A Cheap First Curve

C1 Advanced · Work · about 2 min of audio

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Name _____ Date _____

Part 1 — Fill the gaps while you listen

1. A good _____ is not a miniature triumph, but a cheap way to discover what reality objects to.
2. In a small cabinet workshop, a _____ needed a curved shelf to fit an alcove that narrowed near the ceiling.
3. The drawing gave the curve a _____ line, although no ruler could reveal how the plaster bulged.
4. Rather than cut _____ walnut, the carpenter traced the shape onto a sheet of stiff cardboard.
5. She held this rough _____ against the wall, where its edge exposed a gap at the upper corner.
6. A second tracing _____ the angle, and a third showed that the shelf needed a notch for a pipe.
7. Each _____ cost minutes and scraps, not an afternoon of careful carving.
8. Once the cardboard sat flush, the carpenter _____ its outline to the walnut with little uncertainty.
9. The finished shelf appeared _____ precisely because its awkward decisions had been made in cheaper material.
10. That is the quiet advantage of _____: thought becomes more ambitious when mistakes are inexpensive.

Part 2 — Write every sentence you hear

1. _____

2. _____

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Answer key

Part 1 — the missing words

1. prototype 2. carpenter 3. confident 4. expensive 5. pattern 6. corrected 7. alteration 8. transferred 9. effortless 10. reversibility

Part 2 — the full transcript

1. A good prototype is not a miniature triumph, but a cheap way to discover what reality objects to.
2. In a small cabinet workshop, a carpenter needed a curved shelf to fit an alcove that narrowed near the ceiling.
3. The drawing gave the curve a confident line, although no ruler could reveal how the plaster bulged.
4. Rather than cut expensive walnut, the carpenter traced the shape onto a sheet of stiff cardboard.
5. She held this rough pattern against the wall, where its edge exposed a gap at the upper corner.
6. A second tracing corrected the angle, and a third showed that the shelf needed a notch for a pipe.
7. Each alteration cost minutes and scraps, not an afternoon of careful carving.
8. Once the cardboard sat flush, the carpenter transferred its outline to the walnut with little uncertainty.
9. The finished shelf appeared effortless precisely because its awkward decisions had been made in cheaper material.
10. That is the quiet advantage of reversibility: thought becomes more ambitious when mistakes are inexpensive.

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