EXERCISE 05 • TWO PEOPLE

Draw the Place I’m Describing

Take turns helping a place appear on paper, one detail and one curious question at a time.

About 15–20 minutes

Why try it: Practice listening for what someone wants you to notice, asking rather than assuming, and making room for their additions.

Gather: Two sheets of paper and pens, pencils, or crayons. Use a shared drawing app, arrange objects, or let one person make marks as directed. Descriptions and questions can be spoken, typed, or written.

Make the artwork

1 Choose a place. Each person picks a real or invented place they feel comfortable describing. An imaginary café or a room from a favorite story works well. Decide who will describe first and who will draw.

2 Start with three details. The first person offers a few details: what is nearby, how the space is arranged, or what catches their attention. The listener begins with simple marks. Pause between details so neither person has to rush.

3 Ask and respond. Spend about four minutes building the picture together. The listener might ask, “What would you like me to include next?” or “Where does the cat sit?” The storyteller can clarify, change a detail, or leave something unspecified. Keep the drawing visible if that helps.

4 Look together. The storyteller names something they recognize and asks for any addition they want. Ask, “Would you like to add that yourself, or shall I?” Different interpretations can stay; there is no original picture to reproduce correctly.

5 Swap roles. Use the second sheet for the other person’s place. Finish by choosing titles together. Each storyteller decides whether their picture is kept, displayed, or set aside.

One way it could look

An original illustrated example, not a picture you need to match.



Fictional example: Maya says, “A tiny café. The table wobbles, and an orange cat sits beside a chair.” Luis asks, “What is closest to the window?” Maya answers, “A mug on the table.” He draws it, then offers her the pencil. She adds a folded napkin under the table leg. Together they title it “The Table We Chose.”

If you want to reflect

- Which question helped the place become clearer?
- Was there a detail you were glad the other person noticed?

Another way to try it

Describe a place made entirely of shapes, textures, or objects. No visual memory or detailed scene is needed.

You can leave out any detail, invent another, or switch places midway without explaining why.