Handwriting and Calligraphy Stroke Practice Plate: Build Control with Basic Strokes

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Plan a row of six horizontal strokes at the midline, each 2.0 units long (hypothetical example). The row has six strokes and five gaps. You want equal gaps of 0.4 units. Calculate the total row length from the start of the first stroke to the end of the last stroke.

Answer: Total row length = six strokes × 2.0 units + five gaps × 0.4 units = 12.0 + 2.0 = 14.0 units.

Reason: Each stroke contributes its length, and each gap contributes its width. There are five gaps between six strokes. Add stroke lengths and gap widths to get the total span.

Check: Recount: 6 strokes and 5 gaps. Multiply 6 by 2.0 to get 12.0; multiply 5 by 0.4 to get 2.0; add to get 14.0. Check that the number of gaps is one fewer than the number of strokes.

Task 2

A curved stroke row has seven strokes and six gaps. The gaps are measured as 0.3, 0.3, 0.4, 0.3, 0.3, and 0.3 units. Using the three-level scale, score spacing evenness and state one fix.

Answer: Spacing evenness: developing, because one gap is 0.4 units while the others are 0.3 units. Fix: repeat the row aiming for six gaps of 0.3 units, and check the gap count before starting.

Reason: Five gaps are 0.3 units and one is 0.4 units. The difference is small but checkable. The fix is to repeat with a consistent target gap and verify the count of strokes and gaps.

Check: Count the gaps: six gaps for seven strokes. Compare each gap to the target 0.3 units. If the 0.4-unit gap is the only outlier, the score is developing rather than needs practice.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

You are practicing looped strokes with a broad-edge pen. You choose a pen angle of 30 degrees (hypothetical example) and keep it constant for a row of five ascending loops. A friend says the loops must all be the same width. Explain how the rubric handles this and give one valid alternative.

Answer: The rubric checks family recognition, baseline contact, midline consistency, spacing, and smoothness, not a single universal loop width. A valid alternative is a row of five ascending loops that are slightly narrower than a model but consistent with each other and recognizable as loops. The 30-degree pen angle is noted on the row label and kept constant.

Reason: Letter styles vary, and loop width is a stylistic choice. The rubric allows valid alternatives when the stroke family is recognizable and the convention is consistent. Pen angle is a separate calligraphy variable noted on the label.

Check: Check that all five loops are recognizable, that their tops reach the midline within tolerance, that gaps are even, and that the pen angle note matches the actual angle used. Do not penalize narrower loops if they are consistent.

Task 4

A connector stroke row has nine strokes and eight gaps. You measure the total row span as 10.0 units and the nine strokes together as 7.0 units. Calculate the average gap width, assuming all gaps are equal.

Answer: Average gap width = $(10.0 - 7.0) \div 8 = 3.0 \div 8 = 0.375$ units.

Reason: Subtract the total stroke length from the total row span to get the total gap width. Divide by the number of gaps, which is eight for nine strokes.

Check: Recount: 9 strokes and 8 gaps. Subtract 7.0 from 10.0 to get 3.0. Divide 3.0 by 8 to get 0.375. Multiply 0.375 by 8 to confirm 3.0, then add 7.0 to confirm 10.0.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Baseline contact: strokes sit on the baseline where the family requires it; secure, developing, or needs practice.
- [ ] Midline consistency: stroke tops reach the chosen midline within a small tolerance; secure, developing, or needs practice.
- [ ] Spacing evenness: gaps between strokes are similar; count strokes and gaps to check; secure, developing, or needs practice.
- [ ] Stroke smoothness: curves and loops have no unintended sharp corners; secure, developing, or needs practice.
- [ ] Convention consistency: the chosen x-height and pen angle, if used, are noted and kept constant within a row; secure, developing, or needs practice.
- [ ] Valid alternatives: stylistic choices such as narrower loops or wider curves are noted and not penalized when the stroke family remains recognizable.

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