John, the Rabbit

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John, the Rabbit

Call: Response:

Oh, John, the rab - bit, *Yes, Ma'am!* Had a might - y hab - it,

Yes, Ma'am! Jump - in' in my gar - den,

Yes, Ma'am! Cut-tin' down my cab-bage, *Yes, Ma'am!* My fresh to-ma toes,

Yes, Ma'am! My sweet po - ta - toes, *Yes, Ma'am!* And if I live,

Yes, Ma'am! To see next fall, *Yes, Ma'am!* I ain't gon-na have

Yes, Ma'am! No gar - den at all, *Yes, Ma'am!*

This folk song is from Mississippi, and as with all folk songs, there are many variants. This is my favorite version of the song and a rendition of it can be found in Ruth Crawford Seeger's American Folk Songs for Children (New York: Doubleday) and hear on the accompanying recording by Mike and Peggy Seeger.

This is a call-response song in which a leader sings the call and the group sings the response.

Depending on the age level and skill level of your students the responses can be varied: clapping, snapping, jumping, stomping, etc on the responses. They can also sing the response on solfa, in their head (inner hearing), as solos, etc.

Pedagogical uses:

Solo Singing: have the students take turns answering the call. This is a really simple solo singing opportunity and is good for assessing speaking vs. singing as it's one pitch.

Rhythm/Form: rhythmically this song is tough for the age at which it's appropriate. It is much more appropriate to use this song to teach call-response form.

Improvisation: try improvising different motions for the response. I have included some action cards to try using to give the students ideas for movement: clapping the response, stomping the response, etc.

Melody: you can use this song for practicing low so by isolating those phrases in which low so is the most difficult melodic element. But it's not a good practice song because the rhythms are so tricky. I have, however, included slides in which you can practice the solfa of the response (of the call-response).

Menu:

Lyric Slides

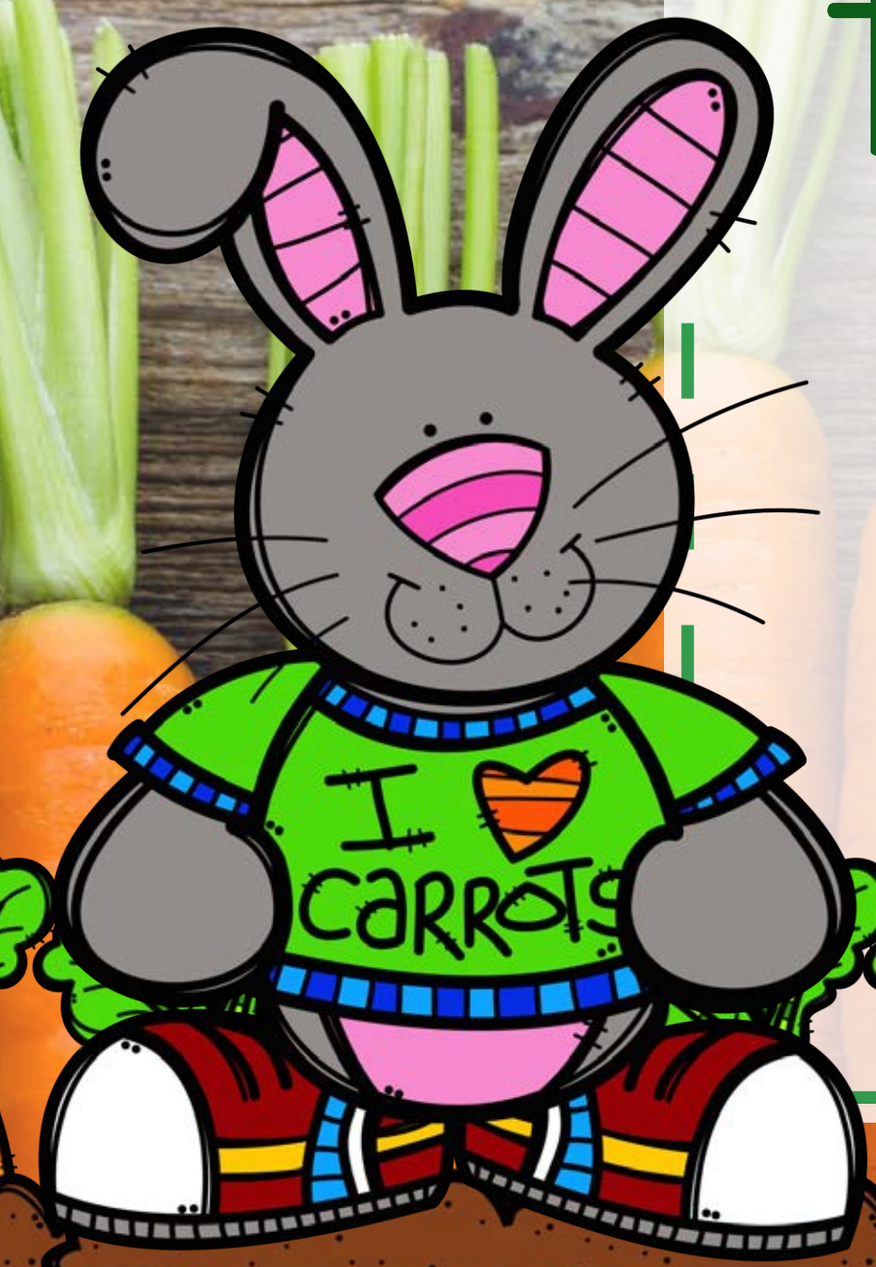
Form Slides

Melodic Slides to practice "do" in the response

Lyric Slides

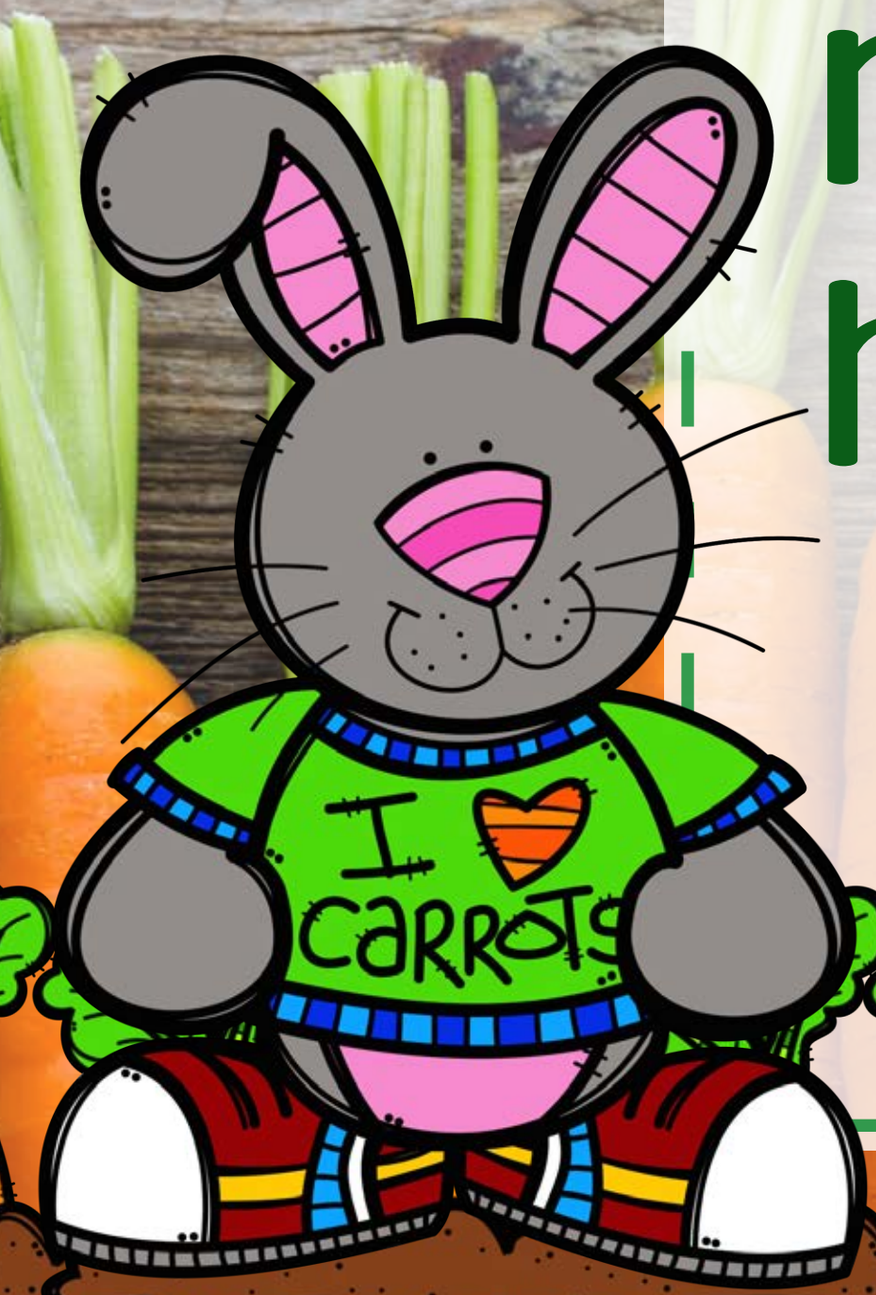
Oh, John,
the rabbit,

Yes, Ma'am!

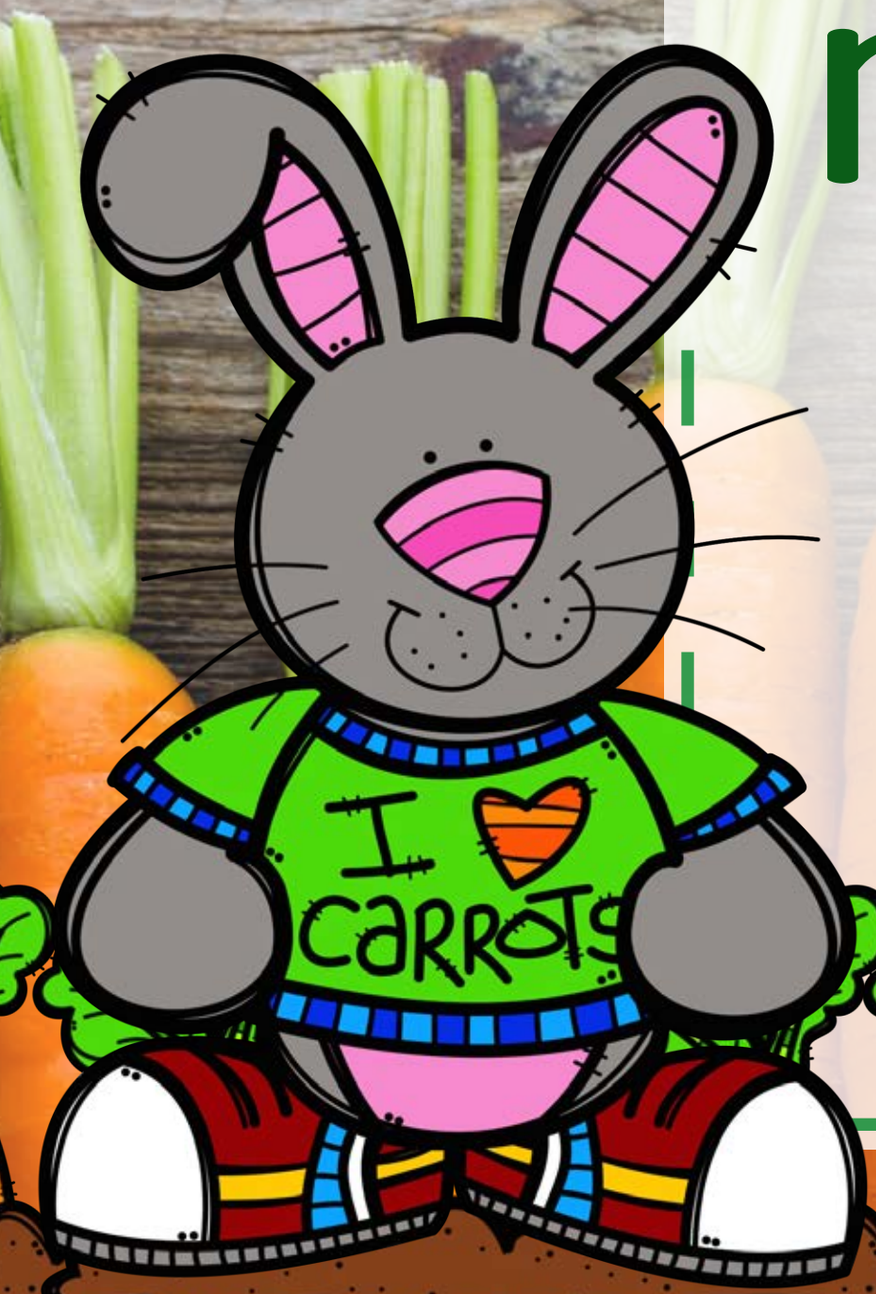


Had a mighty habit

Yes, Ma'am!

