Blind-Contour Drawing of a Lamp: A Focused Line Exercise

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a lamp with a rectangular shade and a square base as one continuous blind contour. Start at the top-left corner of the shade and finish at the bottom-right corner of the base. Do not look at the paper until you finish. Then mark two direction changes and annotate them.

Answer: A continuous line that follows the shade edges, the stem, and the base edges without lifting. The line may cross itself. Two marked direction changes, such as the shade corner and the base corner, each with a short annotation.

Reason: The rectangular shade and square base provide clear corners that are easy to compare. Starting and finishing at named corners makes the continuous line checkable.

Check: Confirm the line never lifts by tracing it with a finger from start to finish. Confirm two marks and two annotations. Confirm no shading or wiring detail.

Task 2

Draw the same lamp twice on one sheet: first a blind contour starting at the shade rim, then a second blind contour starting at the base edge. Keep both lines continuous and do not look between them. After both, mark one place where the two lines differ in direction and write one sentence explaining which matched the lamp better.

Answer: Two separate continuous lines on one sheet, each with a different start point. One marked difference and one sentence comparing the two lines to the lamp.

Reason: Changing the start point tests whether attention is on the lamp rather than on a remembered shape. The comparison sentence practices honest annotation.

Check: Check that each line is continuous and that the start points differ. Check the marked difference and the sentence. No erasing is required or allowed.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Set a lamp with a curved shade and a thin stem. Draw a blind contour that includes the shade curve, the stem, and the base. Use a pencil and keep it touching the paper for the whole drawing. After looking, mark the place where your line changed direction most sharply and state whether that change matched a corner or a curve on the lamp.

Answer: A continuous line covering shade, stem, and base. One marked sharp direction change with a statement identifying it as a corner or curve match or mismatch.

Reason: A curved shade and thin stem create both smooth and sharp changes, which tests whether the learner is following observed edges rather than assuming shapes.

Check: Trace the line for continuity. Check the marked change and the corner-or-curve statement. Confirm the pencil stayed on the paper by the absence of separate line starts.

Task 4

Draw a blind contour of a lamp from a side view where the shade hides part of the stem. Start at the visible top of the shade and finish at the visible base edge. Do not draw the hidden part of the stem. After looking, mark one place where you had to pause because the edge disappeared and write what you did.

Answer: A continuous line that follows only visible edges and does not invent the hidden stem. One marked pause with a sentence describing the pause and the continuation.

Reason: Occlusion forces the learner to decide what is visible. The exercise tests honest observation and continuous line control at a gap.

Check: Check that no hidden stem is drawn. Check the marked pause and sentence. Trace the line to confirm it remains continuous across the gap.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Line is continuous from start point to finish point, with no lifting.
- [ ] Eyes stayed on the lamp until the finish point; this is self-reported and checked by the absence of corrective redrawing.
- [ ] At least three direction changes are marked and compared to the lamp.
- [ ] Each marked change has a one-sentence annotation describing what was seen and what the line did.
- [ ] No shading, wiring detail, or proportion correction is added.
- [ ] Valid alternatives: any start point, any order after the first edge, any line speed, and any handwriting style are accepted if the continuous-line and no-looking rules are met.

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