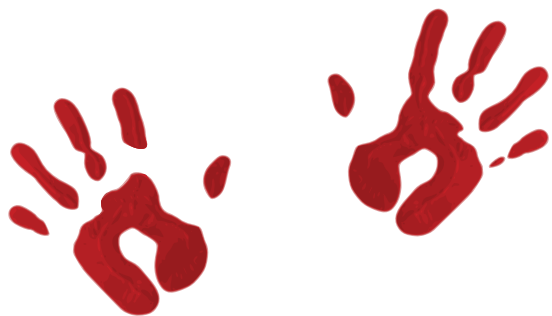


Early Writing For Little Hands



You are your child's first and most important teacher. Learn how to help your child develop strong letter awareness and writing skills that will last a lifetime.

by Renee Abramovitz

Why letter awareness is important

A cornerstone of any early childhood education program is learning about the 26 letters. This includes learning how to identify each letter, what sound(s) each letter makes, and how to properly write each letter. This free e-book will provide you with all the tools and information you need to successfully introduce your child to the letters and teach your child how to properly write each letter.

In this e-book:

Introducing your child to the 26 letters

Tip #1: Don't start with the letter A.

Teaching your child the proper pencil grip

Legible handwriting depends on it.

52 letter tracing worksheets, one for each uppercase and lowercase letter

Print more than one copy of each worksheet to give your child a few extra opportunities to practice.

About School Sparks

www.schoolsparks.com is a free website with tips and resources to help your child start school prepared to succeed. There are hundreds of **kindergarten worksheets**, and new worksheets are added weekly. The website also offers information on the 8 developmental areas that are critical to success in school, including tips for helping your child develop necessary skills in each area. To assess your child's readiness to begin school, there is a **kindergarten readiness test**. At the conclusion of the assessment, you will receive customized feedback about your child's existing skills in each of the 8 developmental areas, plus activity suggestions to help your child accelerate skill development. Lastly, a weekly **blog** covers various topics related to early childhood education, like "Tips For Teaching Your Child The Proper Pencil Grip" and "Teaching Children To Count."

Renee Abramovitz retired from teaching in 2008 to become, as she likes to say, a "full-time grandma." Renee worked in preschool and kindergarten classrooms during her entire teaching career and is passionate about helping young children succeed in school. Although retired, she enjoys continuing to work with young children on school readiness activities and believes that when children start school with a solid foundation of skills, they are poised to begin a lasting cycle of academic success. Renee has three grown children and four young grandchildren. She and her husband recently celebrated 40 years of marriage and live in Columbus, Ohio.

Introducing your child to the 26 letters

After many years of introducing kindergarten students to the 26 letters and their sound(s), I found that a few simple principles helped all students learn this information quickly and easily.

When introducing your child to the 26 letters and each letter's sound(s), do not simply begin with A. Working in alphabetical order is not the most effective way for a child to learn the sound(s) made by each letter. I recommend the following order instead:



B, M, F, D, S, P, V, T, L, Z, N, W, J,
K, H, C, G, Y, R, A, O, I, U, E, Q, X

I suggest this order for a few reasons:

Easy sounds first. It is easiest for children to feel, hear, identify and produce sounds that are formed with the lips, teeth and forward tongue position (where the tongue touches the teeth). This is because children are able to use their sense of

sight when they watch others making the sound. Alternatively, sounds that are formed at the back of the mouth (such as the sounds made by the letters K, G, and Y) are hard for children to mimic as children cannot observe how your mouth and tongue are moving when you make the sound.

Beginning with letters that have easy-to-create sounds will **give your child confidence** as he approaches more challenging letters and sounds.

Complex letters last. Each vowel makes numerous sounds (or is even silent) depending on where in the word the vowel appears. Also, there are only slight differences between the sounds made by many of the vowels, such as the vowel sounds in the words “cat,” “cut” and “cot.” As a result, learning the individual sounds each vowel makes is a complicated skill. In fact, some speech pathologists believe that a child’s “ear” is not developed enough to distinguish all vowel sounds until age 5 or 6. By introducing consonant sounds first, a child will have the opportunity to practice listening to sounds which are easier to identify before attempting to identify the more subtle sounds made by the different vowels.

No similar sounds one after another. After rearranging the letters from least complex to most complex, it is important to avoid introducing two letters around the same time that make similar sounds. For example, consider the letters P and B. Both letters make sounds (“puh” and “buh”) which are primarily formed by lips. For children still working to develop their auditory processing skills, it may be difficult to identify and differentiate between these similar sounds when they are introduced shortly after each other.

Some children may benefit from detailed explanations about the letters with more **complicated sounds**.

Most children are satisfied with basic instruction about the sound(s) each letter makes. However, some children, particularly older children, may ask for additional clarification since they may have already noticed some of the confusing subtleties about the sounds some letters make. If your child is one that likes to ask follow-up questions, here is a list of explanations seasoned teachers typically provide to children to help answer their questions:

- All vowels can be long or short. When a vowel is long, it sounds like the name of the letter. For example, the long E in “she” or the long A in “cake.” When a vowel is short, it makes its own sound. For example, the short E in “met” or the short A in “bat.”

- The letter G can be hard or soft. When it is hard, it has its own sound, which you make without closing your teeth. An example of a hard G is found in “gate.” When it is soft, the letter G borrows the sound made by the letter J, which requires you to close your teeth slightly when forming the sound. An example of a soft G is found in “giraffe.”

Use **correct terms** when talking to your child.

Vowels can be **long** or **short**.

Some consonants can be **hard** or **soft**.

- The letter S can be hard or soft. When it is soft, it has its own sound. An example of a soft S is found in “sat.” When it is hard, the letter S borrows the sound made by the letter Z. An example of a hard S is found in “toes.”
- The letter C can be hard or soft. In both cases, the letter C borrows its sound from other letters. When the letter C is soft, it borrows the sound made by the letter S. An example of a soft C is found in “race.” When the letter C is hard, it borrows the sound made by the letter K. An example of a hard C is found in “cat.”

- The letter Q does not have its own sound. Instead, the letter Q makes the sound of a K and a W squished together, “KW.”
- The letter X makes the sound of a K and an S squished together, “KS.”
- The letter Y has three sounds. One sound is all its own and the other two sounds are borrowed from other letters. When the letter Y is in the beginning or middle of a word, it makes its own sound, as in the word “yellow.” When the letter Y is at the end of a word, it borrows the sound of a long E, as in the word “putty,” or a long I, as in the word “try.” The sound made by the letter Y is a very complicated concept for children to learn, which is why this letter is one of the last consonants I suggest introducing.

The English language is **challenging**
because many letters make multiple sounds.
With **practice**, your child can master
the complexities of each letter.

Teaching your child the proper pencil grip

A child's natural response is to hold a pencil with his entire fist, pinky finger closest to the paper and index finger and thumb on top. A correct pencil grip involves holding the pencil between the thumb and pointer finger, and resting the pencil on the middle finger for added stability.

When your child's fine motor skills have progressed to the point where he is ready to begin using a pencil, it is time to introduce your child to the proper pencil grip.

Four simple guidelines can help your child quickly master the proper pencil grip.

- Use a golf pencil. Golf pencils are typically half the length of standard pencils so they are lighter than the average pencil and easier for a small hand to manipulate.
- Demonstrate the proper pencil grip for your child before handing him the pencil. Say aloud where you are placing your fingers as you demonstrate. Then show your child how you are able to easily control the pencil with that grip.

- Place the pencil into your child's hand and position his fingers on the pencil. First have him pinch the pencil with his thumb and index finger approximately half an inch above the sharpened point. Then have him rest the pencil on his middle finger.
- Direct your child to rest the side of his hand closest to his pinky on the paper and move the pencil with only his thumb and index finger. Show him how to use his non-dominant hand (the one without the pencil) to hold the paper steady while his dominant hand (the one with the pencil) moves the pencil.

Children who are **left-handed**
face **unique challenges**
when learning to write.

If your child is left-handed, you can teach him the proper pencil grip just as you would if he was right-handed. For example, even if you are right-handed, you can demonstrate the proper pencil grip to your child by holding the pencil correctly between the thumb and pointer finger on your left hand and allowing the pencil to rest on the middle finger on your left hand.

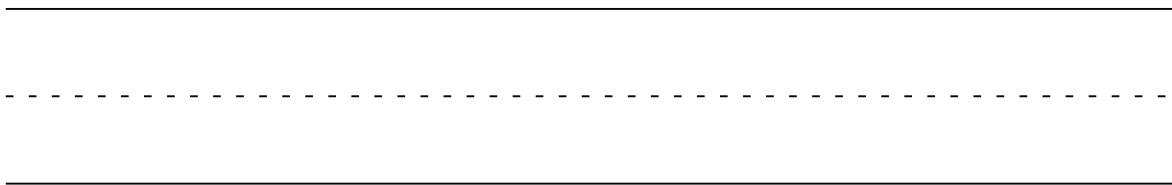
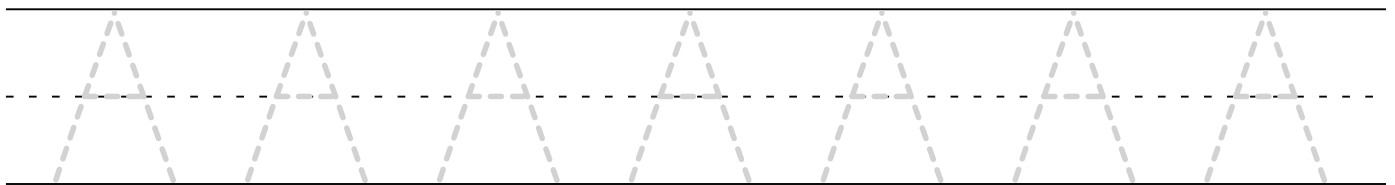
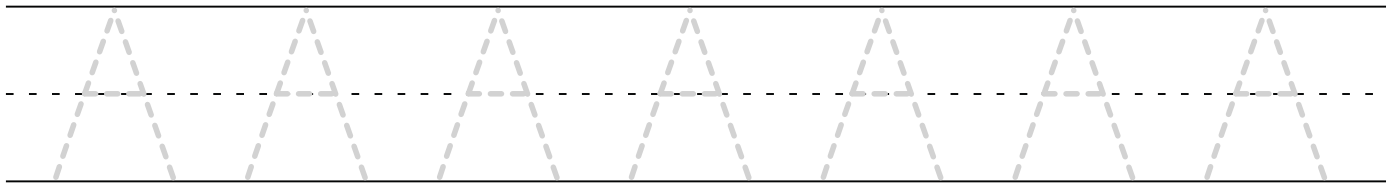
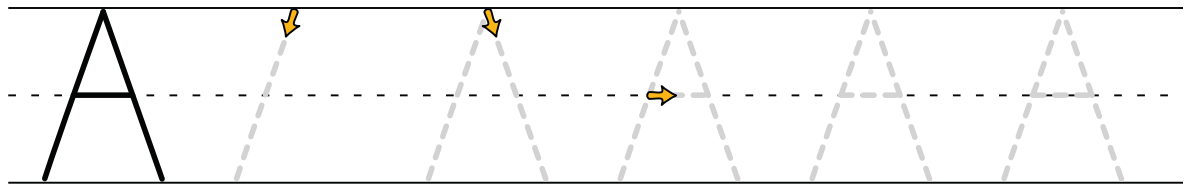
While the basic grip is the same, there are a few added considerations for teaching a left-handed child how to write correctly.

- Direct your left-handed child to hold the pencil slightly further back, approximately 1 or 1.5 inches from the sharpened point. To be able to see what they are writing as they form each letter, left-handed writers need to grip the pencil a little further back from the point. Also, by holding the pencil further from the point, a left-handed child can avoid smearing letters written in pencil as his hand moves from left to right across the page, dragging over the letters.
- Consider allowing your left-handed child to write with a felt-tip pen rather than a pencil. As left-handed people write, the side of their hand closest to the pinky finger naturally drags over each letter. For a child just learning to write letters, smudged work is particularly frustrating. To help avoid smudged writing, encourage your child to write with a felt-tip pen or fine-point marker since those lines will be more resistant to smudging.

Letter tracing worksheets allow children
to develop a **strong foundation** for writing.

ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter A: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



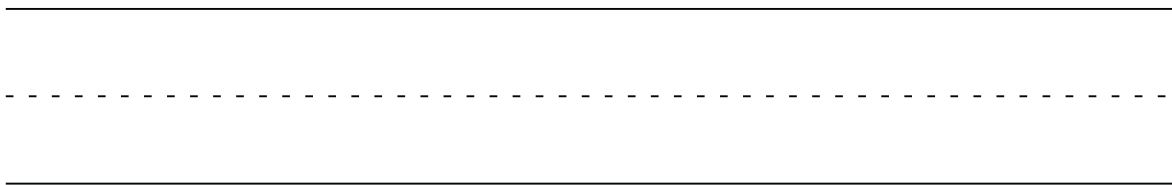
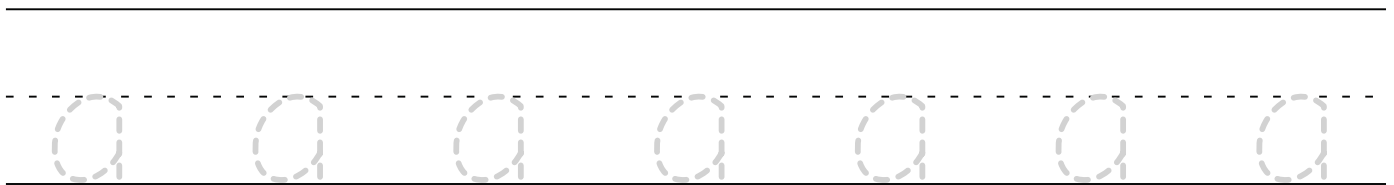
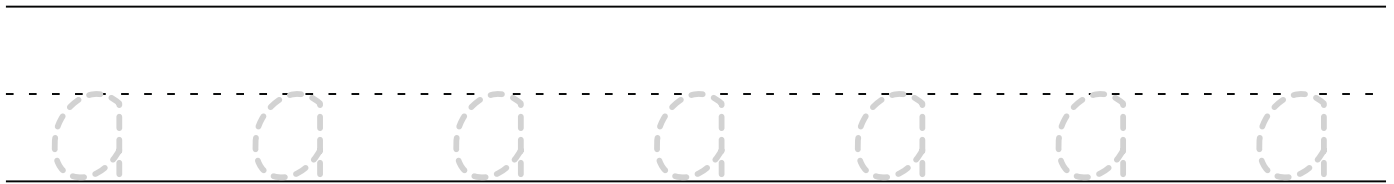
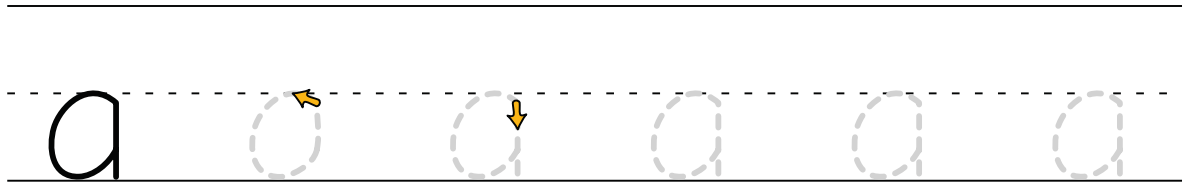
Tip for parents: It's time to draw "A" tent! After drawing the first line, have your child lift his pencil, go back to the top and make the second wall of the tent.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter a: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



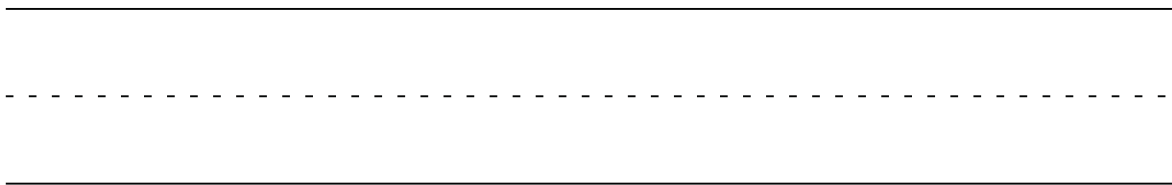
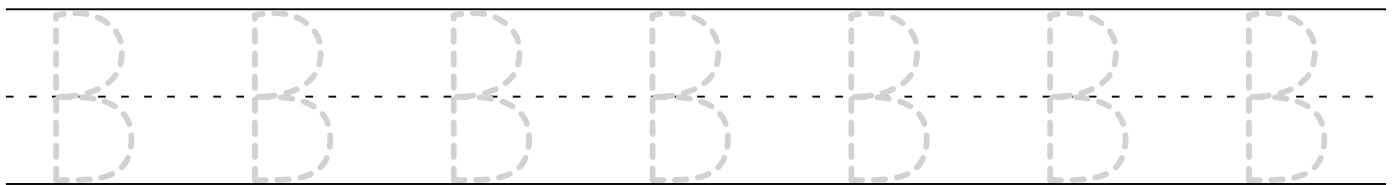
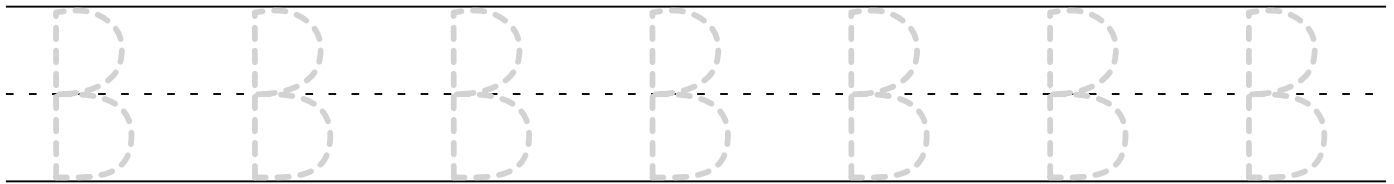
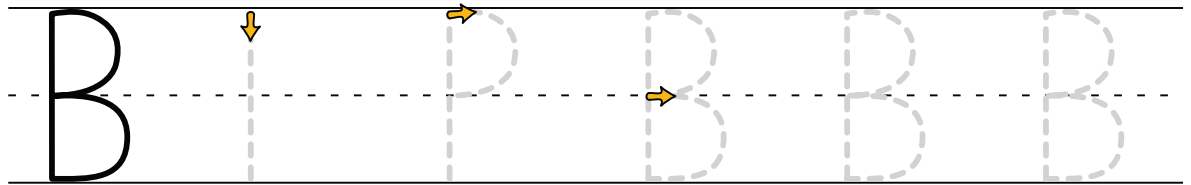
Tip for parents: Have your child start with the pencil just below the dotted middle line and not lift the pencil until the letter is complete. This will create a seamless lowercase a.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter B: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



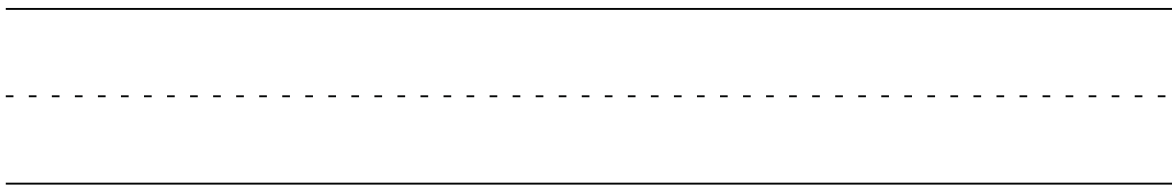
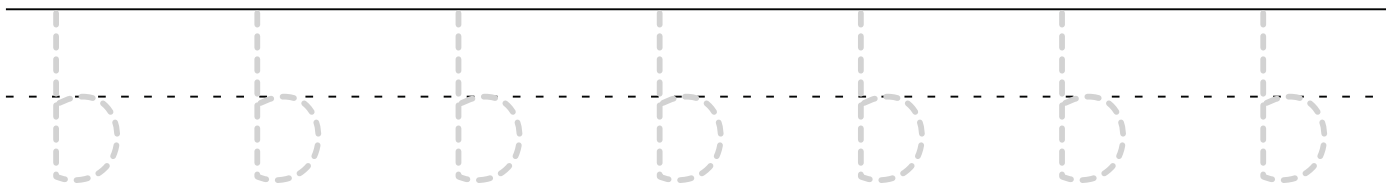
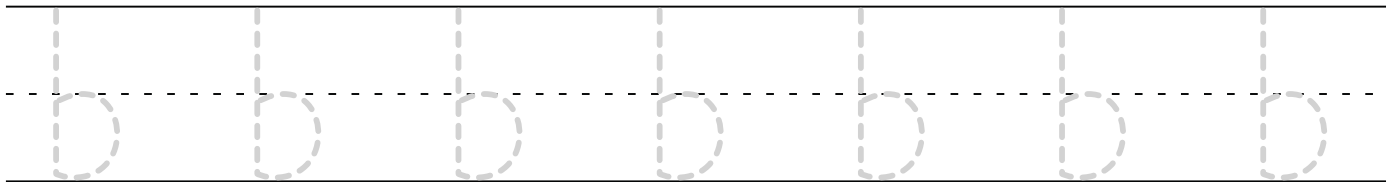
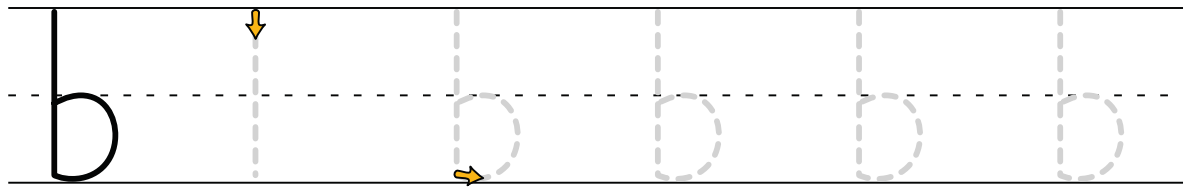
Tip for parents: The key to writing a neat B is to lift the pencil once. After drawing the straight line down, direct your child to lift the pencil, go back to the top and draw two half circles without picking the pencil up in the middle.

