



**STORIES
FROM
THE SEA**

EXPLORATION ONLINE ACTIVITY 1



DESCRIBE AN UNFAMILIAR ANIMAL

Introduction

In this activity, children develop their descriptive skills by closely observing an image of an animal, then describing it to a partner who has to draw it from the description only. This activity is modelled on the way in which George Stubbs painted 'The Kongouro from New Holland' ([insert web link to object page](#)), the first picture of a kangaroo painted outside Australia. He never saw a live kangaroo and did the painting from descriptions and a kangaroo skin.

Immersion

Look at images of different animals. Practise describing each one in detail: its shape, texture, size and colour, using all their senses. Children look at the detail carefully. When they describe it, they use detailed language and aim to create an image in the mind of the reader.

Play a game to help develop children's observation and descriptive skills: in pairs, one child chooses an animal to describe while the other guesses what it is. Hone children's skills by choosing one breed of animal (e.g. cats): put a selection of images of your chosen animal on the whiteboard: the class must guess which is being described from their classmate's description.

Plan and draft

Pupils choose an animal to describe in detail and write their description in as much detail as possible.

Write up and publish

Pupils write up their final description and read it out to the class. These descriptions could be attached to a game where each class member draws the animal, or part of the animal, from the description or has to guess which animal is being described from a selection.

Extension/differentiation

Pupils can describe the behaviour, habits and personality of their animal.

Pupils can invent a fictional animal to describe.



Supported using public funding by



**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