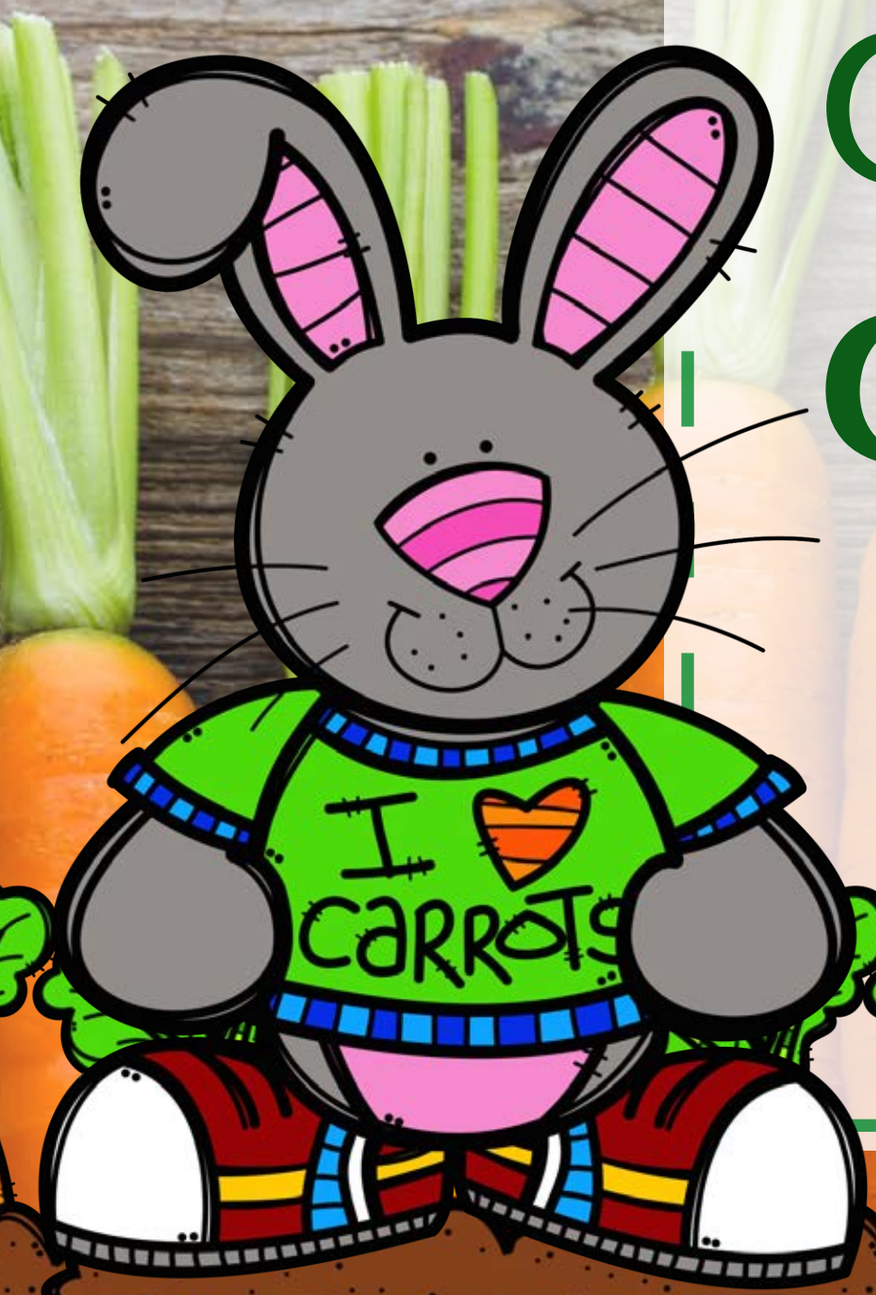


Jumpin' in
my garden,
Yes, Ma'am!



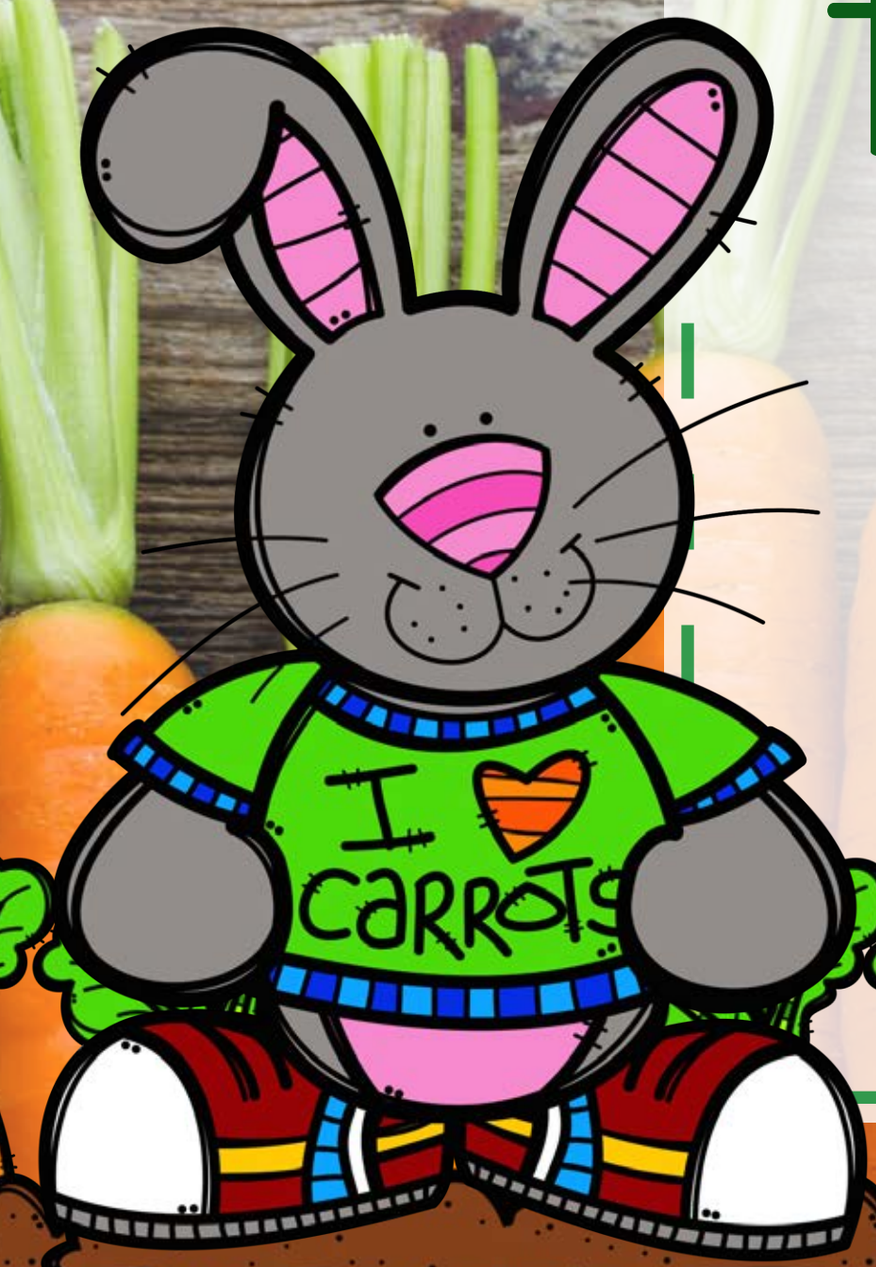
Cuttin'
down my
cabbage,

Yes, Ma'am!



My fresh tomatoes,

Yes, Ma'am!



My sweet potatoes,

Yes, Ma'am!

And if I live,

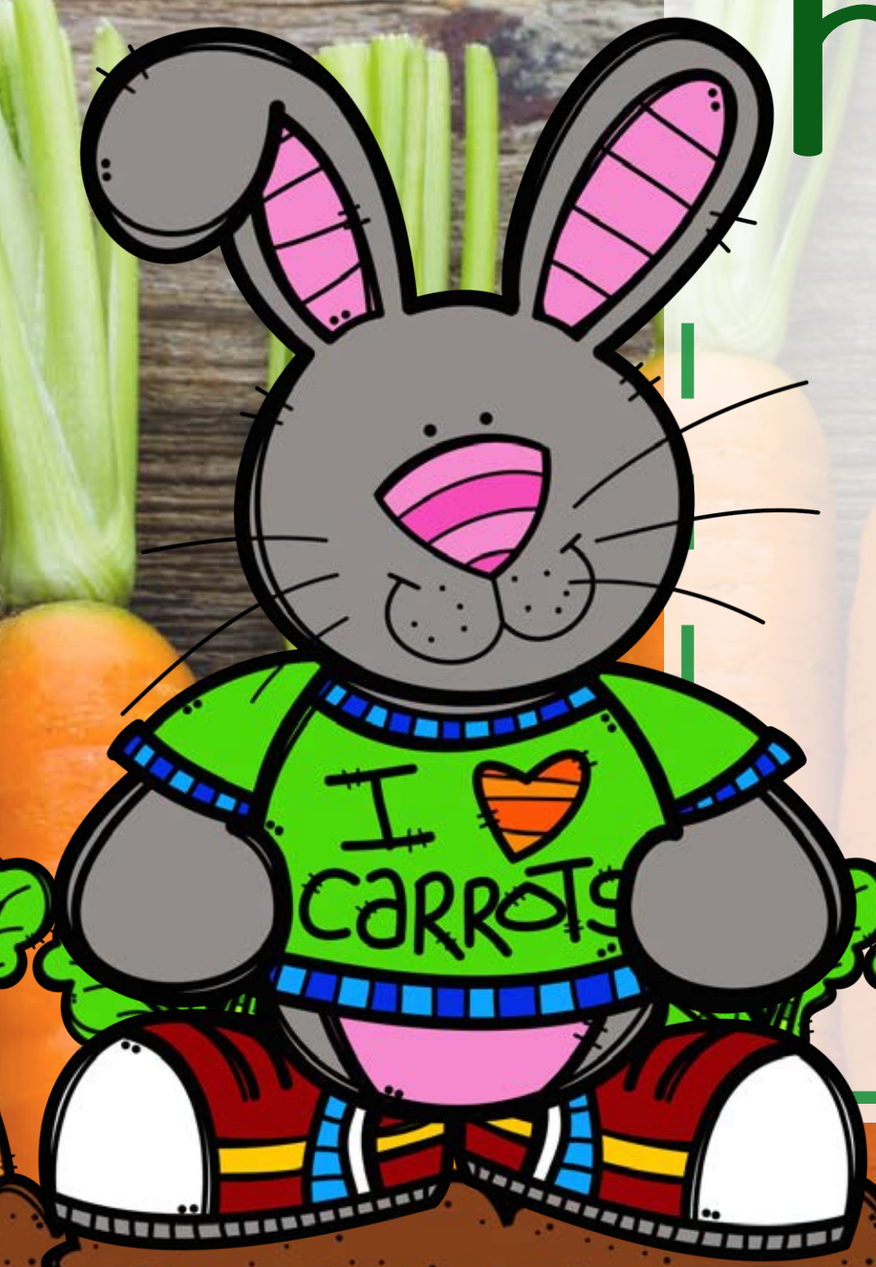
Yes, Ma'am!

