

Introduction to China

Objective: I built an instructional unit based on the over-arching goals of art education (e.g. students will understand the roles and functions of artist and works of art in cultures, time, and place; and to make a valid connection of art, other subject areas in the curriculum, and everyday life.) My primary goal was to teach children to understand and employ techniques and information from the field of art as they explore the world through broad and rich learning experiences. Following this experience I developed a unit for my students that focus on the Chinese culture, society, significant historical art as well as modern Japanese artists.

Materials:

Power Point presentation

Computer with overhead projector.

Artifact from china to share with the students. (Such as Prints of paintings, yuan, pottery, fabric.)

Activities and materials to cover: I developed a unit for my students to engage them in a learning experience focusing on the Chinese culture, society, and significant historical or traditional art.

The unit covered China's geography as students learned that the country consist of an area of 3,716,154 square miles which is one of the worlds largest countries. China is a land of snow-capped mountains, sandy deserts, grassy plains and thousands of rivers. The population is over 1,200,000,000. Most people are farmers. Beijing (meaning Northern Capital) is the capital with a population of 10,940,000. Tiananmen Square is in the center of Beijing. Mao Zedong, China's first Communist head of state has his tomb there. A cobblestone road from Tiananmen leads to the Imperial Palace or Forbidden City. The city stand on an island cut from the city by a large moat and high walls. During it's use ordinary people would not dare to enter.

Other large cities are Shanghai with a population of 12,050,000 and Tianjin with 9,090,000 (Numbers taken from "Guide to China" published in 1995). The highest mountain is Qomlangma Feng (Mt. Everest) at 29,028 feet. The longest river, Chang Jiang (Yangtze) is 3,960 miles long. The largest lake is Qinghai which is 4,100 square miles. China's official language is Putonghua or Mandarin Chinese.

China's emperors always feared attacks by people who lived to the north of their

Imperial Chinese Dress and the Eastern Dragon

[Dragon Robes](http://www.sdsmart.org/dragonrobes/glossary.html) <http://www.sdsmart.org/dragonrobes/glossary.html>

Background Information:

He has the head of a camel, the horns of a deer, the eyes of a rabbit, and a neck like a snake. He has the claws of an eagle and the paws of a tiger. And he is not the result of a cloning experiment gone awry. These are the constitutive features of the Chinese dragon—a powerful symbol of China and Chinese history. Known as the king of all beasts and a herald of spring, the dragon may be most strongly associated with the principle of yang, standing as an emblem of maleness and creation. Dragons are found on most of the textiles and clothing associated with the Chinese emperor and his courtiers—they embellish robes worn by court officials as early as the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-

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907), with subsequent dynasties continuing the tradition, connecting themselves through the familiar imagery to China's past.

In 1644, the birth of the Qing Dynasty was owed to the battle prowess of the Manchu invaders of the North. Bribing their way through the Great Wall and taking advantage of an already existent melee instigated by a Chinese rebel army, the Manchu seized the capital at Beijing. Overthrowing the Han-Chinese of the Ming Dynasty, the Manchu launched what was to be a thriving, highly bureaucratic reign. Chinese traditions established and maintained since the ancient Han Dynasty were merged with newly introduced Manchu traditions. As the existent civil administration system met with the Manchu military structure, traditions also merged in the development of official dress for the imperial court. The Manchu rid imperial wardrobes of the full-sleeved Ming robes and tailored their dress to better suit their extraordinary nomadic horsemanship. Robes were fitted closer to the body and sleeve cuffs were designed to be pulled over the hands for protection when riding.

Intact, however, remained many symbolic aspects of Ming dress. Preserving the Confucian ideal of emphasizing a clearly defined hierarchy, court clothing played an important part in maintaining order and served to identify the ranks of officials. *Buzi*, square badges appliquéd to surcoats, identified an official's striation. These were often codified with animal representations—cranes, for example, represented the first of nine military ranks, while the egret served as a symbol of the sixth military rank. The representation of hierarchy within both the civil and military administrations was a highly regulated and distinct aspect of attire that was soon to be magnified exponentially with the reign of the emperor Qianlong in 1736.

Court dress also provided infinite opportunities to pay reverence to the emperor, exalting him as the representative of the divine on earth. The dragon was, of course, an integral part of that iconography, and an endlessly complex iconography it was. An interesting fact: forward-facing dragons were more important than sideways-facing dragons. The levels of meaning and indication of rank in the painstaking minutia of the embroidery are vast.

