

Cruising the Universe: Fantastic Animals in the Arts of China

Activity Sheet



Do you know? There are many fantastic creatures here at the Hong Kong Museum of Art. Let me take you on an adventure into this wonderland. We will go to the third floor galleries to see two exhibitions, *Cruising the Universe: Fantastic Animals in the Arts of China* and *Gems of Chinese Ceramics from the Hong Kong Museum of Art*. You will find lots of information on those creatures. Have you got paper, pen and map ready? Put them in your backpack - they'll come in handy. Ready now? Let's go!

Floor Plan of 3/F, Chinese Antiquities Gallery (1)

埏埴巧工

香港藝術館藏中國陶瓷選粹
Gems of Chinese Ceramics from the Hong Kong Museum of Art

- 新石器時代
Neolithic Period
- 商、周、戰國時期
Shang, Zhou to Warring States Period
- 漢代
Han Dynasty
- 遼代
Liao Dynasty
- 金代
Jin Dynasty
- 三國、西晉、東晉、南北朝、隋代
The Three Kingdoms, Jin, Southern & Northern Dynasties, Sui Dynasty
- 唐代
Tang Dynasty
- 宋代
Song Dynasty
- 元代
Yuan Dynasty
- 明代
Ming Dynasty
- 清代
Qing Dynasty

中國文物展廳 (1)
CHINESE ANTIQUITIES GALLERY (1)

Education Corner

遨遊

CRUISING THE UNIVERSE
FANTASTIC ANIMALS IN THE ARTS OF CHINA
中國瑞獸珍禽文物

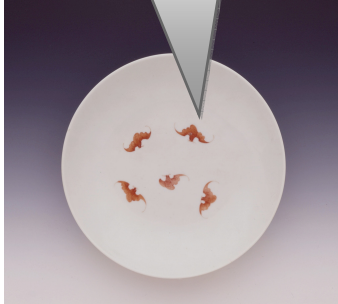
天地

- 權力象徵的神獸
Creatures of Power
- 具超自然力量的靈獸
Religious and Sacred Animals
- 民間傳說的靈物
Folklore and Legendary Animals
- 隨葬動物明器
Funerary Creatures
- 帶吉祥真意的瑞獸
Animals as Auspicious Emblems
- 人間遊走的動物
Animals of the Human Realm
- 精選展品
Exhibition Highlights

👋 1. Do you know who I am?

Do you recognise the creatures in these items on display? Follow the hint and find out.

A. I am a bat.



Cruising the Universe

B. I am _____



Cruising the Universe

C. I am _____



Cruising the Universe

D. I am _____



Cruising the Universe

E. I am _____



Gems of Chinese Ceramics

F. I am _____



Cruising the Universe

G. I am _____



Cruising the Universe

H. I am _____



Cruising the Universe

I. I am _____



Gems of Chinese Ceramics

👋 2. Do you know what I mean?

These creatures have different meanings in Chinese culture. How much do you know? Or can you guess? Compare the pictures and the explanations underneath, then trace the 'ladder puzzle' (turn left or right at every corner) to see if you have guessed correctly.



Deer



Crane



Fish



Bat



Mandarin Duck



Toad

We always appear in pairs, so we represent "lovers who will never part".

I am a celestial bird that often appears in Chinese myths and fairytales. I can live up to a thousand years, so I represent "long life".

I am a symbol of money. You can find me with a man called "Liu Hai", who is always teasing me. I am supposed to keep the money rolling in.

I am a symbol of abundance, meaning I can bring a lot of money and many children and grandchildren to the family.

I am a celestial animal in Chinese myths and legends. I am a symbol of fame, fortune and all the good things associated with high-ranking officialdom.

I am a symbol of good luck, happiness and all kinds of blessings.

👉 3. Everyday sayings involving animals and creatures

Throughout history, humankind and animals have always been very close. We not only see animal images on everyday things around us, but also use them in idiomatic expressions. How many such idioms do you know? Match them with the answers below.

Kill two
birds with
one stone

Someone sees or notices
things more easily than others.

Horse of a
different
colour

A person succeeds in doing two
things at the same time.

A social
butterfly

A person decides to act
decisively in order to deal with
a difficult situation or problem.

