D'Nealian Slanted-Stroke Letter Practice Rows: A Planning Guide

Complete worked example / separate answer key

Plan one row for the letter l using a hypothetical 15-degree slant and 5 mm x-height. The row is 20 mm tall. Describe the model, tracing guides, and blank space, and state one check.

Answer: Draw a baseline and a midline 5 mm apart. Mark a slant guide at 15 degrees from vertical. Place one model l whose downstroke follows the guide and whose body sits between baseline and midline. Add two faded tracing copies. Leave the rest of the 20 mm row blank. Check that the model downstroke is close to the slant guide and that the body touches baseline and midline.

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Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A planned row is 24 mm tall. The x-height is 6 mm. How many full x-height bands fit vertically in the row if each band is 6 mm? Show the arithmetic.

Answer: 4 bands.

Reason: Divide row height by x-height: 24 mm divided by 6 mm equals 4. This is a simple check that the row can contain four x-height bands, though ascenders and descenders may need extra guide lines.

Check: Recalculate 24 divided by 6 and confirm the units cancel to a count.

Task 2

A page is 180 mm tall with 15 mm margins at top and bottom. Each practice row is 20 mm. How many rows fit? Show the arithmetic.

Answer: 7 rows.

Reason: Usable height is 180 minus 15 minus 15 equals 150 mm. Divide 150 by 20 equals 7.5, so 7 full rows fit.

Check: Multiply 7 rows by 20 mm to get 140 mm, which is less than 150 mm; 8 rows would need 160 mm, which is too many.

Task 3

A tracing row has one model letter and three faded copies. The row is 100 mm wide and each letter space is 20 mm. How many blank letter spaces remain after the model and copies? Show the arithmetic.

Answer: 1 blank space.

Reason: Total spaces are 100 divided by 20 equals 5. The model and three copies use 4 spaces, leaving 1 blank space.

Check: Count 1 model plus 3 copies plus 1 blank equals 5 spaces; 5 times 20 mm equals 100 mm.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A learner writes five letters in a blank row. Four letters sit between baseline and midline; one letter rises 2 mm above the midline. Using the rubric, describe a fair check and a next step.

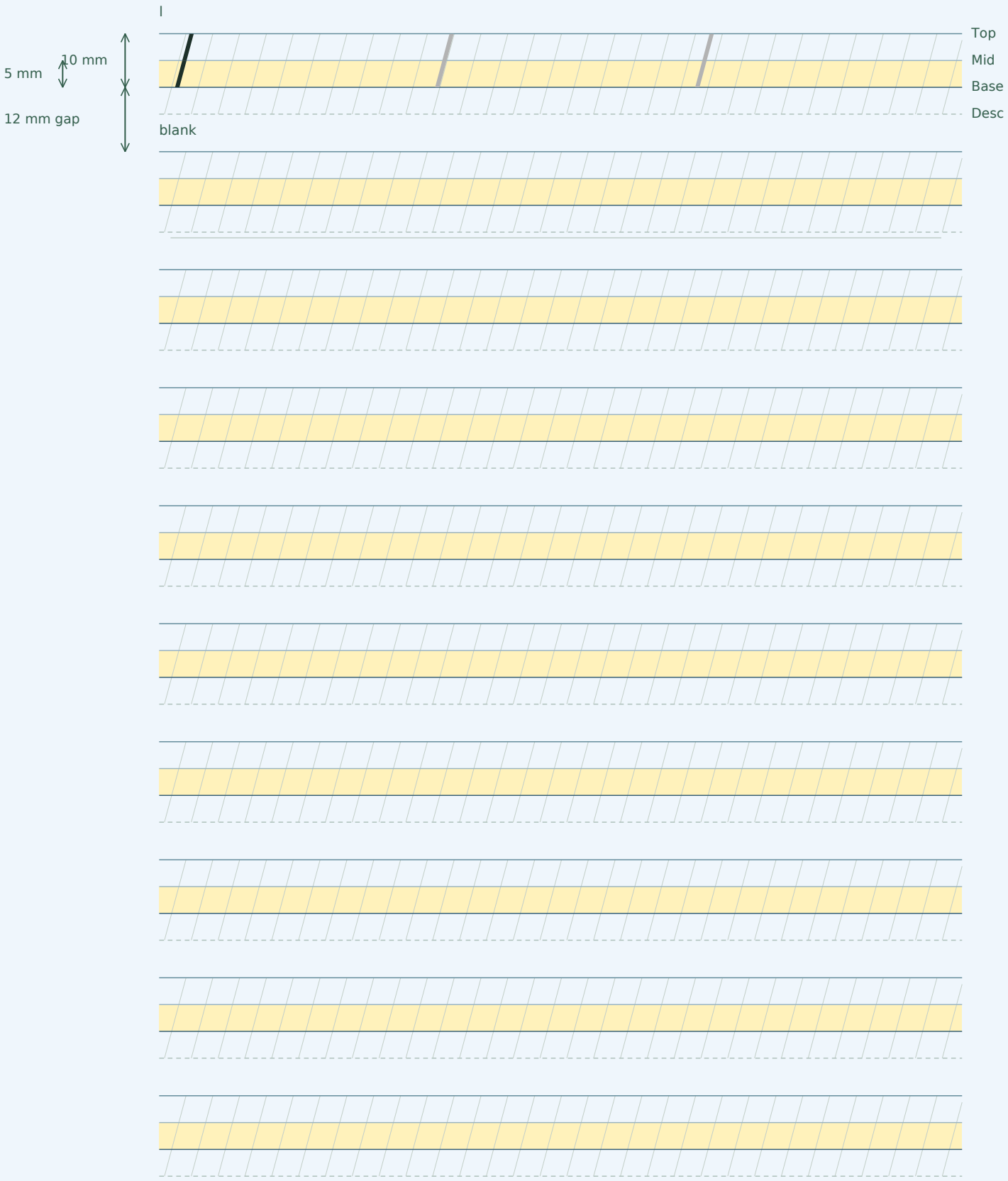
Answer: The row is close with minor variation. Check the one letter against the midline and ask the learner to adjust its body to sit between baseline and midline; keep the four valid letters as evidence of the convention.