To see next fall,

Yes, Ma'am!

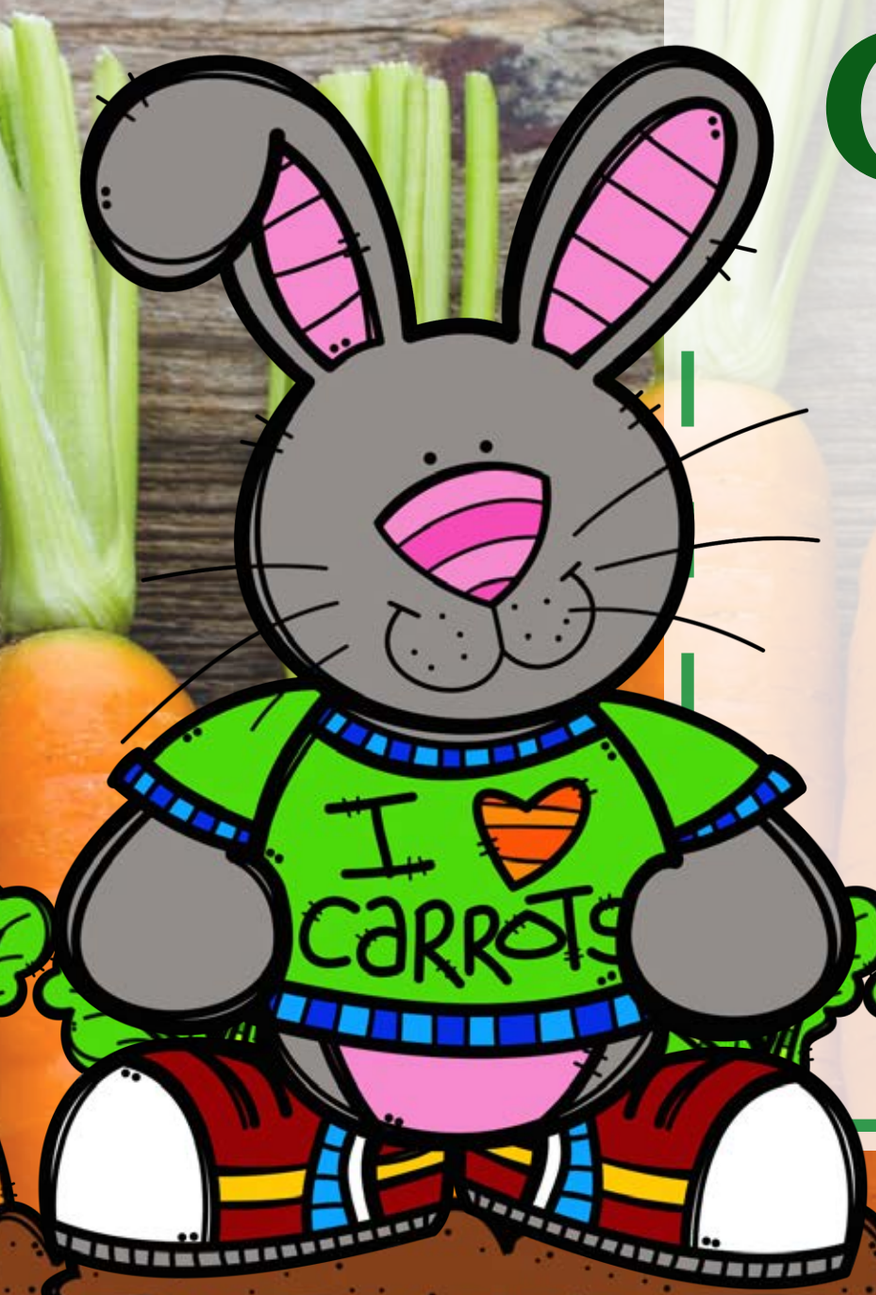
I ain't gonna have,

Yes, Ma'am!



No garden at all,

Yes, Ma'am!



Main Menu

Form

Slides

This song uses a form called "Call-response."

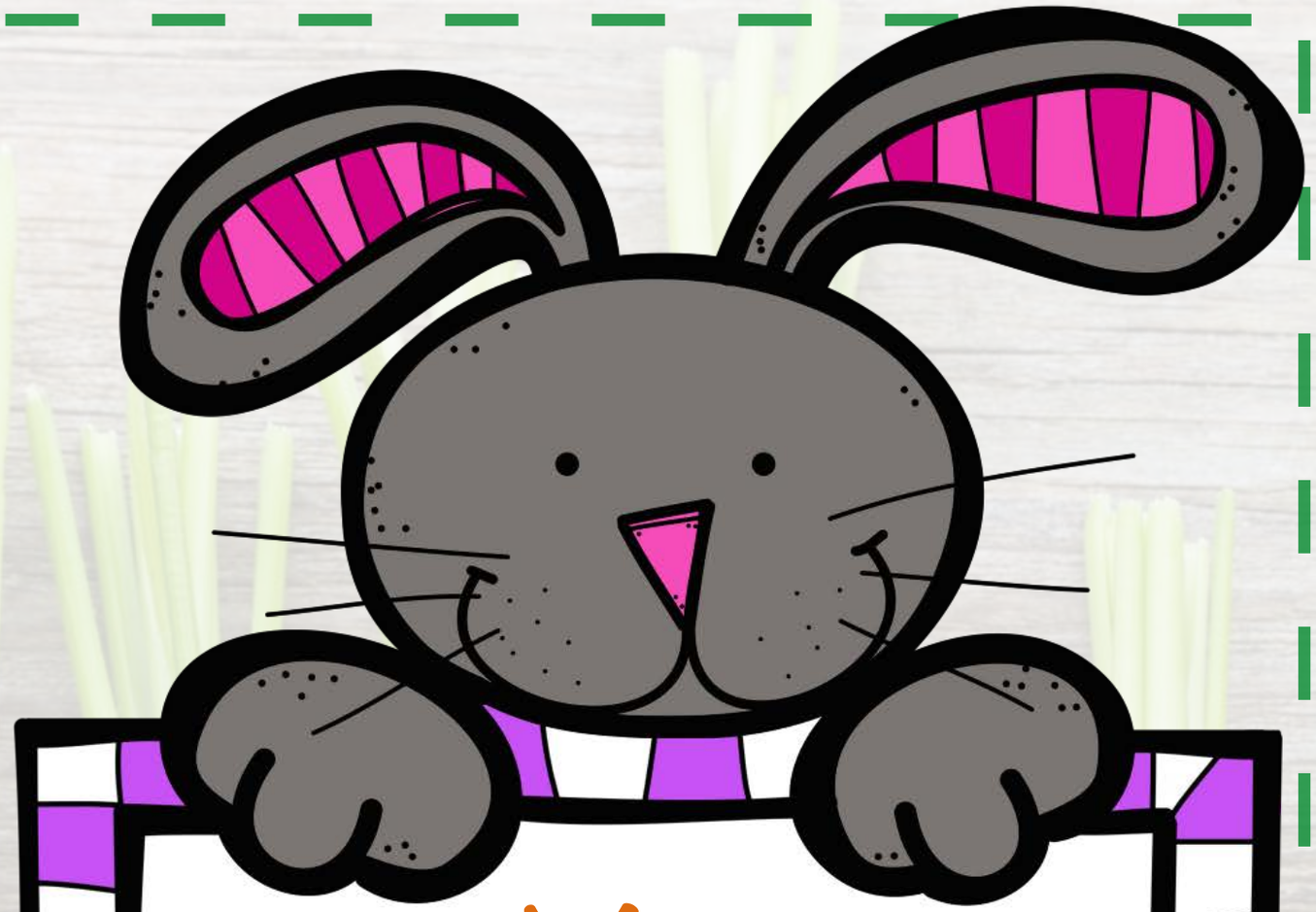
In call-response form there are two parts:

1. leader
2. group

The call part can change with each repetition,

but the response remains the same.

In this song the response is always:



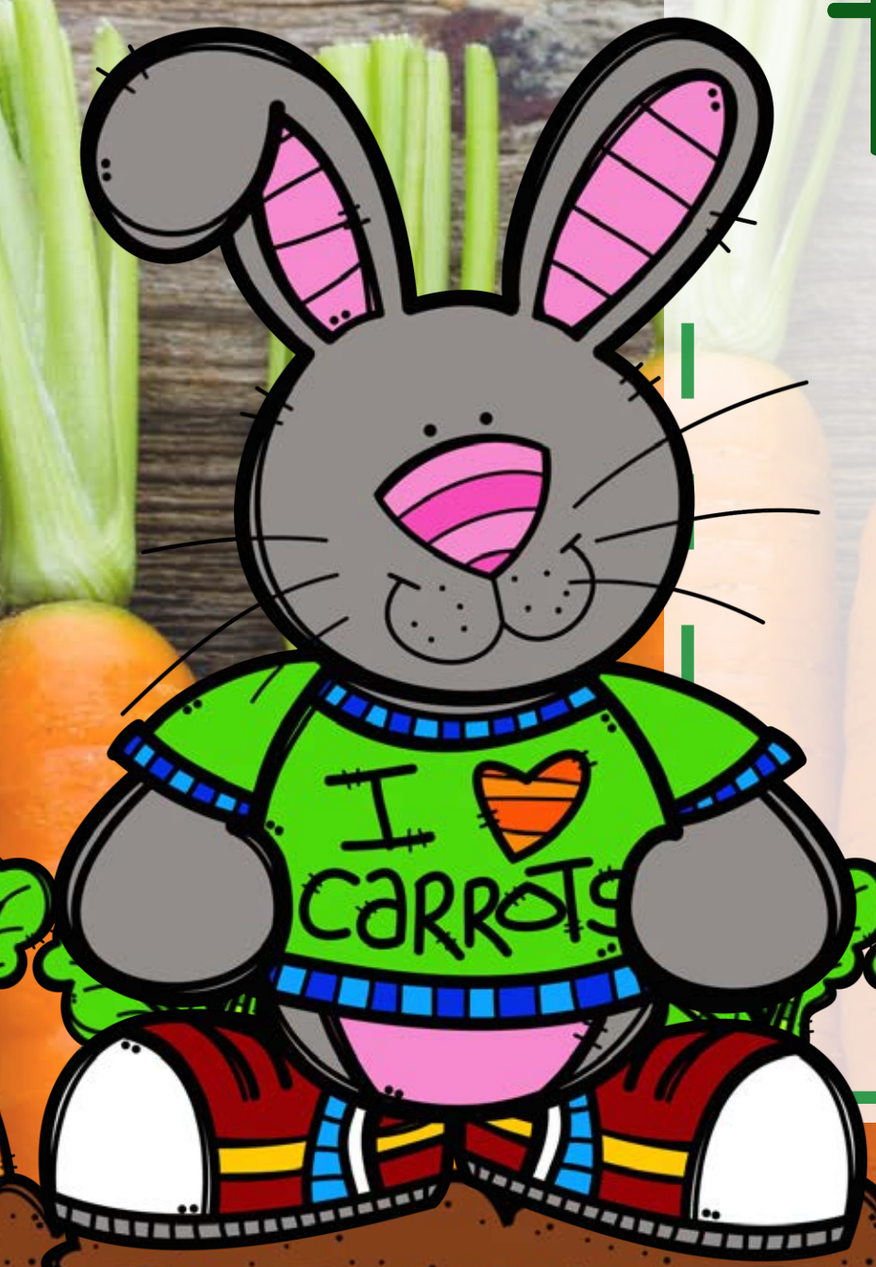
"Yes, Ma'am!"

As you learn the song, your teacher will sing the call.

Your part is to sing the response.

