

EAR NOTCHING

The National Junior Swine Association Educational Materials and Resources

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Understand the numbering system for ear notches.**
- **Identify and assign ear notches to specific animals.**
- **Understand the role of the ear notching system in today's industry.**

TONGUE AND SALIVARY GLANDS

- Ear notching primarily serves as a form of identification.
- Think of an ear notch like the pig's first and last name.
 - The right ear identifies the litter number (last name).
 - Farms assign this number to each litter
 - The left ear identifies the individual pig within that litter (first name).

WHY DO WE NOTCH?

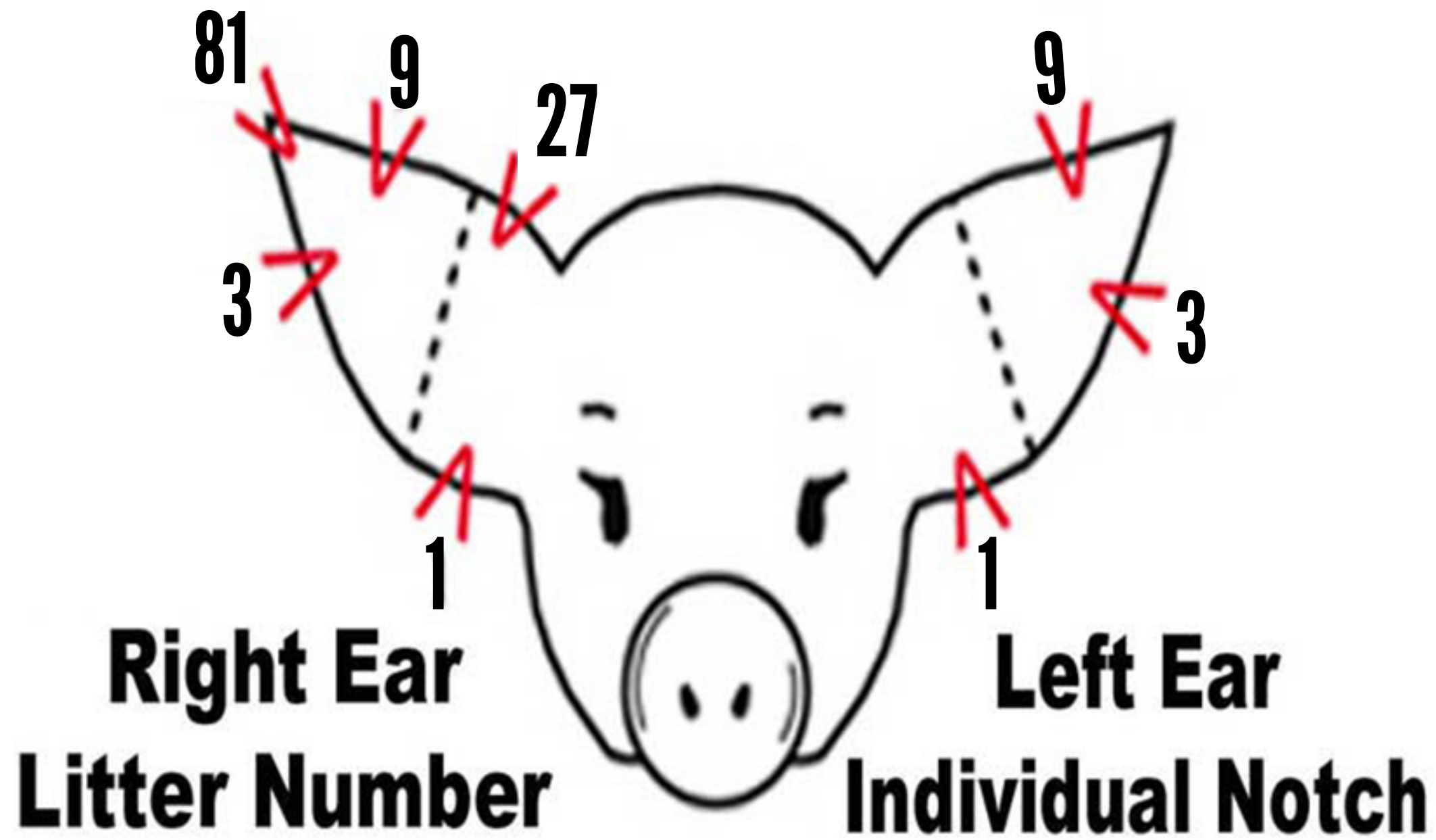
- Ear notches are typically made within the first few days of birth.
- Ear notches help breeders maintain accurate records in regards to registration and in regards to health records on the farm (i.e. vaccination records, etc.)
- Pigs are notched using an ear notcher (the tool seen below).



READING NOTCHES

- **When we are looking at a pig, we read right to left.**
- **The litter number will always be mentioned or written first followed by a dash/hyphen (-) and then the individual pig number.**
- **Some larger breeding operations can have very large litter numbers because there are a lot of litters born on their farm every year. These can be tricky at times, but by practicing the numbering system on the next few slides, you can become a pro in no time!**

EAR NOTCHING SYSTEM



ADDING EAR NOTCHES

- We can use multiple notches of the same number to add up to the total that we need.
- **EXAMPLE:** Say we have a pig with the ear notch of 33-7. This ear notch would be made by making two notches in the “3” location on the left ear, and one notch in the “1” location on the left ear ($3+3+1=7$). In the right ear, one notch would be made in the “27” region, and two notches would be made in the “3” region ($27+3+3=33$).

EAR NOTCHING QUIZ

See what you've learned!

