Cartoon Leaf Drawing: Simple, Lobed, and Compound Shapes with Veins

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a simple cartoon leaf 8 cm long with a straight midrib and three side veins per side. Space the vein start points about 1.5 cm apart along the midrib and stop each side vein 2 mm before the outline.

Answer: A teardrop silhouette 8 cm long, widest about one-third from the base, with a straight midrib from base to tip. Three side veins per side start at roughly 1.5 cm intervals and stop 2 mm before the outline, angling slightly toward the tip.

Reason: The simple leaf uses one continuous outline. Three side veins per side keep the pattern sparse and readable. The 1.5 cm spacing and 2 mm gap are hypothetical examples that make the arithmetic easy to check: three start points at about 1.5 cm intervals fit comfortably along an 8 cm midrib.

Check: Measure the length and confirm about 8 cm. Count three side veins per side and confirm the start points are spaced about 1.5 cm apart. Check that each vein stops before the outline and that the midrib reaches the tip.

Task 2

Draw a lobed cartoon leaf with three rounded lobes per side. Send one side vein into the center of each lobe and keep the blade connected between lobes. Use a curved midrib and stop side veins 3 mm before the outline.

Answer: A connected blade with three rounded lobes per side, a curved midrib from base to tip, and one side vein entering each lobe center. Side veins stop 3 mm before the outline and do not cross.

Reason: Lobed leaves remain one piece, so the outline must curve inward between lobes rather than break into leaflets. One vein per lobe explains the shape. The 3 mm gap is a hypothetical example for consistent checking.

Check: Count three lobes per side and confirm the blade is connected between them. Check that each lobe has one side vein near its center. Verify no side vein crosses the outline or another vein.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a compound cartoon leaf with five leaflets: two pairs plus one at the tip. Give each leaflet its own short midrib and two side veins per side. Keep leaflets separate and attach them to a central stem.

Answer: A central stem with five separate oval leaflets: two pairs attached along the stem and one at the tip. Each leaflet has a short midrib and two side veins per side that stop before its outline.

Reason: Compound leaves are drawn as separate leaflets, each with its own vein structure. Five leaflets create a clear cartoon pattern. Two side veins per side per leaflet keeps each small shape readable.

Check: Count five leaflets and confirm they are separate. Check that each leaflet has a midrib and two side veins per side. Verify all leaflets attach to the central stem.

Task 4

Redraw the simple leaf from the first exercise, but change the midrib to a gentle curve and use four side veins per side. Keep the length at 8 cm and stop side veins 2 mm before the outline. Compare the two versions and note one improvement.

Answer: An 8 cm simple leaf with a gently curved midrib and four side veins per side, each stopping 2 mm before the outline. The comparison note should identify a specific change, such as clearer vein spacing or a smoother silhouette.

Reason: Changing one variable at a time builds control. The curved midrib adds life, and four side veins per side test spacing without overcrowding. The comparison note encourages self-evaluation rather than copying.

Check: Measure the length and confirm about 8 cm. Count four side veins per side. Check the 2 mm stop gap and confirm the midrib is curved. Read the comparison note and verify it names one concrete improvement.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Silhouette clearly matches the chosen leaf type: simple, lobed, or compound.
- [ ] Midrib runs from base to tip and is visually heavier than side veins.
- [ ] Side veins branch outward, stop before the outline, and do not cross each other.
- [ ] Vein pattern supports the shape: lobe-centered for lobed leaves, separate midribs for compound leaflets.
- [ ] Line weight creates hierarchy between silhouette, midrib, and side veins.
- [ ] Drawing reads clearly at arm's length with a simplified vein count.
- [ ] Valid alternatives are accepted if the convention is consistent and the leaf type remains identifiable.

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