

## Chinese Calligraphy- Art Historical Lesson

### What is Calligraphy?

- Chinese Calligraphy is the writing of characters
- The word “calligraphy” is a Greek word meaning “beautiful writing”
- Traditionally, Chinese is written vertically in columns going from top to bottom and ordered from right to left
- Chinese is a pictographic language, Chinese writing uses characters that evolved from ancient pictures

### History

- The earliest known examples of Chinese writing- 13<sup>th</sup> century BC
- In 221 BC the first emperor of China ordered that the writing system be standardized in order to unify the empire and facilitate ease in communication
- Chinese Calligraphy is collected and displayed as art to this day

### “The Four Treasures of the Study” – the four most traditionally valued elements necessary to practice Chinese Calligraphy

#### 1. Paper

- Paper was first developed in China in 100 AD
- Previous to its invention (rice paper), bamboo slips and silks were used for writing material

#### 2. Brush

- Brush handles are traditionally constructed from bamboo, but special brushes are of other precious materials like ivory or jade
- Made with the hair of different types of animals
- The most famous and highly prized brushes are a mix of yellow weasel, goat and rabbit hair
- Brushes are classed as soft, mixed, or hard

#### 3. Ink

- Traditional East Asian ink is solidified into inksticks
- Inksticks are generally made from soot from different sources- Soot is collected then mixed with glue
- Spices and herbs are added to add scent

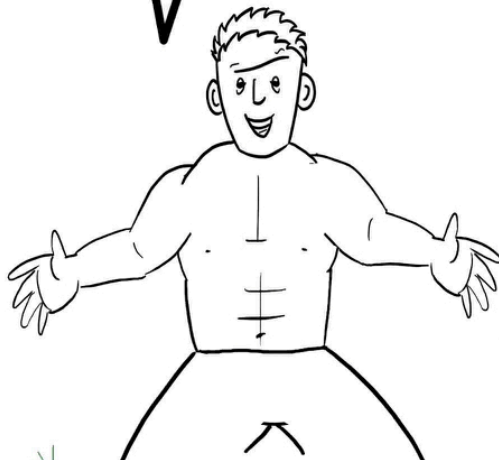
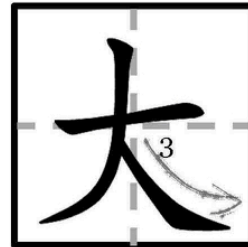
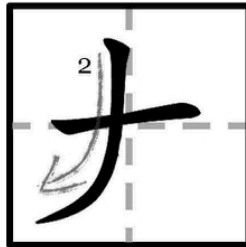
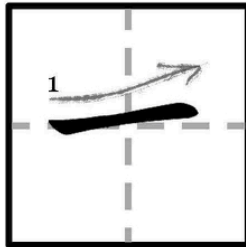
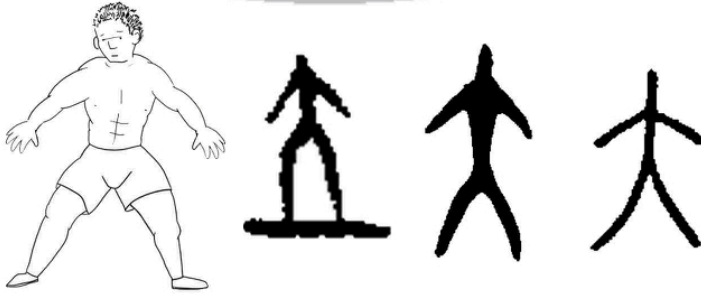
#### 4. Inkstone

- The Inkstone is used to grind the ink stick into powder
- The powder is then mixed with water in a well in the Inkstone in order to produce usable ink for calligraphy

The following images are worksheets that students can complete themselves. It is important to follow the instructions prescribing the order in which the different strokes should be made. There is a proper way to create each character, and they are numbered clearly. These worksheets also clearly illustrate the progression from ancient calligraphic pictographs that were found carved onto bones and shells thousands of years ago to the modern characters that are used today.