QUESTION 1

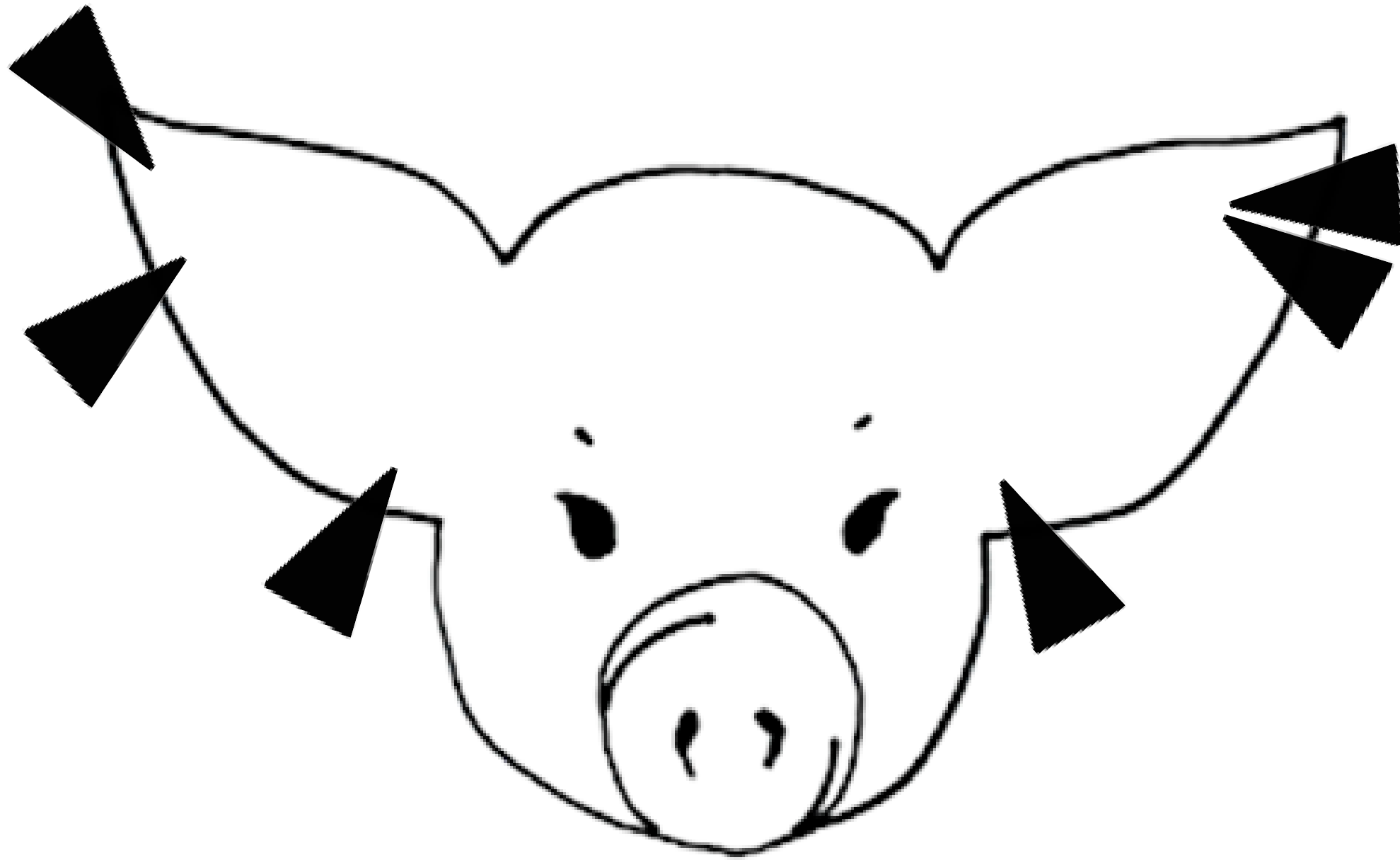
The right ear identifies the individual pig in the litter.

True

False

QUESTION 2

What is the litter number of this pig?



