

## A Martian's Sketchbook



*An activity of "Singapore's Green Spaces Through the Ages"*

In "Singapore's Green Spaces Through the Ages" (page 14-15, *What's Up* July 2021), Eryn Tan was impressed by the rich and detailed illustrations of local wildlife on display at the exhibition, *Human X Nature*. One of the highlights for her was a whole book of scientific illustrations. Do this activity to experience creating artwork of that kind — not as a human being but as a Martian visiting planet Earth!

1. Which of the following images, A or B, would be considered a scientific illustration of the human heart? Why do you say so?

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 <p>(a) A heart by an unknown artist</p>	 <p>(b) A heart by Leonardo Da Vinci</p> <p>To see this image more clearly, go to: <a href="https://www.newscientist.com/gallery/leonardo/">https://www.newscientist.com/gallery/leonardo/</a></p>
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2. View the video "How To: Scientific Drawing" ➤ <https://youtu.be/-lmd35Cz2TQ> by Ms Heckman at the Fernbank Science Centre.
3. From the video, list any five tips on how to create a scientific illustration.

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4. Imagine you are a Martian who has just landed on Earth. You explore your surroundings and find it absolutely fascinating.
5. Pick a “boring” ordinary object which you, as a human, would not normally notice (preferably one that you can hold in your hand, rather than say, a ceiling fan). Look at it through the eyes of a Martian seeing it for the first time. Study it carefully and make a scientific illustration of this object, applying the five features you have listed earlier.

Some questions that may help you get started:

- What would you name the object, in your Martian way?
- What are its unique features (e.g. colour, texture, structure)?
- What do you think are the functions of its parts?
- What does the object remind you of?
- How do you think it can be useful back on Planet Mars?

*Your scientific drawing of an ordinary object on Earth as seen by a Martian.*

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“If something is boring after two minutes, try it for four.  
If still boring, then eight. Then sixteen. Then thirty-two.  
Eventually, one discovers that it is not boring at all.” — John Cage