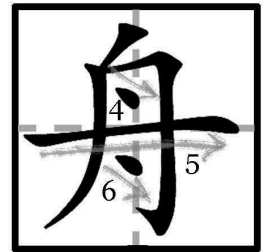
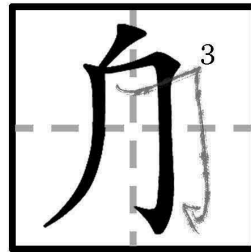
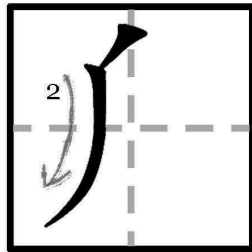
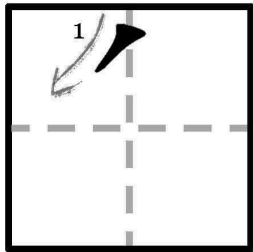
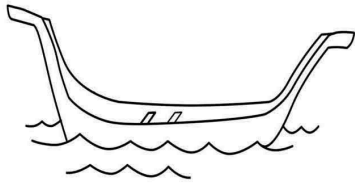
Write the Chinese Character for

"BIG"

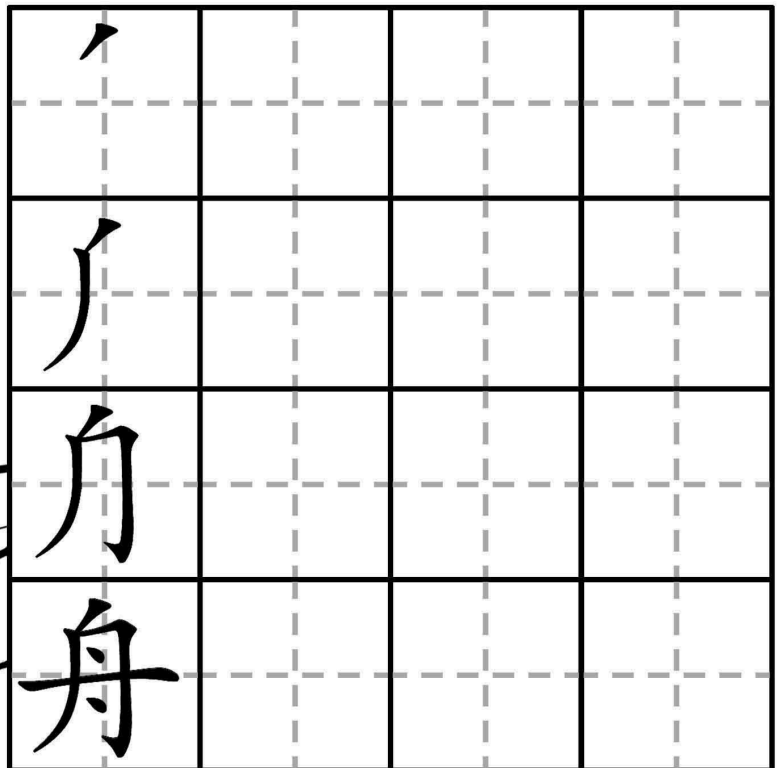


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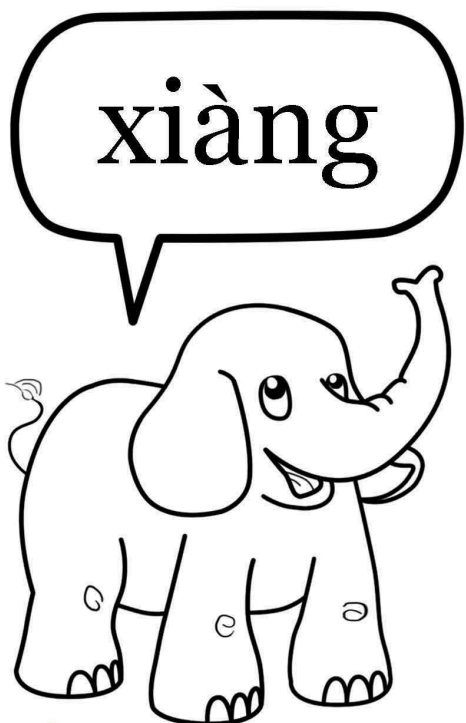
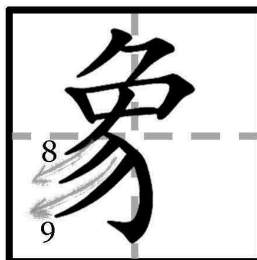
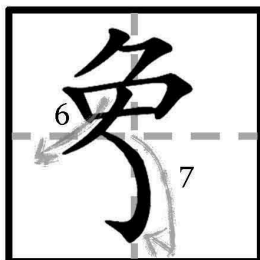
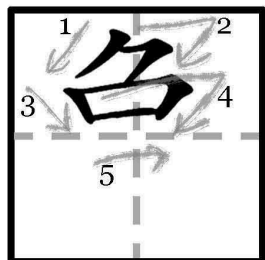
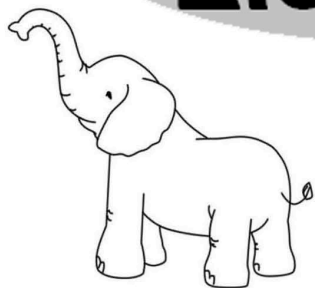
Write the Chinese Character for  
"Boat"



