Draw Snowfall: Flake Shapes and Shading

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw one simple six-arm star flake with arm length equal to one x-height. Shade two opposite arms to value 3 and leave the rest at value 1. Describe your flake in one sentence.

Answer: A six-arm star with equal arms, two opposite arms shaded medium gray (value 3), other arms white (value 1).

Reason: The simple variant uses straight arms. Shading two opposite arms creates depth without darkening the whole flake. Arm length equals one x-height for consistency.

Check: Measure each arm against the x-height; compare shaded arms to value strip patch 3; confirm other arms match patch 1.

Task 2

Draw a branched six-arm star flake at medium size (two x-heights). Add one short branch near the midpoint of each arm. Shade the center to value 2 and leave arms at value 1. List the steps you used.

Answer: A medium branched flake with six equal arms, one branch per arm, center shaded light gray (value 2), arms white (value 1).

Reason: Branched variant adds one branch per arm for variety. Medium size uses two x-heights. Shading only the center keeps arms light and readable.

Check: Check branch placement is near midpoint on all arms; measure arm length against two x-heights; compare center to value strip patch 2.

Task 3

Create a mini field on a 8 cm by 8 cm square with two large flakes (values 3 and 4), three medium flakes (values 2,3,2), and four small flakes (values 1,2,1,2). Compute the average value for each size group and state whether foreground is darkest.

Answer: Large average: (3+4)/2 = 3.5. Medium average: (2+3+2)/3 = 2.33. Small average: (1+2+1+2)/4 = 1.5. Foreground (large) is darkest.

Reason: Averages show value progression from foreground to background. Arithmetic is simple and checkable. The field uses three size classes and varied values.

Check: Recount values per group and recompute averages; confirm large average > medium average > small average.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Draw a dotted six-arm star flake with three dots per arm. Use value 2 for dots and value 1 for arms. Then draw a second flake of the same variant but value 4 for dots and value 3 for arms. Compare the two flakes and explain which reads as closer.

Answer: First flake: dots value 2, arms value 1. Second flake: dots value 4, arms value 3. The second flake reads as closer because its values are darker.

Reason: Dotted variant uses three dots per arm. Darker values suggest foreground. Comparing two flakes with the same shape but different values isolates the shading effect.

Check: Compare each flake to the value strip; confirm second flake uses patches 3 and 4; check dot count is three per arm on both.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Flake shapes: at least two variants used; arms equal length within each flake.
- [ ] Shading: values assigned from the strip; foreground darker than background.
- [ ] Density: clusters and at least two clear gaps present.
- [ ] Size variation: three size classes used consistently with x-height convention.
- [ ] Symmetry: branches or dots mirrored on each arm.
- [ ] Alternative styles allowed if symmetry and value contrast are maintained.

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