The Raspberry Game

Purpose

When learning the alphabet, students say the letter sounds one at a time. In order to read words phonetically, students must be able to scan the letters from left to right and slide the sounds together smoothly to pronounce the word. This is a big leap. For some students this skill comes easily. For others it is a challenge, even when reading short, three-letter words. To make this transition easier, it helps tremendously to start with two-letter combinations before attempting to read three-letter words.

The Raspberry Game

The raspberry game provides practice pronouncing short vowel two-letter combinations. In each combination, the short vowel comes first, followed by a consonant.

There are five main sets of raspberry games, one for each short vowel. The games can be used before and during the time students are learning short vowel words. There is an extra set of introductory short u games which may be used while students work through the *Learning The Alphabet* or *Exploring Sounds In Words* books.

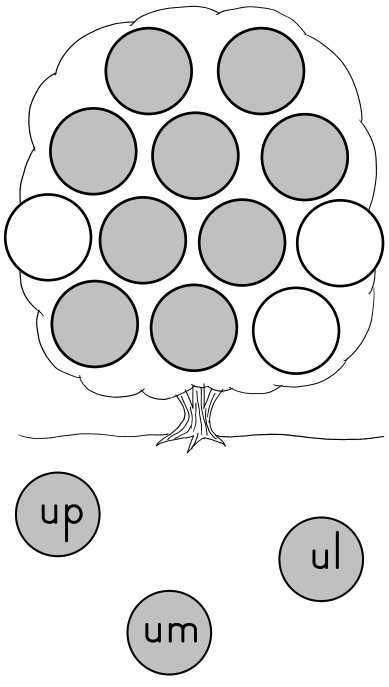
After students have played each short vowel game separately and have learned to pronounce the sound combinations with confidence, you may want to combine the pieces for two different vowels to provide more challenge. This will help with short vowel discrimination.

<u>Introductory Short U Games</u>
Study the listed letters before playing each game.

Game 1	t i h l n w u b m r
Game 2	t i h l n w u b m r f x e s
Game 3	t i h l n w u b m r f x e s j o c d
Game 4	t i h l n w u b m r f x e s j o c d a v g p

<u>Short Vowel Games</u>
Students should know all the letters of the alphabet.

Game 1	Short A
Game 2	Short O
Game 3	Short I
Game 4	Short U
Game 5	Short E



To prepare the activity: Print the raspberry pages for each set on red or purple card stock. The number of berry pages you print will depend on the size of your small groups. Plan on printing two pages for two students, three pages for three students, and four pages for four or five students. Be sure to print the extra page with the berries that end with z. Also print the berry pages with the flower images. Distribute these flower pieces evenly among the games. Laminate the pages, if desired, and cut out the raspberries. To save time, you can just cut them into squares if you wish. I've had luck using a large squeeze-type circle punch from a craft store to cut out the berries quickly. Use light weight cardstock (67 pound vellum bristol) and 3 mil laminating pouches. Anything heavier will be too hard to punch. Store the berries for each set in a labeled envelope or plastic bag. Print enough bush pages to use with the small groups you will be teaching. Print the black and white bush page on green card stock. The full color bush pages will look better if you print them on light blue card stock. This avoids having a white edge around the sheet where the printer doesn't print.

Setting up the game: Each student takes a berry bush. Select the desired set of berries. Put all the berry pieces face down on the table. Students select enough pieces to cover all the blank spaces on their bushes, placing them face down.

To do the activity: Students take turns picking a berry from their bush. The student should pronounce the two-letter combination on the berry, using the short vowel sound. If correct, the student keeps the berry. If the pronunciation is not correct, the teacher models the correct pronunciation, and all of the students repeat. Then the berry is put face down back onto the bush. The first student to pick all of his or her berries successfully wins the game.

Bonus Turns: If a student selects a berry that has a flower on it, he should keep it, and immediately take another turn.

Note: It works well to do the *Sound Connections* activity (available from Sound City Reading) on a regular basis during the same time period that students are playing this game. They both reinforce the same skill, but in different ways.

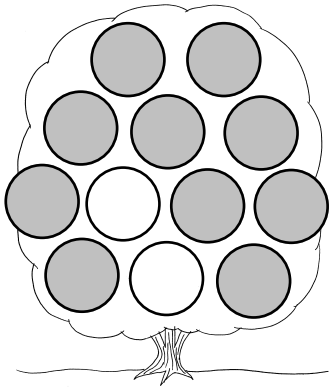
Background: One year I was tutoring a small group of first grade students who, despite my best efforts, were not able to decode (sound out) short vowel words. On a hunch, I checked to see if they could pronounce two-letter combinations. They could not! I created the *Letter Connections Chart* and used it over a period of several weeks to teach them this skill. It was challenging at first, but they eventually mastered the skill, and went on to read short vowel words, other phonetic words, and my beginning stories. For these students, mastering two-letter sound blending was the gateway to reading.

Raspberry Game

Introductory Short U

Game 1

t i h l n w u b m r



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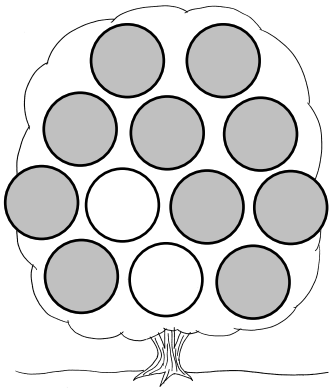
Raspberry Game

Introductory Short U

Game 2

t i h l n w u b m r
f x e s



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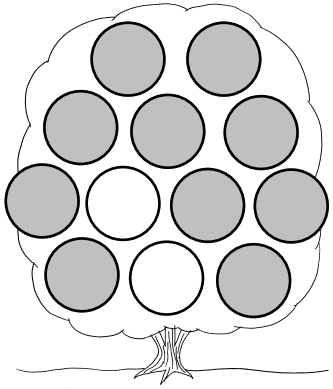
Raspberry Game

Introductory Short U

Game 3

t i h l n w u b m r
f x e s
j o c d



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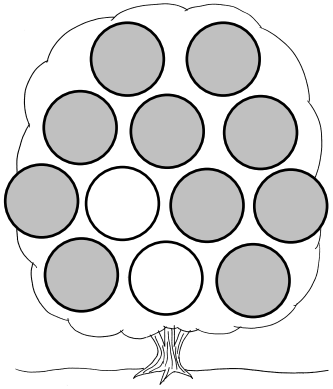
Raspberry Game

Introductory Short U

Game 4

t i h l n w u b m r
f x e s
j o c d
a v g p



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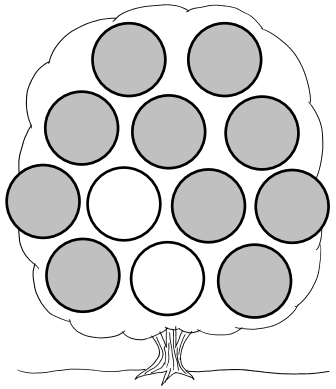
Raspberry Game

Short A



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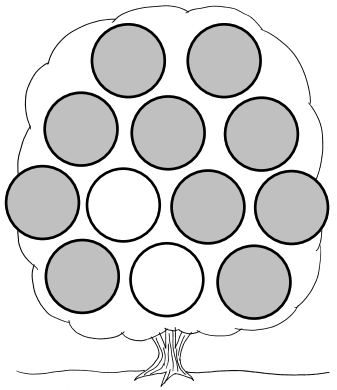
Raspberry Game

Short E



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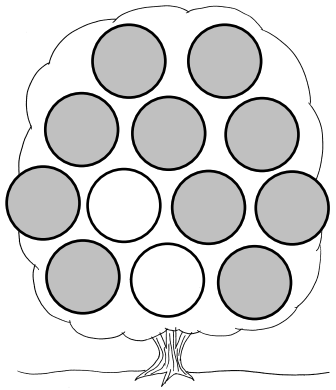
Raspberry Game

Short I



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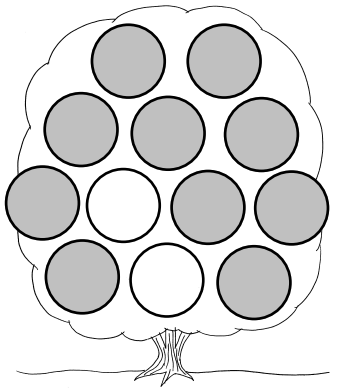
Raspberry Game

Short O



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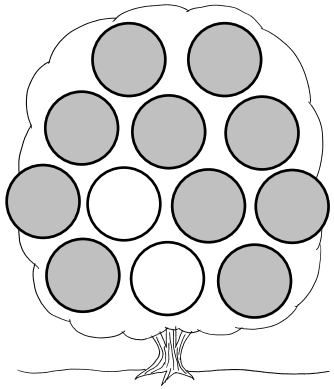
Short U



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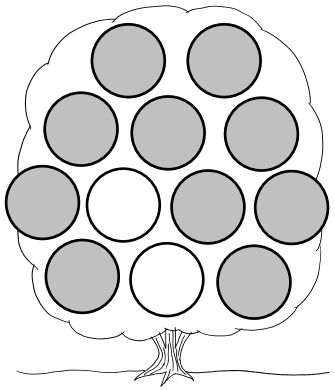
Raspberry Game

Short U



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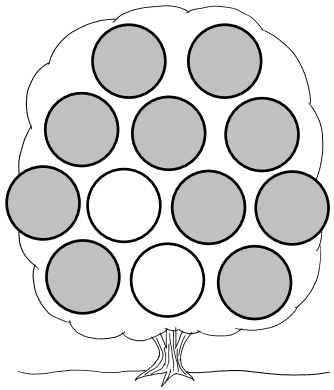
Raspberry Game

Short U



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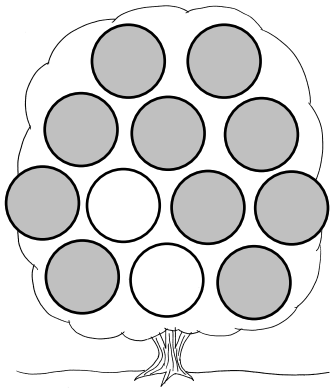
Raspberry Game

