Foreshortened Group Pose: Depth Layering in Figure Drawing

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

Three figures stand in a group. The back figure's head is 2 units, the mid figure's head is 2.5 units, and the front figure's head is 3 units. The front figure's feet are at the bottom guide line, the mid figure's feet are 4 units higher, and the back figure's feet are 8 units higher. State the overlap order and the placement order.

Answer: Overlap order: front covers mid, mid covers back. Placement order: front feet lowest, mid feet 4 units higher, back feet 8 units higher.

Reason: Overlap follows the depth zones: nearer figures cover farther ones. Placement follows the lowest visible body part, which increases in height from front to back.

Check: Verify that the front figure's feet are lowest and the back figure's feet are highest, and that the overlap arrows point from front to mid to back.

Task 2

A mid-zone figure reaches toward the viewer with one arm. The arm's side-view length is 6 units. Using the lesson's hypothetical convention, shorten the forward-pointing arm by one-third and state its drawn length. Then state whether the hand should be enlarged or reduced.

Answer: Drawn length is 4 units. The hand should be enlarged because it is closer to the viewer.

Reason: One-third of 6 units is 2 units, so 6 minus 2 equals 4 units. A forward-pointing limb ends closer to the viewer, so its end is enlarged under the convention.

Check: Confirm that 4 units is two-thirds of 6 units and that the hand is described as enlarged, not reduced.

Task 3

A student draws the front figure first, then the mid figure, then the back figure. The back figure's outline is thicker than the front figure's outline. Identify two depth-cue mistakes and state a fix for each.

Answer: Mistake 1: drawing front to back can break overlap order; fix by drawing back to front. Mistake 2: thicker outline on the back figure contradicts depth; fix by using thicker outlines on front figures and thinner on back figures.

Reason: Overlap order is easiest to keep consistent when farther figures are drawn first. Line weight is a depth cue, so it must match the overlap and scale order.

Check: Check that the revised drawing has back-to-front drawing order and that line weight decreases from front to back.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A group has a front figure with head height 3 units and a back figure with head height 2 units. The front figure's lowest visible body part is 1 unit above the bottom guide line, and the back figure's lowest visible body part is 9 units above the bottom guide line. State whether the scale and placement orders agree, and explain.

Answer: Yes, they agree. The front figure is larger (3 units versus 2 units) and placed lower (1 unit versus 9 units above the bottom guide line), so both cues read as closer.

Reason: Scale order requires larger figures closer; placement order requires lower figures closer. Both conditions are met.

Check: Compare head heights and lowest-point heights: larger and lower for the front figure, smaller and higher for the back figure.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Overlap order is consistent: front figures cover mid figures, and mid figures cover back figures.
- [ ] Scale order is consistent: head heights increase from back to front, using a stated ratio.
- [ ] Placement order is consistent: the lowest visible body part is lowest for the front figure and highest for the back figure.
- [ ] Foreshortening convention is applied to at least one forward- or away-pointing limb per figure, with shortened length and enlarged or reduced end.
- [ ] Line-weight convention matches depth: thicker outlines for closer figures, thinner for farther figures.
- [ ] Valid alternatives are accepted if the depth cues are internally consistent and the convention is stated.

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