



LEVEL 1

A Gentle Feast

*100 Gentle Lessons
in Manuscript Handwriting*

CHARLOTTE MASON HANDWRITING LESSONS

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**THANK YOU FOR PURCHASING THE 100 GENTLE
LESSONS IN MANUSCRIPT WRITING.**

*Blessings,
Julie Ross*

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Some Important Principles

1. Teach your child to hold his pencil correctly from the start.

“It would be a great gain if children were taught from the first to hold the pen between the first and second fingers, steadying it with the thumb. This position avoids the uncomfortable strain on the muscles produced by the usual way of holding a pen—a strain which causes writer's cramp in later days when there is much writing to be done. The pen should be held in a comfortable position, rather near the point, fingers and thumb somewhat bent, and the hand resting on the paper. The writer should also be allowed to support himself with the left hand on the paper, and should write in an easy position, with bent head but not with stooping figure. It would be unnecessary to say that the flat of the nib should be used if children had not a happy gift for making spider marks with the nib held sideways. In all writing lessons, free use should be made of the black-board by both teacher and children by way of model and practice.” -Charlotte Mason, Volume 1 p. 239

I recommend using half a crayon on these beginning lessons over a pencil. This will help ensure proper pencil grip. Taking the time to instill a proper grip from the beginning, will make handwriting much easier for your child down the road.



2. Ensure proper desk height, posture, and paper placement.

“For the writing position children should sit so that light reaches them from the left, and desk or table should be at a comfortable height.” - Volume 1, p. 239

Your child should be able to reach the floor with their backs straight up against the back of their chair. Do not allow your child to do their handwriting on the floor, laying on the couch, or in any other improper position. This will only lead to bad habits down the road.

POSTURE

Feet flat on the floor
Back upright against back of chair
Elbows off table
Shoulders down

PAPER PLACEMENT

The paper should be tilted up with the writing hand.



LEFT-HANDED



RIGHT-HANDED

3. Model each letter on a chalkboard and let your child practice on that before moving to pencil and paper.

“One letter should be perfectly formed in a day, and the next day the same elemental forms repeated in another letter, until they become familiar. By-and-by copies, three or four of the letters they have learned grouped into a word--'man,' 'aunt'; the lesson to be the production of the written word once without a single fault in any letter. At this stage the chalk and blackboard are better than pen and paper, as it is well that the child should rub out and rub out until his own eye is satisfied with the word or letter he has written.” - Volume 1, p.234

I recommend having your child practice the letters in the air, on a chalkboard, and on a piece of sandpaper with a crayon. The chalkboard and sandpaper are necessary practice steps because they provide resistance to help train hand-muscle memory.

4. Do not let slipshod habits develop.

“I can only offer a few hints on the teaching of writing, though much might be said. First, let the child accomplish something perfectly in every lesson--a stroke, a pothook, a letter. Let the writing lesson be short; it should not last more than five or ten minutes. Ease in writing comes by practice; but that must be secured later. In the meantime, the thing to be avoided is the habit of careless work--humpy m's, angular o's.” - Volume 1, p. 233

5. Keep lessons short and focus on a few perfect letters.

“Let the writing lesson be short; it should not last more than five or ten minutes.”

Volume 1 p.233

“His writing task is to produce six perfect m's: he writes six lines with only one good m in each line, the time for the writing lesson is over and he has none for himself; or, he is able to point out six good m's in his first line, and he has the rest of the time to draw steamboats and railway trains." - Volume 1, p.143

6. Have your child point out the errors between his writing and the model.

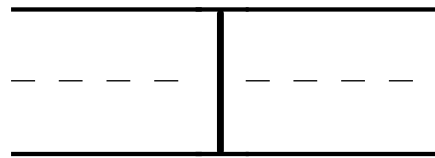
“If he produces a faulty pair, get him to point out the fault, and persevere until he has produced his task; if he does not do it to-day, let him go on to-morrow and the next day, and when the six perfect strokes appear, let it be an occasion of triumph. Closely connected with this habit of 'perfect work' is that of finishing whatever is taken in hand. The child should rarely be allowed to set his hand to a new undertaking until the last is finished.”-Volume 1 p.160

I always have my child circle their best letter, and we talk about why they think that. This is similar to what Miss Mason says above, but a more positive spin.