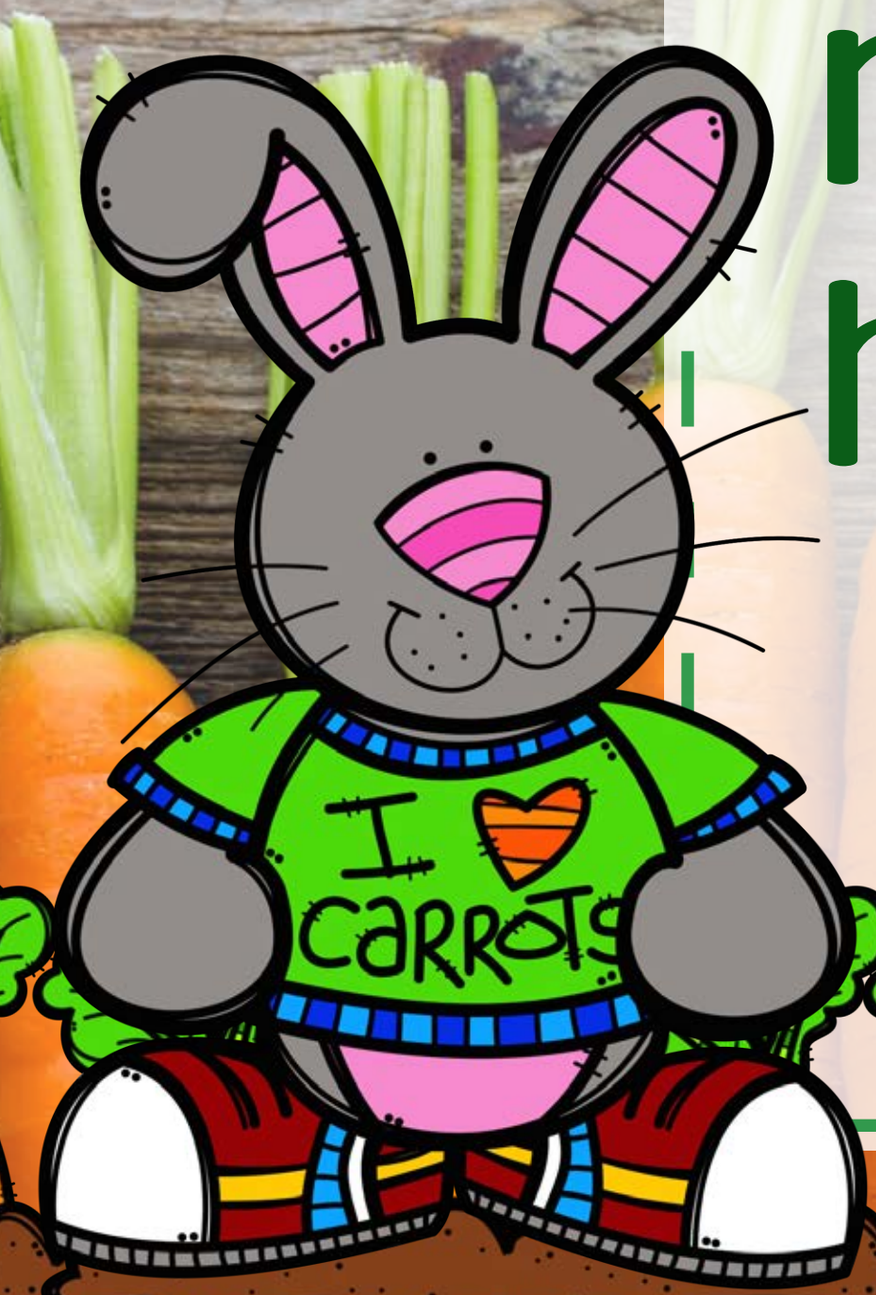
Oh, John,
the rabbit,

Yes, Ma'am!



Had a mighty habit

Yes, Ma'am!



Jumpin' in
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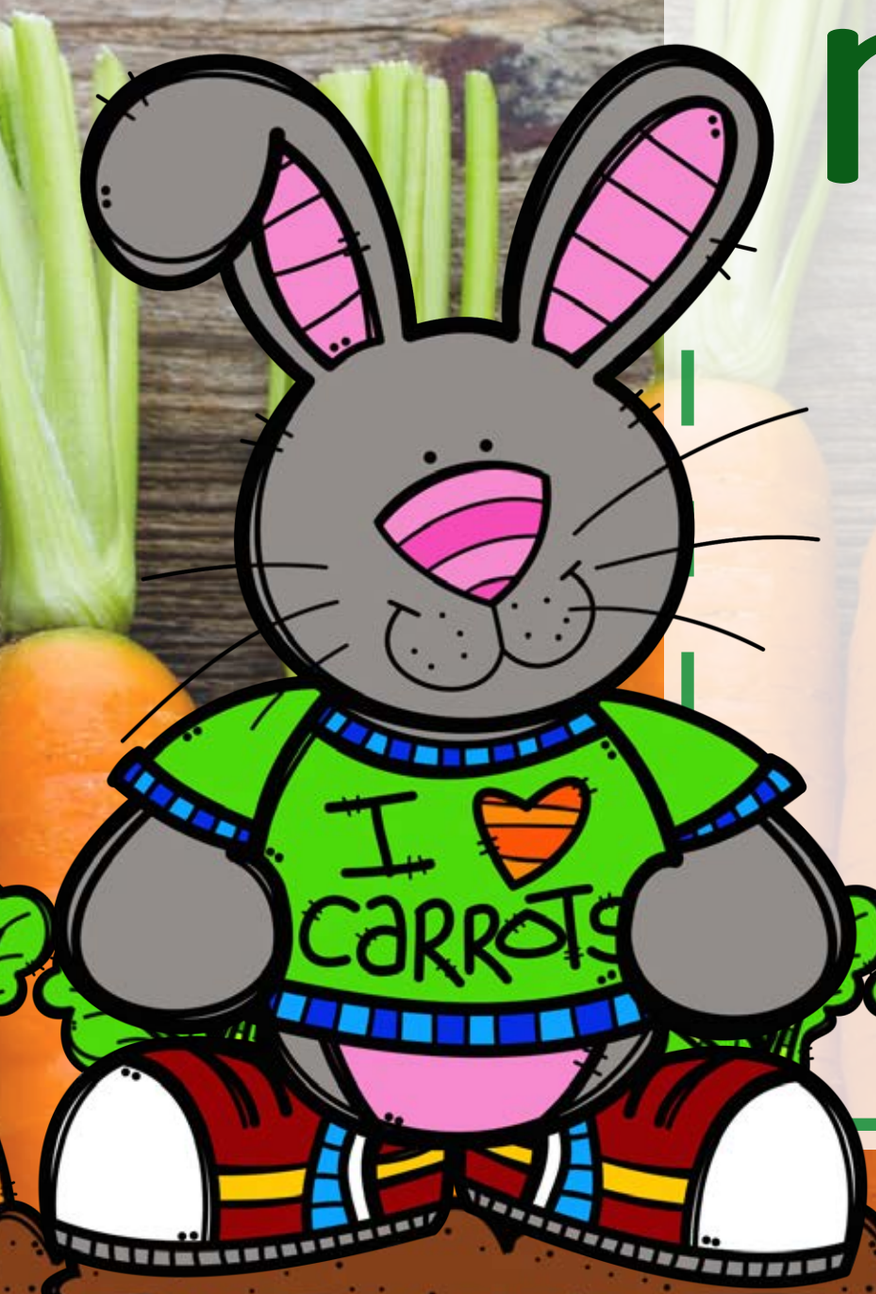
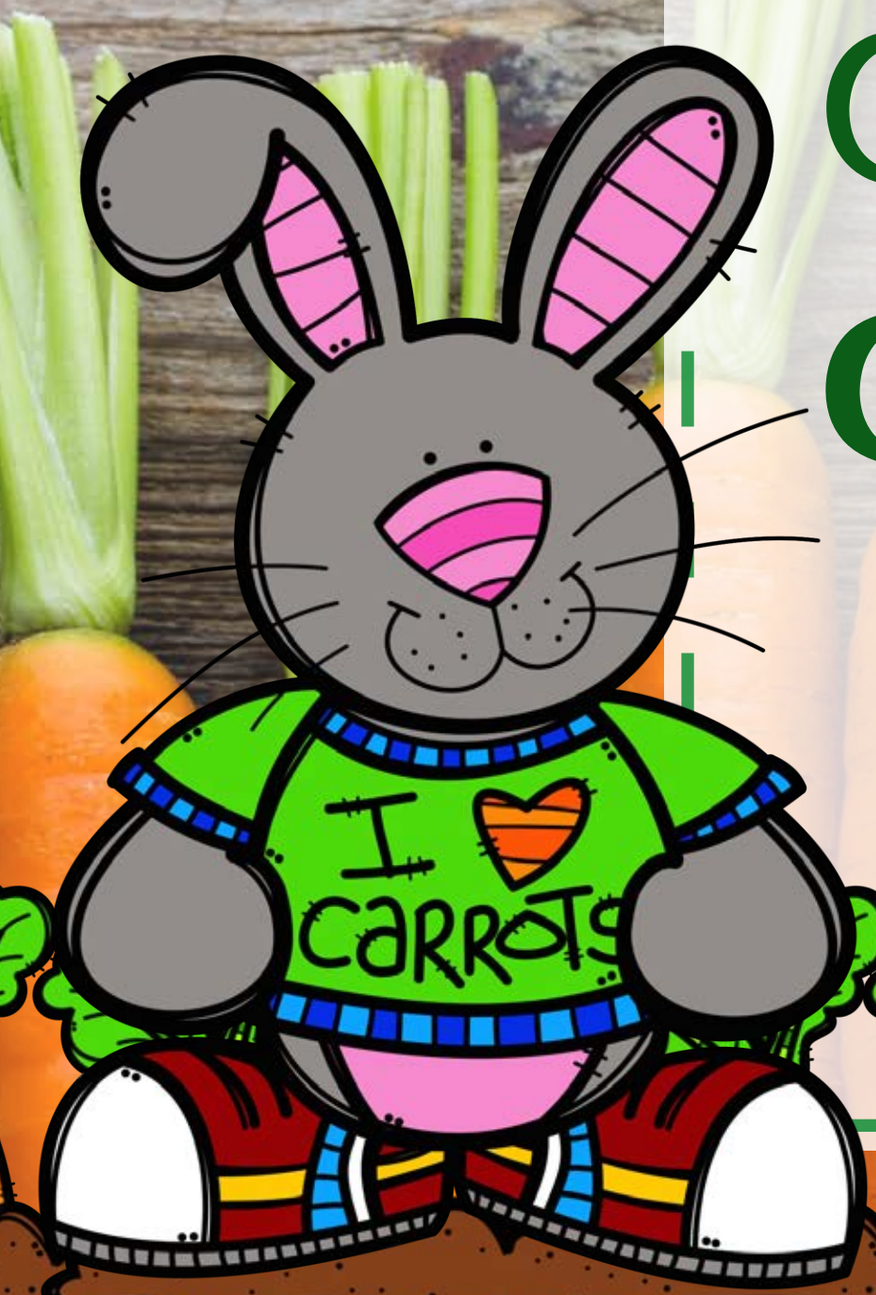
Yes, Ma'am!