From 1736 to 1795, the emperor Qianlong reigned in the Chinese empire. Literally writing the book on the standardization of official dress, the *Illustrated Precedents for the Ritual Paraphernalia of the Imperial Court* outlined every instance of magnificence and pretension required of official dress for the imperial family, the nobility, and civil and military officers. Color mattered. Shapes mattered. Certain jewels implied levels of rank. Certain beads were appropriate for the court necklace. Qianlong even explicated what summer robes could be switched for winter ones—a sort of fascist Mr. Blackwell.

Qianlong also brought back the twelve imperial symbols worn by the emperor for official state sacrifices—all the rage in 206 B.C. He reserved the symbols for the sole use of the empress and himself, as well as those to whom he gave the honor. Representing universal dominion, the symbols appeared in five colors, each color linked to one of the five elements and to one of the four cardinal directions. Yellow was the emperor's color, as well as an indication of the fifth direction—the center. The twelve symbols included the sun disk, the moon disk, the constellation, and the mountain, all representing principal features of the universe and found around the robe's neck. The dragon was the principle of yang; the pheasant, yin. Elements were represented by bronze cups, waterweed, millet,

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flames, and again the mountain, this time implying the element of earth. Finally, the sacrificial ax was the emblem of the imperial power to punish, and the *fu* character spoke for the power of judgment.

The finely woven tapestry robes of Qianlong's reign showcased in the current exhibit were wrought in accordance with the highest imperial standards and continue to reverberate with seemingly all of their original gleam. One particular example, circa 1750-75, is bright yellow in color, hosting five-clawed dragons clutching the pearls of wisdom. Its color, decorations, and the appearance of all twelve symbols (as mentioned above) are elements consistent with an owner of imperial rank.

Hats, badges, small purses, belts, and jewelry are all examples of further adornments with the potential to convey prestige. The hats of imperial rank, for example, bore elaborate knobs with tiers of gilt phoenixes surrounded by pearls. The number of tiers and pearls indicated the rank of its wearer. Even the hat stands often upheld a level of utmost extravagance. All such accessories—and accessories to the accessories—can be found in *Draped in Dragons: Chinese Court Costume* amongst startlingly detailed furniture and portraiture.

Because textiles of this nature are extremely susceptible to fading from exposure to light, such items cannot be put on permanent display. These days, ancient dragons have to crouch in the darkness. Hence, *Draped in Dragons* is a rare chance to catch a glimpse of these magnificent mythical creatures; they will be in the limelight at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, through May 2nd.

— D'lynne Plummer

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http://www.artseditor.com/html/feature/0304_dragons.shtml

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source: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston detail: ArtsEditor

(detail) *Qianlong Emperor's Semi-formal Court Robe (Jifu)*, Chinese, Qing Dynasty, 1770-1781, silk satin embroidered with silk and gold-metallic thread, (lent by Paul and Moying Marcus and Joseph and Julie Phelan); included in the exhibit *Draped in Dragons: Chinese Court Costume* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



source: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Court Insignia Badge for 1st Degree Civil Official (Buzi), Chinese, Qing Dynasty, Kangxi, 1650-1700, silk twill embroidered with silk, peacock-feather, and gold-metallic threads, (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, William Sturgis Bigelow Collection), detail below; included in the exhibit *Draped in Dragons: Chinese Court Costume* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



detail: ArtsEditor

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source: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

*Man's Robe Restyled as a Tibetan Chuba, Chinese, Ming or Qing, 17th Century, silk, gold metallic thread, and peacock feathers, slit tapestry, (museum purchase with funds donated anonymously); included in the exhibit *Draped in Dragons: Chinese Court Costume* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*



1821-50 (Qing dynasty)
Embroidered silk, gold thread
The John R. Van Derlip Fund

Background Information (from World Myths & Legends)

Dragons

The Chinese dragon was a divine bringer of rain, necessary for the good of all. The dragon was also a symbol of the good emperor whose wisdom and divine power assured the well-being of his subjects. Many legends draw connections between the dragon and the emperor. Some emperors even claimed to have descended from the dragon. For others, dragons were special protectors.

Chinese dragons could make themselves as large as the universe or as small as a silkworm. They could also change color and disappear in a flash. Dragons were rarely seen because they cleverly hid in caves burrowed into the lofty mountains, or coiled up on the bottom of the deepest seas. Any sighting of a dragon boded well - it meant that Heaven was letting the people know that their ruler was doing a good job. Obviously, rulers were eager to hear of any reports of dragons in their domain.