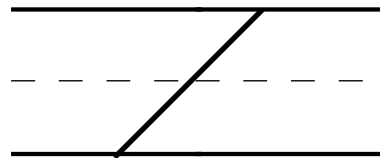
Before You Begin

If your child has never done a handwriting program before, you will want to spend some time teaching the basic strokes in a more hands on manner before introducing pencil and paper.

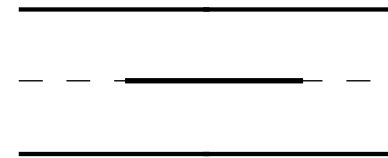
Have your child practice the strokes below in the air, on a chalkboard, and on a piece of sandpaper with a crayon. This might need to be done over several lessons before your child is ready to practice on paper.



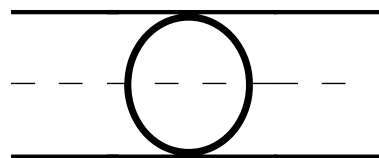
Vertical



Slant



Horizontal



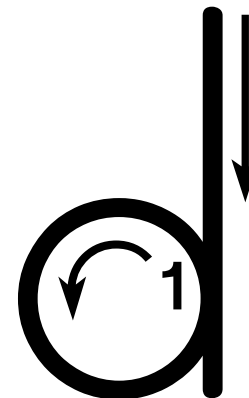
Circle

“A child must first learn to control his hand and constrain it to obey his eye.” - Volume I, p. 236

Lesson

4

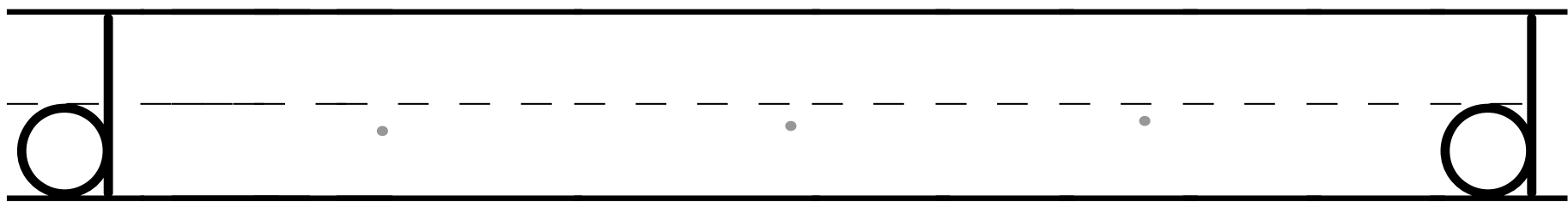
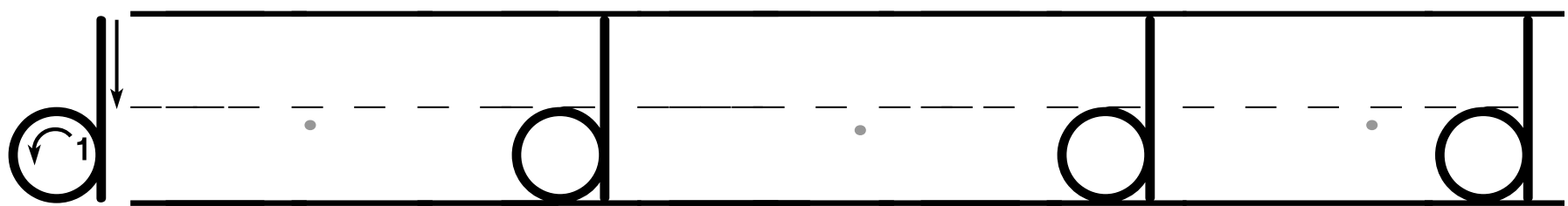
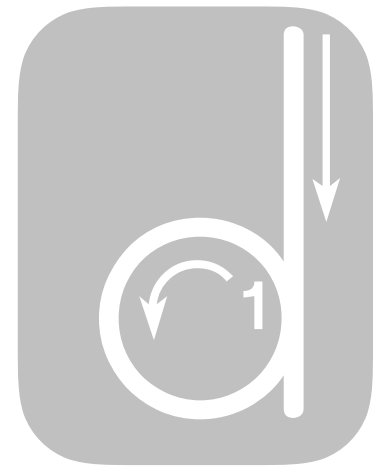
d o l l



