Whole-Word Handwriting Tracing Worksheet: Design and Use

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A row models the word book. The trace is gray, and the blank zone has baseline, midline, and top line. A learner copies book with b and k reaching the top line, oo between baseline and midline, and even spacing. Does the copy follow the convention?

Answer: Yes. b and k are ascenders and reach the top line; the two o letters are x-height letters between baseline and midline; spacing is even and no letter is missing.

Reason: The convention places ascenders toward the top line and x-height letters between baseline and midline. The copy matches both and remains legible.

Check: Point to each letter and confirm its zone: b top line, o midline zone, o midline zone, k top line. Confirm all four letters appear in order.

Task 2

A row models the word play. A learner traces it, then copies play but writes p entirely above the baseline and omits y. Does the copy meet the rubric?

Answer: No. p is a descender and should extend below the baseline under the stated convention, and y is missing, so the whole word is not present.

Reason: The rubric requires all letters in order and correct placement of descenders. Both conditions fail.

Check: Count the letters in the copy against the model: four letters expected. Check that p crosses the baseline downward and that y is present.

Task 3

A row models the word cat. The learner copies cat with c, a, and t all between baseline and midline, but t does not reach the top line. Is the copy acceptable under the convention?

Answer: No, if the stated convention classifies t as an ascender reaching toward the top line. The copy is legible but does not follow the stated height convention.

Reason: The convention defines t as an ascender. A legible copy that keeps t only in the x-height zone conflicts with the stated convention, so it does not meet the height criterion.

Check: Compare t in the copy to the model: check whether its stem reaches the top line. Confirm c and a remain between baseline and midline.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A row models the word sun. A learner copies sun with even spacing and all letters between baseline and midline, but uses a slightly rounded s and a slanted u. Does the copy pass?

Answer: Yes. The word is complete, spacing is even, and all letters follow the x-height convention. Slight style variation is allowed.

Reason: The rubric rewards legibility and consistent use of the convention, not a single universal letter shape. Rounded or slanted forms are valid alternatives.

Check: Confirm s, u, and n appear in order, sit between baseline and midline, and read as one evenly spaced word.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Whole word is present: all letters appear in order with none omitted.
- [ ] Letter height follows the stated convention: x-height letters sit between baseline and midline; ascenders and descenders are placed as defined.
- [ ] Spacing between letters is even enough that the word reads as one unit.
- [ ] The copy is legible and consistent with the model's letter style, allowing valid alternatives such as slight slant or rounded joins.
- [ ] The learner completes model reading, tracing, and independent copying in the row.

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