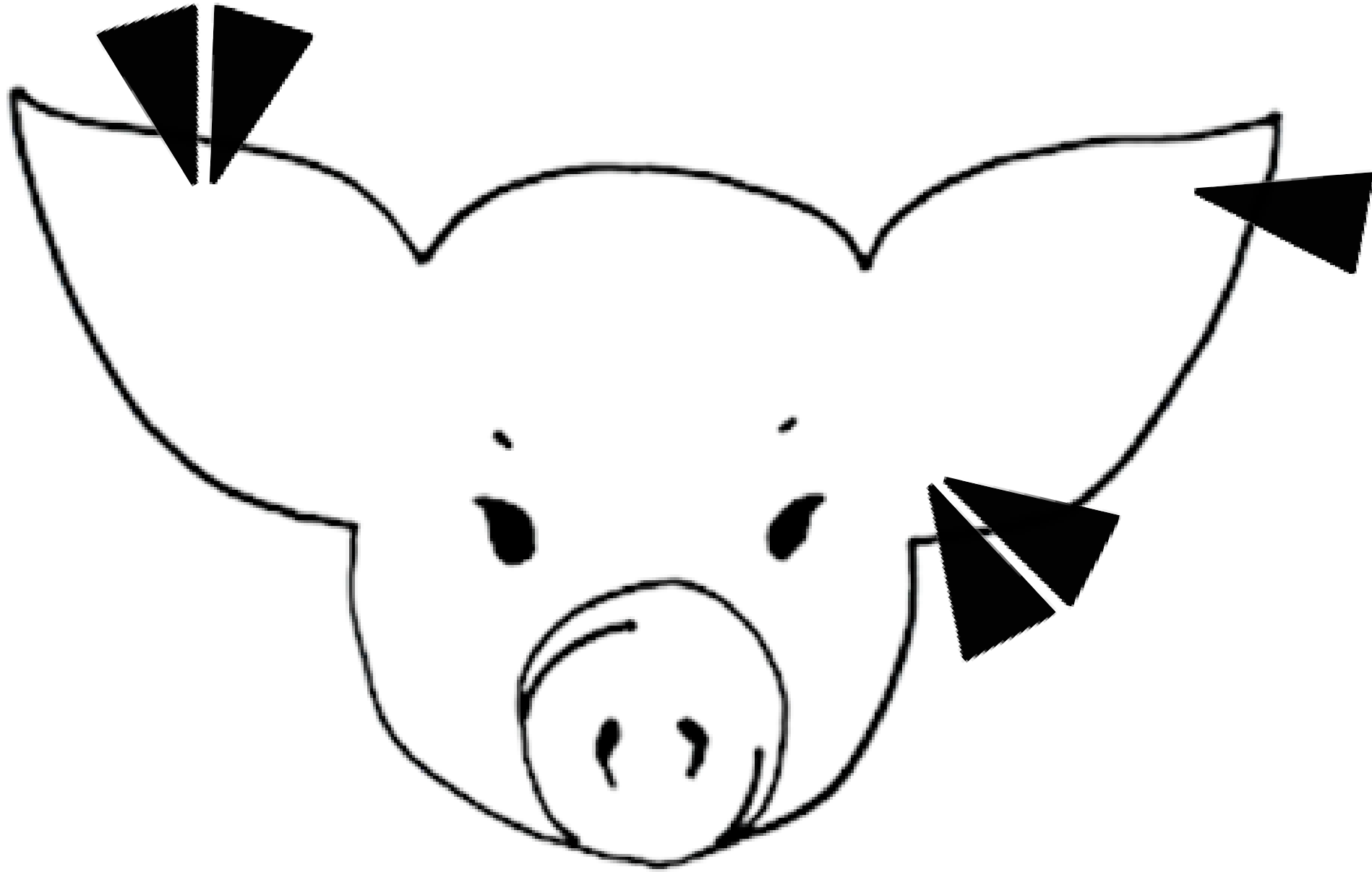
85

87

83

QUESTION 3

What is the individual pig is in this litter?



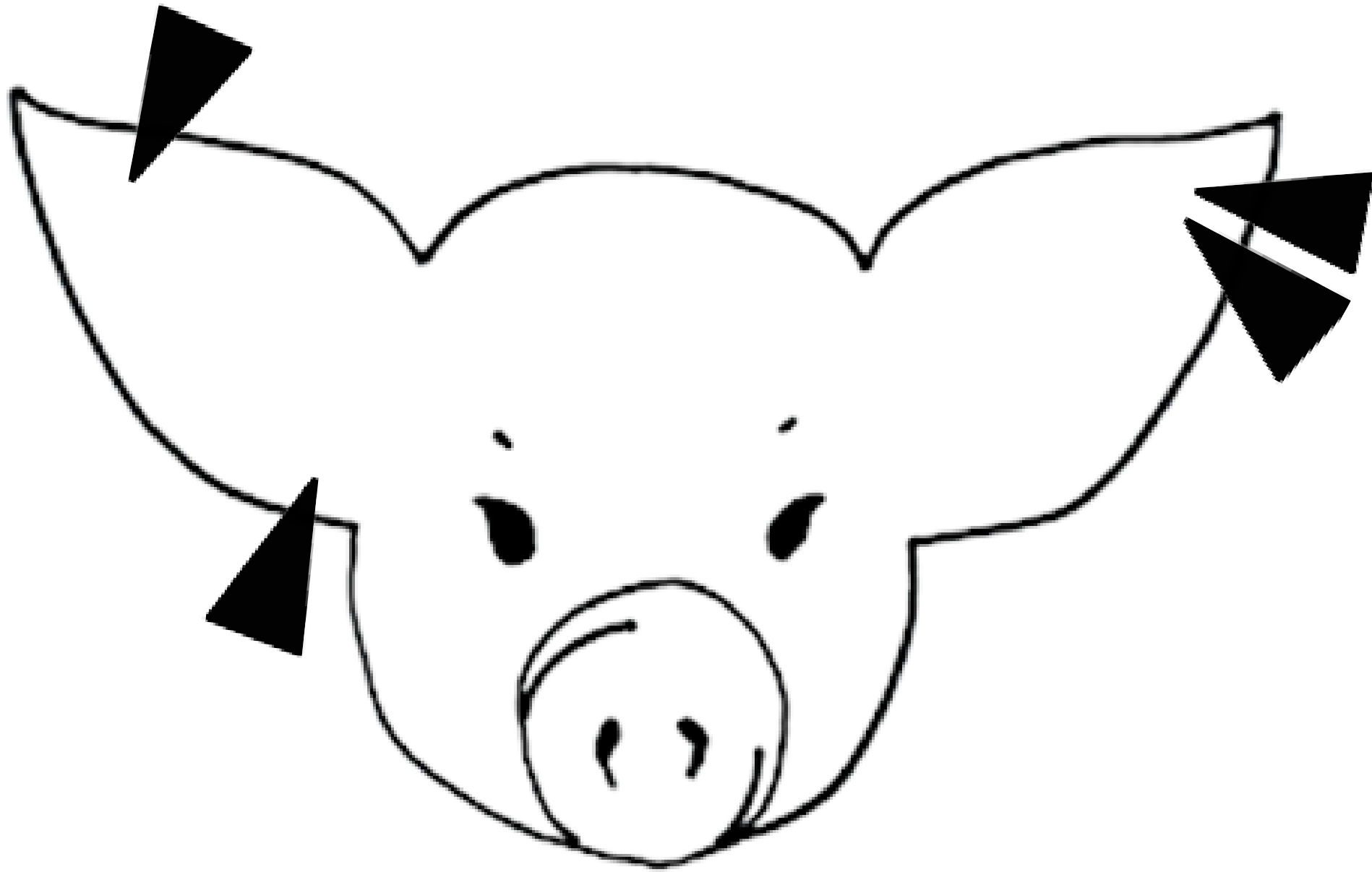
7

5

9

QUESTION 4

What is the ear notch of this pig?