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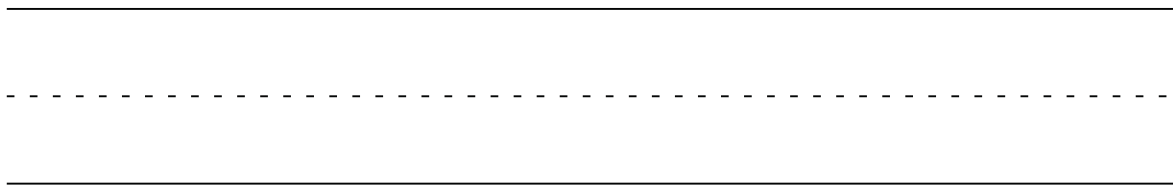
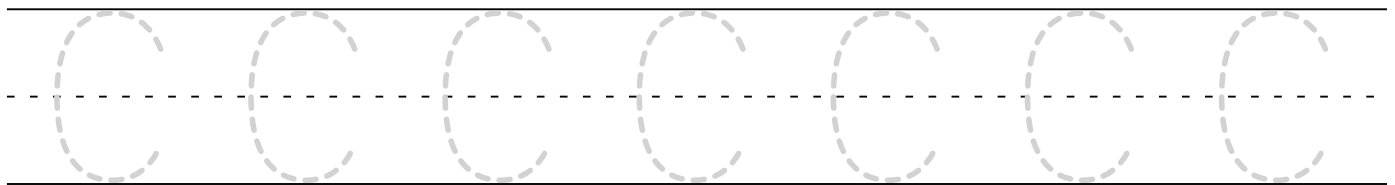
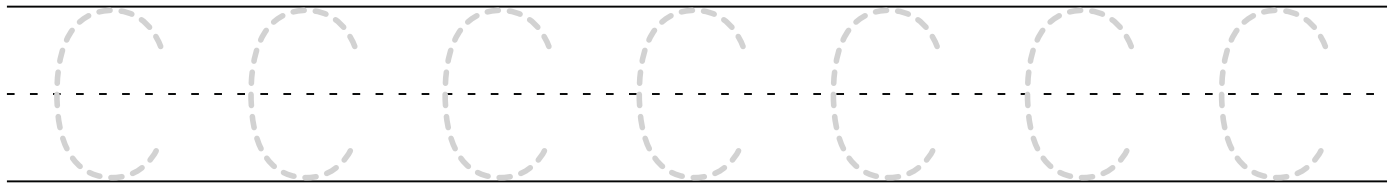
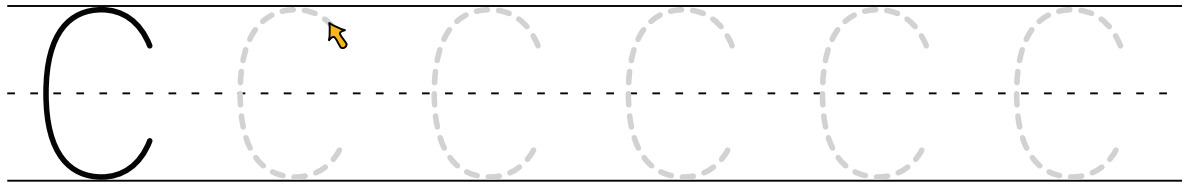
ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter b: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter C: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter c: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



C



SCHOOL SPARKS



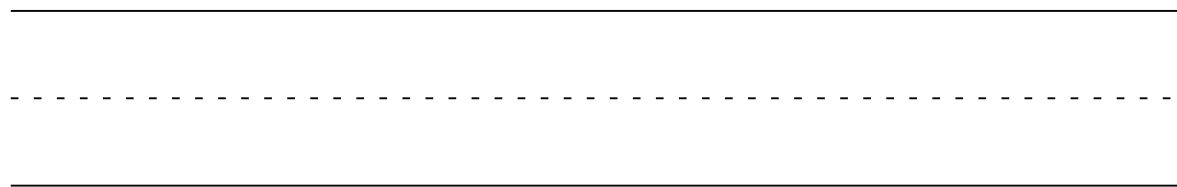
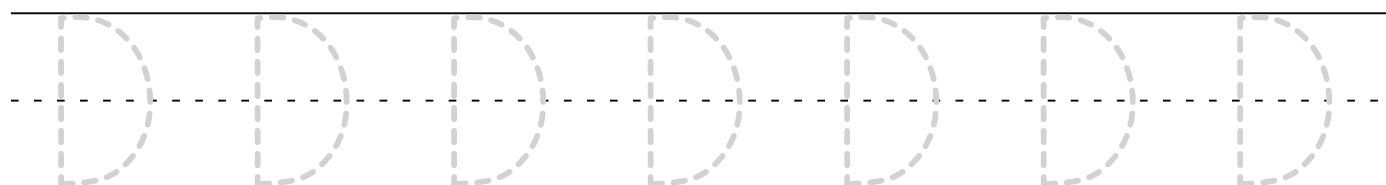
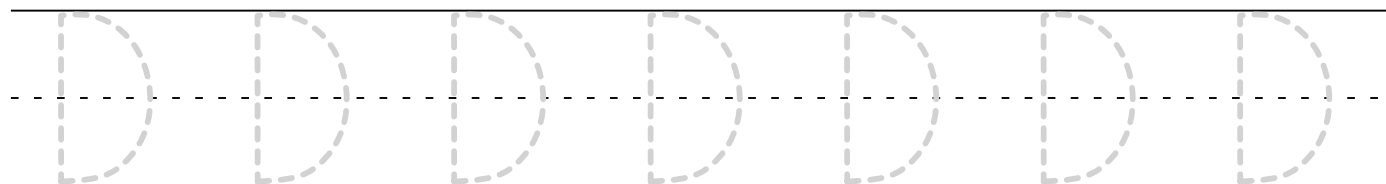
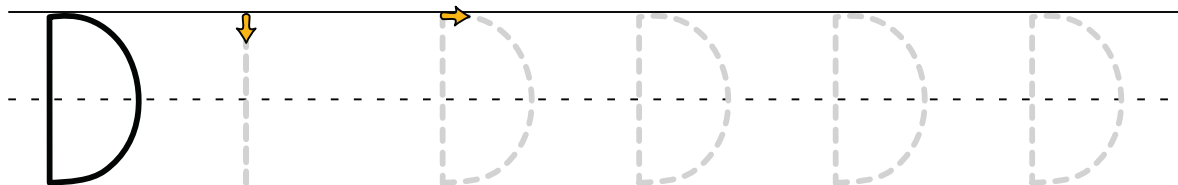
Tip for parents: Explain to your child that the letter c is one smooth curve, starting just below the dashed line and ending just above the solid line at the bottom. It is identical to the uppercase C, only smaller.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter D: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



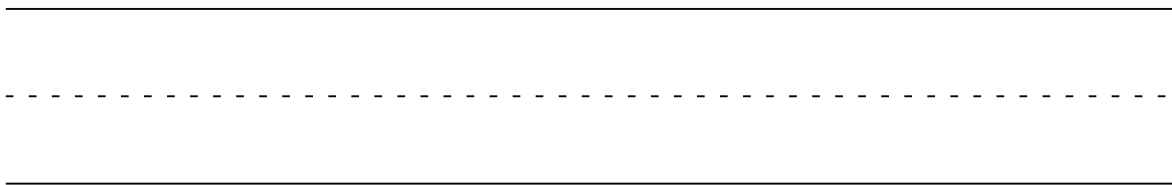
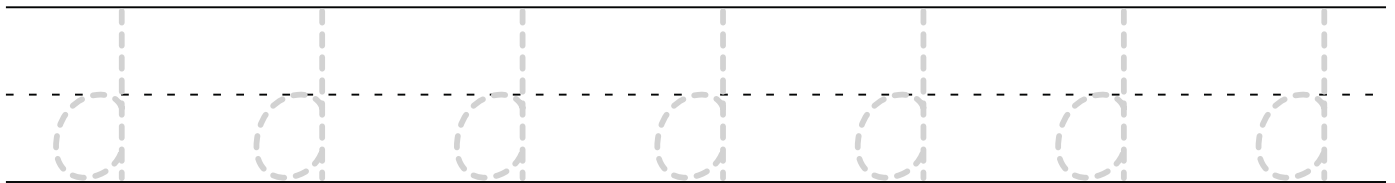
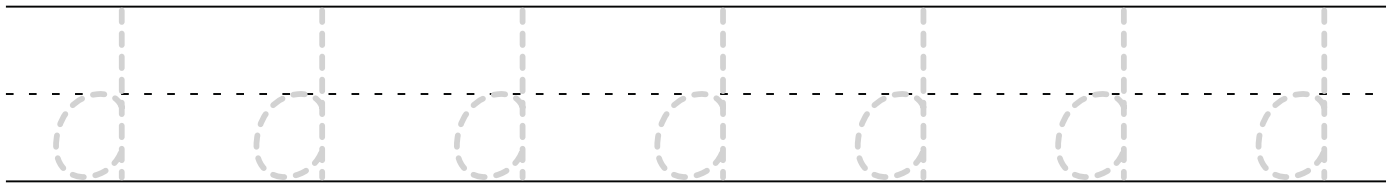
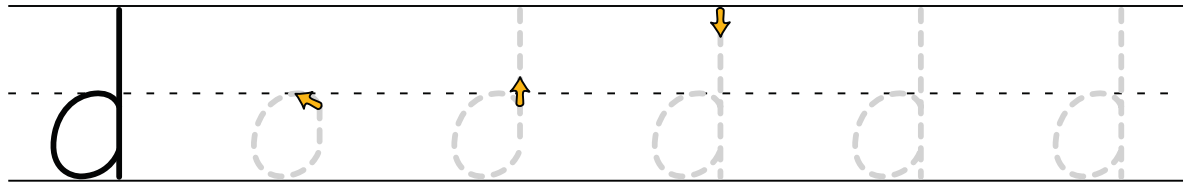
Tip for parents: This letter requires one straight line and one big curve. After drawing the vertical line, direct your child to pick up the pencil and draw one big curve from the top of the line to the bottom of the line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter d: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



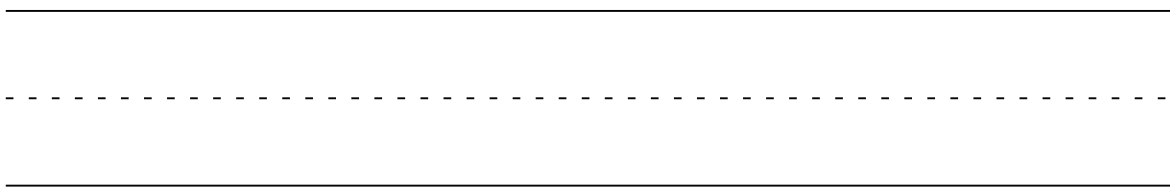
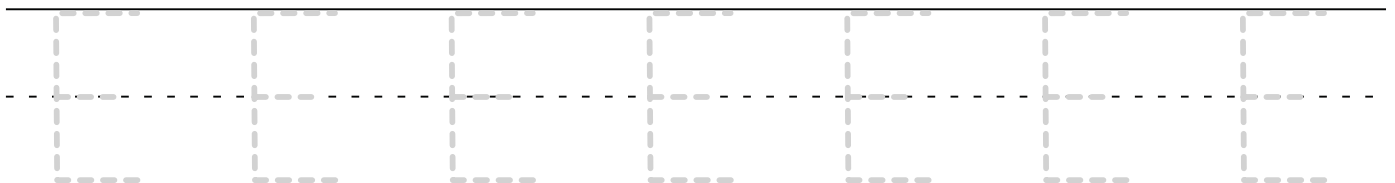
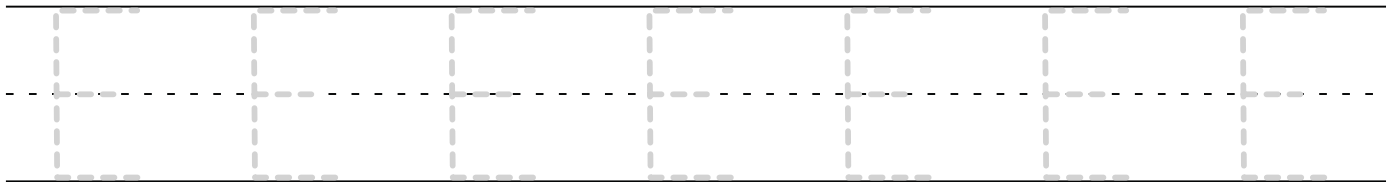
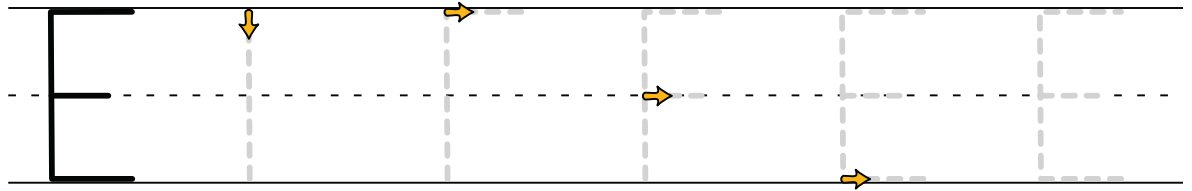
Tip for parents: The key to this letter is writing it without lifting the pencil. After drawing the loop, direct your child to continue drawing to the top line before changing direction and drawing a straight line back to the bottom.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter E: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Your child will need to lift the pencil three times to write the perfect E. To help his accuracy, remind him to always put the pencil tip down directly on the line he already drew before adding a new line to the letter.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter e: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



e



SCHOOL SPARKS



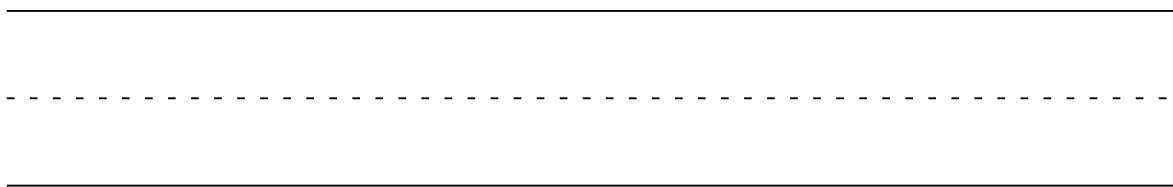
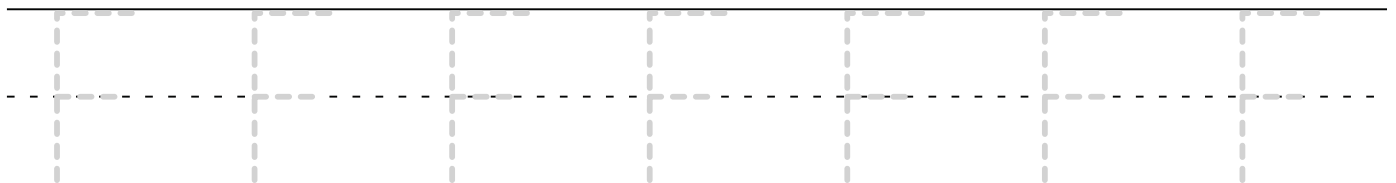
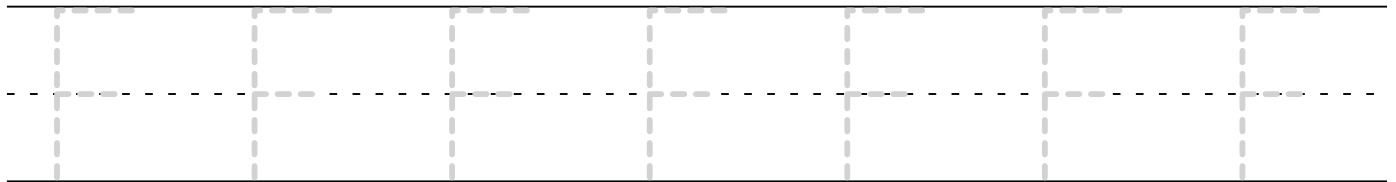
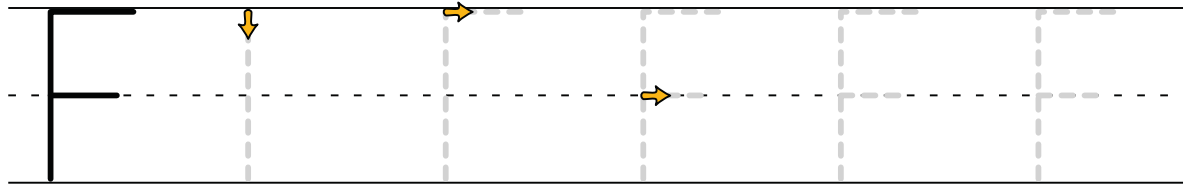
Tip for parents: The letter e is one big, excellent loop! Remind your child to draw the letter in one smooth movement, without lifting the pencil midway through writing the letter. This will create a smooth, seamless curve.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter F: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



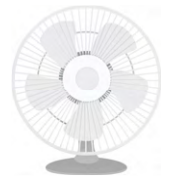
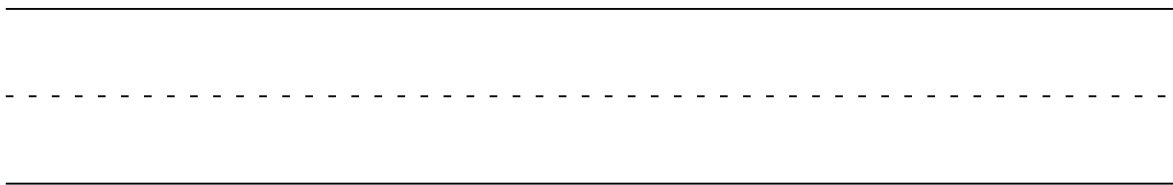
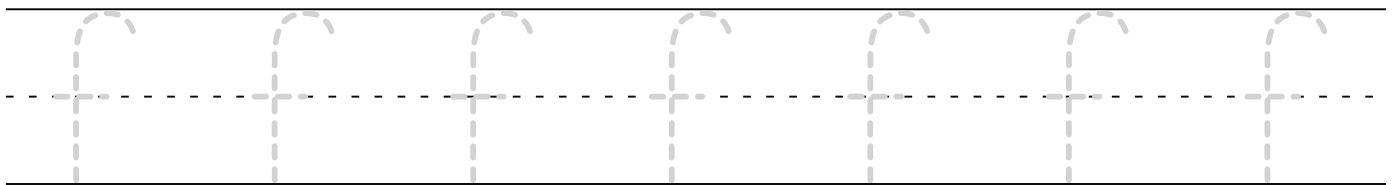
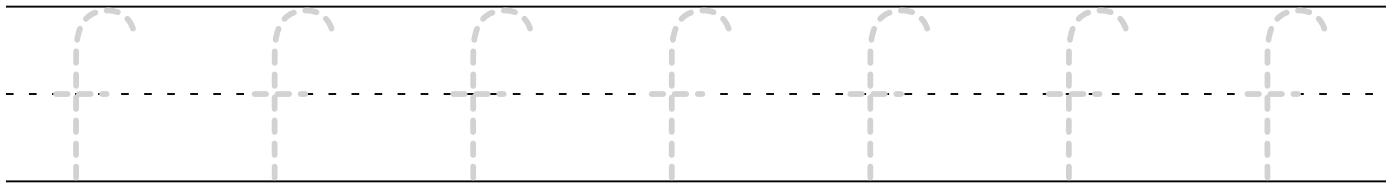
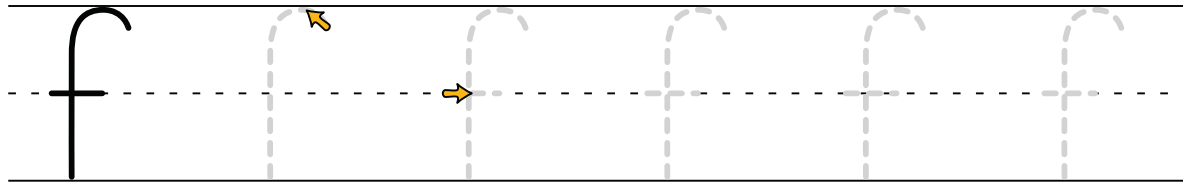
Tip for parents: This letter needs 3 strokes. Remind your child to always put the pencil tip down directly on the line he already drew before adding a new horizontal line to the letter. This ensures there are no gaps between the lines.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter f: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



