Handout: Sketching from Text

In this activity, each child is given a detailed written description of a bird—in this case, one of the many kingfisher species found in India. Using only the description, the child must *draw and colour* the bird on the provided worksheet, which shows only a branch and a scale.

Encourage children to read the description carefully and draw the bird step by step, adding each feature as they interpret it from the text.

There are 10 kingfisher descriptions provided below. Cut them out along the designated lines and give one description slip and one worksheet to each student. Provide students with pencils, erasers and colours.

Kingfisher # 1
A beautiful bird which measures about 27 to 28 centimetres. Its head, neck and belly are a rich chestnut brown. Its throat is bright white. Its back, rump, and tail are mostly bright blue in colour while its wings, although appear blue from the outside, actually are a combination of blue, white, black and chestnut. The tail is medium in length and the same blue colour as the back and wings. The bird has a large, thick, pointed beak that is bright red or reddish-orange. The beak is about 5 to 6 centimetres. Its legs and feet are short and also bright red, making them easy to spot. The area under its tail is brown, just like its belly. It has four toes, which help it grip branches tightly.

Kingfisher # 2
This is a small, lively bird about 16 centimetres in length. It has bright metallic blue upperparts. The back, wings, and rump are blue or blue-green, and it has a white throat, and cheeks are rufous. The belly and underparts are vibrant sunshine-orange. The head (crown) shows blue and there is a white patch on the neck and behind the eyes. The beak is sharp and pointed, measuring about 3 to 4 centimetres. In males, it is usually black. The legs and feet are small and bright red-orange. The tail is short, matching the blue of the wings. It has four toes which help it grip branches tightly. The bird is commonly found near nallas and city streams, ponds.

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Kingfisher # 3

This medium-sized kingfisher is about 25–30 cm in length and has striking black and white plumage. It has a black crown and crest on its head, with a white stripe above the eye and a black stripe running through the eye. Its back and wings are black with white spots or edges, and the rump looks somewhat the same. The underparts, including the belly and chest, are mostly white, and it has a white throat and a necklace-like pattern around the neck and chest. The tail ends in a white tip. The beak is long, strong, completely black, and measures about 4 to 5 cm. The legs and feet are blackish.

Kingfisher # 4

This is a large bird reaching a length of about 41 to 43 centimetres. It has a striking black and white body. Its head, neck, and long, messy crest are covered in black and white spots and stripes. The bird's throat and belly are mostly white, but its chest has little black spots. The bird has a large, sharp beak that can be around 5 centimetres. The beak is dark greyish in colour, sometimes with a lighter tip. Its legs and feet are a pale grey colour.

Kingfisher # 5

This kingfisher is a small bird, about 17 centimetres in length. Its head and face are a bright, shiny blue, and its back and wings are a deep blue colour, almost showing shades of violet. Its belly and chest are a reddish-orange. This bird has blue patches near its ears, which help tell it apart from other similar looking kingfishers. It also has a white chin and throat. The male has a dark beak with a white tip, while the female's beak has a reddish lower part. Its beak is about 3 to 4 centimetres. Its legs and feet are also reddish in colour. It has four toes which help it grip branches tightly. The bird is often seen close to forest streams.

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Kingfisher # 6

This large billed Kingfisher measures about 35 centimetres. Its head is olive-brown, and its back is greenish or dark blue-green. The wings and tail are blue, with a light blue (turquoise) patch on the back and rump. Its neck, chest, and belly are pale yellow-orangish in colour. This kingfisher has a very large, thick beak that is bright red, sometimes with a darker tip. The beak is about 8 centimetres and seems abnormally large with respect to the rest of the body. Its legs are also bright red. Seen near wetlands and mangroves, this kingfisher is a delight to spot!

Kingfisher # 7

This kingfisher is a medium-sized bird, measuring about 28 centimetres. It has a black head which looks like a black cap and wings are a combination of black and deep purple-blue. Its throat, neck, and chest are white, creating a clear contrast. The neck may also appear a little rufous. The bird's back and wings are a deep purple-blue, while its belly and lower parts are a reddish-orange colour. It has a large, thick, bright red beak that is about 5 centimetres. Its legs and feet are also red. Seen near wetlands and mangroves, this kingfisher is a delight to spot!

Kingfisher # 8

The medium-sized bird, about 23 to 25 centimetres long, comes across like a bird that is blue and green. Its back, wings, and tail appear a turquoise blue which also looks greenish. It has a white patchy ring around its neck. Its belly and chest are usually white or light brown. The bird has a large, black beak with a pale yellow base on the lower part. The beak is about 4 centimetres. Its legs are grey in colour. Seen in the creeks and mangroves, this kingfisher is a blue-green wonder!

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Kingfisher # 9
The large kingfisher measures about 35 centimetres in length. Its head, neck, and underparts are bright orange-yellow, while its back, wings, and tail are brownish-dark chocolate in colour. When it flies, you can see a distinctive sky-blue rump. This bird has a large, thick, red bill that is about 6 to 7 centimetres. Its legs are also red in colour. The bird is typically found in mangrove forests and stream banks.

Kingfisher # 10
This kingfisher is a small one measuring just about 14 centimetres. Its back and wings are dark bluish-black, and it has a lilac-pink patch at the rump. The top of its head is a mix of lilac and reddish-brown, with blue, orange and white patches on the sides of its neck. Its throat is white. The belly and chest are bright orange or orangey-yellow. It has a long, wide reddish-orange beak that is about 3 centimetres. Its legs and feet are also reddish-orange. It has only three toes unlike other kingfishers! This bird is found in dense forests and looks like a flying jewel!