Short U



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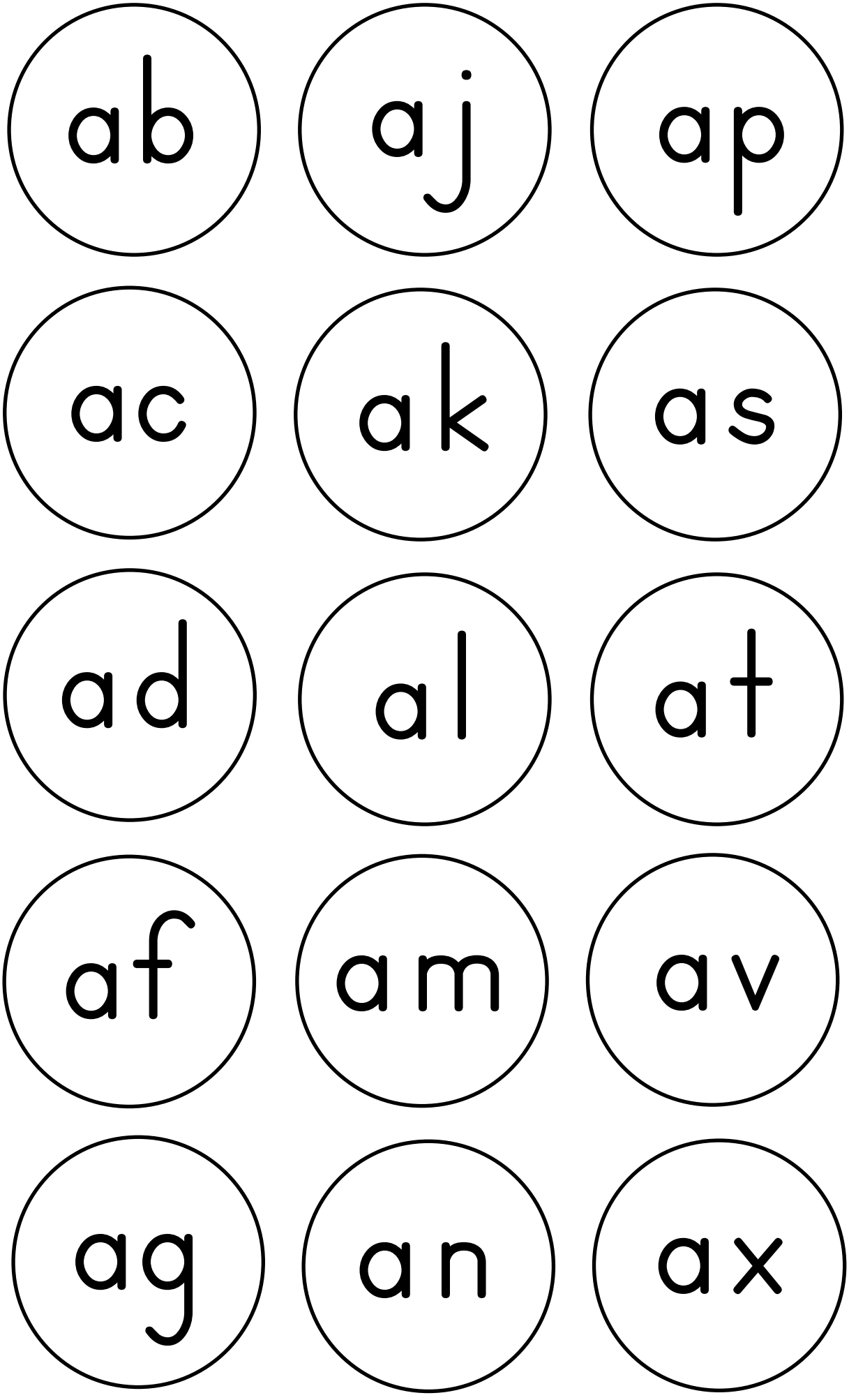

Raspberry Game Short A

ab aj ap

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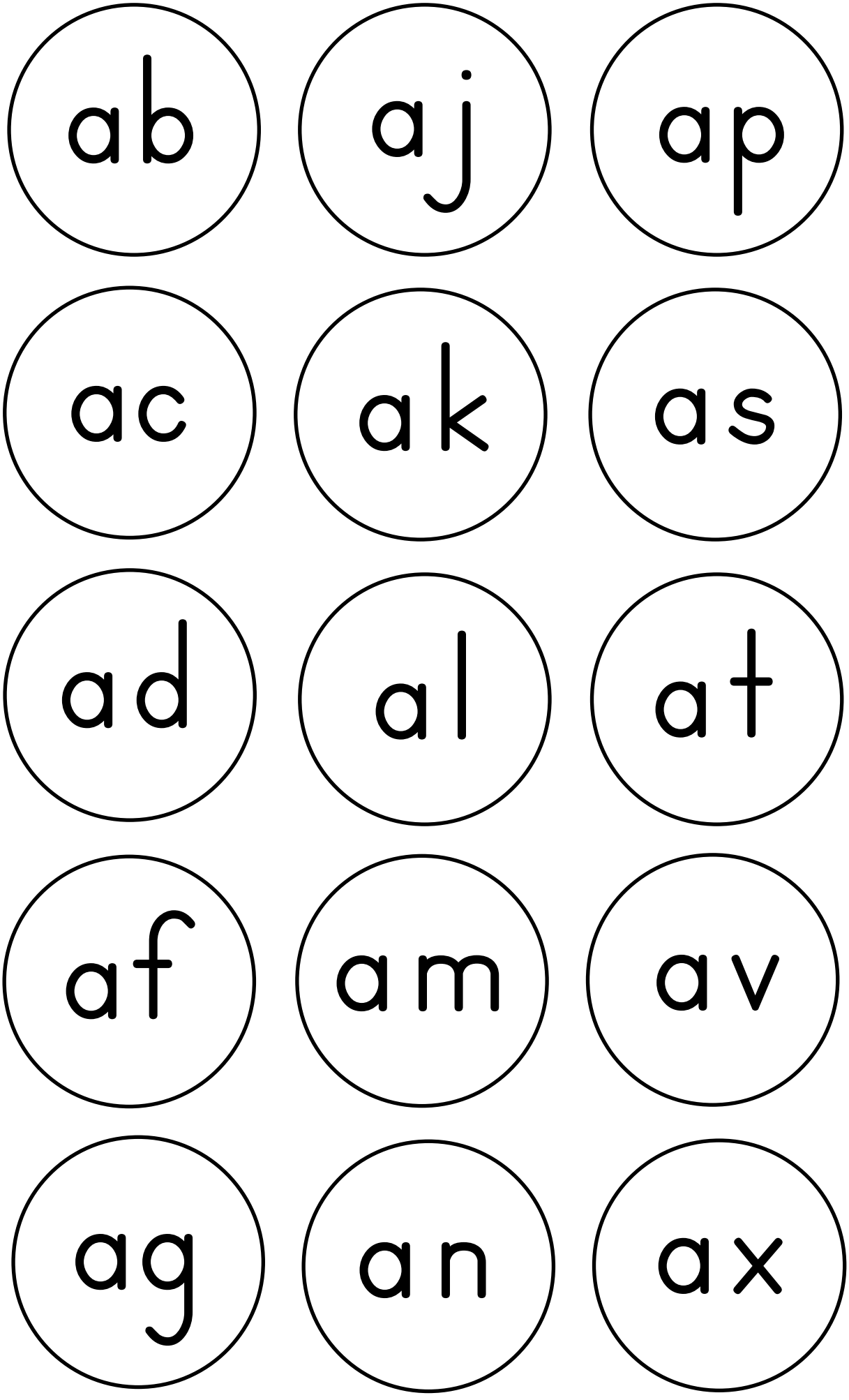
af am av