HOGWARTH, WILLIAM. THE DOLL'S TEA PARTY. C. 1730

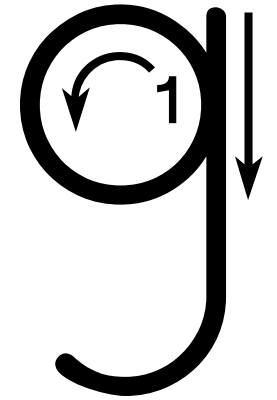
Lesson

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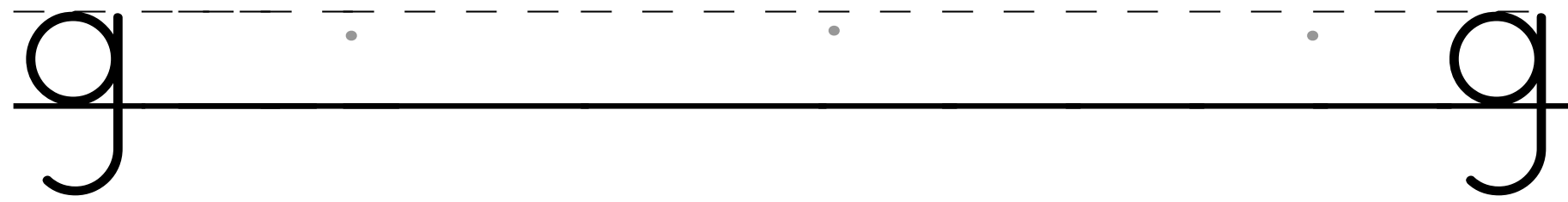
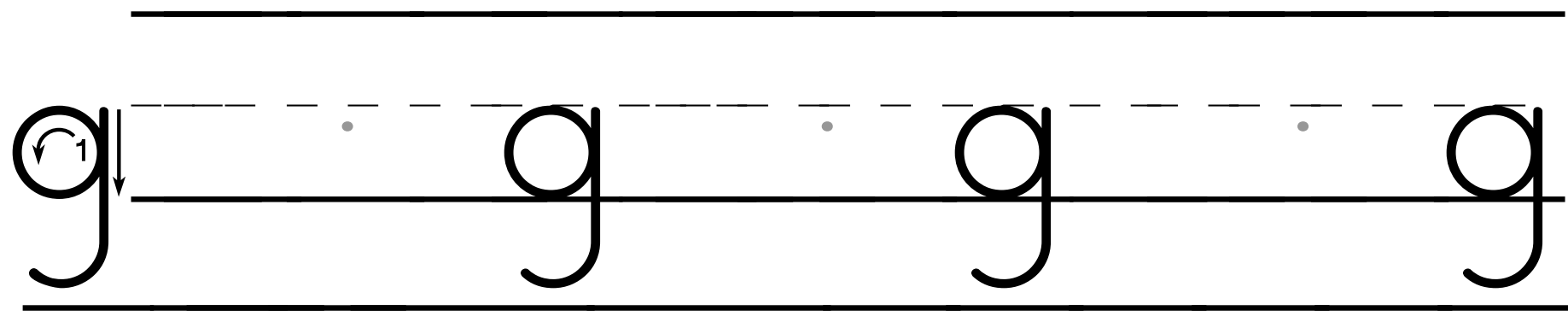
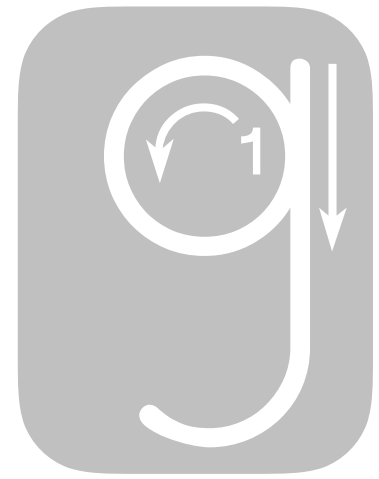
Lesson
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goat



