



Mythological Creatures Field Guide

Free classroom resources

Chinese Beasts

Five classroom posters, A3

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- These posters are A3. To print one on A4, choose "Fit to page" in your print settings.
- The QR code on each poster opens mythologicalcreatures.net/resources.

Chinese Dragon

Say it **Loong** (rhymes with 'long') Chinese 龍 / 龙

The wingless dragon that brings the rain, honoured in China for thousands of years.

No wings needed. Chinese dragons fly using a magic lump on their heads, called the Chiou.

Carp to dragon. A brave carp leapt the Dragon Gate waterfall and became a dragon.

Where it comes from:
About 3,300 years ago
Basis: Shang oracle bones
More than 2,500 years ago
Guide: The Book of Changes
About 250 years ago
Ruler: an emperor's robe
Place: the Nine-Emperors Wall, Beijing

The Chinese Dragon brings rain, not fire. Why might farmers in ancient China imagine a dragon like that?

Chinese writers give the dragon parts of six animals: deer antlers, eagle claws and more. Here it is, ready to bring the rain.

Follow the dragon to find out more

From the book: Mythological Creatures Field Guide: Chinese Beasts

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Qilin

Say it **chee-LIN** Chinese 麒麟

A gentle beast that harms no living thing, from the ancient books of China.

A gift of jade. Before Confucius was born, a Qilin dropped a jade tablet at his mother's feet.

It bends no grass. The Qilin steps so gently that it never crushes a living blade.

Where it comes from:
More than 2,500 years ago
Poem: the Classic of Poetry
About 1,300 years ago
Dictionary: by Xu Shen
About 600 years ago
Painting: a griffin called a Qilin
Today
Place: Ming Tombs, Beijing

The Qilin will not fight back, even to save itself. Is that brave, or is it unwise?

By Shen's dictionary describes the Qilin with a deer's body, an ox's tail and a single horn. Here it is, brought to life.

Follow the scroll to find out more

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Fenghuang

Say it **fung-hwong** Chinese 鳳凰

The queen of birds, who comes in times of peace, from the myths of Ancient China.

A mix of animals. Some say she has a pheasant's head, a snake's neck, a tortoise's back and a fish's tail.

A fussy eater. She nests only in Wutong trees and eats only bamboo seeds.

Where it comes from:
About 3,300 years ago
Basis: Shang oracle bones
More than 2,500 years ago
Poem: the Classic of Poetry
About 2,500 years ago
Book: Confucius's sayings
About 400 years ago
Crown: a Ming empress's crown

The Fenghuang stays away when rulers are cruel. Is that fair on the ordinary people who live there?

'Feng' and 'huang' mean 'peace' and 'king' respectively. Chinese writers describe a bird patterned in the rainbow, not a bird of fire like the Western phoenix. Here she is, in all her colours.

Follow the feathers to find out more

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Nian

Say it **nyen-SHOH** Chinese 年兽

The hungry beast of Lunar New Year's Eve, from the folk tales of China.

Red, fire and noise send the Nian running. A beggar scared it off with red paper and cracking bamboo.

Tamed by magic. In one tale, a wise old sage rode it across the clouds.

Where it comes from:
About 1,500 years ago
Book: Zang Li's festival book
Nearly 2,000 years ago
Poem: Wang Anshi's 'New Year's Day'

Today
Festival: Lunar New Year

The Nian was beaten by red paper and loud noises, not by a hero with a sword. Why might that make a better story?

Some say the Nian lives under the sea, others in mountain caves, most others in huge, deep blue holes with a cold nose. This is how we picture it.

Follow the fuse to find out more

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Bai Ze

Say it **BYE-zuh** Chinese 白泽

The talking beast who knew every spirit, from the legends of Ancient China.

11,520 ghosts and spirits were named by Bai Ze. The Yellow Emperor had them all written down.

Know a ghost's name and you have power over it, people believed.

Where it comes from:
More than 1,500 years ago
History: the Book of Song
About 1,300 years ago
Book: the Kaiyuan star guide
More than 1,000 years ago
Scroll: from a sealed cave
More than 300 years ago
Badge: a silk badge on a robe

People once hung pictures of Bai Ze at home to keep their families safe. Why might a picture make people feel safer?

In the most famous Chinese telling, Bai Ze has a tiger's head, a long red mane and a dragon's body. This is how we picture it.

Follow the scroll to find out more

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Chinese Dragon

Qilin

Fenghuang

Nian

Bai Ze



This page is blank on purpose: it is the back of the cover.

Chinese Dragon

Say it **Loong** (rhymes with 'long')

Chinese 龍 / 龙

The wingless dragon that brings the rain,
honoured in China for thousands of years.



No wings needed. Chinese dragons fly using a magic lump on their heads, called the Chimu.

