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LOWERCASE LETTER FORMATION TEACHER GUIDE

By: Raising Readers

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO
KNOW TO TEACH CORRECT
LOWERCASE LETTER
FORMATIONS

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**LETTER FORMATIONS REQUIRE
EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION AND
CORRECTION**

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WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT LETTER FORMATION?

- Handwriting is a foundational skill which needs to be explicitly taught.
- Explicit handwriting instruction is extremely beneficial for:
 - letter recognition
 - spelling automaticity
- If students are fluent with handwriting, they free up cognitive space for spelling and writing words/sentences.
- Grouping letters by how they are formed can help remediate some common reversals.
- A student's letter formation direction should be corrected if:
 - Their handwriting is totally illegible
 - Their handwriting is fatiguing or inefficient

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HANDWRITING

DIFFICULTY

If handwriting is difficult (which for MANY students, it is), and/or there are many letter recognition/spelling gaps, this explicit instruction is a tremendous support.

- Teach letter formations explicitly and systematically with lots of review and time to practise
- Remember to focus on these 4 things when teaching a letter:
 - the letter's name
 - the letter's sound
 - the letter's shape
 - the letter's feel in the mouth
- Model and remediate correct pencil grip - this grip needs to be functional

Grouping for Letter Formations:

The Coach is the formation used for the Team formations

The Mascots are formations which are on their own

Coach = c Team = a, d, g, o, q, s

Coach = l Team = t, h, p, f, b, k, j, i

Coach = r Team = m, n

Coach = u Team = y

Coach = v Team = w

Mascots = e, x, z

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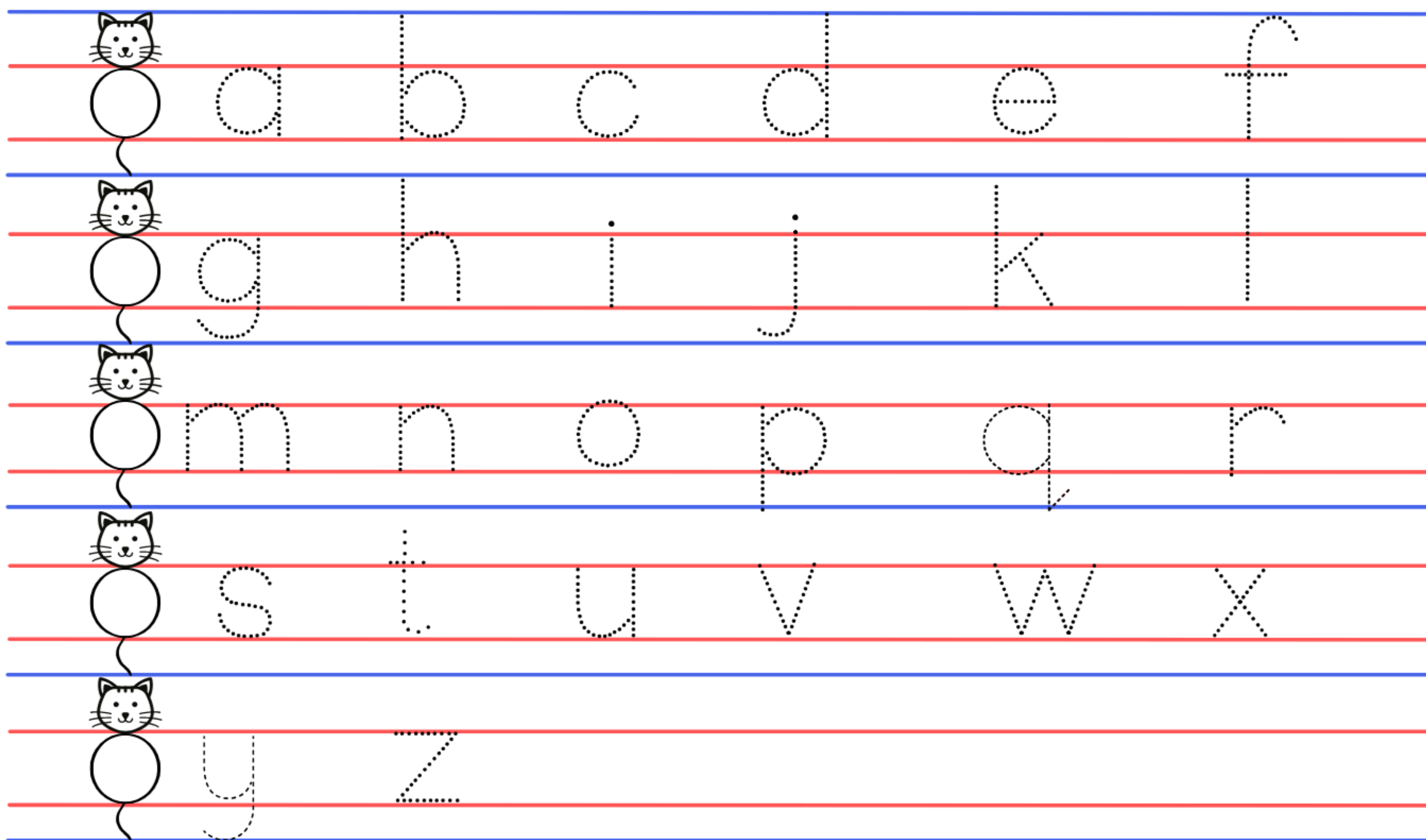


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CORRECT LETTER FORMATIONS

Handwriting:

Lowercase Letter Formation



The cat is used as a guide for students in the correct formation of their letters.

head = tall letters

body = the body of the letter that sits on the baseline

tail = letters that hang below the baseline

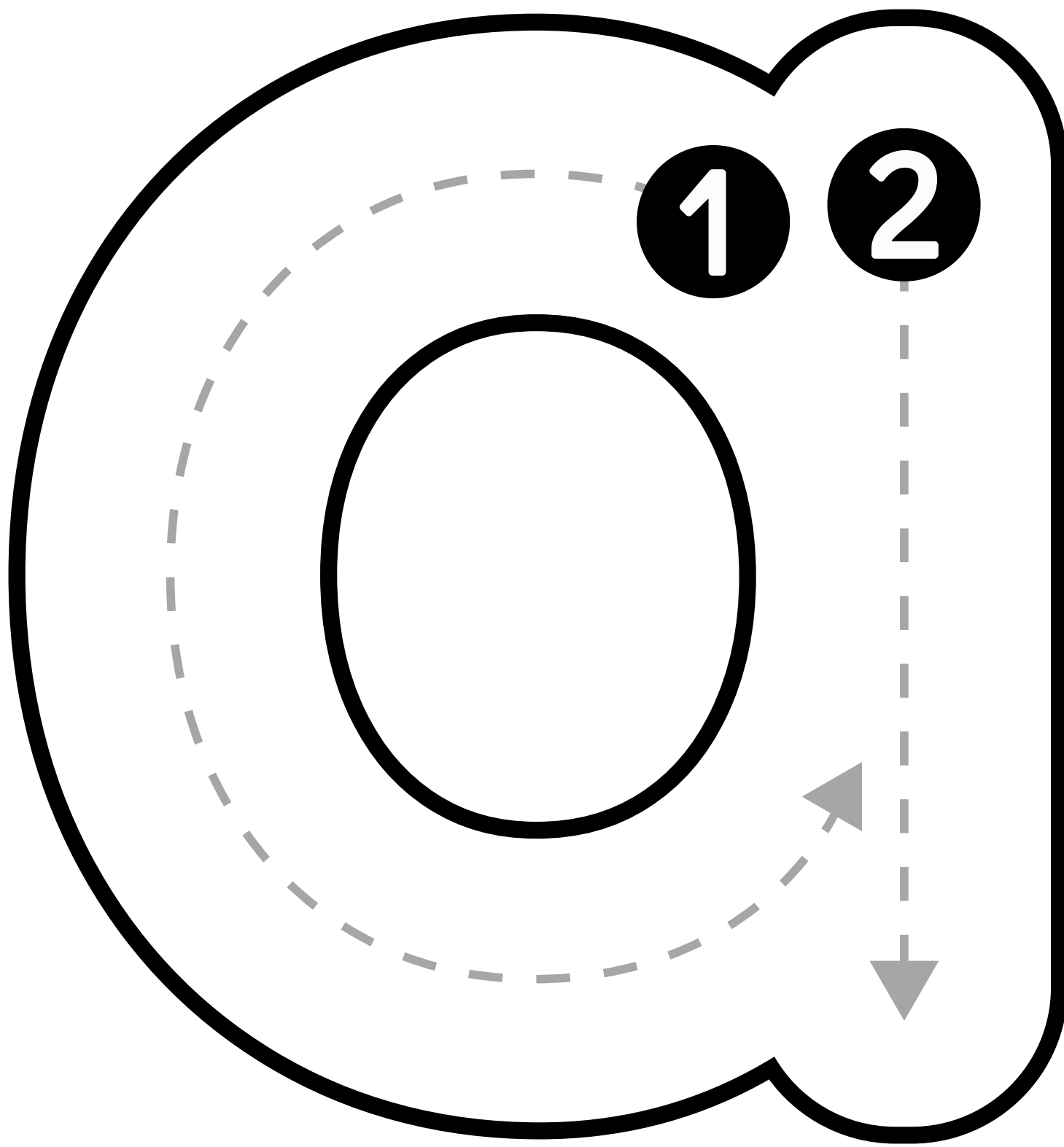
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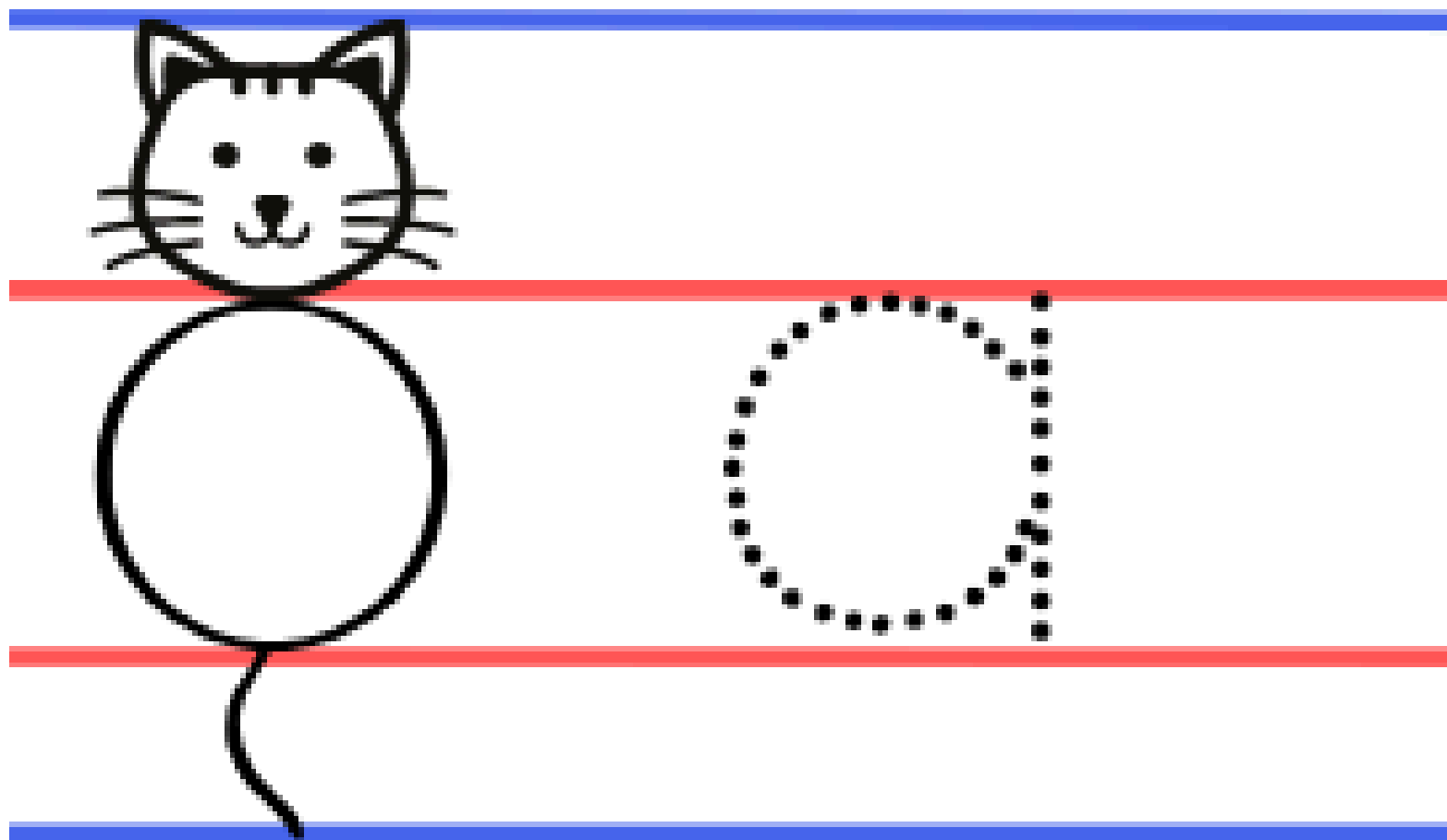
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Letter a:



SCRIPT:

- Circle back
- Up and back down

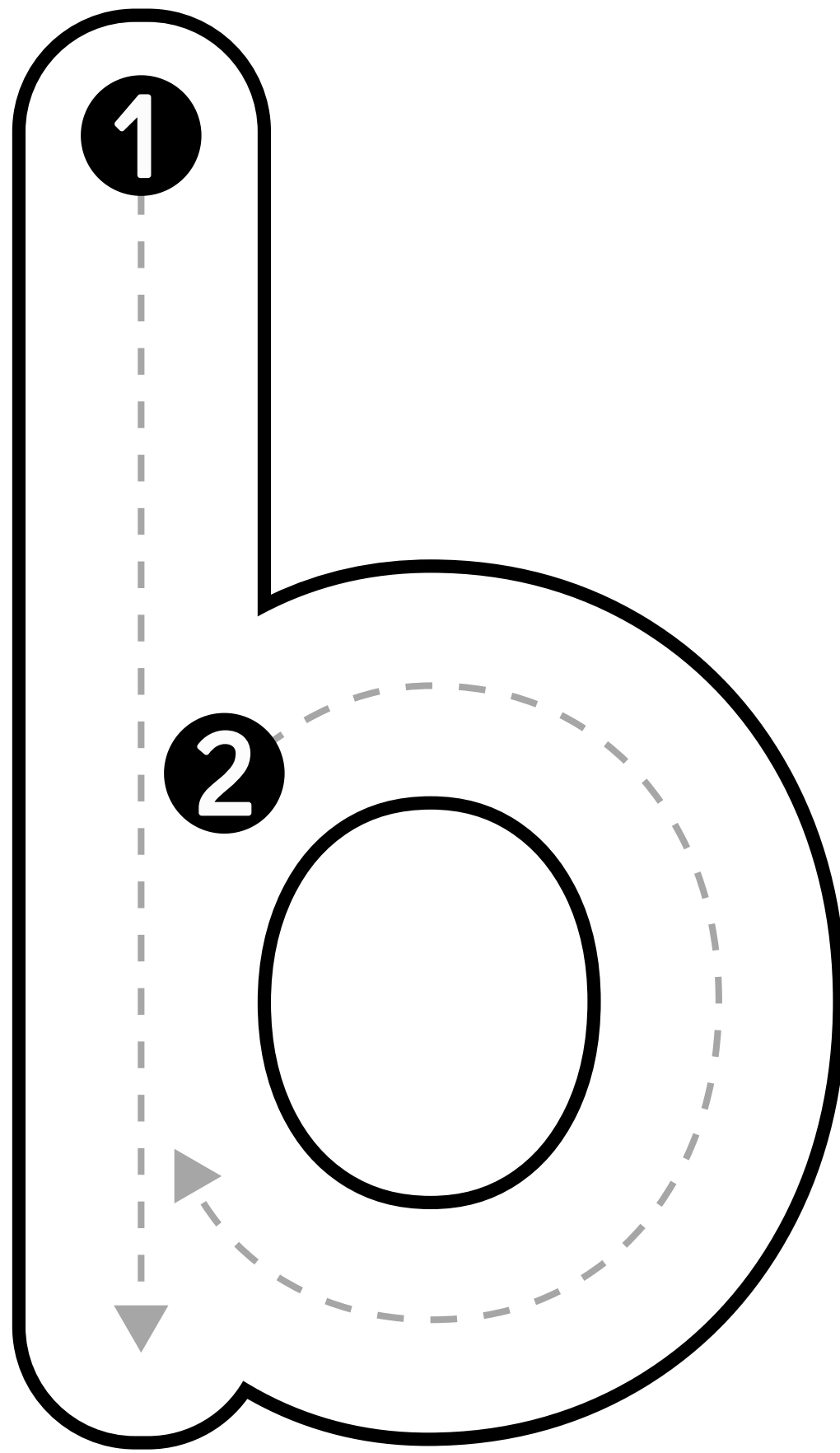


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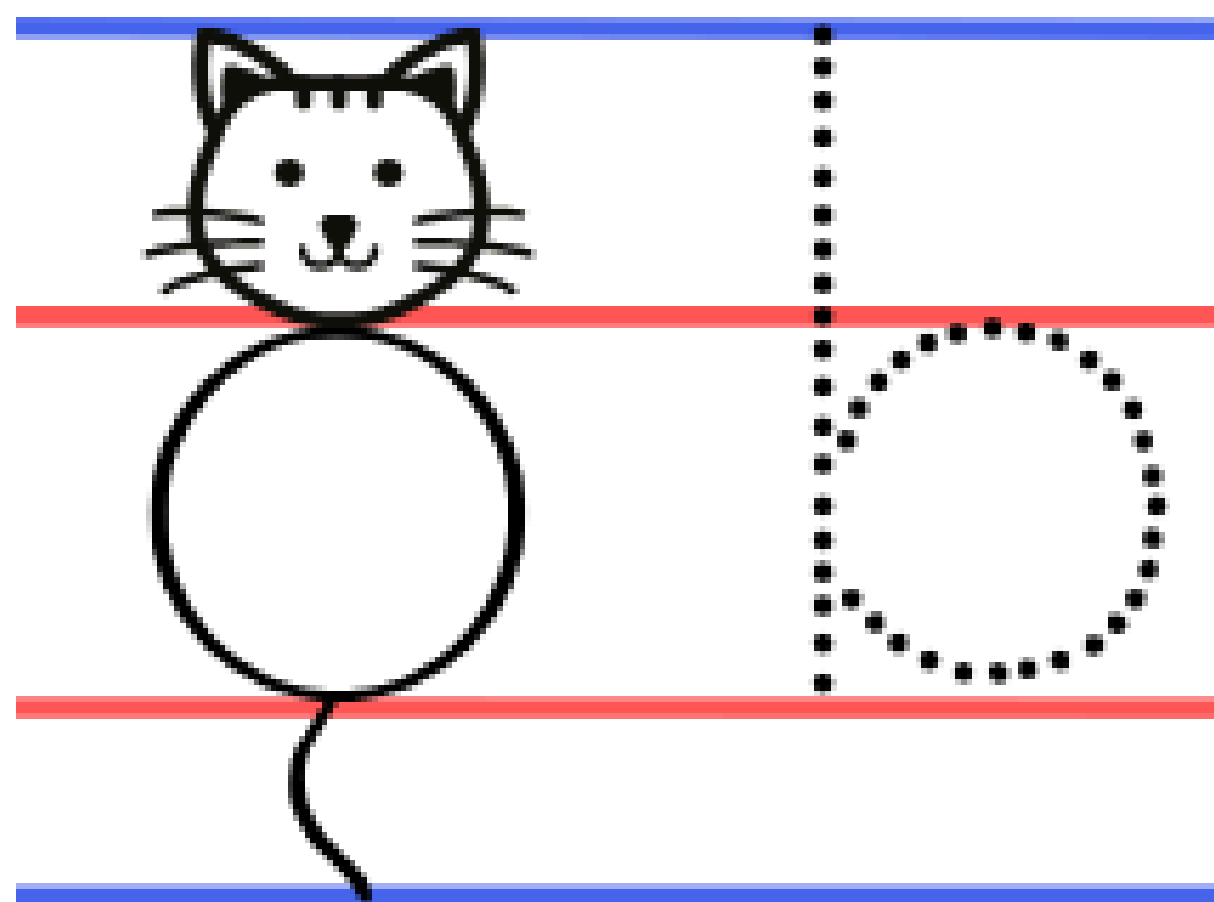
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Letter b:



SCRIPT:

- Start at the top of the head line
- Down to the tummy line
- Back up to top of tummy line
- Circle forward and close

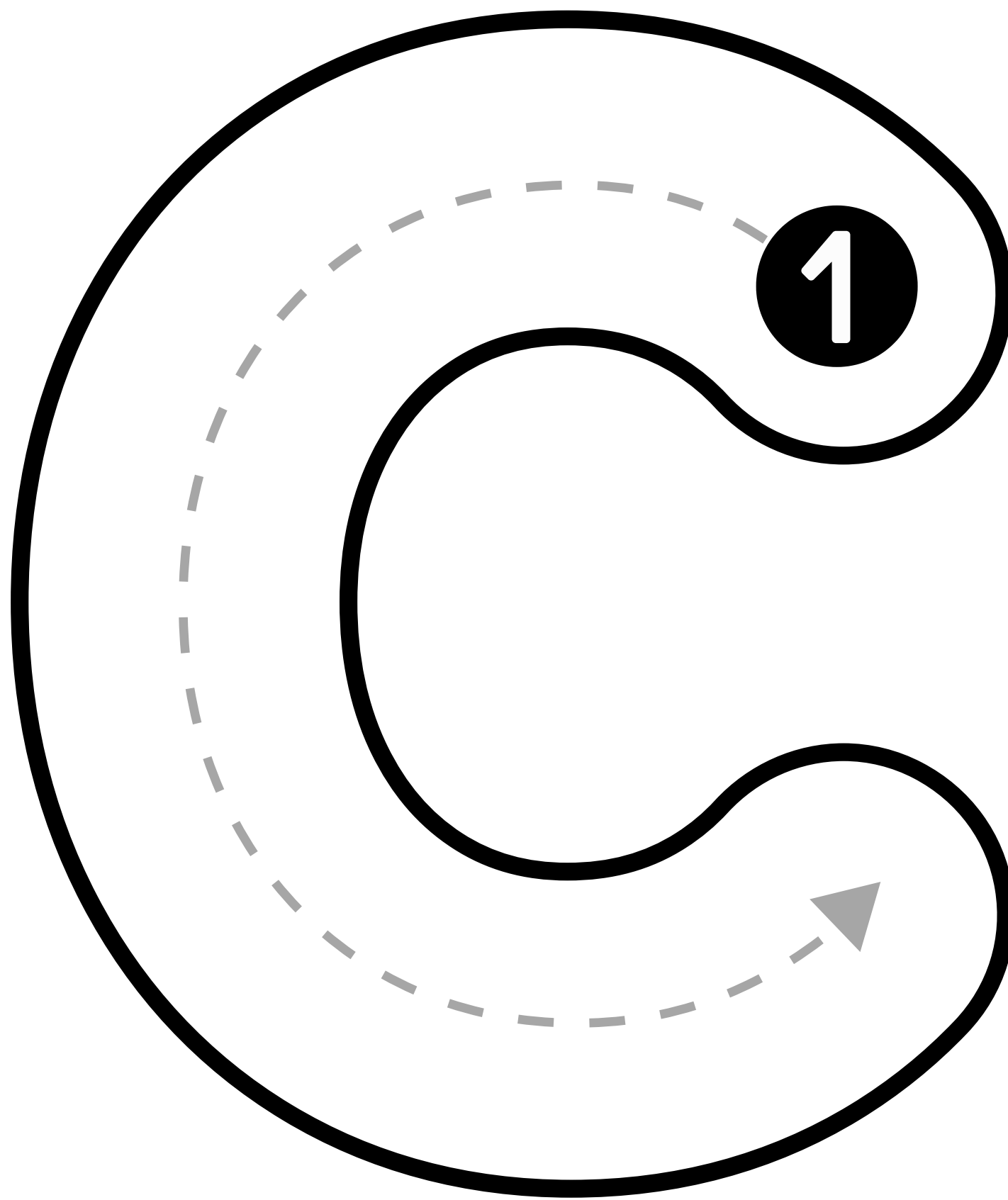


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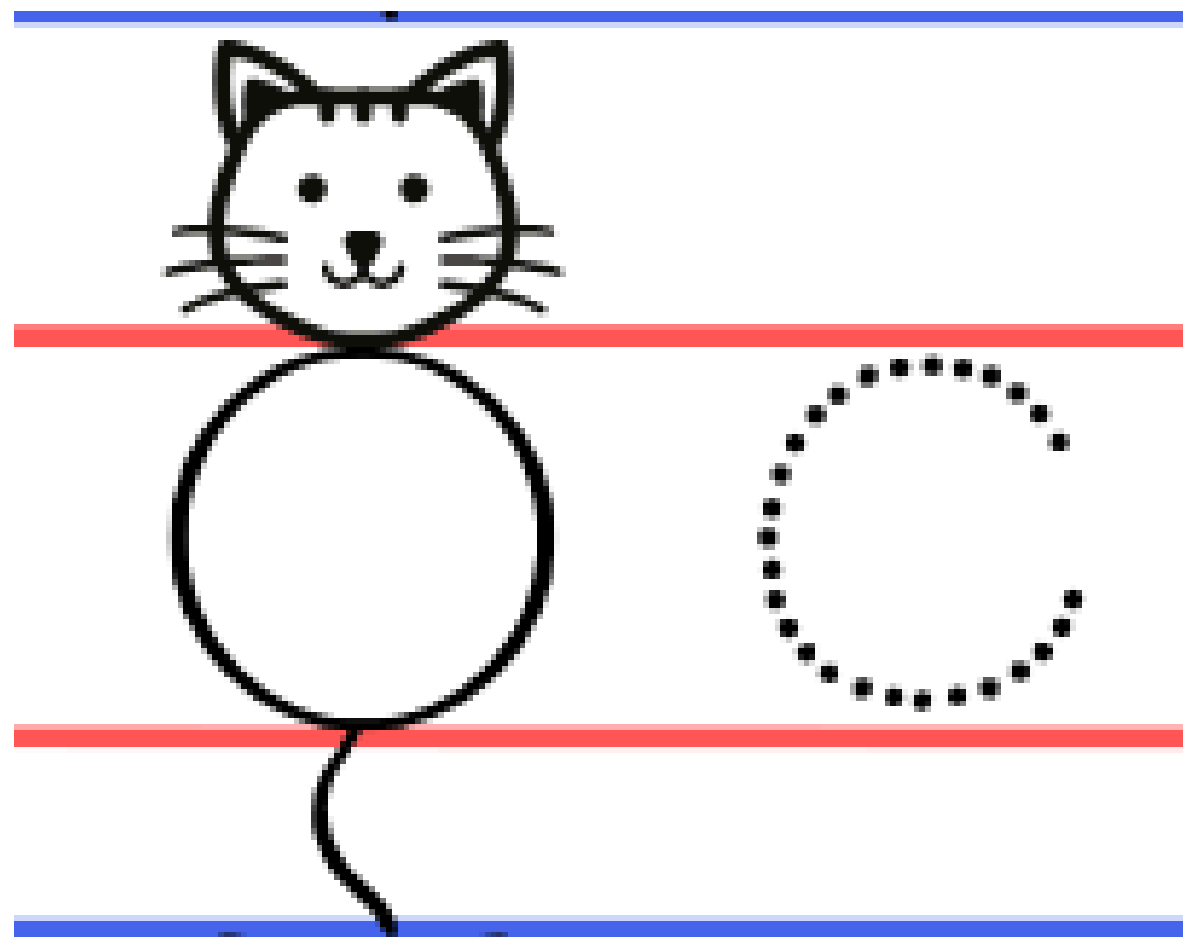
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Letter c:



