

MYTHOLOGY

Unit 1 Session 5

Mythical creatures are found in legends and myths. People believed they were real beings.

Mythical creatures can be divided in two groups; the first group consists of creatures that people think existed or still exist today and the other group consists of creatures which not everybody thinks have existed.

Each country has their own folklore made up of mythical and magical creatures, monsters and legend heroes. Throughout the years, a country's history becomes rich with mythical characters, with amazing creatures that became more and more alive as the centuries and decades go by.



DRAGON

DESCRIPTION

Dragons are found in the myths of many cultures, and appear in many different forms. The name comes from the Greek "*draconta*" which means "to watch." Often, dragons are portrayed as guarding an object or a particular area.

Dragons are drawn with bodies like a huge lizards, or snakes with two pairs of lizard-type legs. In Europe they have bad-type wings growing from their backs. Dragons are large and powerful fire-breathing creatures, typically with magical powers and spiritual qualities.

FEATURES

In legendary myths, dragons were generally described as fierce, evil and destructive. They often guard a sacred treasure such as gold, a powerful stone or jewel or an imprisoned maiden. Most stories include a knight who rescues a young woman or treasure. First, he must slay the dragon or get it's heart

Dragons are also considered as real life creatures that have existed in the past. Like dinosaurs, dragons are similar to the great reptiles that appeared before humans.

Giant lizards are often described as the real –life counterpart of dragons.

SYMBOLISM

Dragons represent the primal forces in nature and the universe. They can alternately breathe fire, poison or ice. These abilities show they are both creators and destroyers. Fire gives life (and sometimes death); ice and poison lead to death.



The Phoenix.

DESCRIPTION

The size of an eagle, with gold plumage around its neck, a purple body, and an azure tail. The throat has a crest, and the head has some feathers.

FEATURES

The main feature of the phoenix is that it is reborn through fire: when it gets old it will make a nest (sometimes of myrrh) and set it on fire. The phoenix is consumed in the flames, but will be reborn out of the ashes. There is only one Phoenix at a time; it lives for many years (accounts vary from 500, 540, 1000 or 1460 years.) No person has ever seen this bird eat. This legend was very common among the Egyptians, the Greeks and, oriental cultures during medieval times.

SYMBOLISM

It represents the Sun, which dies every night and is reborn the next morning. Among classical writers, it may represent those existing in paradise, enjoying eternal youth. Among Christians, it can represent rebirth after death.