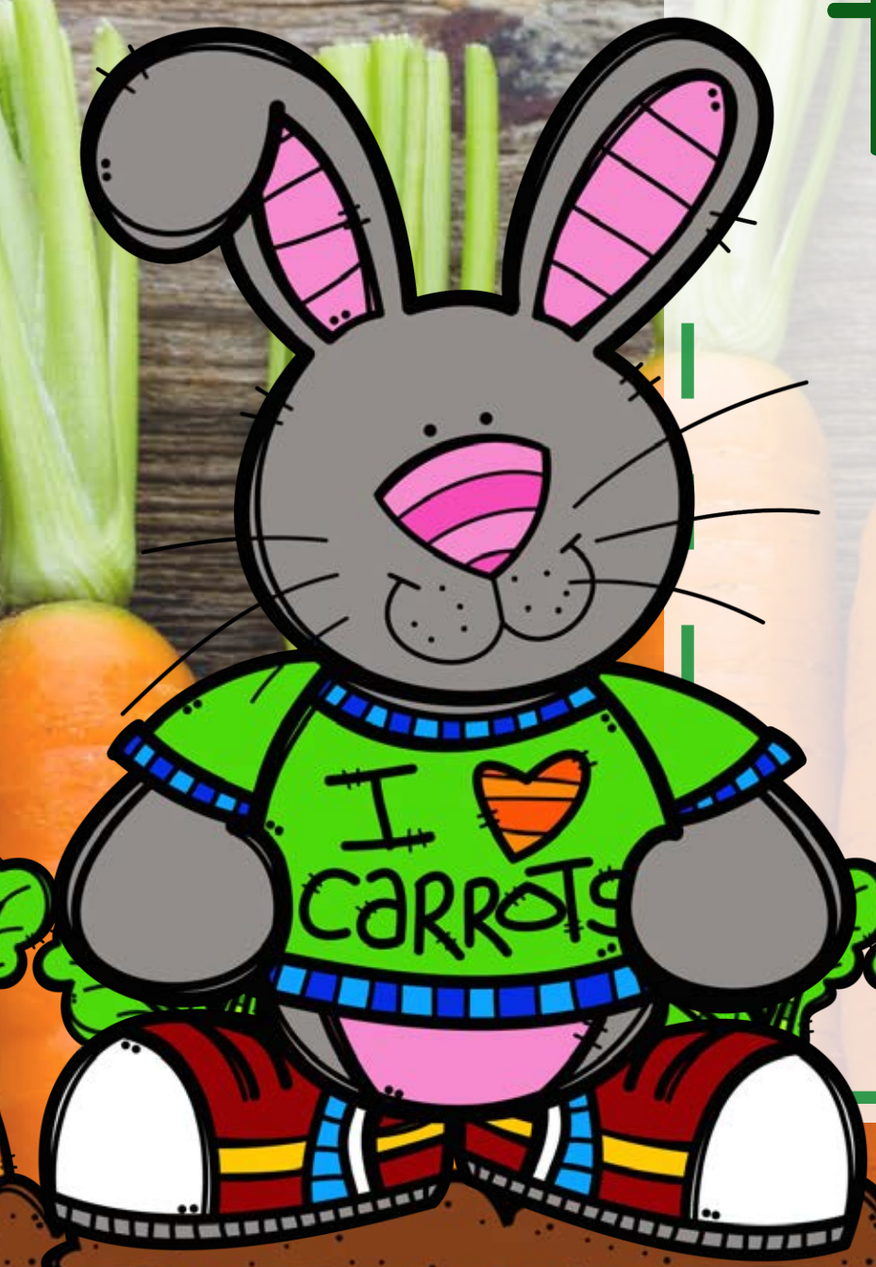
Cuttin'
down my
cabbage,

Yes, Ma'am!



My fresh tomatoes,

Yes, Ma'am!



My sweet potatoes,

Yes, Ma'am!

And if I live,

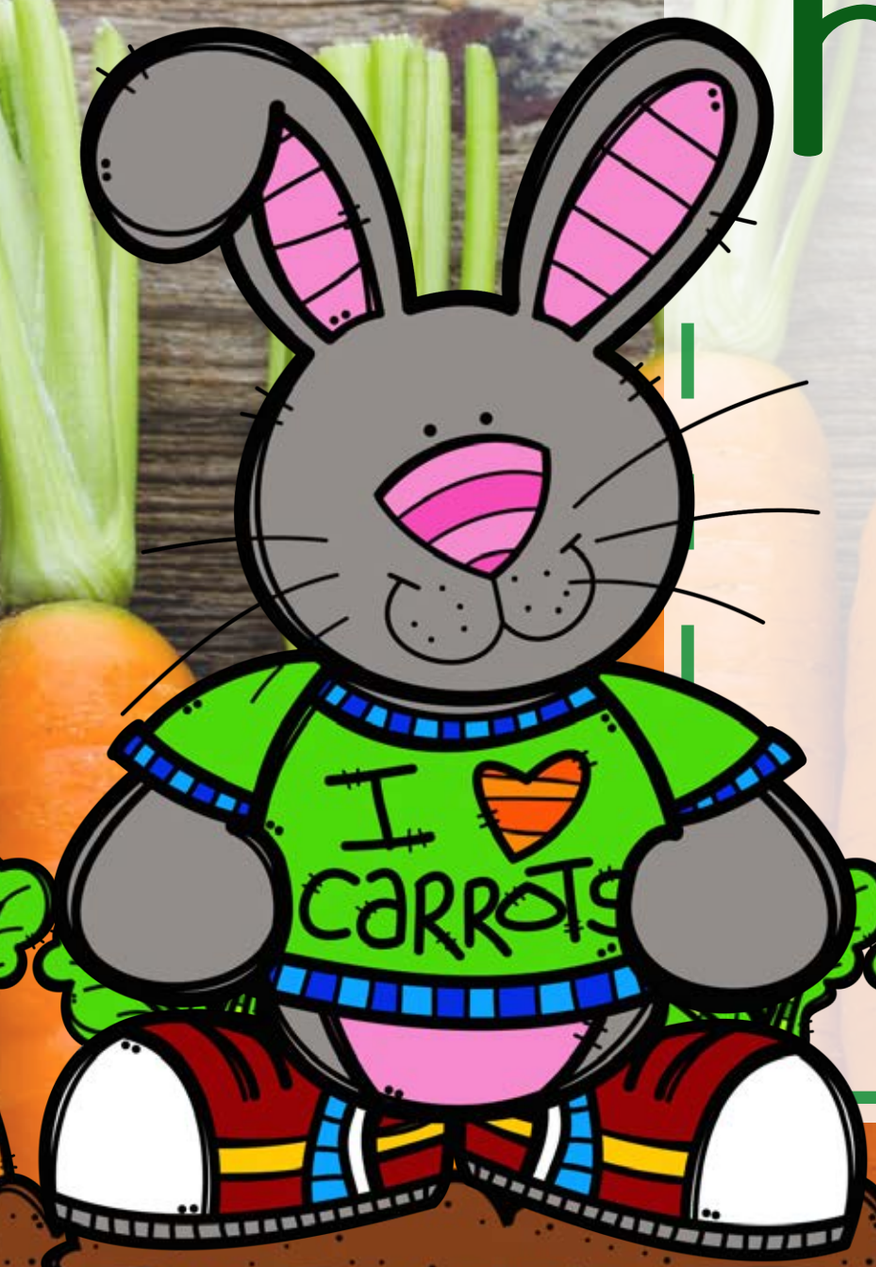
Yes, Ma'am!

To see next fall,

Yes, Ma'am!

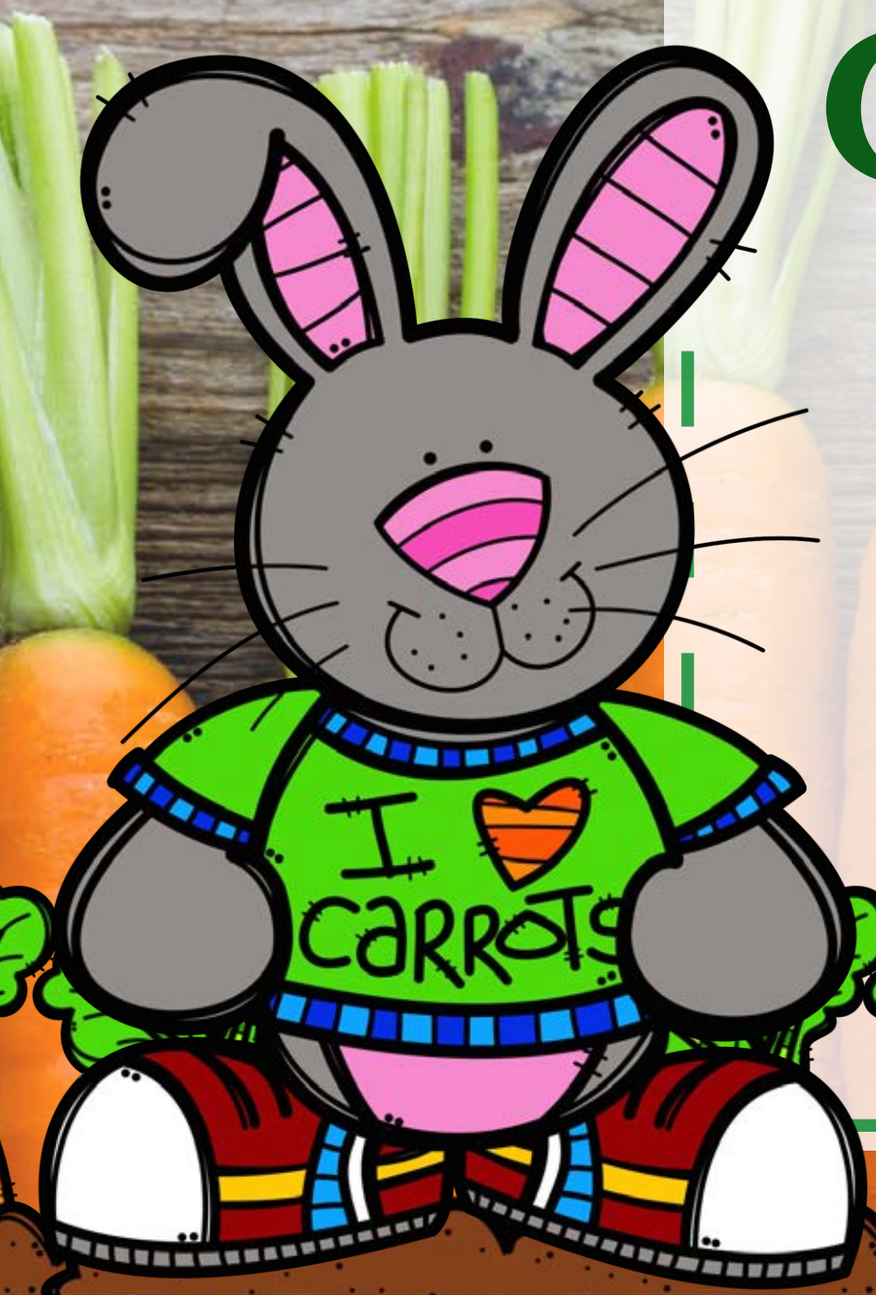
I ain't gonna have,

Yes, Ma'am!



No garden at all,

Yes, Ma'am!