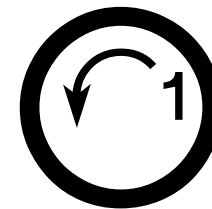
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Lesson
5



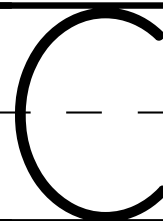
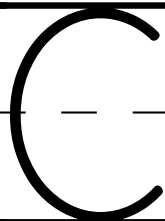
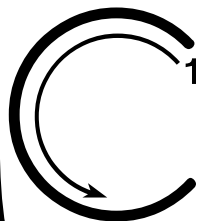
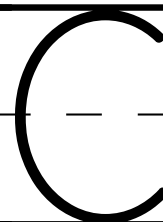
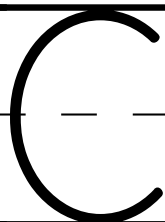
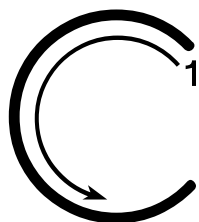
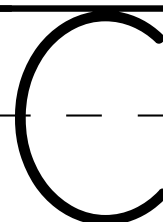
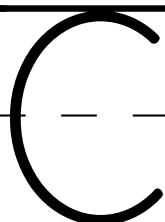
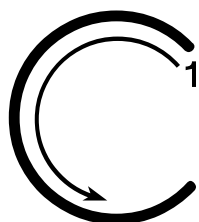
Lesson
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OWL



