

Silent Letters





Aim

- To investigate, spell and read words with silent letters.



What Are Silent Letters?

Some letters in words do not make a sound, they are silent.

Silent letters are **letters** that you can't hear when you say the word, but that are there when you write the word.

There are silent letters in some English words because over hundreds of years, we have changed how we pronounce these words, but have kept the spelling.

The spelling tells us how the word used to be pronounced.

For example: knock. In the past, people used to say the word with the k sounded out at the beginning! That would sound very strange to us today!



How Can We Remember How to Spell Words with Silent Letters?

Sometimes we can forget to include letters when they can't be heard in words or if they are difficult to hear.

One way to remember the spelling of words with silent letters is to stress the silent letter when you say the word to yourself.

Break the word up and decide how you say it to yourself, to help you remember the spelling.

For example: Wednesday has a silent d.
You could remember how to spell it by saying Wed-nes-day.

Task: Choose some words with silent letters and try breaking them up in this way, to help you remember how to spell the word correctly with the silent letter.

Can You Find the Silent Letters in These Words?

knife

wrapper

wrong

write

gnome

wreck

crumb

lamb

knuckle

know

A silent **b** occurs after **m**, before **t**.



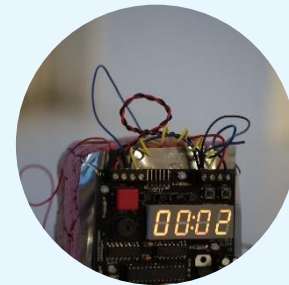
lamb



thumb



debt



bomb

What other words do you know with a silent **b**?

subliminal

A silent **k** and a silent **g**
are found before **n**.



gnome



gnat



knee



knife

What other words do you know with a silent **k** or **g**?

change machine

A silent **l** follows
vowels **a**, **o** and **u**.



calf



salmon



chalk



yolk

What other words do you know with a silent **l**?



A silent **w** often goes before **r**.



