Drawing a Native American Figure: Pose, Regalia Layers, and Simple Construction

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A standing figure uses a 16 cm tall guide divided into eight equal segments. Find the segment length and the shoulder position at 1.5 segments from the top.

Answer: Each segment is 16/8=2 cm. The shoulder position is 1.5×2=3 cm from the top.

Reason: The guide is divided evenly, so multiply the segment length by the requested segment count.

Check: Measure 2 cm per segment and confirm the shoulder mark is 3 cm from the top.

Task 2

On a 24 cm tall guide divided into eight segments, place a raised-arm pose. The shoulder is at 1.5 segments, the waist at 3.5, and the elbow should be near the waist. Give the shoulder and waist distances from the top and one check for the raised hand.

Answer: Each segment is 3 cm. The shoulder is 4.5 cm from the top and the waist is 10.5 cm from the top. Bend the raised arm at an elbow near the waist and keep the hand below the top of the head guide.

Reason: The positions are 1.5×3=4.5 cm and 3.5×3=10.5 cm. The hand check keeps the raised limb connected to the pose rather than detached.

Check: Measure the two marks from the top. Trace the arm from shoulder through elbow to hand and confirm the hand remains below the head top mark.

Task 3

A 20 cm standing-figure guide is divided into eight segments. Draw the body construction and leave clothing undecorated. State which parts should be checked before any source-led clothing contours are considered.

Answer: Use 2.5 cm segments; place the head, shoulder, waist, hip, knee, and foot guides, then connect torso and limbs. Check body connections and pose balance first. No cultural symbols or regalia details are added in this text-only exercise.

Reason: The exercise isolates pose construction from culturally specific clothing, so the visible checks are the figure landmarks and connected limbs.

Check: Confirm the guide has eight equal parts, limbs connect to the torso, and the pose reads as standing. Confirm no unreferenced cultural details were added.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A proposed drawing combines a generic feather headband, a ceremonial mask, and clothing details from several unrelated Native communities. Identify the problem and give a respectful revision plan while keeping the standing pose.

Answer: The plan combines unrelated cultural details into a generalized costume and imitates a mask. Keep the standing pose guide, remove the invented cultural details, and only depict source-supported clothing from an appropriate community- or person-led reference.

Reason: There is no single pan-Indigenous regalia template, and the NMAI advises against generalized costumes and imitation of masks or headdresses.

Check: Check that the revised plan identifies one appropriate source, includes only details it supports, and omits unverified or restricted items.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Standing pose is built from a clearly measured guide, with connected head, torso, arms, and legs.
- [ ] Guide measurements are used consistently but are not presented as universal body proportions.
- [ ] Any culturally specific clothing is drawn from an appropriate source created by or with the represented person or community.
- [ ] The drawing avoids generic pan-Indigenous costume cues and unsupported symbols or ceremonial details.
- [ ] Neutral practice outlines are not labeled as regalia.
- [ ] Final pose remains readable and context-aware.

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