Dolch and Fry Sight Word Tracing Sheets: Design and Use Guide

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A tracing row is 18 cm wide. One handwritten word is about 3 cm wide. If you leave 1 cm between words, how many repetitions fit in the row? Use the hypothetical measurements given.

Answer: Four repetitions fit, using 15 cm and leaving 3 cm.

Reason: Four words use 4 × 3 cm = 12 cm. Three gaps between them use 3 × 1 cm = 3 cm. Total = 12 cm + 3 cm = 15 cm, which is less than 18 cm. Five repetitions would need 5 × 3 cm + 4 × 1 cm = 15 cm + 4 cm = 19 cm, which exceeds 18 cm. So four is the maximum.

Check: Add the widths and gaps aloud: 3 + 1 + 3 + 1 + 3 + 1 + 3 = 15 cm, and confirm 15 cm is less than 18 cm while 19 cm is more.

Task 2

A learner copies the word 'said' but the 'd' descender stops at the baseline. Using the convention, what should be corrected, and what should be accepted?

Answer: The 'd' should go below the baseline into the descender space. The letter style itself should be accepted if the word is legible and the other letters follow the line positions.

Reason: The convention states that descenders go below the baseline. The 'd' is a descender letter in this word. Letter styles vary, so the correction is about line position, not a single shape.

Check: Look at the baseline and descender line: the bottom of the 'd' should cross below the baseline.

Task 3

You have a checklist with columns for word, traced, copied, and note. A learner traced 'come' but copied it with wide spacing between letters. What note is appropriate, and what is the next step?

Answer: Note 'spacing wide' and ask the learner to copy the word again with letters closer together, then check spacing against the rubric.

Reason: The checklist records a short observation. Wide spacing is a spacing issue, not a line-position issue. The next step is a focused retry on the blank copying row.

Check: Compare the letter gaps in the copy with the model and confirm the word remains legible.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A sheet lists five words but has only tracing rows and no blank copying rows. Using the resource blueprint, what is missing, and how would you fix it?

Answer: The blank copying rows and the checklist are missing. Add at least one blank copying row after each tracing row and include a checklist with word, traced, copied, and note columns.

Reason: The blueprint calls for tracing rows grouped by list, blank copying rows, and a checklist. Without copying rows, learners do not practice independently. Without a checklist, progress is not recorded.

Check: Count the tracing rows and blank copying rows, and confirm the checklist has the required columns.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Letters sit on the baseline where required.
- [ ] X-height letters stop at the midline.
- [ ] Ascenders reach the top line and descenders go below the baseline.
- [ ] Spacing between letters and words is clear and consistent.
- [ ] The word is legible and matches the target sight word.
- [ ] Valid alternative letter styles are accepted if line positions and spacing are correct.

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