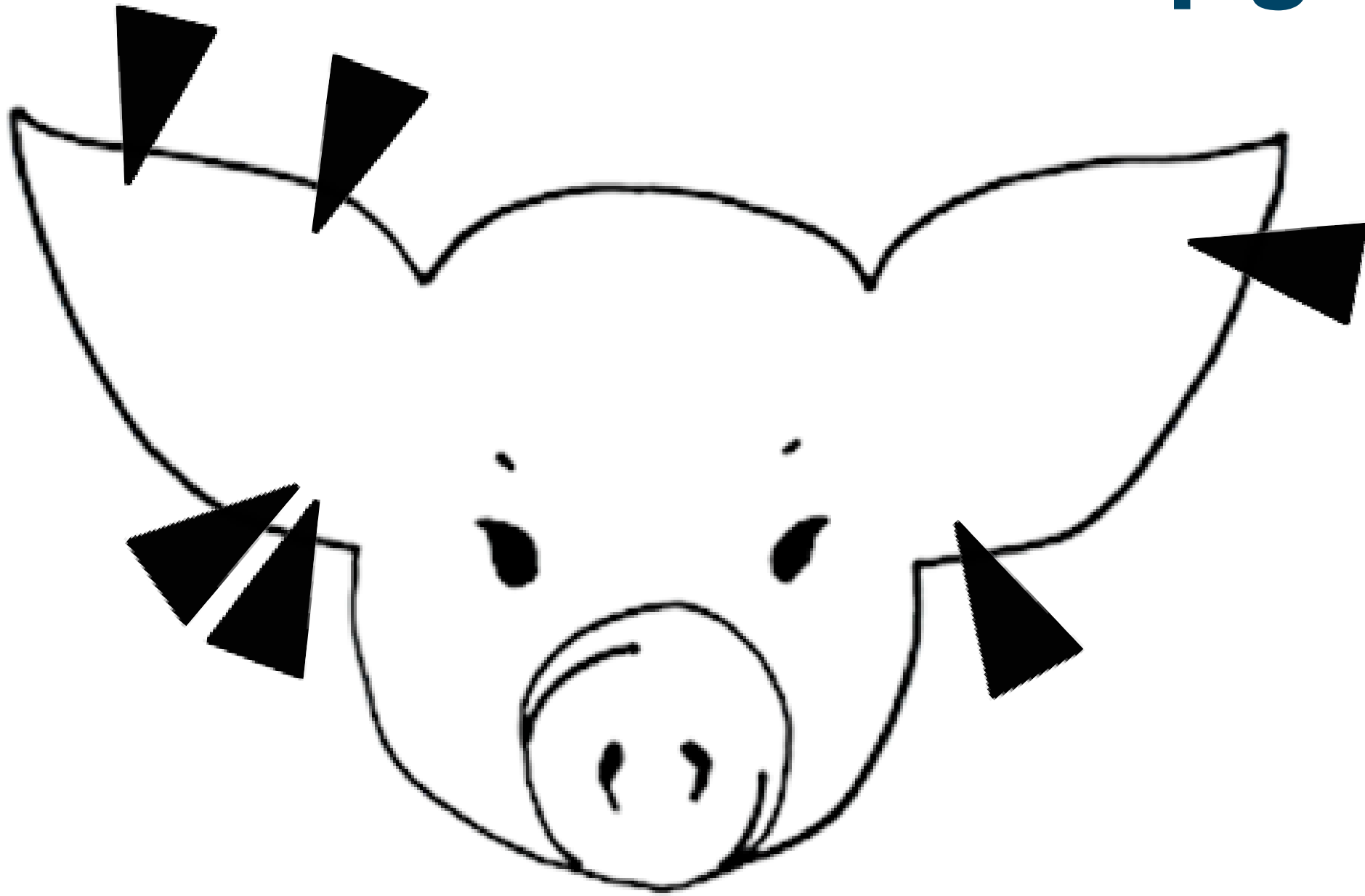
6-9

6-10

10-6

QUESTION 5

What is the ear notch of this pig?