ag an ax



Raspberry Game Short A

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af am av

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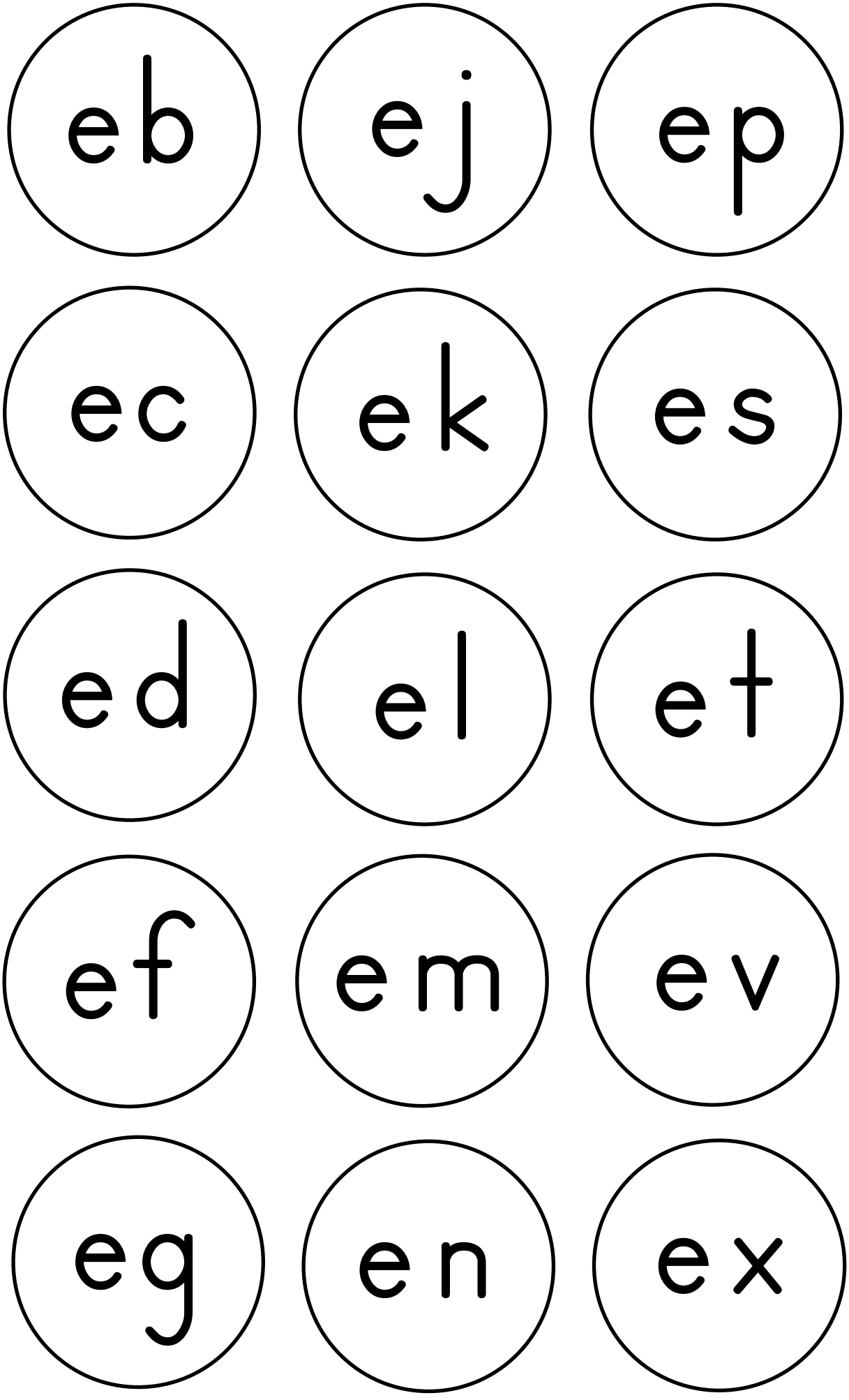
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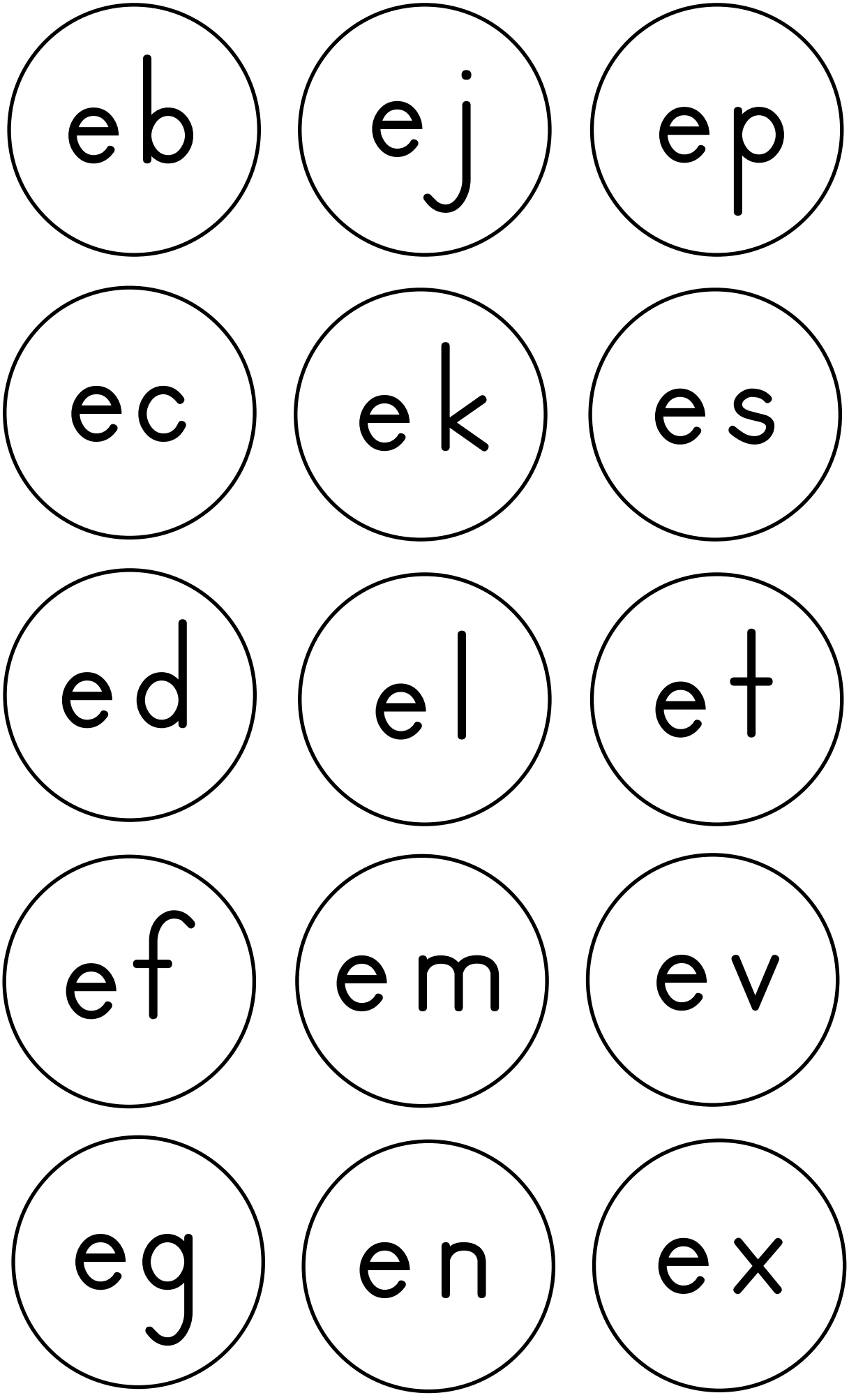
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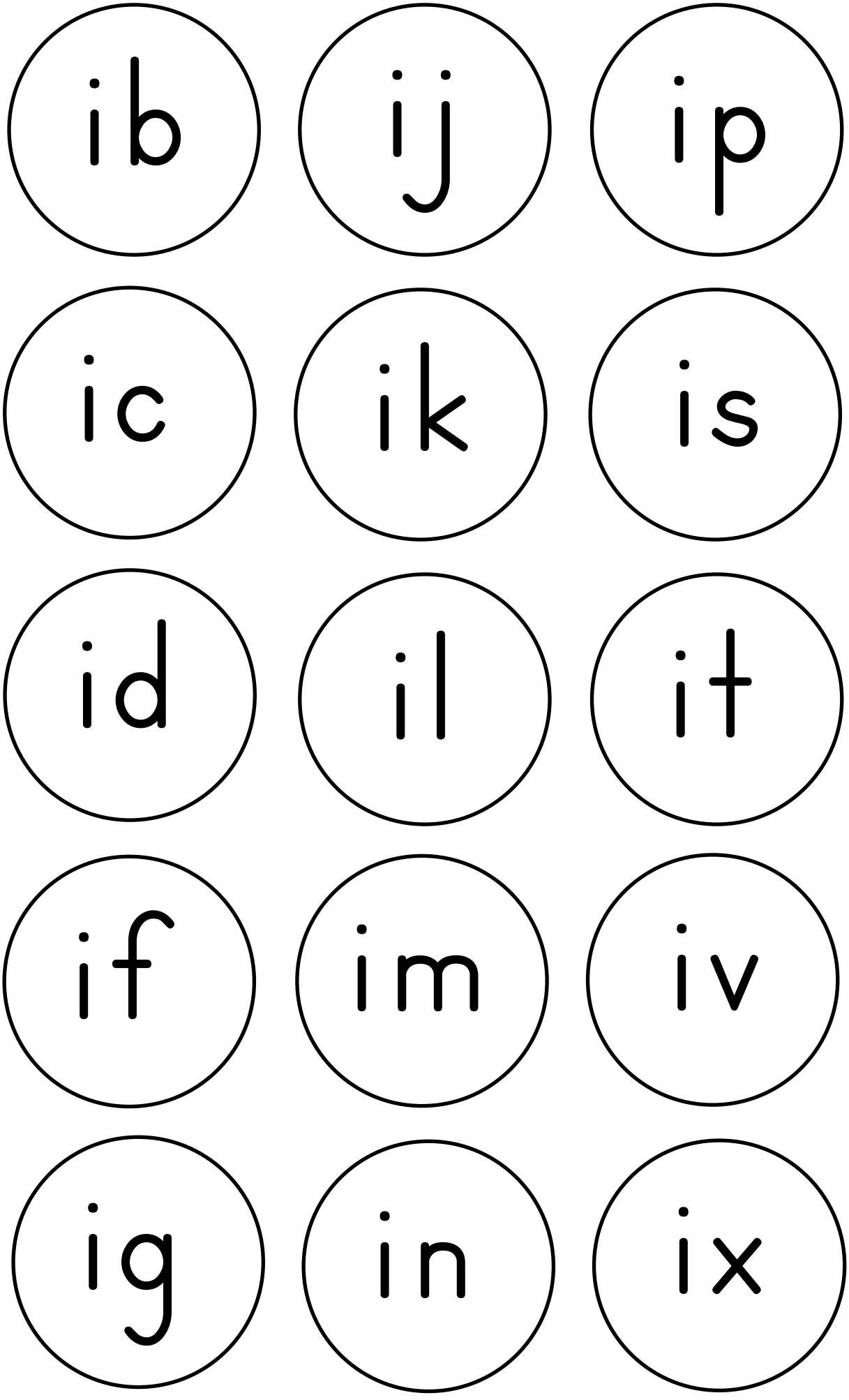
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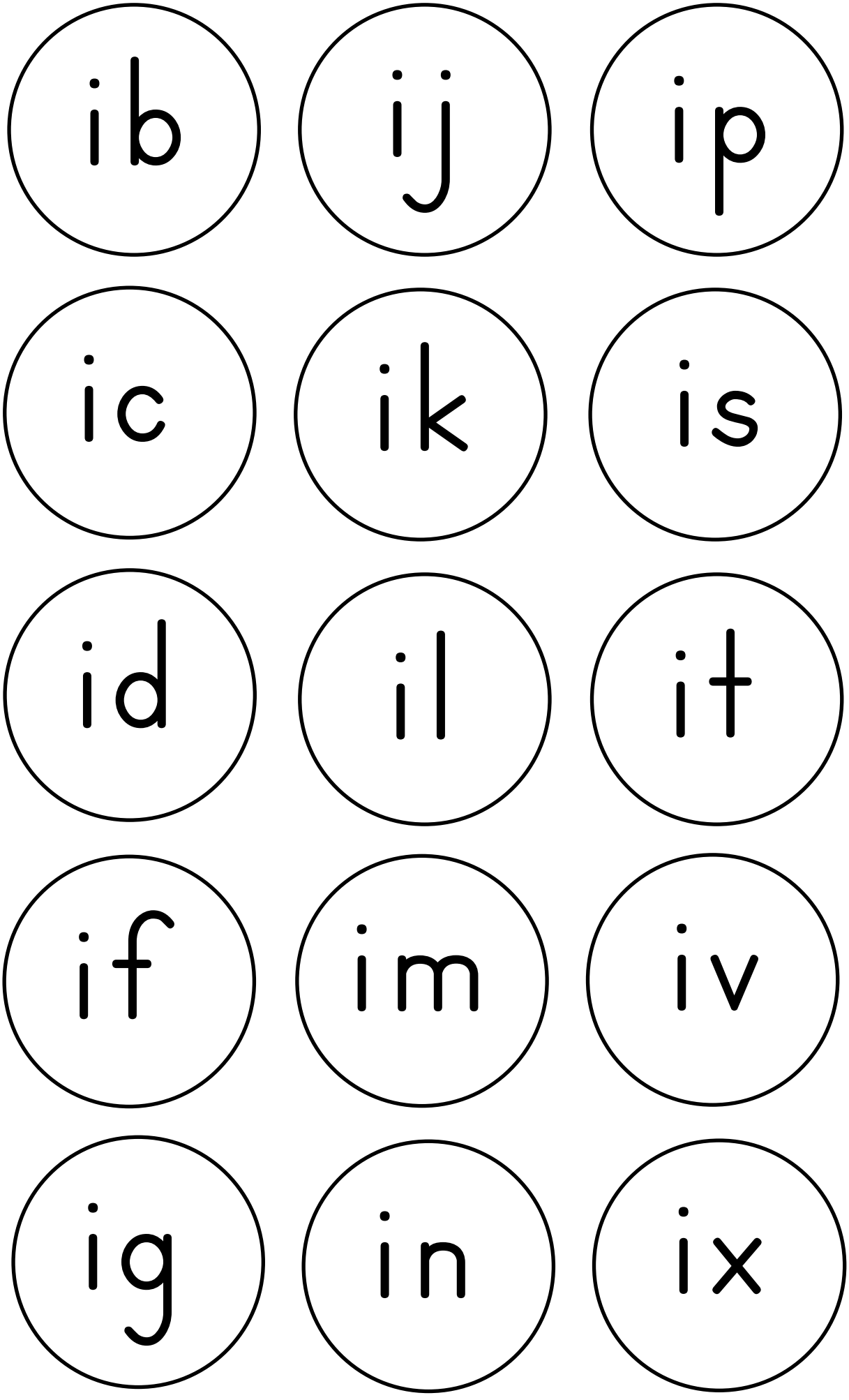
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Raspberry Game Short O