wrapper



wrestle



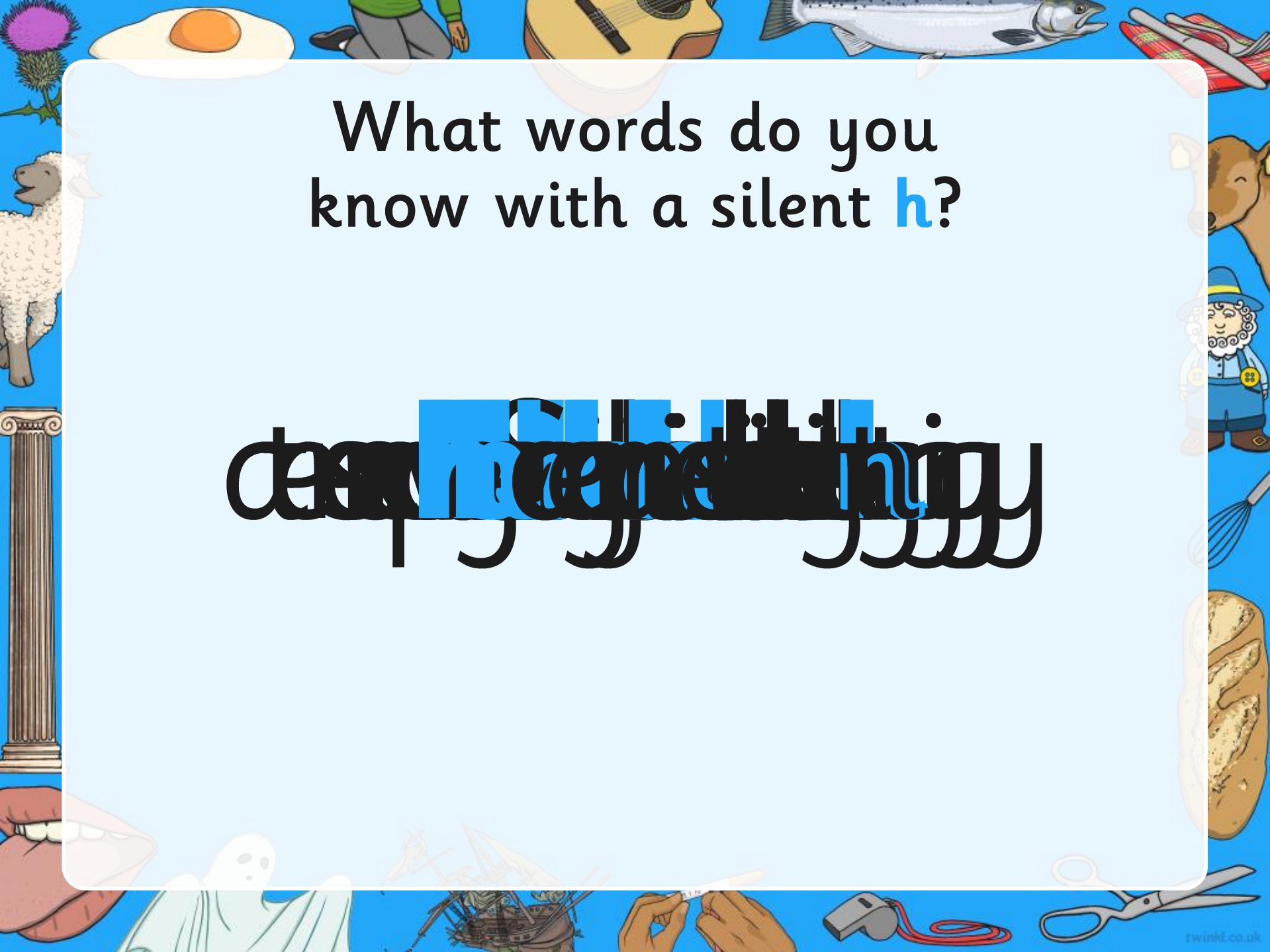
wrist



wreck

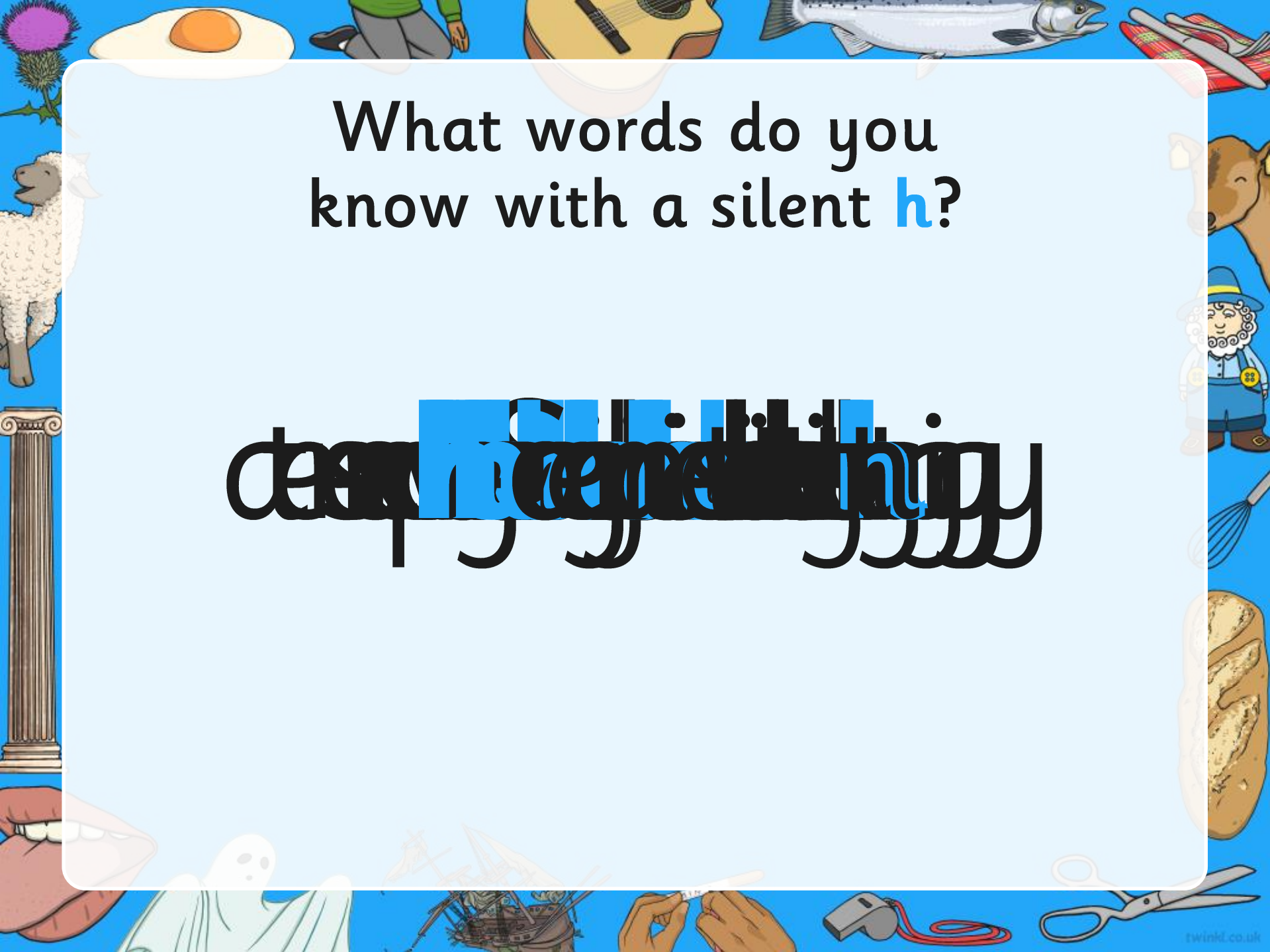
What other words do you know with a silent **w**?