Reason: The rubric accepts minor variation but requires the body to sit between baseline and midline. One letter needs adjustment, while four meet the convention.

Check: Measure the one letter from baseline to its top; if it exceeds the midline by 2 mm, mark it for adjustment and recheck after practice.

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Worked example / Answer sheet: one valid example per row



Answer example: model l, two faded tracing copies, blank space. Hypothetical 5 mm x-height and 15-degree slant from vertical. Other valid slants and letter styles are acceptable.

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Task 1, Task 2, Task 3, Task 4 / Exercise answers and reasoning

Worked answers preserved from source.

Exercise 1: 4 bands. Reasoning: 24 mm divided by 6 mm equals 4. Check: recalculate 24 divided by 6 and confirm units cancel to a count.

Exercise 2: 7 rows. Reasoning: usable height is 180 minus 15 minus 15 equals 150 mm; 150 divided by 20 equals 7.5, so 7 full rows fit. Check: 7 times 20 mm equals 140 mm, less than 150 mm; 8 rows would need 160 mm, too many.

Exercise 3: 1 blank space. Reasoning: 100 divided by 20 equals 5 spaces; model plus three copies use 4 spaces, leaving 1 blank. Check: 1 model plus 3 copies plus 1 blank equals 5 spaces; 5 times 20 mm equals 100 mm.

Exercise 4: The row is close with minor variation. Check the one letter against the midline and ask the learner to adjust its body to sit between baseline and midline; keep the four valid letters as evidence of the convention. Reasoning: the rubric accepts minor variation but requires the body to sit between baseline and midline. Check: measure the one letter from baseline to its top; if it exceeds the midline by 2 mm, mark it for adjustment and recheck after practice.

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Worked example / Answer key: slant, x-height, spacing checks

Qualitative key; other valid slants and letter styles are acceptable.

Slant: main downstroke is close to the stated slant guide; minor variation is acceptable.

X-height: body of the letter sits between baseline and midline.

Ascenders and descenders: reach faint guide lines without crossing unrelated rows.

Spacing: letters are separate and gaps are roughly even.

Tracing: faded copies are followed closely enough to show the slanted stroke.

Blank practice: independent letters keep the same slant and x-height convention. Other valid slants and letter styles are acceptable.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Slant: main downstroke is close to the stated slant guide; minor variation is acceptable.
- [ ] X-height: body of the letter sits between baseline and midline.
- [ ] Ascenders and descenders: reach faint guide lines without crossing unrelated rows.
- [ ] Spacing: letters are separate and gaps are roughly even.
- [ ] Tracing: faded copies are followed closely enough to show the slanted stroke.
- [ ] Blank practice: independent letters keep the same slant and x-height convention.

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