ub	uj	up
uc	uk	us
ud	ul	ut
uf	um	uv
ug	un	ux

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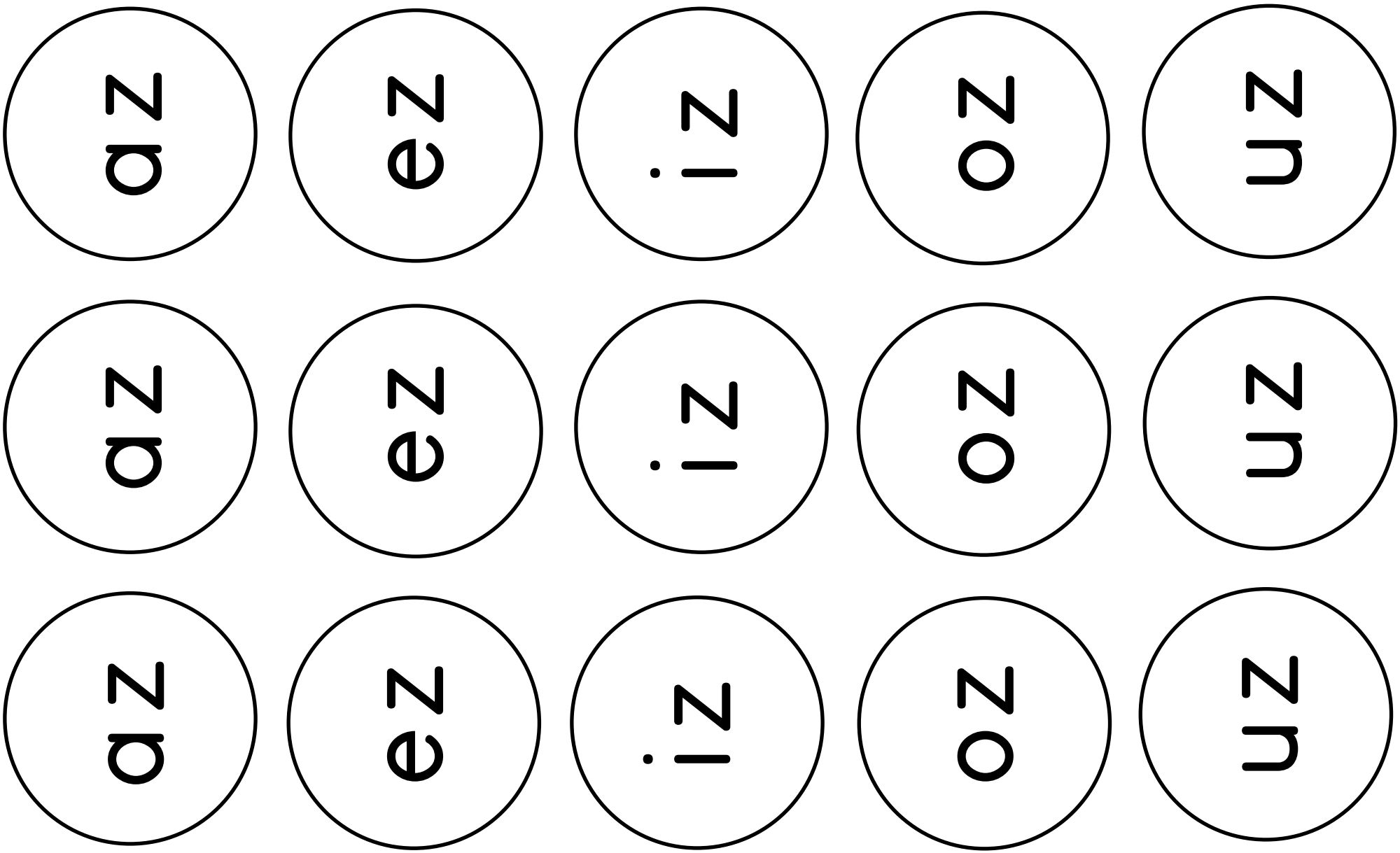
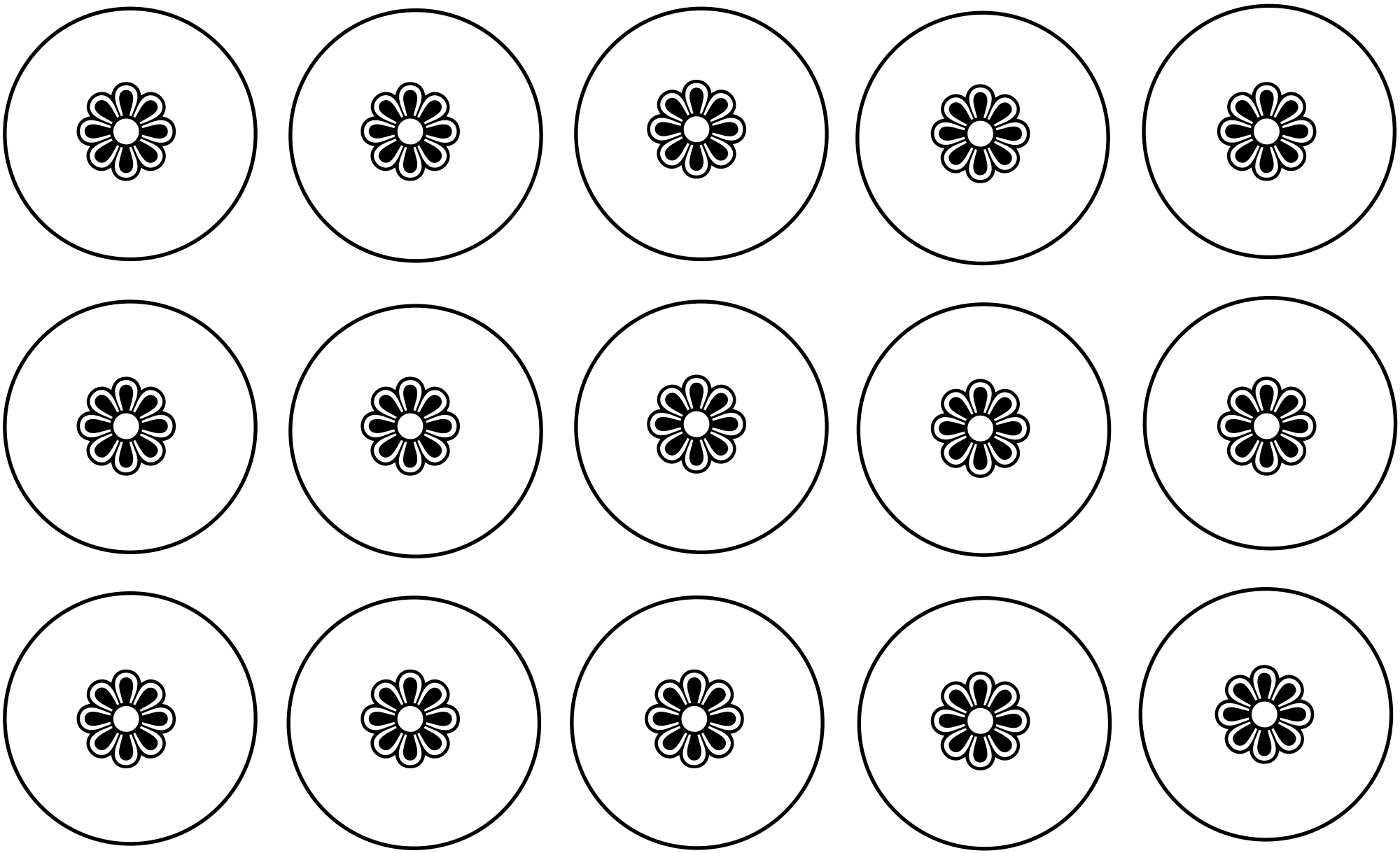
uc	uk	us
ud	ul	ut
uf	um	uv
ug	un	ux

Raspberry Game Short A E I O U with Z - Add the pieces that end with z to the appropriate short vowel set.



Raspberry Game Flowers - Add about four to six flower pieces to each set.