zhōu

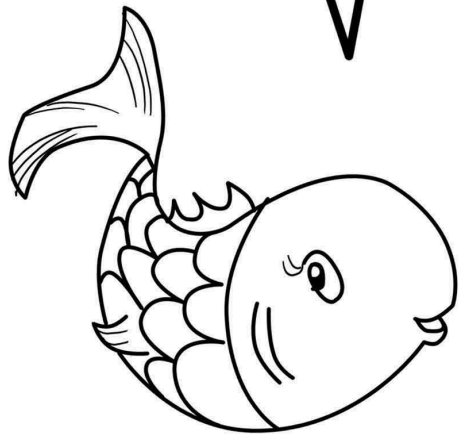
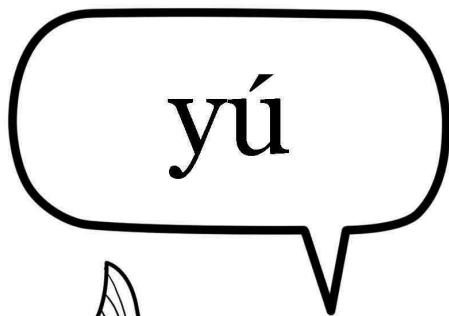
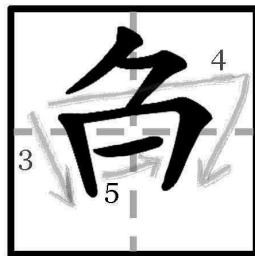
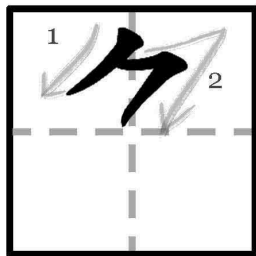


Write the Chinese Character for  
"Elephant"



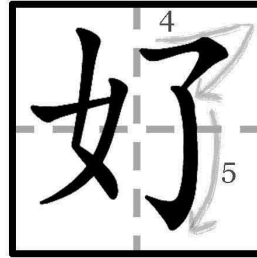
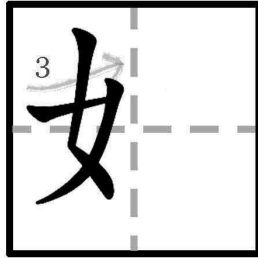
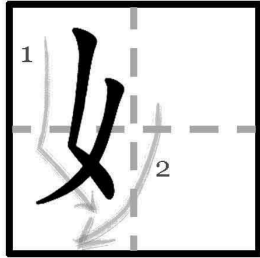
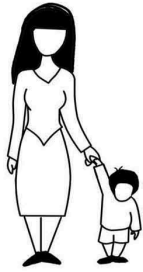
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Write the Chinese Character for  
"Fish"



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Write the Chinese Character for  
"Good"