Ch'ing Dynasty

In 1644, the nomadic Manchu (man-CHEW) warriors from northern China overthrew China's Ming rulers and established the Ch'ing dynasty. The Manchu admired and quickly adopted the culture and government of the native Chinese they had conquered. Still, in their official clothing styles, the Manchu emphasized their own distinctive cultural heritage. Inspired by the riding garments of their nomadic days, Ch'ing robes had long tapered sleeves, tight cuffs, narrow neck openings, side closures, and slit skirts. Although the cut was new, Ch'ing robes were decorated with symbols from traditional Chinese mythology, most notably the dragon.

Everyone who attended and served at court during the Ch'ing dynasty wore symbolic robes. Rank and status within the court were indicated by the cut, color, and symbolic decoration of one's robe. The highest rank was that of emperor, empress, or empress dowager. Only these individuals were allowed to wear yellow robes bearing the five-toed motif (moe-TEEF).

Dragon Robe

This type of semiformal court robe is called ch'i-fu (chee-foo), which translates as "festive dress." The color and cut indicate that this robe was worn by an empress. Rollover the image to locate details from the *Dragon Robe for an Empress of China*

Description

The dragon on this robe (see detail) is a distinctive type associated with the imperial house. Its wide, flat head is topped by horns and flanked by wiry whiskers. Scales and sharp spines cover its curving body. Five short legs with powerful claws emerge from the dragon's snakelike torso. Flames spark outward from its joints. The dragon tosses a flaming pearl between its claws.

The dragon cavorts in a celestial landscape above a rainbow-hued diagonal ocean whose frothy waves crash against three rocky mountains that represent the earth.

The heavens are represented by a band of colorful stylized stringy clouds that curl on top of the waves and float up in little ovals through the robe.

Symbols

The dragon is the centerpiece of an elaborate set of images that symbolize the emperor's authority as an intermediary in the universal order between heaven and earth. The great and beneficial power of the dragon could be brought to the people by the good governance of the emperor. The pearl within the dragon's grasp is a symbol of wisdom. Like a worthy emperor, the dragon always seeks wisdom.



•Detail of pearl in dragon's grasp from the *Dragon Robe for an Empress of China*

•Detail of swastikas from the *Dragon Robe for an Empress of China*

Many symbols of good luck and power surround the dragon. The whole background is embroidered with an intricate pattern of connected bright blue swastikas. In China the swastika symbolized good luck and the number 10,000. Thus any symbol of blessing laid against it is multiplied 10,000 times.

Several red bats fly through the heavens below the dragon. Bats were considered emblems of longevity and happiness because the words for happiness and bat sound similar. To either side of the dragon's head are red stylized shou (show) characters. They wish long life for the robe's wearer.



•Detail of one red bat from the *Dragon Robe for an Empress of China*

•Detail of one red shou character from the *Dragon Robe for an Empress of China*

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1 The emperor Yao was said to be the son of a red dragon. The dragon had come to his mother bearing an inscription on his back indicating that she would receive Heaven's blessing. A great darkness and wind whipped around her on all sides. The dragon touched her and she became pregnant. Fourteen months later she gave birth to Yao.

2 According to one myth, during the time of great rebellion, the T'ang emperor Ming Huang had to flee from the capital. The previous evening a small dragon arose from a pond ready to help the emperor escape by boat. The dragon carried the emperor's boat on its back to safety. Ming Huang was very grateful. He thanked it and gave wine.

3 If these robes at first seem to us very ornate, we must remember that they are robes of state, worn in the imperial court and its temples and theatres. They can be compared to the robes worn for a royal coronation in Westminster Abbey.

boarders. Over hundreds of years, the Chinese built a colossal defensive wall across the country. The Great Wall of China is approximately 3,700 miles long

Marco Polo, the Italian explorer, traveled to Hangzhou in the 13th century then called "the Heavenly City" and described it as the most beautiful he had ever seen. China was one of the most advanced countries.

Hong Kong, near the mouth of the Zhu, is a small island that belong to Great Britain until 1997 when it was given back to China. Hong Kong is one of the busiest harbors in the world.

Other significant of the country include the terra-cotta army that was discovered at the tomb of China's first emperor near Xi'an beautiful calligraphy , pottery including porcelain vases and carvered bowls, bracelets and other objects from jade.

All of this knowledge they gained from understanding the Chinese culture contributes to their analyses of Chinese art.