Carp to dragon. A brave carp leapt the Dragon Gate waterfall and became a dragon.

Where it comes from:

- **About 3,300 years ago**
Bone: Shang oracle bones
- **More than 2,500 years ago**
Guide: the Book of Changes
- **About 250 years ago**
Robe: an emperor's robe
- **Today**
Place: the Nine-Dragon Wall, Beijing

The Chinese Dragon brings rain, not fire. Why might farmers in ancient China imagine a dragon like that?



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'Lóng' is the Chinese word for dragon

Chinese writers gave the dragon parts of nine animals: deer antlers, eagle claws and more. Here it is, ready to bring the rain.



Danger



Magic



Power



Speed



Size



Spooky



**Follow the dragon
to find out more**



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Qilin

Say it **chee-LIN**

Chinese 麒麟

A gentle beast that harms no living thing,
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 **A gift of jade.** Before Confucius was born, a Qilin dropped a jade tablet at his mother's feet.

It bends no grass. The Qilin steps so gently that it never crushes a living blade.

Where it comes from:

More than 2,500 years ago

Poem: the Classic of Poetry

About 1,900 years ago

Dictionary: by Xu Shen

About 600 years ago

Painting: a giraffe called a Qilin

Today

Place: Ming Tombs, Beijing

The Qilin will not fight back, even to save itself. Is that brave, or is it unwise?



Often called the Chinese unicorn

Xu Shen's dictionary describes the Qilin with a deer's body, an ox's tail and a single horn. Here it is, brought to life.



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Step softly to find out more



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Fenghuang

Say it **fung-hwong**

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The queen of birds, who comes in times of peace,
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A mix of animals. Some say she has a pheasant's head, a snake's neck, a tortoise's back and a fish's tail.

A fussy eater. She nests only in Wutong trees and eats only bamboo seeds.

Where it comes from:

About 3,200 years ago

Bone: Shang oracle bones

More than 2,500 years ago

Poem: the Classic of Poetry

About 2,500 years ago

Book: Confucius's sayings

About 400 years ago

Crown: a Ming empress's crown

The Fenghuang stays away when rulers are cruel. Is that fair on the ordinary people who live there?



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'Feng' and 'Huang' were once two birds, now one

Chinese writers describe a bird patterned in five colours, not a bird of fire like the Western phoenix. Here she is, in all her colours.



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Nian

Say it **nyen-SHOH**

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The hungry beast of Lunar New Year's Eve,
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Red, fire and noise send the Nian running. A beggar scared it off with red paper and crackling bamboo.

Tamed by magic. In one tale, a wise old sage rode it across the clouds.

Where it comes from:

About 1,500 years ago

Book: Zong Lin's festival book

Nearly 1,000 years ago

Poem: Wang Anshi's 'New Year's Day'

Today

Festival: Lunar New Year

The Nian was beaten by red paper and loud noises, not by a hero with a sword. Why might that make a better story?



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"Nian" means "year"

Some say the Nian lives under the sea, others in mountain caves; most picture a huge, dog-like beast with a wild mane. This is how we picture it.



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Bai Ze

Say it **BYE-zuh**

Chinese 白澤

The talking beast who knew every spirit,
from the legends of Ancient China.



11,520 ghosts and spirits were named by Bai Ze. The Yellow Emperor had them all written down.

Know a ghost's name and you have power over it, people believed.

Where it comes from:

More than 1,500 years ago

History: the Book of Song

About 1,300 years ago

Book: the Kaiyuan star guide

More than 1,000 years ago

Scroll: from a sealed cave

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Badge: a silk badge on a robe

People once hung pictures of Bai Ze at home to keep their families safe. Why might a picture make people feel safer?



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'Bai Ze' means 'white marsh'

In the most famous Chinese telling, Bai Ze has a tiger's head, a long red mane and a dragon's body. This is how we picture it.



