Draw a Realistic Wood Duck: Feather Layering and Iridescent Head

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Using a hypothetical scale of body length 12 units, calculate head length and bill length if head is one-third of body and bill is half of head. Then describe where the tail tip ends relative to the rear oval if it extends 2 units beyond.

Answer: Head length = 4 units; bill length = 2 units; tail tip ends 2 units beyond the rear oval.

Reason: One-third of 12 is 4; half of 4 is 2. The tail extension is given directly as 2 units beyond the rear oval.

Check: Recompute 12 divided by 3, then 4 divided by 2; confirm tail extension matches the stated 2 units.

Task 2

A drawing shows feather rows drawn from neck to tail, with each new row covering the previous one. Identify the sequencing error and state the correct order for five rows.

Answer: The error is reversing the layering direction. Correct order: tail tips, lower flank, mid-flank, upper wing coverts, neck rows.

Reason: Wood duck rows overlap from tail toward neck so each new row sits on top of the previous one; drawing neck first makes lower rows cover upper rows incorrectly.

Check: Trace each row edge: confirm every new row overlaps the one behind it by about one-third and that neck rows are last.

Task 3

Describe a three-zone iridescent head using the convention: name the zones, the base color, the shadow band, and the highlight. Then state one valid alternative hue shift.

Answer: Zones: crown, cheek, throat. Base green midtone; blue-violet shadow band on lower cheek; pale highlight streak above eye. Valid alternative: teal-to-purple shift.

Reason: The convention requires three zones and a highlight; iridescence is a hue and value shift, so teal-to-purple satisfies the same structure.

Check: Confirm three zones are visible, shadow band sits where the head curves away from light, highlight is above the eye, and the alternative still shows a clear hue shift.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A side-view sketch has body length 9 units, head length 4 units, and bill length 1 unit. Check the proportions against the guide (head about one-third body, bill about half head) and state one correction.

Answer: Head is too large: one-third of 9 is 3, not 4. Bill is too short: half of head should be 2, not 1. Correction: reduce head to 3 units and lengthen bill to 2 units.

Reason: The guide ratios give head 3 and bill 2 for a 9-unit body; the sketch deviates on both.

Check: Divide body length by 3 for head; divide head by 2 for bill; compare with the sketch and adjust.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Proportions: head about one-third body length; bill about half head length; tail tip extends beyond rear oval.
- [ ] Feather layering: five to seven rows, consistent one-third overlap, tapered strokes, no full outlining.
- [ ] Iridescent head: three color zones present, pale highlight streak, white throat patch clean, eye ring visible.
- [ ] Line quality: light guides removed or integrated; strokes follow body contour.
- [ ] Valid alternatives: different hue shifts, stroke styles, or minor pose changes that keep wood duck proportions.

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