

# Drawing pictures from words

LAFS.2.W.2.5: With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

## Overview

Students use their field guide descriptions as instructions for another student's illustration. The goal is to create text that describes the drawing—and allows for reproduction—as accurately as possible, thereby practicing writing and observational skills. Accurate scientific writing is an important skill, and this activity is designed to develop it. They will write descriptions of their own journal sketches for the “Make a Field Guide or Collection” activity which will be used as instructions for a fellow student's own illustration. Students often find that this kind of “test” of their written descriptions helps them to make their own writing more accurate and specific.

**Location:** This activity may be done in the in the classroom using journal entries as a foundation.

## PROCEDURE

- Complete the “Make a Field Guide or Collection” activity in the field. Writing a Descriptive Paragraph. Tell students that they are going to write a descriptive paragraph about one of their field guide illustrations, and that it is very important that they are as descriptive and accurate as possible. Do not tell students beforehand that their paragraphs will be used as illustration instructions.
- Ask the class for some characteristics of a good scientific description. Characteristics might include measurements, details, or sense impressions e.g., what an organism looks, smells, feels, or tastes like, use of color.
- Have students write a descriptive paragraph on a separate piece of lined paper, encouraging them to use as many good details to describe their illustration as possible.
- After the paragraphs are completed, collect them and distribute them to a second student. Tell students that they are going to use the description that they have received to make a new illustration. Instruct them to follow the description as closely as possible and not to add anything extra.
- Have the paired students meet and see how well the written descriptions helped their partner create an accurate illustration. Where was the description accurate? How was it misleading? What did it include? What did it leave out?
- Revise writing based on feedback. Option: try again with a new partner.