Sunglasses Negative Space Drawing: Shade the Surround, Not the Frame

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

In a 10 cm by 6 cm negative-space box, a sunglasses outline has a 3 cm left lens, a 1.5 cm bridge, a 3 cm right lens, and equal side gaps. Find the side gap and state whether the outline fits the box.

Answer: Each side gap is 1.25 cm. Total: 1.25 + 3 + 1.5 + 3 + 1.25 = 10 cm, so the outline fits the 10 cm width.

Reason: Subtract the known widths from the box width: 10 - 3 - 1.5 - 3 = 2.5 cm for both gaps, so each gap is 1.25 cm. The sum equals the box width, so it fits.

Check: Add the five widths again and confirm the total equals 10 cm; measure the drawn gaps with a ruler.

Task 2

A student shades the surround with one heavy pass and the outline becomes fuzzy. The box is 8 cm wide and the outline is 6 cm wide, leaving 1 cm gaps on each side. Describe two fixes and check the gap arithmetic.

Answer: Fix one: lighten the outline and re-shade in two pale layers. Fix two: keep the heavy pass but sharpen the outline with a thin line before adding more shade. Gap check: 1 + 6 + 1 = 8 cm, so the gaps are correct.

Reason: A heavy single pass can smear and close the negative shape. Layering keeps the edge readable. The arithmetic confirms the outline is centered in the box.

Check: Measure each gap with a ruler and confirm both are 1 cm; step back to see if the sunglasses shape still reads.

Task 3

You reverse the convention: the sunglasses are shaded dark and the surround stays light. The box is 9 cm wide, the outline is 7 cm wide, and the side gaps are 1 cm each. Check the arithmetic and state one risk of reversing the convention.

Answer: Arithmetic: 1 + 7 + 1 = 9 cm, so the outline fits. Risk: the negative shape may read as the surround rather than the sunglasses, so state the reversed convention clearly.

Reason: Reversing values is valid if stated, but viewers expect the object to be the light shape in a negative-space study. The arithmetic confirms the outline is centered.

Check: Measure the gaps and confirm they are equal; ask someone to identify the sunglasses shape without prompting.

Sunglasses Negative Space Drawing: Shade the Surround, Not the Frame

Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A drawing has a 5 cm lens, a 2 cm bridge, a 5 cm lens, and 2 cm side gaps in a 16 cm box. A second drawing has the same lenses and bridge but 1 cm side gaps in a 14 cm box. Which drawing has the larger surround area, and by how much in width?

Answer: The first drawing has the larger surround width: 2 + 2 = 4 cm of side gaps versus 1 + 1 = 2 cm. The difference is 2 cm of total surround width.

Reason: Surround width is the sum of the side gaps. First: 2 + 2 = 4 cm. Second: 1 + 1 = 2 cm. The difference is 2 cm. Both outlines fit their boxes: 2 + 5 + 2 + 5 + 2 = 16 cm and 1 + 5 + 2 + 5 + 1 = 14 cm.

Check: Add the widths for each drawing and confirm they equal the box widths; compare the gap sums directly.

Sunglasses Negative Space Drawing: Shade the Surround, Not the Frame

Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Convention is stated and followed consistently: frame and lenses unshaded, surround shaded.
- [ ] Outline is light and thin enough that the negative shape stays open.
- [ ] Surround tone is built in layers and is visibly darker than the object.
- [ ] Proportion checks are recorded: lens widths, bridge width, and side gaps compared.
- [ ] Valid alternatives (reversed values, colored surround, hatching) are accepted if the convention is stated.
- [ ] No lens reflection or frame construction detail is added.

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