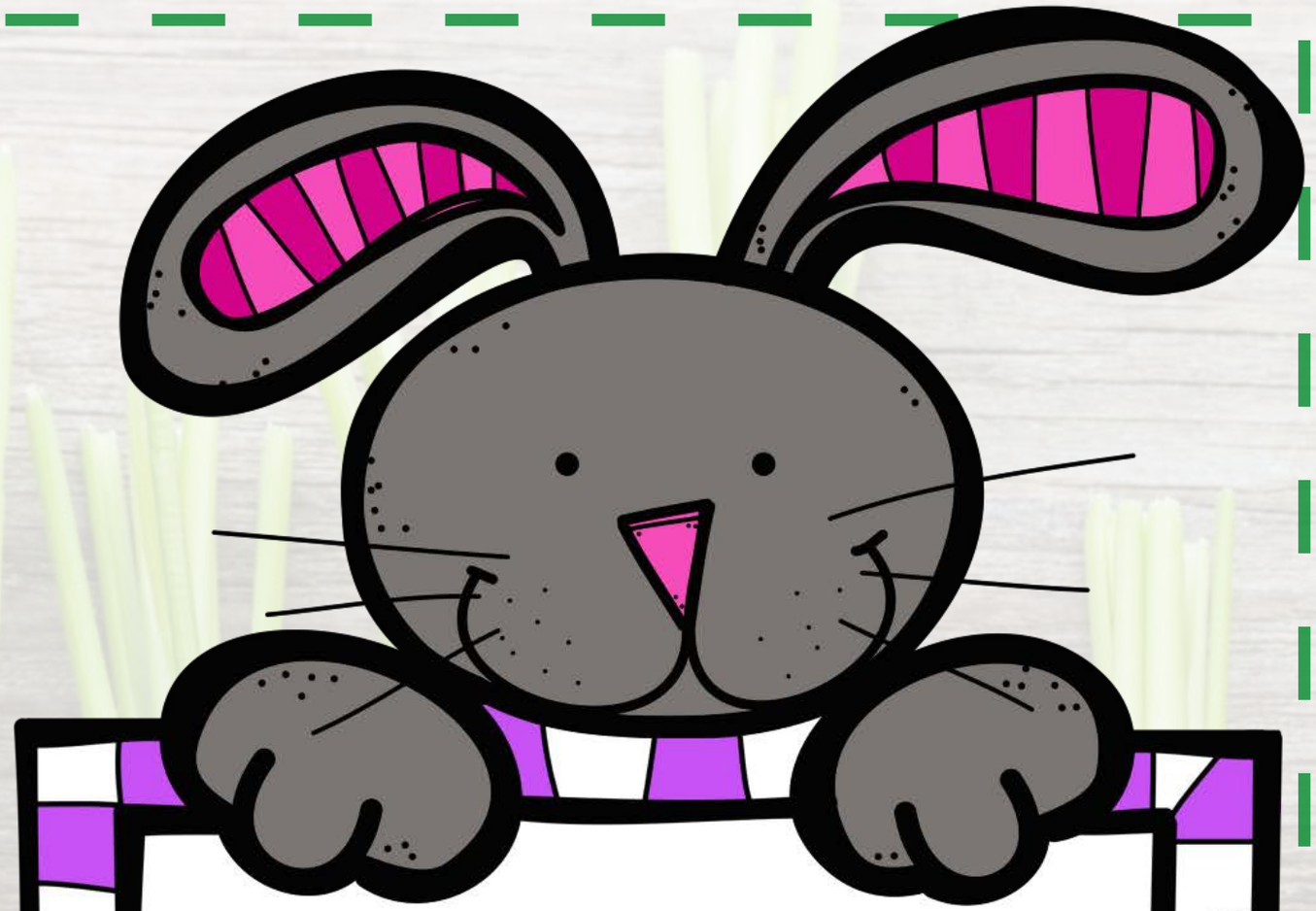


Main Menu

Melodic Response

Slides

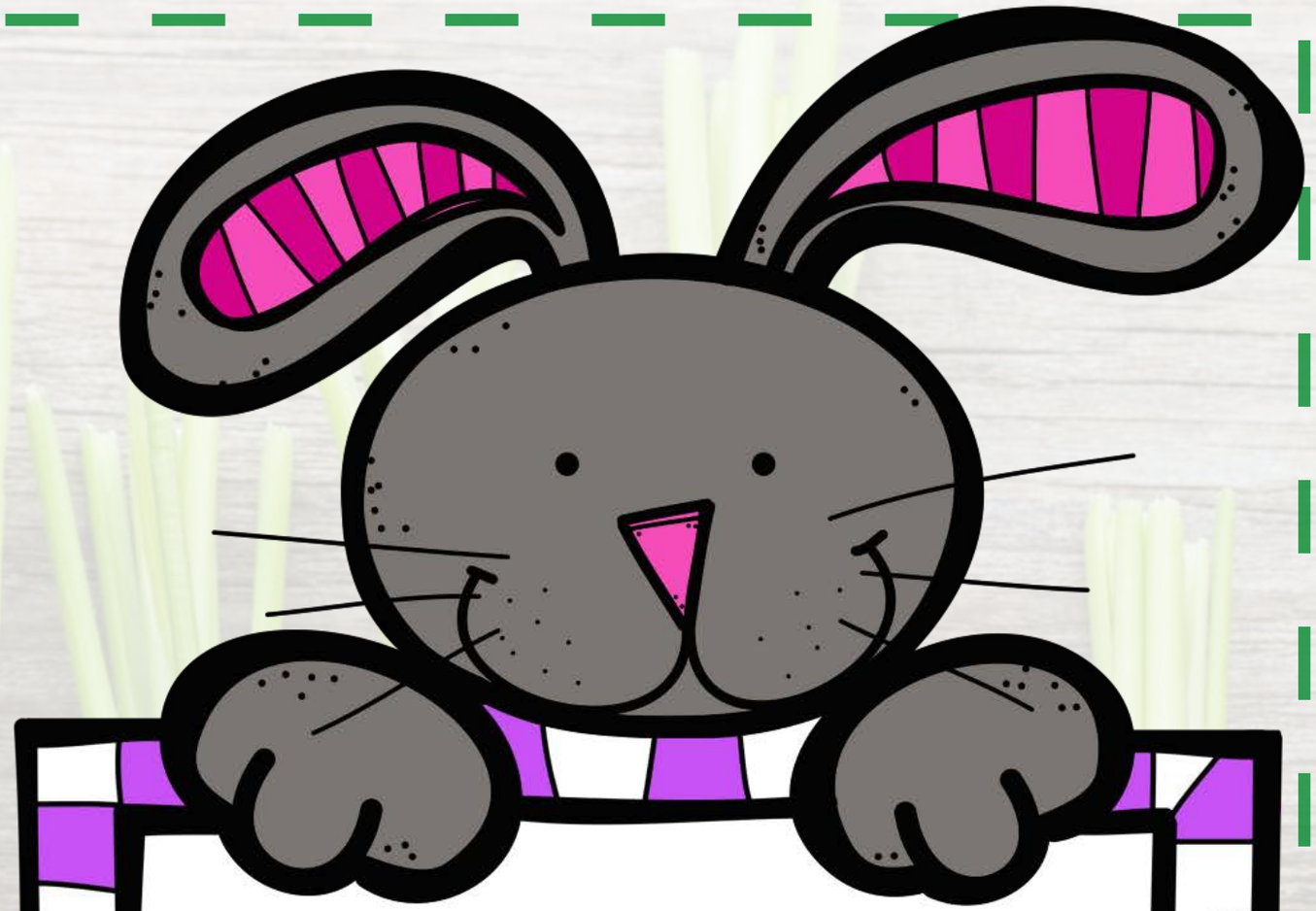
The response for this song is always sung on these pitches:



do do

"Yes, Ma'am!"

As you sing the song, sing the response on solfa syllables.

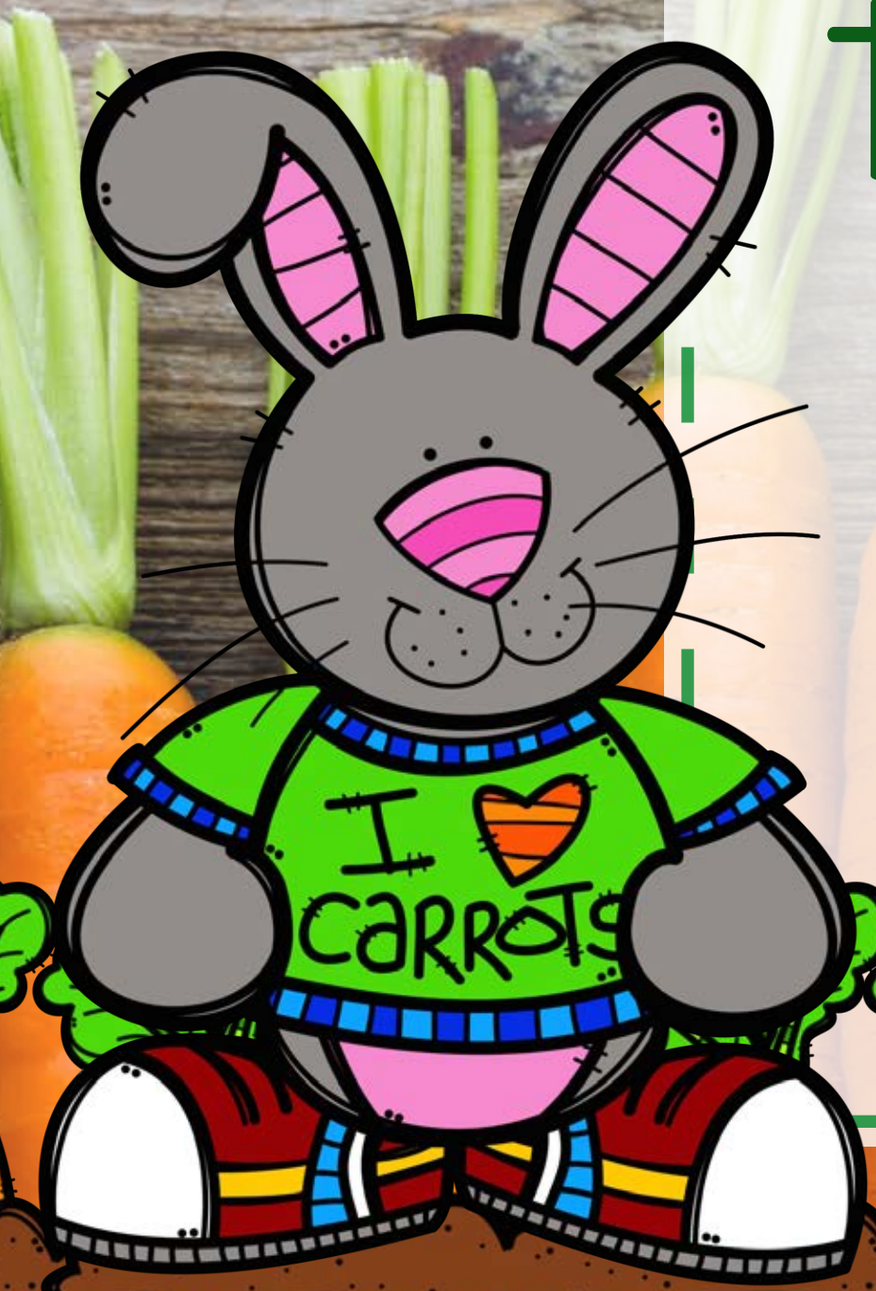


do do

"Yes, Ma'am!"

