Draw a Teacup: Rim Ellipse, Handle, and Saucer

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a teacup with a rim width of 10 cm and rim height of 4 cm. The body height is 8 cm. Add a handle with two attachment points and a saucer width of 14 cm. Describe the rim ellipse and saucer alignment.

Answer: The rim ellipse has width 10 cm and height 4 cm, so it is wider than tall. The body height is 8 cm, tapering to a narrower base. The handle attaches near the rim and halfway down the body. The saucer ellipse has width 14 cm and its long axis is parallel to the rim's long axis.

Reason: The rim height is smaller than the rim width, which makes a valid ellipse. The saucer is wider than the cup and aligned with the rim, so the construction is consistent.

Check: Measure the rim width and height and confirm height is smaller. Check that the handle has two attachment points on the body contour. Confirm the saucer's long axis is parallel to the rim's long axis.

Task 2

A drawing shows a cup with rim width 9 cm, rim height 5 cm, body height 6 cm, and a handle that touches the body at one point. The saucer width is 11 cm. Identify two problems and state fixes.

Answer: Problem one: the handle touches at only one point, so it looks pasted on. Fix: mark two attachment points on the body contour and connect the handle between them. Problem two: the rim height (5 cm) is more than half the rim width (9 cm), making the ellipse too tall. Fix: reduce the rim height so it is clearly smaller than the width.

Reason: A handle needs two attachment points to read as attached. An ellipse for a teacup rim seen from slightly above should have a height noticeably smaller than its width.

Check: Count the handle attachment points on the body contour. Compare rim height to rim width and confirm the height is clearly smaller.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a teacup with rim width 7 cm, rim height 2.5 cm, body height 6 cm, and saucer width 10 cm. The saucer's long axis is tilted 20 degrees away from the rim's long axis. State whether the alignment is acceptable and what to change.

Answer: The alignment is not acceptable because the saucer's long axis should be parallel or nearly parallel to the rim's long axis. Change the saucer so its long axis matches the rim's long axis, then redraw the saucer ellipse.

Reason: A tilted saucer axis makes the cup look unstable. Parallel axes keep the perspective consistent.

Check: Compare the two long axes. If they differ by more than a small amount, redraw the saucer with a parallel axis.

Task 4

A student draws a teacup with rim width 8 cm, rim height 3 cm, body height 7 cm, a two-point handle, and saucer width 12 cm. The cup base sits outside the saucer's inner ellipse. Identify the problem and the fix.

Answer: The problem is that the cup base sits outside the saucer's inner ellipse, so the cup appears to float or overlap incorrectly. Fix: enlarge the saucer's inner ellipse or reposition the cup base so it sits inside the inner ellipse.

Reason: The saucer's inner ellipse represents the recessed center where the cup rests. The base should sit within it for a stable construction.

Check: Trace the cup base and confirm it lies inside the saucer's inner ellipse. If not, adjust the inner ellipse or the base position.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Rim is drawn as a symmetrical ellipse with height clearly smaller than width.
- [ ] Body tapers slightly inward from rim to a narrower base curve.
- [ ] Handle attaches at two distinct points on the body contour and arcs outward.
- [ ] Saucer is a wider ellipse with its long axis parallel to the rim's long axis.
- [ ] Cup base sits inside the saucer's inner ellipse.
- [ ] Final contours are clean and construction lines are erased.
- [ ] Proportions are measured and consistent in the same units.

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