Dragons Of China Silk transfer Lesson

Objective/Key Ideas:

- Compare and contrast the distinctive characteristics of art forms from various cultural, historical and social contexts. Describe how the same subject mater is represented differently in works of art across cultures and time periods. (Ohio Academic Content Standards for Fine Arts)
- In Chinese mythology the dragon has the power to bring rain.
- The dragon frequently appears on Chinese court robes as a symbol of the emperor's power to mediate between heaven and earth.
- In keeping with the strict dress codes of the Qing (ching) dynasty, the color, cut, and symbolic decoration of this empress's *dragon robe* indicate that its wearer is royalty.
- Create a work of art that incorporates the style or characteristics of artwork from a culture other than their own. (Ohio Academic Content Standards for Fine Arts)
Students will design an original dragon based of the information of the history of Chinese dress and dragon myths.

Chinese Dragon Story:

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A T'ang (tong) dynasty emperor visited the Chinese city of Loyang (low-yang) during a long spell of very hot, dry weather. There, in a temple, lived an Indian priest named Wu Wei (woo way), who knew how to call forth the dragon who brings rain. The emperor begged Wu Wei to bring rain to his scorched land, but the priest refused. The heat was seasonable, he said, and summoning the dragon would do much damage. The emperor said that the people were suffering because of the drought. Any rain, he pleaded, even if accompanied by roaring winds and crashing thunder, would be good. Finally Wu Wei agreed.

Wu Wei ordered the removal of everything from the temple, except for one bowl of water. Stirring the water, he repeated magical words hundreds of times. Presently, a red finger-sized dragon appeared, raising its head slightly above the water's surface. Then it slowly disappeared. Wu wei stirred the water again, chanting a spell three times. From the bowl a white vapor rose several feet into the air and floated toward the temple door.

"Go," Wu Wei ordered the emperor's messenger, "for the rain is coming!" As he fled to alert the emperor, the messenger glanced back to see the vapor roll like white silk out of the temple. Then darkness fell, bringing with it thunder and rain. Gale winds uprooted giant trees along the road as the storm overtook the terrified messenger. At last he reached the emperor, drenched but safe.

(World Myths & Legends in Art, [Dragon Robe For an Empress of China](http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/dragon_background.html) http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/dragon_background.html)

1 This story was first told in *Ci Liushi Jiu Wen* (Old records of the younger Liu) and written down by Li Deyu, also of the T'ang Dynasty. This version is based on Evangeline D. Edward's translation in *Chinese Prose Literature of the T'ang Period* (London, 1938) I, p. 93, who took it from *Tangshui Congshu*, ed. Wang Wenhe (Shanghai, 1806) I, bk. V, 5b-6.

Western Dragon Story:

The episode of St George and the Dragon was Eastern in origin, [3] brought back with the Crusaders and retold with the courtly appurtenances belonging to the genre of Romance (Loomis; Whatley). The earliest known depiction of the mytheme is from early eleventh-century Cappadocia (Whatley), (in the iconography of the Eastern Orthodox Church, George had been depicted as a soldier since at least the seventh century); the earliest known surviving narrative text is an eleventh-century Georgian text (Whatley).

In the fully developed Western version, a dragon makes its nest at the spring that provides water for the city of Cyrene in Libya or the city of Lydda, depending on the source. Consequently, the citizens have to dislodge the dragon from its nest for a time, in order to collect water. To do so, each day they offer the dragon a human sacrifice. The victim is chosen by drawing lots. One day, this happened to be the princess. The monarch begs for her life with no result. She is offered to the dragon, but there appears the saint on his travels. He faces the dragon, slays it and rescues the princess. The grateful citizens abandon their ancestral paganism and convert to Christianity.

Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia; European Dragon http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_dragon

Description of the European Dragon: In European folklore, a **dragon** is a serpentine legendary creature. The Latin word *draco*, as in the constellation Draco, comes directly from Greek $\acute{\epsilon}\text{-}\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\grave{\iota}\text{-}\acute{\epsilon}\text{-}\acute{\epsilon}\grave{\alpha}$, *drákȳn*. The word for dragon in Germanic mythology and its descendants is *worm* (Old English: *wyrm*, Old High German: *wurm*, Old Norse: *ormr*), meaning snake or serpent. In Old English *wyrm* means "serpent", *draca* means "dragon". Finnish *lohikäärme* means directly "salmon-snake", but the word *lohi-* was originally *louhi-* meaning crags or rocks, a "mountain snake". Though a winged creature, the dragon is generally to be found in its underground lair, a cave that identifies it as an ancient creature of earth. Likely, the dragons of European and Mid Eastern mythology stem from the cult of snakes found in religions throughout the world.