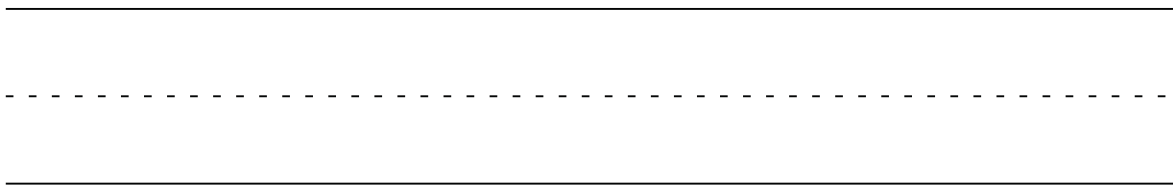
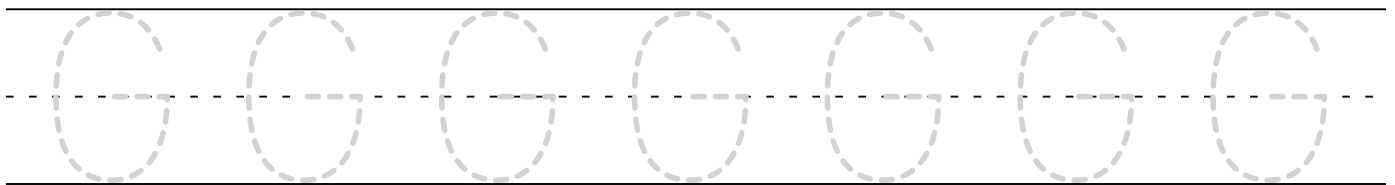
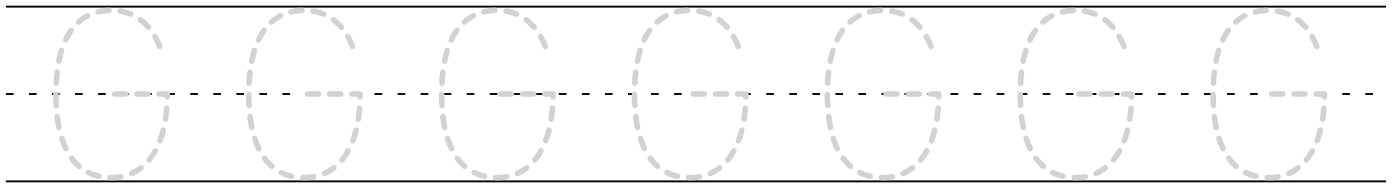
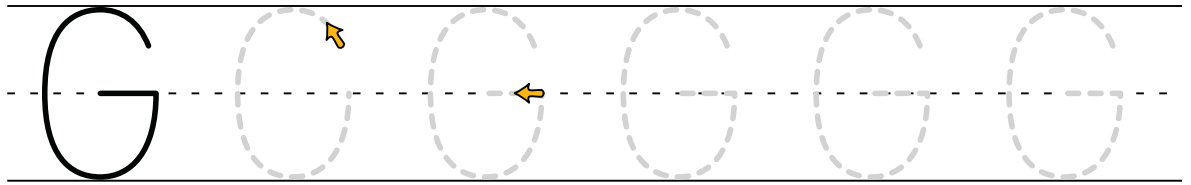
Tip for parents: Show your child how this letter looks like a candy cane. Direct your child to begin with the pencil slightly below the top black line to ensure he gets a nice hook at the top before continuing down to the bottom line.

Why keep the fun all to yourself? Please feel free to share this worksheet with friends.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter G: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: This letter begins like a C, with a long, smooth curve. After making a complete curve, direct your child to stop and, without lifting the pencil, change direction to draw a short, horizontal line to the left.

Why keep the fun all to yourself? Please feel free to share this worksheet with friends.

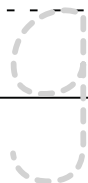
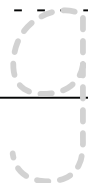
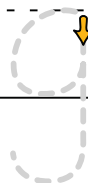
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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter g: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.

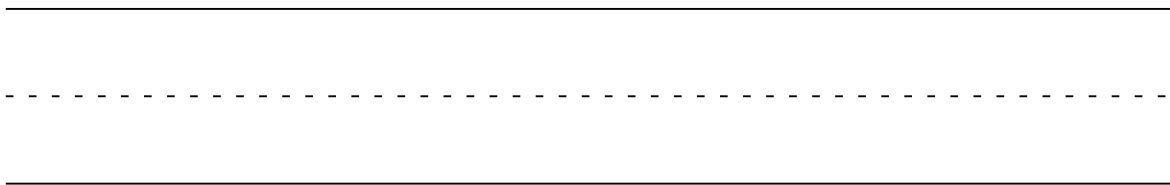
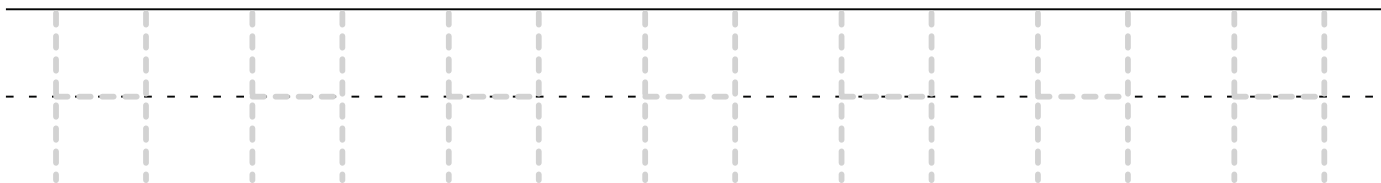
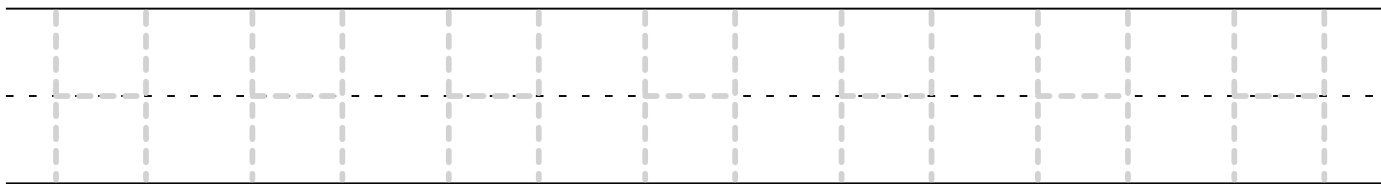
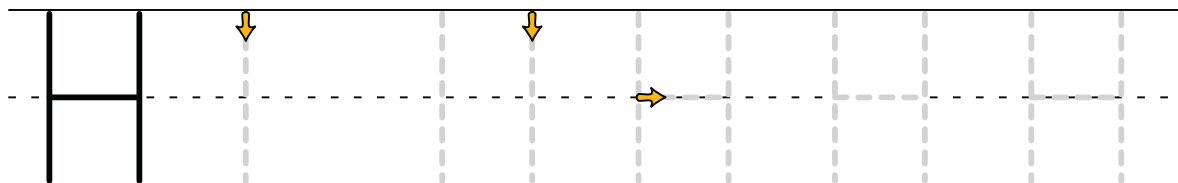


g



ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter H: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



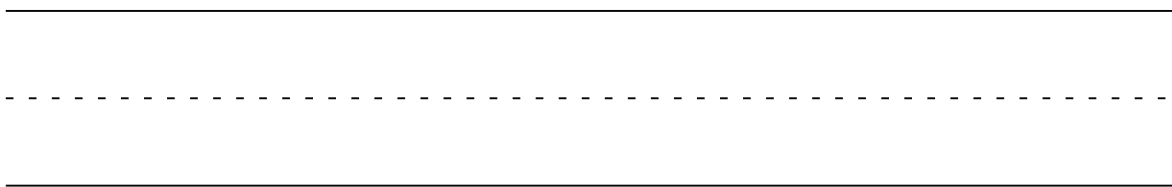
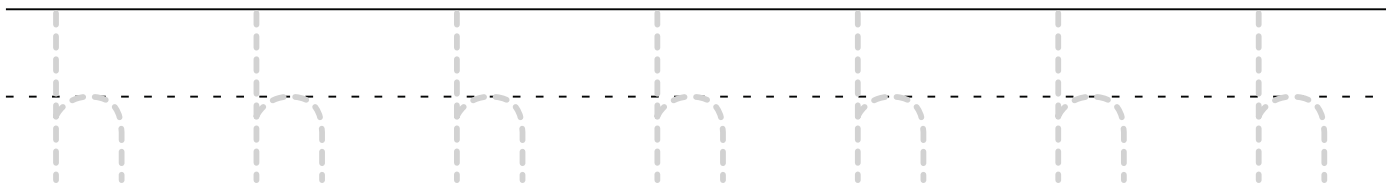
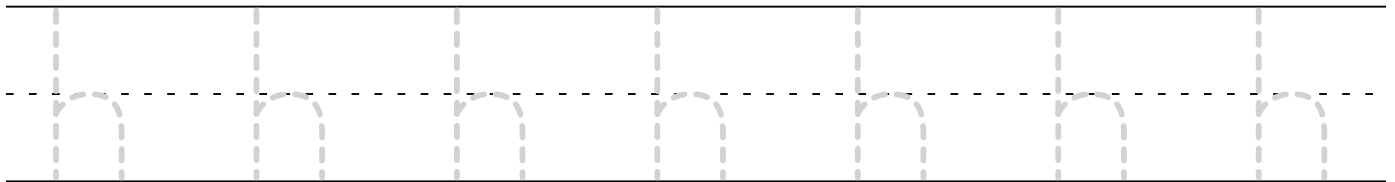
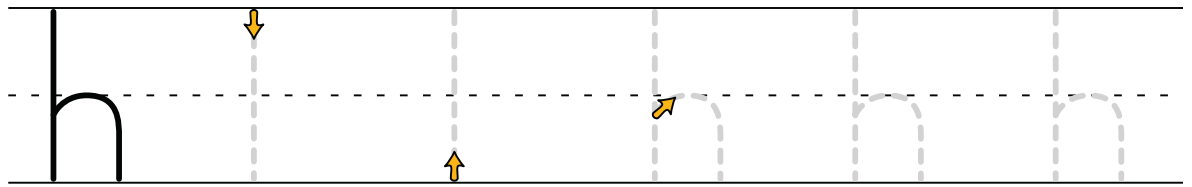
Tip for parents: After drawing the first vertical line, direct your child to draw a second, identical line one finger width away from the first line. Then, your child must lift the pencil and draw a line connecting the two vertical lines.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter h: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



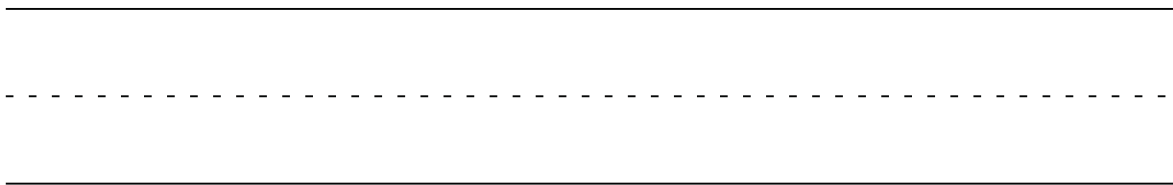
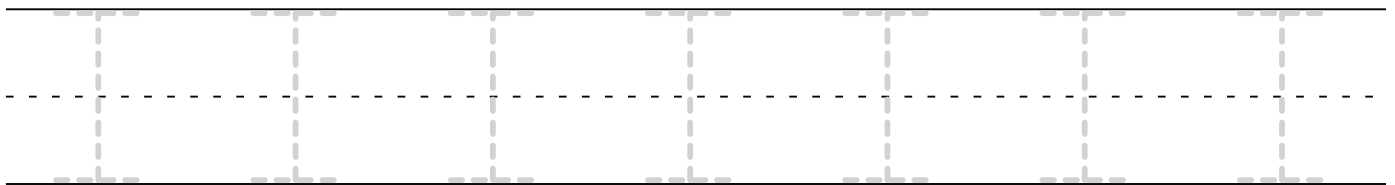
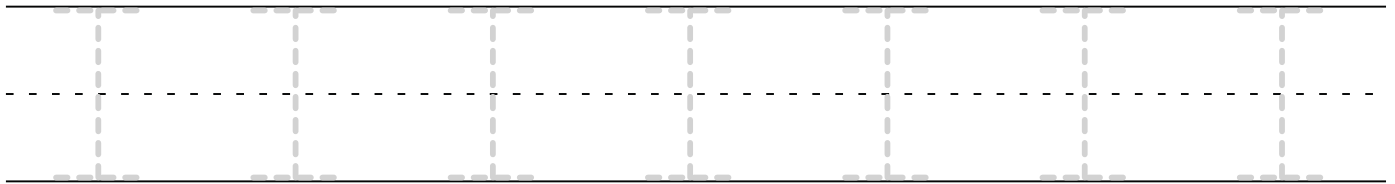
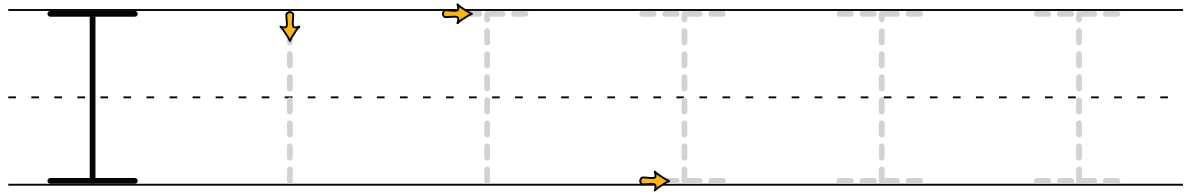
Tip for parents: The key to a perfect h is a perfect hill. After your child draws the first vertical line downward, direct him to keep the pencil on the paper and retrace part of the line as he draws a hill directly next to the line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter I: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



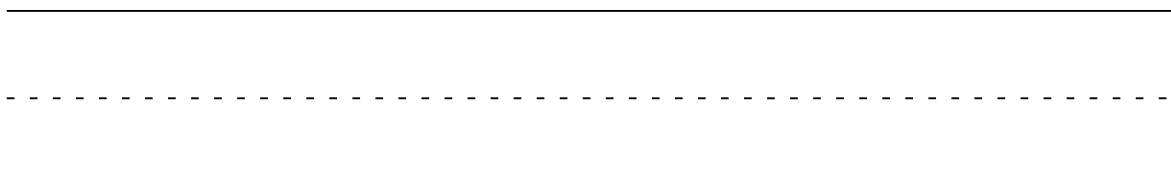
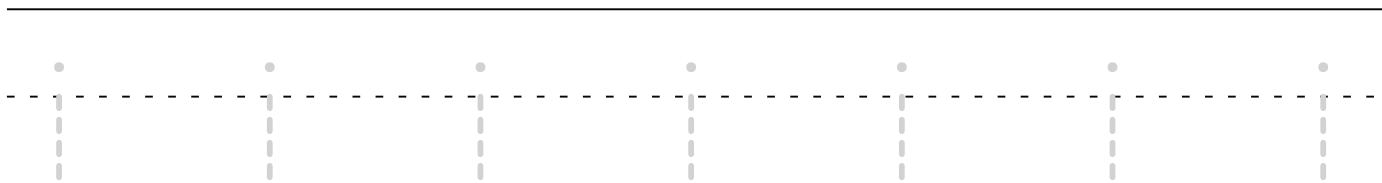
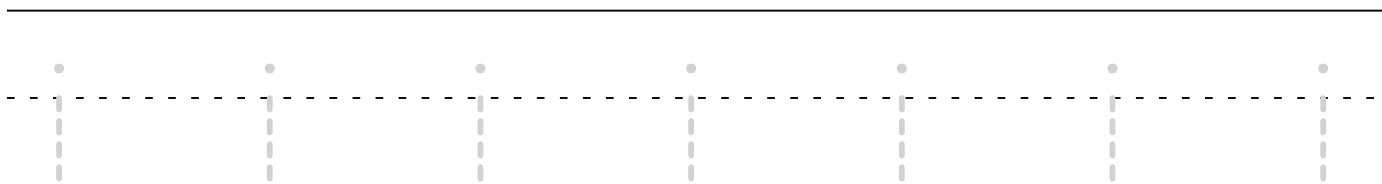
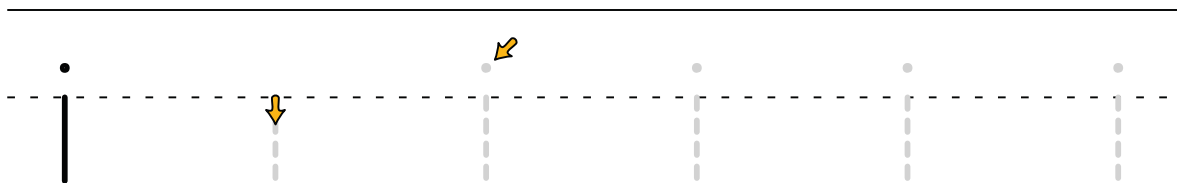
Tip for parents: The trick to writing this letter clearly is to show your child how the letter is symmetrical. The vertical line is the longest and the top and bottom lines should be centered on top and bottom of the vertical line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter i: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



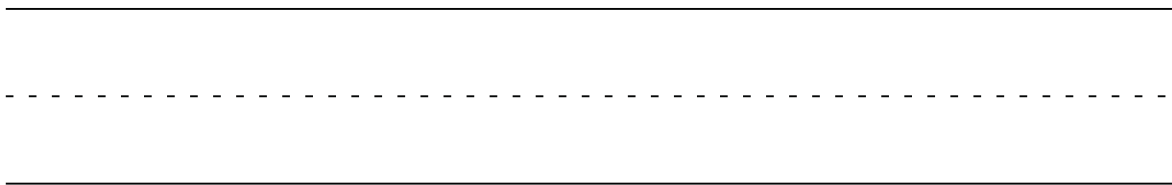
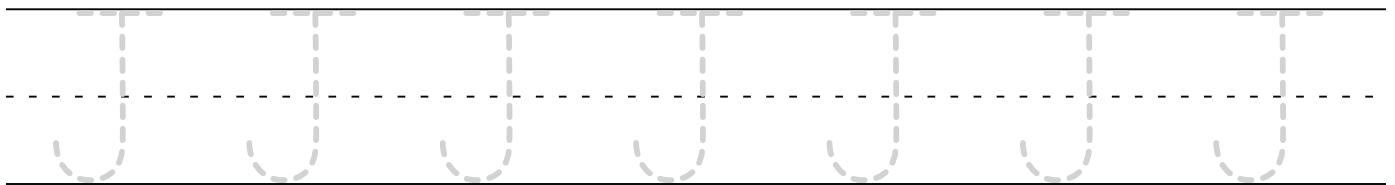
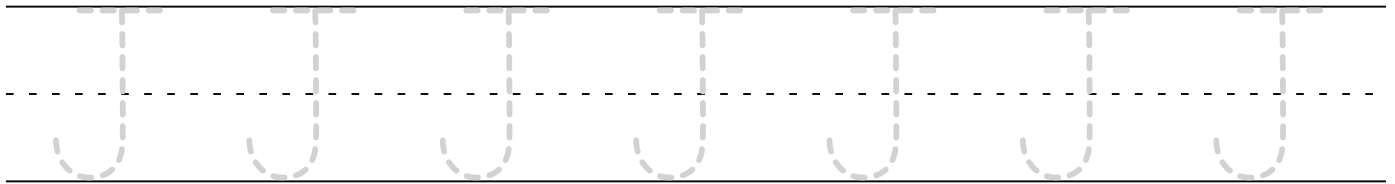
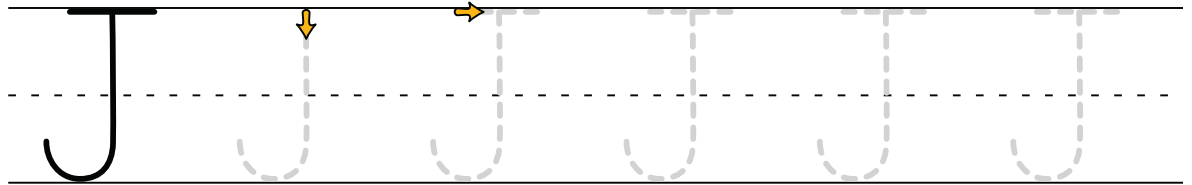
Tip for parents: While the short vertical line is easy for most children to draw, remind your child to always add a small dot over the line before moving on to the next letter. Without the dot, it is not an i.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter J: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