JOHN JAMES AUDUBON. PLATE 46. BARRED OWL. C. 1827-1838

Lesson
50



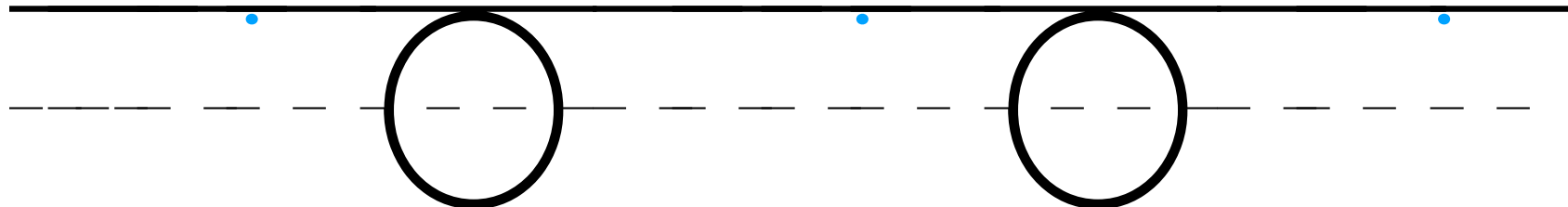
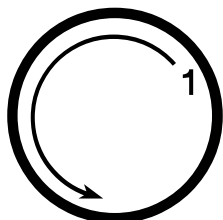
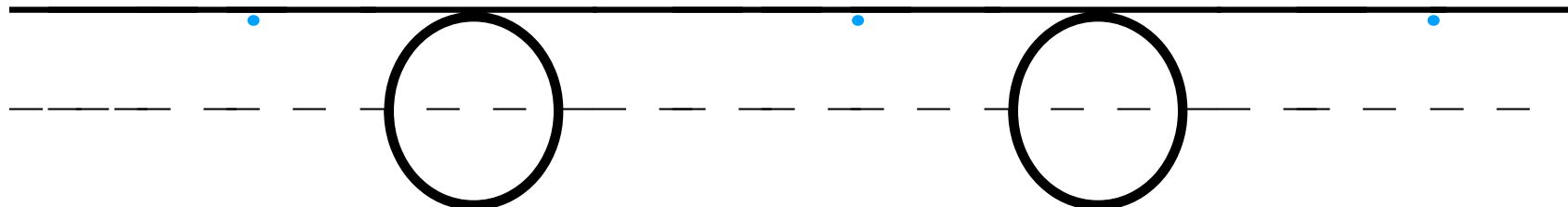
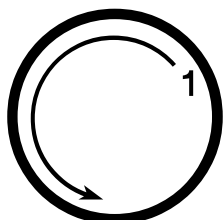
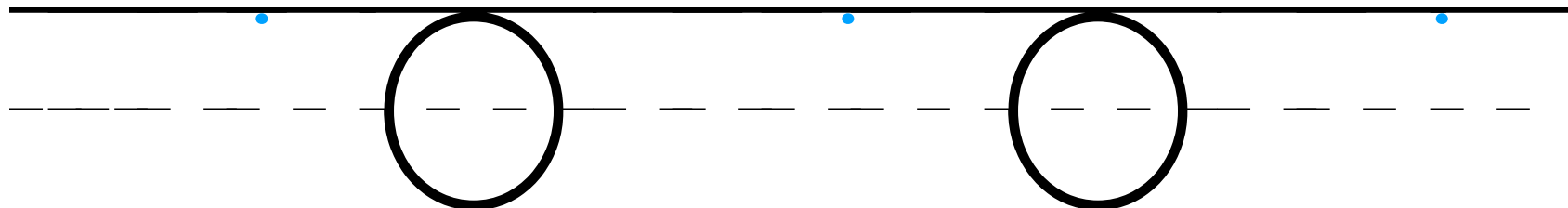
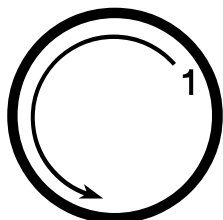
Lesson
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C Canada

