Sauropod Drawing: Neck, Legs, and Tail Construction

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A student draws a torso 8 units long and 4 units tall, a neck 6 units long, and a tail 9 units long. They place the head 6 units above the baseline. Check whether the neck length is proportional to the torso and describe one adjustment if needed.

Answer: The neck is 6 units and the torso is 8 units, so the neck is 0.75 of the torso length. This is a reasonable proportion. No adjustment is needed unless the neck looks too short; if so, extend it to 7 units.

Reason: Compare neck length to torso length using the same unit. A ratio between 0.6 and 1.0 is visually balanced for a sauropod guide.

Check: Measure the neck and torso on the drawing with the same unit and divide neck by torso. Confirm the result is between 0.6 and 1.0.

Task 2

A drawing shows a tail that starts 3 units thick at the hips and ends 2 units thick at the tip after 7 units of length. Identify the problem and state a fix using the taper convention.

Answer: The tail does not taper enough; it should narrow gradually to a point. Fix by redrawing the tail so the thickness decreases steadily from 3 units at the hips to about 0.5 units near the tip.

Reason: A sauropod tail tapers from thick to thin. A tip that is 2 units thick is too blunt for the convention used in this lesson.

Check: Measure the tail thickness at the hips and near the tip. The tip should be noticeably thinner, ideally less than one-quarter of the hip thickness.

Task 3

A student places the front legs 4 units apart and the back legs 6 units apart under a torso 8 units long. The feet are on different ground lines. Describe two fixes to make the stance stable.

Answer: First, move the legs inward so the front legs are about 2 units apart and the back legs about 3 units apart, keeping them under the torso. Second, align all feet on a single ground line.

Reason: Columnar legs should sit under the body's center of mass and share a ground line so the animal looks grounded.

Check: Check that each leg's top is under the torso oval and that the bottom of each foot touches the same horizontal line.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A neck is drawn as a straight line 5 units long with a sharp corner at the shoulders. Using the curve convention, describe how to redraw it and how to check the result.

Answer: Redraw the neck as two narrowing parallel curves that rise smoothly from the shoulders to the head, keeping the length about 5 units. Check by tracing the curve with your finger; there should be no sharp corner.

Reason: The lesson convention uses smooth S-curves for the neck to avoid kinks and to show the neck narrowing toward the head.

Check: Trace the neck outline slowly; if you feel a corner, redraw that section with a lighter line and smooth the transition.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Neck is drawn as a smooth curve that narrows toward the head.
- [ ] Tail tapers gradually from thick at the hips to a thin tip.
- [ ] Four columnar legs are placed under the torso and share a ground line.
- [ ] Body outline connects neck, torso, and tail without sharp corners.
- [ ] Head is simple, without cartoon styling.
- [ ] Proportions are consistent with the chosen unit measurements.

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