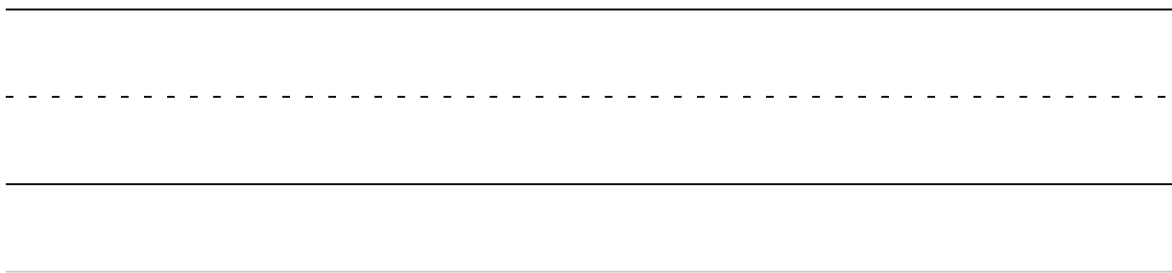
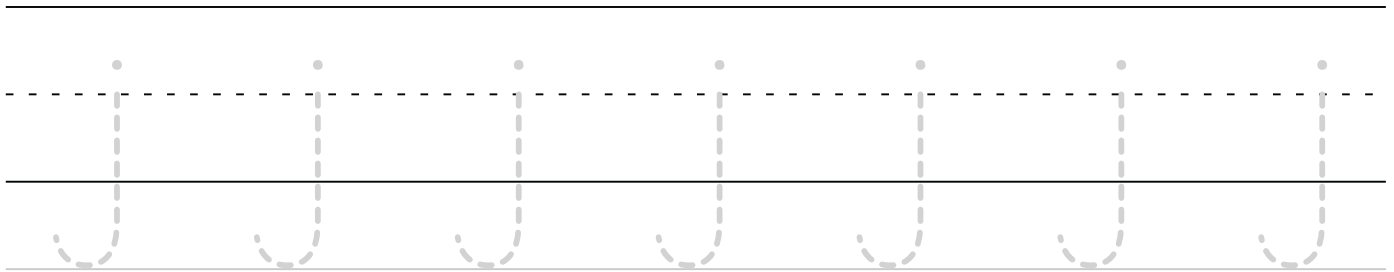
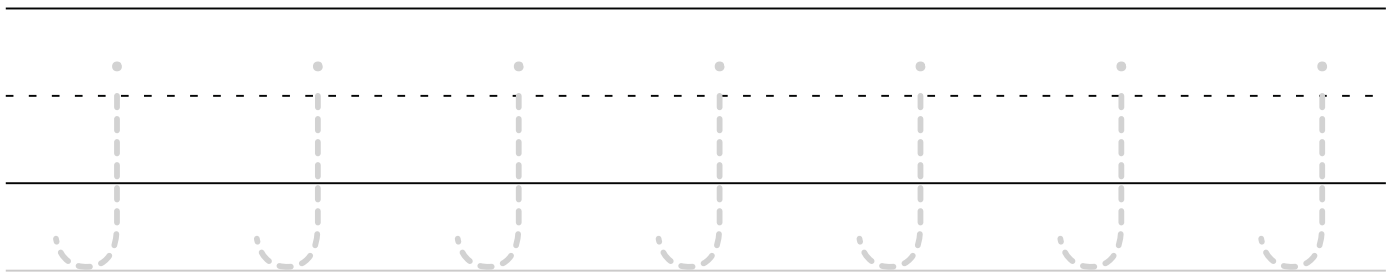
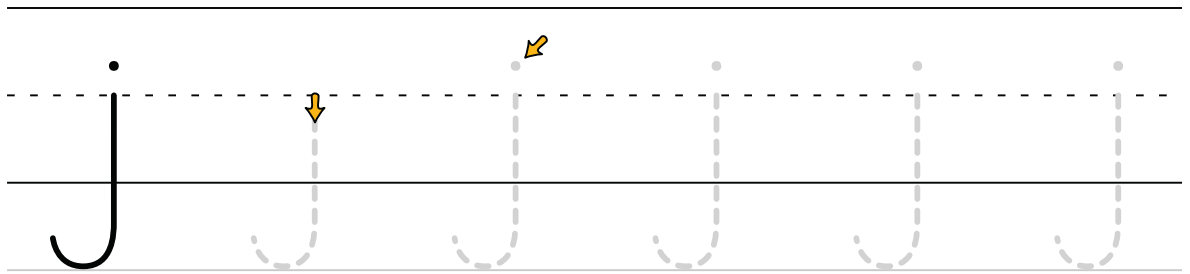
Tip for parents: While most writing requires children to draw from left to right, a J requires the opposite movement. As your child's vertical line nears the bottom line of the paper, direct him to "hook" backwards to the left.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter j: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



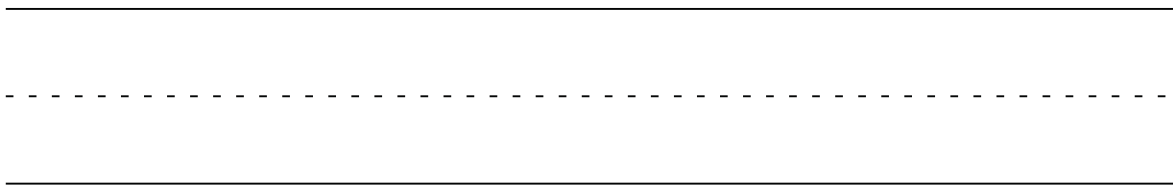
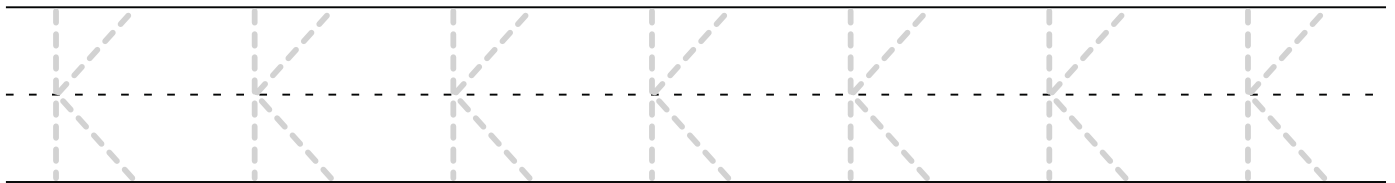
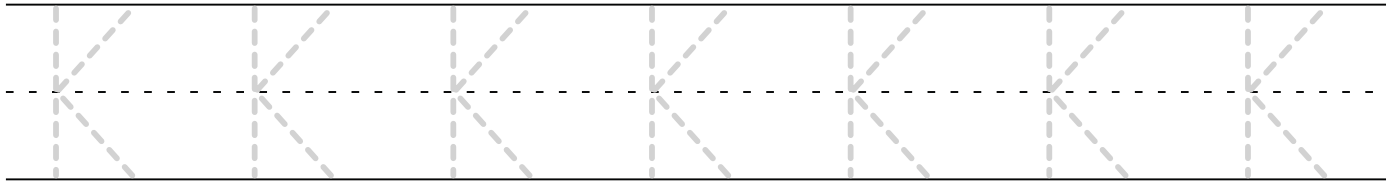
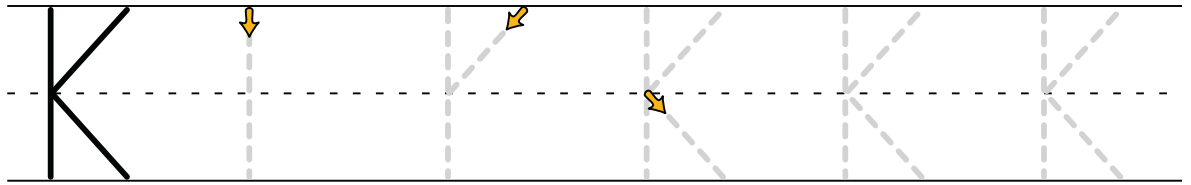
Tip for parents: As with the uppercase J, your child needs to draw in the backwards direction of right to left as he completes the bottom "hook" of the lowercase j. Remind your child to add a small dot above the letter at the end.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter K: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



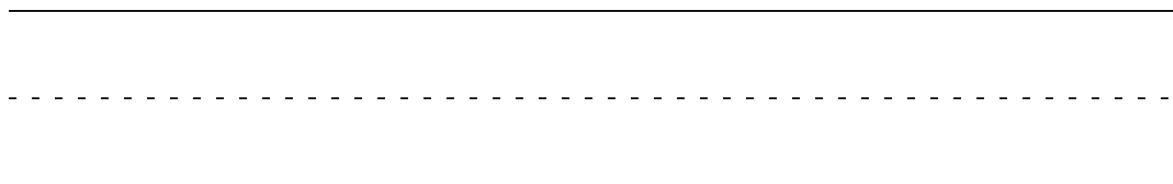
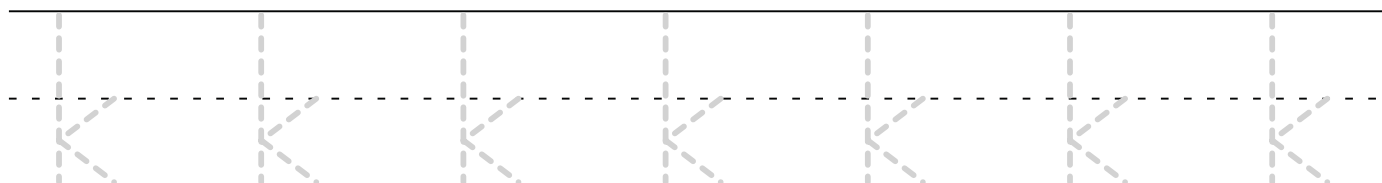
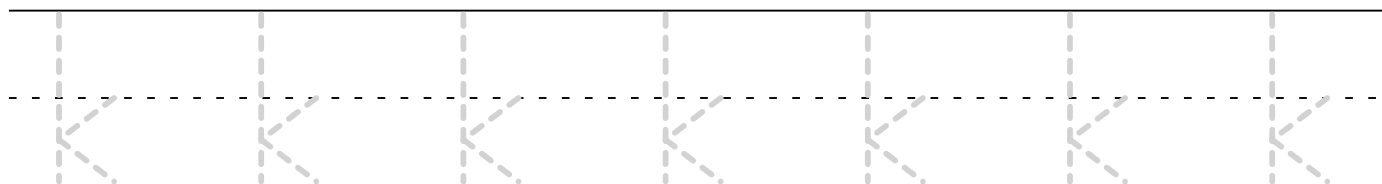
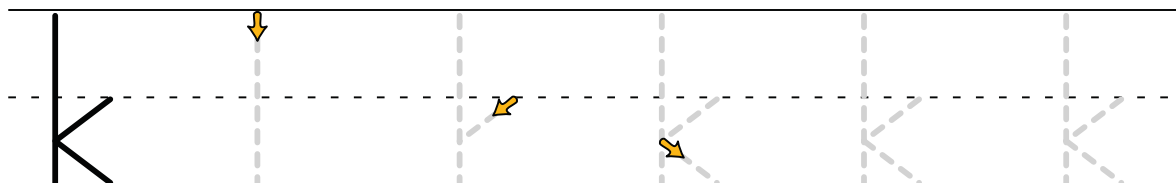
Tip for parents: Your child should pick up the pencil once while drawing this letter. After drawing the long vertical line, direct him to draw a "sideways uppercase V" that touches the first line at the dotted middle line in the center.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter k: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



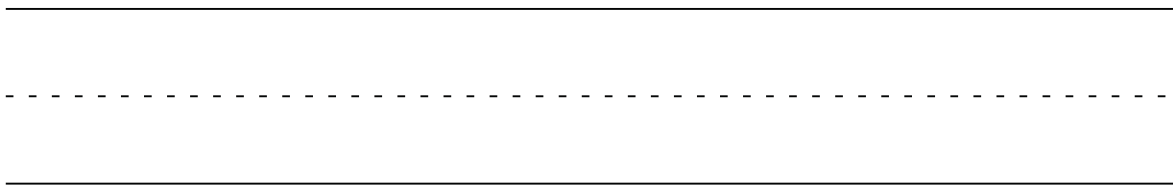
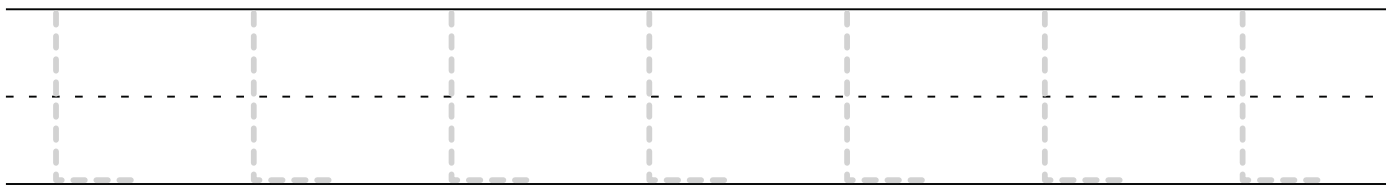
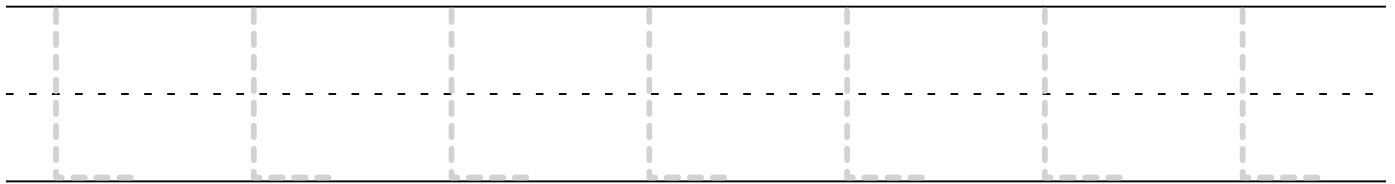
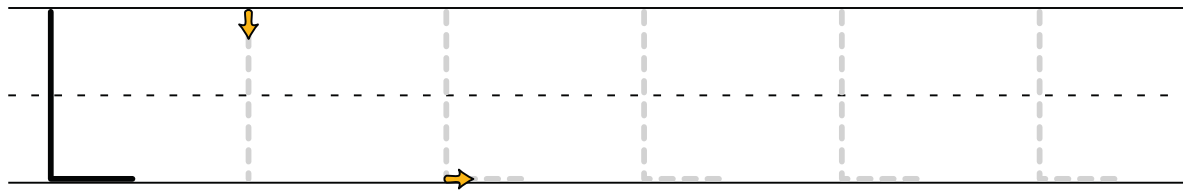
Tip for parents: Direct your child to draw a "sideways lowercase v" next to the long vertical line. The size and placement of the "sideways v" help to distinguish an uppercase K from a lowercase k.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter L: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



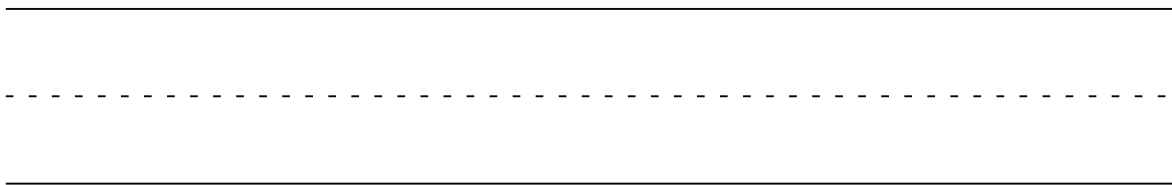
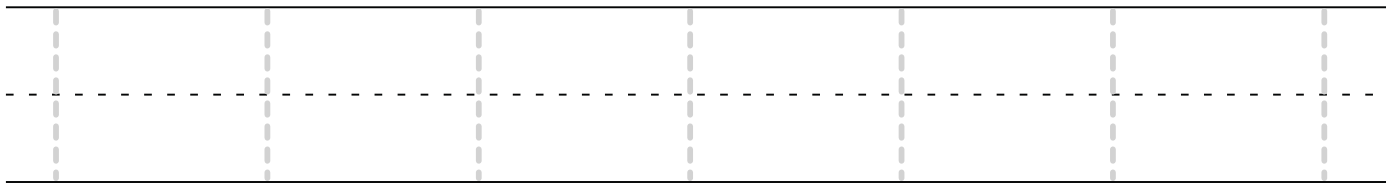
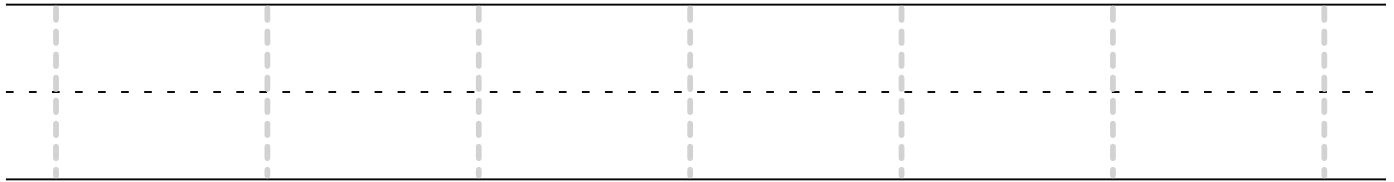
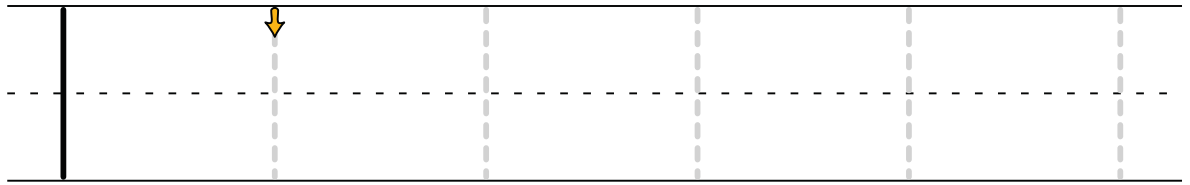
Tip for parents: This letter should be drawn in one stroke. After your child draws a straight line down, direct him to leave the pencil on the paper and change direction to draw the bottom line of the letter.