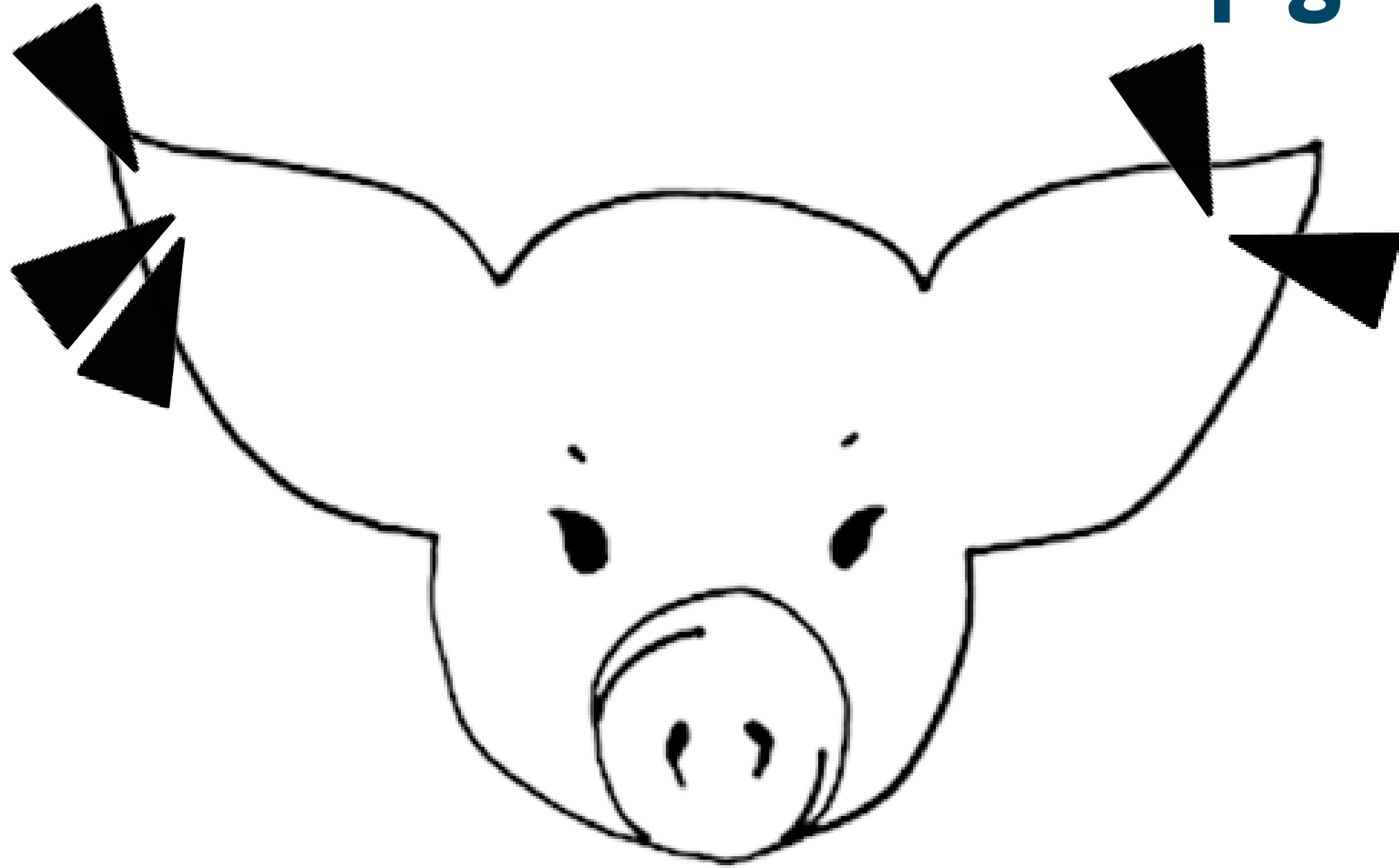
5-20

38-4

5-37

QUESTION 6

What is the ear notch of this pig?



87-12

90-12

84-9

QUIZ ANSWERS

Check your knowledge!

ANSWERS

1. The right ear identifies the individual pig in the litter?

- FALSE, When doing ear notches, the right ear identifies the litter number and the left ear identifies the individual pig in that litter.

2. What is the litter number of this pig?

- The litter number is 85.

3. What is the individual pig in this in the litter?

- The individual pig number is 5.

4. What is the ear notch of this pig?

- 10-6.

5. What is the ear notch of this pig?

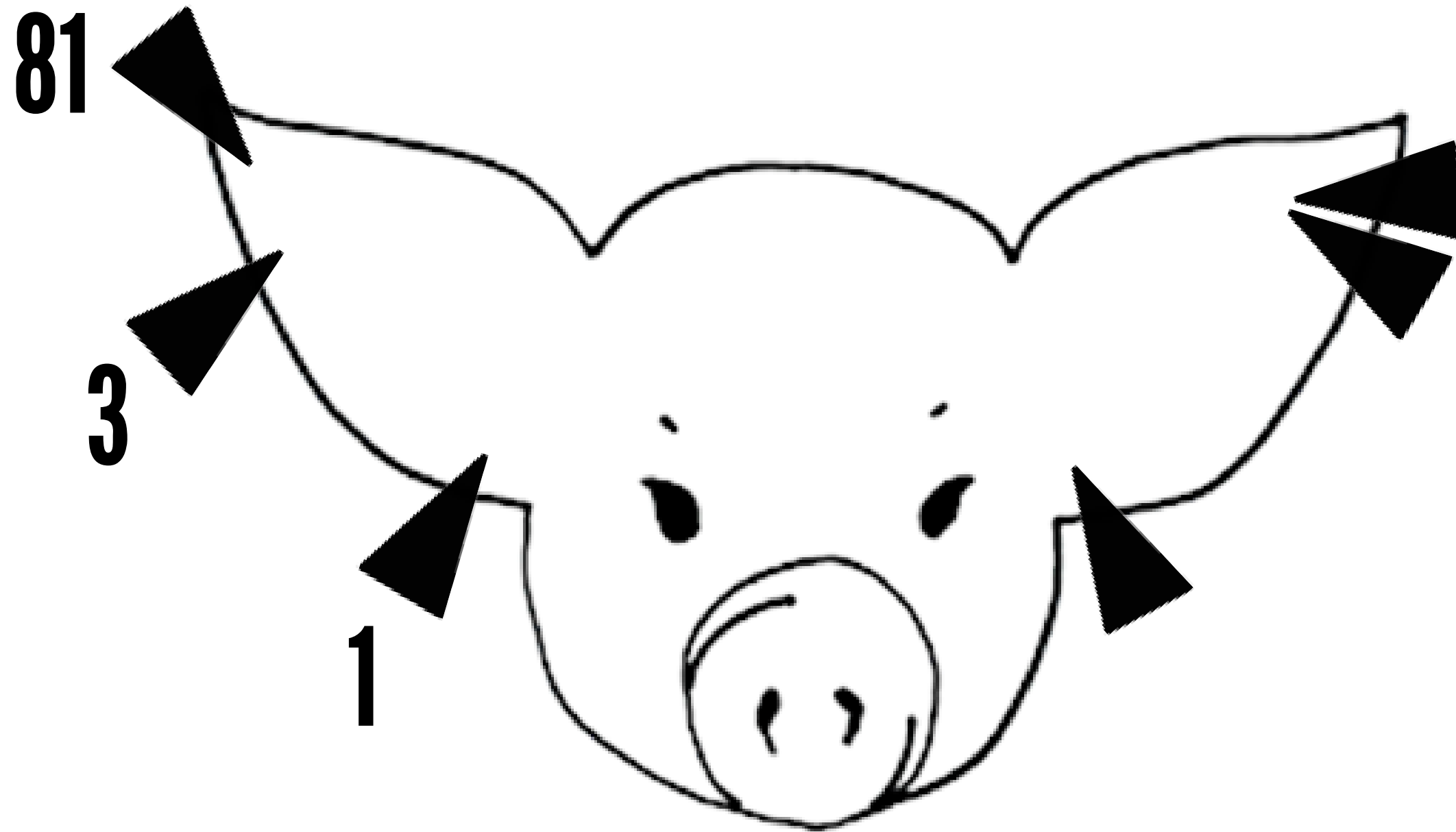
- 38-4.

