Monochromatic Landscape Drawing: Single-Hue Value Steps

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

You have a 1–5 value strip. Plan a landscape with sky = 2, distant land = 3, middle ground = 4, foreground = 5. List the adjacent differences and state whether the plan meets the rule that each adjacent pair differs by at least one step.

Answer: Differences: sky to distant land = 1; distant land to middle ground = 1; middle ground to foreground = 1. The plan meets the rule because every adjacent difference is at least 1.

Reason: Subtract each value from the next: $3-2=1$, $4-3=1$, $5-4=1$. All results are ≥ 1, so the plan is valid.

Check: Re-list the values in order and subtract adjacent pairs. Confirm no difference is 0.

Task 2

A drawing uses sky = 1, land = 2, foreground = 2. Identify the problem and propose one fix that keeps the sky lightest and the foreground darkest.

Answer: The land and foreground share value 2, so they may merge. Fix: change foreground to 3 (or land to 1 and foreground to 3, but sky must remain lightest). One valid fix is sky = 1, land = 2, foreground = 3.

Reason: Adjacent land and foreground differ by 0 steps, which violates the contrast rule. Increasing foreground to 3 gives differences of 1 and 1, and keeps sky lightest and foreground darkest.

Check: Compute differences: $2-1=1$ and $3-2=1$. Confirm sky is smallest and foreground is largest.

Task 3

You mix a value strip with steps 1–5. Step 1 is mostly white, step 3 is pure hue, step 5 is hue plus black. Describe how to mix step 2 and step 4 so the strip remains monochromatic and ordered from light to dark.

Answer: Step 2: mix white with a small amount of hue, lighter than pure hue but darker than step 1. Step 4: mix pure hue with a small amount of black, darker than pure hue but lighter than step 5. Keep only the one hue, white, and black.

Reason: Step 2 must sit between step 1 and step 3, so it needs more hue than step 1 but less than pure hue. Step 4 must sit between step 3 and step 5, so it needs some black but less than step 5.

Check: Place small squares in order 1–5 and squint. Confirm the sequence appears steadily darker and no other hue is visible.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A landscape plan uses sky = 3, land = 2, foreground = 1. Does this meet the rule that adjacent bands differ by at least one step? Does it keep the sky lightest and foreground darkest? Explain.

Answer: Adjacent differences: sky to land = 1; land to foreground = 1. The contrast rule is met. However, the sky is not lightest and the foreground is not darkest; the plan reverses the usual order. It is valid only if you intentionally want a dark sky and light foreground, but it does not meet the stated goal of sky lightest and foreground darkest.

Reason: Differences are $3-2=1$ and $2-1=1$, so contrast is fine. But the goal requires sky to be the smallest number and foreground the largest; here sky=3 and foreground=1, so the goal is not met.

Check: Check differences and also compare sky and foreground to the goal: sky should be minimum, foreground maximum. Both checks must pass.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Uses exactly one hue plus white and black; no other colors.
- [ ] Includes a labeled value strip with at least five steps from light to dark.
- [ ] Assigns distinct value numbers to sky, land, and foreground, with adjacent differences of at least one step.
- [ ] Applies values in flat steps or clear boundaries; avoids continuous gradients.
- [ ] Checks contrast by squinting or distance viewing and records final value numbers.
- [ ] Landscape is readable as sky, land, and foreground using value alone.

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