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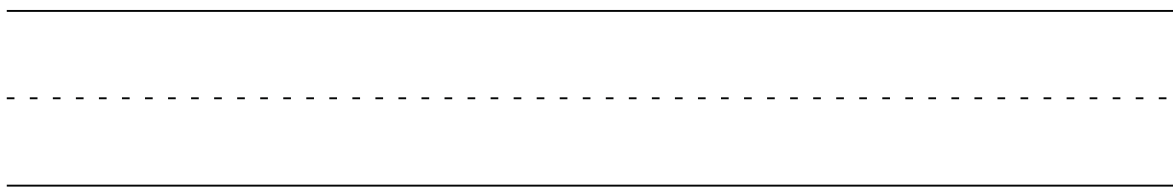
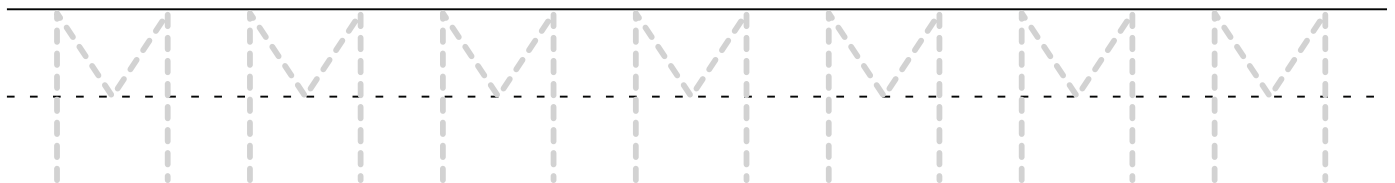
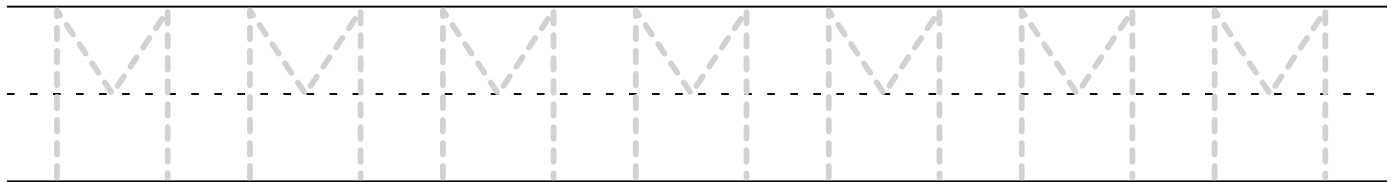
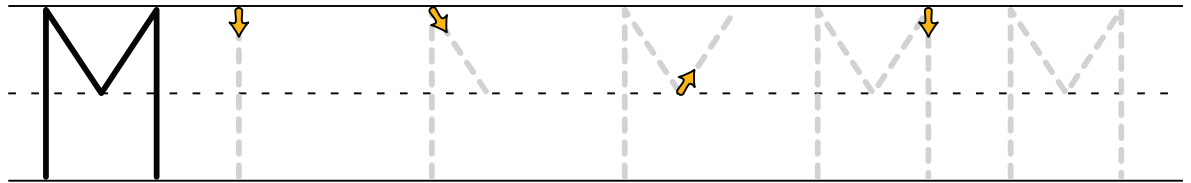
ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter I: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter M: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



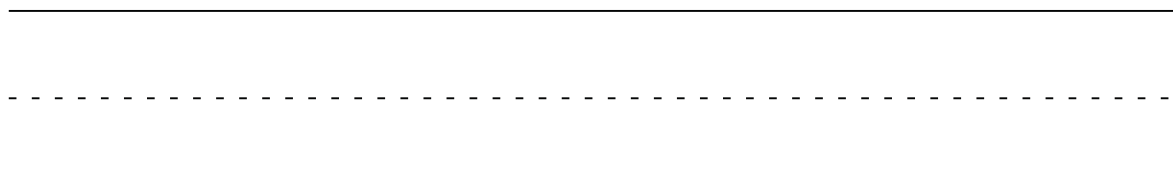
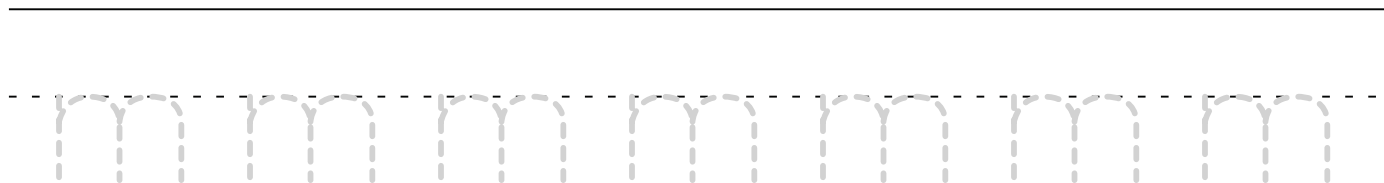
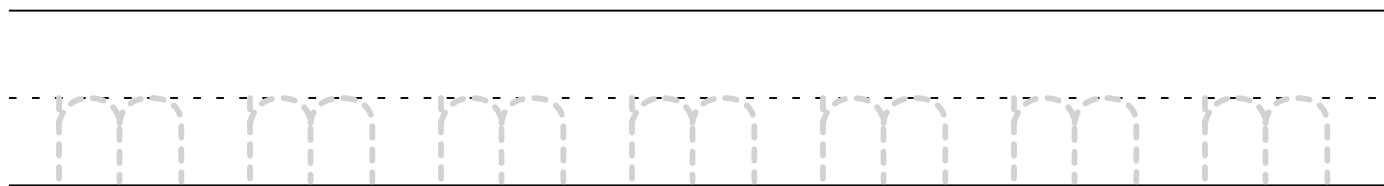
Tip for parents: This letter has 4 segments but only takes 2 strokes. After your child draws the first downward line, remind him to move the pencil back to the top of that line and not pick it up again until the letter is complete.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter m: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



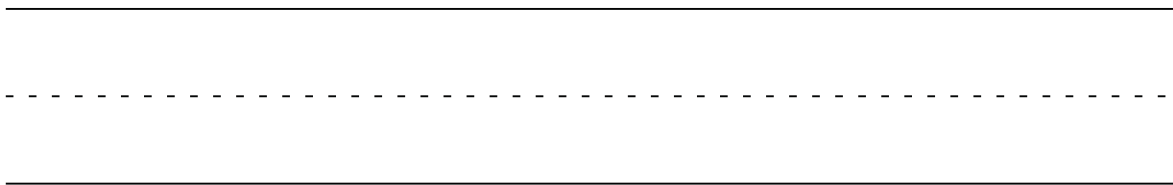
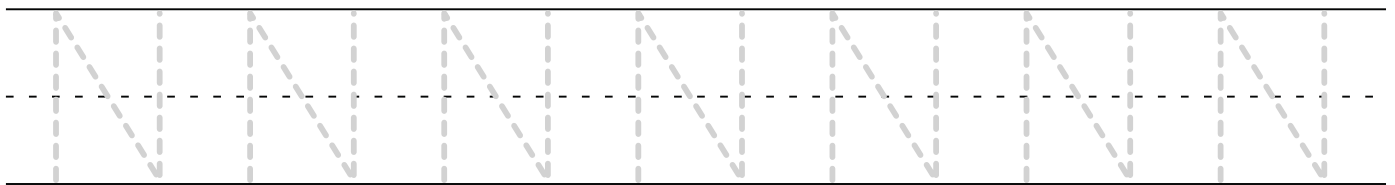
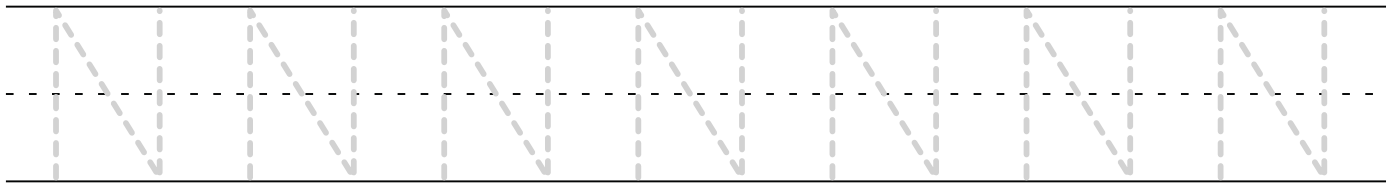
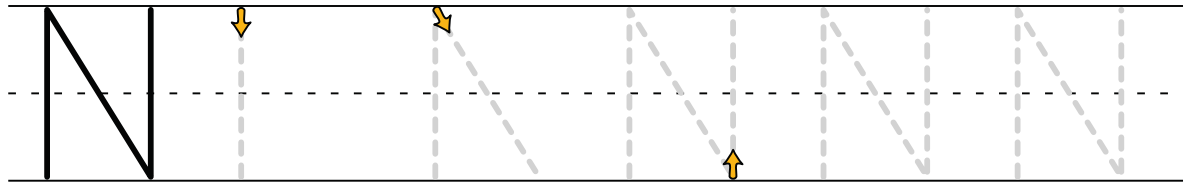
Tip for parents: This is the double mountain letter! Direct your child to complete the letter without lifting the pencil by first drawing one straight line, then drawing two mountains next to each other.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter N: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



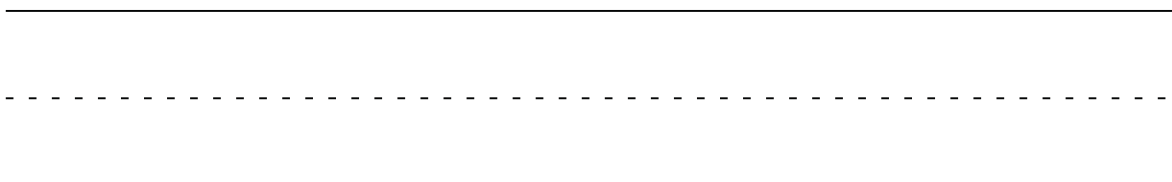
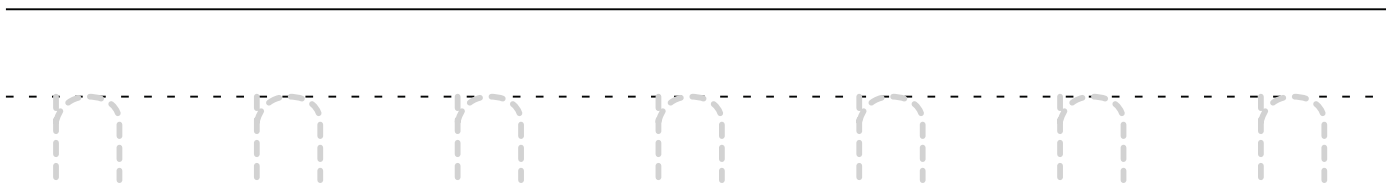
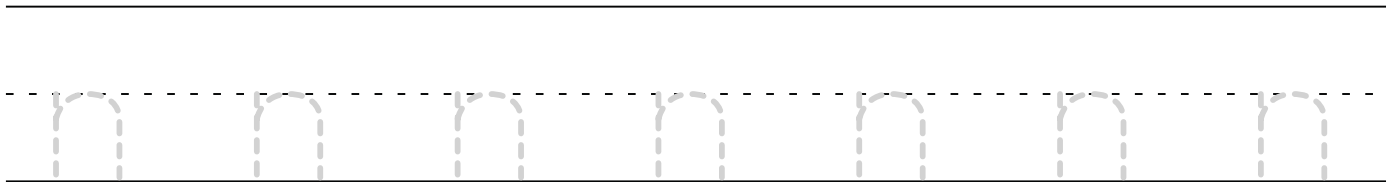
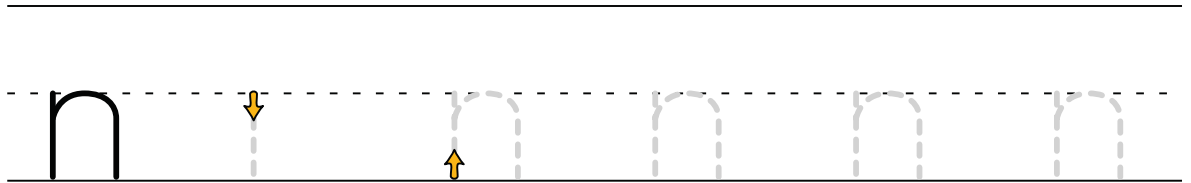
Tip for parents: Remind your child to begin writing this letter with the pencil at the top of the page. After drawing the first straight line, direct your child to pick up the pencil and draw the remaining two lines in one stroke.

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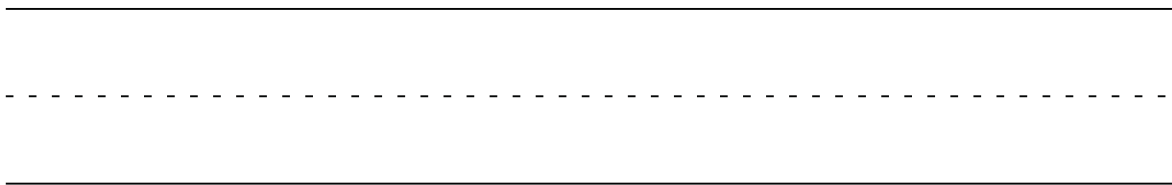
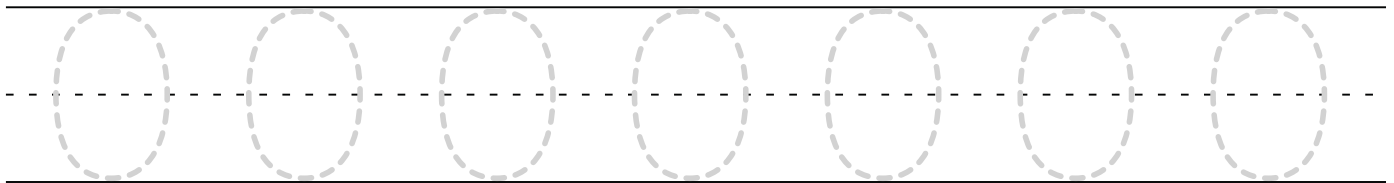
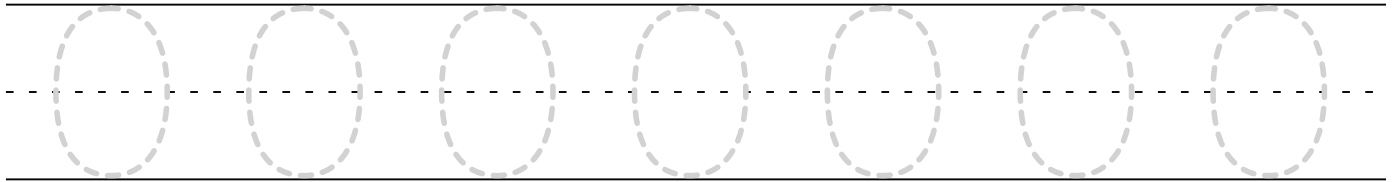
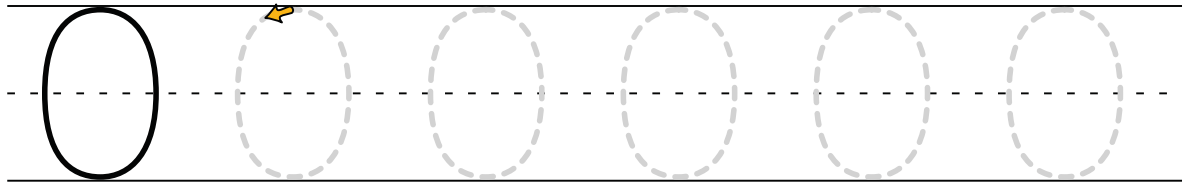
ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter n: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter O: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



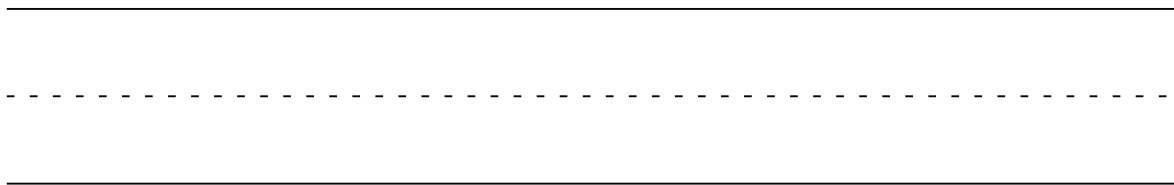
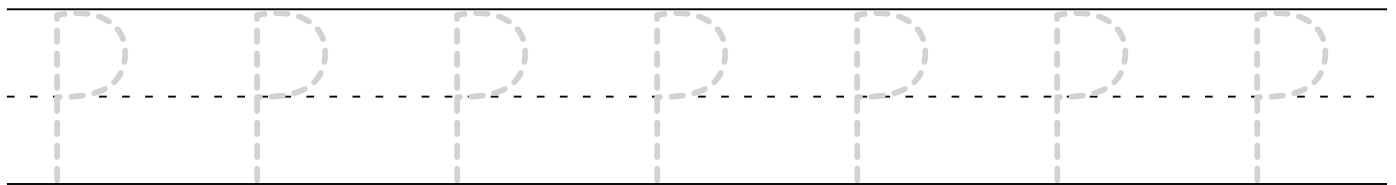
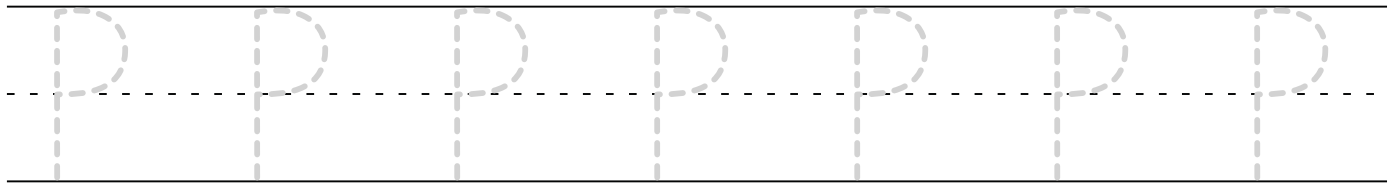
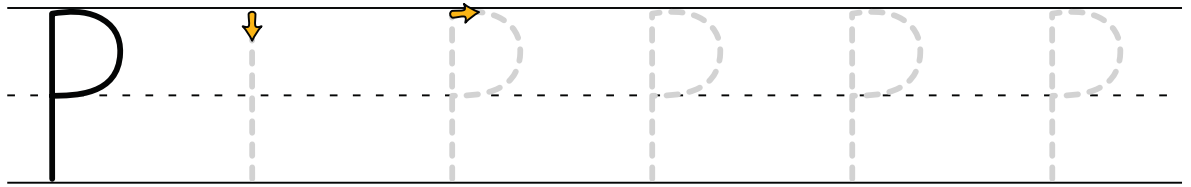
ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter o: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter P: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



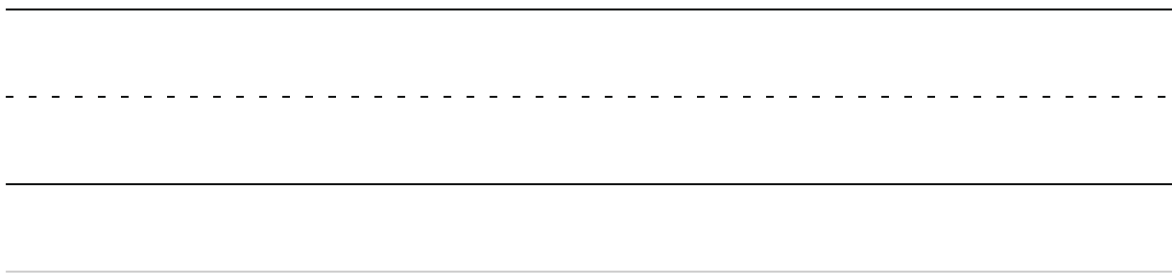
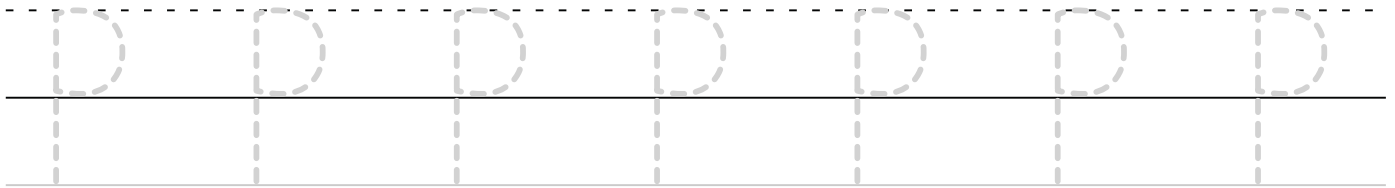
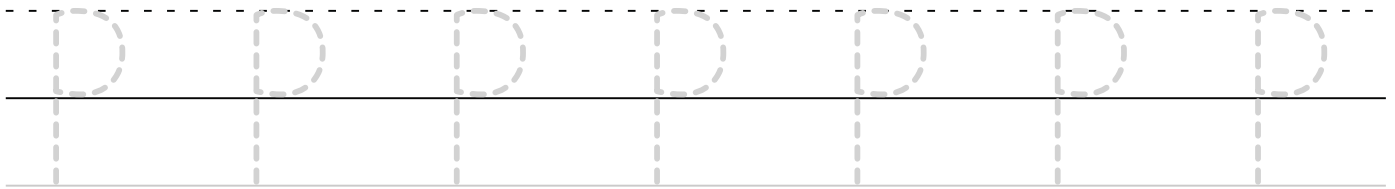
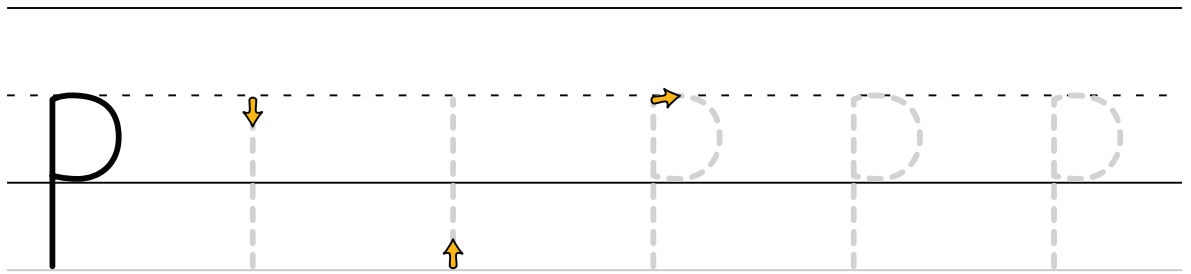
Tip for parents: This letter requires two different strokes. First your child needs to draw a straight line downward. Then direct him to lift the pencil and draw a half circle from the top of the line to the mid-point of the line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter p: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