The dragon of the modern period is typically depicted as a huge fire breathing, scaly and horned dinosaur-like creature, with leathery wings, with four legs and a long muscular tail. It is sometimes shown with feathered wings, crests, fiery manes, and various exotic colorations. Ironically it has at last combined the Chinese dragon with the western one. Asian dragons are long serpent like creatures which possess the scales of a carp, horns of a deer, feet of an eagle, the body of a snake, a feathery mane, large eyes, and can be holding a pearl to control lightning. They usually have no wings. Imperial dragons that were sewn on to silk had five claws (for a king), or four for a prince, or three for courtiers of a lower ranking. The dragons were bringers of rain and lived in and governed bodies of water (e.g. lakes, rivers, oceans, or seas). Asian dragons were benevolent, but bossy (this strict behavior is why one of China's nicknames is "the Dragon"). In Western folklore, dragons are usually portrayed as evil, with exceptions mainly in modern fiction.

Many modern stories represent dragons as extremely intelligent creatures who can talk, associated with (and sometimes in control of) powerful magic. Dragon's blood often has magical properties: for example it let Siegfried understand the language of the Forest Bird. The typical dragon protects a cavern or castle filled with gold and treasure and is often associated with a great hero who tries to slay it, but dragons can be written into a story in as many ways as a human character. This includes the monster being used as a wise being whom heroes could approach for help and advice.

Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia; European Dragon
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_dragon

<http://www.artsmia.org/http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/index.html><http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/artbytheme/index.html><http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/index.html><http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/compare-contrast.html><http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/artbyculture/index.html>

Activity:

1. Asks students to name describe or tell about a story of a dragon they know about. (Puff the magic dragon, the dragon in sleeping beauty, the dragon in the Harry Potter's 4th book, Eargon) Discuss the different characteristics of those mentioned in class.
2. Discuss the Western story of Saint George and the dragon and show images of Famous artworks depicting this story (Raphael's *Saint George and the Dragon*)

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1504, Rogier Van der Weyden's, *Saint George Killing the Dragon* 1432; Bernardo Martorell's *Saint George and the Dragon* 1430-35.) List physical and behavior characteristic of the Western Dragon.

3. Read and discuss the story from the T'ang Dynasty of the city of Loyang and the drought. Discuss the background information on Chinese Dragons and the use of symbols on robes/clothing. View images from the Manchu Dragon: Costumes of the Ch'ing Dynasty.
4. Focus on Emperor's Twelve-Symbol Dragon Robe. (1821-50 (*Qing dynasty*) *Embroidered silk, gold thread The John R. Van Derlip Fund*) Discuss the following questions: (Could use the interactive website: http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/dragon_questions.htm)

Look (See robe at: http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/dragon_background.html)

1. Tell the story of Wu Wei and the dragon. The dragon frequently appears on Chinese court robes like this one as a **SYMBOL** for the emperor's power to mediate between heaven and earth for the well-being of the people.

What is a symbol? Something that stands for or represents another thing or idea.

Where are dragon symbols on this robe? Center, lower left and right, left and right shoulders, tiny dragons on sleeve borders.

How did the emperor mediate between heaven and earth in this story? He persuaded a priest to summon a dragon in order to bring rain.

2. This *dragon robe* is covered with **SYMBOLS** that stand for the emperor's authority to mediate between heaven and earth.

Find multicolored lines that represent "standing water." Hem and sleeves of the robe.

Find frothy ocean waves. Semicircles above the diagonal stripes.

Find three prism-shaped rock formations that symbolize mountains. Above the ocean waves.

Find colorful stringy clouds that float throughout the robe. The Chinese word for happiness and bat sound similar.

Find red bats that symbolize happiness. Red bats fly through the sky below the central dragon.

Find the round red shou character, a symbol of long life. Scattered throughout the area surrounding the dragons.

Find three pearls that symbolize wisdom. White circles with red flames held by each of the three central dragons. See also THINK 1.

3. **Detail of swastikas from the *Dragon Robe for an Empress of China***

PATTERN can be made up of any repeated elements such as line, shape, or color.

What pattern do you see on the BACKGROUND of this robe? Bright blue connecting lines that make a background for other **SYMBOLS**.

Do these lines look familiar to you? Point out the swastika in the pattern and explain that in traditional Chinese culture it symbolizes luck and the number 10,000.