6. What is the ear notch of this pig?

- 87-12.

QUESTION 2 EXPLANATION

What is the litter number of this pig?



85

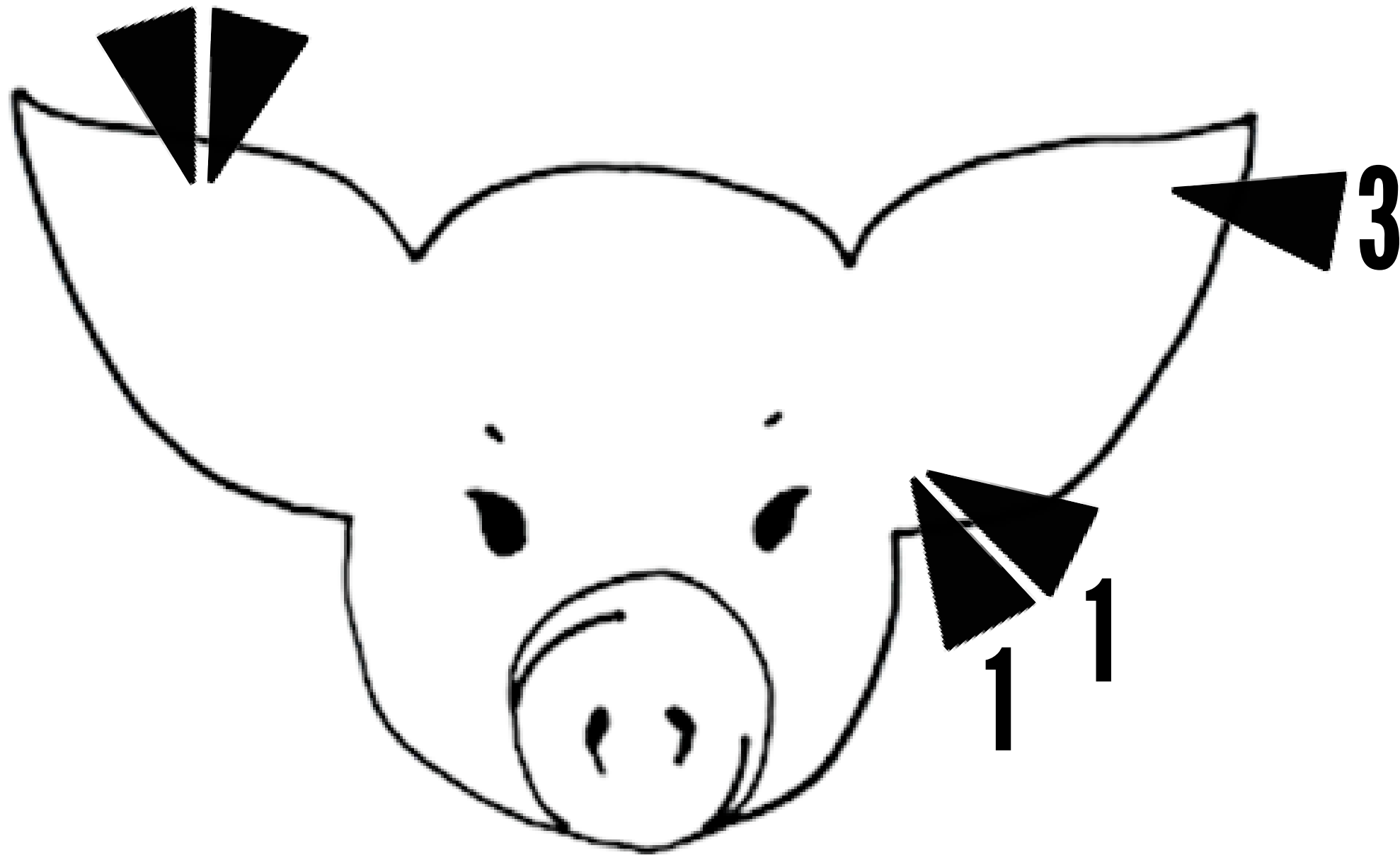
87

83

We look at the right ear and see an 81, a 3, and a 1. ($81 + 3 + 1 = 85$)

QUESTION 3 EXPLANATION

What is the individual pig is in this litter?