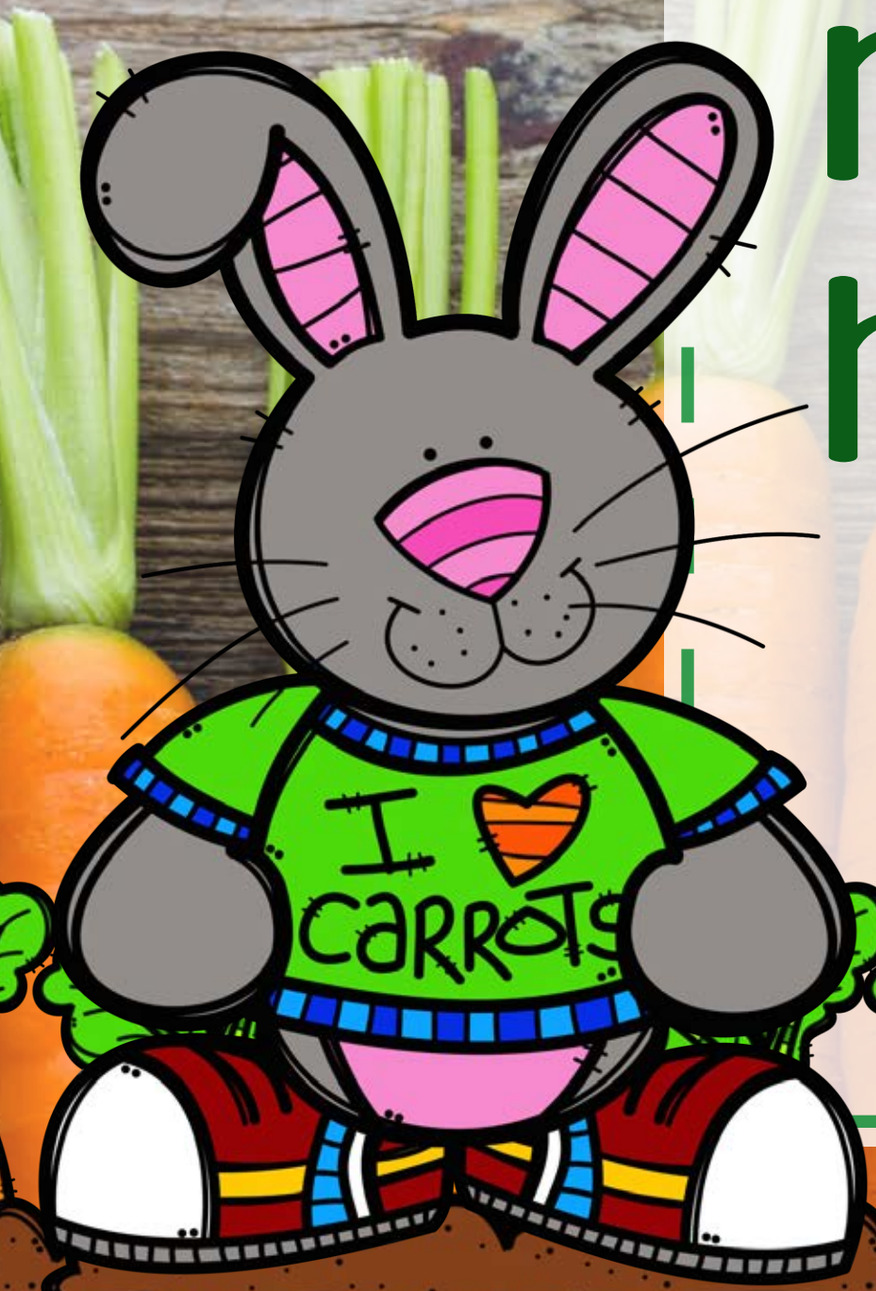
Oh, John,
the rabbit,

do do

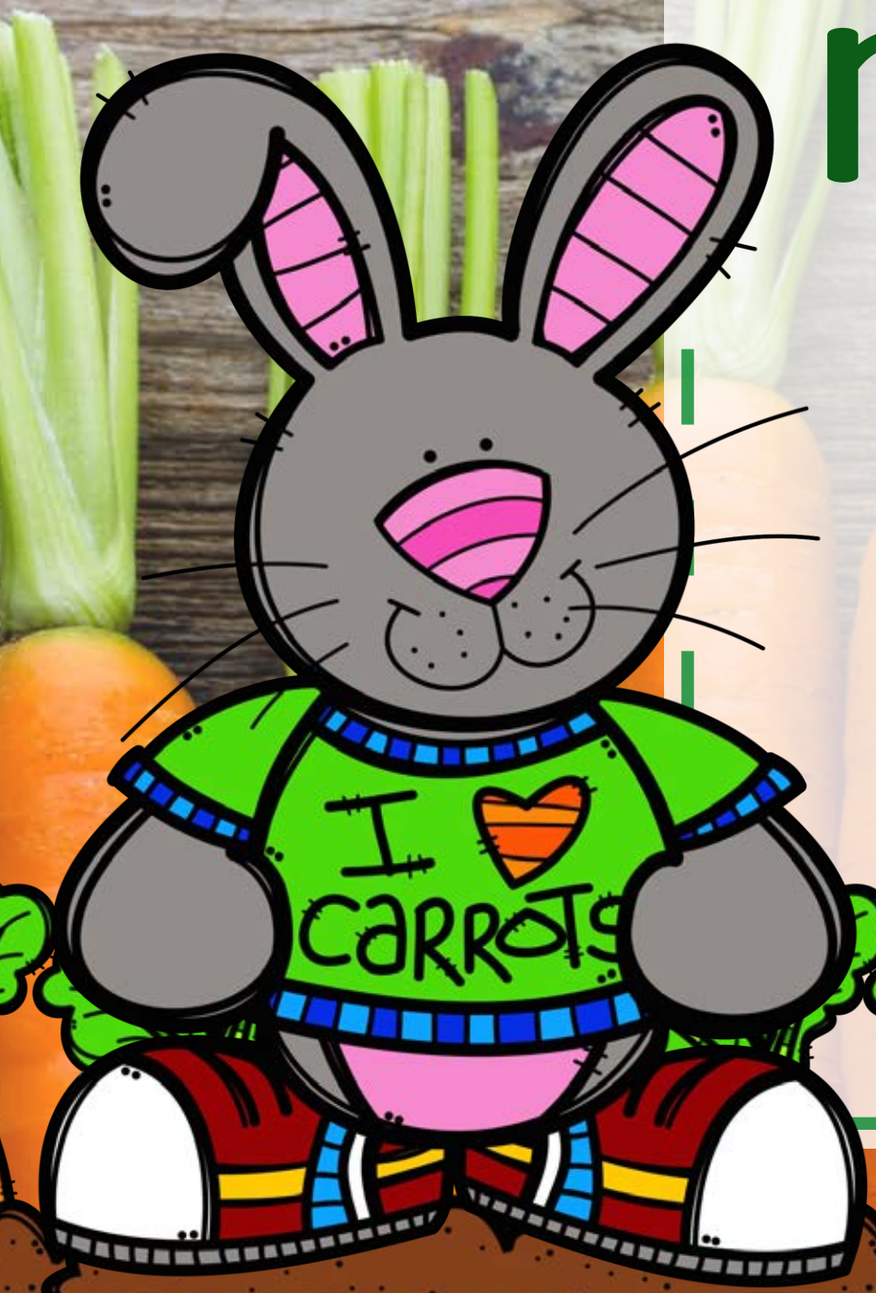


Had a mighty habit

do do

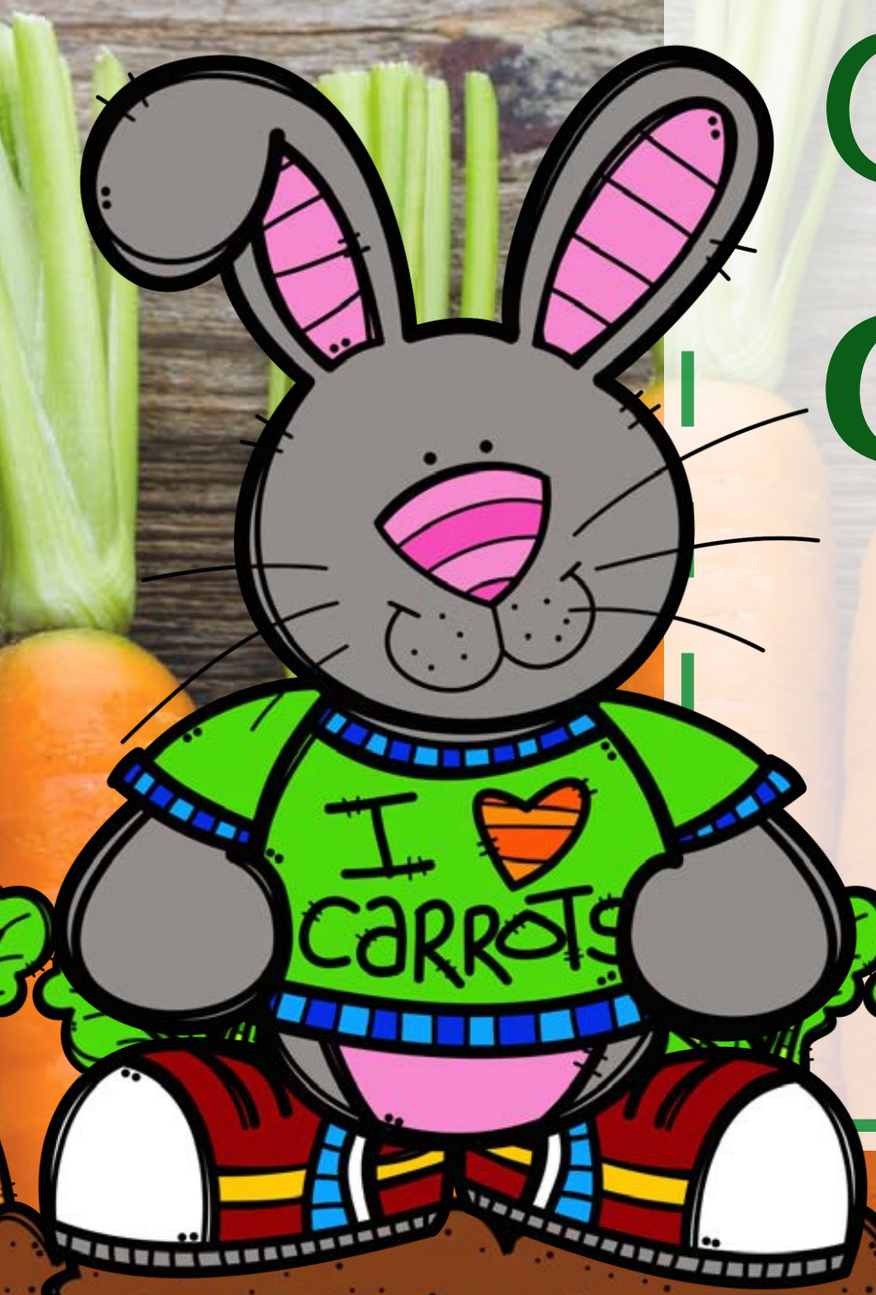


Jumpin' in
my garden,
do do



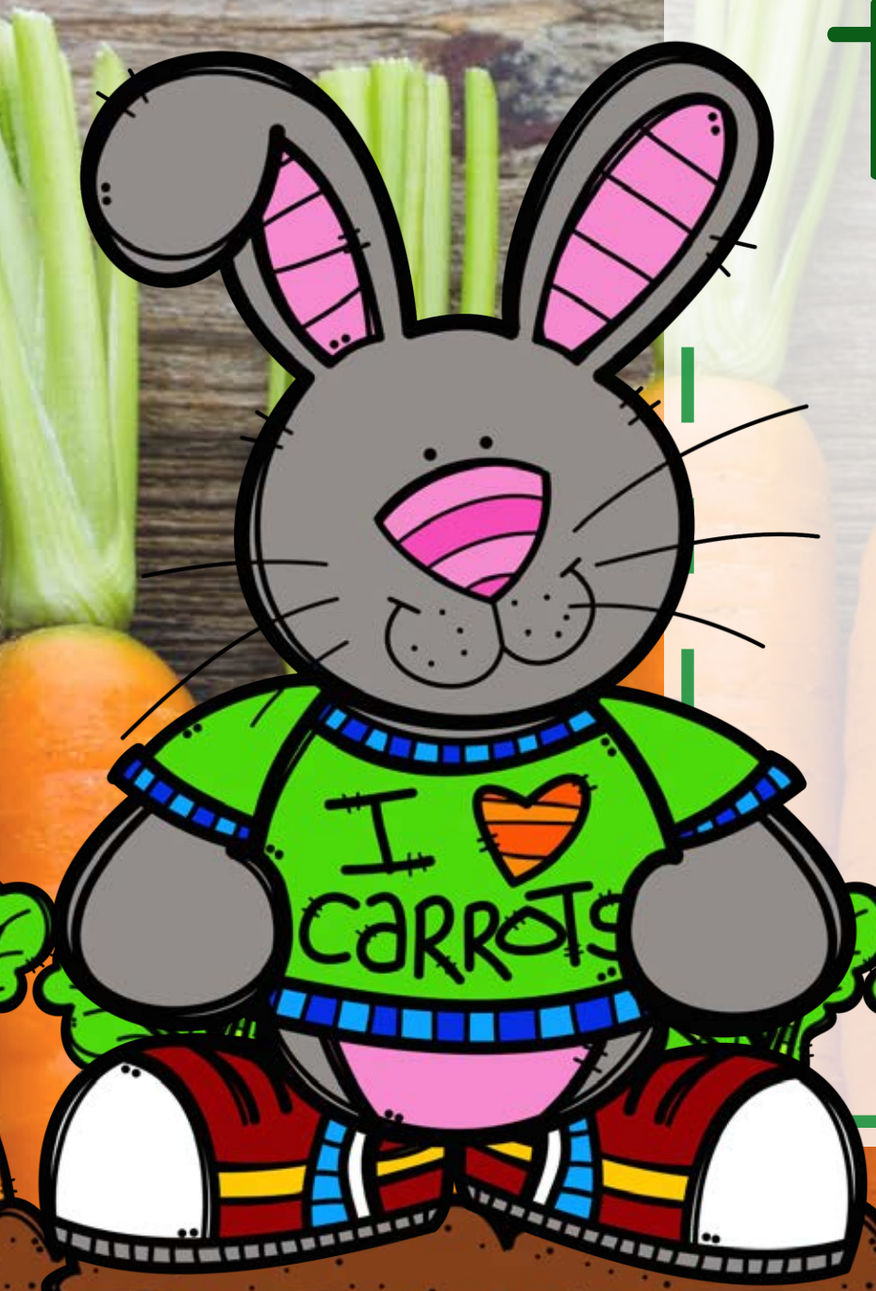
Cuttin'
down my
cabbage,

do do



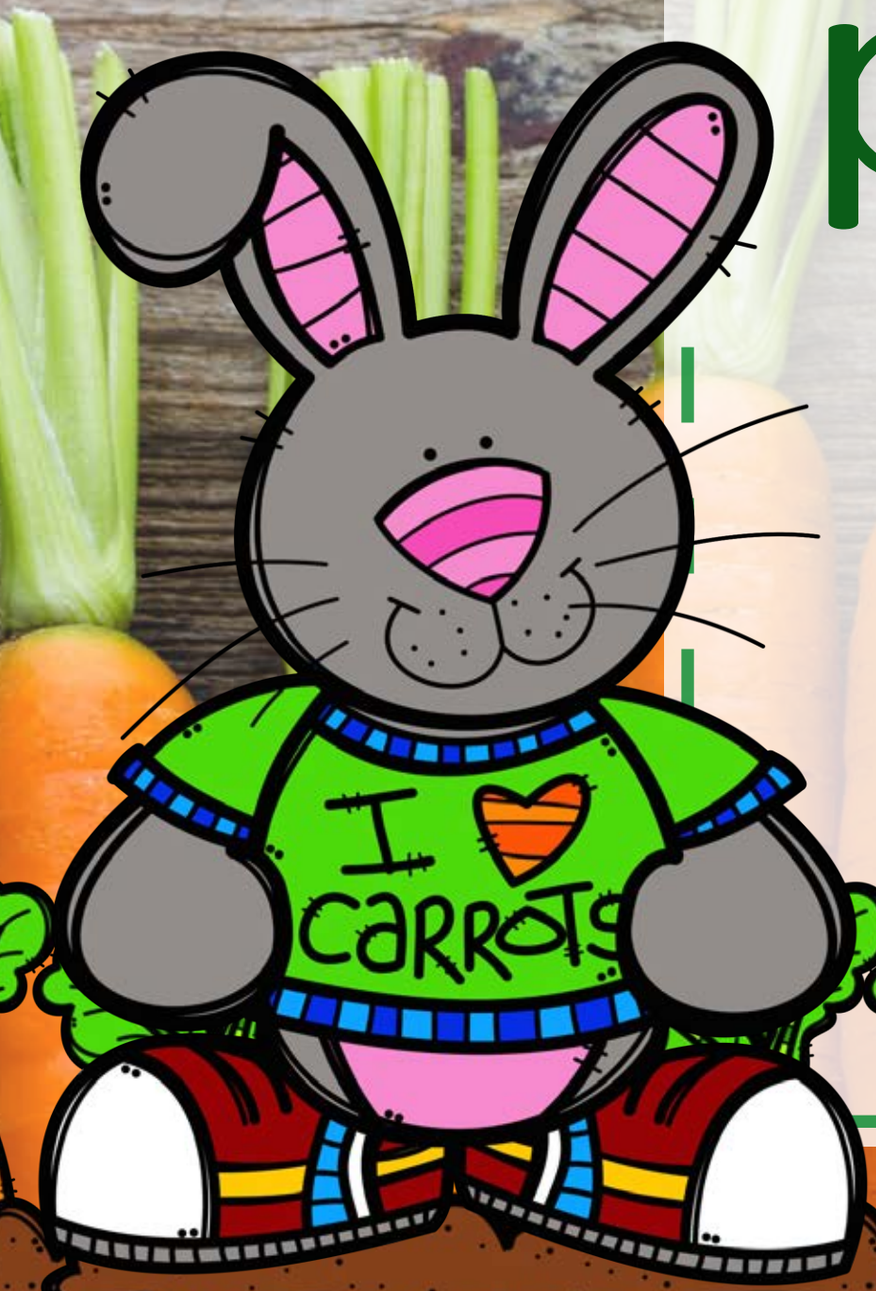