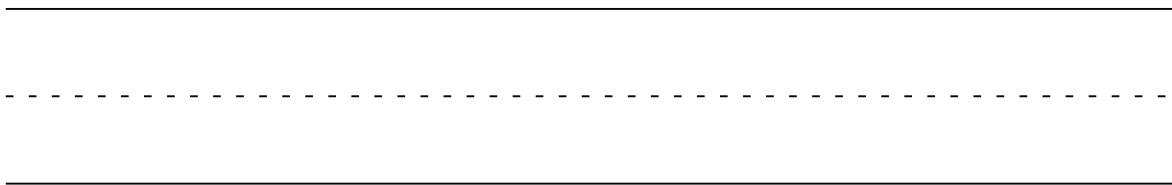
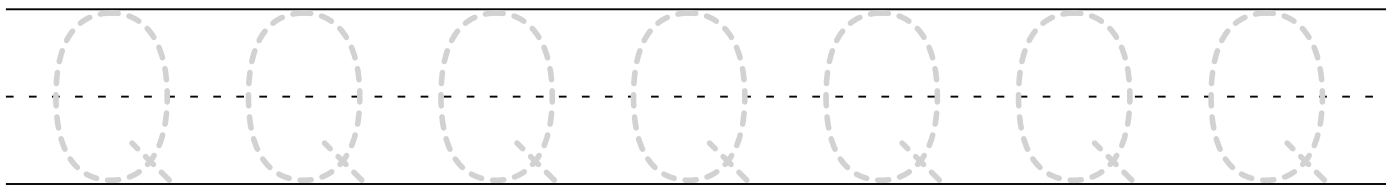
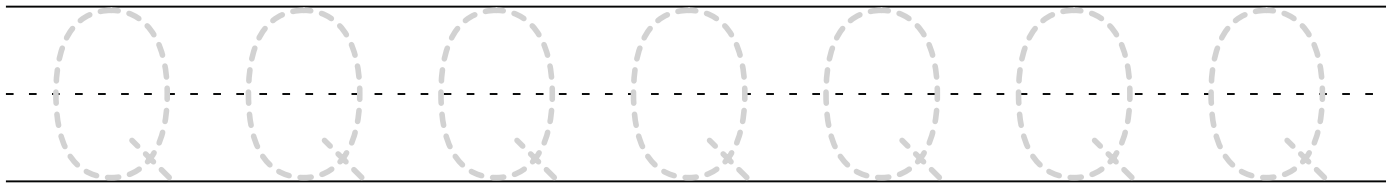
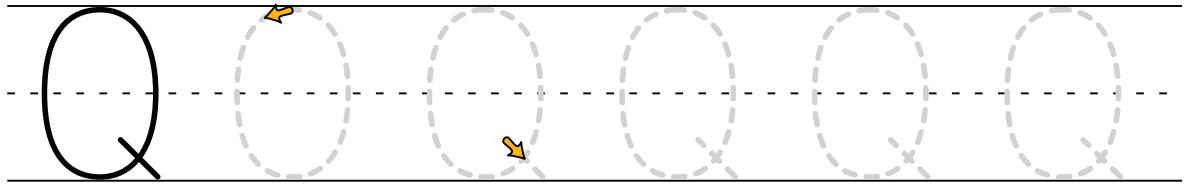
Tip for parents: Unlike the uppercase P, this letter is made in one stroke. Direct your child to keep the pencil on the paper after drawing the first downward line and simply retrace that line before drawing a loop at the top.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter Q: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



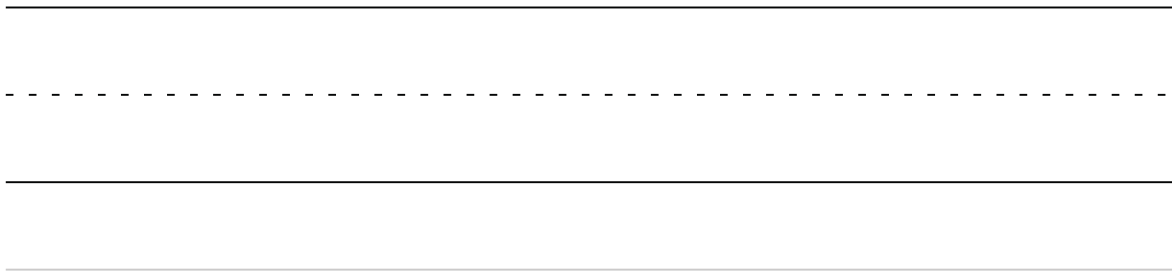
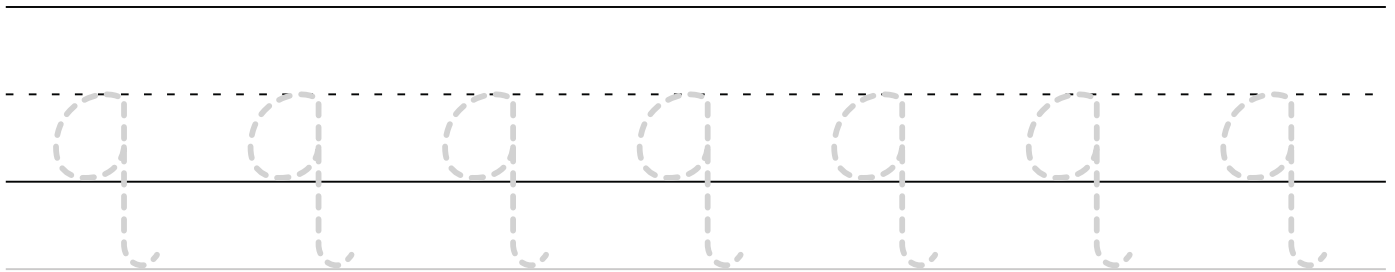
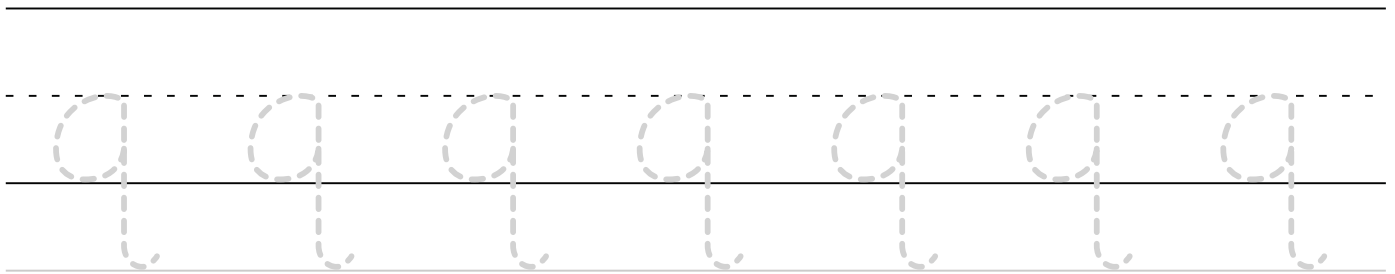
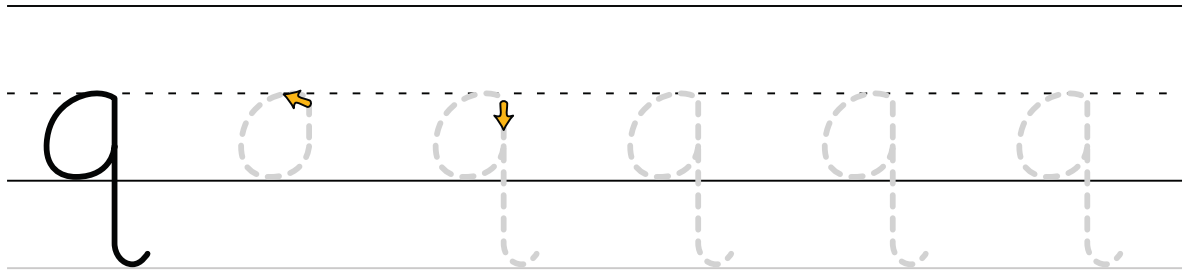
Tip for parents: Children love to think of this letter as a "fancy O." After your child draws an uppercase O, direct him to pick up the pencil and add the short line that crosses the lower right side of the O.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter q: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



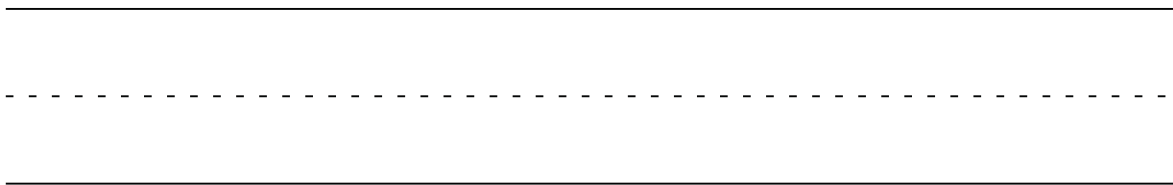
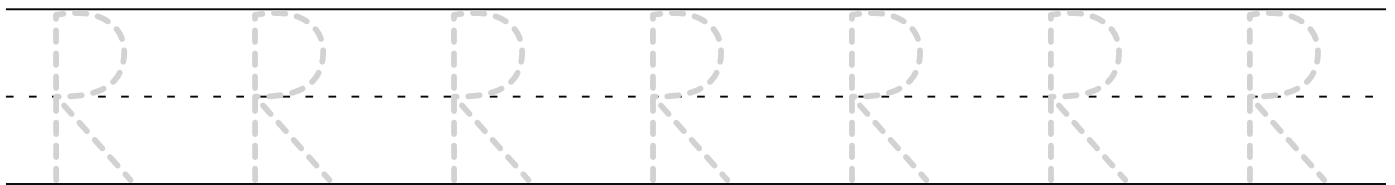
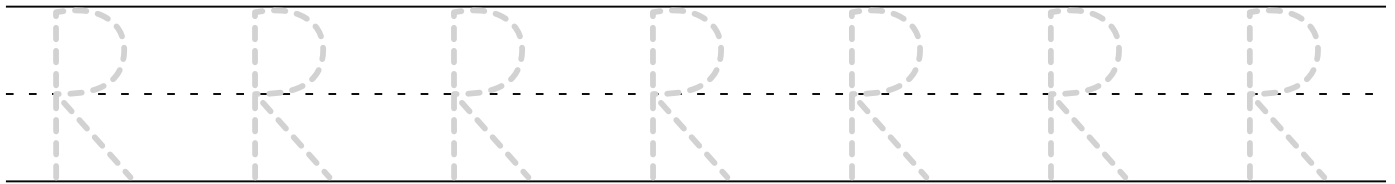
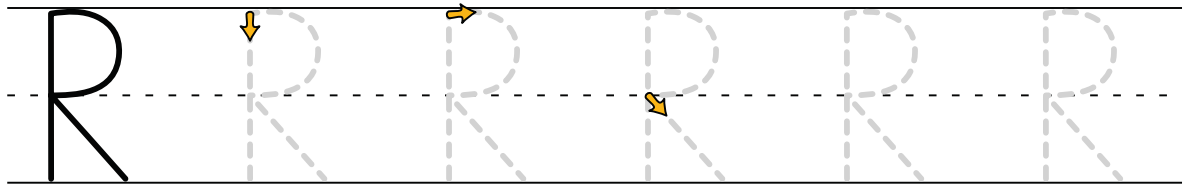
Tip for parents: Remind your child to draw this letter in one stroke, so the loop and downward line are connected seamlessly. As he completes the straight line downward, remind him to hook to the right to give the letter its tail.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter R: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



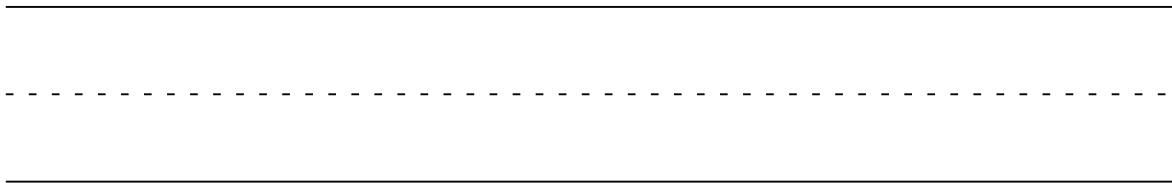
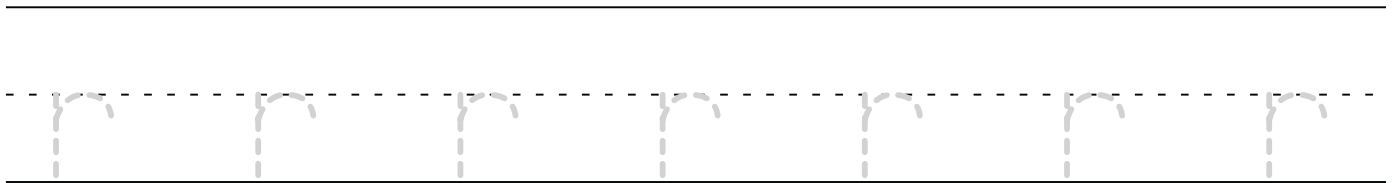
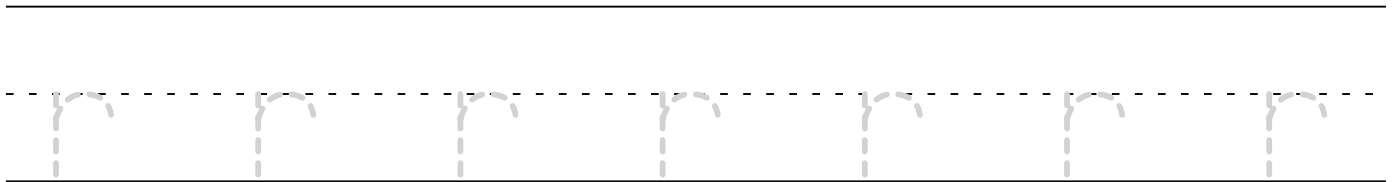
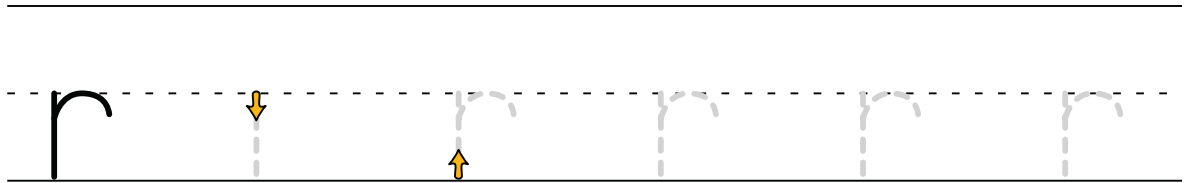
Tip for parents: Children love to think of this letter as a "P with a leg." After your child has drawn an uppercase P, direct him to leave the pencil on the paper and add a "leg" that moves diagonally down to touch the bottom line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter r: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



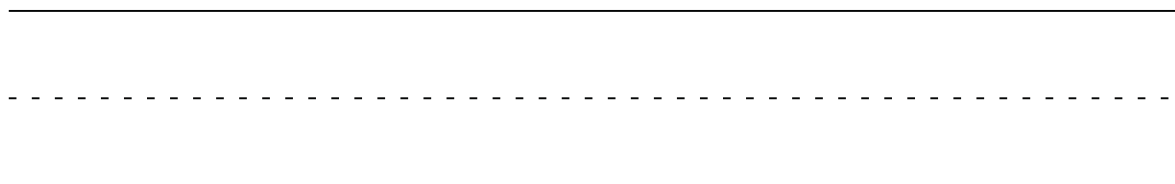
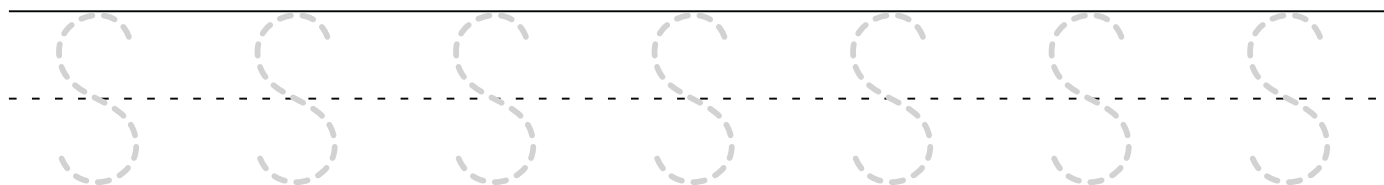
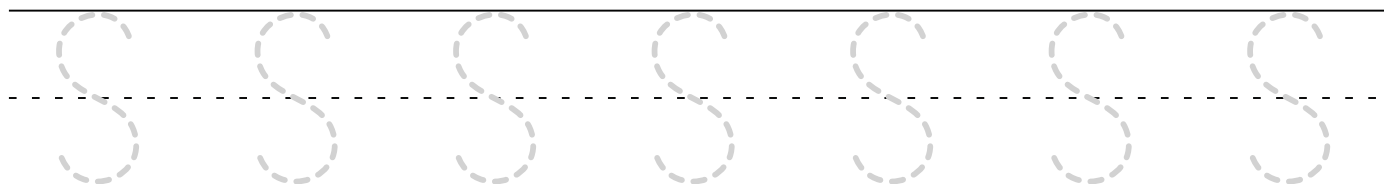
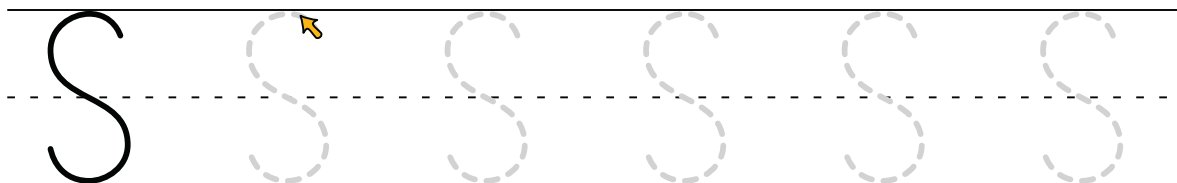
Tip for parents: This letter is similar to a lowercase n but does not have a complete hump. Direct your child to begin drawing the hump as usual, but to stop shortly after the pencil passes the tallest part of the hump.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter S: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: The S is challenging to write because of the two curves and the direction change in the middle. Tell your child to "draw a forward c, keep the pencil on the paper, and then draw a backward c."

