Fading Sentence Tracing: Solid, Dotted, Blank Rows

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

A row has a solid model 'I see a cat.' in segment one, a dotted trace-over in segment two, and a blank line in segment three. The learner traces segment two and writes segment three. Describe two checks you can make on the independent sentence without requiring exact letter shapes.

Answer: Check one: the independent sentence has four words in the order 'I see a cat.' Check two: the main body of each letter without an ascender or descender stays between baseline and midline.

Reason: The row structure fixes the sentence text and the convention fixes x-height placement. Letter shapes may vary, so the checks focus on word order and guideline placement rather than exact replication.

Check: Count the words in the independent sentence and compare to the model. Then inspect each letter's main body relative to the baseline and midline.

Task 2

A hypothetical row is 16 cm wide with 1 cm margins on each side, leaving 14 cm for three equal segments. What is the width of each segment, and why does this matter for sentence length?

Answer: Each segment is 14 cm divided by 3, which is about 4.67 cm. This matters because the sentence must fit within each segment without crowding, so a shorter sentence is needed if the segment width is small.

Reason: The arithmetic is simple division: 16 minus 1 minus 1 equals 14, and 14 divided by 3 is approximately 4.67. The segment width limits how many letters and spaces can fit legibly.

Check: Multiply 4.67 by 3 to get about 14, then add the two 1 cm margins to get 16 cm. Confirm the sentence fits within one segment by measuring a printed example.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

A learner's independent sentence has the correct words but every letter's main body rises above the midline. Using the convention that x-height is baseline to midline, what is the likely issue and what is one valid fix?

Answer: The likely issue is that the learner is not using the midline as the top of x-height. A valid fix is to point to the midline and ask the learner to keep the main body of letters without ascenders or descenders below it, then rewrite the sentence on a fresh blank segment.

Reason: The convention defines x-height as baseline to midline. If main bodies rise above the midline, the learner is exceeding x-height. The fix targets the convention rather than a specific letter style.

Check: After rewriting, inspect letters such as 'a', 'c', and 'e' and confirm their main bodies sit between baseline and midline.

Task 4

You are designing a row for the sentence 'We can go.' The solid model and dotted trace-over are ready, but the blank segment has no guidelines. Explain why this is a problem and what to add, using the row structure from this lesson.

Answer: The blank segment needs guidelines because the learner writes independently there and needs a baseline and midline to place letters correctly. Add the baseline and midline across the blank segment at the same height as the other segments.

Reason: The row structure requires a blank practice line, and the convention depends on baseline and midline placement. Without guidelines, the learner cannot apply the x-height convention consistently.

Check: Compare the blank segment to the solid and dotted segments and confirm the baseline and midline are at the same height across all three.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Sentence text matches the solid model in word order.
- [ ] Dotted trace-over follows the dotted strokes without skipping letters.
- [ ] Independent sentence is legible and uses consistent spacing.
- [ ] X-height stays between baseline and midline for letters without ascenders or descenders.
- [ ] Ascenders rise above the midline and descenders fall below the baseline where applicable.
- [ ] Letter style may vary from the model but remains consistent within the row.

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