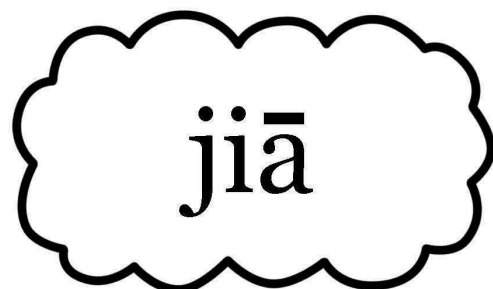
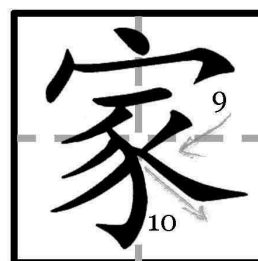
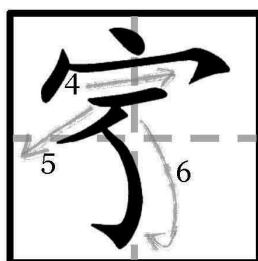
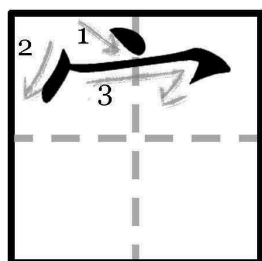
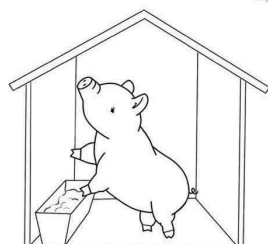


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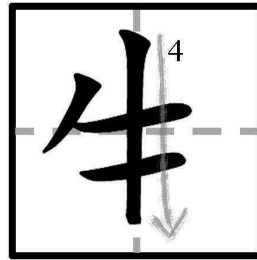
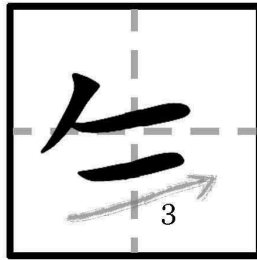
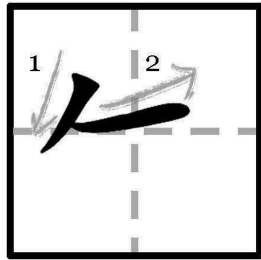
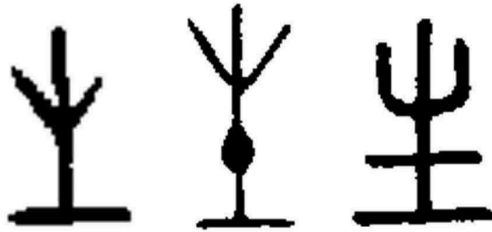
女			
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Write the Chinese Character for  
"Home"

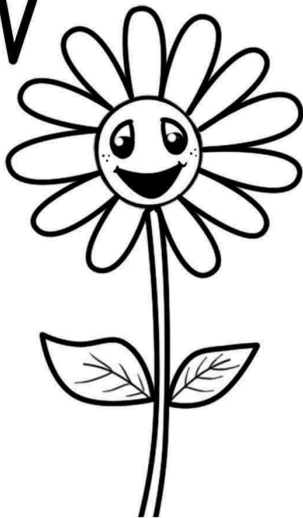


宀			
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Write the Chinese Character for  
"Life"



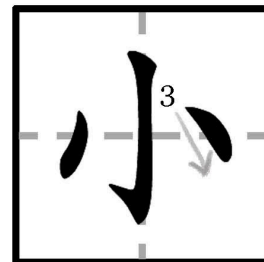
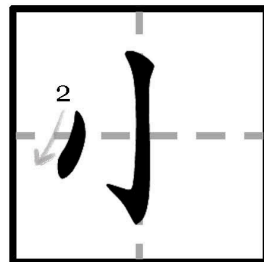
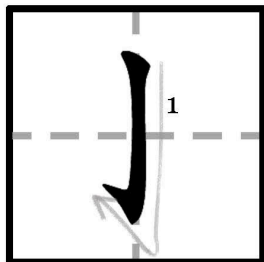
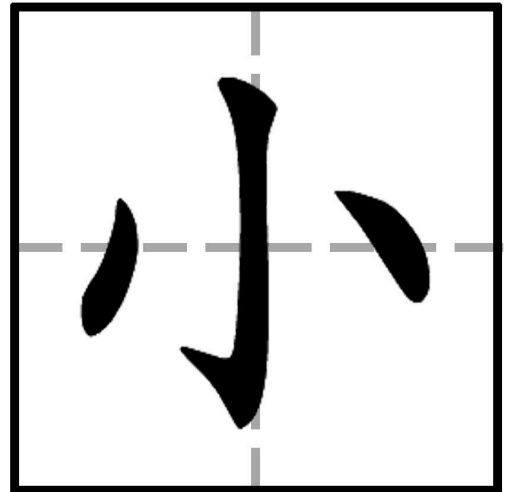
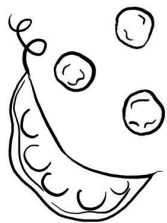
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Write the Chinese Character for  
**"Little"**