words




What words do you know with a silent **h**?

chance



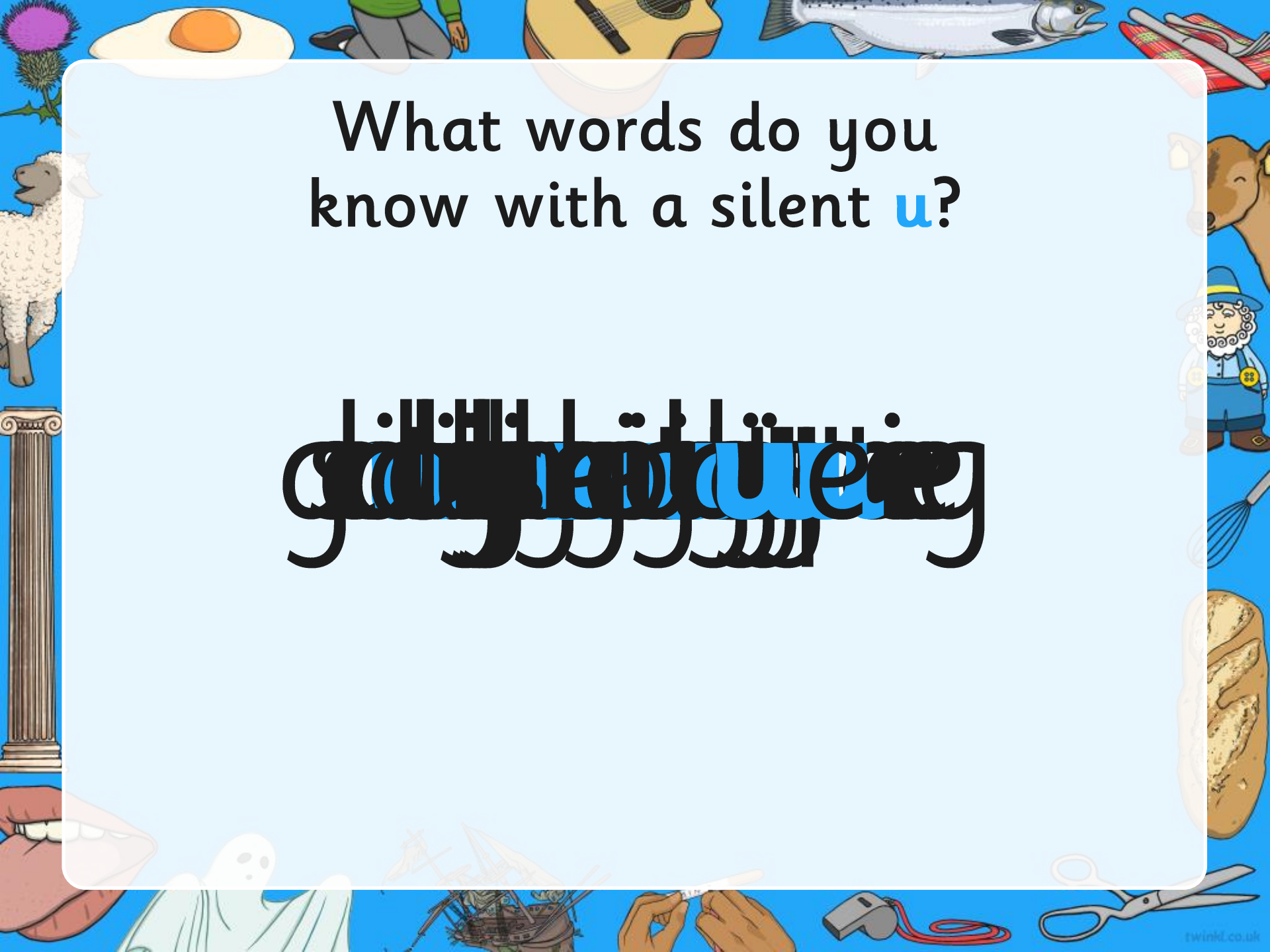
What words do you know with a silent **h**?

chance




What words do you
know with a silent **t**?