7

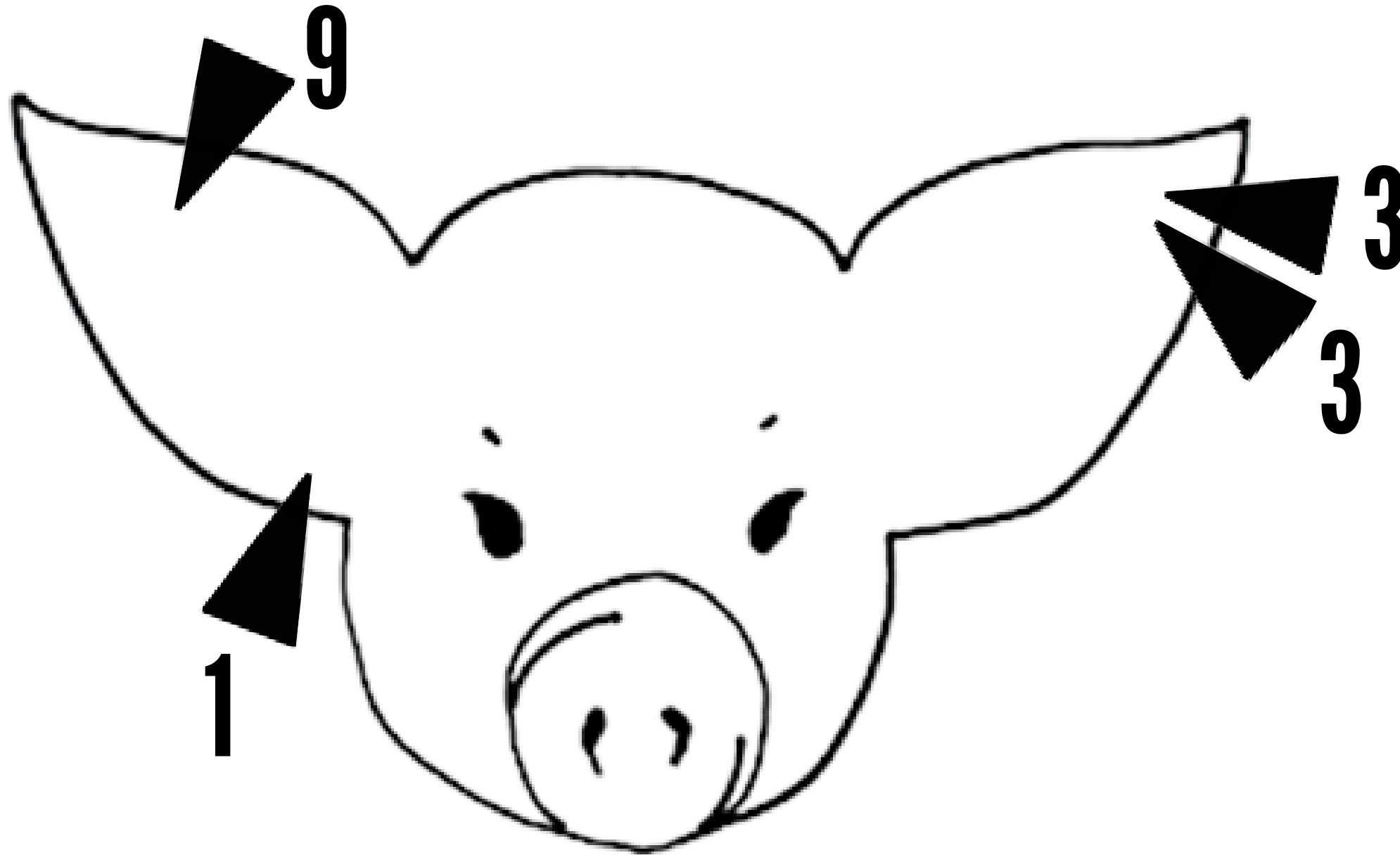
5

9

We look at the left ear and see a 3, and two notches in the 1 area. ($3 + 1 + 1 = 5$)

QUESTION 4 EXPLANATION

What is the ear notch of this pig?