My fresh tomatoes,

do do



My sweet potatoes,

do do



And if I live,

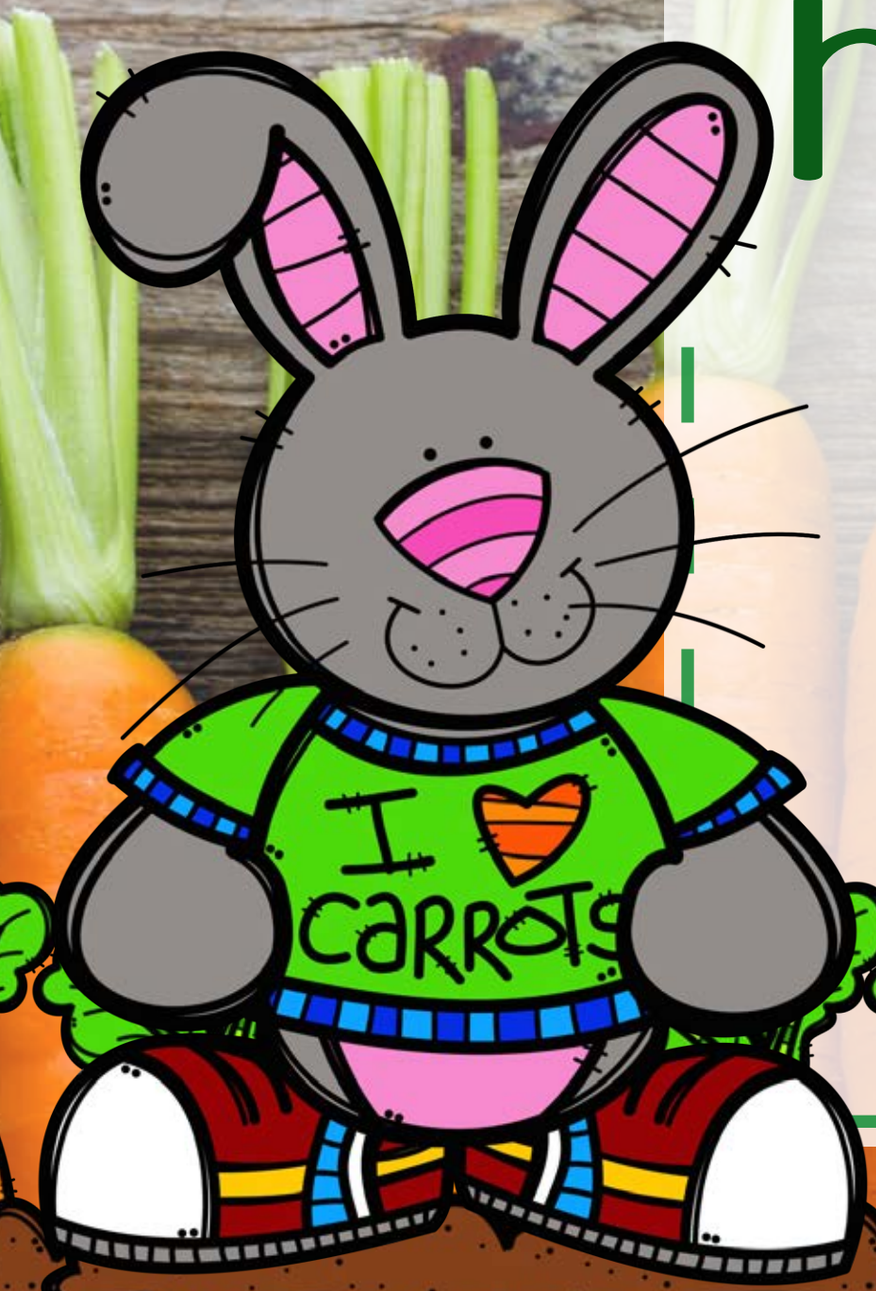
do do

To see next fall,

do do

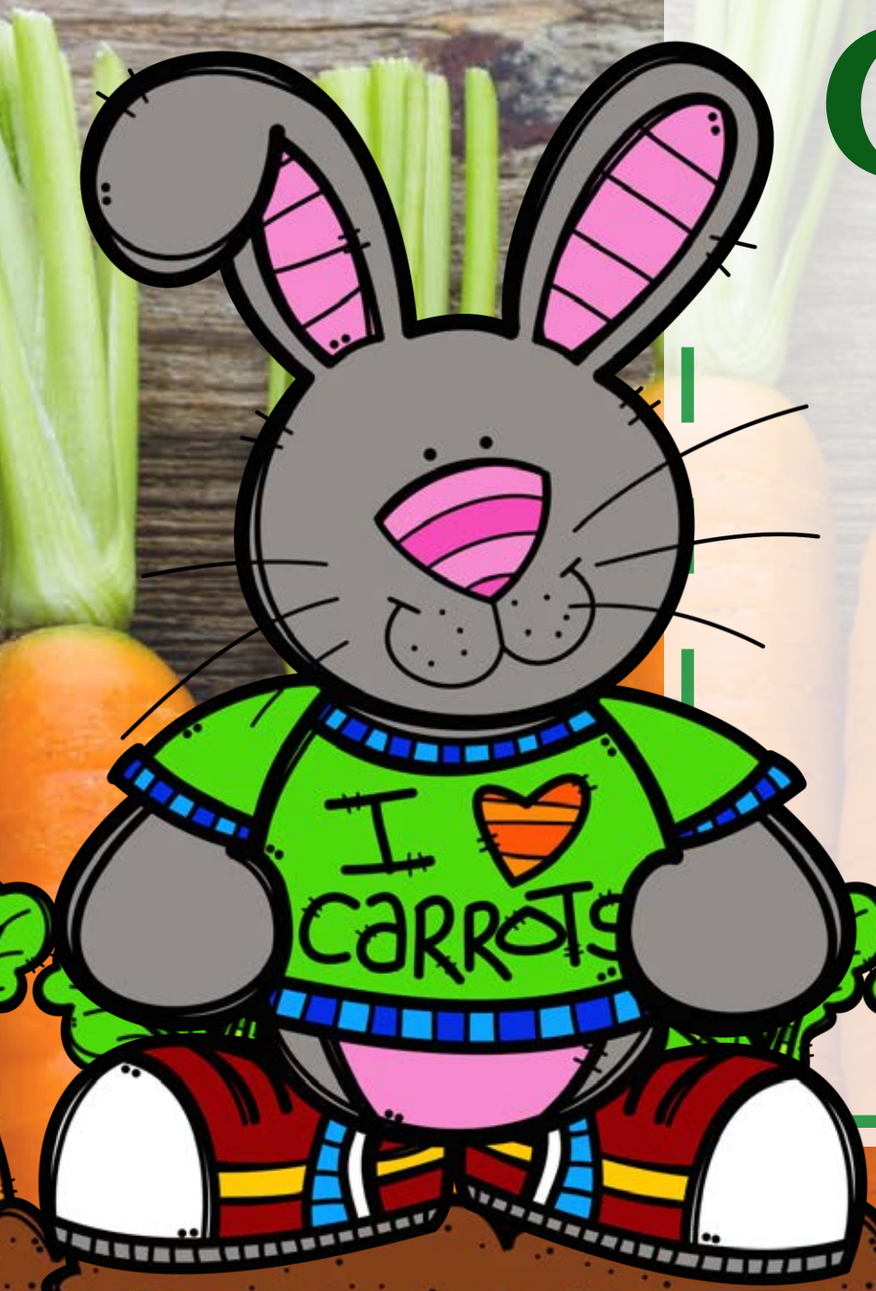
I ain't gonna have,

do do



No garden
at all,

do do



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