Tattoo Drawing Easy: Line, Shading and Stencil Transfer Studies

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a 10 cm by 10 cm panel. A diamond motif is 4 cm wide and 6 cm tall. You want 1 cm margin on all sides. Does it fit, and what is the total horizontal margin?

Answer: Yes. Horizontal: 4 cm motif plus 1 cm each side equals 6 cm, leaving 4 cm total extra margin (2 cm each side if centered). Vertical: 6 cm plus 1 cm top and bottom equals 8 cm, leaving 2 cm extra.

Reason: Compare motif size plus required margins to panel size. Horizontal requirement is 4 + 1 + 1 = 6 cm, less than 10 cm. Vertical requirement is 6 + 1 + 1 = 8 cm, less than 10 cm.

Check: Measure the drawn motif and margins with a ruler; confirm each margin is at least 1 cm and the motif stays inside the panel.

Task 2

You draw five value squares. Square one is solid dark, square five is open. You hatch squares two, three, and four with spacing of 2 mm, 4 mm, and 6 mm. Which square should look darkest after square one, and why?

Answer: Square two should look darkest after square one because 2 mm spacing is the densest hatch among the three hatched squares.

Reason: Denser spacing means more lines per area, which reads as a darker value. The order from dark to light is solid, 2 mm, 4 mm, 6 mm, open.

Check: View the strip at arm's length and confirm the values step from dark to light without two adjacent squares merging.

Task 3

A motif outline is drawn with thick weight. You add three interior veins with the same thick weight. What is the likely visual problem, and what is one fix?

Answer: The outline may lose dominance because interior details compete at the same weight. Fix by redrawing the veins with thin weight.

Reason: Tattoo-style linework relies on weight hierarchy. Thick outline plus thick interior lines flattens the hierarchy.

Check: Squint at the drawing; the outline should still read as the main shape. If interior lines dominate, reduce their weight.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

You transfer a motif and find it sits 1 cm above the baseline. You want the base on the baseline. Describe one correction that avoids stretching the paper.

Answer: Lift one corner of the transfer, slide the paper down 1 cm, and press from the center outward. Recheck alignment by measuring from the panel edge to two matching points.

Reason: Sliding the transfer preserves proportions; stretching would distort the motif. Measuring two points confirms the shift is even.

Check: Measure the distance from the panel edge to the motif base at two locations; both should match the intended baseline position.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Line weights are labeled and used consistently: outline dominant, interior details thinner.
- [ ] Shading strip has at least three distinct values readable at arm's length.
- [ ] Motif sits on the baseline and stays within the practice panel with margin.
- [ ] Stencil transfer steps are followed in order: outline first, then interior lines.
- [ ] Valid alternatives are accepted: different motif shapes or hatch directions, provided value zones remain distinct and alignment is checked.

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