6-9

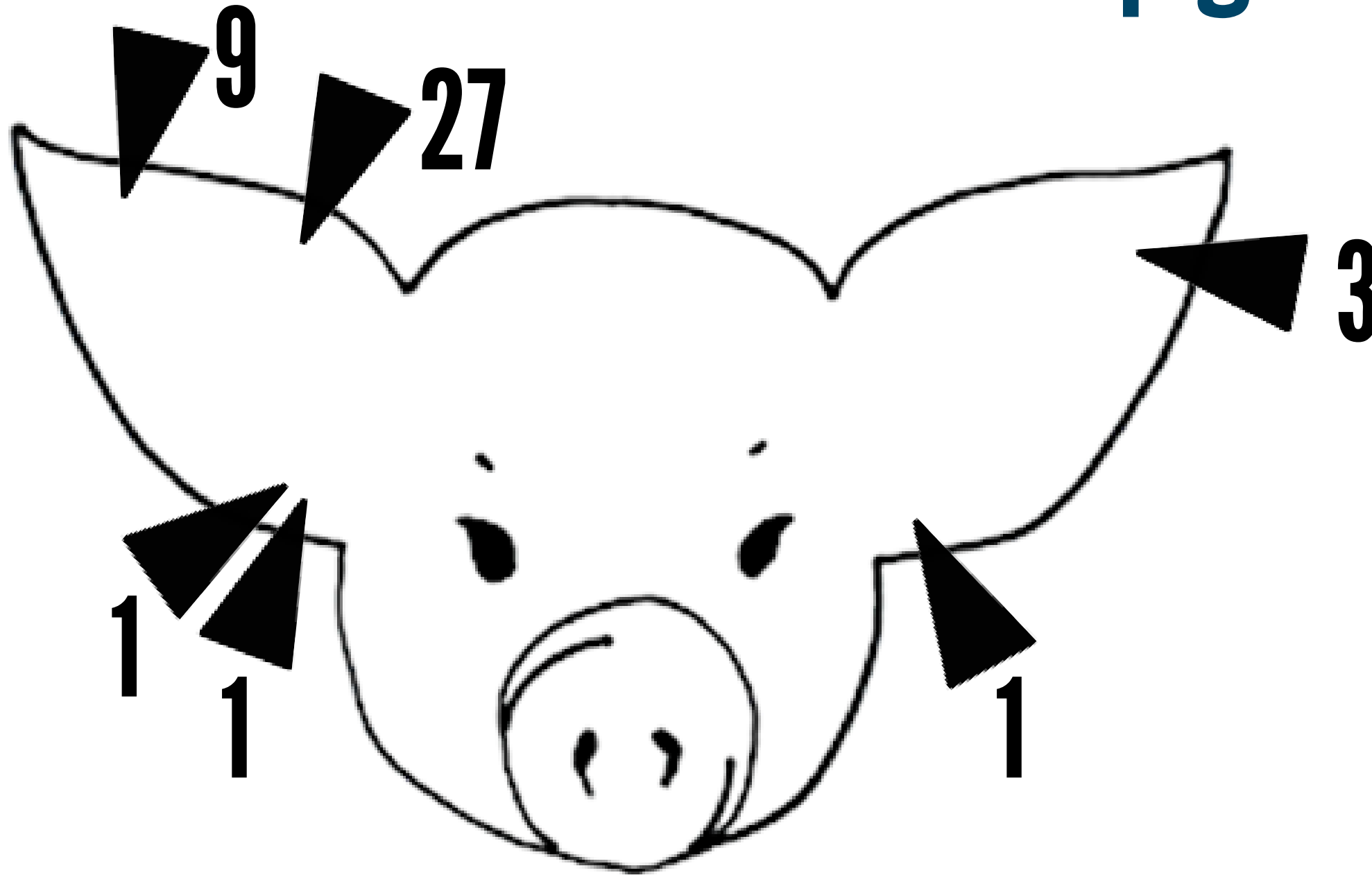
6-10

10-6

We look at the litter number and see: $(9 + 1 = 10)$. We look at the individual pig number and see: $(3 + 3 = 6)$

QUESTION 5 EXPLANATION

What is the ear notch of this pig?



Right Ear: $(27 + 9 + 1 + 1 = 38)$. Left Ear: $(3 + 1 = 4)$

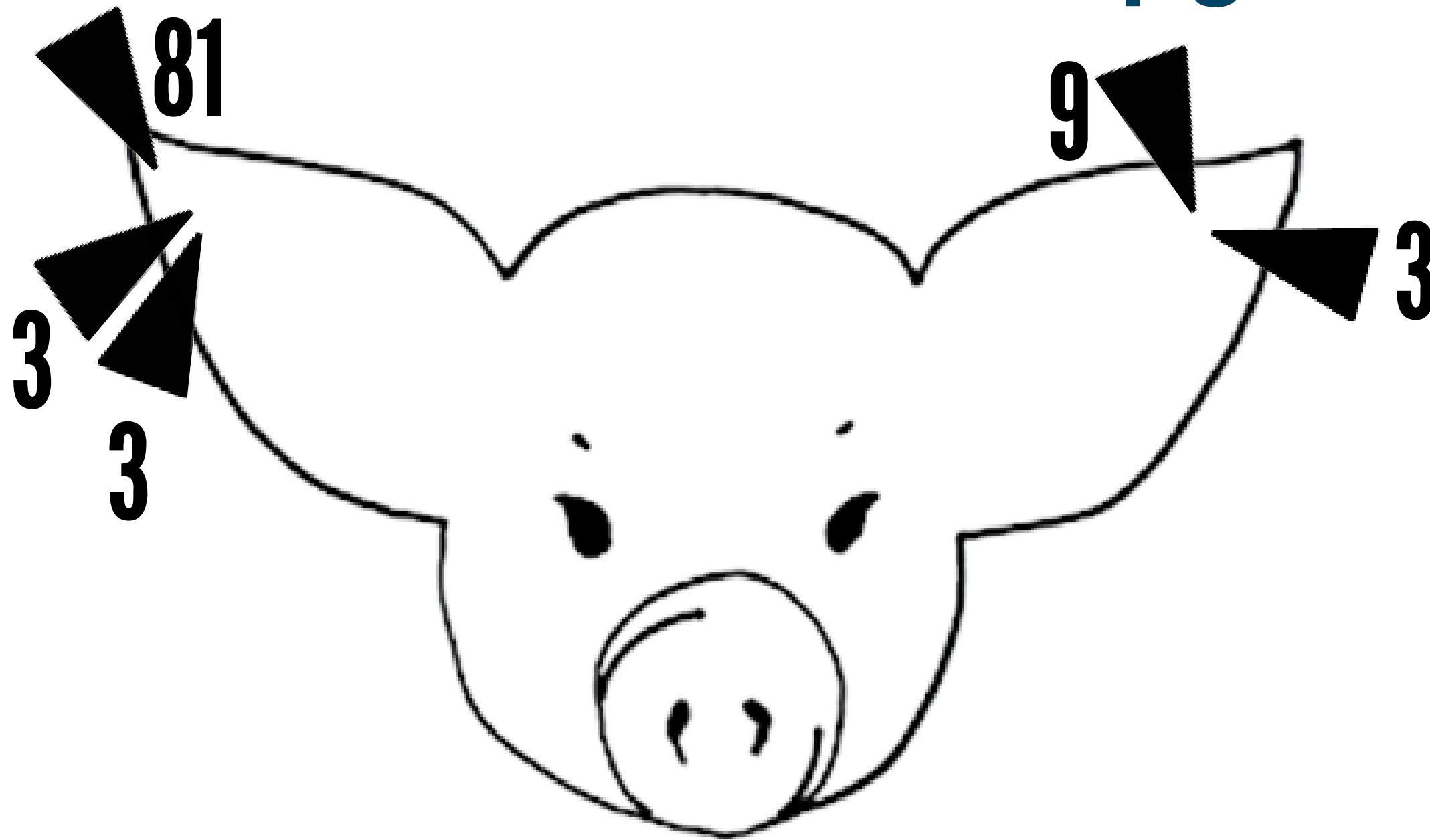
5-20

38-4

5-37

QUESTION 6 EXPLANATION

What is the ear notch of this pig?



Right Ear: $(81 + 3 + 3 = 87)$. Left Ear: $(9 + 3 = 12)$

87-12

90-12

84-9

Congratulations!

**You've completed the "Ear Notching"
resource! Great Work!**

**Keep going through the resources to
learn more about swine!**