Pencil Peacock Drawing: Feather Layering and Tail-Fan Shading

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a peacock body contour only: tilted oval 5 cm long, head circle 1.5 cm wide above and forward, curved neck, triangular beak, eye one-third from beak side. Add fan center and two guides 80 degrees apart. Do not layer feathers.

Answer: A light construction drawing with oval, head circle, neck, beak, eye mark, fan center, and two guides 80 degrees apart; no feather layers or shading.

Reason: This isolates contour and proportion before layering. The 5 cm and 1.5 cm values are hypothetical examples; measure your own paper. The eye position and guide angle are checkable.

Check: Measure oval length and head width against your chosen values; confirm eye is about one-third from beak side; confirm guides are about 80 degrees apart.

Task 2

On a fan shape with center marked, draw three feather layers: large outer teardrops, medium inner feathers overlapping by one-third, small inner feathers near center. Keep overlap direction consistent. No shading.

Answer: Three visible layers with consistent overlap direction; medium feathers overlap large ones by about one-third of their length; small feathers near center overlap medium layer.

Reason: Layering is the core skill; this task removes shading so overlap clarity can be checked. One-third overlap is a hypothetical example but easy to estimate.

Check: Count three layers; check that each medium feather starts under a large one and overlaps about one-third; confirm small feathers are nearest the center.

Task 3

Make a five-value tonal strip on scrap paper. Then shade a fan shape darkest at the rim, medium in the middle ring, lightest at the center. Keep overlap lines visible.

Answer: A five-value strip with distinct values; fan rim darkest, middle medium, center lightest; overlap lines still readable.

Reason: This practices controlled pressure and the rim-to-center gradient. The five values are a convention, not a standard; adjust to your pencil.

Check: Squint at the fan: rim should read darker than center; compare each area to the tonal strip; confirm overlap lines are not smudged away.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

Draw a complete pencil peacock using the full sequence: contour, three feather layers, fan shading, body shading, and final outline refinement. Use a fan width that fits your paper and note your chosen measurements.

Answer: A complete drawing with clear contour, three overlap steps, rim-to-center fan gradient, body underside/top shading, thin light contour edge, erased construction, and darkened final outline at background edge.

Reason: This integrates all skills. Chosen measurements are hypothetical examples; the rubric accepts valid alternatives in feather shape and fan width.

Check: Use the rubric: contour clarity, three layers, consistent direction, three-value fan gradient, body shading, erased construction, final outline. Note your measurements and compare to your own paper.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Body contour is clear and continuous, with neck flowing into chest without a kink.
- [ ] Three distinct feather overlap steps are visible on the fan.
- [ ] Feather direction is consistent, with acceptable variation in shape and length.
- [ ] Fan shading shows a rim-to-center gradient using at least three values.
- [ ] Body shading distinguishes underside from top with a thin light contour edge.
- [ ] Construction lines are erased and final outline is darkened only at the background edge.
- [ ] Valid alternatives in feather shape and fan width are accepted if the above are met.

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