4. **How are the symbols and patterns applied?** **EMBROIDERY:** the technique of

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hand sewing decorative designs on fabric with needle and silk thread.

How can you tell? Thread creates tiny lines within each design, uneven edges of designs show where the thread has gone through the fabric.

5. During the Chinese Ch'ing dynasty, everyone who served the Emperor at court wore special robes. Rank and status within the court were indicated by the cut, color, and **SYMBOLIC** decoration of these robes. The emperor, empress, and empress dowager (emperor's mother) wore yellow robes with five-clawed dragons. The crown prince wore apricot yellow, while the imperial princes wore blue or brown. Officials of the first through third ranks dressed in blue robes with nine dragons. Officials of the fourth through sixth ranks wore blue robes with eight four-clawed dragons.

Who wore this *dragon robe*? The emperor, empress, or empress dowager. The colors and the cut of this particular robe indicate that it was worn by the empress.

Think

1. Make a list on the board of all the **SYMBOLS** and their meanings discussed in LOOK.
2. Chinese dragons were magical, mythical animals that could make themselves as large as the universe or as small as a silkworm. They could change color and disappear in a flash. Dragons were rarely seen because they hid in caves or at the bottom of the sea. Any sighting of a dragon foretold happiness and good fortune.

Can you think of other magical, mythical characters who bring good luck and good fortune? Leprechauns, fairies, elves, angels, a genie in a lamp.

3. The symbols on this *dragon robe* are associated with the emperor's authority to intermediate between heaven and earth.

Which of the symbols are related to earth? Water, waves, and mountains.

Which of the symbols are related to the heavens? Clouds, bats, and dragons.

Do the shou character for long life and the pearls symbolize wisdom related to heaven and/or earth? No.

Why do you think they appear on the robe? They are related to qualities desirable in an emperor.

5. The blue swastika pattern that makes up the background of this robe is symbolic of good luck and the number 10,000. Why do you think a symbol for 10,000 appears on the empress's robe? Explain that any symbol of blessing laid against the swastika is multiplied 10,000 times.

World Myths & Legends in Art, [Dragon Robe For an Empress of China](http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/dragon_robefor_an_empress_of_china.html)

http://www.artsmia.org/world-myths/viewallart/dragon_background.html

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5. Using the information from our discussion and following the characteristics of the dragon image and other symbols, student will design their own dragon design that could be used on a robe. Student will be required to sketch 2-3 different idea first

in their sketchbooks. Student will be encouraged to incorporate not only Chinese symbols but those that are personal to who they are. In small group discussion student will explain their chose of images and symbols and how their designs relate to those of the Chinese ideas.

6. Next students will draw lightly with a pencil their design onto 8X10 watercolor paper. Designs need to be enhanced with a variety of pattern on their dragon image. Various symbols need to be repeated in the backgrounds.
7. Students will then plan the color scheme for their designs in their sketchbooks using colored pencil.
8. A watercolor wash will be applied to the background of their watercolor paper. The design should still be seen through the wash.
9. Once the wash has dried the student will be using tempera paints to paint in the dragon and any of the major symbols throughout the design.
10. Using an extra fine permanent marker, students will add their decorative patterns and designs to enhance their symbols and dragon images.

Dragons Of China/part2

Objective/Key Ideas:

- Use current, available technology as the primary medium to create an original work of art. (Ohio Academic Content Standards for Fine Arts) *Student will transfer their dragon fabric designs onto silk.*
- Apply knowledge of materials, tools, media, techniques and processes to communicate subject matter, themes or ideas in a variety of visual forms. (Ohio Academic Content Standards for Fine Arts) *Students will carry over their dragon designs onto a hand designed metal embossed border.*

Materials:

Lazertran Silk transfer paper

Iron

Habuti Silk

Metal

Metal Embossing tools

Newspaper

Scissors

Activity:

Lazertran Techniques

Transferring student dragon images onto silk

Lazertran Silk is used to transfer images onto sheer Habuti type silk and also as a fast etch resist and onto metal foil. Student often want to transfer onto open weave silk such as Organza or Chiffon. This is difficult as the toners only adhere to the weave and fall off the holes leaving a ghost of the image. This can be cured by using the 3M Photo Mount method at the bottom of the page.

Have your own design copied, in reverse onto a sheet of Lazertran Silk paper.