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Lesson
51



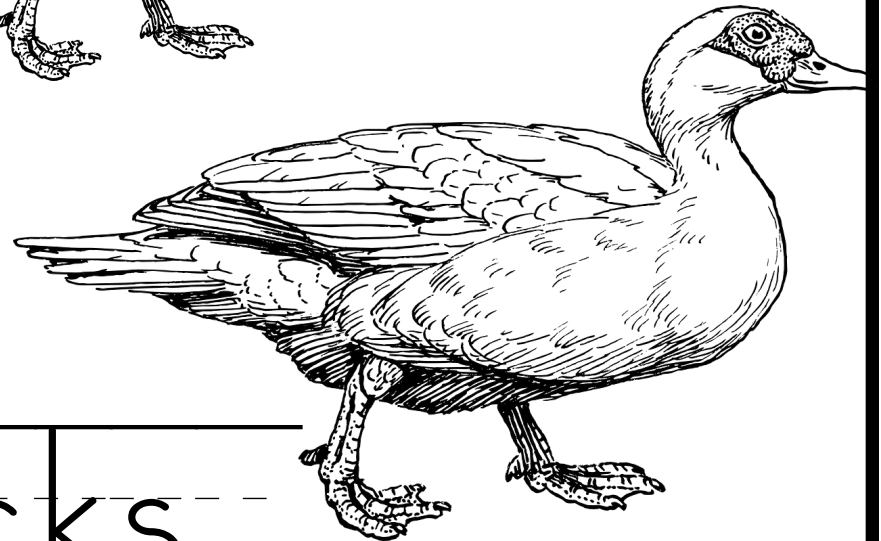
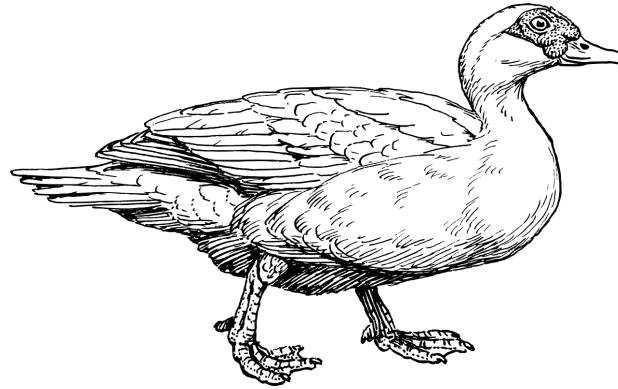
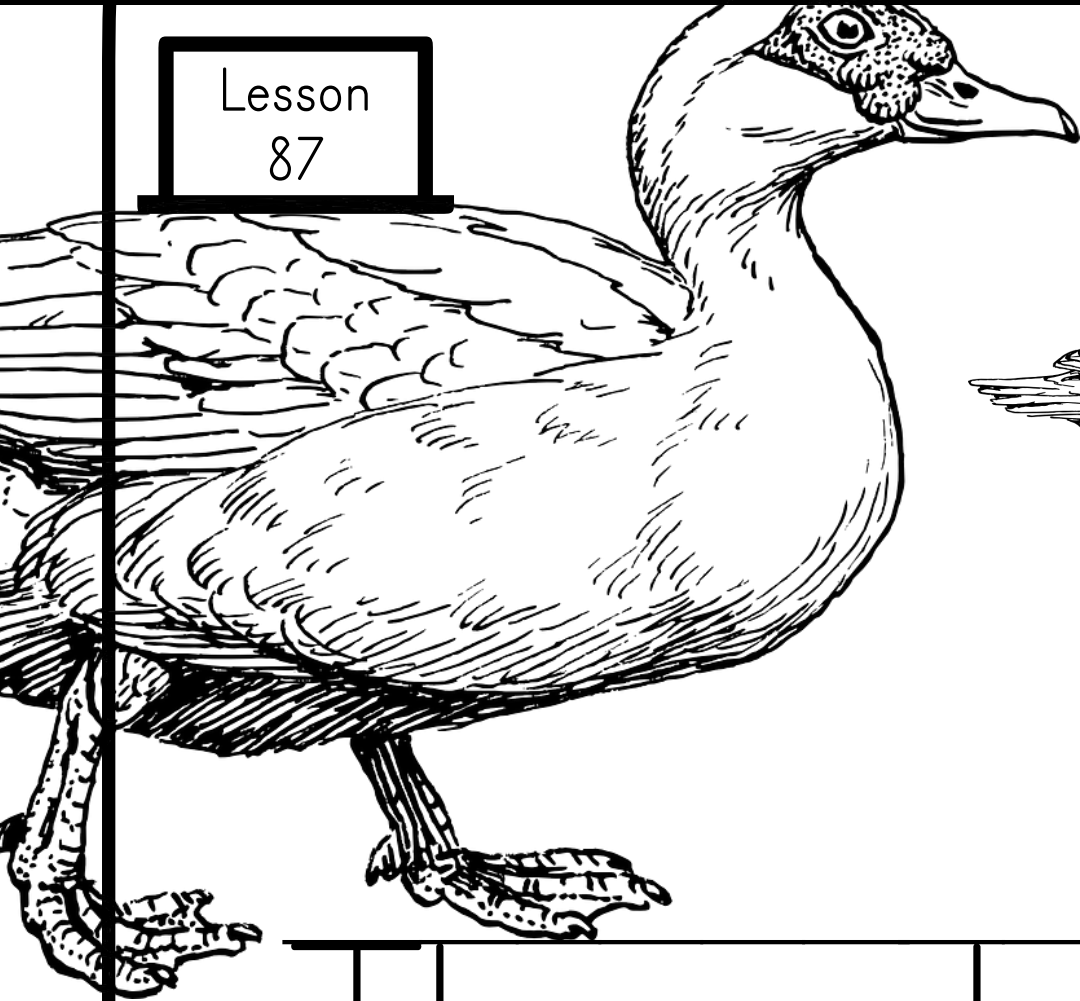
Lesson
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Ohio