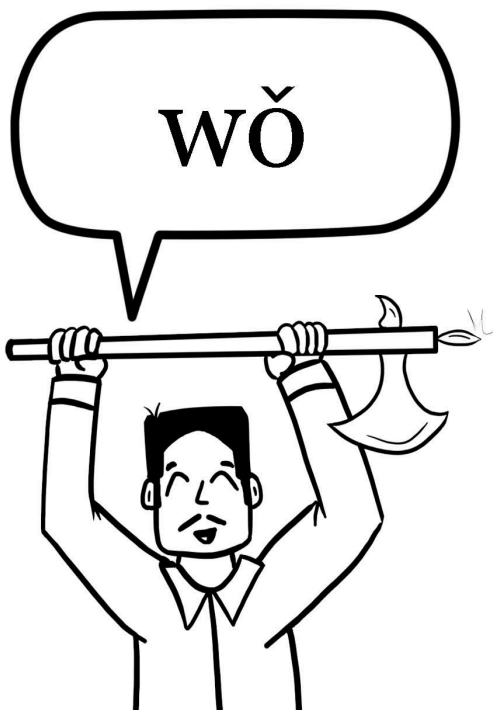
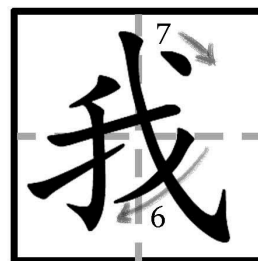
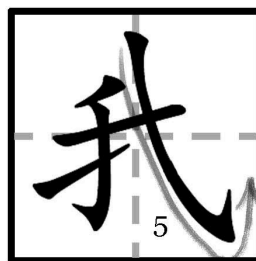
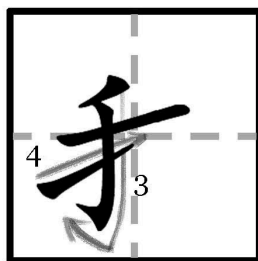
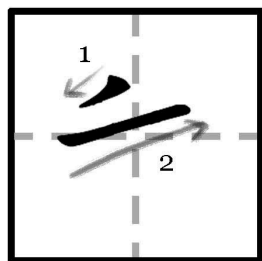
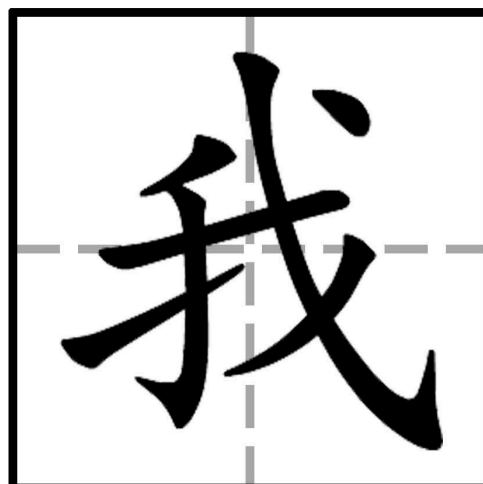


小			
小			
小			

Write the Chinese Character for  
"Me"