1. Iron silk flat
2. Set iron hot enough (and this needs to be hot, silk can take it) for the toners to stick to the silk
3. Lay silk over your image and iron until the silk is stuck to the image
4. Without pulling at the paper to make sure it is stuck! place the silk, with paper attached, in clean warm water, paper down and leave until the paper falls off
5. Lift the silk carefully from the water, lay the image face down and lightly iron with a cool iron until dry
6. When dry, turn the silk over, image side up, and place a sheet of silicon baking parchment over the image
7. Iron through the baking parchment with a hot iron then allow to cool. When cool peel off the parchment

This method produces a beautiful result and can be rinsed in warm water but will not take a vigorous wash

Problems

If, after soaking in water you find lots of bits of toner floating in the water then your iron is not hot enough. If the image is shiny and appears to be on the surface then you will need to put a sheet of baking parchment over the image and iron with a hot iron again.

3M photo mount method

Lazertran Silk can now be used to put images onto almost any surface using 3M Photo Mount Spray

1. Copy your image onto Lazertran Silk in reverse or mirror, cut to size and then spray an even coat of Photo mount onto the image
2. Press onto the surface and make sure it is well stuck. Iron with a medium heat iron if using on cloth
3. Wet backing paper, allow to soak for about one minute and slide off

This method can be used on Voile, plastics, wood and in decoupage to put images down without thickness. It is also very good for interior decoration on walls etc.

For thicker materials Lazertran Textile Inkjet paper for light materials and our Lazertran Textile Inkjet paper for dark materials can be ironed on

1. Print the image in reverse using your Inkjet printer
2. Set iron to hot and iron onto the cloth until it is well stuck
3. Carefully peel away the backing sheet

Metal Embossed Borders:

1. Student will design images from their painting to be developed around the boarder of their silk fabric. (such as repeated symbols or a winding dragon) The designs need to fit into a 2 inch wide strips (2 at 8” long and 2 at 10”long)
2. The 2” designs will then be laid onto the strips of metal that are the same length. The metal does not have to have straight edges. Students may trim their metal to fit their designs creating irregular edges.
3. Once the designs have been pressed onto the metal, students can then use the embossing tools to form the desired patterns.
4. Using hot glue or other adhesives, the metal border is glued together and the silk is tacked to the back.

Dragon Robes

Dragon Robes Glossary

Ax One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the ax symbolized the power of the emperor to punish.

Bat In Chinese art, the bat is a symbol of happiness and longevity, and the word for happiness, is pronounced the same way as the word for bat. According to legend, bats were able to live for a thousand years; silver in color, legend held that they fed on stalactites and that, if consumed by humans, they would increase one's longevity. One bat symbolized happiness, two bats represented redoubled good fortune and five bats represented the Five Blessings (a long life, riches, health, love of virtue, and a natural death.)

Bee In Chinese art, the bee symbolizes industry.

Buddhism Buddhism was founded in India around 500 B.C. by Gautama Sakyamuni, who taught that the cause of all suffering is desire. When desire is extinguished, the individual may attain nirvana (nothingness) and thus escape the painful cycle of birth, life, and death.

Canopy One of the Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune, the canopy is the symbol of a monarch, and represents spiritual authority and shelter for all living beings.

Cao Gou-Jiu One of the Eight Immortals of Daoism. Cao Gou Jiu is reputed to have been the brother of a 10th century Sung empress and the son of a military commander. His attribute, the castanets, are thought to be derived from the pass that gave him free access to the palace—a benefit of his rank. Cao Gou Jiu is the patron saint of actors.

Chao-fu The Chinese word means "court garment." This term refers to the most formal robes worn by officials for important rituals and court observances.

Characters To bring good luck and guard against misfortune, Chinese characters were frequently incorporated into ornamental designs as auspicious objects. Shou means "longevity." Wan means "ten thousand." Xi means "joy." Ji means "luck." Shuangxi means "double happiness," a popular wedding symbol of both happiness and longevity. A

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Swastika symbolizes "ten thousand" and longevity. It was originally a symbol of Buddha's heart, and was a term borrowed from Sanskrit (the ancient language of India).

Chrysanthemum The China Astor, or chrysanthemum indicum, is a symbol of happiness and a life of ease. It is representative of autumn in the symbolism of the four seasons, along with wild plum (winter), peony (spring), and lotus (summer).

Clouds (yun) Clouds symbolize the celestial realm.

Coins One of the Eight Precious Objects, coins are naturally a symbol of prosperity.

Conch shell One of the Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune. The conch shell represents wisdom in the voice of Buddha calling people to worship.

Constellation (xing) One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the constellation of three stars is a symbol of the cosmic universe. The universe, as personified by the Emperor, is an unending source of pardon and love.