SCRIPT:

- Circle back and round

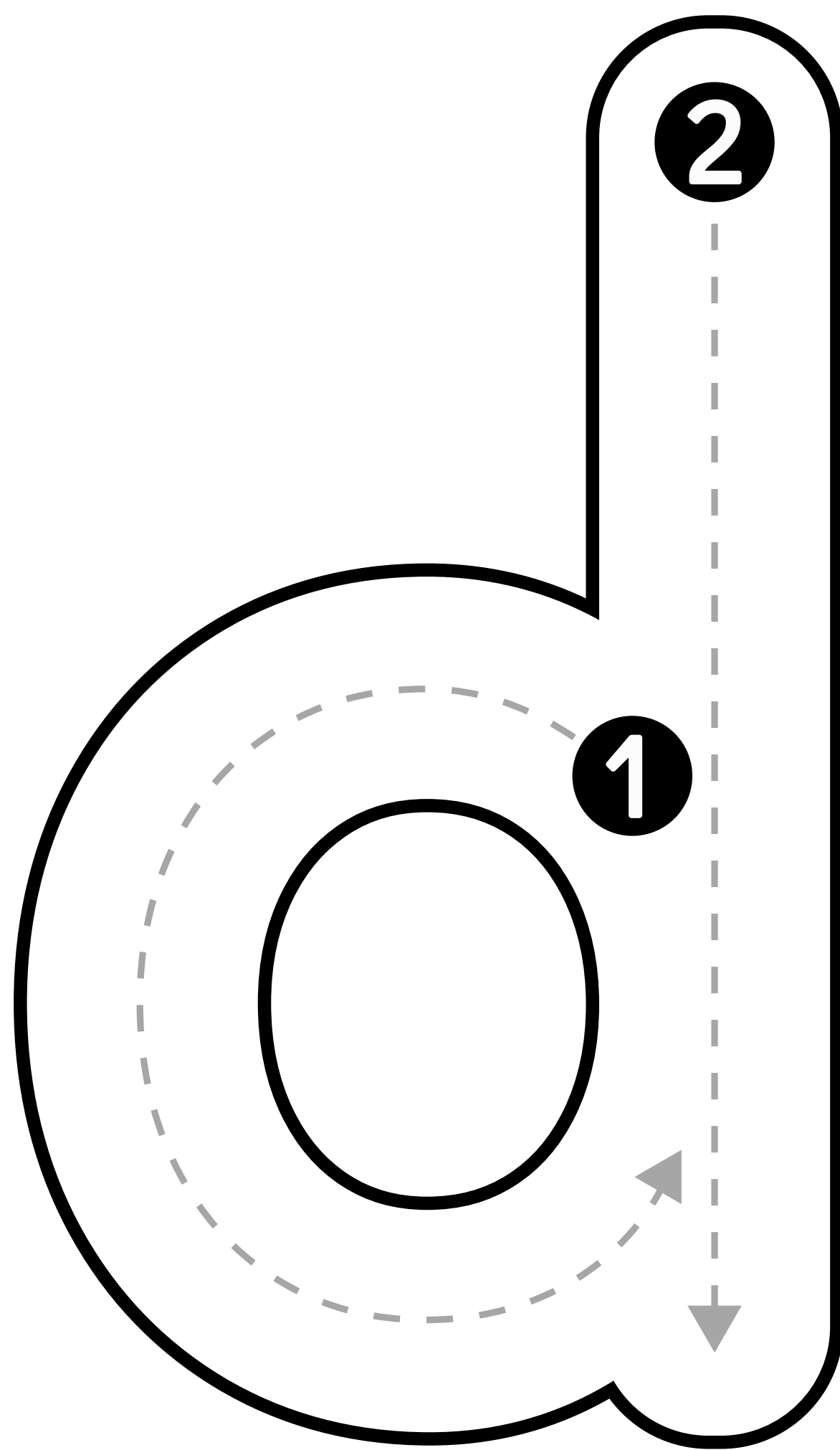


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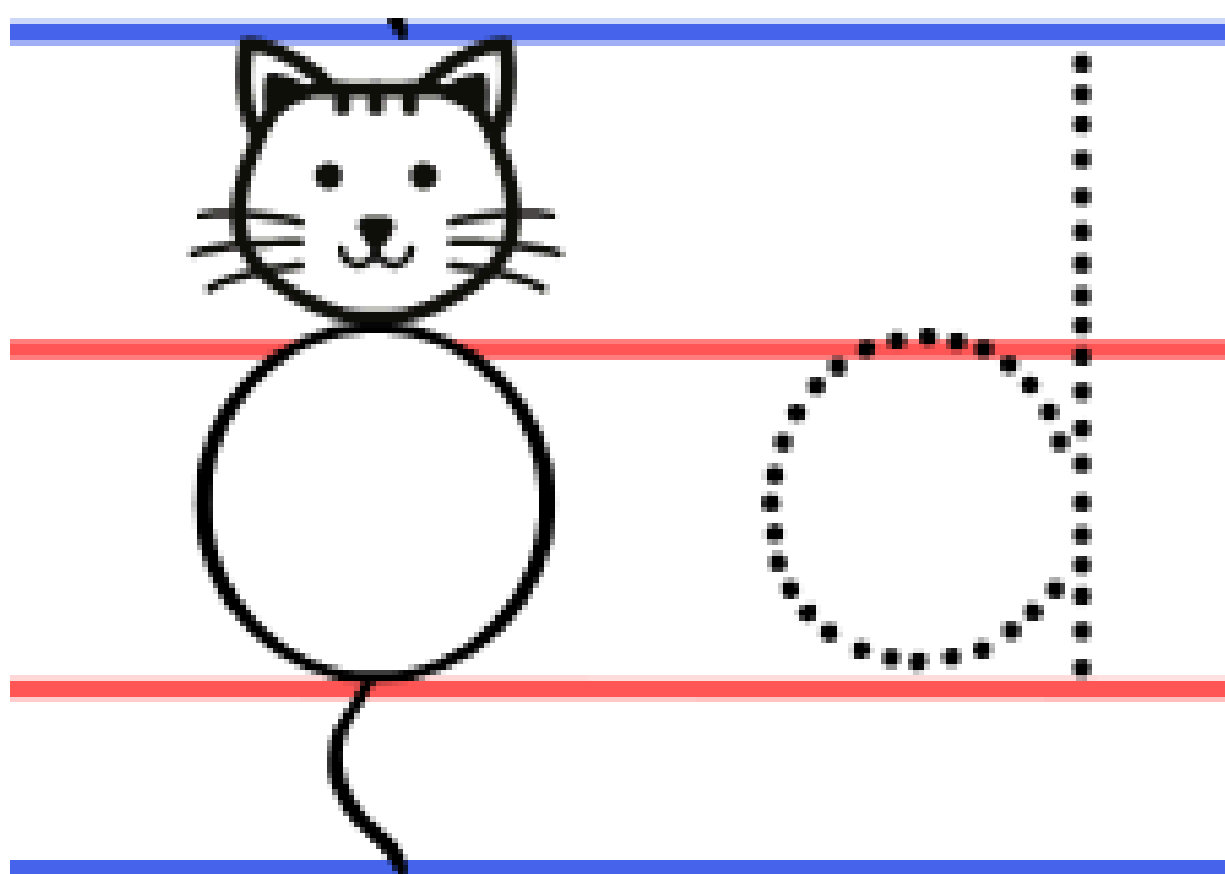
Letter d:



SCRIPT:

- Circle back and round
- Up to top of head line and back down

***Pencil does not lift**

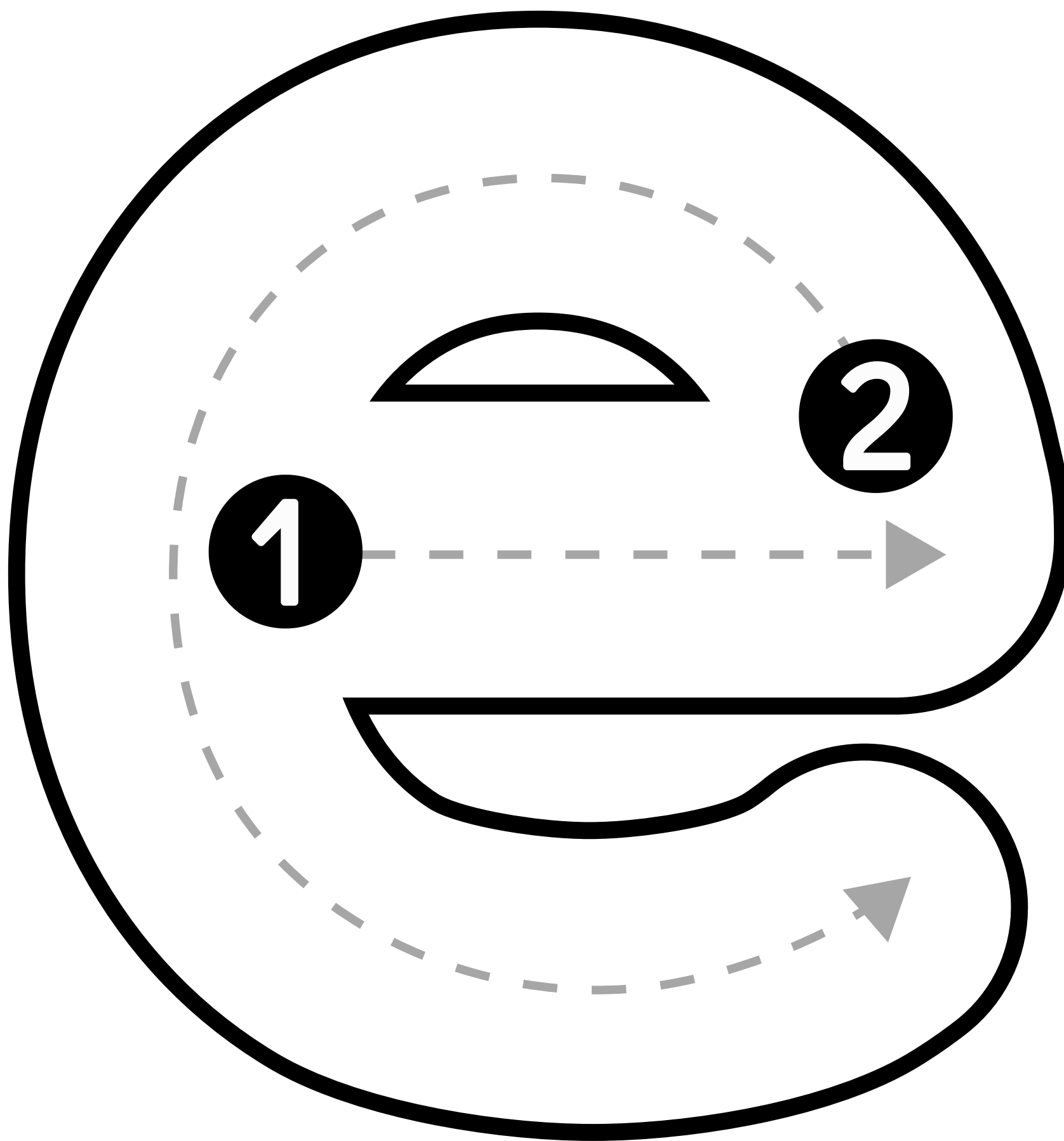


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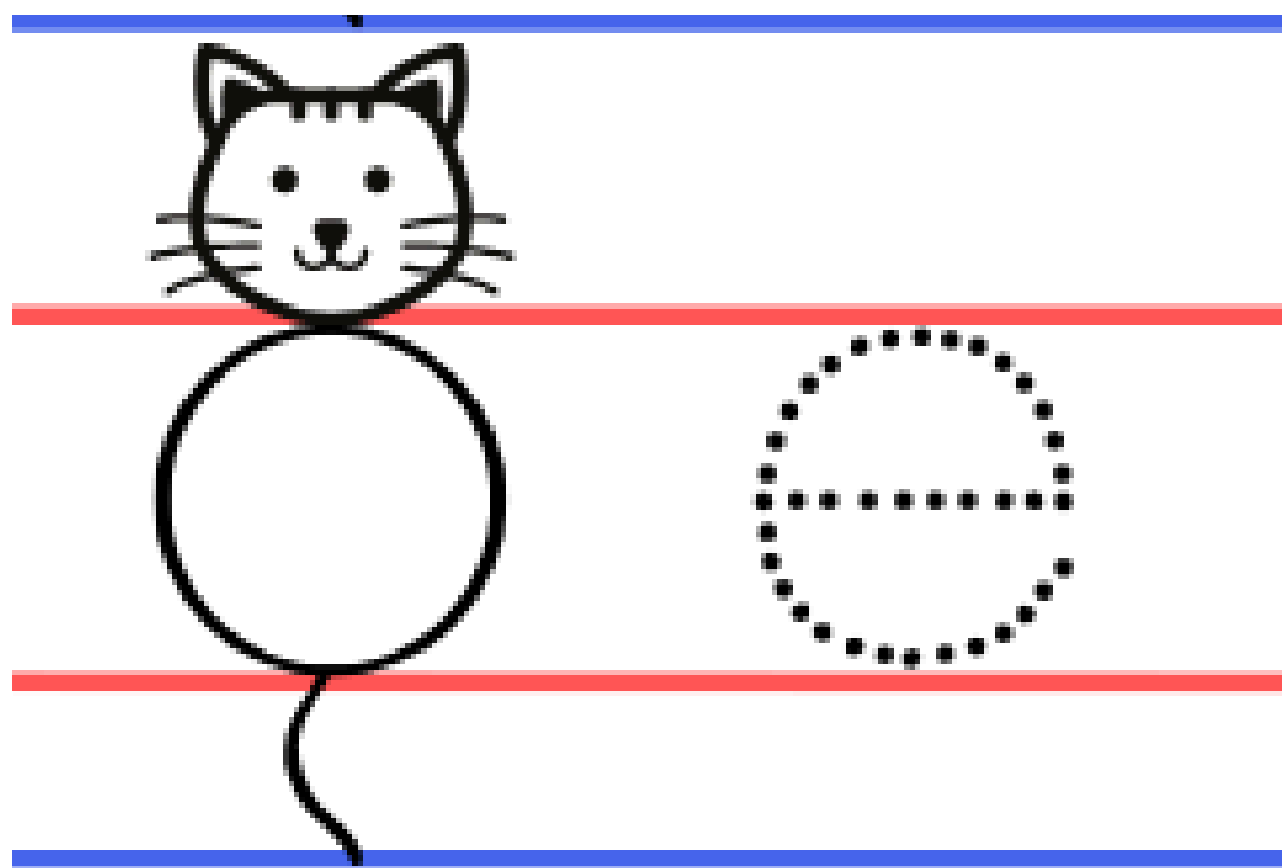
Letter e:



SCRIPT:

- Straight across
- Circle up and back
- And around

***Start in the middle of the tummy line**

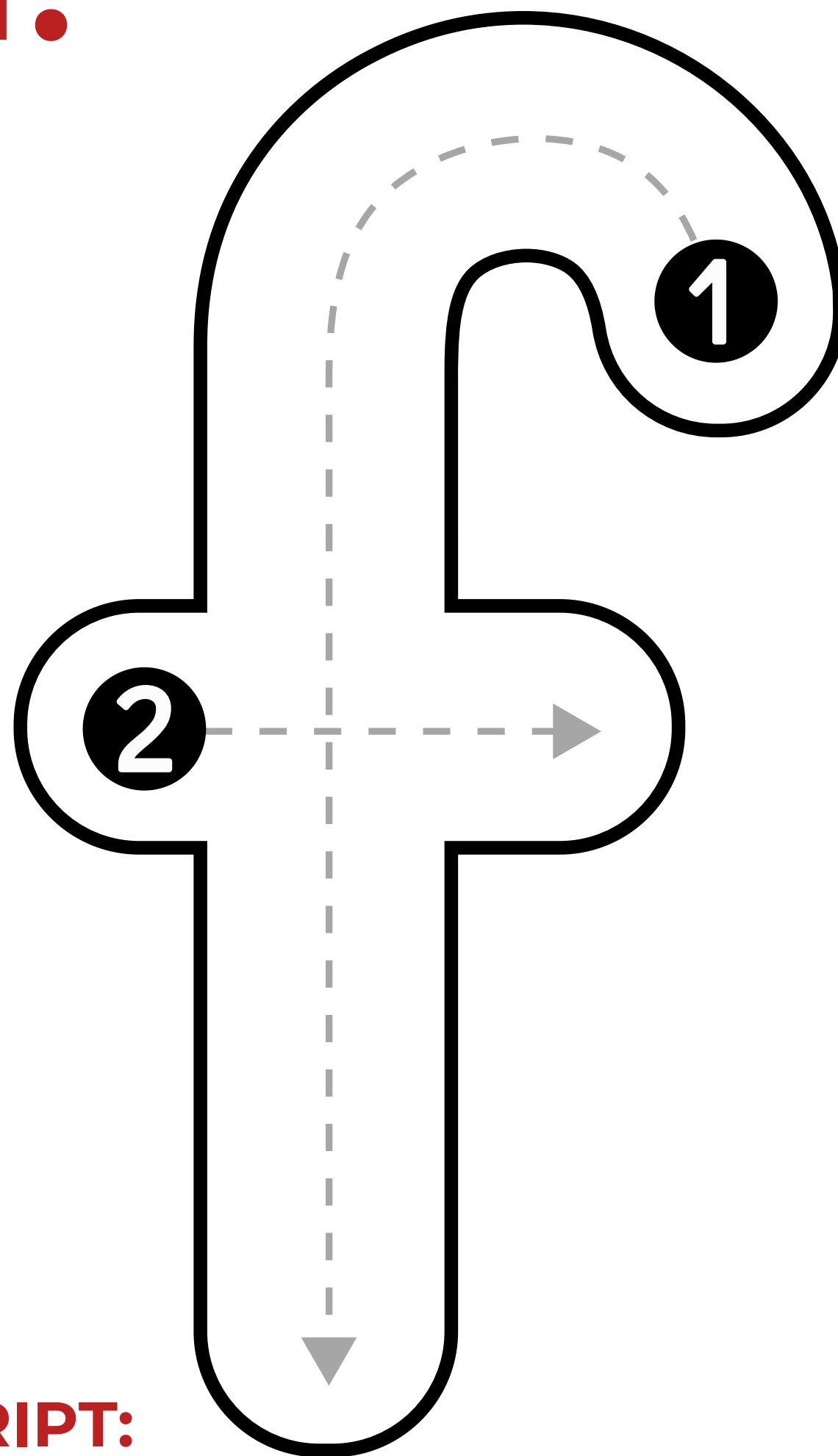


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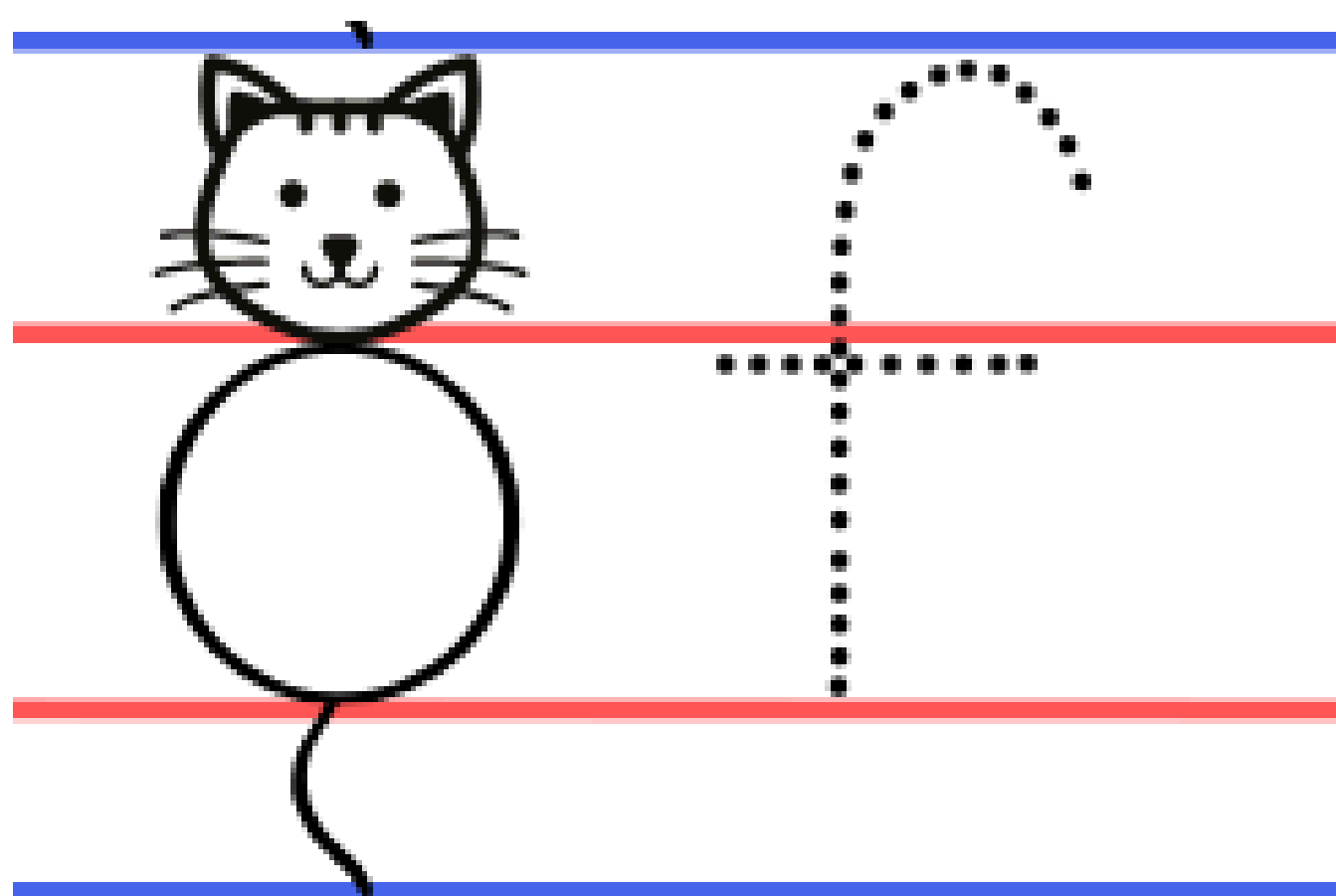
Letter f:



SCRIPT:

- Up and over
- Straight down
- Lift your pencil and make a line across

***Start in the middle of the head line**

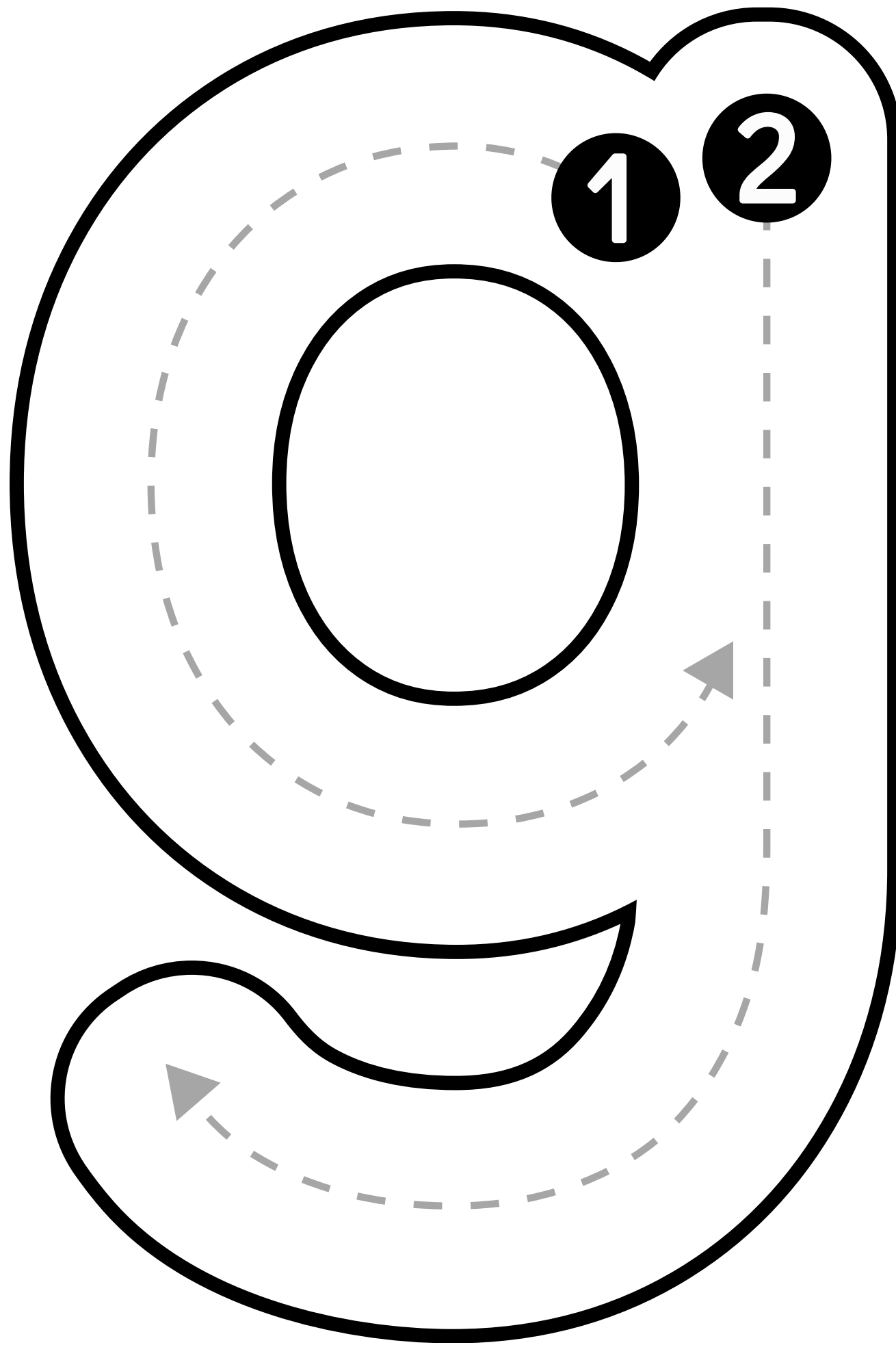


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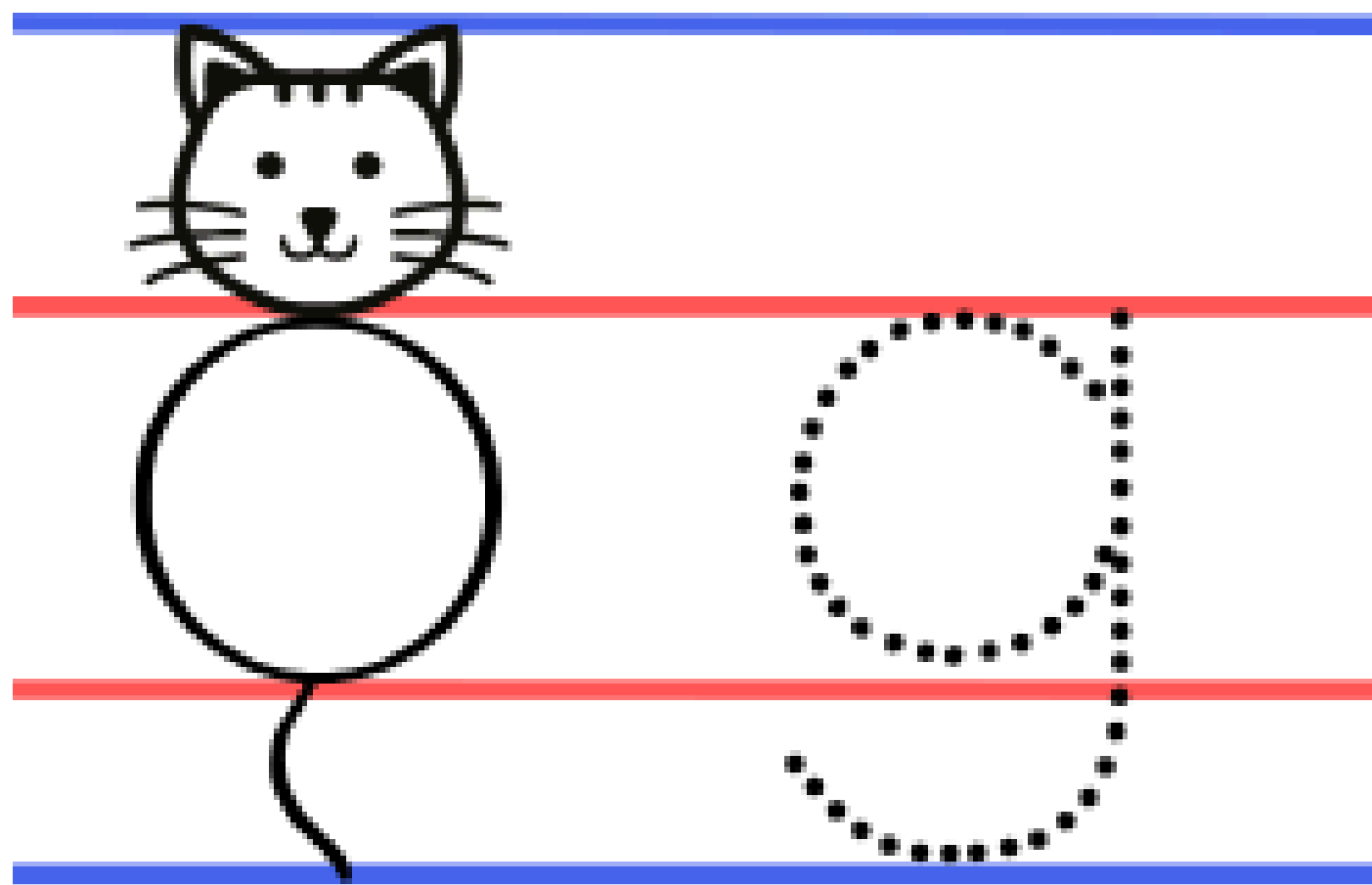
Letter g:



SCRIPT:

- Circle back and close
- Pull down to tail line
- And add a hook

***Do not lift pencil**

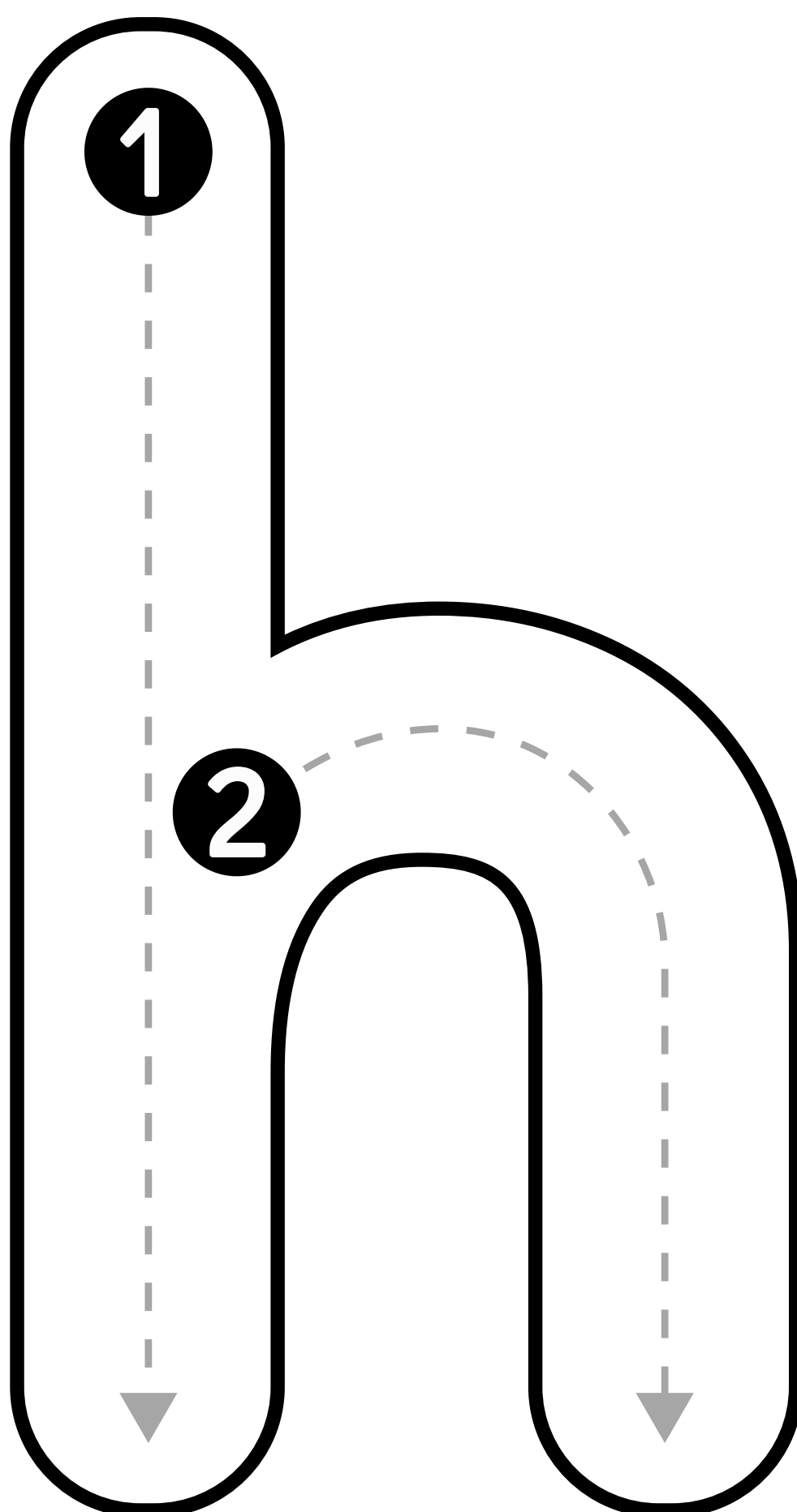


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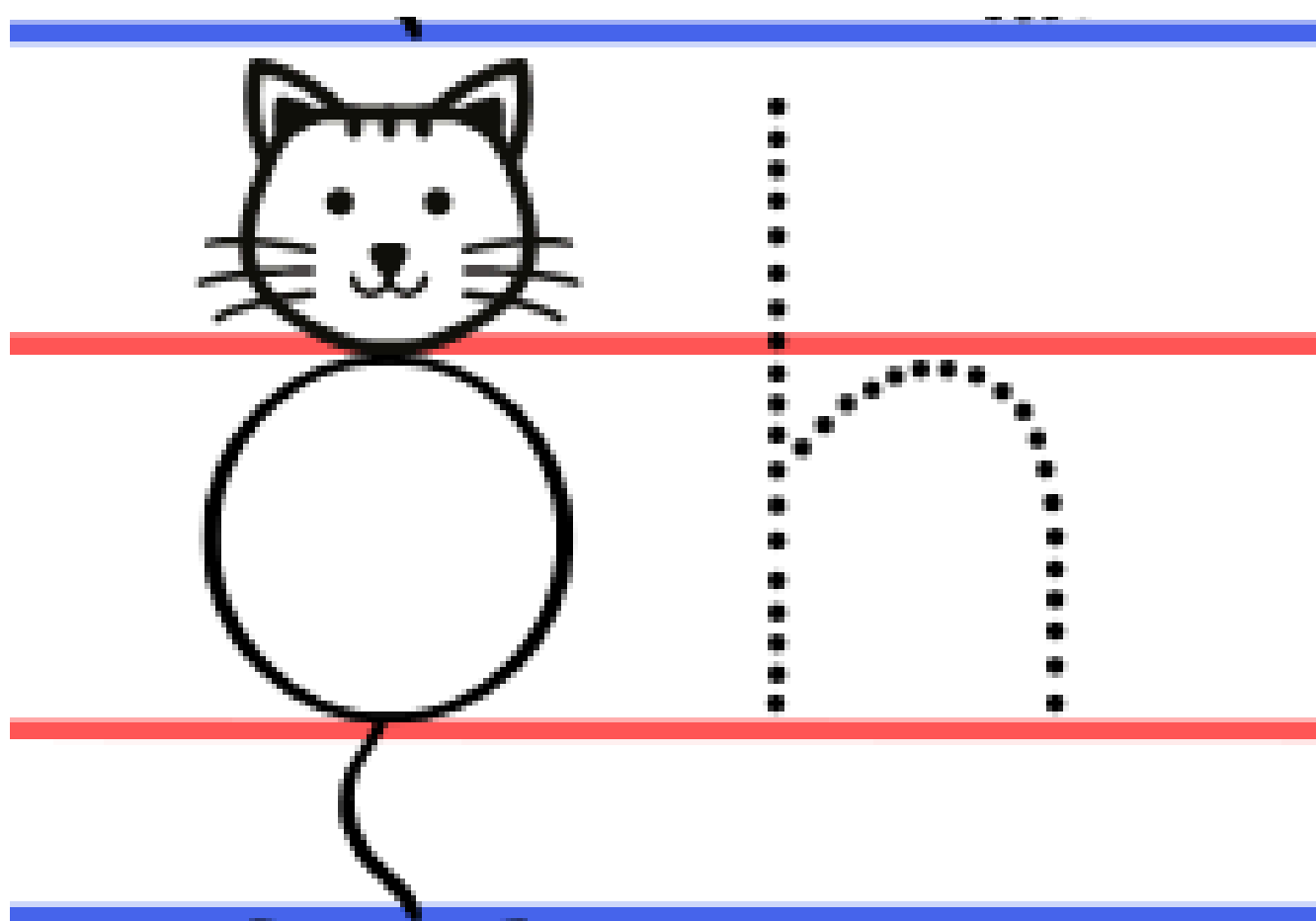
Letter h:



SCRIPT:

From the head line:

- Pull down to tummy line line
- Back up and over
- Pull down

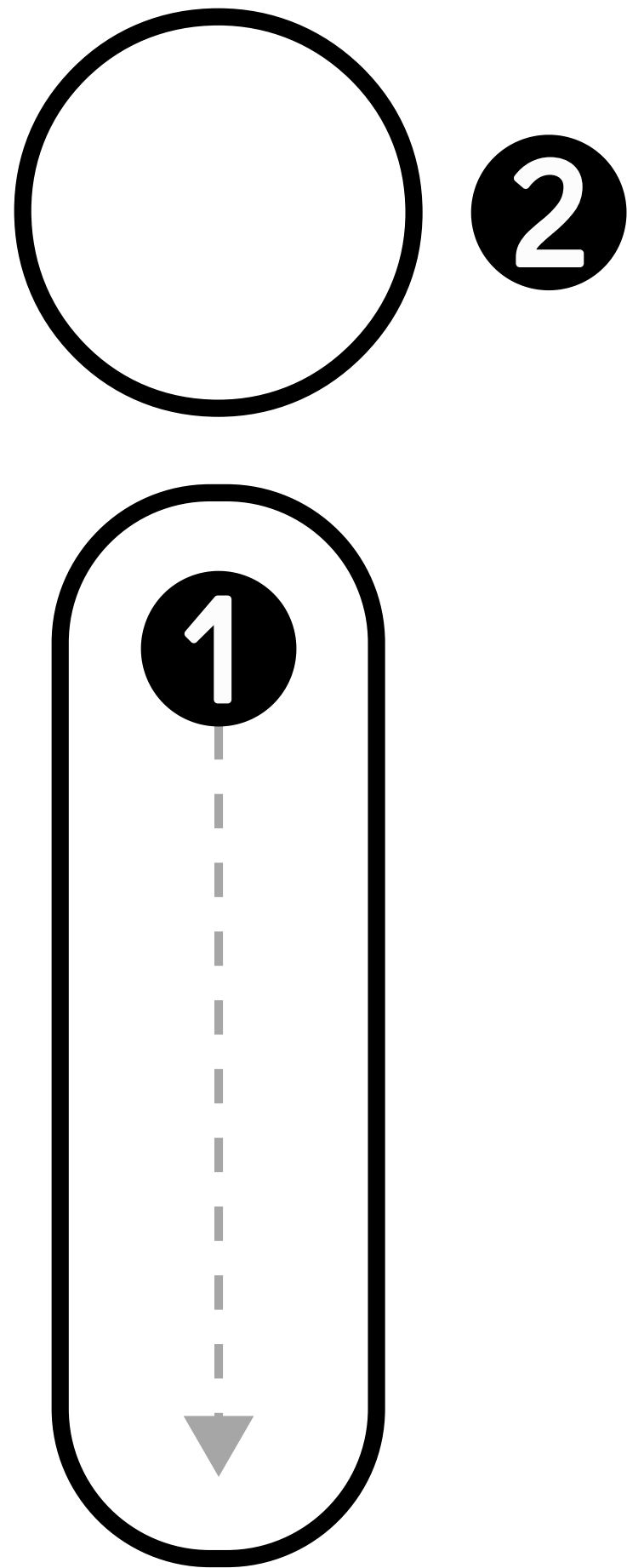


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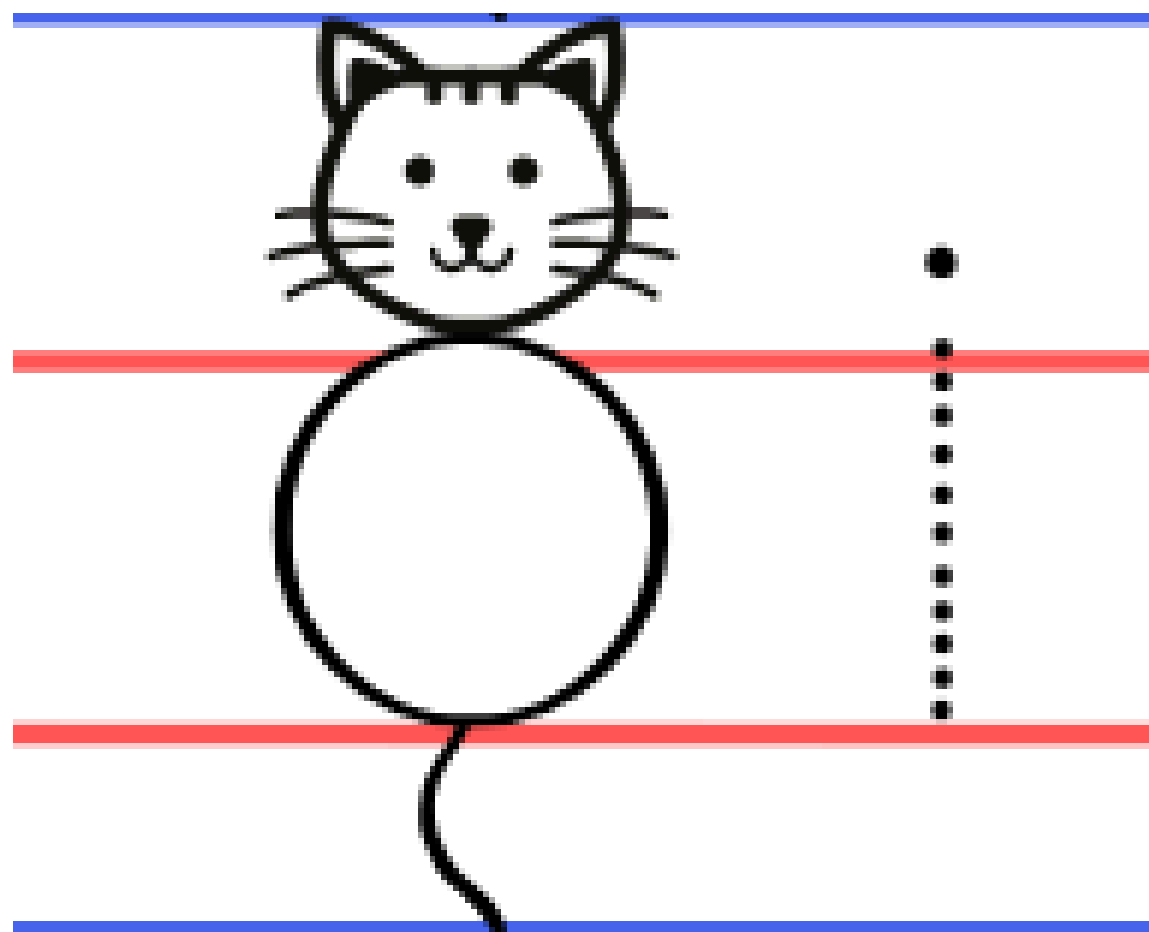
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Letter i:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Lift your pencil
- Add a dot (in the middle of head line)

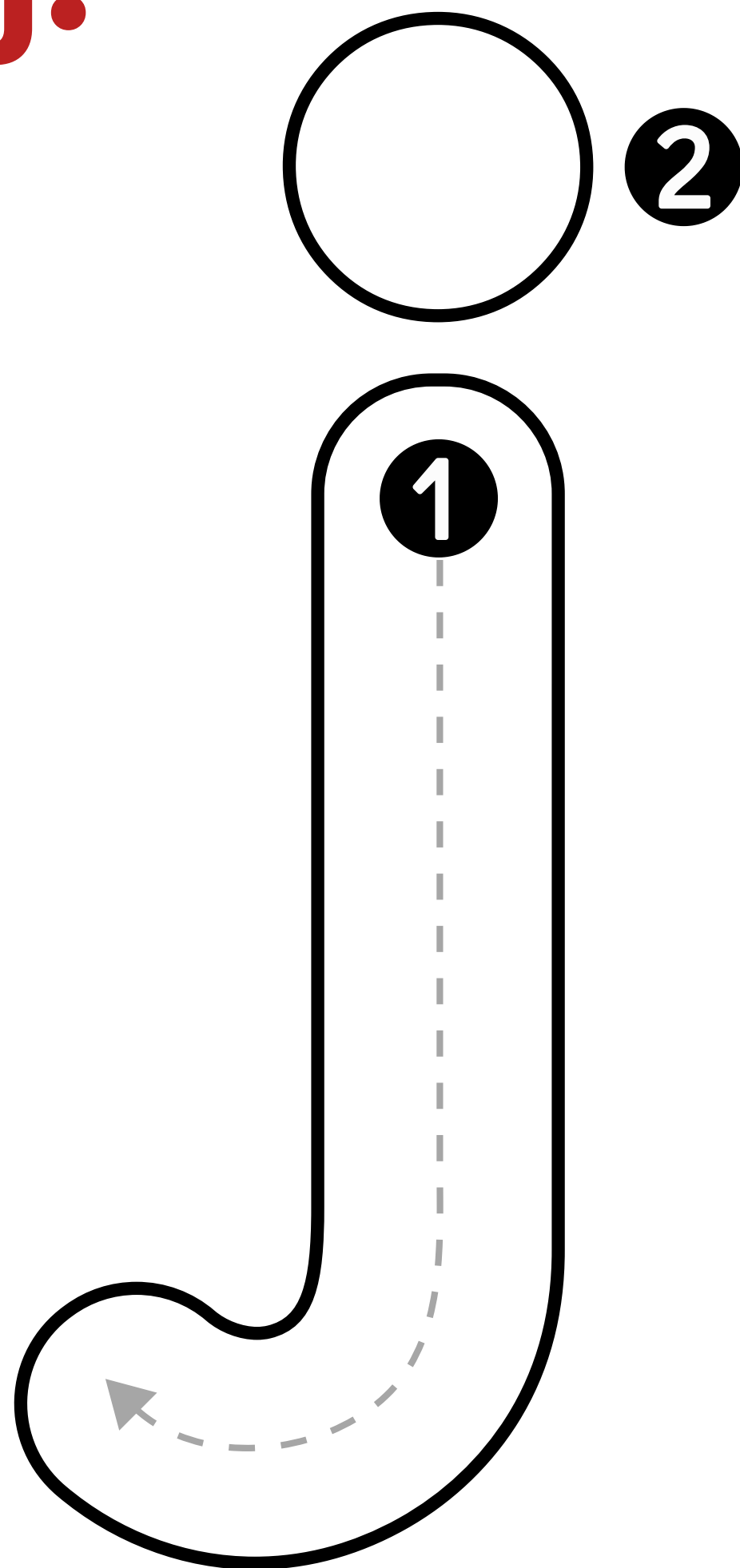


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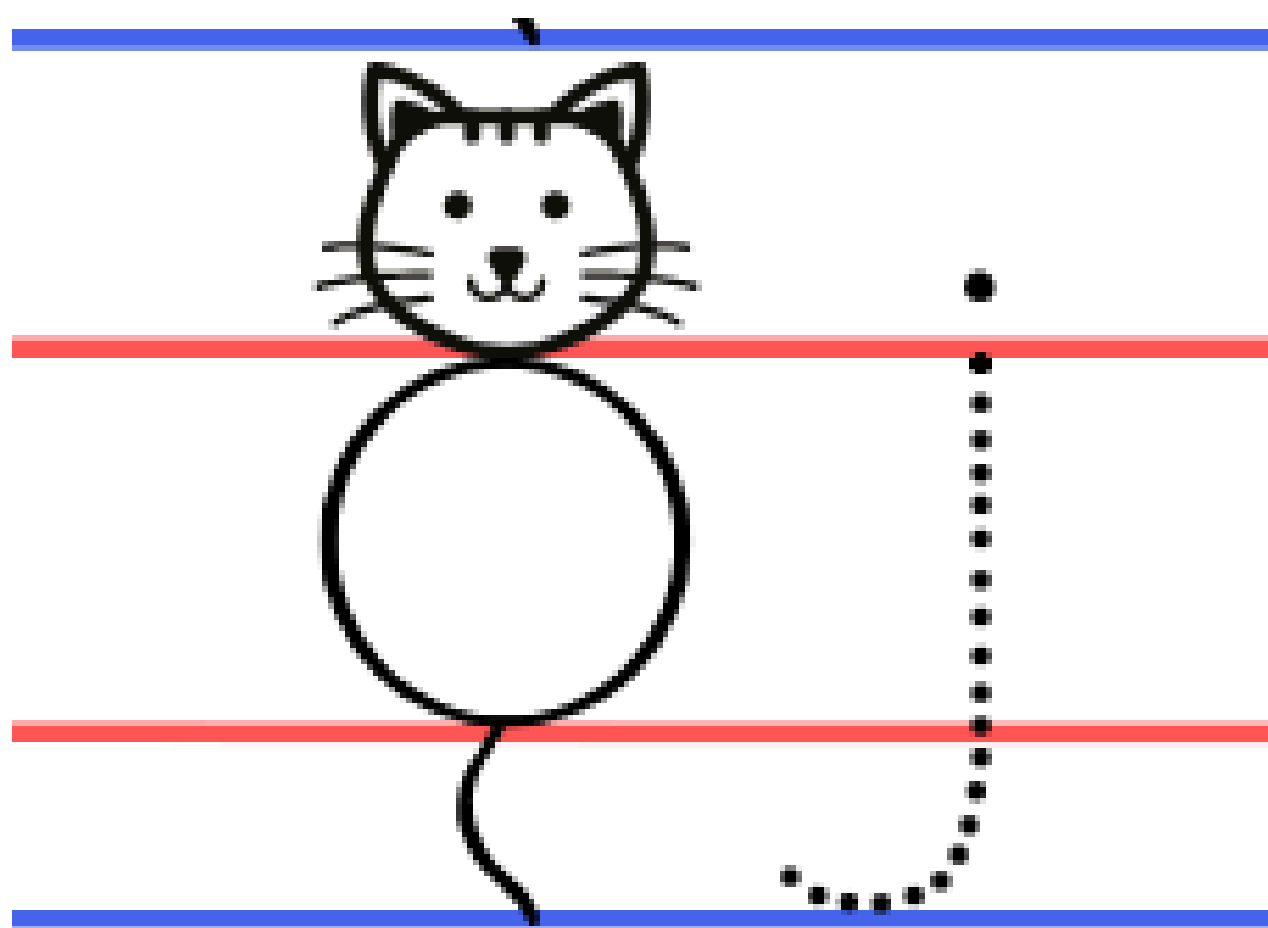
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Letter j:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Hook round
- Lift your pencil
- Add a dot (in the middle of head line)

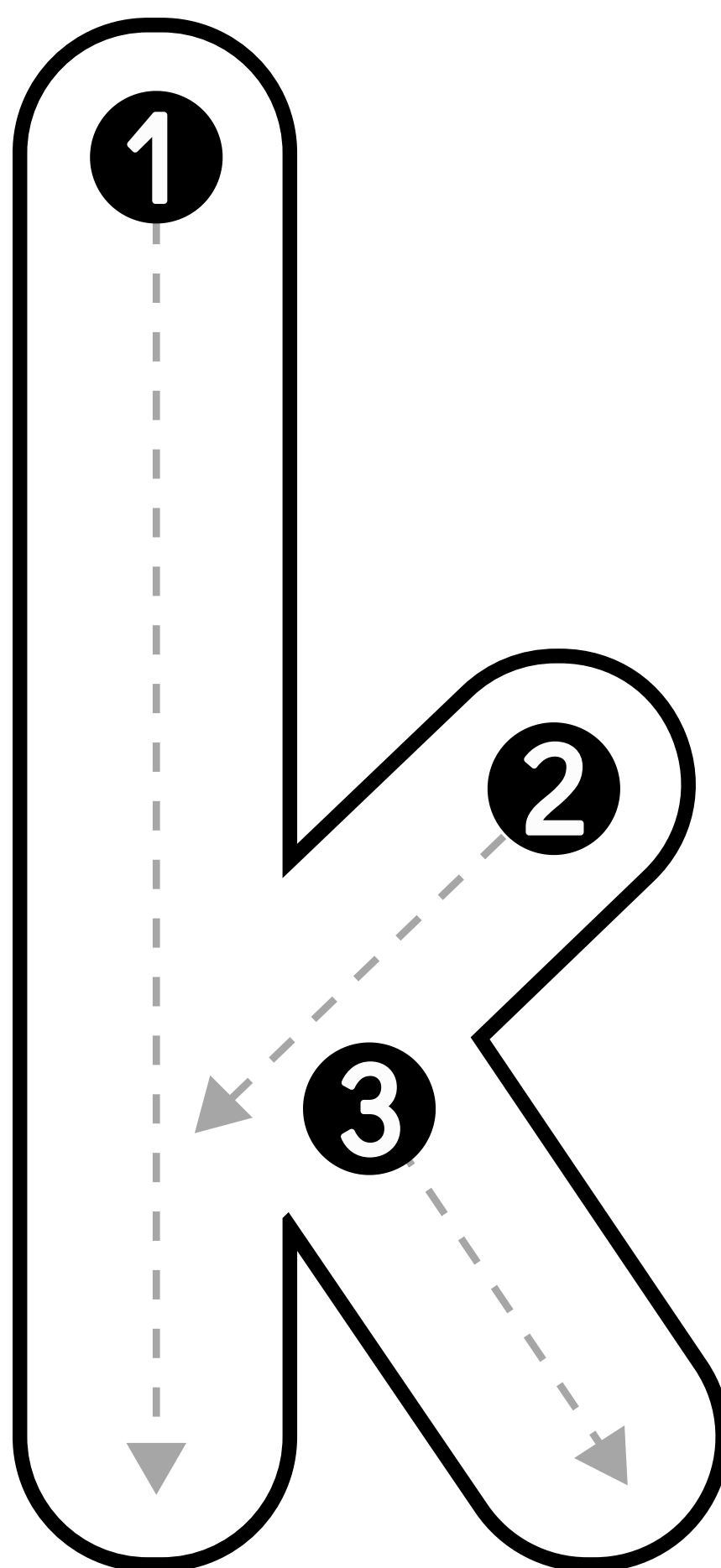


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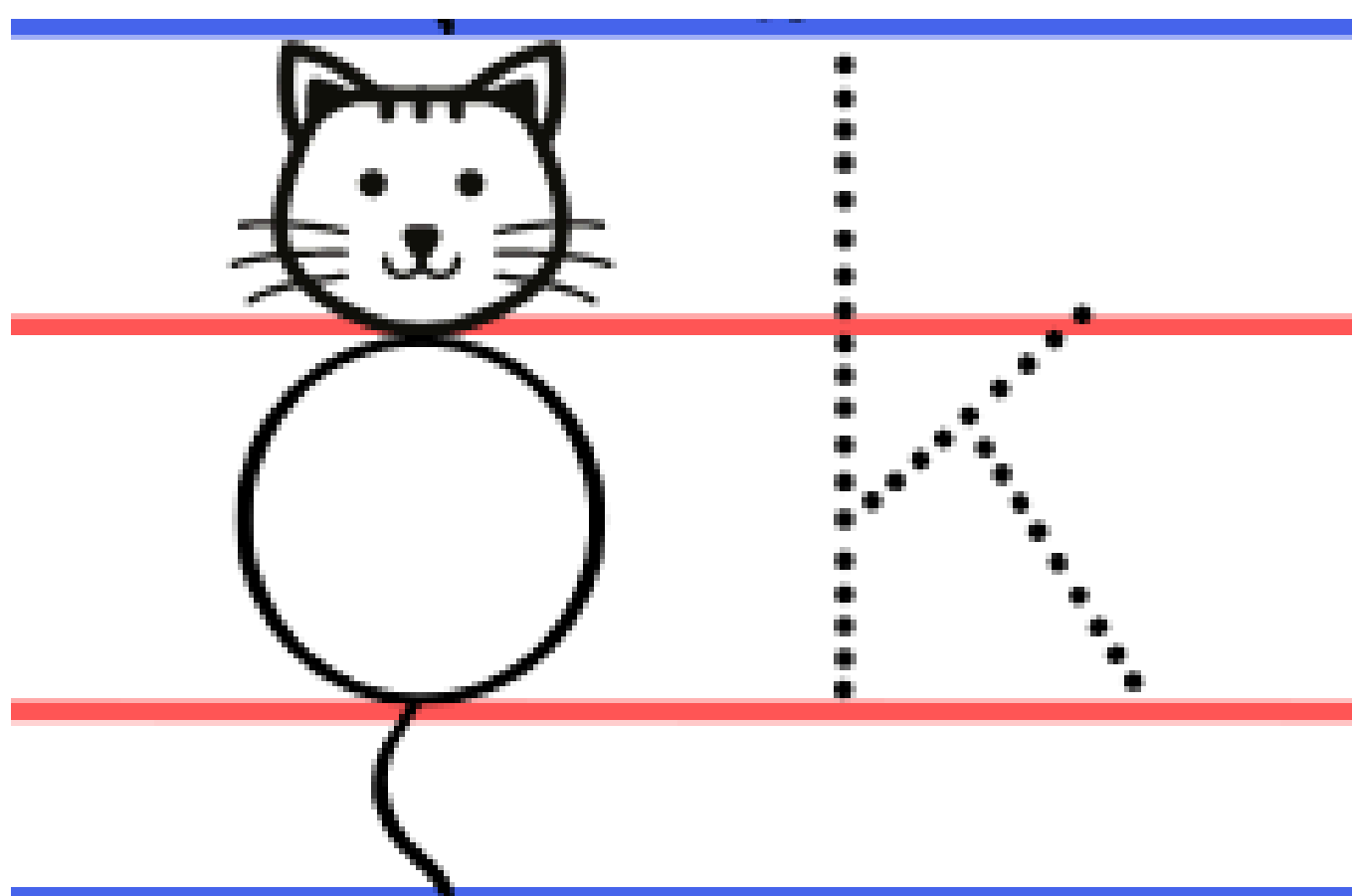
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Letter k:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Lift your pencil
- Diagonal line back
- Lift your pencil
- Diagonal line forward

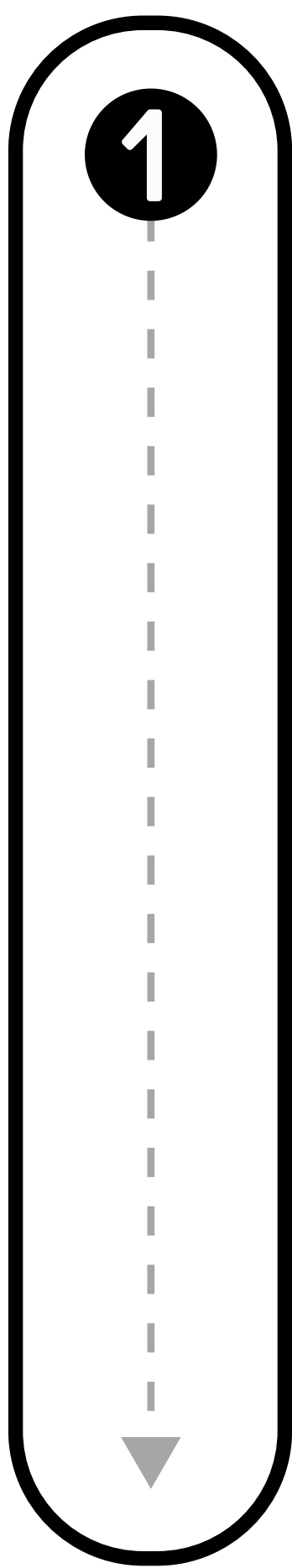


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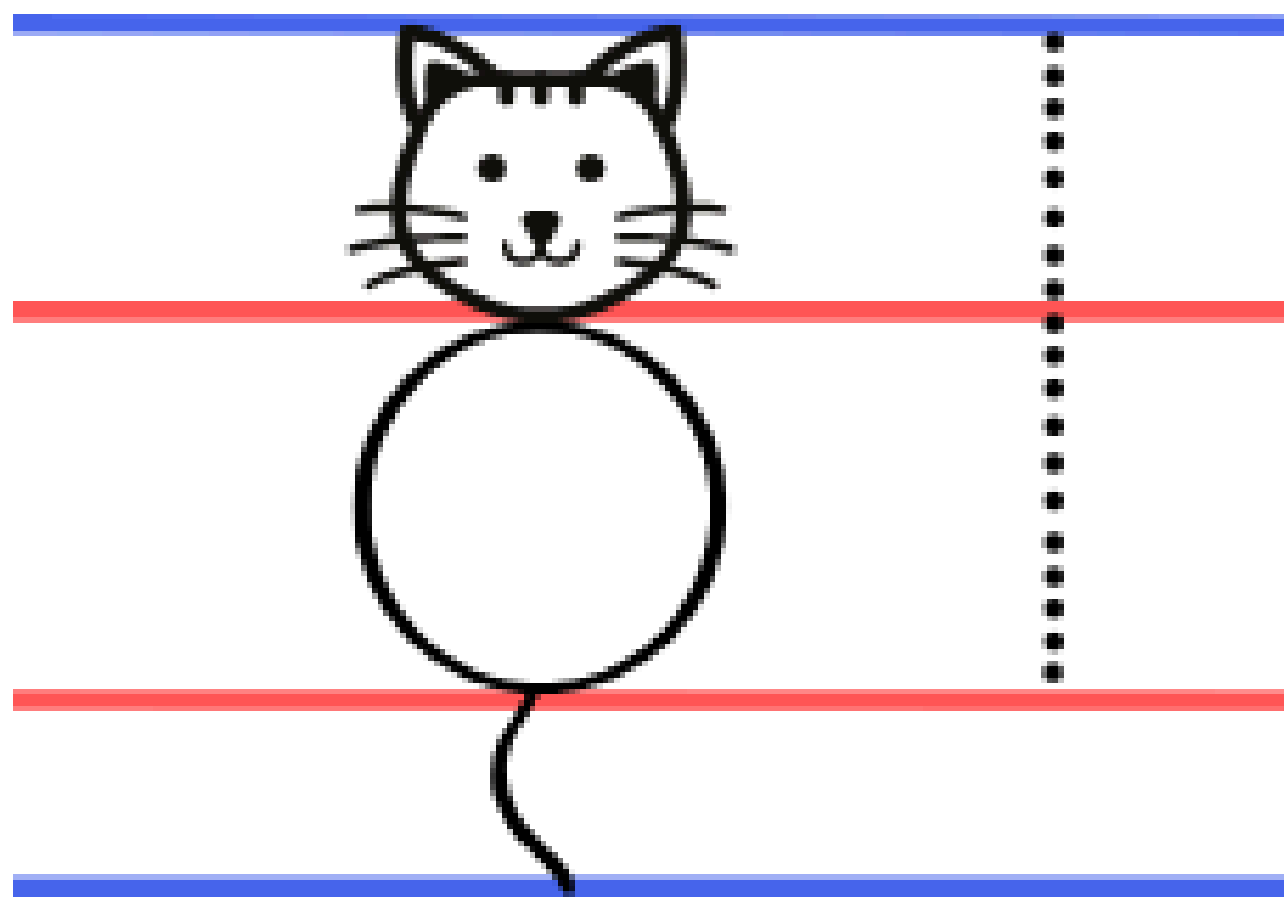
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Letter l:



SCRIPT:

- Start at head line
- Pull down

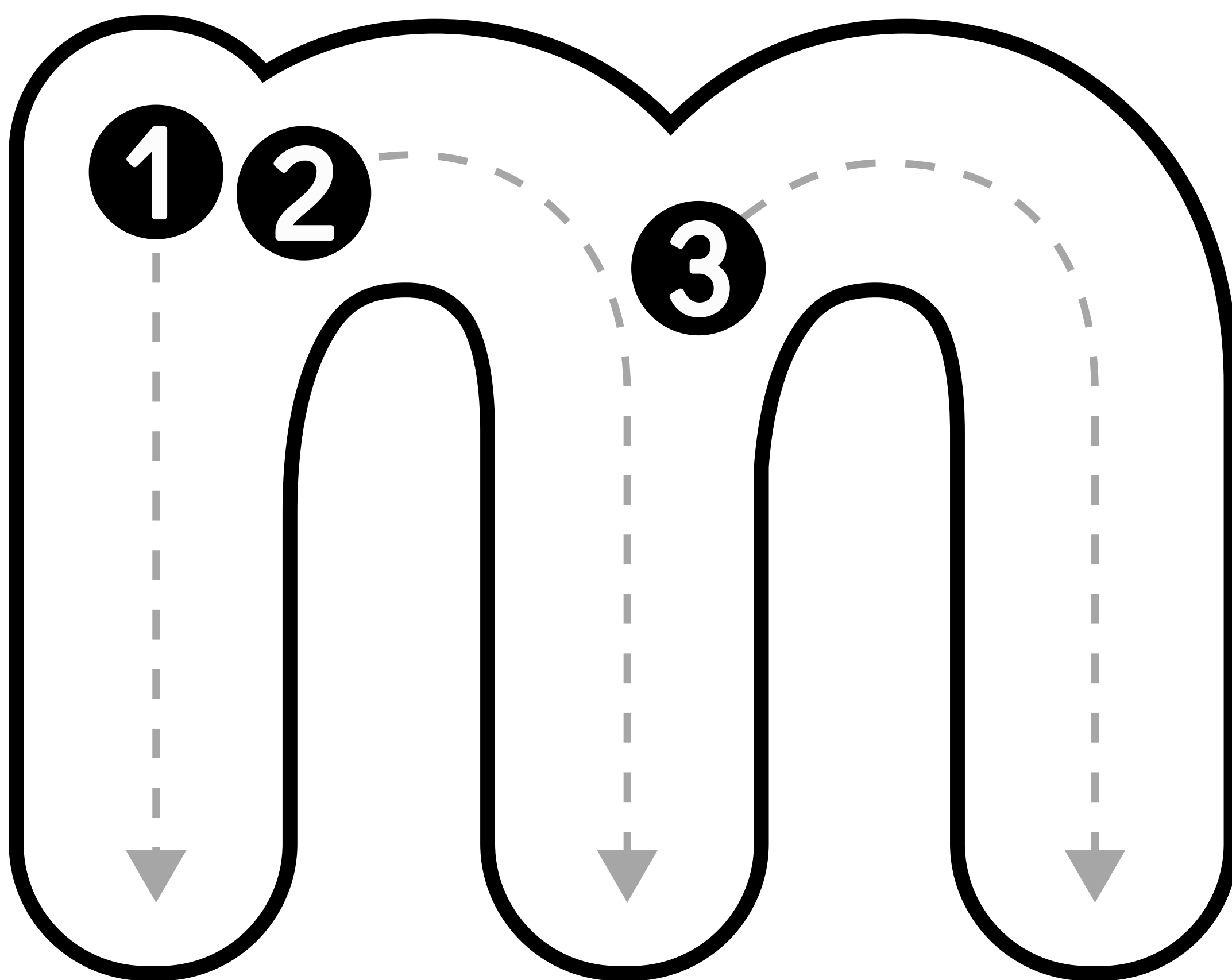


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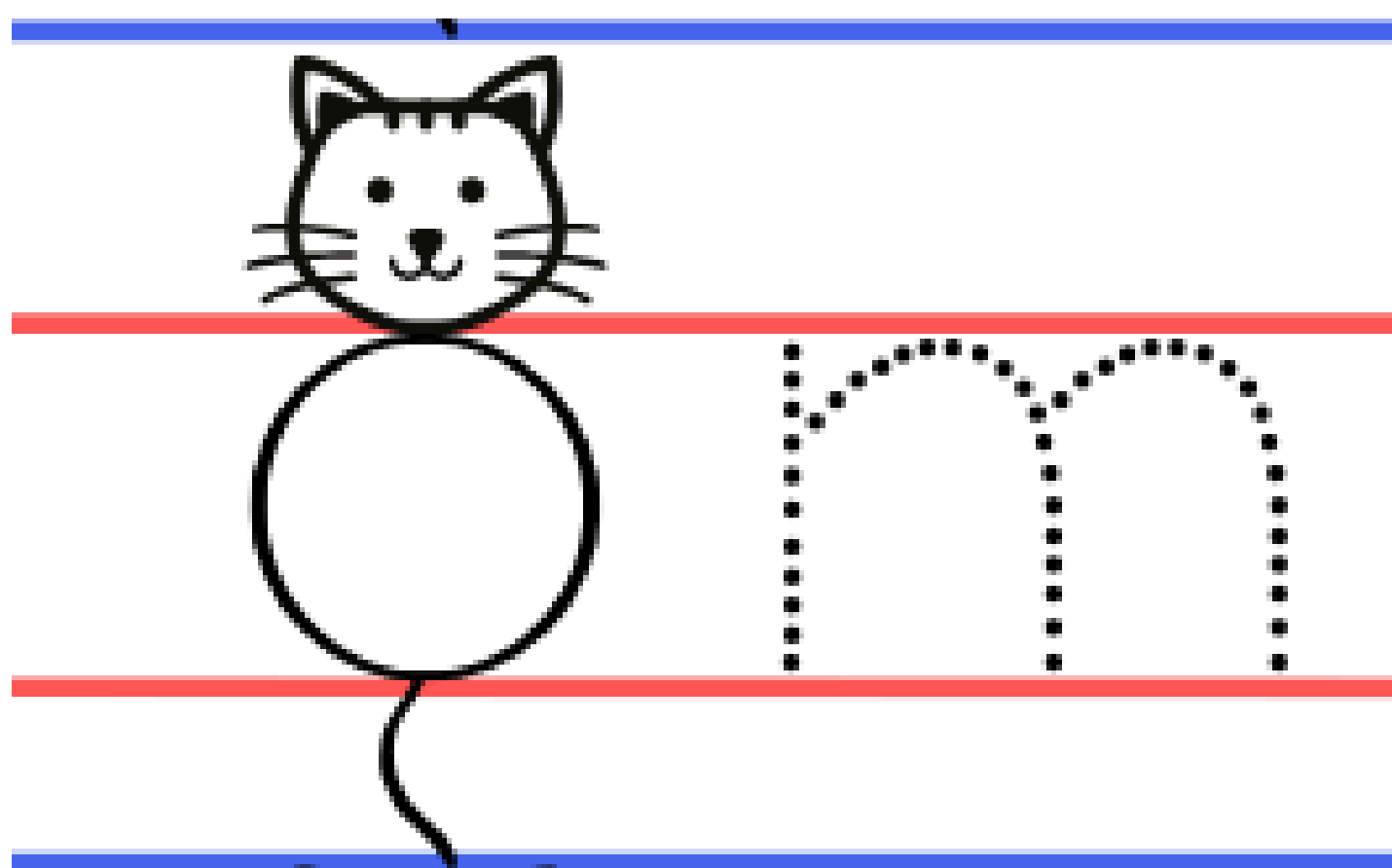
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Letter m:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Back up and over
- Pull down
- Back up and over
- Pull down

