Charcoal Figure Drawing: Gesture, Mass, and Tonal Modeling

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

On a 20 cm hypothetical figure height with a 4 cm hypothetical head unit, place joint dots and state the spacing you would check between hip and knee.

Answer: Place dots at hips and knees; check that the hip-to-knee spacing is roughly one head unit, about 4 cm, as a hypothetical check.

Reason: Joint dots make proportion checkable; comparing a segment to the head unit is a simple arithmetic check.

Check: Measure the dot spacing on your paper and compare to 4 cm; adjust if the figure reads too long or short.

Task 2

Block a torso mass 8 cm wide on a 24 cm hypothetical figure with a 4 cm hypothetical head unit. State one check for mass balance.

Answer: The figure is about six head units tall. Torso width 8 cm is two head units wide; check that limb widths are narrower than the torso and that the figure stands balanced over the supporting foot.

Reason: Simple ratios keep masses readable; balance is checked against the supporting foot.

Check: Measure torso and limb widths; confirm torso is widest and the head aligns over the support.

Task 3

Model a limb with light from the left. Describe where shadow and highlight lift go.

Answer: Shadow on the right side of the limb; highlight lift on the left lit side with a kneaded eraser.

Reason: One light direction creates consistent shadow and highlight placement.

Check: Step back and confirm the limb reads as round with shadow on the right and lift on the left.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

State the head-unit convention for a figure and explain one valid alternative way to mark the same proportion check.

Answer: Measure from the top of the head to the chin as one head unit, then divide total height into equal units. A valid alternative is to mark the same unit length with a paper strip or divider and step it down the figure.

Reason: The convention defines a repeatable measurement unit, not a single tool or style.

Check: Compare your marked units to the head-to-chin distance; accept any method that keeps equal units.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Gesture line is continuous and captures the action.
- [ ] Joint dots anchor shoulders, elbows, wrists, hips, knees, and ankles.
- [ ] Masses are simple, clear, and proportionally checked against a labeled hypothetical height in head units.
- [ ] Tonal modeling shows one light direction with shadow shapes and lifted highlights.
- [ ] Head-unit convention is applied consistently to figure proportions; written labels are legible and letter styles may vary.

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