Sports Scene Composition: Place Figures and Equipment with Purpose

Original tasks 1, 2 / complete keys

Task 1

A soccer scene has a shooter in the center foreground, a goalkeeper in the center background, and a ball between them. The shooter's height is 8 units, the goalkeeper's height is 4 units, and the gap between the ball and the shooter is 1 unit. The shooter's width is 4 units. Using the quarter-width rule from the lesson, is the ball-to-shooter gap acceptable? Show your arithmetic.

Answer: The quarter-width threshold is 4 divided by 4, which equals 1 unit. The gap is 1 unit, so it meets the threshold exactly. It is acceptable but borderline; increasing the gap slightly would improve clarity.

Reason: The lesson states that if the gap is less than one quarter of the focal figure's width, shapes may merge. Here the threshold is 1 unit and the gap is 1 unit, so it is not less than the threshold. The exact equality makes it acceptable but worth checking visually.

Check: Measure the shooter's width in your drawing, divide by 4, and compare to the measured gap. Then squint to confirm the ball and shooter do not merge.

Task 2

A track scene places a runner in the left foreground, a second runner in the center middle ground, and a third runner in the right background. The foreground runner is 10 units tall, the middle runner is 7 units tall, and the background runner is 5 units tall. The gap between the foreground runner and the middle runner is 2 units, and the foreground runner's width is 6 units. Is the gap acceptable by the quarter-width rule? What depth problem, if any, do the heights suggest?

Answer: The quarter-width threshold is 6 divided by 4, which equals 1.5 units. The gap of 2 units is greater than 1.5, so it is acceptable. The heights decrease from foreground to background, which supports depth, but the middle runner at 7 units is more than half the foreground height; that is allowed, but the scene should be checked visually for clear separation.

Reason: The gap check uses the focal figure's width. The height comparison shows a consistent decrease, which is a valid depth cue. No single ratio is required, so the heights are acceptable if the scene reads clearly.

Check: Measure the foreground runner's width, divide by 4, and compare to the gap. Compare the three heights and squint to confirm the runners read as separate depths.

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Original tasks 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 3

A hockey scene has a player in the center middle ground, a goal in the right background, and a puck near the player. The player's width is 5 units. The puck is 1 unit from the player's stick. The goal is 3 units from the player. Identify any tangent risk and state one adjustment that would fix it.

Answer: The puck-to-stick gap is 1 unit, which is less than one quarter of the player's width (5 divided by 4 equals 1.25 units). This is a tangent risk. Move the puck to at least 1.25 units from the stick, for example 1.5 units, or move the player slightly away from the puck.

Reason: The quarter-width rule flags gaps smaller than 1.25 units. The goal gap of 3 units is larger and not flagged. The fix increases the puck gap above the threshold.

Check: Measure the player's width, divide by 4, and compare to the puck gap. After adjusting, trace the outlines to confirm they no longer just touch.

Task 4

A volleyball scene has three figures: a server in the left foreground, a receiver in the center middle ground, and a net in the right background. The server is 9 units tall and 4 units wide. The receiver is 6 units tall. The net is 5 units tall. The gap between the server and the receiver is 1 unit. Is the gap acceptable by the quarter-width rule? Suggest one composition change to improve the scene's readability.

Answer: The quarter-width threshold is 4 divided by 4, which equals 1 unit. The gap is 1 unit, so it meets the threshold exactly and is acceptable but borderline. One improvement is to move the receiver one half cell to the right, increasing the gap and separating the two figures more clearly. Another is to lower the net slightly so it does not compete with the figures.

Reason: The gap equals the threshold, so it is not less than the threshold. The scene still benefits from more separation because the server and receiver are both important. The net height is a separate visual choice; lowering it can reduce crowding.

Check: Measure the server's width, divide by 4, and compare to the gap. After moving the receiver, re-measure the gap and squint to confirm the focal action remains clear.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] The scene includes at least three figures and at least one piece of equipment.
- [ ] A written moment sentence identifies the focal action and focal figure.
- [ ] Figure sizes clearly differ by depth: foreground larger, background smaller.
- [ ] Overlaps are deliberate and do not hide the focal action.
- [ ] No accidental tangents: outlines of figures and equipment do not just touch.
- [ ] Equipment placement supports the action and does not crowd the focal figure.
- [ ] The blank composition box is used to test at least one alternative arrangement.
- [ ] The final scene reads clearly when squinting and when the focal figure is covered.
- [ ] Figure style follows a stated convention or a valid alternative, not a single required style.
- [ ] Measurements or grid-cell comparisons are used to check spacing.

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