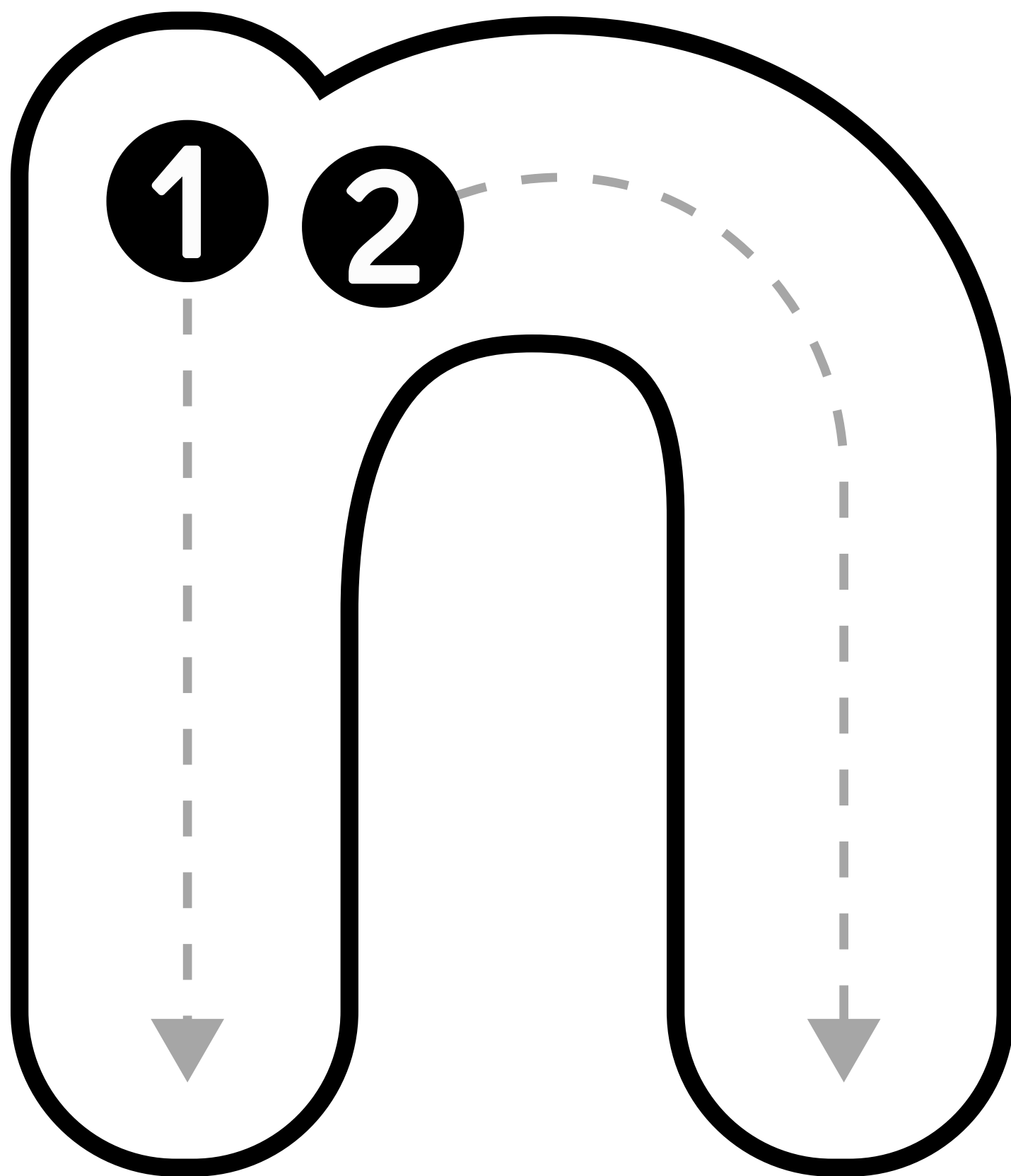


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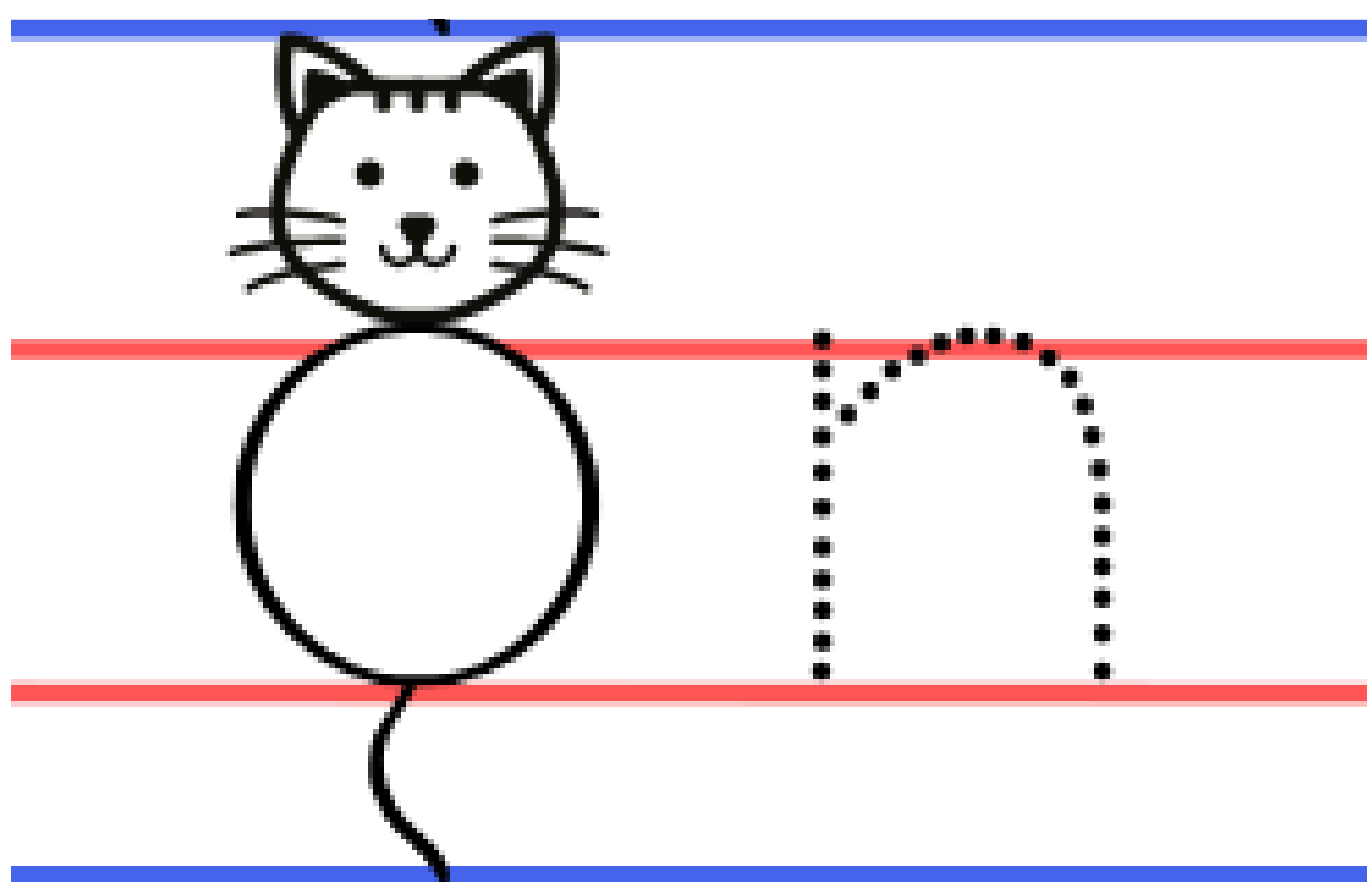
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Letter n:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Back up and over
- Pull down

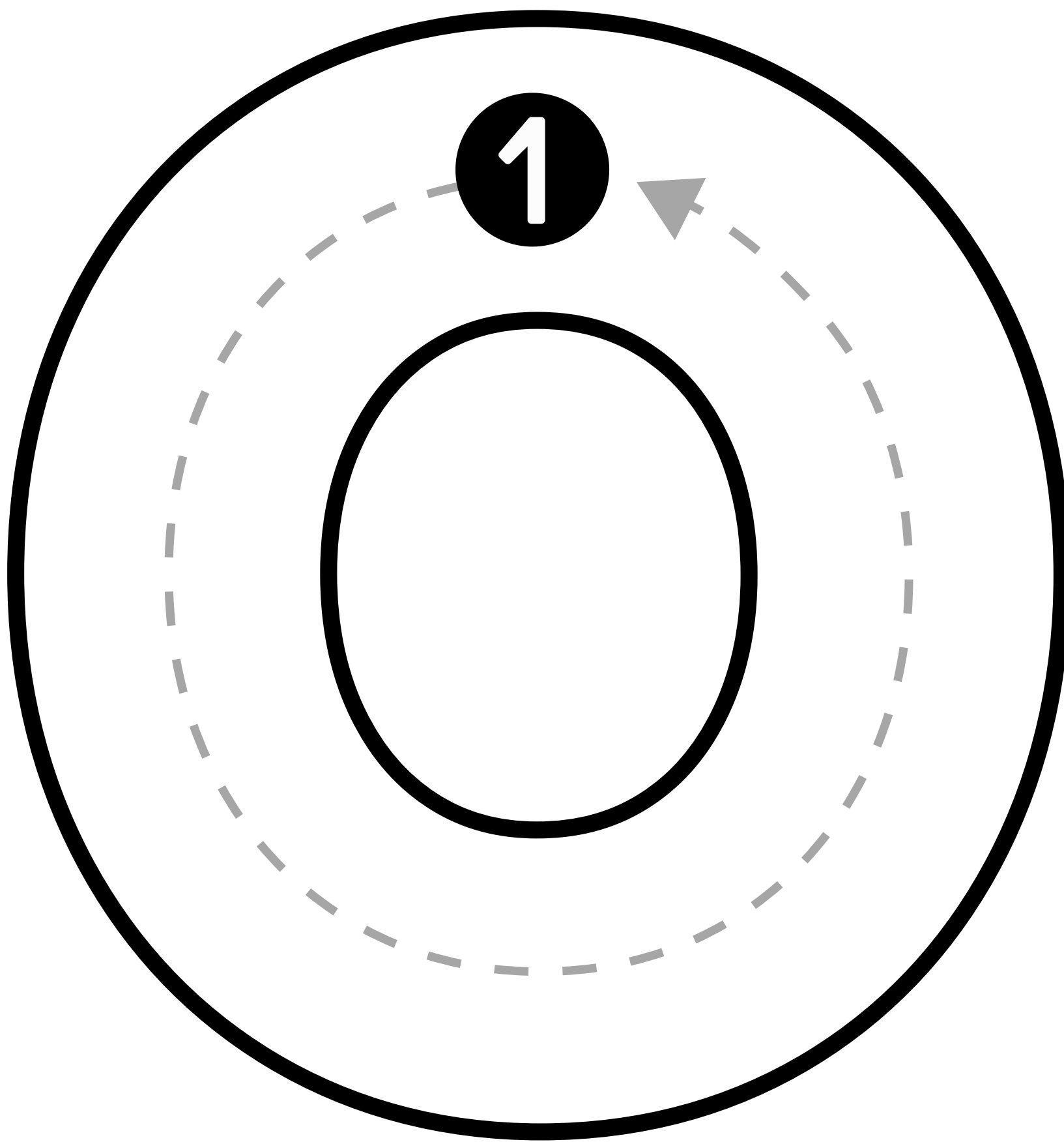


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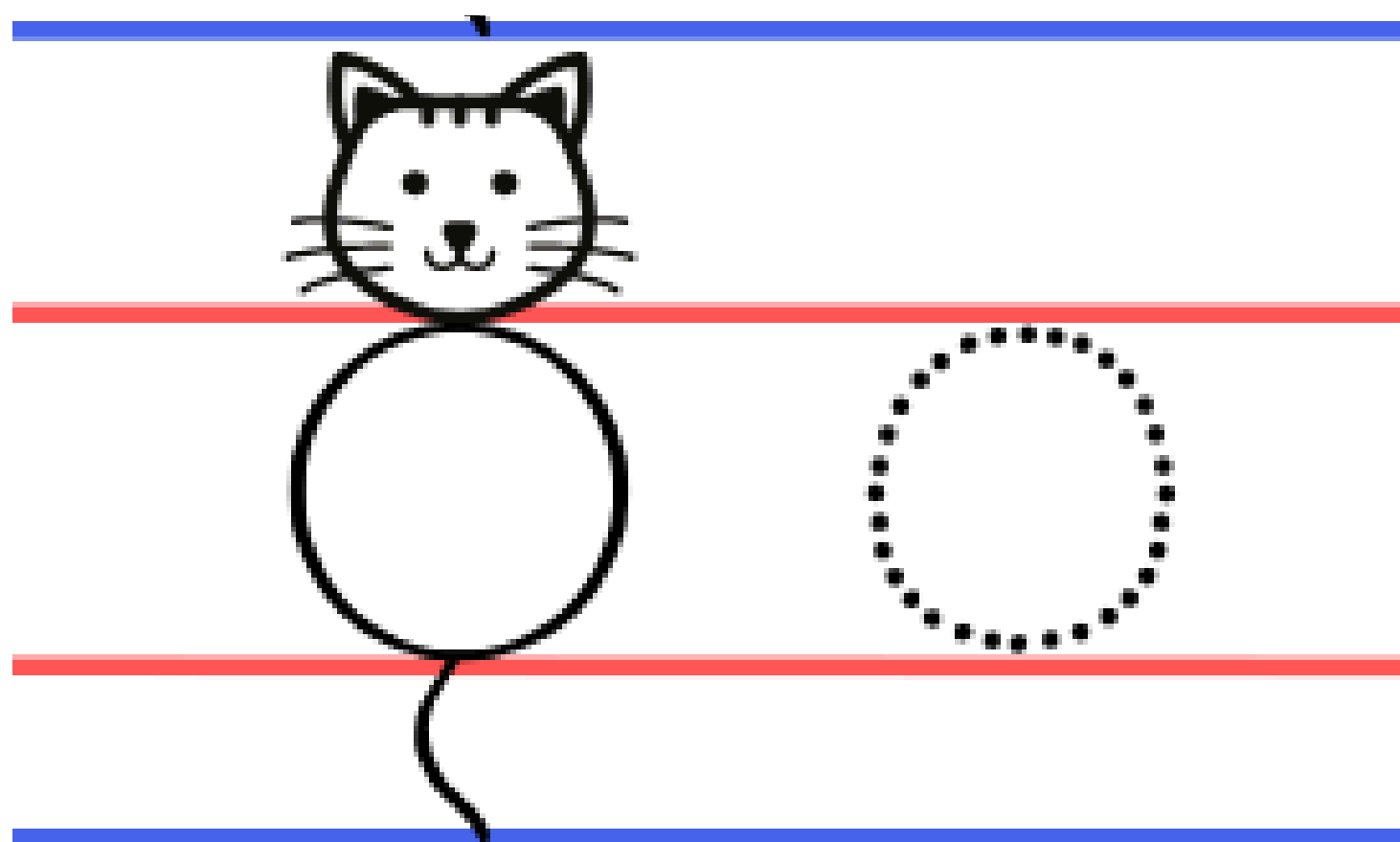
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Letter o:



SCRIPT:

- Pull back
- And round
- And close

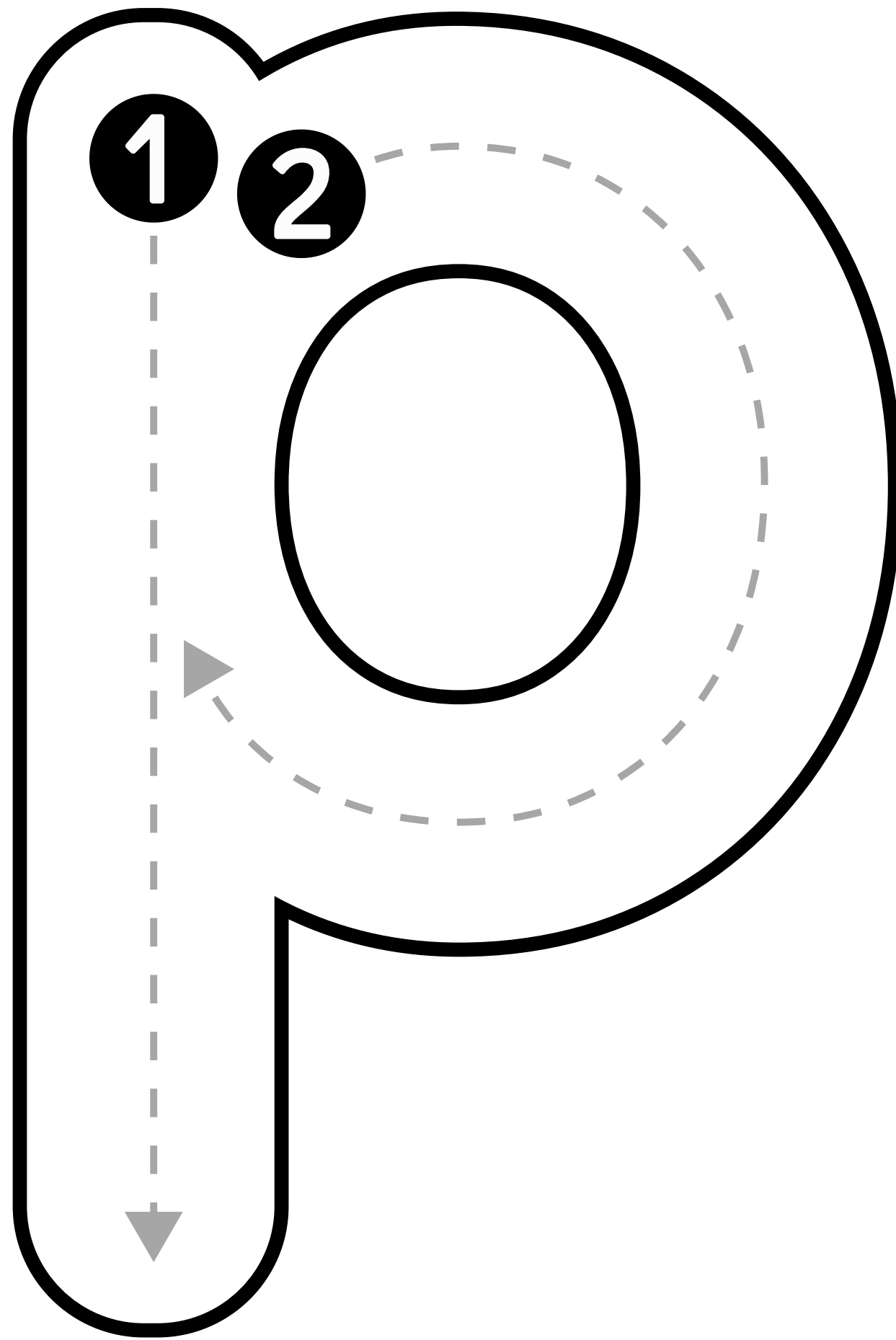


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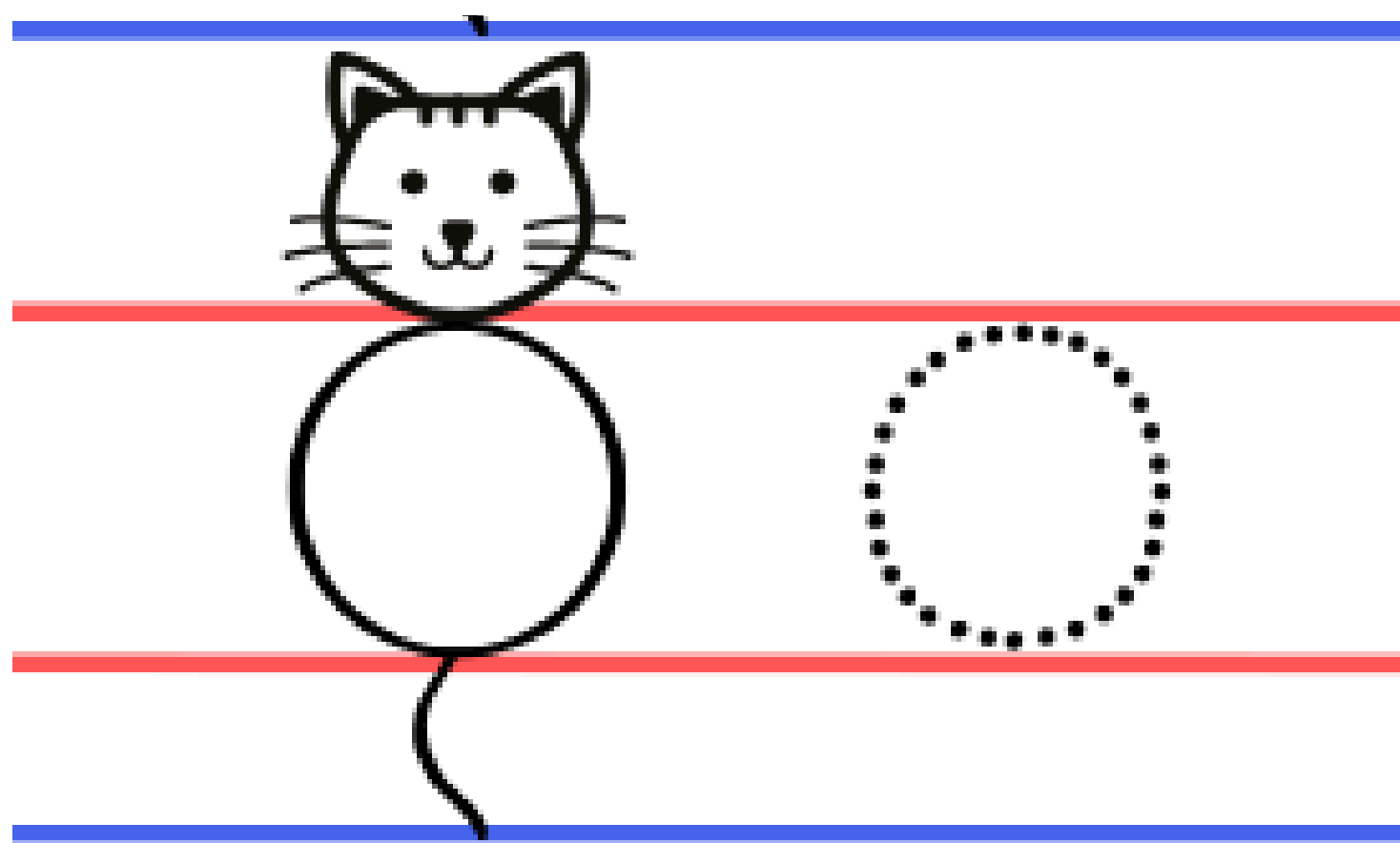
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Letter p:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down to tail line
- Back up
- Circle forward
- And close