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter s: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



S



SCHOOL SPARKS



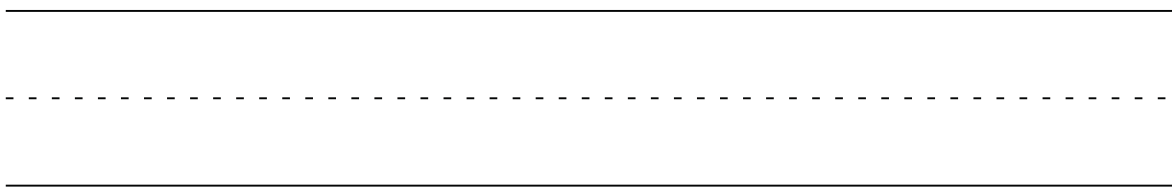
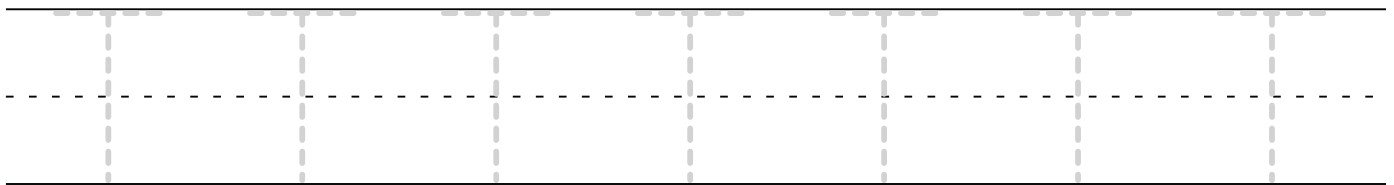
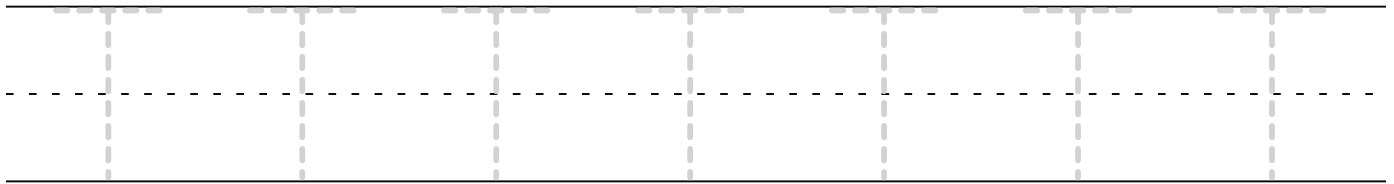
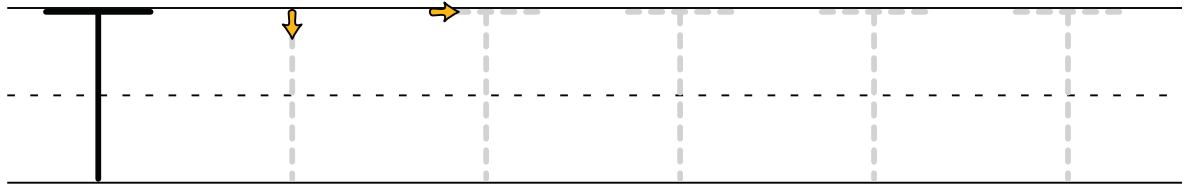
Tip for parents: The smaller the letter, the more complicated it is for little hands to form. Fortunately, the lowercase s is an exact miniature of the uppercase S, using the same "forward c, backward c" formation.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter T: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



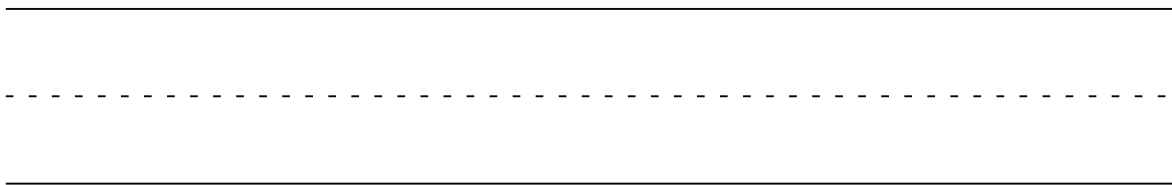
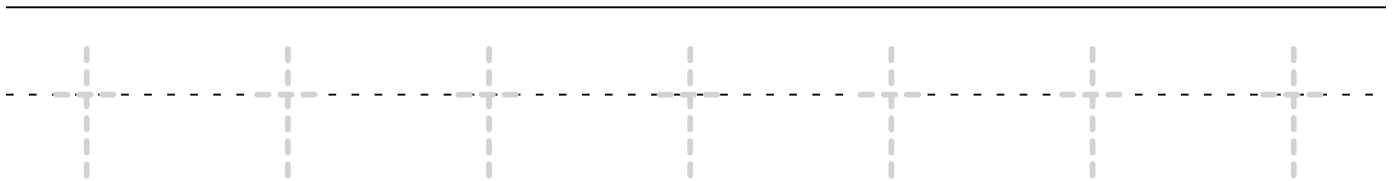
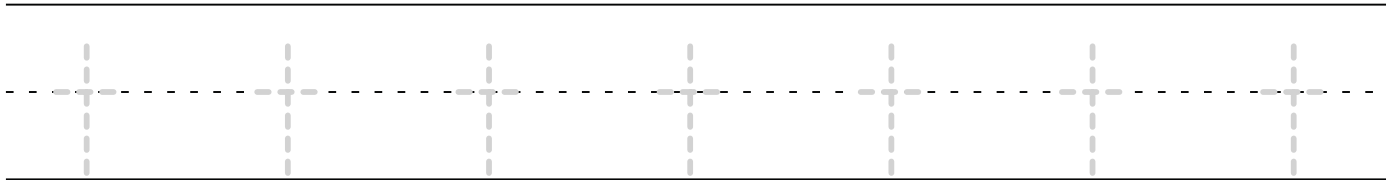
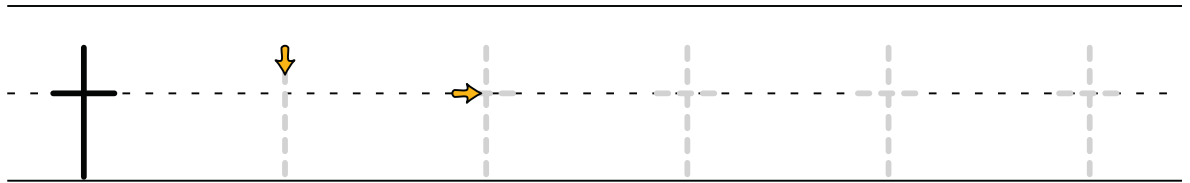
Tip for parents: After your child draws the initial long line downward, remind him to pay attention to the length of the horizontal line on top to ensure that it extends equally on both sides of the vertical line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter t: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



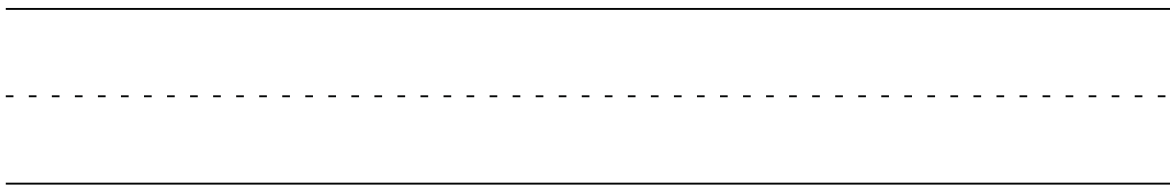
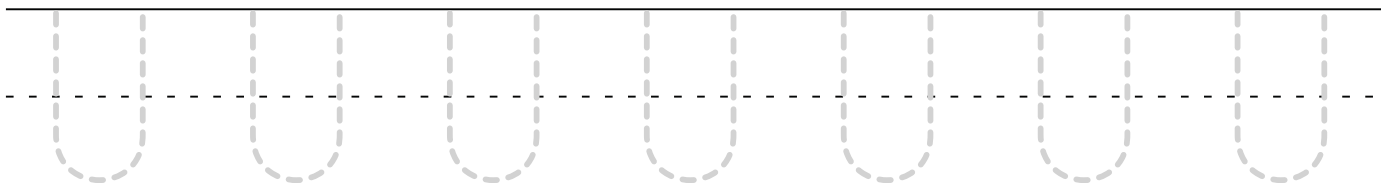
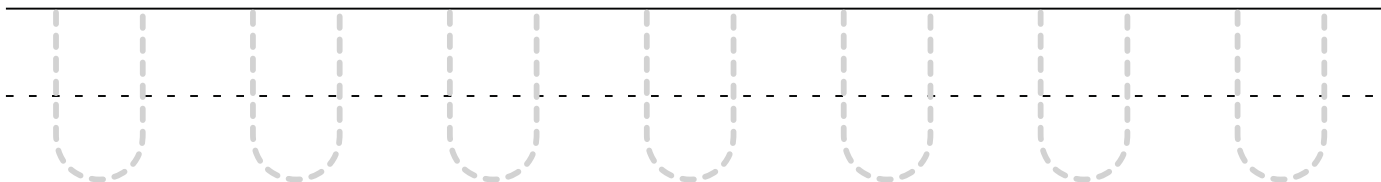
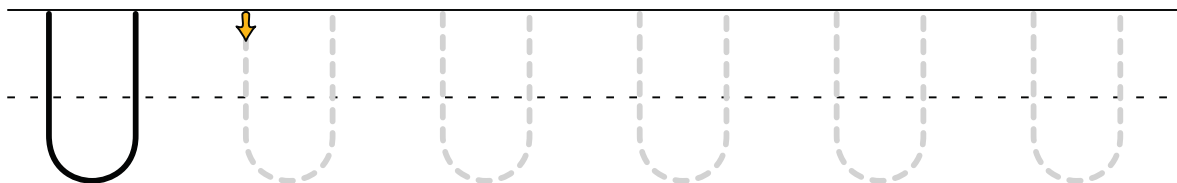
Tip for parents: The lowercase t is not as tall as the uppercase T but not as short as most lowercase letters. Show your child how to begin writing this letter by starting in the white space between the lines rather than on a line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter U: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



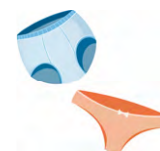
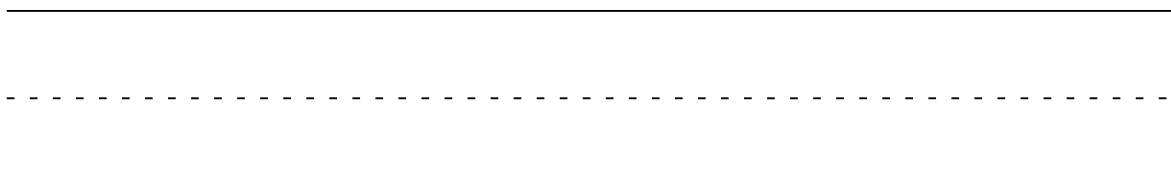
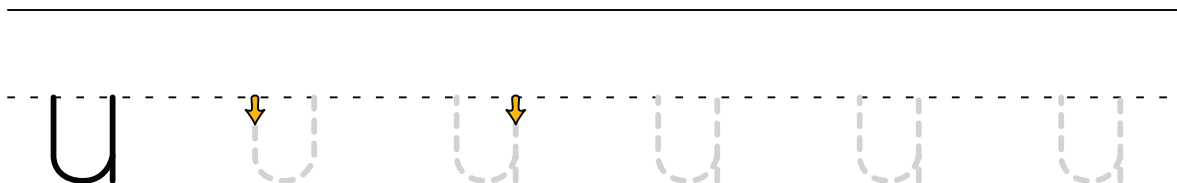
Tip for parents: As your child draws this letter, remind him that the second vertical line needs to return all the way back to the solid black line at the top. This way, the letter is the same height on both sides.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter u: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



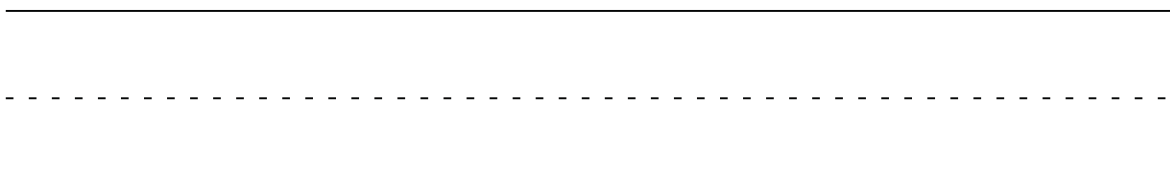
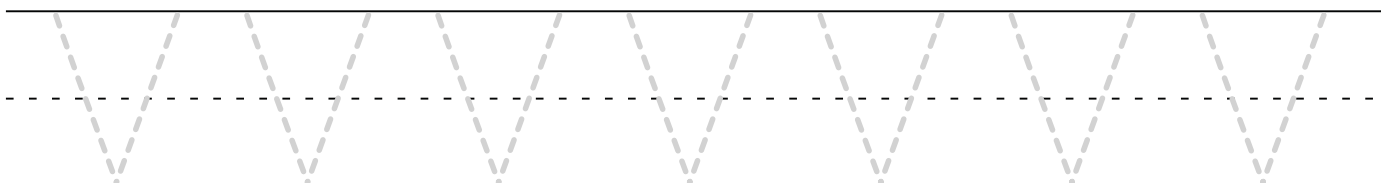
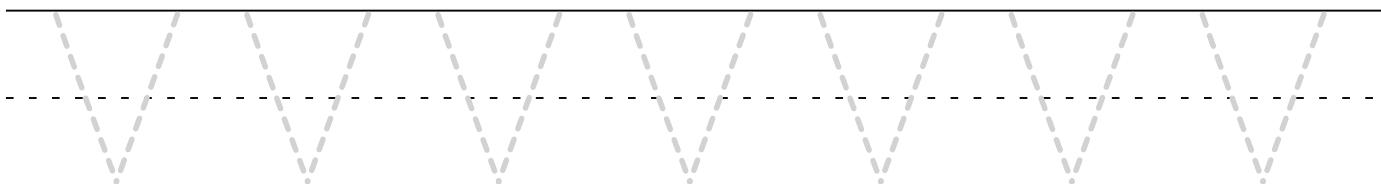
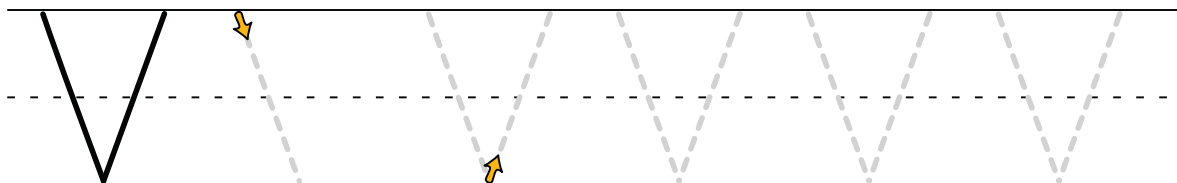
Tip for parents: This letter is drawn in a single stroke, without lifting up the pencil. After your child completes the initial hook shape, remind him to change direction and draw an additional straight line down.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter V: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



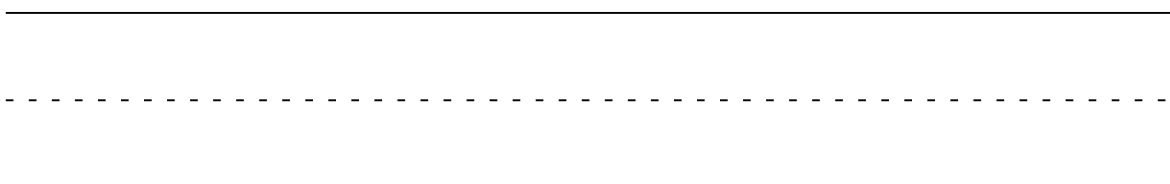
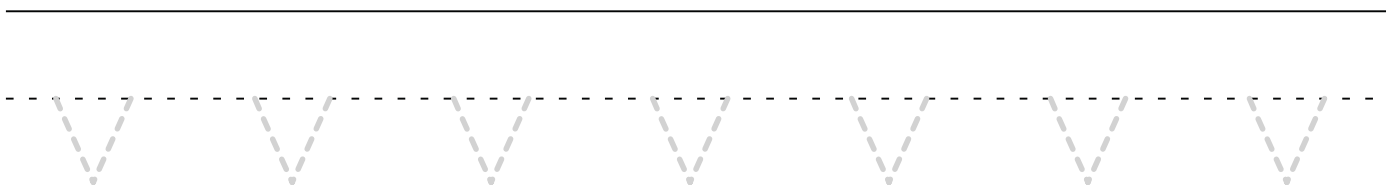
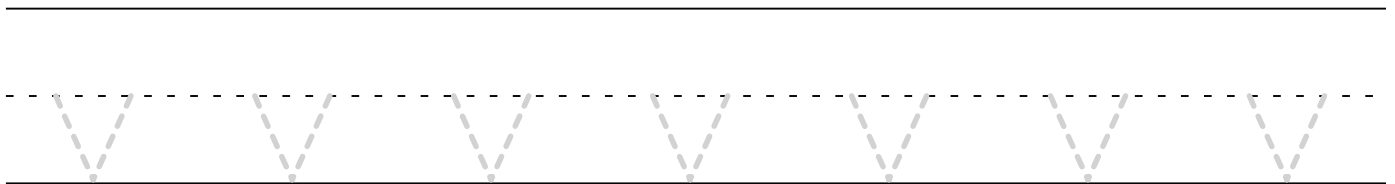
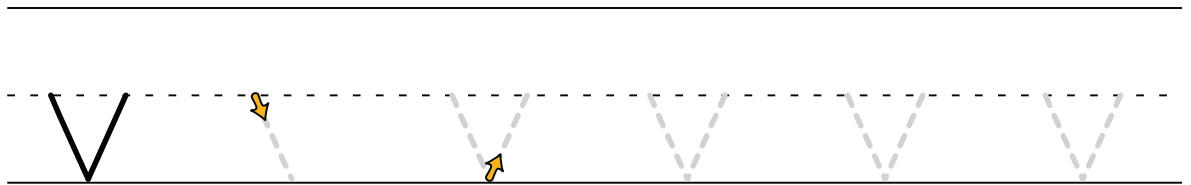
Tip for parents: The uppercase V is drawn in one stroke, without lifting up the pencil. Direct your child to first draw a slanted vertical line downward, then change the direction of the pencil and go back to the top line.

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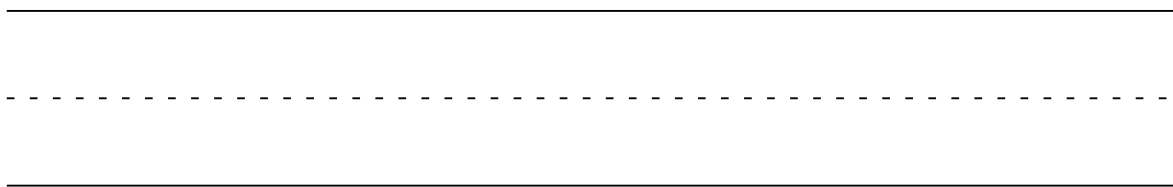
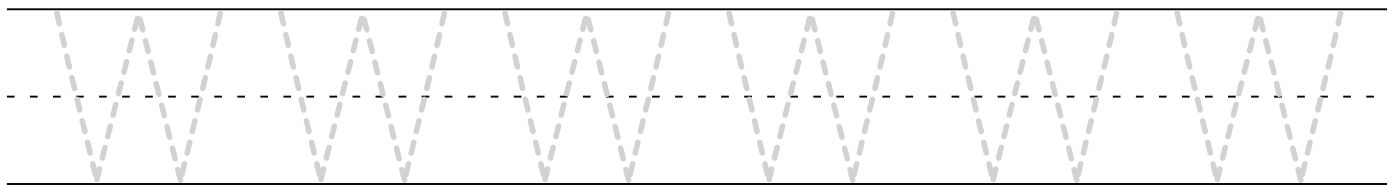
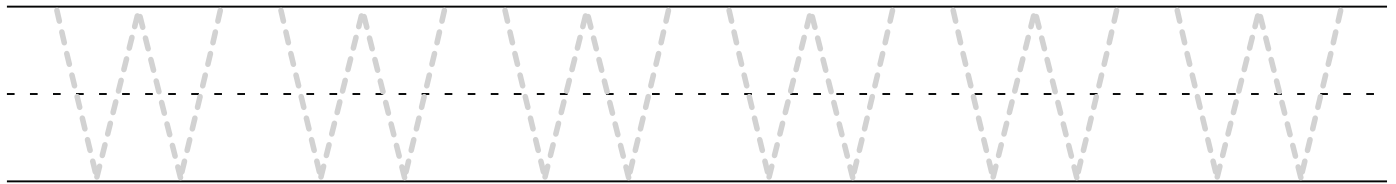
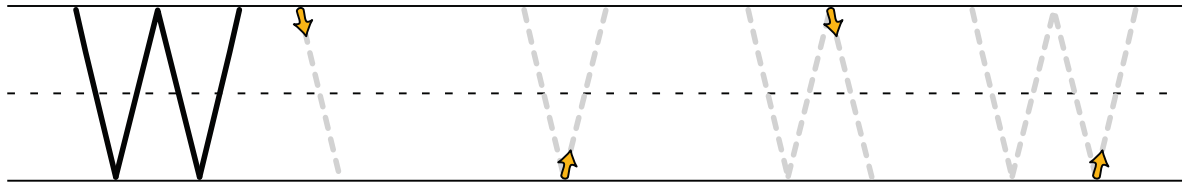
ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter v: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter W: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



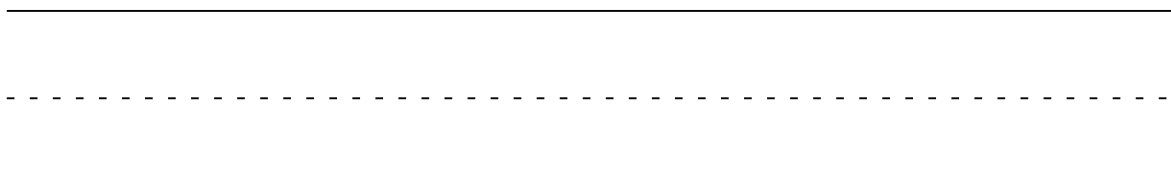
Tip for parents: This letter has four different segments, but is drawn with one continuous stroke. Explain to your child how each line should stretch all the way from the top black line to the bottom black line.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter w: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



