Negative Space Leaf Drawing: See the Gaps, Draw the Leaf

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

A simple leaf outline has two side lobes. Between the lobes and the stem are two gaps: gap A is 5 mm wide and gap B is 3 mm wide. Using the convention shade gaps and leave the leaf blank, describe where to place dots and how to check the result.

Answer: Place a dot at the widest point of gap A and another at the widest point of gap B. Shade each dotted region evenly, leaving the leaf blank. Check that the shaded widths are about 5 mm and 3 mm, that the two gaps are separate, and that no vein line lies inside either shaded region.

Reason: The dots fix the gap locations before shading, and the measured widths give checkable targets. Keeping the gaps separate preserves the leaf structure.

Check: Measure the two shaded widths with a ruler in millimetres and compare with 5 mm and 3 mm. Count the dots and confirm each sits inside a shaded region.

Task 2

A leaf is drawn at scale 2. Its narrowest vein gap measures 1.5 mm on the reference. Using the convention shade the leaf and leave gaps blank, state the target gap width on the drawing and describe one check.

Answer: The target gap width is 1.5 mm multiplied by 2, which equals 3 mm. Leave that 3 mm gap blank and shade the leaf around it. Check by measuring the blank gap width on the drawing and comparing with 3 mm.

Reason: Scaling multiplies every measurement by the same factor, so the gap width doubles. The convention is stated and applied to the gap only.

Check: Measure the blank gap in millimetres and confirm it is about 3 mm. Confirm the convention line says shade the leaf and leave gaps blank.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

A leaf has three gaps measuring 4 mm, 2 mm, and 6 mm. A student shades one large region covering all three. Describe the error and give a corrected procedure using the convention shade gaps and leave the leaf blank.

Answer: The error is merging three separate gaps into one region, which loses the leaf structure. Correct by dotting each gap separately at 4 mm, 2 mm, and 6 mm, then shading each dotted region while keeping a thin unshaded strip of leaf between them. Check that three separate shaded widths remain.

Reason: Separate dots preserve the boundaries between gaps, and the measured widths give checkable targets for each region.

Check: Count three distinct shaded regions and measure each width against 4 mm, 2 mm, and 6 mm. Confirm no shaded region touches another.

Task 4

A leaf outline is 60 mm long. Two vein gaps are 3 mm and 2 mm wide. Using the convention shade gaps and leave the leaf blank, describe the order of work and two checks that confirm the leaf outline was placed correctly.

Answer: Write the convention line, dot the 3 mm and 2 mm gaps, shade each dotted region, then draw the leaf outline last. Check one: the outline passes between the two shaded gaps without crossing either. Check two: the two shaded widths measure about 3 mm and 2 mm and remain separate.

Reason: Drawing gaps first anchors the outline, and the two checks test both placement and measurement.

Check: Trace the outline with a finger and confirm it does not enter a shaded region. Measure both shaded widths in millimetres and confirm they are separate.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Convention stated in one line at the top of the page.
- [ ] At least three vein gaps marked with dots before shading.
- [ ] Each gap filled or left open consistently according to the stated convention.
- [ ] Gap widths match measured or scaled targets within a stated tolerance, for example plus or minus 1 mm.
- [ ] No vein treated as negative space.
- [ ] Separate gaps remain separate; no merging.
- [ ] Leaf outline passes between gaps without crossing filled regions.
- [ ] Valid alternative conventions accepted if stated and applied consistently.

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