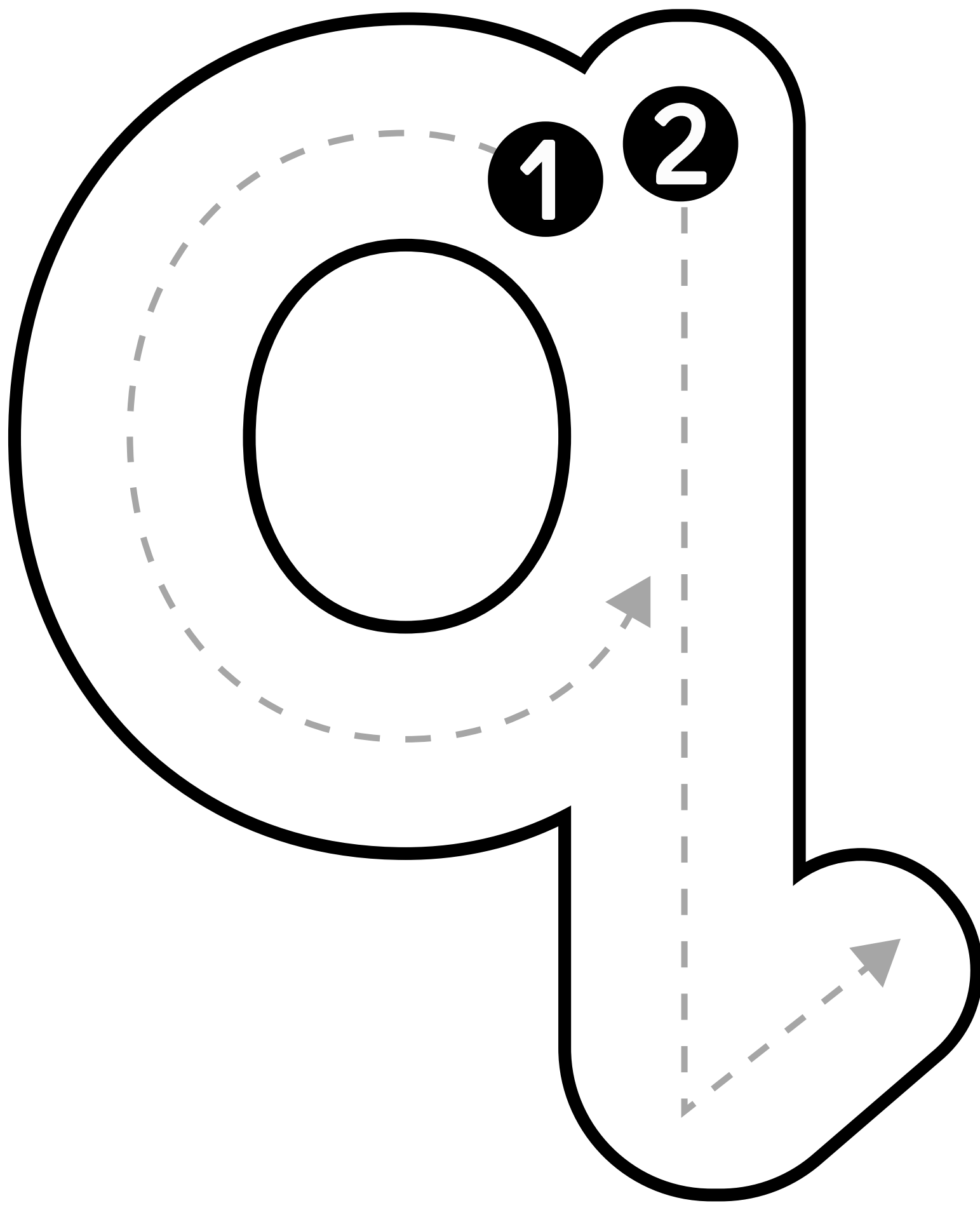


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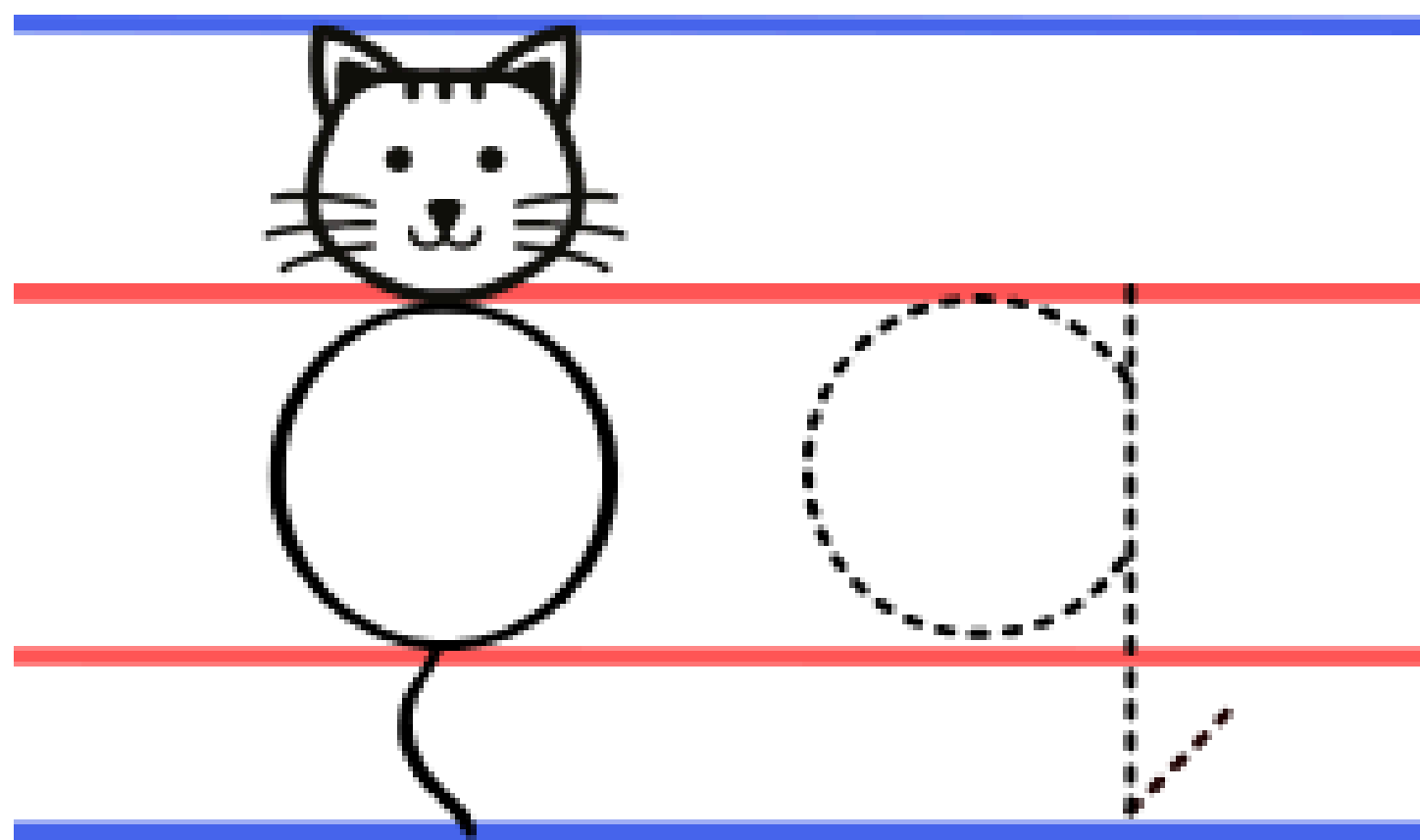
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Letter q:



SCRIPT:

- Circle back
- And round
- Up to top
- Pull down
- Add a flick

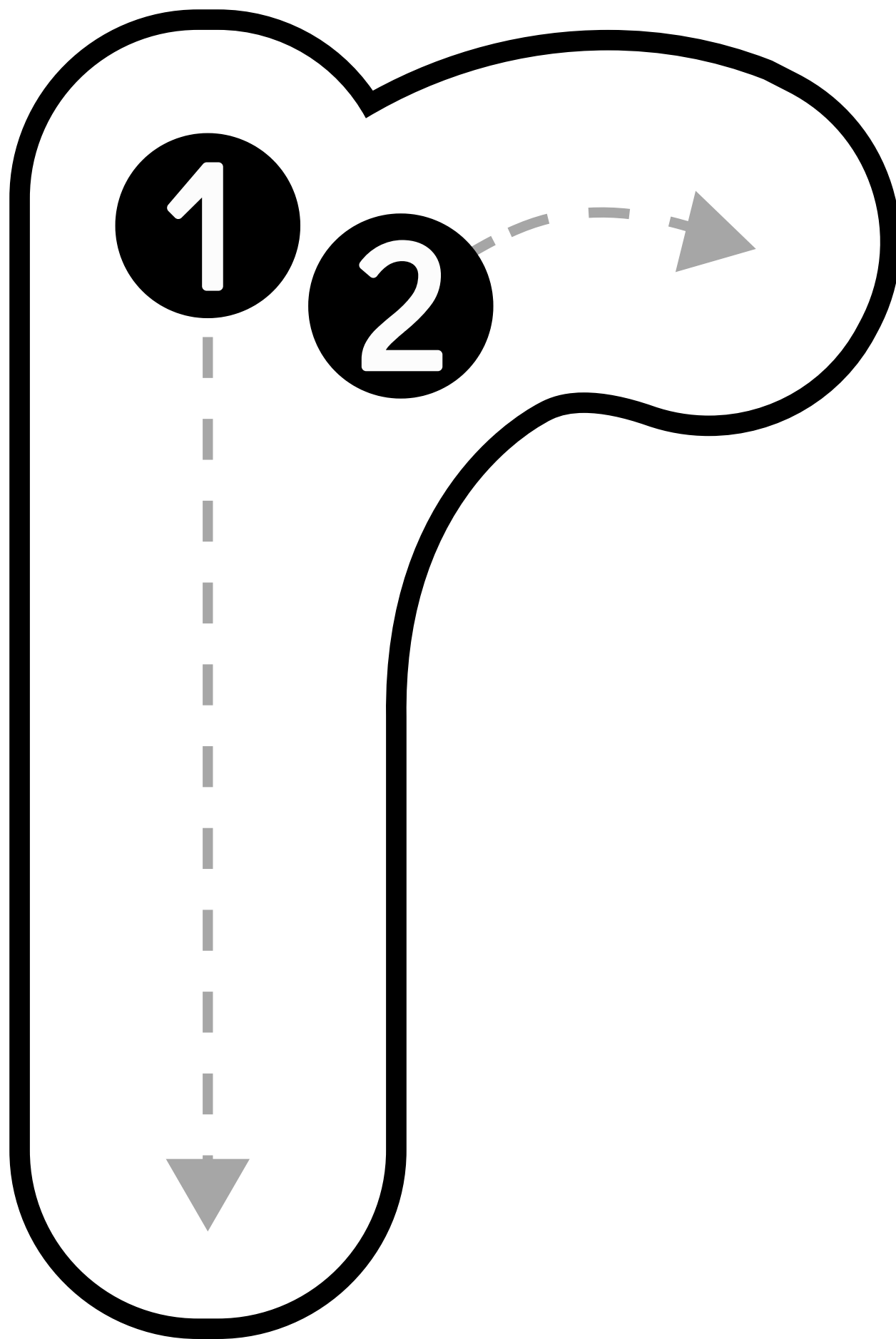


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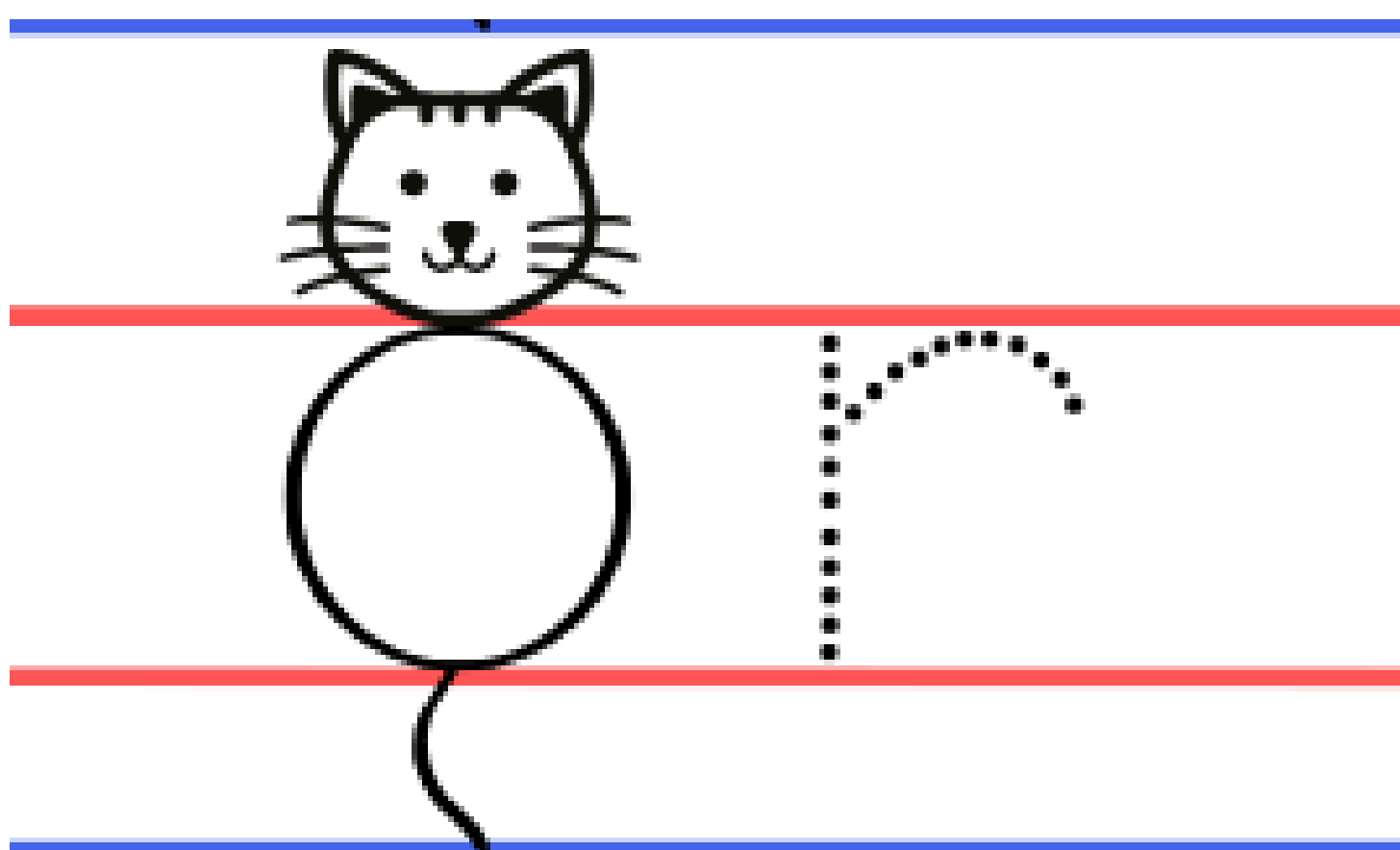
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Letter r:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Back up and over

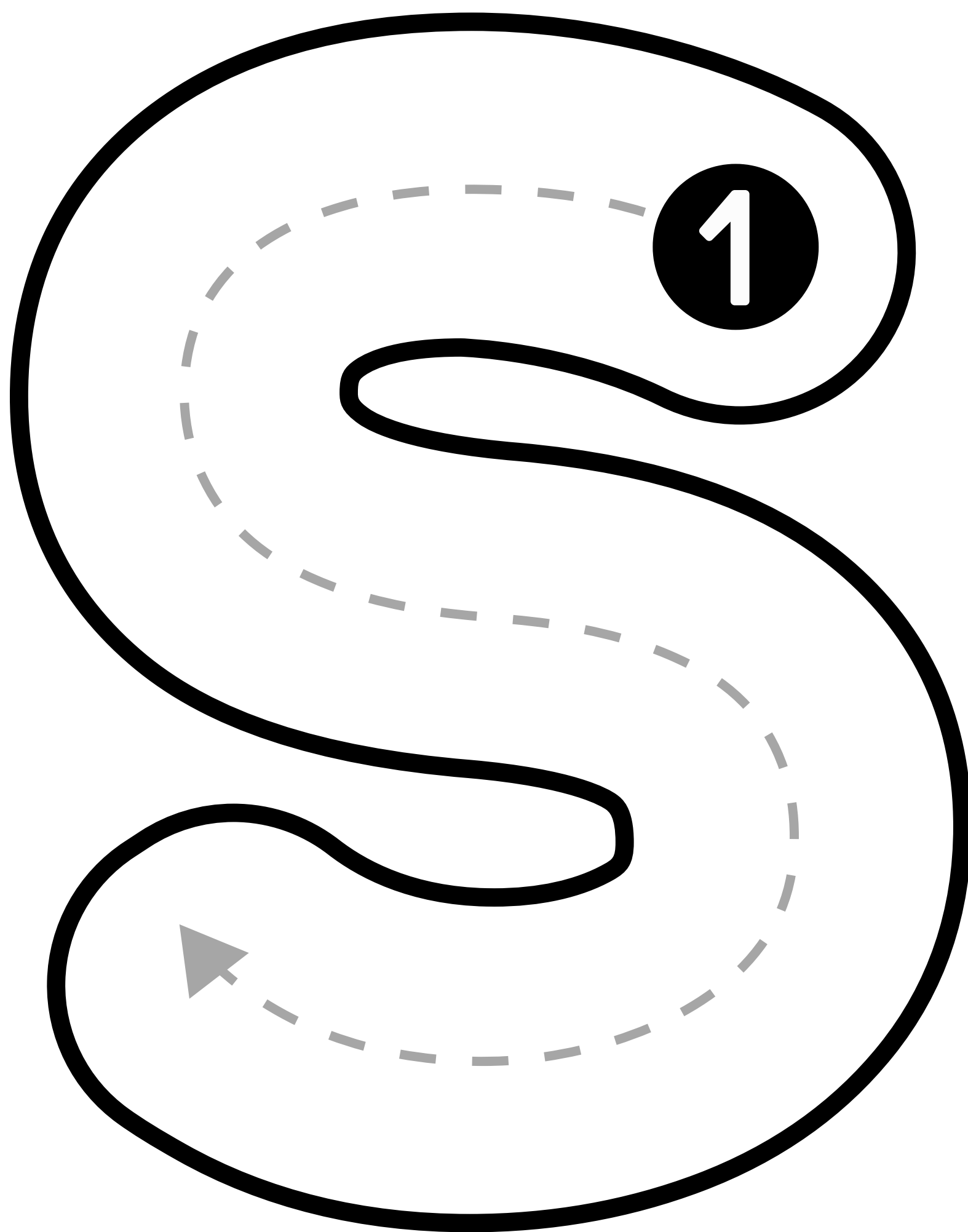


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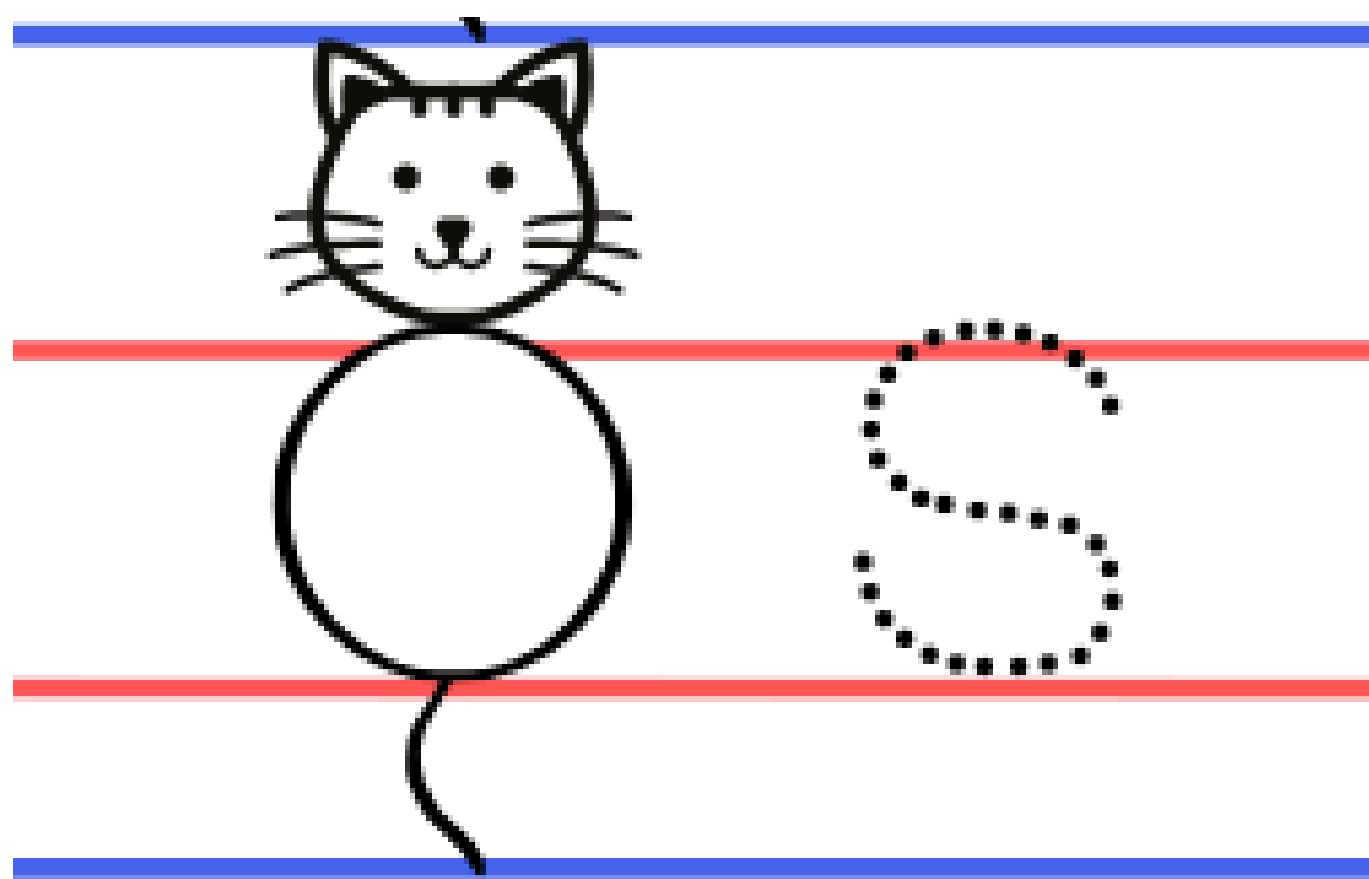
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Letter s:



SCRIPT:

- Pull back
- Curl round
- Pull back

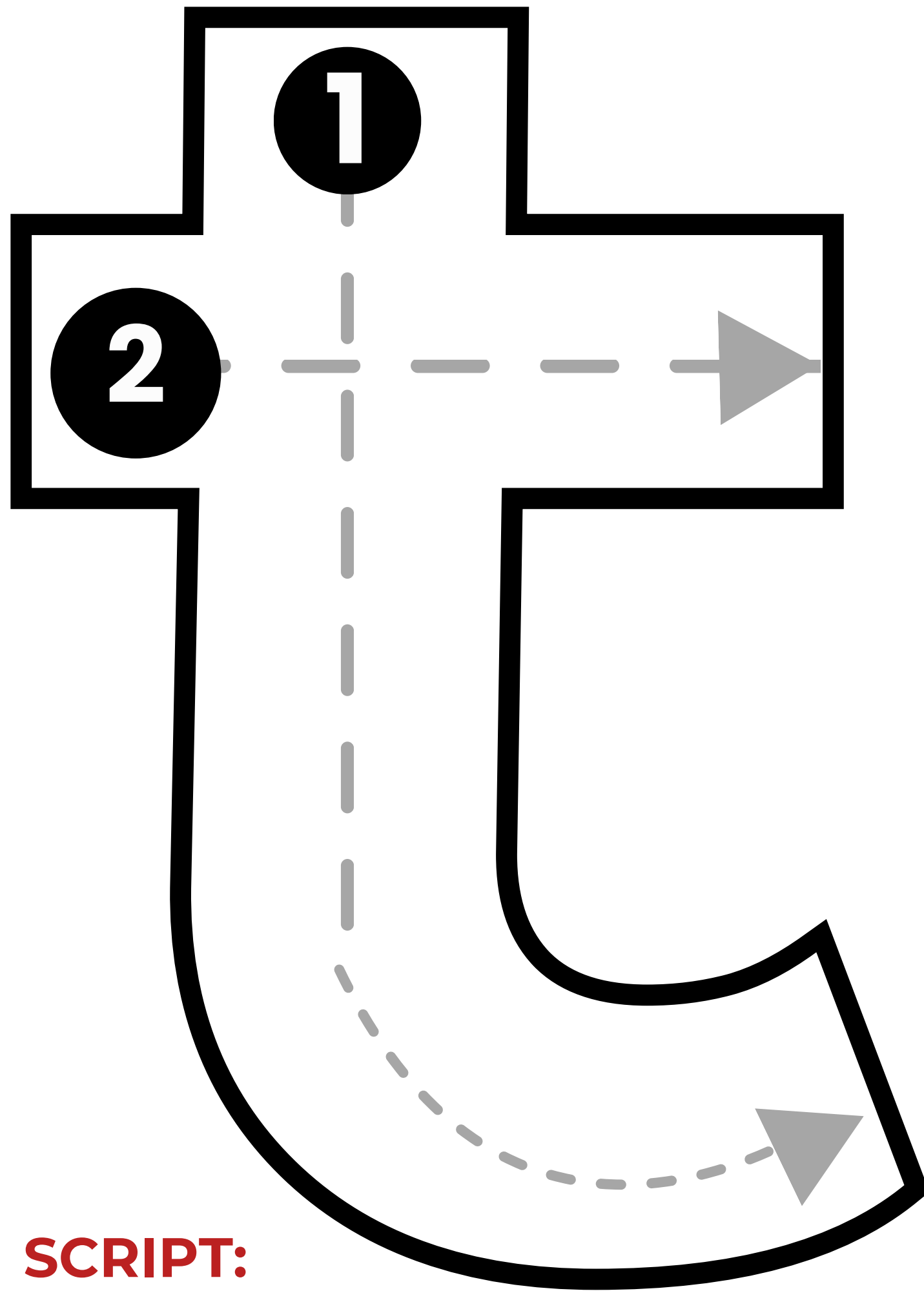


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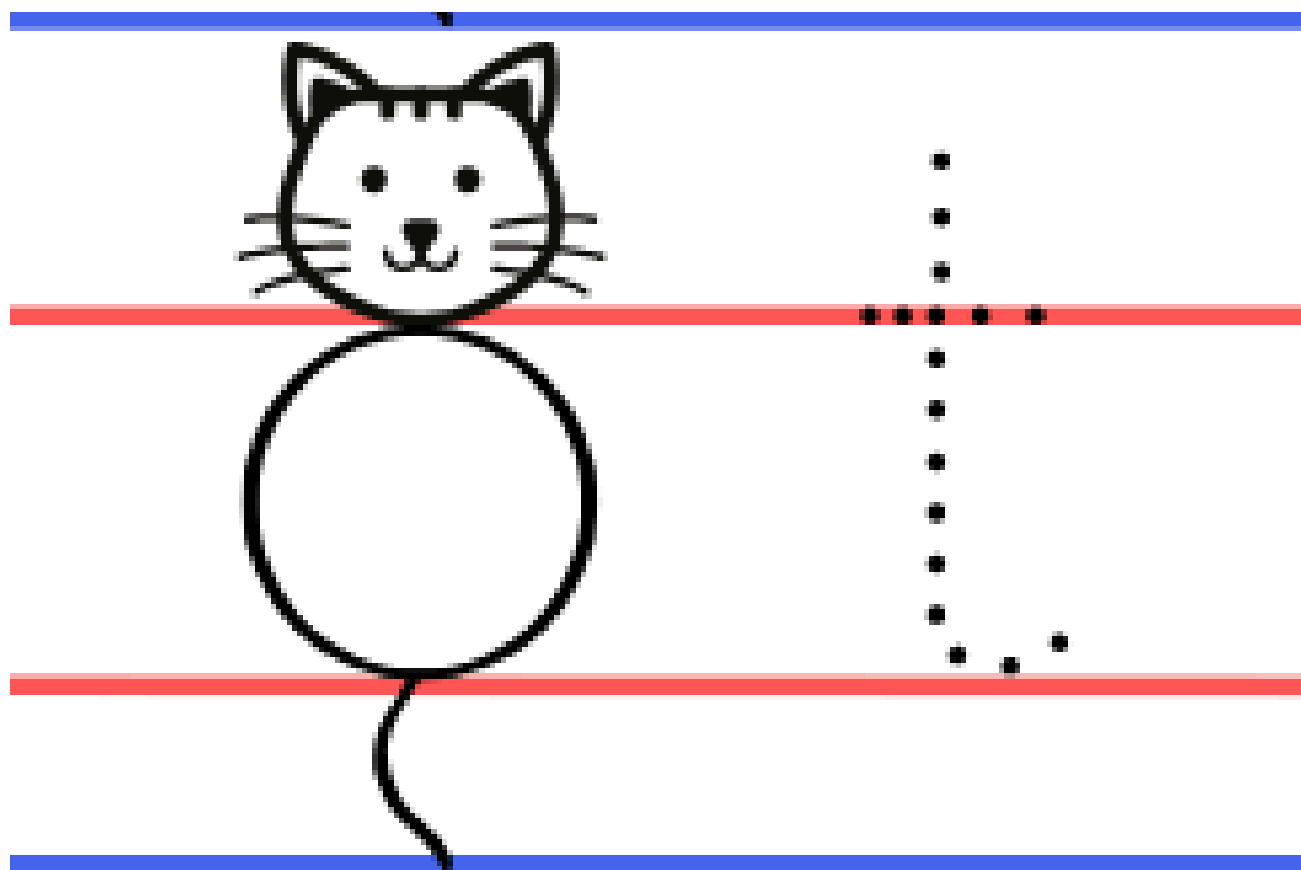
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Letter t:



SCRIPT:

- Start in the middle of the head line:
- Pull down
- Add a hook
- Lift your pencil
- Cross the line

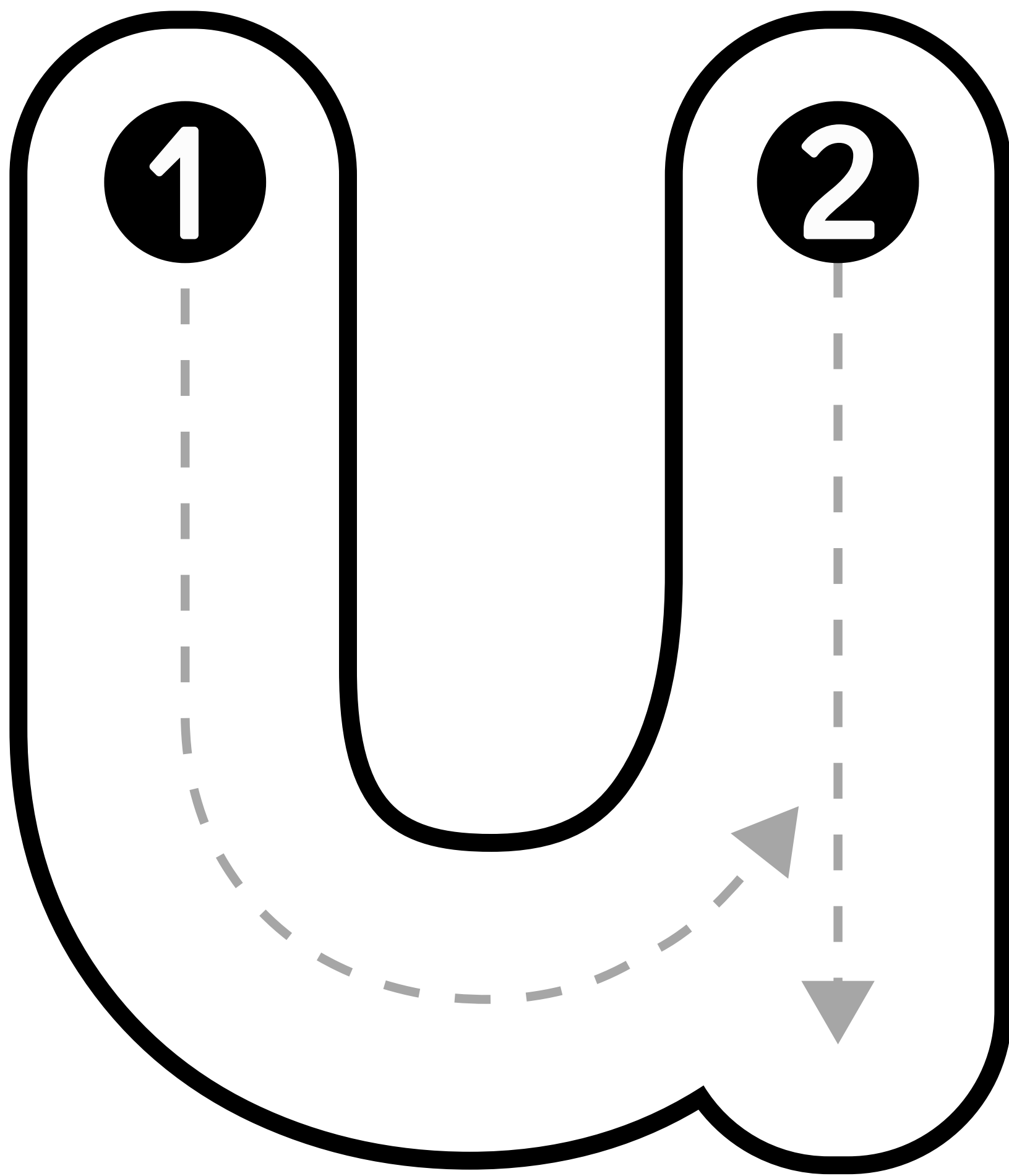


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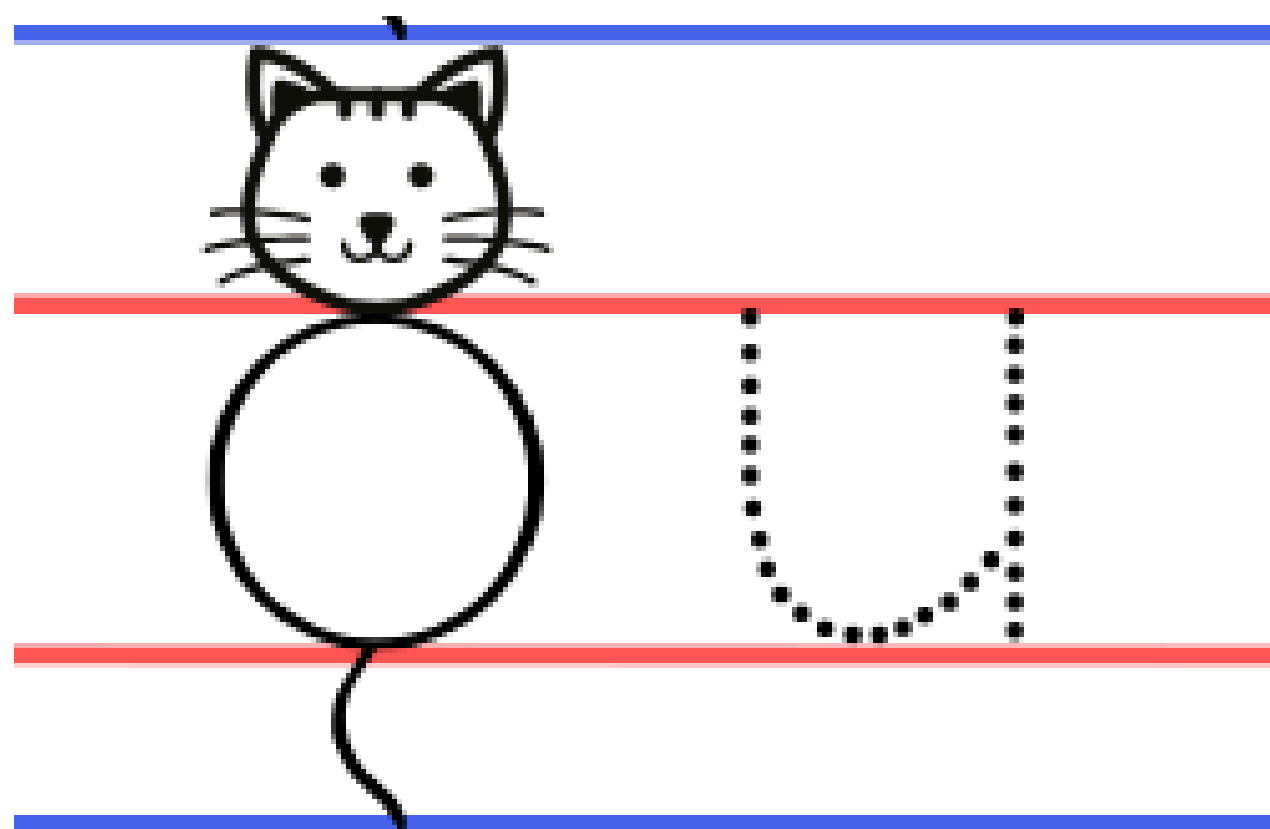
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Letter u:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Curl around
- Pull up
- And back down

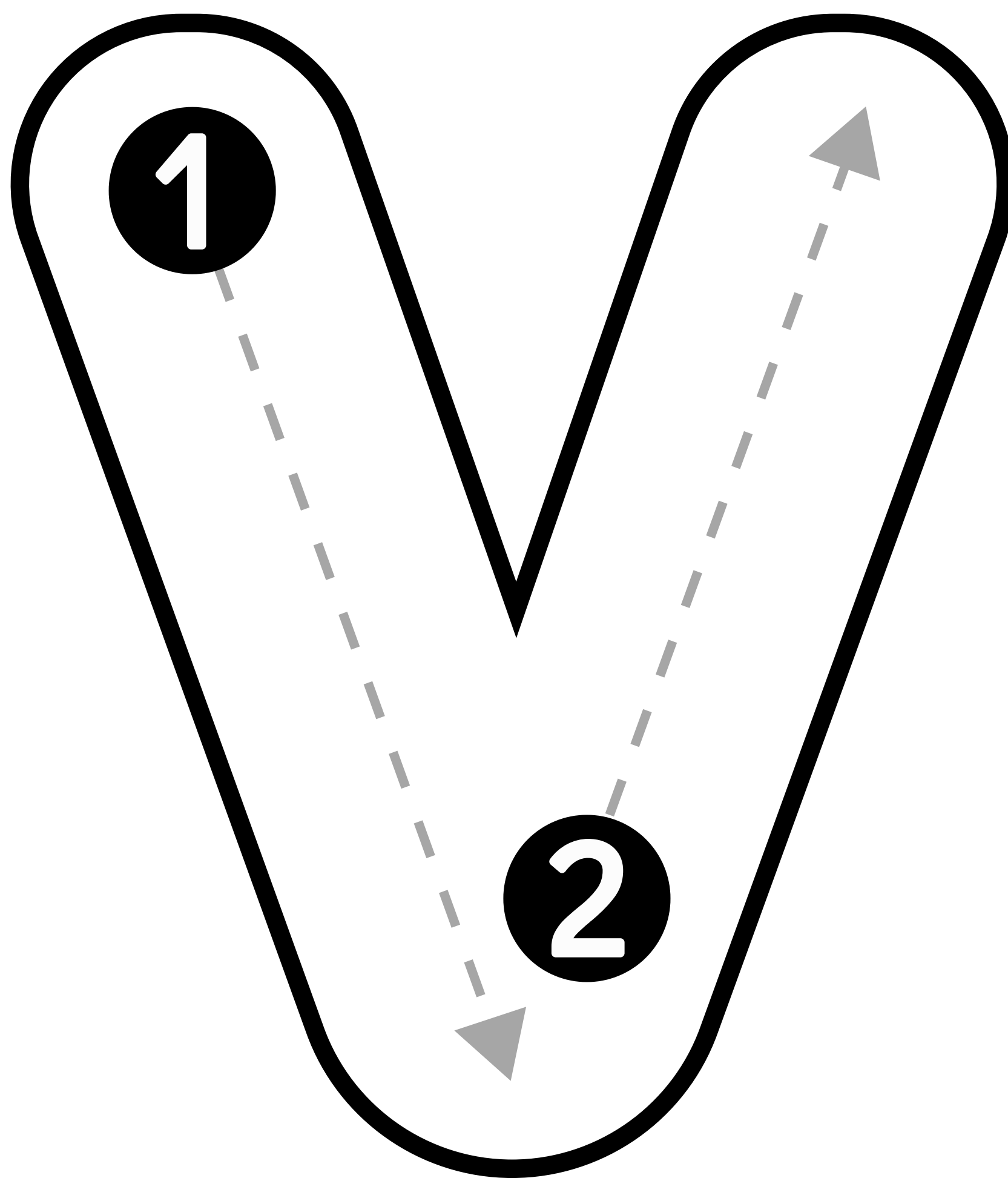


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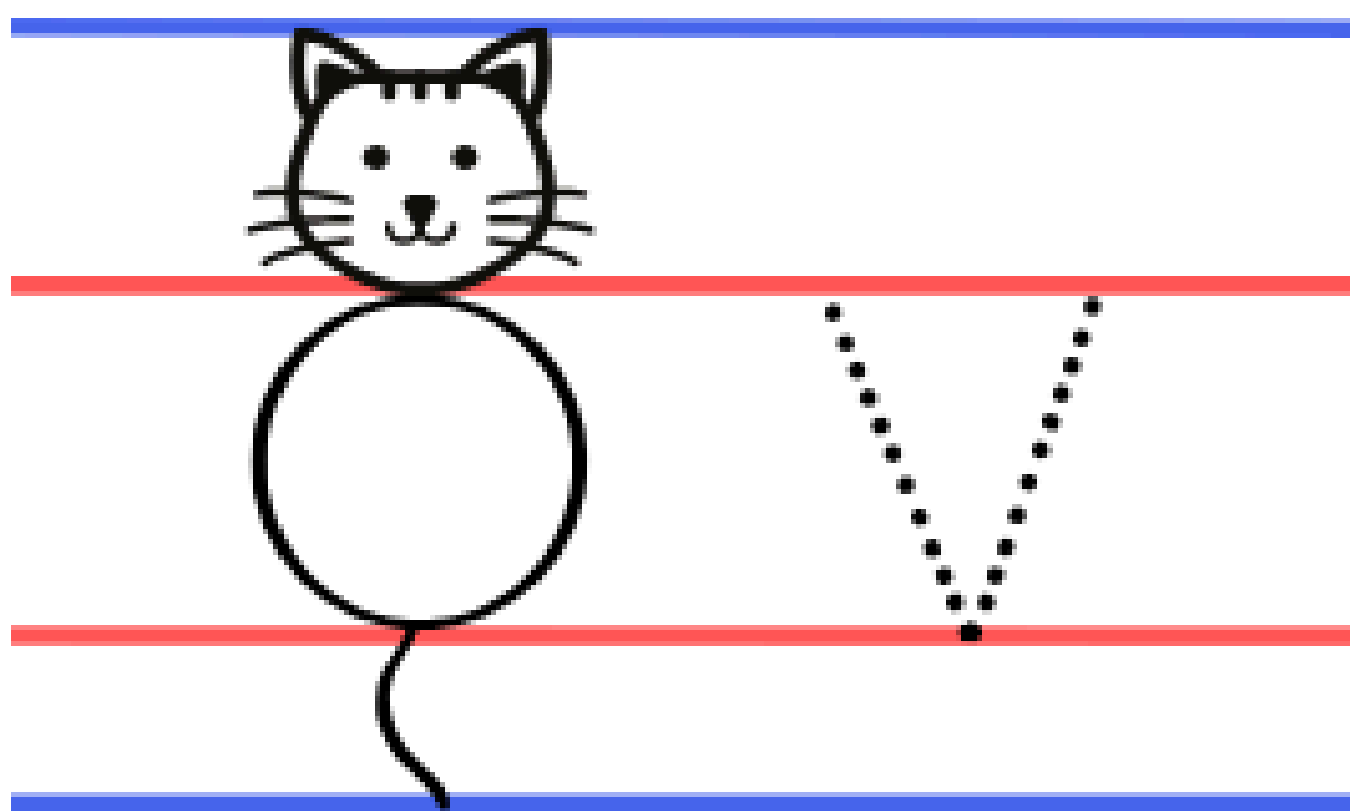
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Letter v:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down diagonally
- Pull back up diagonally

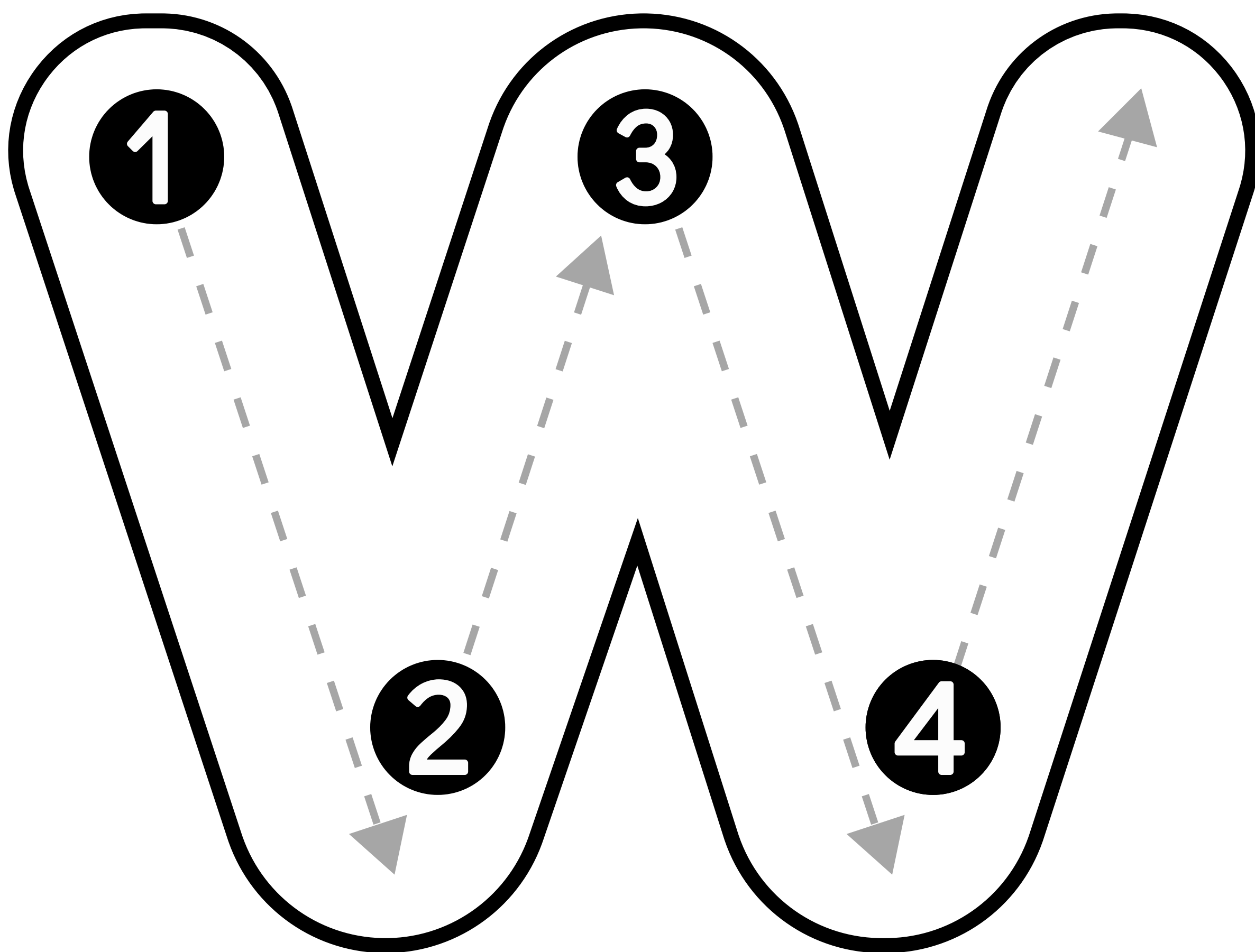


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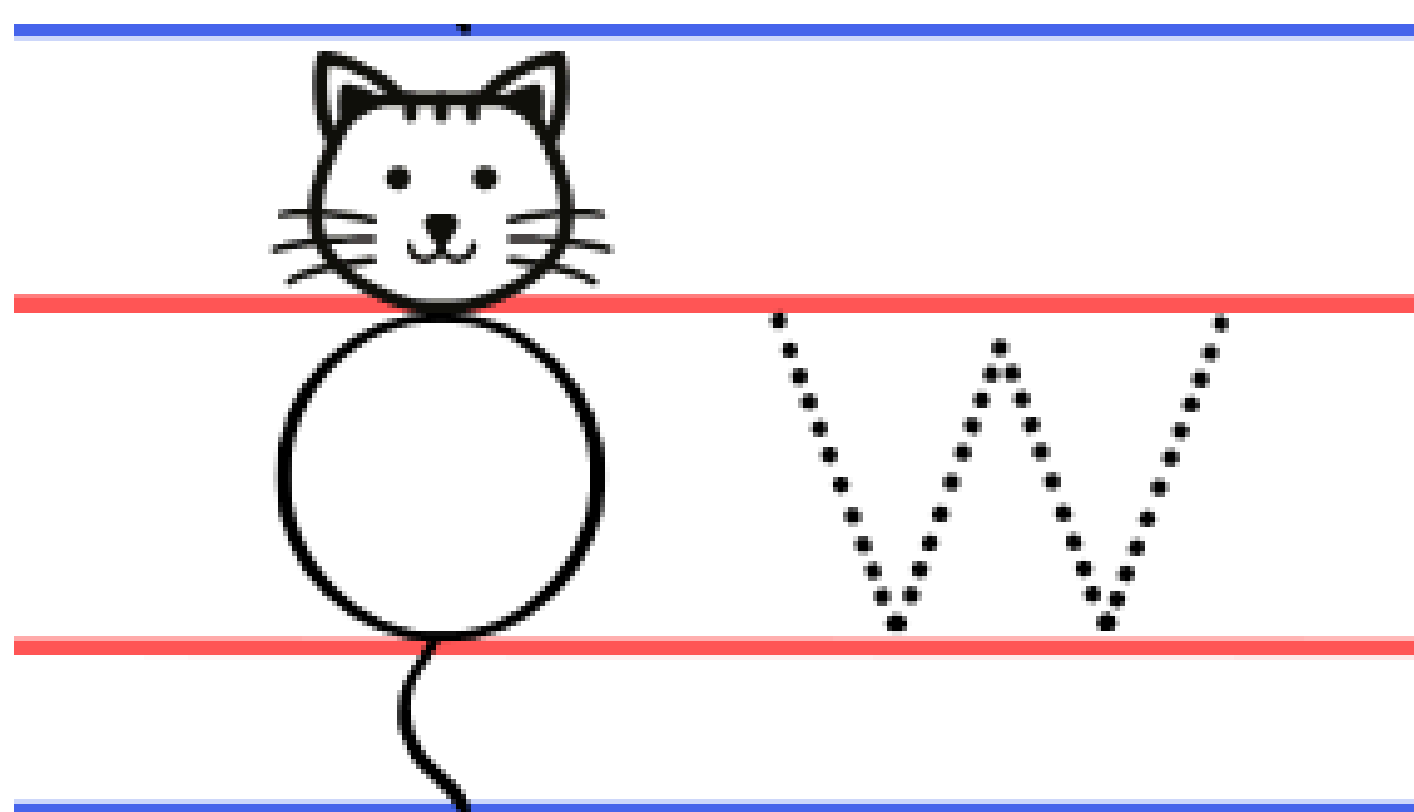
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Letter w:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down diagonally
- Pull back up diagonally
- Pull down diagonally
- Pull back up diagonally