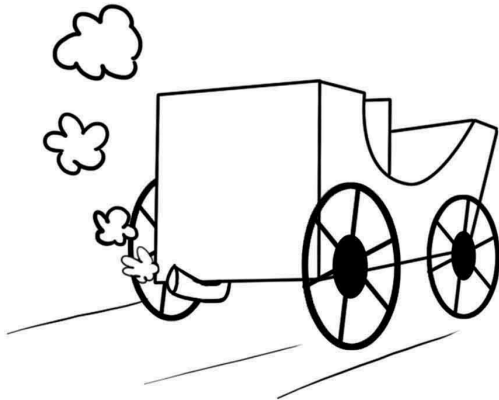
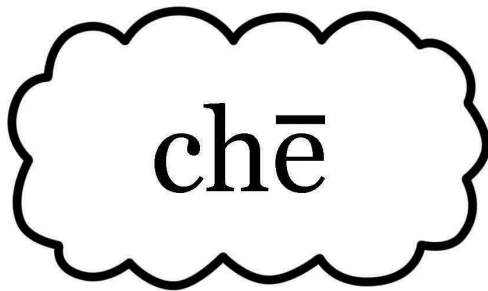
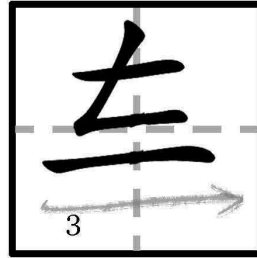
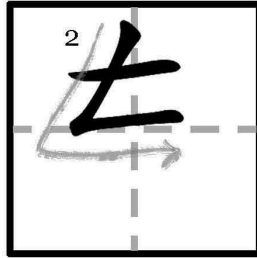
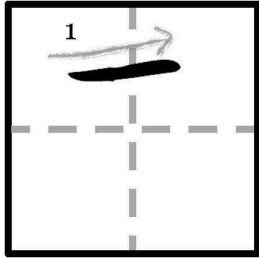
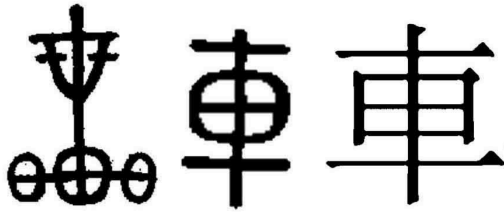
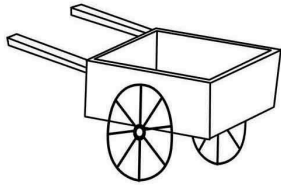


我 女 我



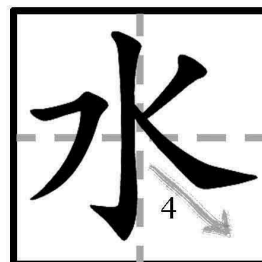
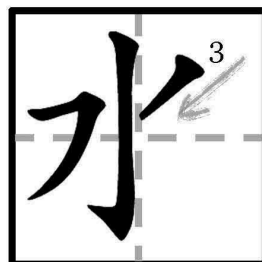
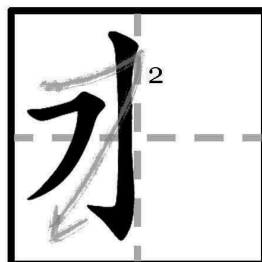
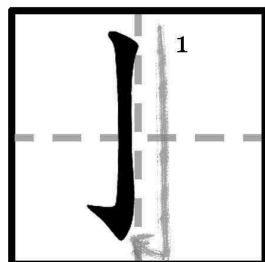
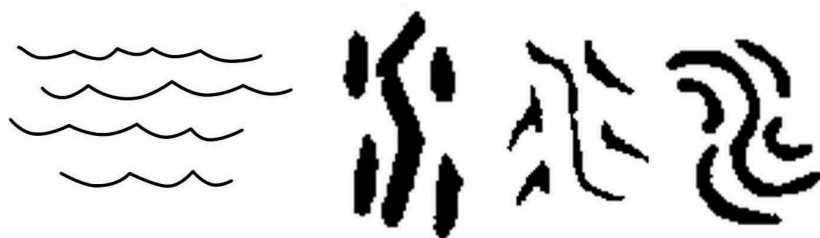
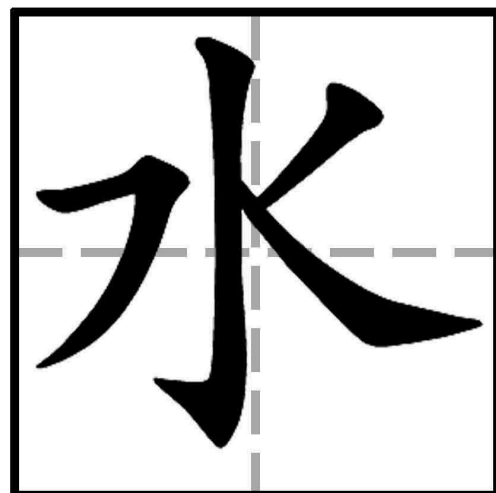
二			
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Write the Chinese Character for  
"Vehicle"