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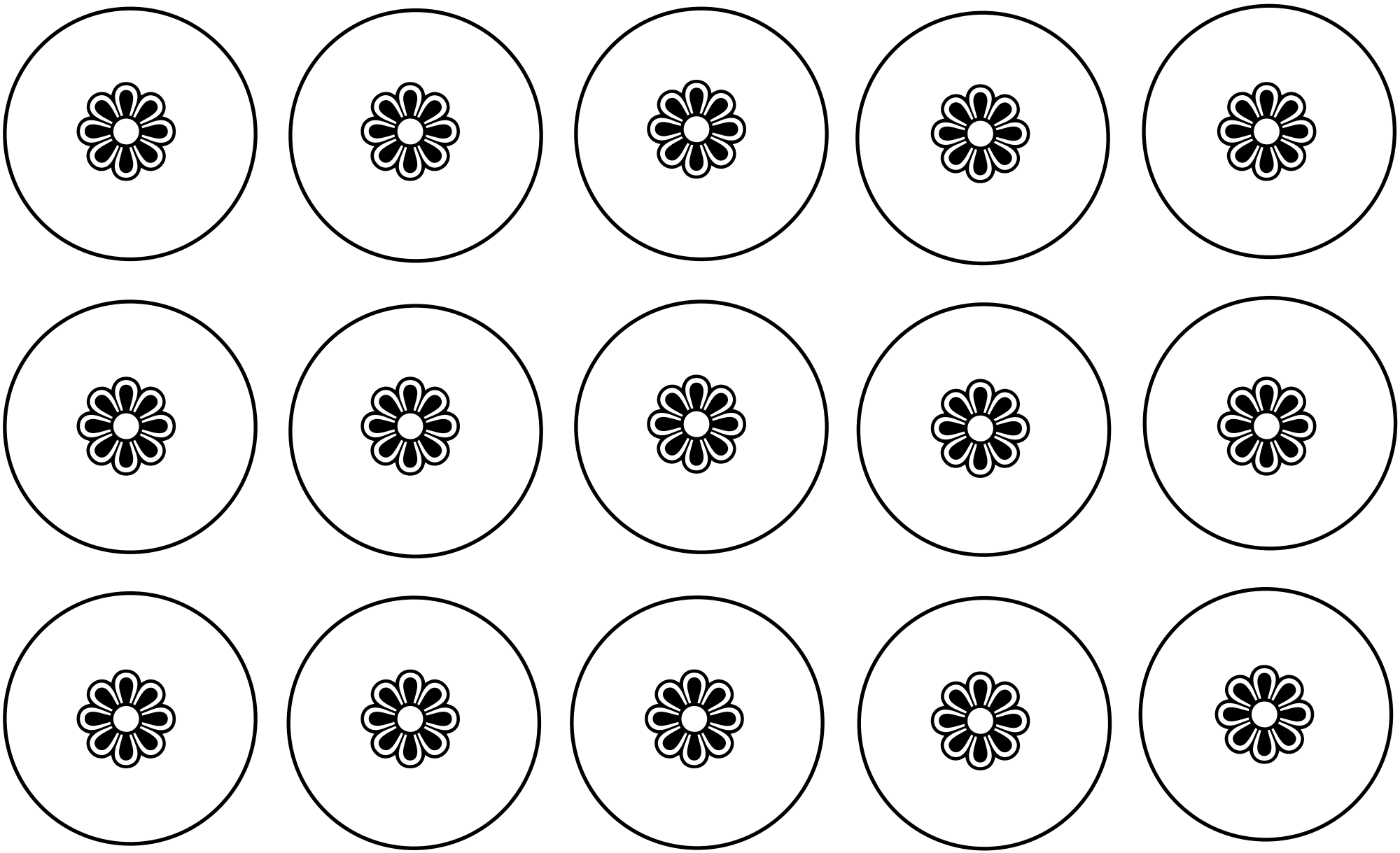
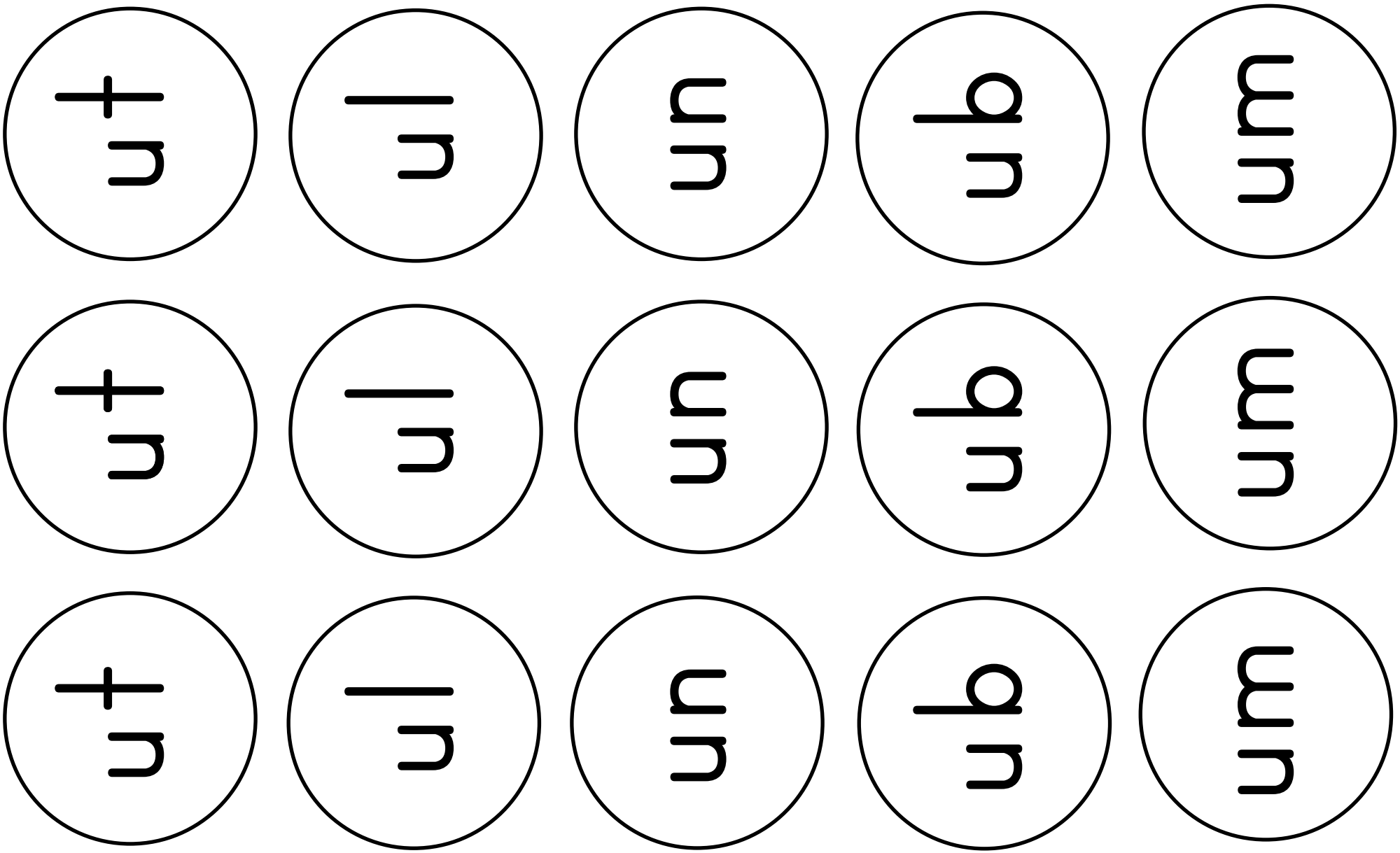
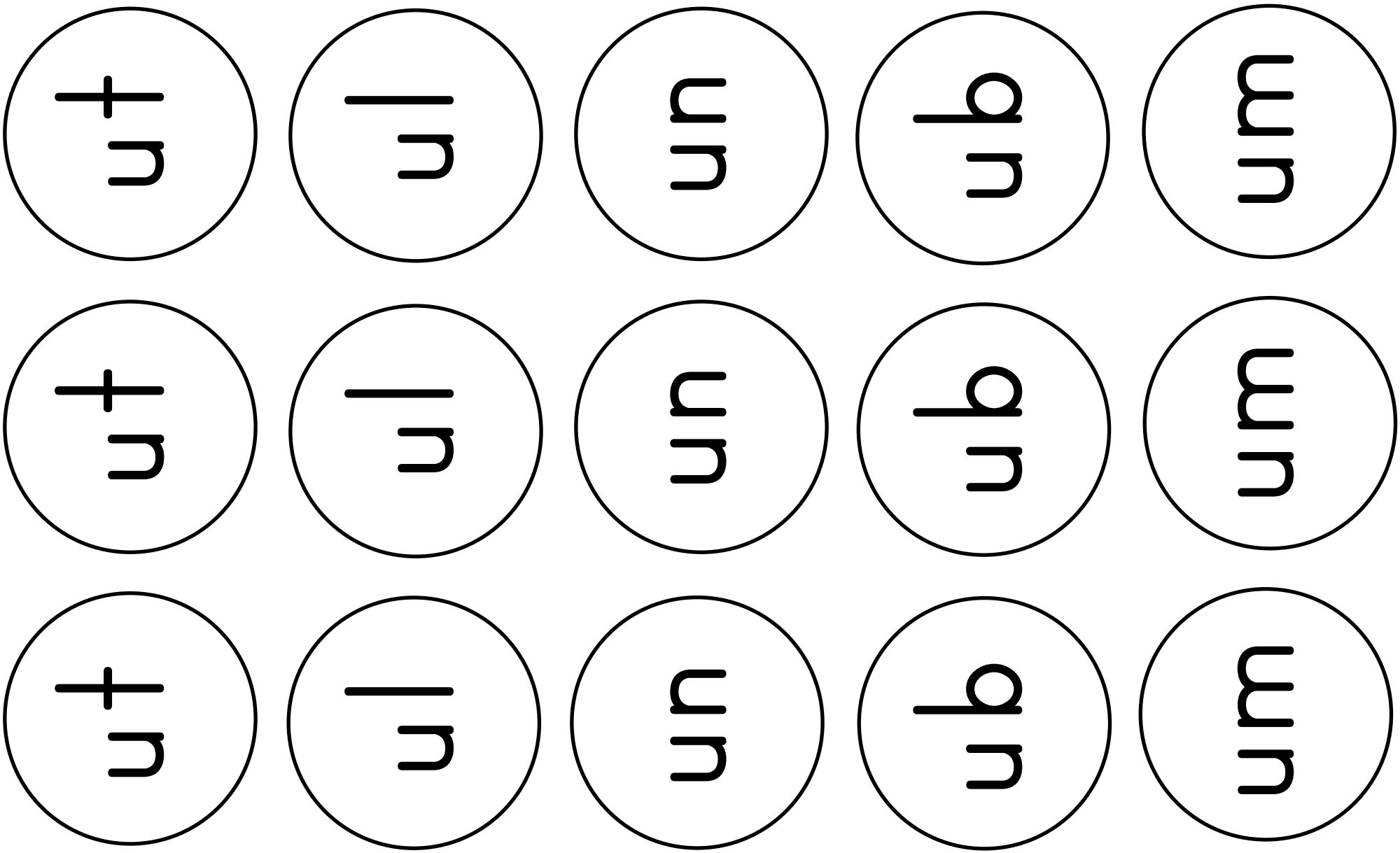


