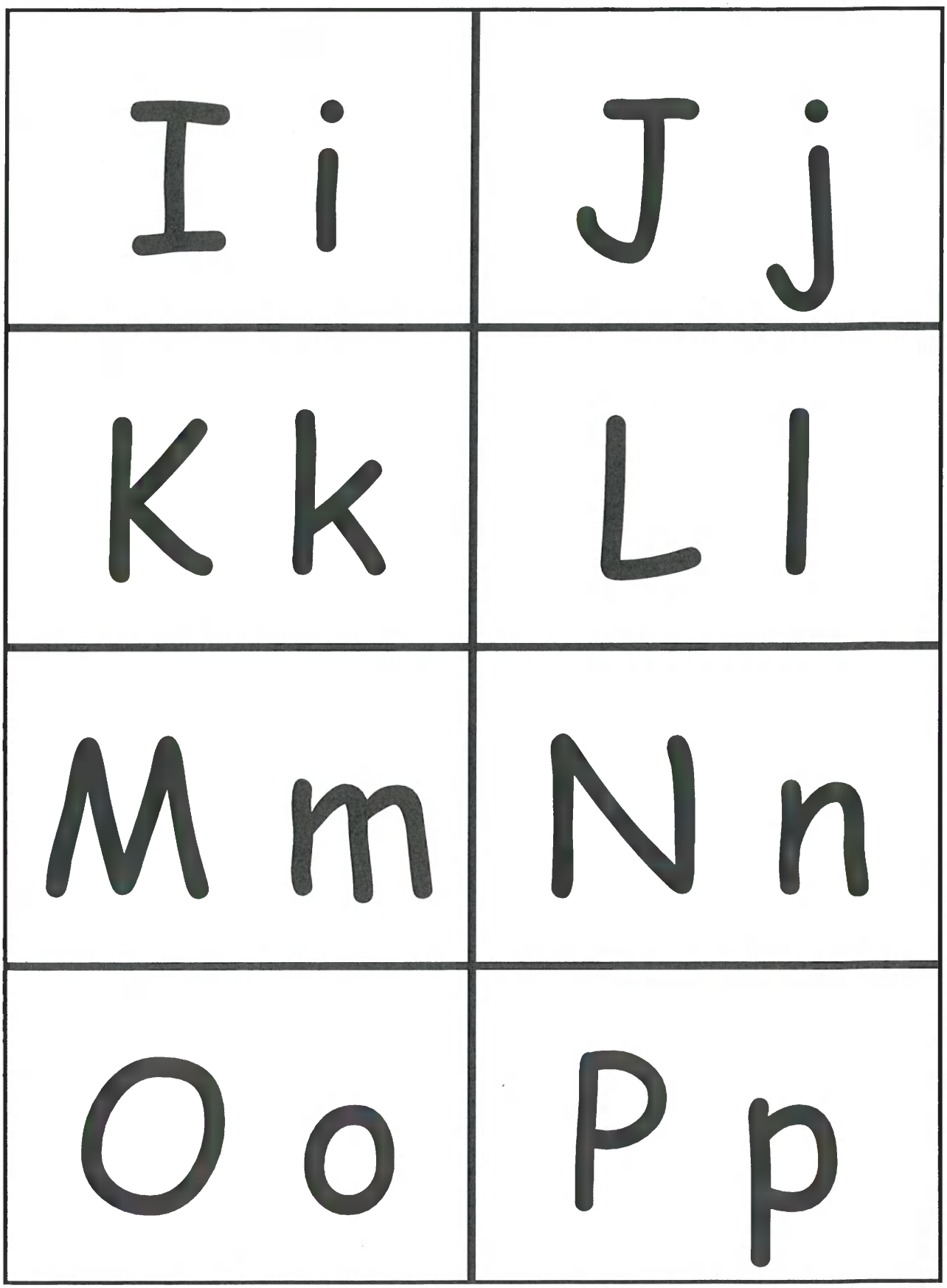

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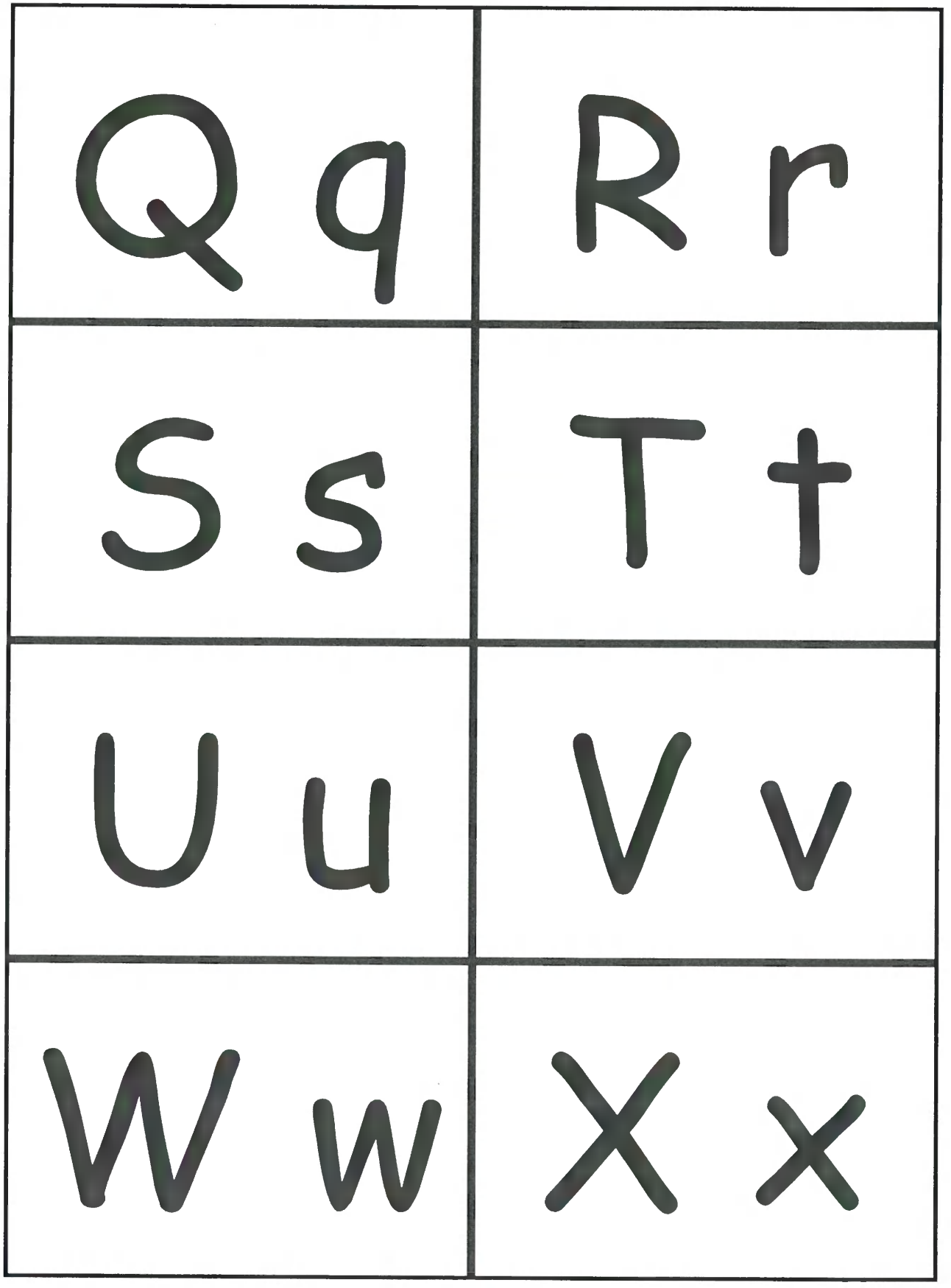

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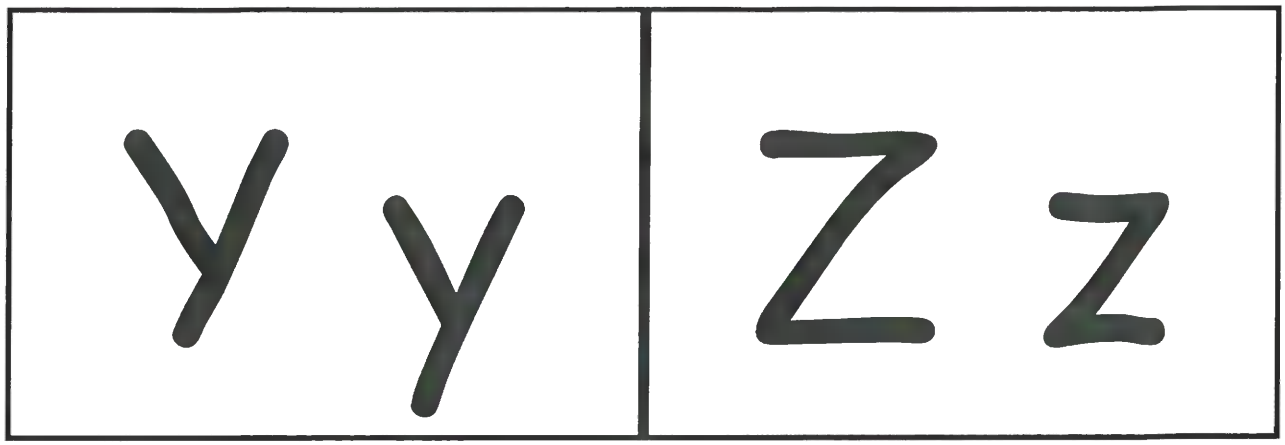


Just the Right Sound

__ a t

Which letter is it
c, r or s?

__ o u s e

Which letter is it
h, l or m?

__ a w

Which letter is it
j, p or r?

__ i s h

Which letter is it
w, f or d?

Just the Right Sound

__ a n d

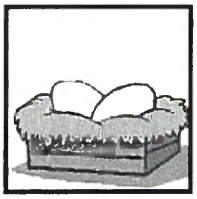
Which letter is it
b, h or s?

__ o a t

Which letter is it
b, c or g?

__ u g

Which letter is it
b, d or l?



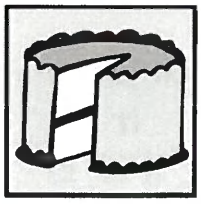
__ e s t

Which letter is it
n, r or t?

Just the Right Sound

__ o g

Which letter is it
d, l or f?



__ a k e

Which letter is it
c, l or t?

__ u n

Which letter is it
f, s or r?

__ u c k

Which letter is it
d, l or y?

Sound Step	Sound Step
A a	B b

Sound Step	Sound Step
C c	D d

Sound Step	Sound Step
E e	F f

Sound Step	Sound Step
G g	H h

Sound Step	Sound Step
I i	J j

Sound Step	Sound Step
K k	L l

Sound Step	Sound Step
M m	N n

Sound Step	Sound Step
O o	P p

Sound Step	Sound Step
Q q	R r

Sound Step	Sound Step
S s	T t

Sound Step	Sound Step
U u	V v

Sound Step	Sound Step
W w	X x

Sound Step	Sound Step
Y y	Z z