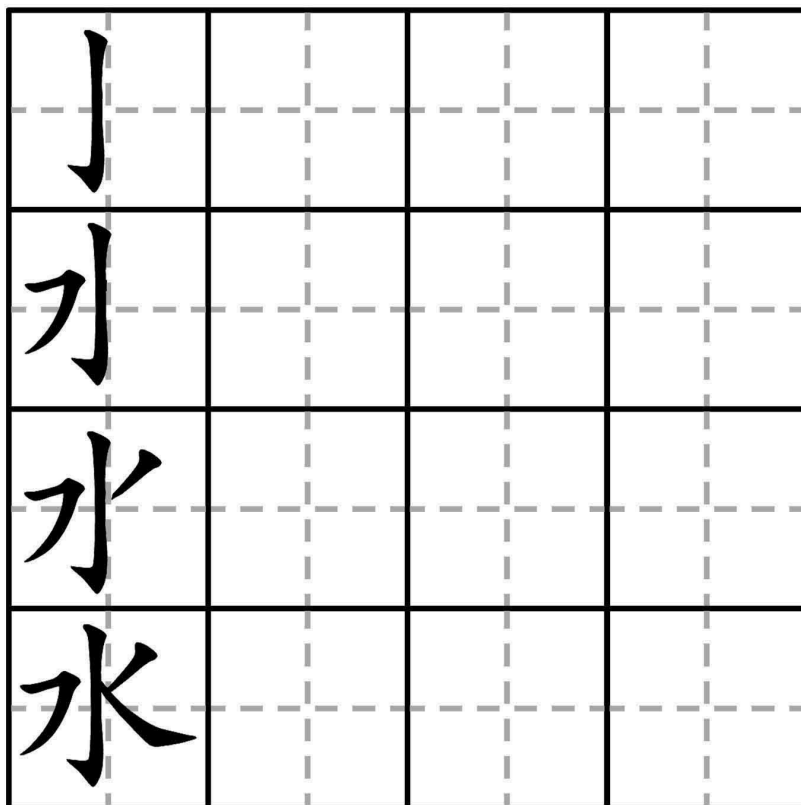
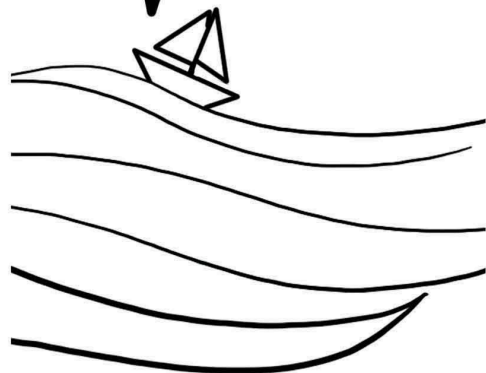


