Drawing Animals with Ellipse Scaffolds: Body and Head Construction

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

Draw a body ellipse 8 squares wide and 5 squares tall. Add a head ellipse 4 squares wide and 3 squares tall with a 1-square overlap. Add two front limb ellipses each 1 square wide and 3 squares tall. Measure the head-to-body width ratio.

Answer: Head width 4 squares, body width 8 squares, ratio 4:8 = 1:2. Overlap is 1 square, which is one quarter of the head width.

Reason: The ratio is found by comparing widths in the same unit. The overlap is checked against the head width to confirm a deliberate connection.

Check: Count grid squares for each width, write the ratio, and confirm the overlap equals one quarter of the head width.

Task 2

A learner draws a body ellipse 10 cm wide and 6 cm tall, and a head ellipse 5 cm wide and 4 cm tall with no overlap. Identify the main scaffold problem and state one fix using the same units.

Answer: The main problem is no overlap between head and body. Fix: move the head ellipse so it overlaps the body by about 1.25 cm, which is one quarter of the 5 cm head width.

Reason: Without overlap the neck connection is missing. A quarter-head overlap creates a readable connection while keeping the head distinct.

Check: Measure the overlap in centimeters and confirm it is approximately one quarter of the measured head width.

Drawing Animals with Ellipse Scaffolds: Body and Head Construction

Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

Draw a generic animal using three ellipses: one body, one head, and one rear limb. The body is 7 squares wide and 4 squares tall. The head is 3 squares wide and 2 squares tall. The rear limb is 1 square wide and 3 squares tall. Check whether the limb is too wide relative to the head.

Answer: The limb width is 1 square and the head width is 3 squares, so the limb is one third of the head width. This is not too wide; it is a plausible limb proportion for this scaffold.

Reason: Comparing limb width to head width gives a simple check. A limb one third of the head width is visually subordinate and does not overpower the head.

Check: Divide limb width by head width using the same unit; confirm the result is a simple fraction such as one third.

Task 4

On a grid, place a body ellipse 9 squares wide and 6 squares tall. Place a head ellipse 4 squares wide and 3 squares tall with a 2-square overlap. Add four limb ellipses each 1 square wide and 2 squares tall. Measure the head-to-body width ratio and the overlap as a fraction of head width.

Answer: Head-to-body width ratio is 4:9. Overlap is 2 squares out of a 4-square head width, so the overlap is one half of the head width.

Reason: The ratio uses the same unit for both widths. The overlap fraction is found by dividing overlap by head width.

Check: Count squares for head and body widths, write 4:9, then divide overlap 2 by head width 4 to confirm one half.

Drawing Animals with Ellipse Scaffolds: Body and Head Construction

Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Body ellipse is present and clearly the largest shape.
- [ ] Head ellipse overlaps the body by a deliberate amount.
- [ ] Four limb ellipses attach at plausible joint areas.
- [ ] Head-to-body ratio is measured and recorded in consistent units.
- [ ] Overlap zone reads as a connection rather than a pinch or merge.
- [ ] Scaffold avoids finished texture and species-specific detail.
- [ ] Valid alternative ellipse shapes are accepted when proportion and overlap logic are sound.

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