Graphite Landscape Drawing: Tonal Layering Practice

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a five-step value scale on scrap paper using the layer counts in the lesson. Label each step 1 to 5. Then draw a 100 mm by 60 mm rectangle and fill it with a smooth gradient from value 1 on the left to value 5 on the right.

Answer: A completed scale with five labeled steps and a rectangle showing a smooth left-to-right gradient from lightest to darkest.

Reason: The scale establishes a reference for all later layering. The gradient tests controlled pressure and layer transitions without a landscape subject.

Check: Compare the rectangle to the scale: each fifth of the rectangle should match one step. Check for shiny patches and uneven bands.

Task 2

In a 120 mm by 80 mm box, draw a simple landscape with the horizon at 30 mm from the top. The sky is the region above the horizon (30 mm tall), the middle-ground band below the horizon is 30 mm tall, and the foreground band at the bottom is 20 mm tall, so the three bands sum to 80 mm. Assign values: sky 2, distant hill 2, middle tree 3, foreground rock 4, nearest grass 5. Apply layers from lightest to darkest. Label each zone with its value.

Answer: A landscape box with five labeled zones and distinct values, with the foreground rock and grass darker than the sky and hill.

Reason: This exercise practices the foreground-to-background sequence and value separation. The horizon measurement is a hypothetical example; measure your own box.

Check: Verify that adjacent zones have different values, except sky and hill, which may share value 2 only if a clear horizon line separates them; if they blend, revise one zone to a different value. Check that labels are legible.

Graphite Landscape Drawing: Tonal Layering Practice

Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a misty valley using this five-step scale: sky 4, distant hill 2, middle tree 3, foreground rock 4, nearest grass 5. Explain how the distant hill can look mist-soft while the sky and foreground remain dark.

Answer: Keep the sky at value 4, the distant hill lighter at value 2, the middle tree at 3, the rock at 4, and the nearest grass at 5. Use a soft edge or a narrow light gap around the hill to suggest mist; the hill remains lighter than the nearer tree and foreground.

Reason: Mist is shown by lower contrast and lighter distant forms. A darker sky can be a separate dramatic choice, while the light hill and clear value steps preserve depth.

Check: Compare the labels: the hill is lighter than the tree, rock, and grass, and the nearest grass is the darkest. Confirm at least three values remain distinct.

Task 4

Measure your hand-drawn practice box with a ruler and record width and height in millimeters. Then list three checks you would perform before calling the drawing complete, using the rubric criteria.

Answer: Recorded dimensions in millimeters and three checks such as: value scale has five steps, practice box has three distinct values, foreground anchor is darkest.

Reason: Measuring the actual equipment avoids assumed standards. Listing checks connects the rubric to a practical completion routine.

Check: Verify the recorded dimensions match a ruler measurement and that each check names a rubric criterion.

Graphite Landscape Drawing: Tonal Layering Practice

Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Value scale shows five distinct steps from 1 to 5.
- [ ] Practice box contains at least three distinct values.
- [ ] Foreground anchor is the darkest or most contrasted shape.
- [ ] Layers are even and free of shiny patches.
- [ ] Value labels are legible and consistent in any chosen style.
- [ ] Depth reads clearly from foreground to background, or an intentional alternative order is explained.

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