Botanical Contour Drawing: Blind and Continuous-Line Practice

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a simple leaf blind contour. Start at the tip, follow the outline to the stem, then follow one side vein back to the midrib. Do not look at the paper until the line is complete. Then label the line as blind or not blind and continuous or not continuous.

Answer: A single unbroken line from tip to stem and along one side vein, drawn without looking at the paper. Label: blind contour, continuous line.

Reason: The method requires no looking at the paper and no lifting. The line records the outline and one internal vein. Distortion is expected and does not change the label.

Check: Confirm the pencil never lifted and the drawer did not look at the paper. Check that the line reaches the stem and includes one side vein. The label must say blind and continuous.

Task 2

Draw a stem with one attached leaf using continuous line. Start at the top of the stem, follow it down, move out to the leaf, and return to the stem without lifting. Describe one place where you retraced a short segment.

Answer: An unbroken line from the stem top down to the leaf and back to the stem, with at least one short retraced segment. The description names the retraced location, such as the leaf joint.

Reason: Continuous line forbids lifting. Retracing is the allowed way to change direction or reach a new area. The stem and leaf joint are natural retrace points.

Check: Trace the line from start to finish and confirm no gap. Locate the retraced segment and check that it overlaps an existing line. The description must match the drawing.

Botanical Contour Drawing: Blind and Continuous-Line Practice

Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a simple bloom with a round center and several petals using blind contour for three petals. Start at the center, move out along one petal edge, return to the center, and continue to the next petal without looking at the paper. Stop after three petals. Label the line and note whether the center remained visible.

Answer: A single unbroken line that visits three petals and returns to the center between them, drawn without looking at the paper. Label: blind contour, continuous line. The center may be distorted but should be traceable.

Reason: Blind contour requires no looking; continuous line requires no lifting. Returning to the center between petals keeps the path connected. Three petals limit the task while testing radial edges.

Check: Confirm the line is unbroken and visits exactly three petals. Check that the drawer did not look at the paper. Locate the center and confirm it is part of the path.

Task 4

Draw the same leaf twice: once blind contour and once continuous line. Place them side by side. Under each, write one clear feature and one missed feature. Then state one adjustment for a second attempt.

Answer: Two labeled drawings of the same leaf, one blind and one continuous. Each has one clear feature and one missed feature. One adjustment is stated, such as slower eye movement or fewer retraces.

Reason: The comparison row tests both methods on the same subject. Clear and missed features build observation vocabulary. The adjustment connects the comparison to the next attempt.

Check: Check that both drawings show the same leaf and are labeled by method. Confirm each note names a feature visible in the drawing. The adjustment must be specific and checkable, such as pausing at the tip.

Botanical Contour Drawing: Blind and Continuous-Line Practice

Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Blind contour line: the drawer did not look at the paper during the line; the line is unbroken from start to finish.
- [ ] Continuous line: the pencil never lifted; any change of area uses retracing rather than lifting.
- [ ] Edge description: the outline and at least one internal vein are recorded.
- [ ] Comparison note: one clear feature and one missed feature are stated for each method.
- [ ] Valid alternatives: different starting points, vein choices, and retracing amounts are accepted; no single appearance is required.

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