Draw a Bass Clef: Stroke Order and Staff Placement

Original tasks 1, 2, 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 1

A staff has lines 6 mm apart. State the expected belly height and the gap to leave before the first note, using the proportions in this lesson.

Answer: Belly height about 12 mm; gap about 6 mm.

Reason: The belly spans two staff spaces, so 2 times 6 mm equals 12 mm. The gap is one staff space, 6 mm.

Check: Multiply the staff spacing by 2 for the belly and by 1 for the gap; confirm the units are millimetres.

Task 2

Describe where the two dots go on a five-line staff, counting lines from the top.

Answer: Counting from the bottom, the reference line is line 4; counting from the top, it is line 2. Put one dot in the space immediately above it and one in the space immediately below it.

Reason: The bass clef identifies F on the fourth staff line from the bottom. Its two dots sit in the adjacent spaces, so the reference line is second from the top on a five-line staff.

Check: Count four staff lines up from the bottom (or two down from the top). Confirm one dot lies in each neighboring space and neither dot sits on the F line.

Task 3

A student draws a bass clef whose tail joins the starting hook, forming a closed loop. Name the mistake and give one fix.

Answer: Mistake: closed loop. Fix: end the tail above the starting point without joining it to the hook.

Reason: The bass clef curve should remain open on the left; a closed loop changes the glyph's shape.

Check: Trace the outline with a finger; if the path returns to the start without a gap, the curve is closed.

Task 4

On a staff with 10 mm spacing, a student draws a belly 30 mm tall. Is this within the lesson's proportion guide? Explain.

Answer: No. The guide is about two staff spaces, which is 20 mm here; 30 mm is one space too tall.

Reason: Two spaces times 10 mm equals 20 mm. A 30 mm belly spans three spaces and crowds the staff.

Check: Multiply spacing by 2 and compare with the drawn height; 30 mm is greater than 20 mm.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] The curve is open on the left and the tail ends above the starting point without forming a closed circle.
- [ ] The belly spans about two staff spaces vertically and touches or crosses the fourth line from the bottom.
- [ ] Two dots sit in the spaces immediately above and below the fourth line from the bottom (the second line from the top), not on the lines.
- [ ] The clef is recognizable as a bass clef and leaves clear space before the first note.
- [ ] Valid alternatives: slight lean, different belly width, or a more rounded tail are acceptable if the clef remains recognizable and correctly placed.

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