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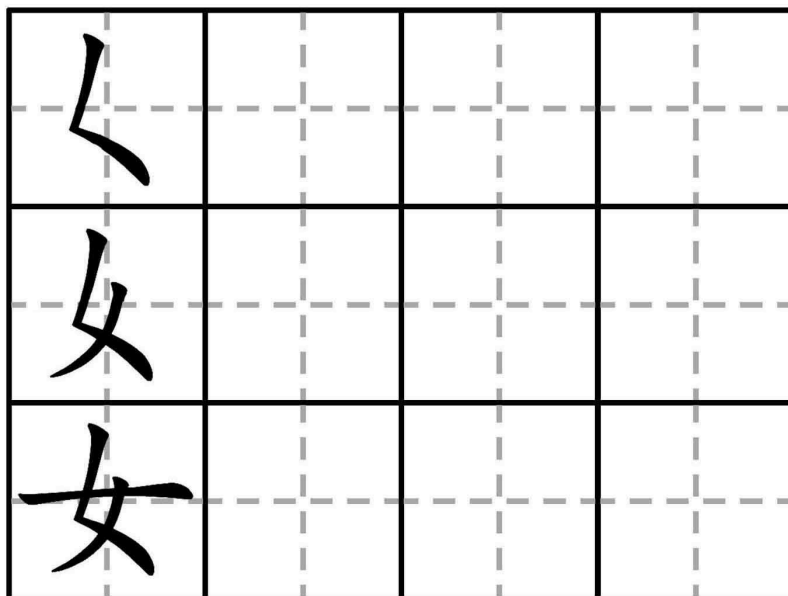
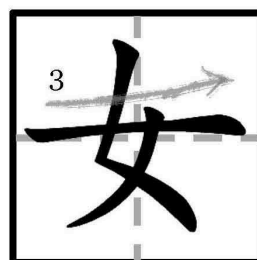
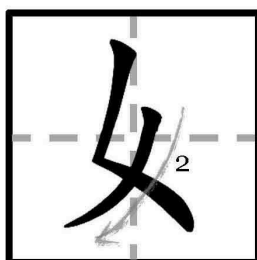
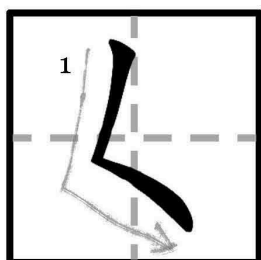
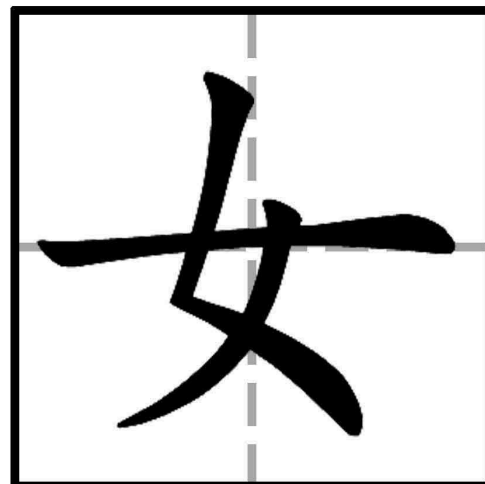
Write the Chinese Character for  
"Water"



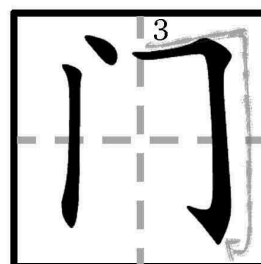
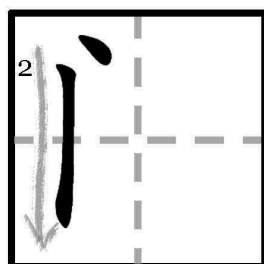
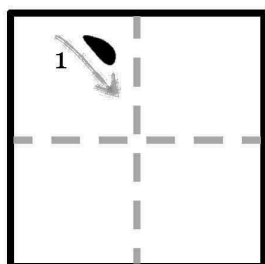
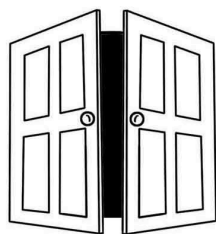
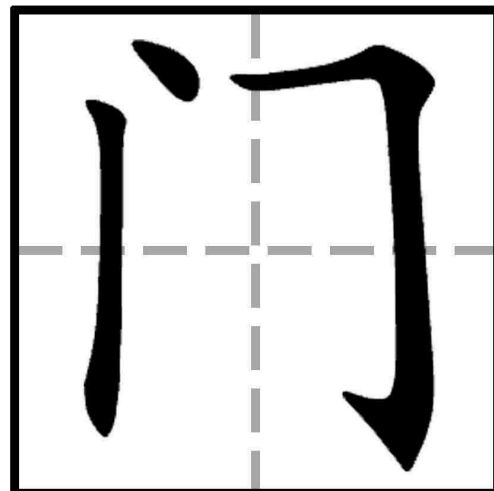
shuǐ



Write the Chinese Character for  
"Woman"



Write the Chinese Character for  
"Door"



mén