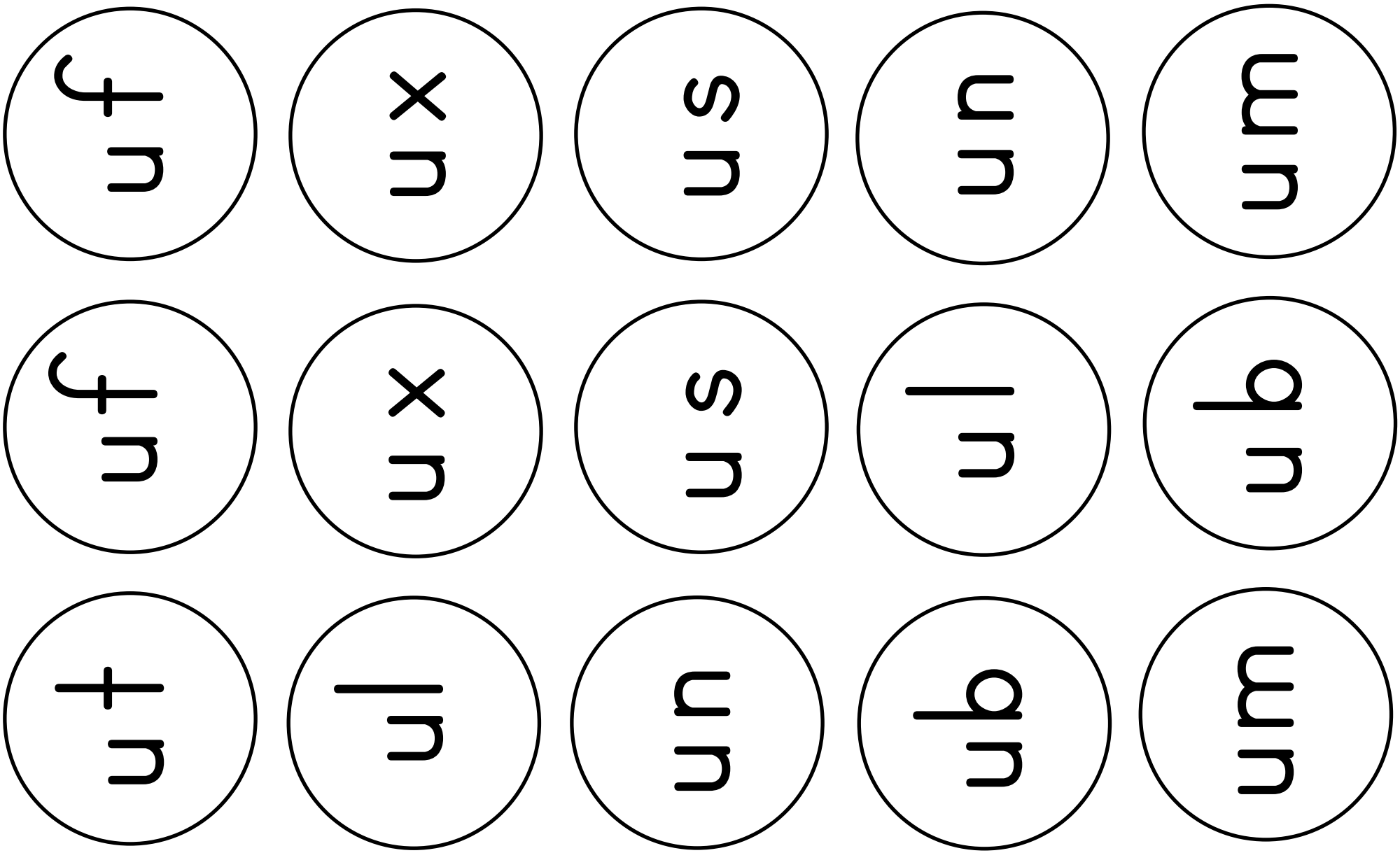
Raspberry Game - Introductory Short U # 1 - Teach t i h l n w u b m r



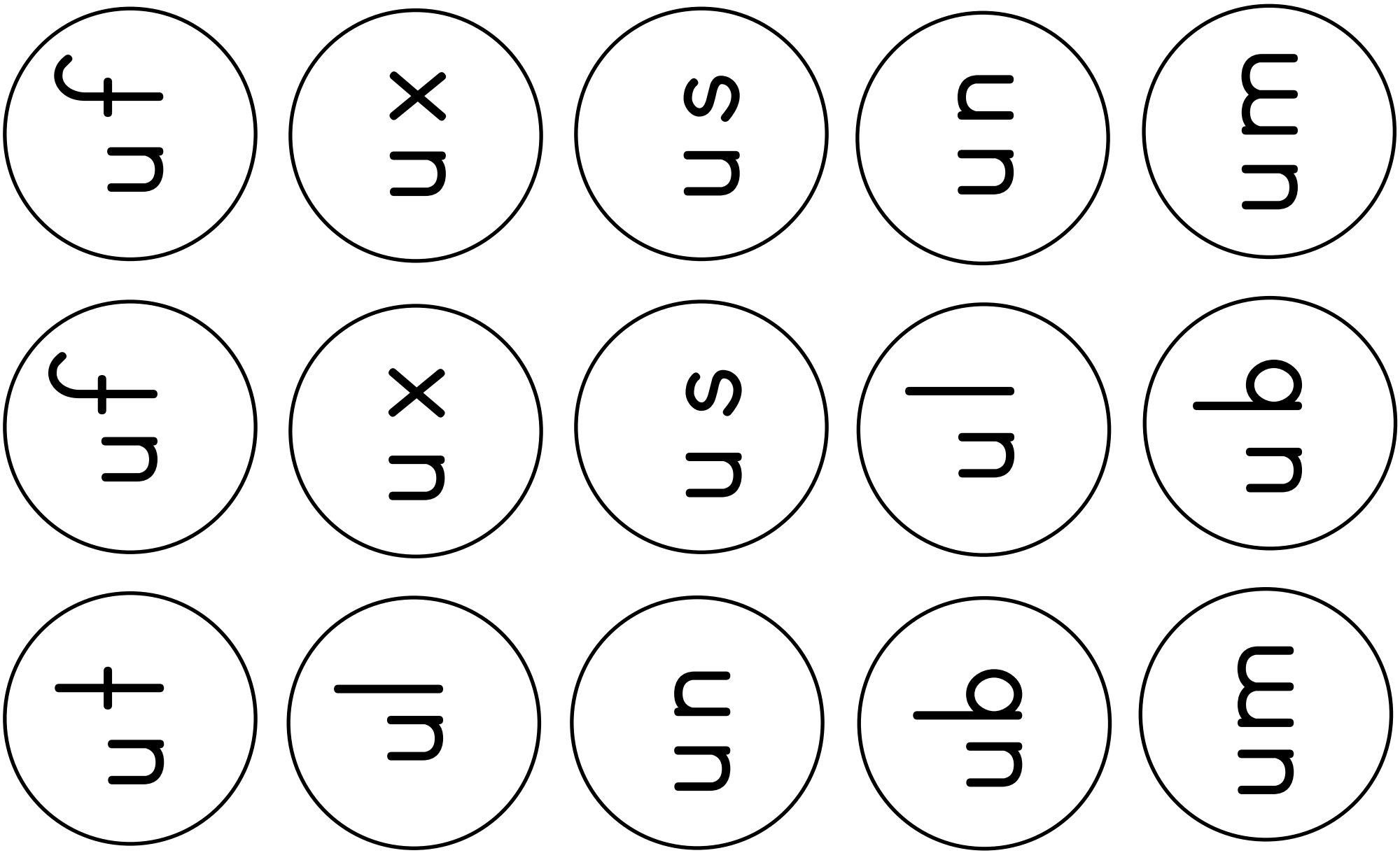
Raspberry Game - Introductory Short U # 1 - Teach t i h l n w u b m r



Raspberry Game - Introductory Short U # 2 - Teach t i h l n w u b m r f x e s



Raspberry Game - Introductory Short U # 2 - Teach t i h l n w u b m r f x e s



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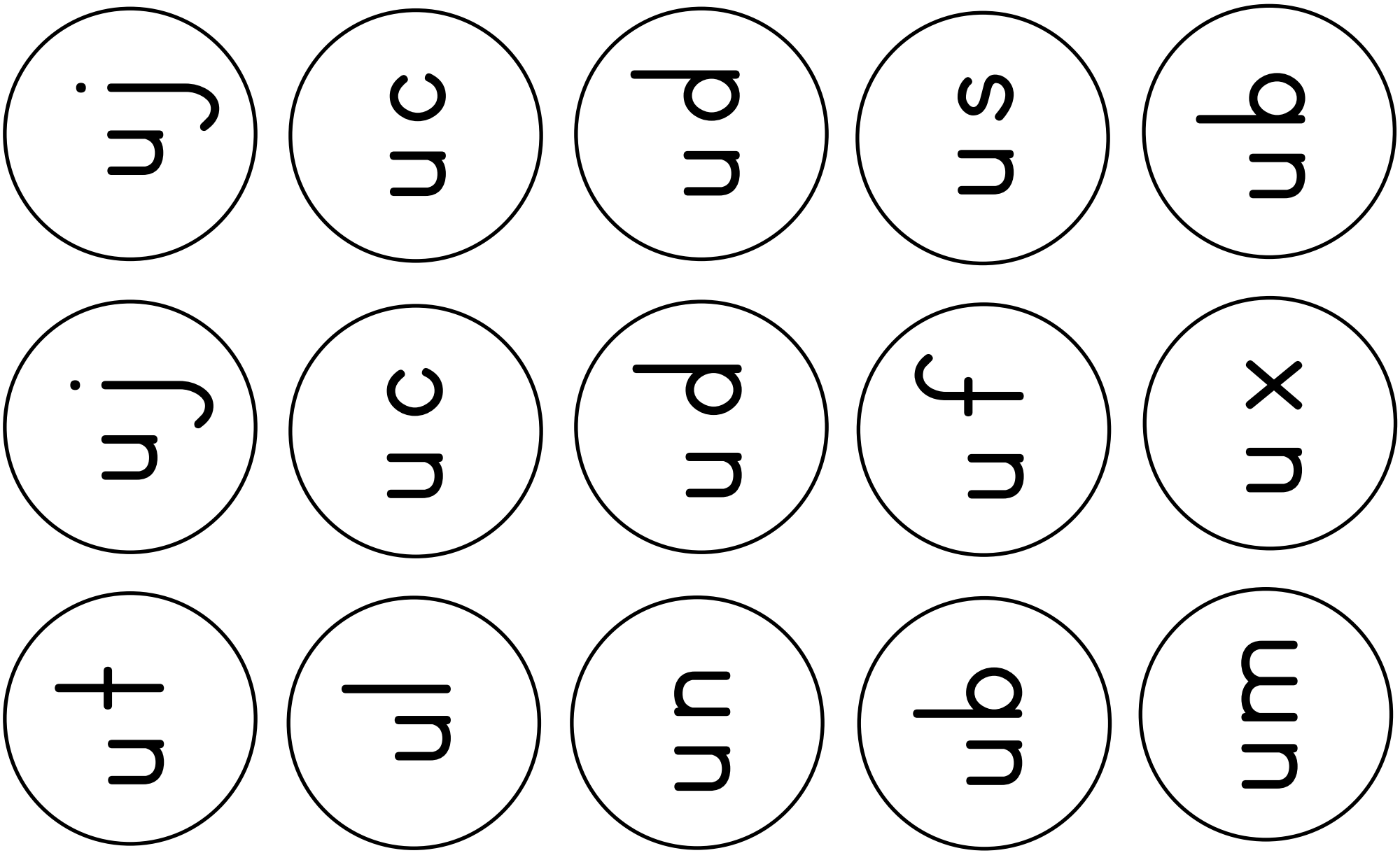