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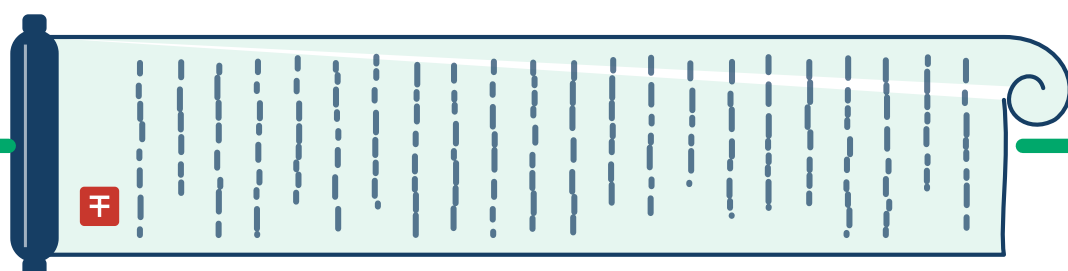
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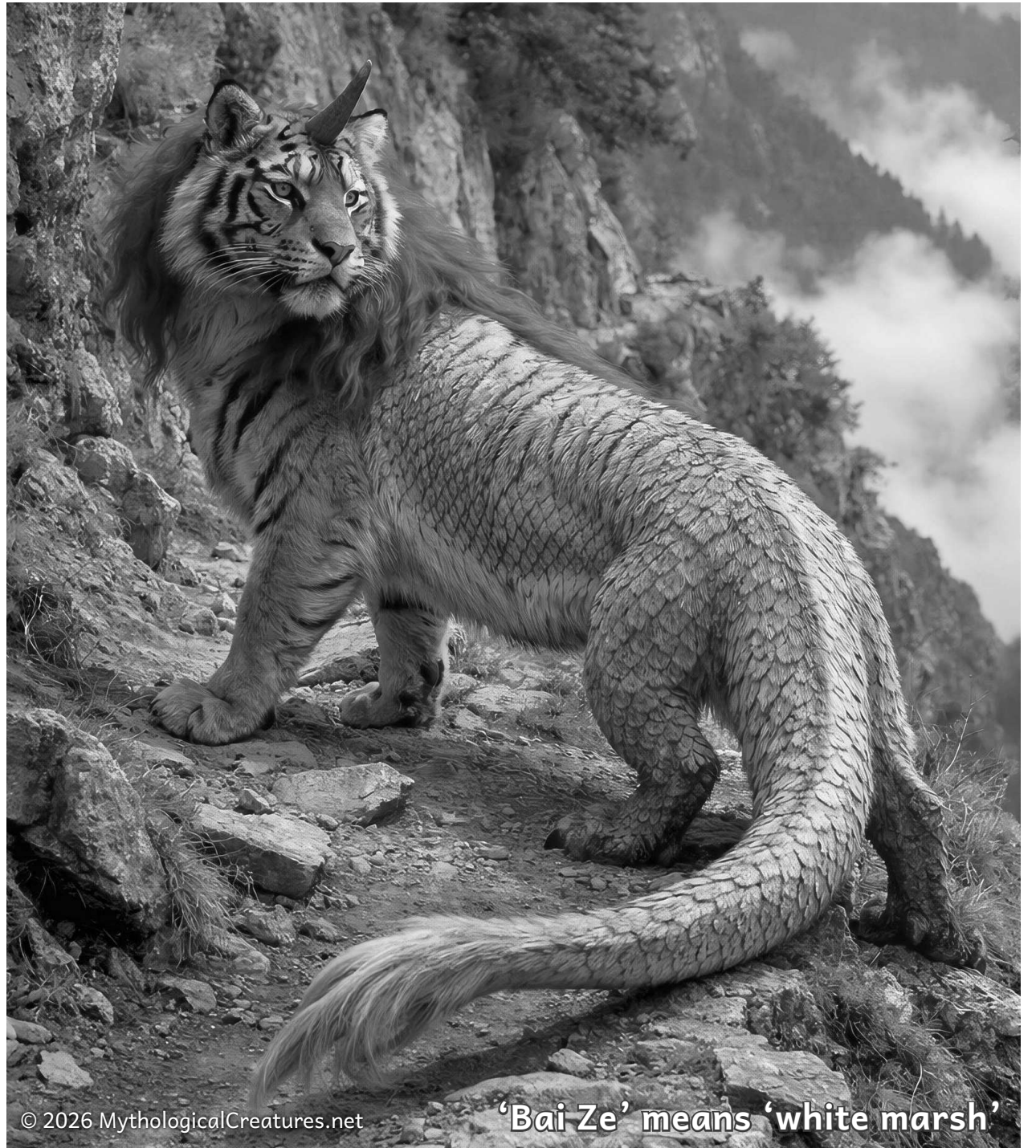
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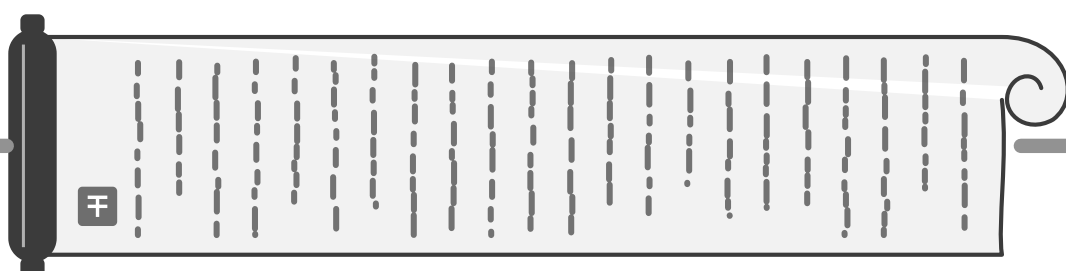
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