Eagle eyes

The person does things different
from others or that the nature of
the problem is an entirely different.

Take the
bull by the
horns

A person has a lot of friends and
acquaintances and likes to flit
from one social event to other.


And can you give more examples?

🐾 4. Hunt them down!


Follow the instructions on the map and 'hunt down' these animals. After you have found them, remember to read the descriptions, look carefully, and observe what is before you. It's a great lesson in Chinese antiquities!

中國文物展廳 (1)
CHINESE ANTIQUITIES GALLERY (1)


遨遊
CRUISING THE UNIVERSE
FANTASTIC ANIMALS IN THE ARTS OF CHINA
中國瑞獸珍禽文物
天地



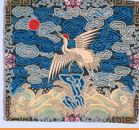
Tomb guardian in *sancai* glaze
Period: Tang dynasty (618-907)
Medium: ceramics
What this is for:
It was buried with the owner of the tomb. It is a protector of the master, supposed to ward off evil, and can stop tomb-raiders from entering the inner chambers.




Bronze *gu* vase with animal mask and *kui*-dragon design
Period: Late Shang (c. 11th century BC)
Medium: bronze
What this is for:
A wine vessel. It can also be used as a ritual implement, that is, a utensil for sacrificial ceremonies, funerals and banquets.



Beast-shaped urinal in celadon glaze
Period: Southern dynasties (420-589)
Medium: ceramics
What this is for: Night pot



First rank civil official's badge embroidered with a crane
Period: 19th century
Medium: embroidery
What this is for:
An embroidered square sewn on a court official's robe to identify the wearer's rank in the Qing dynasty.

