Sight-Word Tracing Rows: Letter-Formation Guides for Handwriting Practice

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

A planned row shows the word 'the' with three dotted letters, three start dots, and three direction arrows. The learner traces all three letters and writes 'the' once in the blank space. The blank space is 24 mm wide and the written word occupies 18 mm. State the traced-letter count, the written-letter count, and the unused space. Then state one formation check for the letter t.

Answer: Traced-letter count is 3. Written-letter count is 3. Unused space is 6 mm. For t, check that the first stroke begins at the start dot and follows the arrow, and that the tall stem rises above the midline while the cross stroke is placed consistently. The 24 mm and 18 mm values are hypothetical examples.

Reason: The word 'the' has three letters, so both counts are 3. Subtract 18 mm from 24 mm to get 6 mm unused space. The t check uses the tall-letter rule and the start-dot rule.

Check: Count the letters in 'the'; subtract the written width from the blank width; confirm the t start dot and tall stem against the row guides.

Task 2

A planned row shows the word 'and' with three dotted letters. The learner traces two letters and stops. The blank copy space is empty. Using the trace-then-write routine, state what is incomplete and give the next action. Also state how many letters remain to be traced.

Answer: The trace is incomplete because only two of three letters were traced, and the blank copy space is empty. The next action is to trace the remaining letter from its start dot, then write 'and' once in the blank space. One letter remains to be traced.

Reason: The word 'and' has three letters. Two traced means one remains. The routine requires a written copy in the blank space before the check box is marked.

Check: Compare the traced-letter count with the word length; confirm the blank space contains one written copy.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

A planned row shows the word 'look' with four dotted letters. The learner traces all four letters, but the two o letters float above the baseline and cross the midline. The written copy in the blank space is legible. State whether the formation passes under the stated convention and give one fix.

Answer: The formation does not pass because the lowercase o letters should sit between baseline and midline. The written copy being legible does not override the formation convention. One fix is to circle one o, return to its start dot, and retrace it so it stays between baseline and midline. The word length is four, so four letters should be traced and four written.

Reason: The convention defines x-height as baseline to midline for lowercase letters including o. Floating above the baseline and crossing the midline breaks that check.

Check: Inspect each o against the baseline and midline; count traced and written letters to confirm both equal four.

Task 4

A planned row shows the word 'play' with four dotted letters. The learner traces all four letters correctly and writes 'play' once in the blank space. The blank space is 36 mm wide and the written word occupies 27 mm. State the unused space and list two rubric checks that this work can pass.

Answer: Unused space is 9 mm. Two rubric checks that can pass are: each traced letter begins at the marked start dot and follows the direction arrow; and the blank copy space contains one written copy of the same sight word. The p and y descenders should also be checked below the baseline. The 36 mm and 27 mm values are hypothetical examples.

Reason: Subtract 27 mm from 36 mm to get 9 mm. The described work includes tracing all letters and one written copy, so those rubric items can be checked directly.

Check: Subtract the written width from the blank width; confirm four traced letters and one written copy; inspect p and y below the baseline.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Each traced letter begins at the marked start dot.
- [ ] The first stroke of each traced letter follows the shown direction arrow.
- [ ] Lowercase letters a, c, e, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, and z sit between baseline and midline.
- [ ] Tall letters rise above the midline and descenders fall below the baseline.
- [ ] The blank copy space contains one written copy of the same sight word.
- [ ] Letter spacing is even enough that the word reads as one unit.
- [ ] Valid alternative letter styles are accepted when they follow the stated start point and direction convention.

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