Oil Pastel Landscapes: Blending Sky, Ground and Foreground

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A plate is 24 cm wide and 18 cm deep. You want a sky band 7 cm deep, a midground 5 cm deep, and a foreground 6 cm deep. How much depth remains for margins if margins are equal top and bottom?

Answer: 7 + 5 + 6 = 18 cm of zones. The plate is 18 cm deep, so 0 cm remains for margins. To have margins, reduce zone depths; for example, sky 6 cm, midground 4 cm, foreground 5 cm leaves 3 cm total, or 1.5 cm top and bottom.

Reason: Add the three zone depths, subtract from the plate depth, and divide any remainder by two for equal top and bottom margins.

Check: Re-add the chosen zones and margins: 6 + 4 + 5 + 1.5 + 1.5 = 18 cm.

Task 2

You overlap two sky colors by one finger width, which you measure as 1.5 cm. The sky band is 6 cm deep. What fraction of the sky band is the overlap?

Answer: 1.5 divided by 6 equals 0.25, or one quarter of the sky band.

Reason: Divide the overlap width by the sky band depth to get the fraction.

Check: Multiply 6 cm by 0.25 to get 1.5 cm, matching the overlap.

Task 3

A foreground band is 10 cm deep. You plan three accent strokes per 5 cm. How many accent strokes for the whole band?

Answer: 10 divided by 5 equals 2 sections; 2 times 3 equals 6 accent strokes.

Reason: Find the number of 5 cm sections, then multiply by the strokes per section.

Check: Divide 6 strokes by 3 per section to get 2 sections; 2 times 5 cm equals 10 cm.

Oil Pastel Landscapes: Blending Sky, Ground and Foreground

Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Your scrap strip shows a hard stripe between the medium sky color and the midground color. You add a thin layer of the middle color and smudge. Describe one check to confirm the stripe is gone.

Answer: Hold the plate at arm's length and look along the boundary. If no sharp line is visible and the value changes gradually, the stripe is gone. If a line remains, add another thin middle layer and smudge again.

Reason: The convention defines smoothness as no hard stripe at arm's length with a gradual value change.

Check: Repeat the arm's-length check after each correction and compare with your scrap strip.

Oil Pastel Landscapes: Blending Sky, Ground and Foreground

Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Four zones are marked and labeled: sky, horizon, midground, foreground.
- [ ] Sky shows a gradual value change from top to horizon with no hard stripe.
- [ ] Horizon is soft, not outlined with a dark line.
- [ ] Midground shows broader strokes and a lighter tone near the horizon.
- [ ] Foreground shows stronger color and some unblended texture.
- [ ] At arm's length, the whole plate shows no hard stripe between zones.
- [ ] Any lettering is legible under the baseline-to-midline x-height convention; letter styles may vary.
- [ ] Valid stylistic alternatives are accepted if the blending convention and value change are met.

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