Portrait Drawing from Photo References: A Structured Practice Guide

Topic reference / ordinary illustration



Ordinary topic reference. Hypothetical dimensions in the four tasks are supplied in their own text; this illustration is not their measured answer.

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Worked example / complete source key

A photo plate shows a head 12 cm tall and 9 cm wide. The eye line is 6 cm from the chin. Your drawing box is 15 cm tall. State a convention, compute the scale factor, and give scaled positions for head height, head width, and eye line from chin.

Answer: Convention: eye line at half head height; nose base halfway from eye line to chin; mouth one-third from nose base to chin. Scale factor = 15/12 = 1.25. Scaled head height = 12 x 1.25 = 15 cm. Scaled head width = 9 x 1.25 = 11.25 cm. Scaled eye line from chin = 6 x 1.25 = 7.5 cm. Check: 7.5 is half of 15, consistent with convention.