Cross-Contour Still Life Drawing: Map Curved Surfaces with Wrapping Lines

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A bottle has a narrow neck and a wide, rounded body. Describe where cross-contour lines should be spaced tightly and where they should be spaced widely.

Answer: Lines should be spaced tightly around the narrow neck and widely across the broad, gently curved body.

Reason: Tight spacing describes surfaces that curve sharply or turn away quickly, as at the neck. Wide spacing describes broad, gently curved surfaces, as across the body.

Check: Confirm that the neck has closer spacing than the body and that the body lines curve gently rather than sharply.

Task 2

A bowl is viewed from slightly above. Its front surface curves outward, and its rim is nearly circular. Describe the direction of cross-contour lines across the front and near the rim.

Answer: Across the front, lines curve downward in the center and upward at the sides. Near the rim, lines become tighter and more circular, following the rim's curve.

Reason: The front surface bulges toward the viewer, producing a downward center curve. The rim is a tighter, more circular form, so lines there follow a smaller radius.

Check: Check that front lines curve consistently and that rim lines are tighter and more circular than front lines.

Task 3

An apple sits beside a tall jar. The apple is round; the jar is cylindrical. Describe how the cross-contour lines on each object differ in curvature and spacing.

Answer: The apple's lines curve more strongly and change direction near its top and bottom, with spacing tightening at the edges. The jar's lines curve gently and consistently, with even spacing across the front and tighter spacing at the sides.

Reason: A round form produces lines that change curvature across its surface, while a cylinder produces consistent curvature. Spacing tightens where each surface turns away.

Check: Confirm that apple lines change curvature near top and bottom, jar lines remain consistent, and both tighten at turning edges.

Cross-Contour Still Life Drawing: Map Curved Surfaces with Wrapping Lines

Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A rectangular box is placed at an angle. Describe how cross-contour lines cross its flat faces and what happens at its edges.

Answer: On each flat face, lines are nearly straight and evenly spaced. At edges, lines change direction sharply, turning to follow the adjacent face.

Reason: Flat surfaces produce straight or nearly straight cross-contour lines. Edges are boundaries where the surface direction changes, so lines turn there.

Check: Check that face lines are straight and evenly spaced and that lines turn sharply at edges rather than curving gradually.

Cross-Contour Still Life Drawing: Map Curved Surfaces with Wrapping Lines

Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Each major object has at least three cross-contour lines crossing its visible surface.
- [ ] Line spacing changes in response to changes in surface curvature.
- [ ] Lines curve in directions consistent with the observed object's form.
- [ ] Lines remain continuous across surfaces and do not stop arbitrarily.
- [ ] No shading is used to compensate for unclear line description.
- [ ] Line style may vary, but the drawing consistently communicates three-dimensional form.

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