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

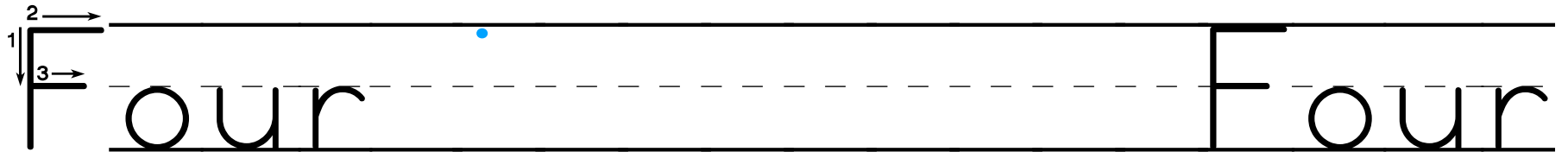
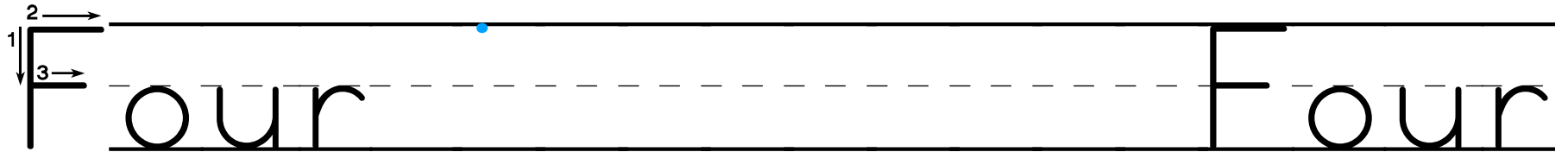
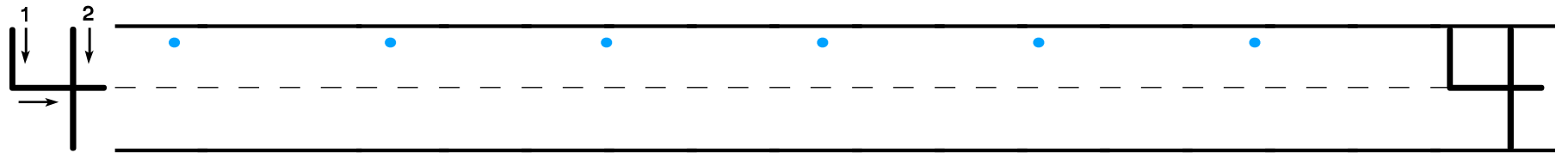
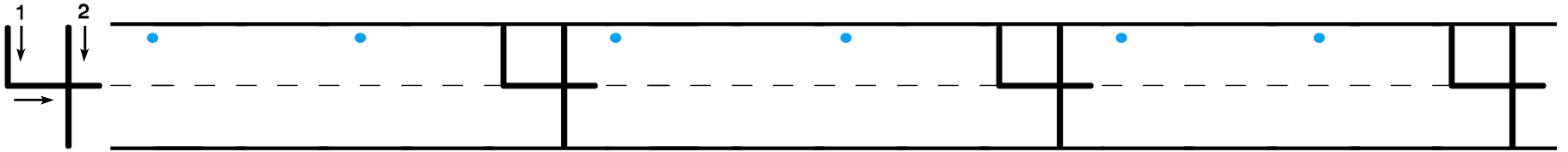
Lesson
87



Three ducks

Blank handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Lesson
88



Lesson
98

X x X x

Y y Y y

Z z Z z