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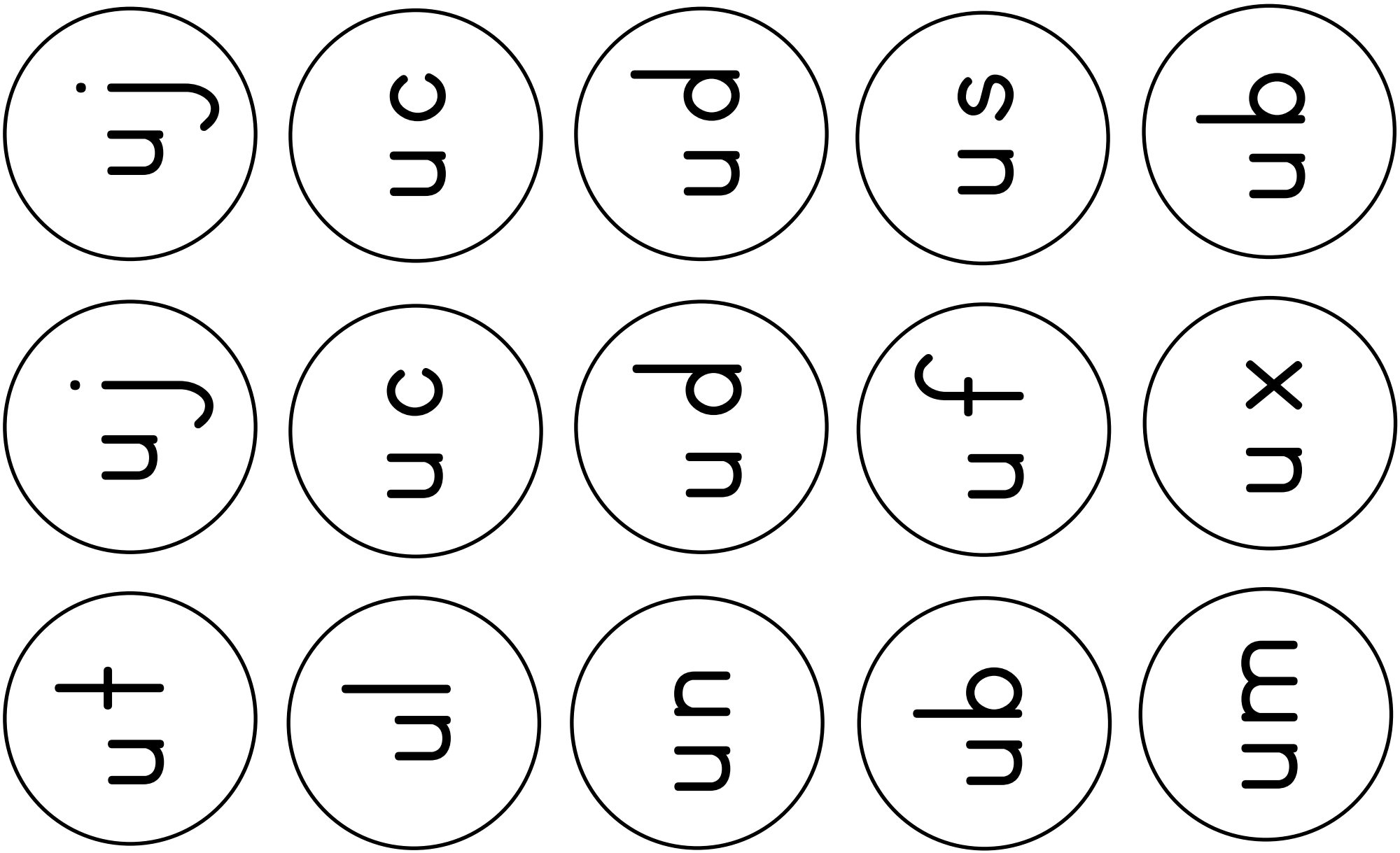
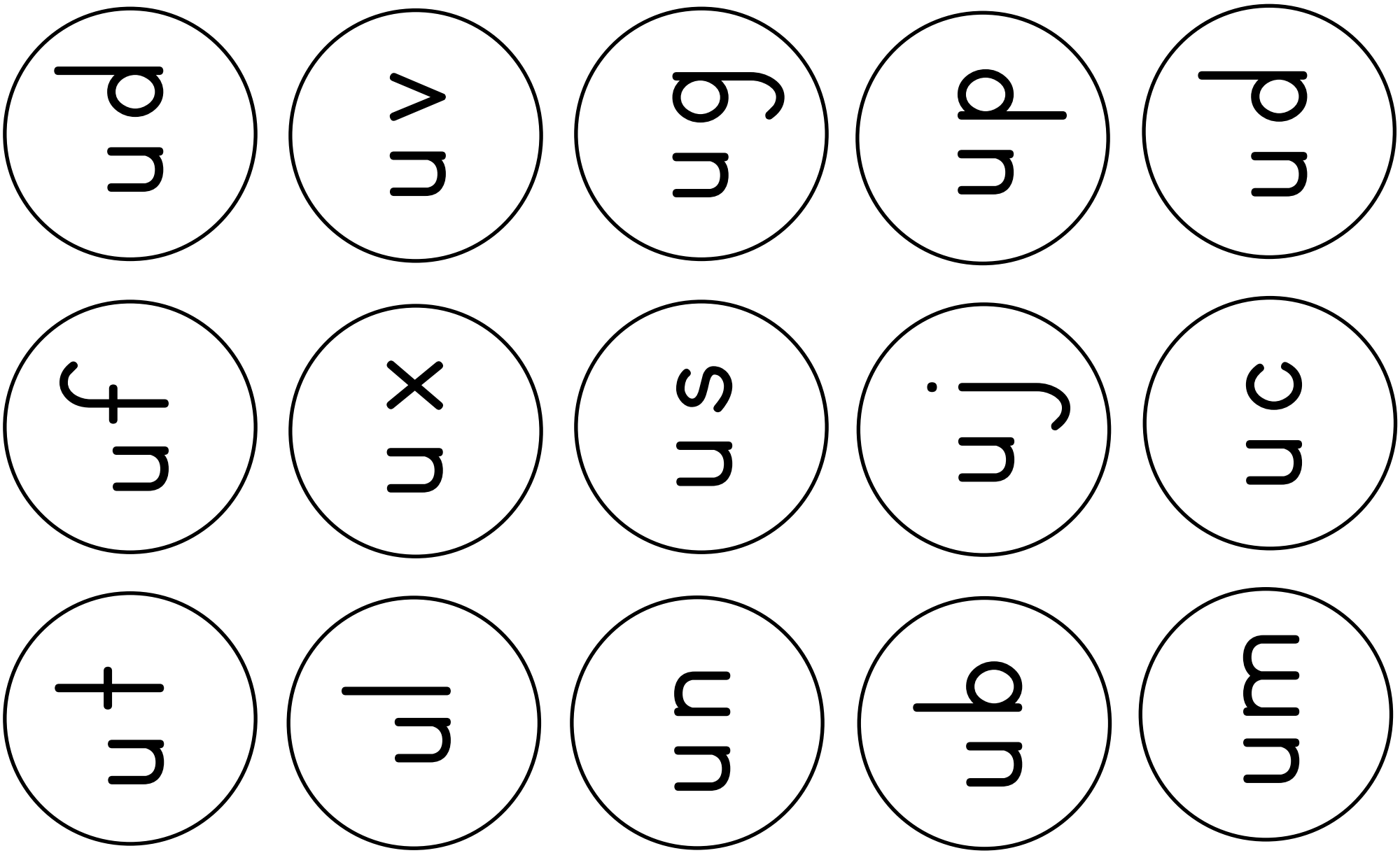


Raspberry Game - Introductory Short U # 4 - Teach t i h l n w u b m r f x e s j o c d a v g p



