

Science Meets Art



Why not just take photographs?

KLAs: Science, Creative Arts	LESSON TOPIC: Zoology Collections and Scientific Illustration
YEAR LEVEL: K-6	DURATION OF ACTIVITY: 45 minutes

Illustrations play a very important role in Science, as they can communicate processes, depict things that no longer exist (for example, dinosaurs), or features that are difficult to observe in nature. Photographs sometimes show too much; an illustration on the other hand can highlight key items, while dimming or even eliminating superfluous features.

True scientific illustration should reflect the findings of science and technology. It can reveal to the viewer the unobservable — from single cells to galaxies, from the internal anatomy of an animal to the reconstruction of extinct life forms. These drawings can be realistic or abstract portrayals. Shapes, anatomy, details, and concepts that cannot be conveyed with words form the essence of this art.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Identify some anatomical features of invertebrates through observations of museum and live caught specimens
- Appreciate the importance of museum collections as a scientific resource, why we collect organisms, and what they can tell us

- Discuss the ethical considerations surrounding collecting animals for science
- Develop and appreciate the skills important in scientific illustrating, through tracing and free-hand drawing, close observation and paying attention to detail

EXPLORATORY AND PLAY-BASED COMPONENTS

Students are encouraged to explore their schoolyard for butterflies and other organisms they would like to draw. These are captured, and released upon completion of the activity. Students then have the opportunity to examine, identify, compare and finally illustrate specimens from the UNE Natural History Museum Collections.