Pencil Scenery Drawing: Foreground, Midground, and Horizon Layers

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

On a 15 cm by 25 cm sheet, place the horizon 8 cm from the top. Divide the space below into a midground band of 7 cm and a foreground band of 10 cm. Sketch one midground triangle and one foreground circle. State the band measurements and describe the pressure you used for each shape.

Answer: Horizon at 8 cm from the top. Midground band from 8 cm to 15 cm from the top. Foreground band from 15 cm to 25 cm from the top. The triangle sits in the midground with light pressure. The circle sits in the foreground with firm pressure. The foreground circle reads darker and nearer than the midground triangle.

Reason: The measurements sum to the sheet height: 8 + 7 + 10 = 25 cm. Placing each shape in its band and applying the pressure convention creates a readable layer order.

Check: Measure each band with a ruler and confirm the sums. View from one meter away and confirm the circle reads nearer than the triangle. Compare line darkness side by side.

Task 2

A learner draws a horizon at 6 cm from the top on a 20 cm sheet, then draws a midground oval that extends from 5 cm to 9 cm from the top. Identify the error and state a correction using the layer method.

Answer: The midground oval crosses the horizon line because it extends above 6 cm. Correction: erase the part above the horizon or move the oval so it sits entirely below 6 cm, then recheck that the oval remains in the midground band.

Reason: Midground shapes must stay below the horizon to preserve the layer order. An oval crossing the horizon blurs the boundary between sky and midground.

Check: Measure the oval's top edge against the horizon position. Confirm the oval's top edge is at or below 6 cm from the top.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

On a 30 cm sheet, the horizon is 12 cm from the top. The midground band is 9 cm tall and the foreground band is 9 cm tall. A learner claims the three zones sum to 30 cm. Check the arithmetic and state whether the claim is correct.

Answer: The claim is correct: 12 + 9 + 9 = 30 cm. The horizon, midground, and foreground zones account for the full sheet height.

Reason: Adding the three zone measurements gives the total sheet height, which confirms the zones are consistent with the paper size.

Check: Add the three measurements and compare the sum to the sheet height. Repeat the addition in a different order to confirm.

Task 4

Describe how to adjust a drawing where the foreground lines are not darker than the midground lines. Include one pressure change and one observation check.

Answer: Increase pressure on the foreground lines to firm, or lighten the midground lines to light. Then view the drawing from one meter away and compare the two sets of lines under the same lighting. If the foreground still does not read darker, repeat the adjustment once and check again.

Reason: The pressure convention defines line weight by pressure. Adjusting one layer relative to the other restores the intended contrast and layer order.

Check: Compare line darkness side by side at the same distance and lighting. Confirm the foreground lines are visibly darker before and after the adjustment.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Horizon line is present and clearly separates sky from land or water.
- [ ] Midground shapes are contained below the horizon and use lighter pressure than foreground lines.
- [ ] Foreground shapes use firmer pressure and read as nearest to the viewer.
- [ ] The three layers are distinguishable from one meter away.
- [ ] Construction labels and band marks are erased or absent in the final drawing.
- [ ] Valid alternatives are accepted if the pressure convention is consistent and the layer order is readable.

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