The blind men and the elephant 🔊 ▶️

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This folk tale from India teaches intercultural awareness by illustrating how different perspectives lead to distinct points of view. The poem below based on this Hindu fable was written by John Godfrey Saxe in 1872.
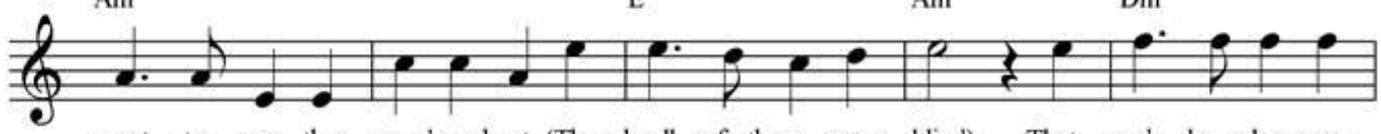*Music by Dany Rosevear*

It was six men of Hin - du - stan, To learn - ing much in - clined, Who
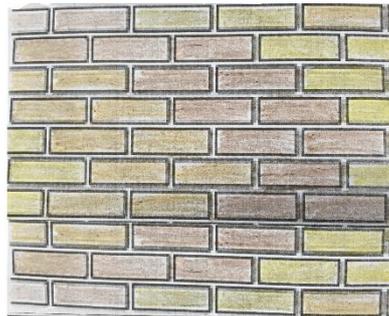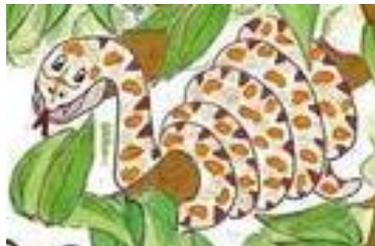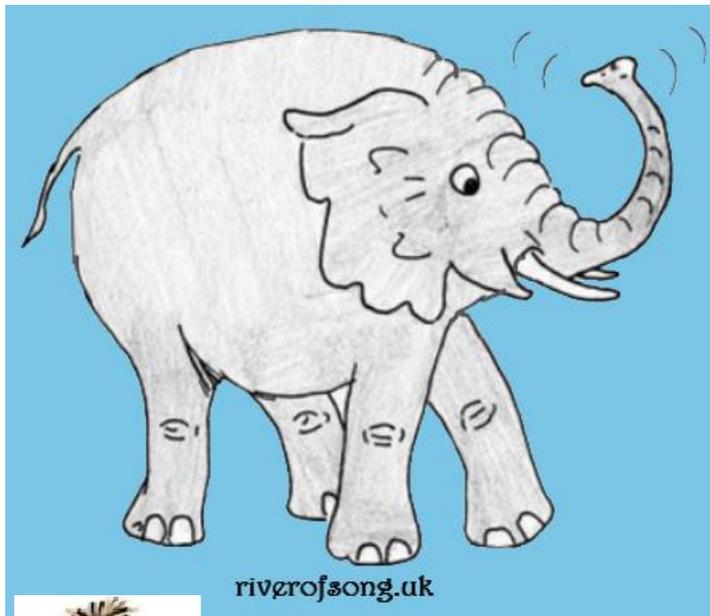
went to see the e - le - phant, (Though all of them were blind) That each by ob - ser -

va — - tion might sa - tis - fy their mind, might sa - tis - fy their mind.

It was six men of Hindostan, To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the elephant, (Though all of them were blind)
That each by observation Might satisfy his mind.

The first approached the Elephant, And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side, At once began to bawl:
"Bless me,it seems the Elephant Is very like a wall!"

The second, feeling of the tusk, Cried, "Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant Is very like a spear!"

The third approached the animal, And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands, Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant Is very like a snake."

The fourth stretched out his eager hand, And felt about the knee,
"What most this mighty beast is like Is mighty plain," quoth he;
"'Tis clear enough the Elephant Is very like a tree"

The fifth, who chanced to touch the ear Said, "Even the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most; Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant Is very like a fan."

The sixth no sooner had begun About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant Is very like a rope."

And so these men of Hindostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong.