Tattoo Drawing Exercises: Line, Curve and Shading Drills

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw five parallel lines with four equal gaps. The total width is 40 mm. What is each gap, and how do you check spacing?

Answer: Each gap is 10 mm because 40 mm divided by four gaps equals 10 mm. Check by measuring each gap and comparing to the average.

Reason: Equal gaps require dividing total width by the number of gaps. Four gaps from five lines is a simple arithmetic check.

Check: Measure each gap with a ruler; all gaps should be close to 10 mm. If one gap is 13 mm, redraw the dots.

Task 2

Draw three C-curves that start and end on the baseline and peak at the midline. Describe how you check smoothness without referring to an image.

Answer: Run a finger along each curve and feel for flat spots or kinks. A smooth curve has continuous direction change and even pressure.

Reason: Smoothness is a tactile and visual check: flat spots indicate a stop or rush. Valid alternatives include wider or narrower arcs.

Check: Mark any flat spot and redraw the curve directly below; compare the redrawn curve to the original for continuity.

Task 3

Draw a rectangle divided into four bands for gradient shading. The rectangle is 40 mm wide. What is each band width, and how do you check evenness?

Answer: Each band is 10 mm because 40 mm divided by four bands equals 10 mm. Check evenness by comparing adjacent bands: each should be slightly darker than the one before.

Reason: Equal band widths make pressure changes easier to judge. Adjacent-band comparison is a simple visual check.

Check: Measure band widths and look for dark patches inside light bands; adjust pressure if two adjacent bands look the same.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Draw an S-curve that crosses the midline once. State one pass criterion and one valid alternative.

Answer: Pass criterion: continuous curve with no flat spots and even pressure. Valid alternative: a wider or narrower S-curve that still crosses the midline once.

Reason: Control traits matter more than exact shape. The midline crossing is a simple structural check.

Check: Trace the curve with a finger for continuity; confirm the midline is crossed once; redraw if a flat spot appears.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Parallel lines: gaps within 1 mm of the average, no gaps, consistent pressure.
- [ ] Curves: continuous arc, no flat spots, start and end points controlled.
- [ ] Shading: gradual change across bands, no sudden dark patches, adjacent bands visibly different.
- [ ] Repetition: at least three sets per drill, with comparison between first and last set.
- [ ] Valid alternatives: wider or narrower curves and different line weights pass if control traits are met.

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