Whisper



What words do you
know with a silent **u**?

Goodnight



What words do you
know with a silent **n**?

castanet **n**

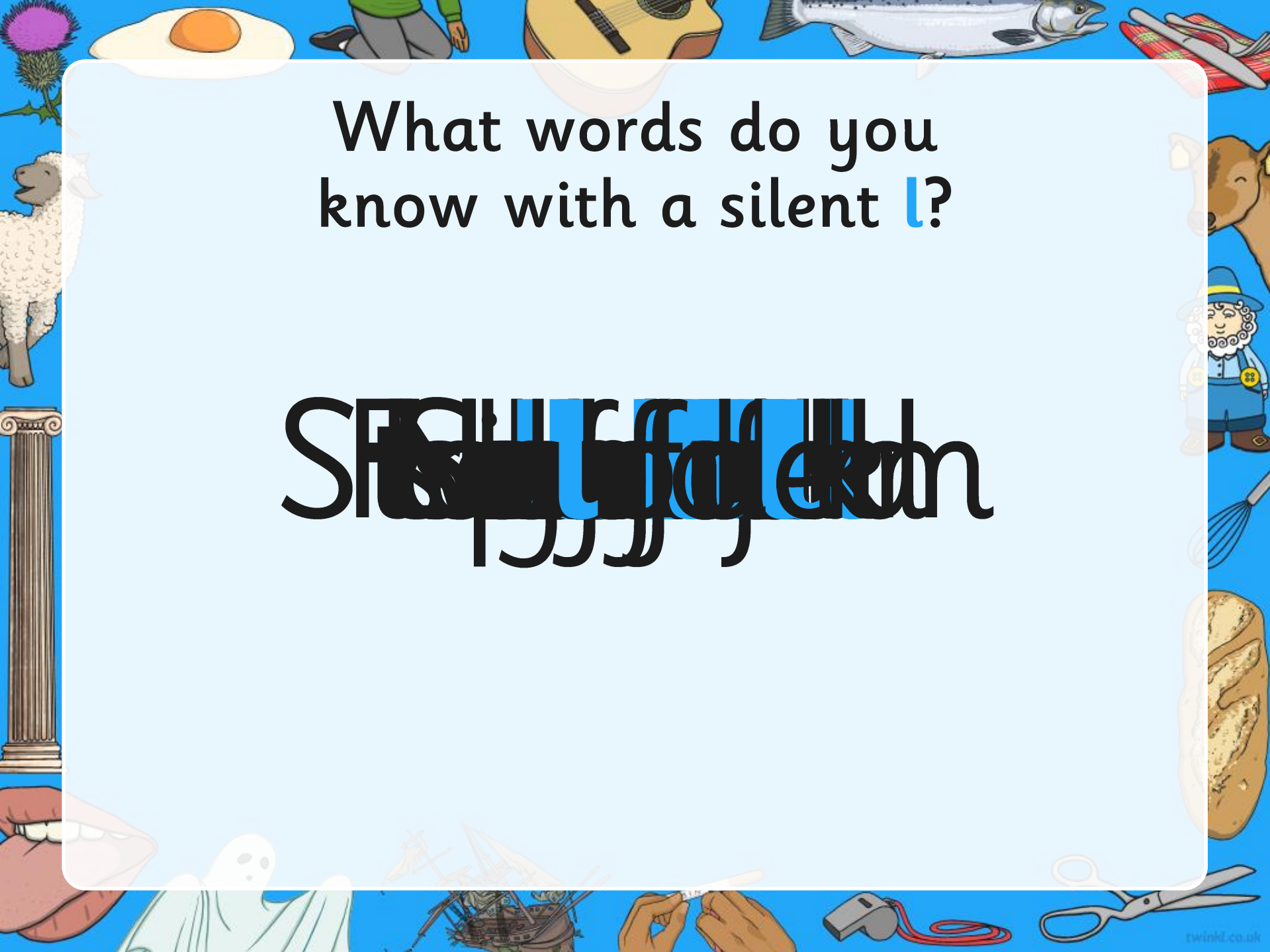
What words do you know with a silent c?