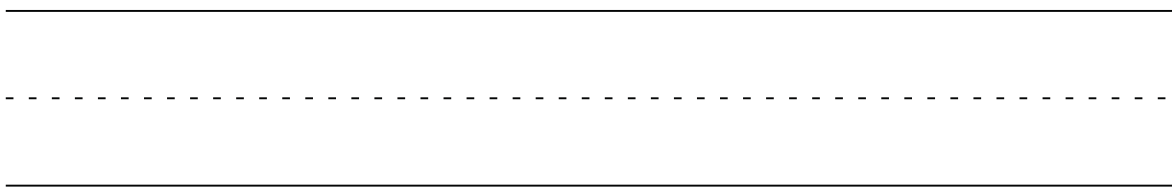
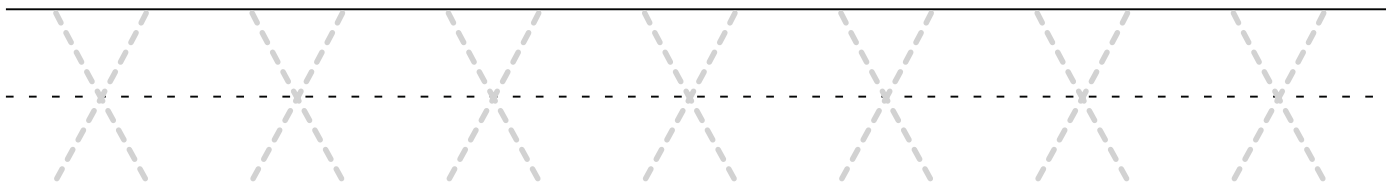
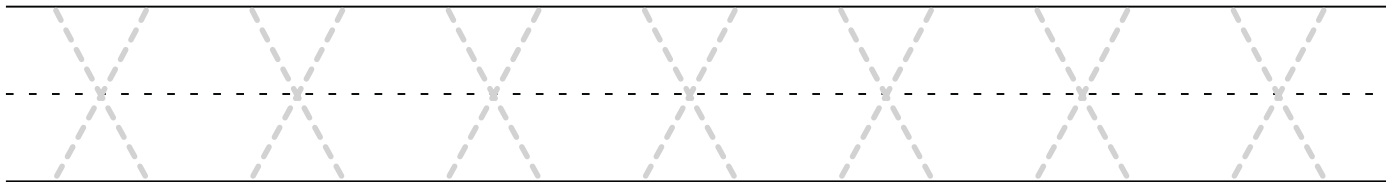
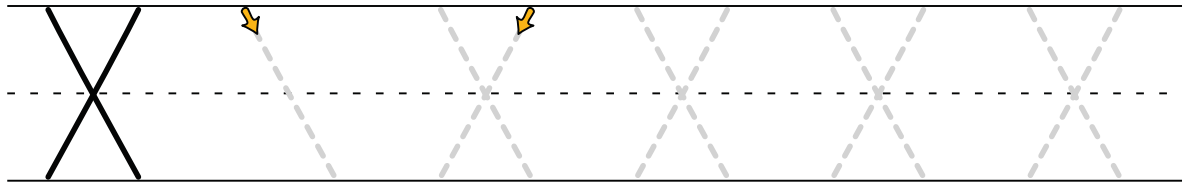
Tip for parents: Unlike the uppercase W, this letter has soft curves rather than sharp angles. Direct your child to make one curve and draw an identical curve next to the first without picking up the pencil.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter X: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



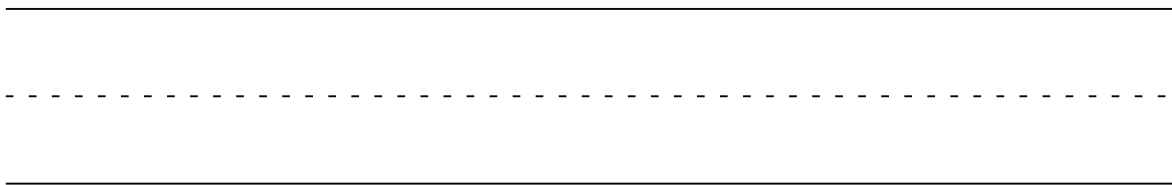
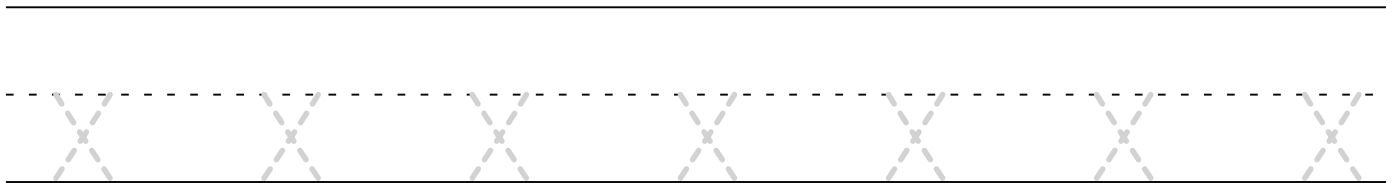
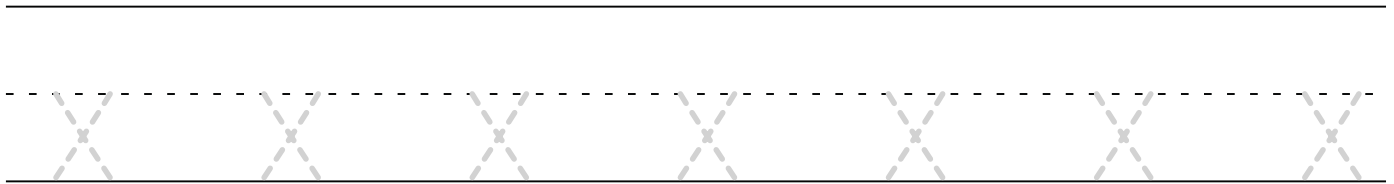
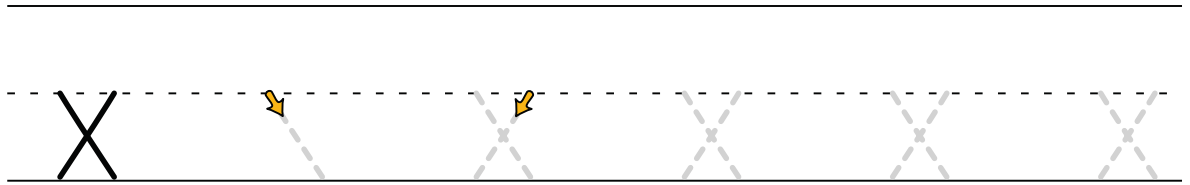
Tip for parents: The key to writing a perfect X is to make sure the two lines cross at their midpoints. Explain to your child how the second line should “cut the first line in half.”

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter x: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



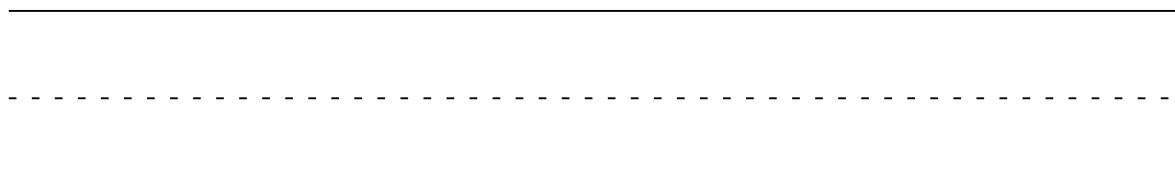
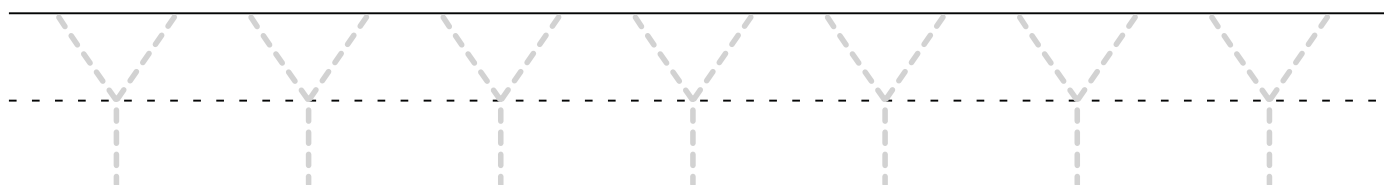
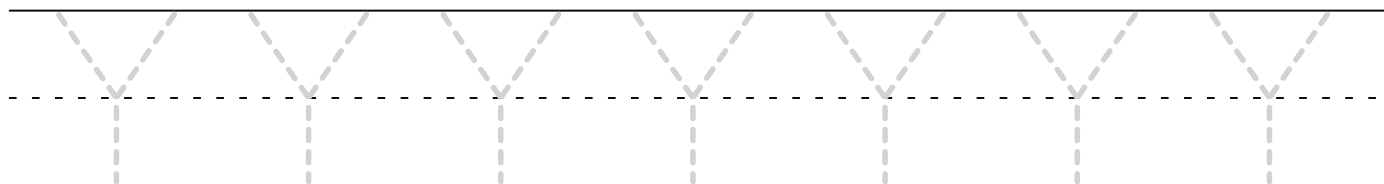
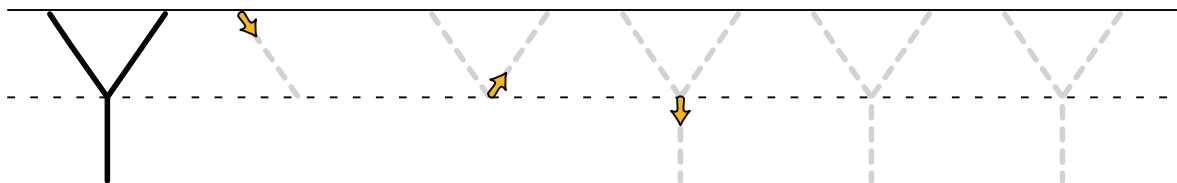
Tip for parents: Remind your child to watch closely as he draws the second line, ensuring the lines cross at their midpoints. Unlike an uppercase X that crosses on the dashed line, there is no "midpoint guide" for the lowercase x.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter Y: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



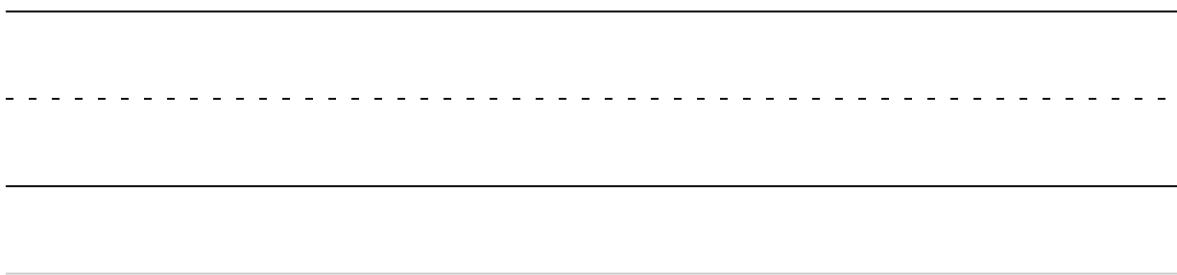
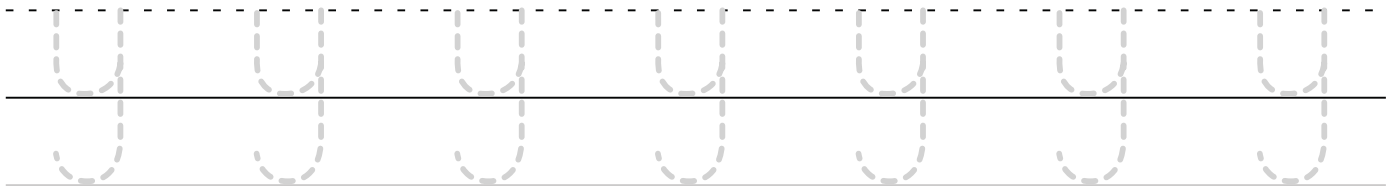
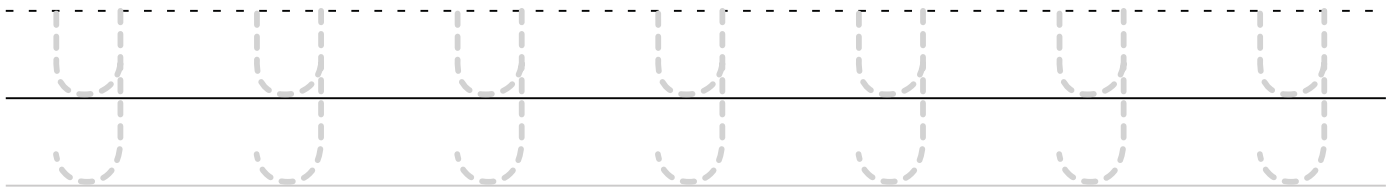
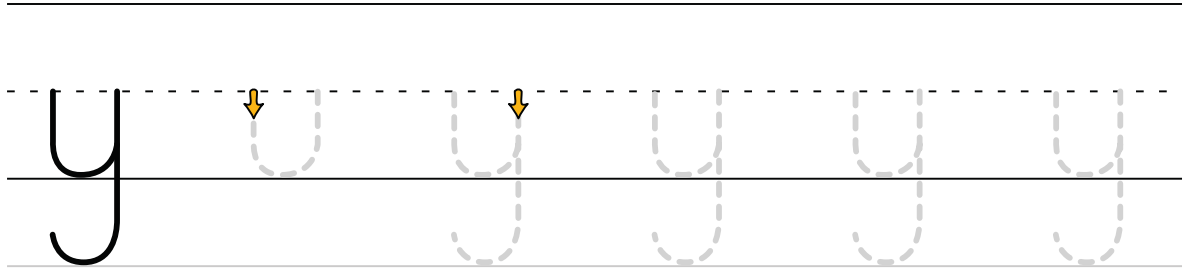
Tip for parents: Remind your child to start by drawing a lowercase v resting on the dotted middle line. Then direct him to pick up the pencil, rest it on the bottom of the v, and draw a straight line down to complete the letter.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter y: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



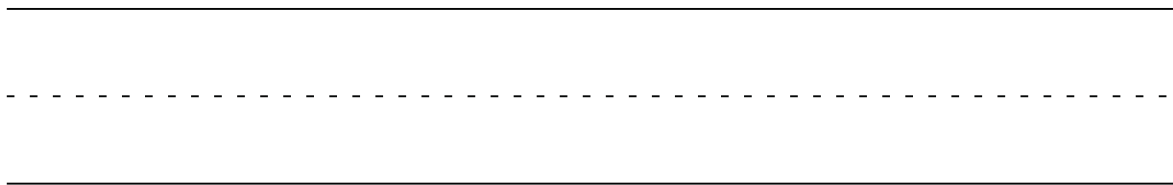
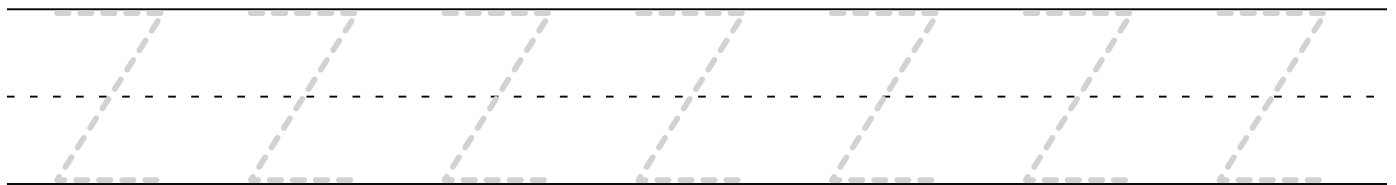
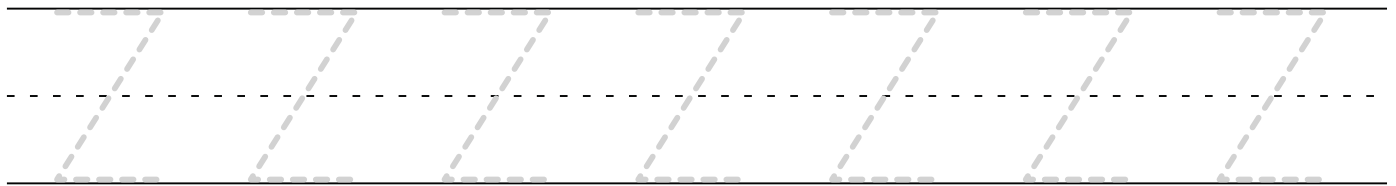
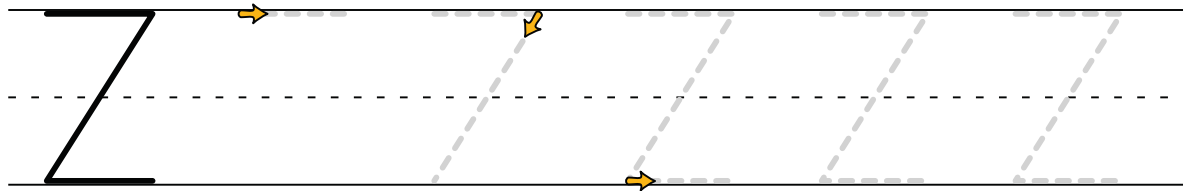
Tip for parents: Children love to think of this letter as a lowercase u with a tail! Direct your child to draw a lowercase u, but to continue the downward stroke below the line, hooking under the letter to complete the tail.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter Z: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



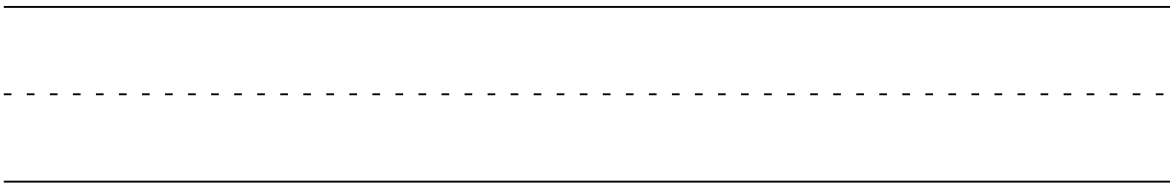
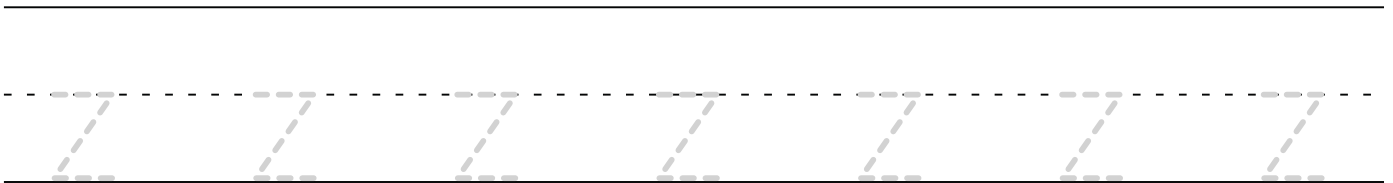
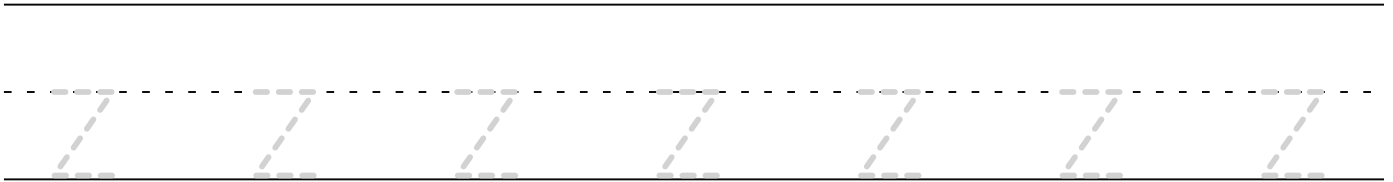
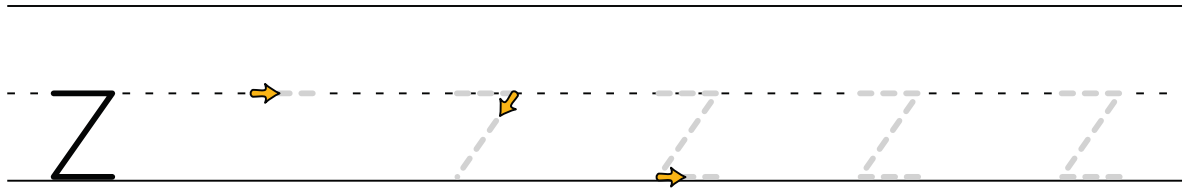
Tip for parents: This zig-zag letter requires three lines, but is made with one continuous stroke. Explain to your child that the first and third lines are totally flat, and that the second line goes diagonally down the page.

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ALPHABET PARADE

Tracing the letter z: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger for support. The arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the letter.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: The key to a well-formed lowercase z is drawing sharp corners. As your child writes the letter, remind him to pause completely at the corners before changing direction and drawing the next line.

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