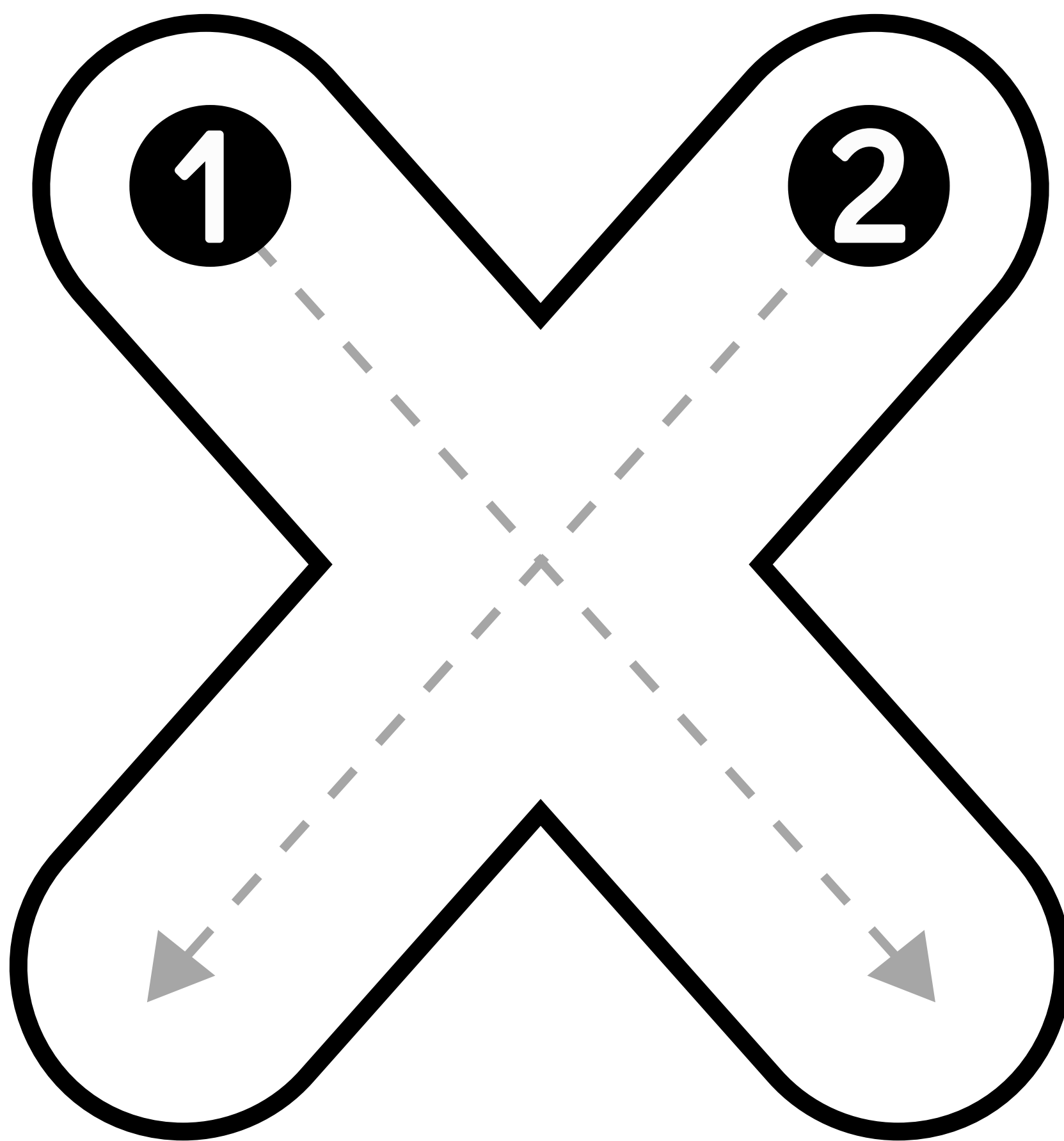


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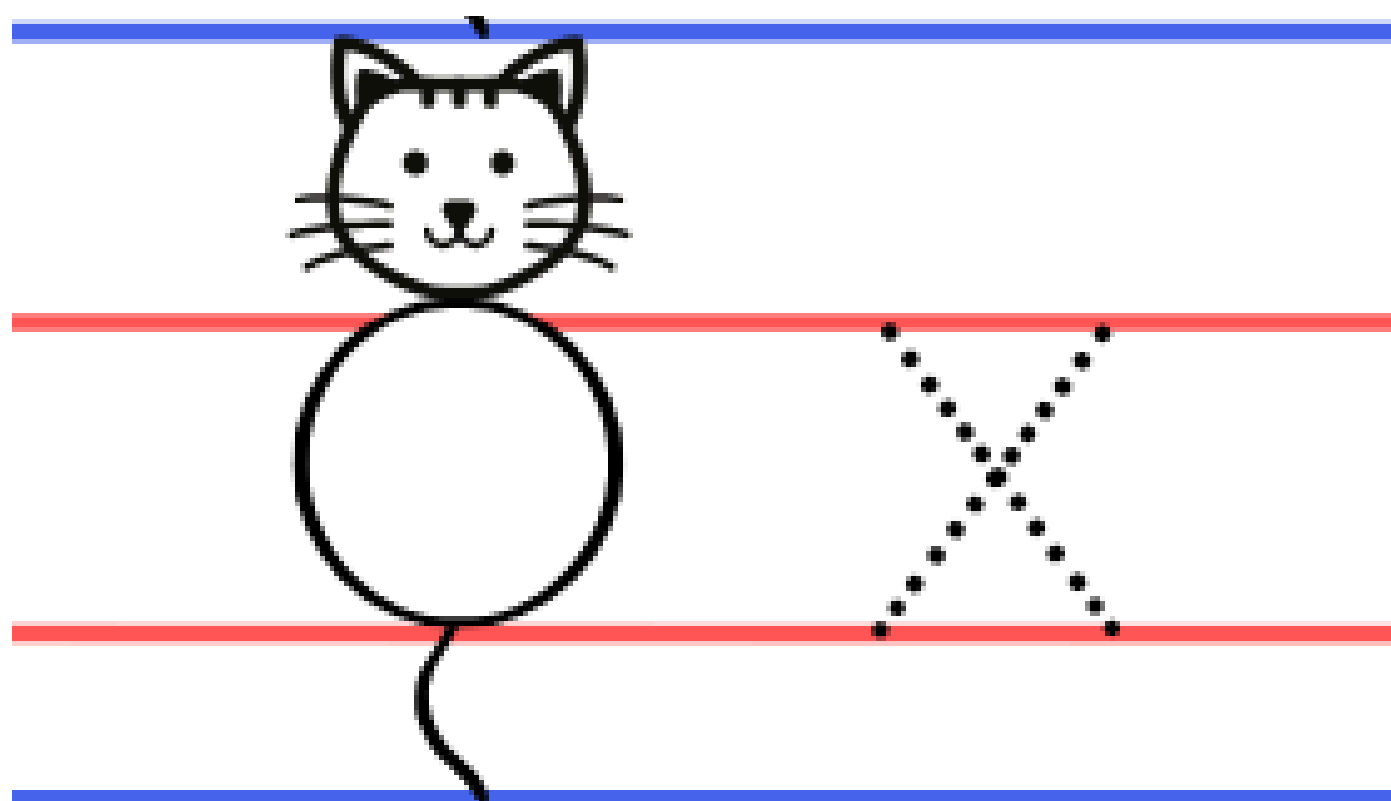
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Letter x:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down diagonally
- Lift pencil
- Pull down diagonally

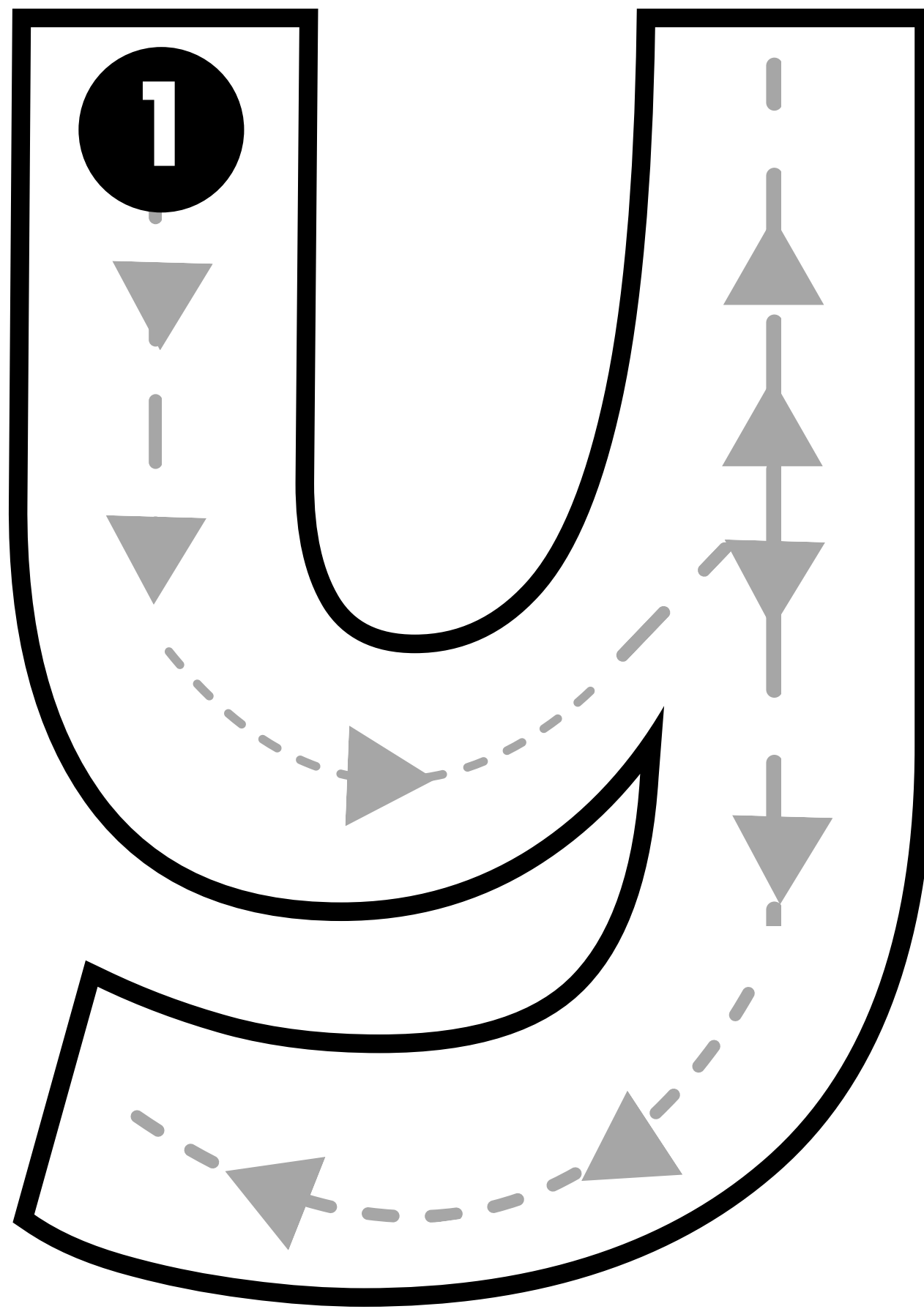


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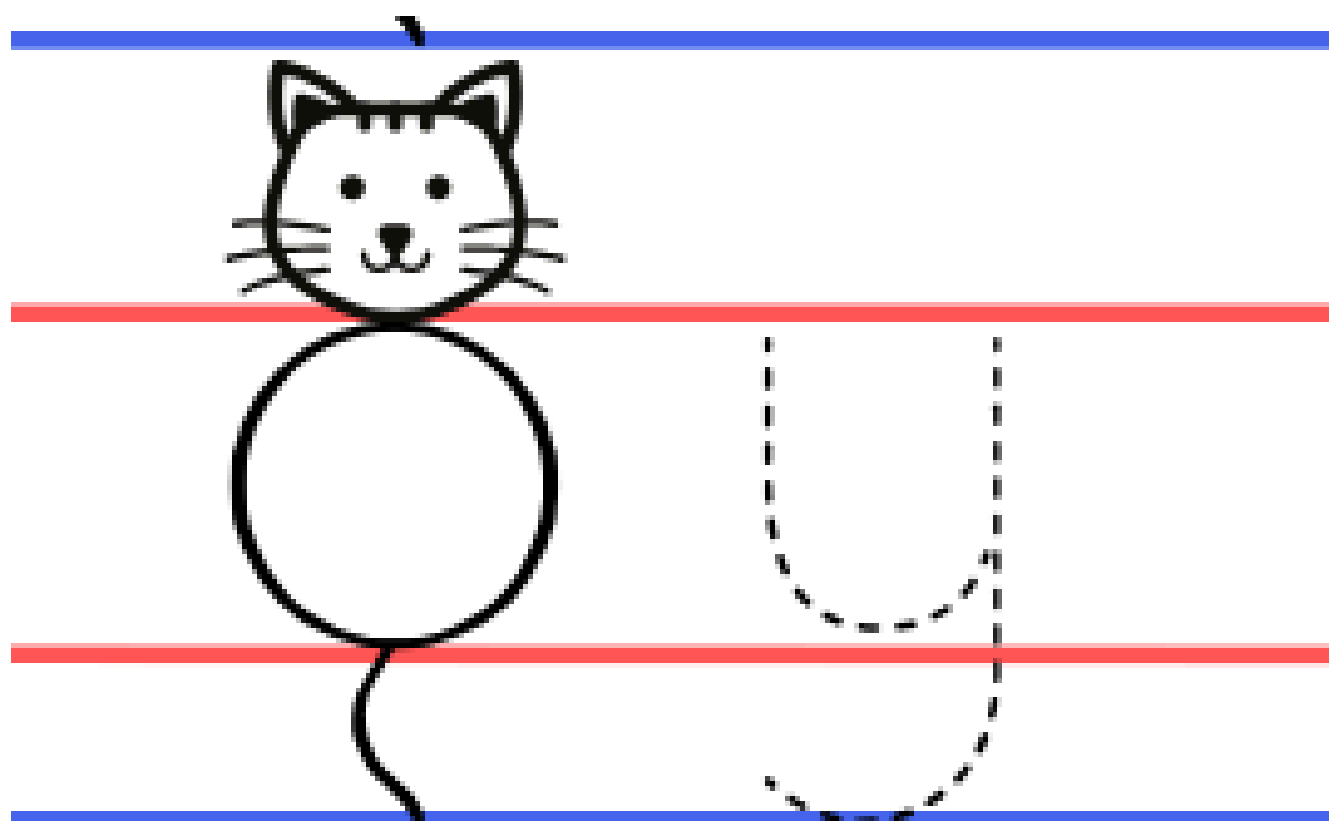
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Letter y:



SCRIPT:

- Pull down
- Curl round
- Pull up
- Back down all the way to tail line
- Add a hook

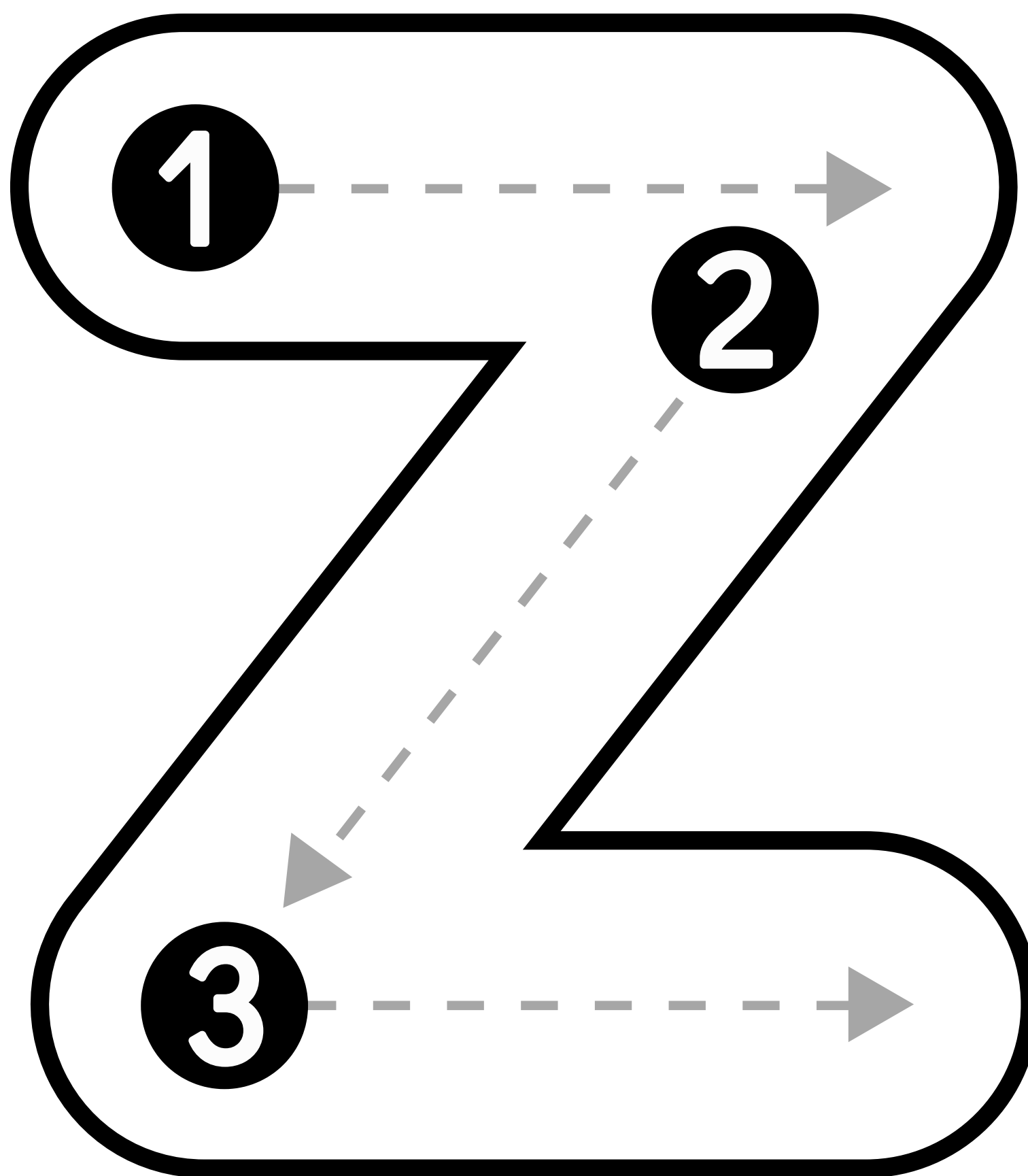


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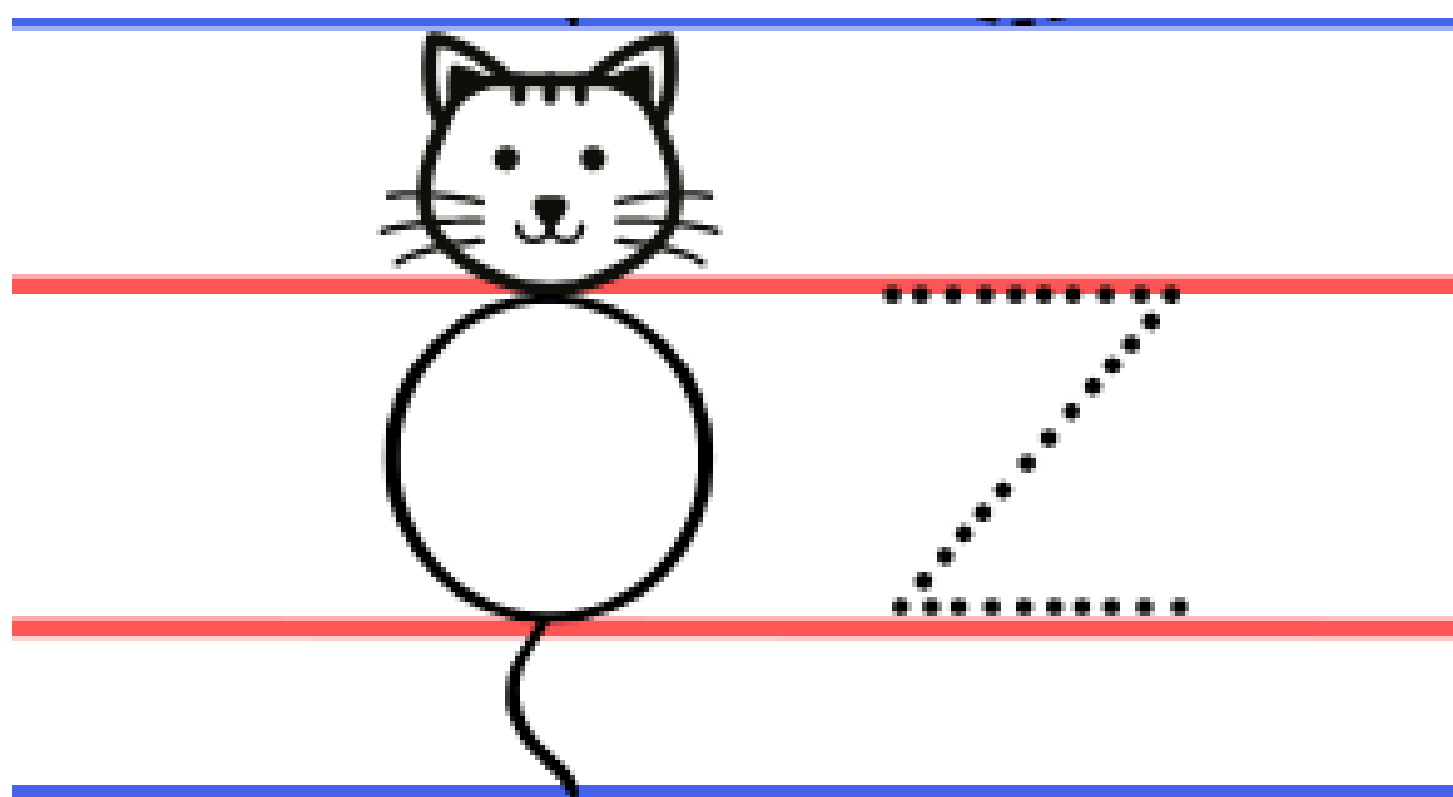
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Letter z:



SCRIPT:

- Pull across
- Diagonally down
- Pull across



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If teaching students how to write with the correct letter formations still sounds daunting...
don't worry. I've got you!

Join The Reading Teachers Club and let me be your structured literacy coach as you start to align your classroom and teaching with the science of reading.

Sound cards are available on the website:
<https://raisingreaders.co.za/product/raising-readers-sound-cards/>

LET'S CONNECT!

Head to our website for more information!



Website

www.raisingreaders.co.za



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Marian Bailey

Structured literacy specialist
and founder of Raising
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