~~mice~~ ~~nick~~ ~~excuse~~ ~~accident~~ ~~octopus~~



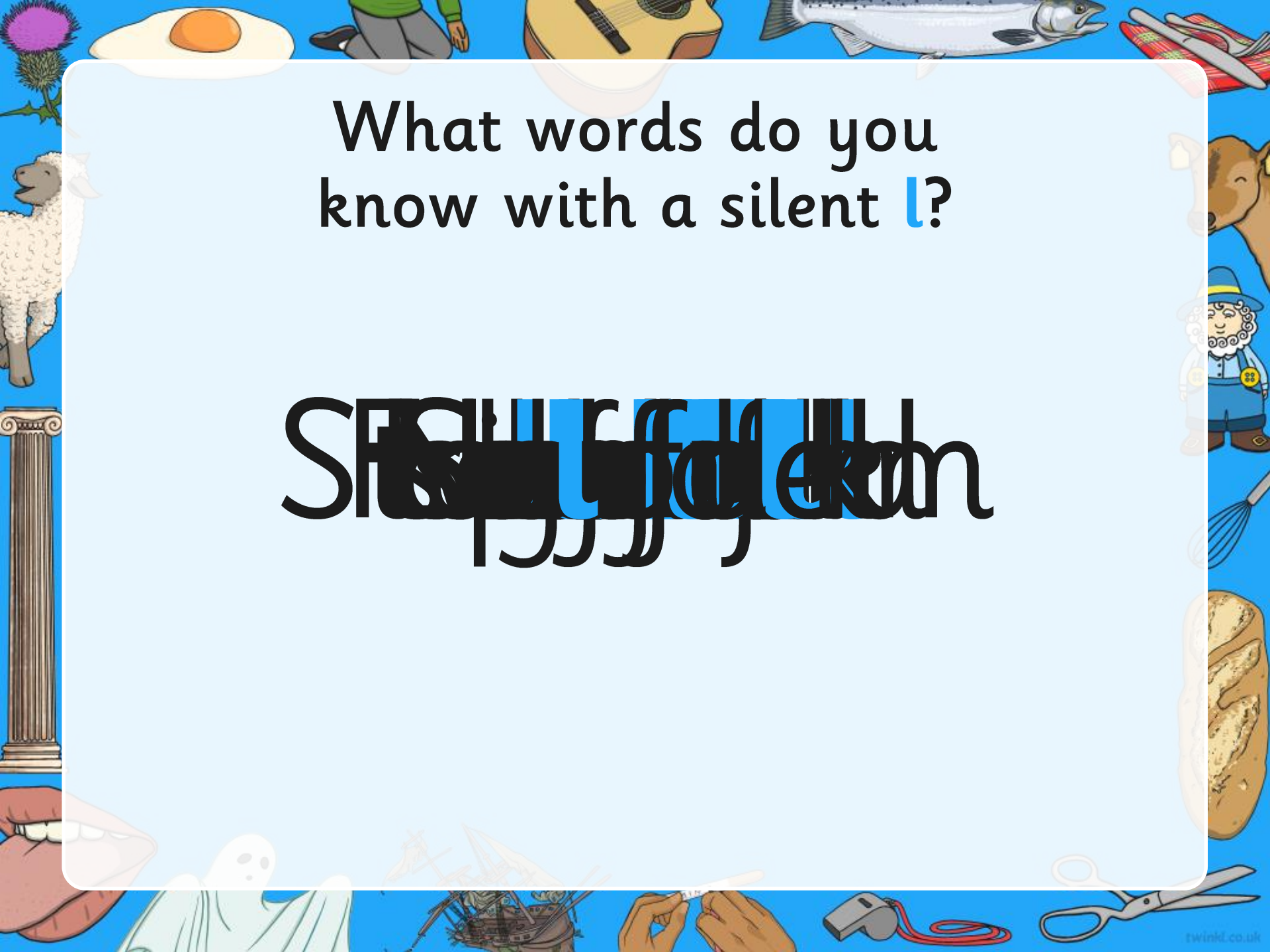
What words do you know with a silent c?

mice



What words do you know with a silent **l**?

Slither



What words do you know with a silent **l**?

Slither

