Primary Writing Lines: Top, Middle, and Baseline Guides for Handwriting Practice

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Write the word 'mat' on a primary ruled row. Check each letter against the guides.

Answer: The m, a, and t bodies sit between the middle line and baseline. The tall stroke of t rises above the middle line but does not need to reach the top line. This is one acceptable placement.

Reason: Short letters use the middle line and baseline; t is a tall letter but often rises only partway.

Check: Use the rubric: short-letter bodies between middle line and baseline; tall stroke placement checked against the top line; no descenders in this word.

Task 2

Write the word 'pig' on a primary ruled row. Check the descender.

Answer: The p and i bodies sit between the middle line and baseline. The g body sits between the middle line and baseline, and its descender goes below the baseline without touching the next row.

Reason: p and g have descenders; i is a short letter with a dot above its body.

Check: Use the rubric: descenders below the baseline; no collision with the next row; short-letter bodies correctly placed.

Task 3

Write the sentence 'A cat sat.' on a sentence row with a start point and stop point. Check word spacing.

Answer: Each word is written once with a clear gap between words. The gaps between words are wider than the gaps between letters inside each word. The period sits after the last word.

Reason: Sentence rows add a start and stop point so spacing can be judged across the line.

Check: Use the rubric: word gaps wider than letter gaps; all letters checked against the guides; sentence fits between start and stop points.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Plan a word-list row for a child whose short letters are about 1 cm tall. Decide how much space to leave above and below, then explain how you would verify the printed result.

Answer: Use a hypothetical row with about 1 cm for short letters, additional space above for tall letters, and additional space below for descenders. After printing, measure the top-to-baseline distance with a ruler and compare it to the child's writing. Adjust the sheet or printer scaling if the printed height differs from the plan.

Reason: Row height should match the child's current writing size, and printer scaling can change the printed distance.

Check: Measure the printed top-to-baseline distance with a ruler; check that tall letters and descenders still fit; use the rubric for placement.

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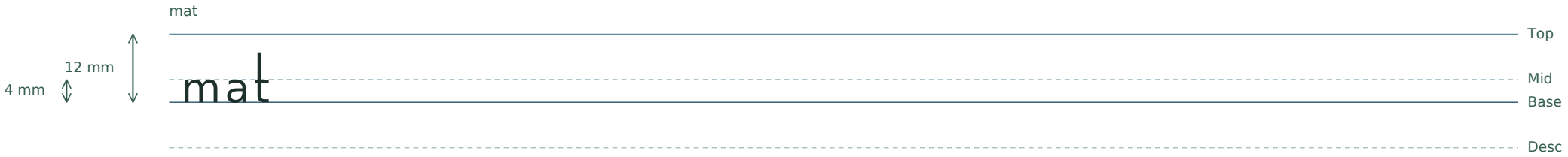
Worked example: 'dog' placed against the guides



Chosen example dimensions: 2:1:2 zones at 4 mm x-height. Model placement only; letter shapes may vary.

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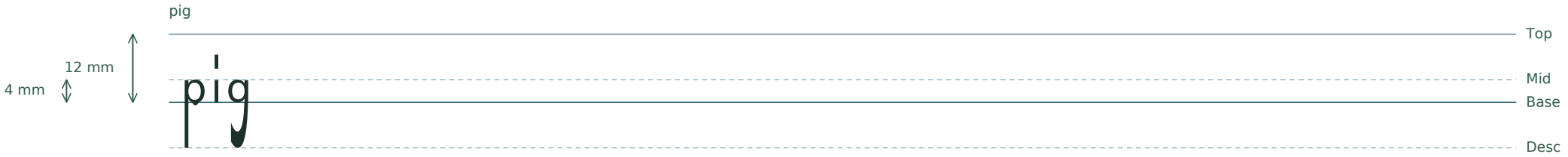
Task 1 / guide-placement example



Chosen example dimensions: 2:1:2 zones at 4 mm x-height. Blank copying attempts; no completed answer printed.

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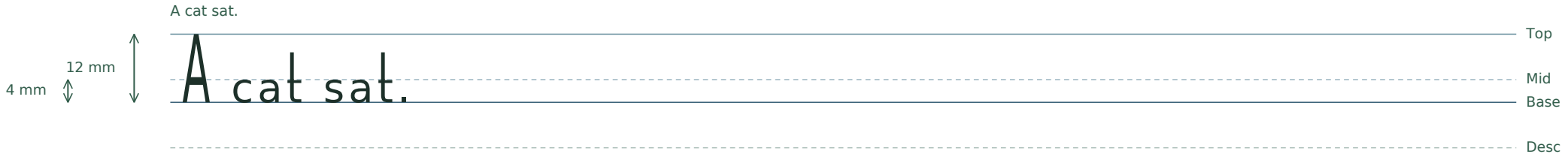
Task 2 / guide-placement example



Chosen example dimensions: 2:1:2 zones at 4 mm x-height. Descender space shown; blank copying attempts.

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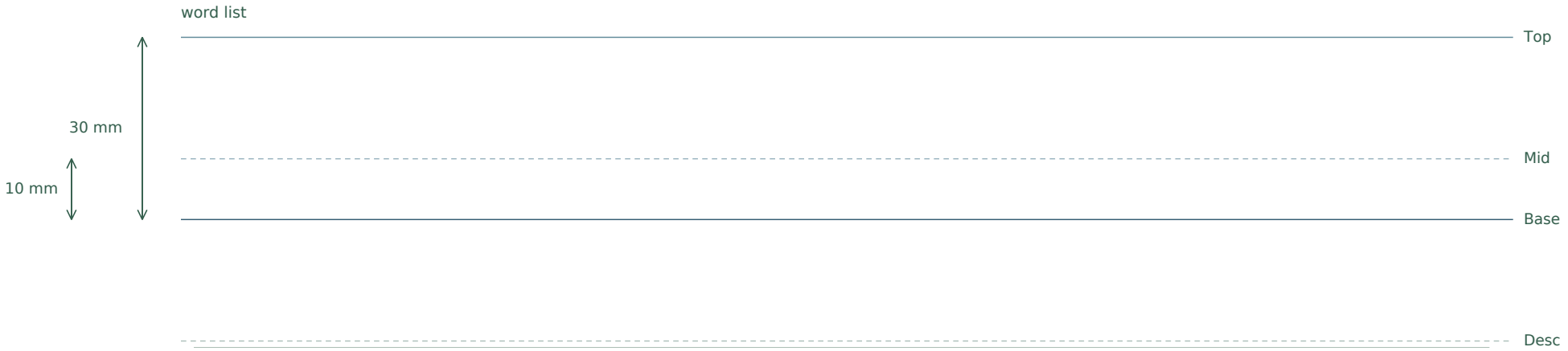
Task 3 / guide-placement example



Chosen example dimensions: 2:1:2 zones at 4 mm x-height. Start/stop points are the row ends; blank copying attempts.

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Task 4 / measured guide-layout example



Chosen hypothetical plan: 2:1:2 zones at 10 mm x-height (top 30, mid 10, desc 20). Verify printed top-to-baseline with a ruler.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Short-letter bodies sit between the dashed middle line and the solid baseline.
- [ ] Tall strokes reach the top line without crossing it.
- [ ] Descenders stay below the baseline and do not touch the next row.
- [ ] Word gaps are clearly wider than gaps between letters inside a word.
- [ ] The child can point to the top line, middle line, and baseline when asked.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?