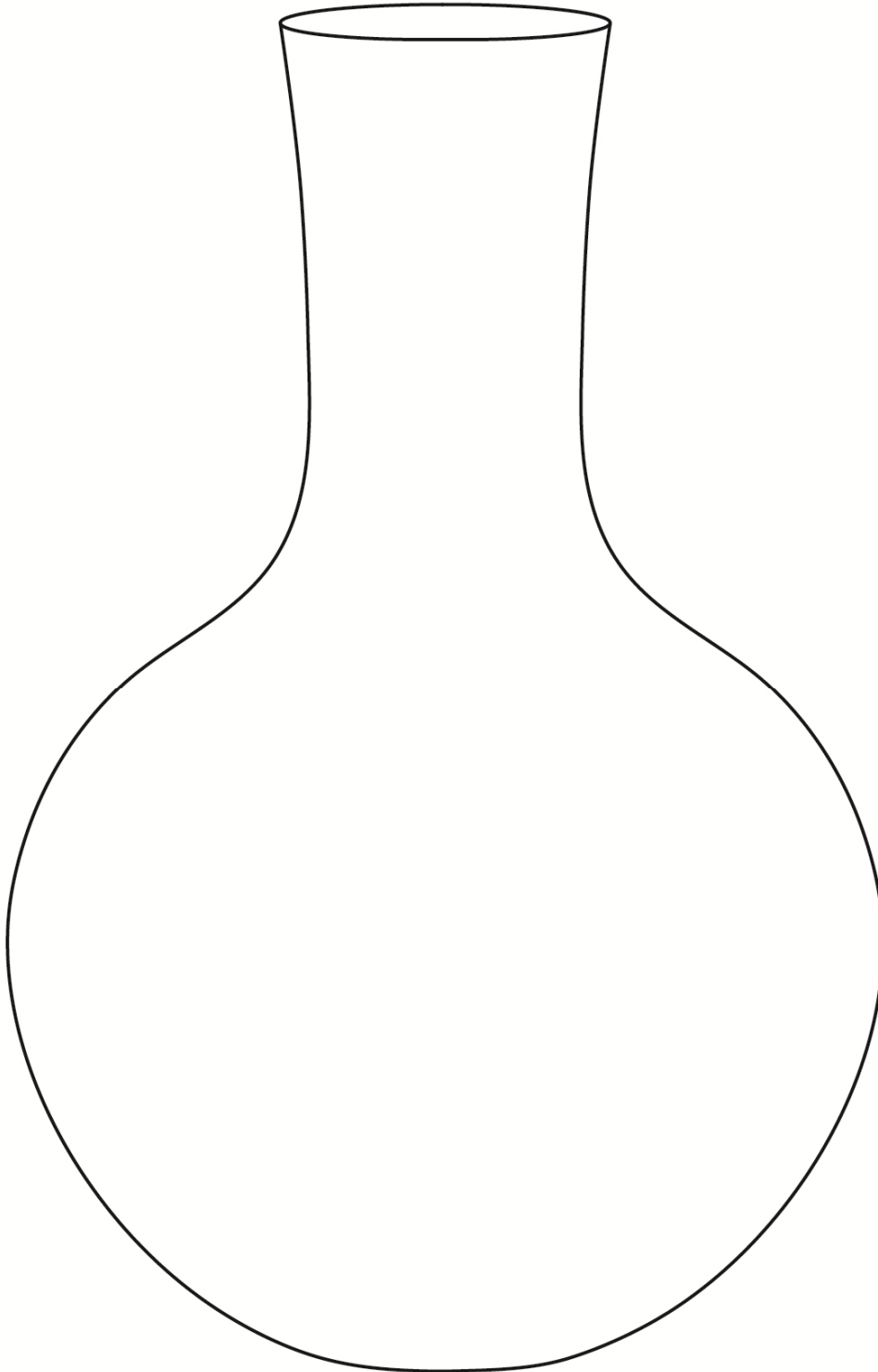


Glass snuff bottle with coiling *chi*-dragon design in polychrome overlay on snowflake ground
Period: Qing dynasty (1644-1911)
Medium: glass
What this is for: Snuff bottle

👉 5. Decorate your own vase

Try your design skills! Pick up your colour pencils and draw the creatures you have seen today on this vase.

(Hint: At the Education Corner on Level Three, you can find some stamping and tracing tools that might come in handy.)



🌿 6. Handy tools past and present

On this page you can see on the left some of the tools and utensils the ancient Chinese used. Do you know what they were for? Can you link them with the tools and utensils we use today, as shown on the right?



Bronze Mirror



Ewer



Pillow



Bronze Iron



Hand Warmer



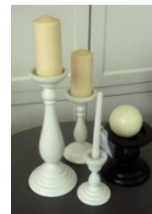
Candle Stand



Jug



Hand Warmer



Candle Stand



Mirror



Pillow



Iron

We have come to the end of our 'adventure in wonderland' today. Next time when you see fantastic creatures like these, you can proudly say, "I know them! Let me tell you who they are, what they mean, and how to use them!" See you in our next exhibition then!

Answer:

1. B. a dragon C. a phoenix D. a deer E. a magpie
F. a toad G. a deer H. a ram I. a butterfly

2.

Animals	Metaphorical Meaning
Deer	I am a celestial animal in Chinese myths and legends. I am a symbol of fame, fortune and all the good things associated with high-ranking officialdom.
Fish	I am a symbol of abundance, meaning I can bring a lot of money and many children and grandchildren to the family.
Bat	I am a symbol of good luck, happiness and all kinds of blessings.
Mandarin Duck	We always appear in pairs, so we represent "lovers who will never part".
Toad	I am a symbol of money. You can find me with a man called "Liu Hai", who is always teasing me. I am supposed to keep the money rolling in.

3.

Idioms	Meaning
Kill two birds with one stone	A person succeeds in doing two things at the same time.
Horse of a different colour	The person does things different from others or that the nature of the problem is an entirely different.
A social butterfly	A person who has a lot of friends and acquaintances and likes to flit from one social event to other.
Eagle eyes	Someone who sees or notices things more easily than others.
Take the bull by the horns	A person decides to act decisively in order to deal with a difficult situation or problem.

6.

Past	Bronze Mirror	Ewer	Pillow	Bronze Iron	Hand Warmer	Candle Stand
Present	Mirror	Jug	Pillow	Iron	Hand Warmer	Candle Stand



Presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Organised by the Hong Kong Museum of Art
Chinese Antiquities Gallery (1)
3/F, Hong Kong Museum of Art

Website: <http://hk.art.museum>

Produced by the Chinese Antiquities Unit, Hong Kong Museum of Art
Copyright©2012 Leisure and Cultural Services Department
All rights reserved