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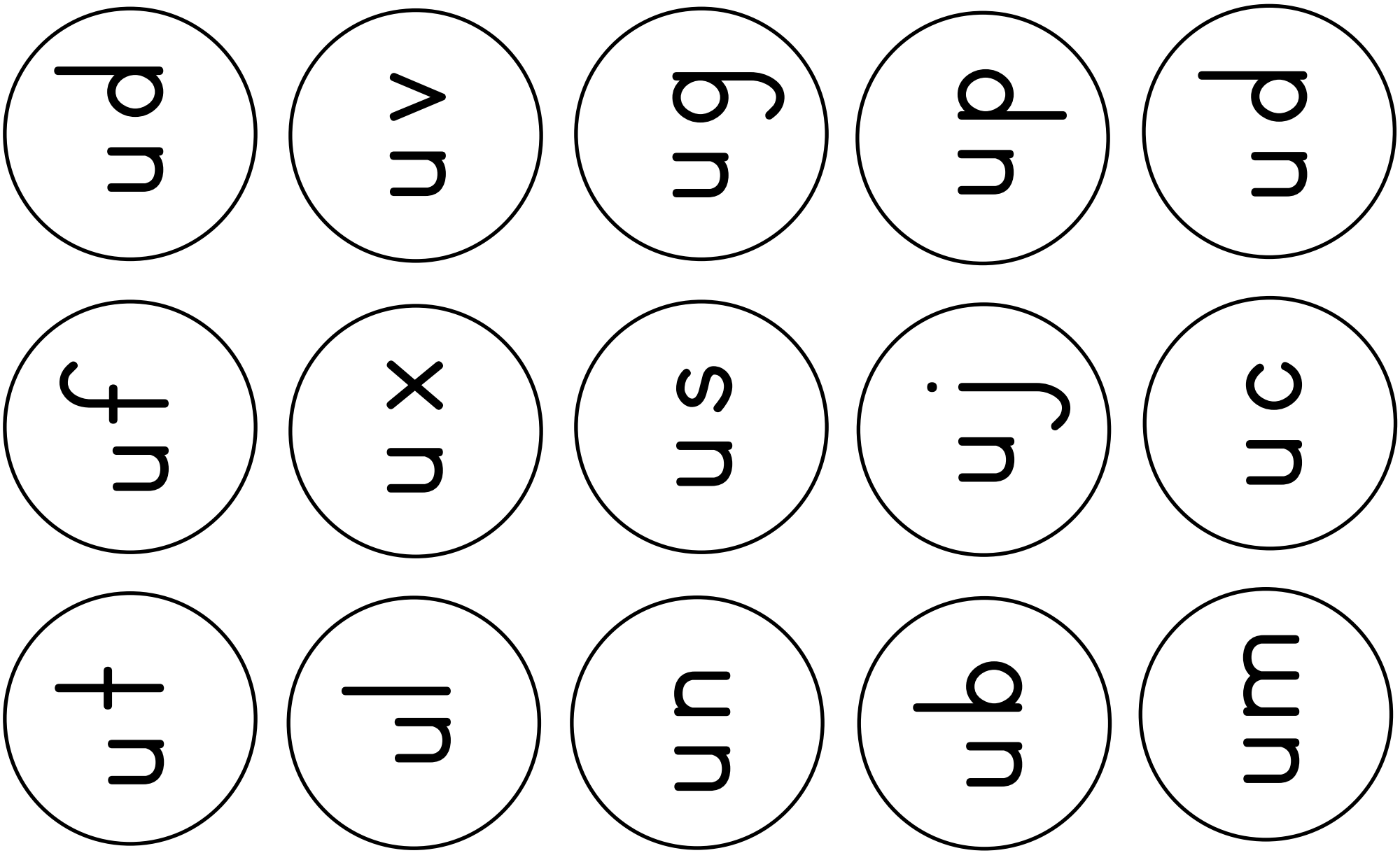

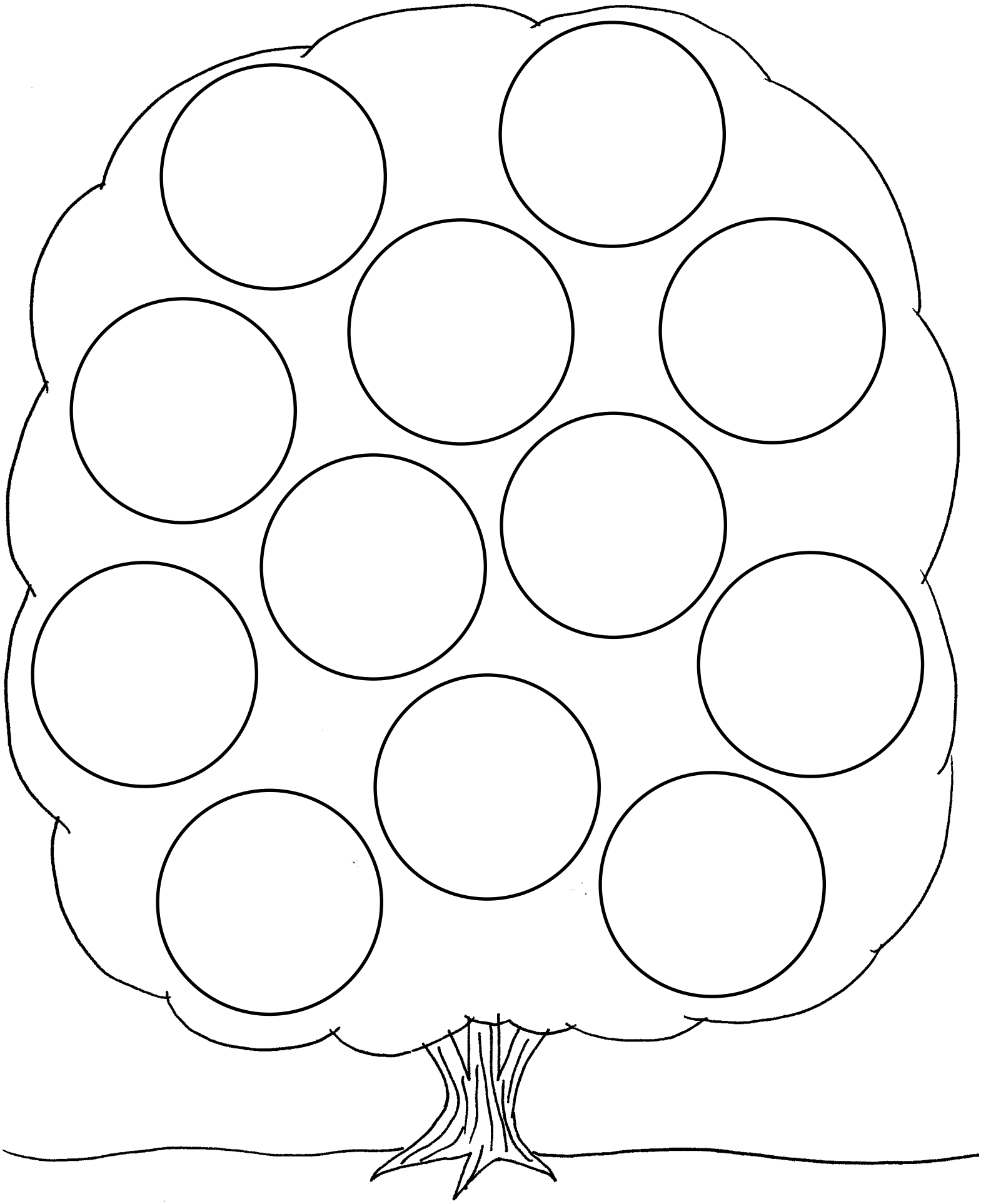

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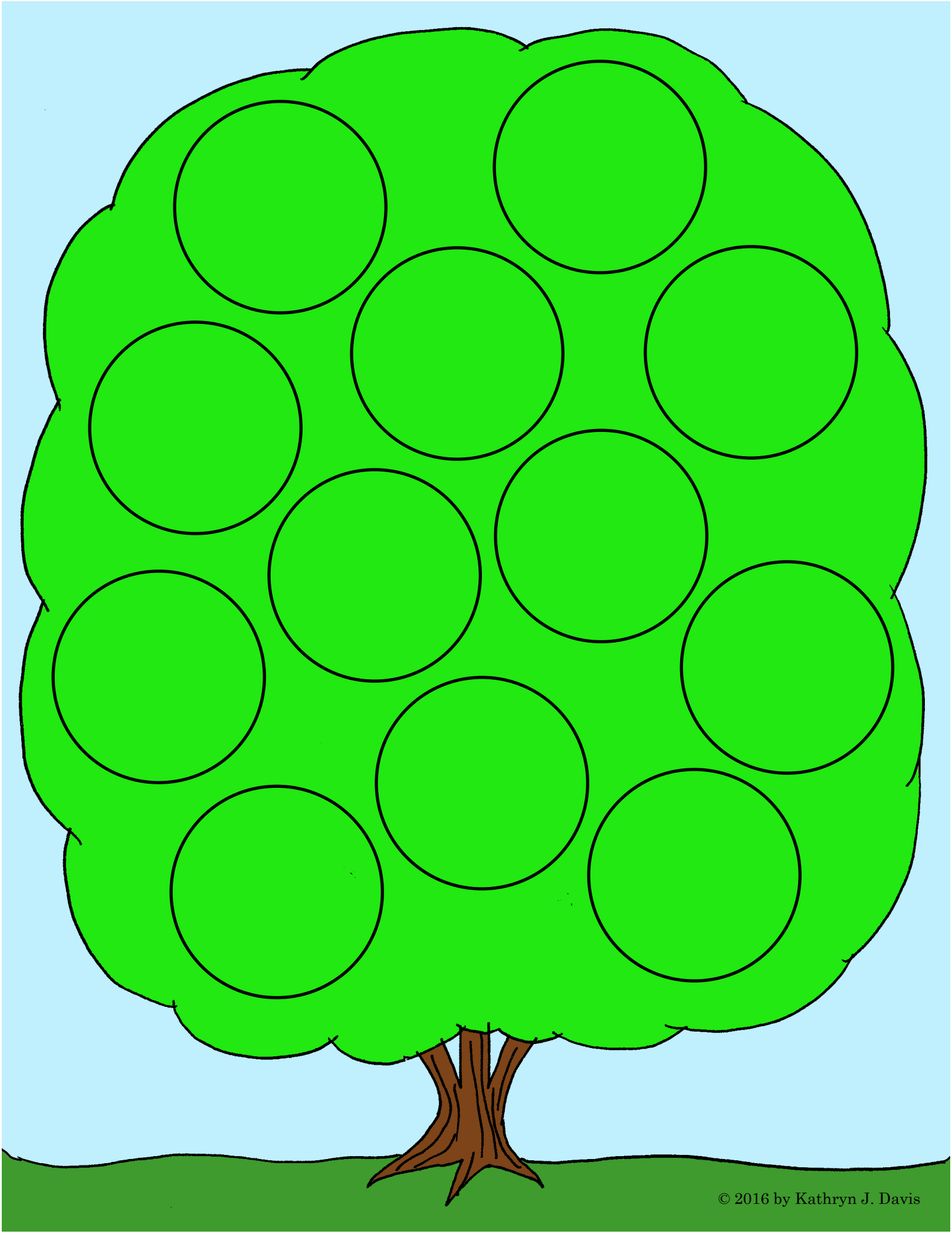
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