Coral One of the Eight Precious Objects, coral was supposed to represent a tree that grew at the bottom of the ocean and blossomed only once in a hundred years, another symbol of longevity.

Crane (he) The crane is also a symbol of longevity. According to Chinese legend the crane could live to be more than 600 years old.

Cups One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the pair of bronze sacrificial cups symbolize strength (represented by a tiger) and cleverness (represented by a monkey). Together they are symbols of respect for one's parents.

Daoism A principal philosophy and system of religion in China based upon the teachings of Lao-ze in the sixth century B.C.

Deer In Chinese Art the deer symbolizes riches.

Dragon (long) One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the dragons are symbols of the natural world, adaptability, and transformation. The dragon and the pheasant represent the animal and bird kingdoms and thus the entire natural world. When two dragons are placed together but turned away, the dragons symbolize eternity via the Yin and the Yang.

Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune Buddhist missionaries brought eight symbols to China from India: the canopy, the conch shell, the sacred vase, the royal umbrella, the wheel of the law, the endless knot, the lotus flower, and a pair of fish. The first four of these are royal emblems associated with Buddha, and the other four are symbols of Buddhist religious belief.

Eight Immortals The eight immortals were legendary beings of the Daoist sect who knew the secrets of nature. They were believed to be able to raise the dead, to make themselves invisible, to turn stone into gold, and to bless anyone who bore their image. Symbols representing the characteristic attributes of each immortal were depicted on a wide variety of porcelain, bronze, ivory, and embroidered objects. These attributes include the fan (Zhuang-li Quan), the sword (Lü Dong-bin), the double gourd and crutch (Li Tie-guai), the castanets (Cao Gou-Jiu), the basket of flowers (Lan Cai-He), the fish drum (Zhang Guo-lao), the flute (Han Xiang-zi), and the lotus pod (He Xian-gu).

Fire One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the flame is a symbol of intellectual brilliance.

Fish (yu) One of the Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune. A pair of fish is a symbol of tenacity, domestic felicity, and fertility.

Five colors The Chinese universe was ordered in five directions symbolized by the five elements, five colors, animal deities, and the seasons of the year. The five colors

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used to organize the Chinese universe were yellow, red, black, white, and blue. Yellow (center) is associated with the earth element and reserved for use by the emperor, the empress, and the heir-apparent. Red (south) is associated with the fire element and used during the rituals of marriage and birth. Black (north) is associated with the water element. White (west) is associated with the metal element and is the traditional color of mourning. Blue (east) is associated with the element wood.

Five elements The Chinese universe was ordered in five directions symbolized by the five elements, five colors, animal deities, and the seasons of the year. The five elements are earth (yellow), fire (red), water (black), metal (white), and wood (blue).

Fu One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the fu is a symbol of collaboration and the power of the emperor to judge.

Gourd The gourd is the symbol of Li Tie-guai, one of the Eight Immortals, representing his power to free his soul from his body. Gourds also symbolize longevity and the ability to ward off evil spirits.

Grain One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, grain is a symbol of a country's capacity to feed its people, and thus prosperity and fertility.

Han Chinese The indigenous people of China.

Han Xiang-zi Han Xiang zi is said to have been the nephew of Han Yü, a famous scholar of the 9th century. His attribute is the flute, and he is the patron saint of musicians. Among his special skills was the ability to make flowers bloom instantaneously.

He Xian-gu One of the Eight Immortals of Daoism. He Xian gu is one of the two female immortals. She was the daughter of a 7th-century shopkeeper who ate a magic peach and became a fairy. Her attribute is the lotus, and according to legend, He Xian gu's immortality is due to a consistent diet of powdered mother-of-pearl and moonbeams.

Insignia badges (also called rank badges) The dress code initiated by early Qing emperors was ultimately codified in 1759 by Emperor Ch'ien Lung in a collection of writings called The Illustrated Catalogue of Ritual Paraphernalia of the Qing Dynasty, which outlined what should be worn when and by whom. Court officials were allowed to wear certain emblems and colors according to their rank and function. Civil officials wore badges displaying birds and were accorded higher stature than their military counterparts who wore animal badges. The practice of using badges to signify the rank of the wearer was common in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) and continued into the Qing.

Rank	Civil Official	Military Official
first (highest rank)	white crane	unicorn
second	golden pheasant	lion
third	peacock	leopard
fourth	wild goose	tiger
fifth	silver pheasant	black bear
sixth	egret	panther
seventh	mandarin duck	rhinoceros
eighth	quail	rhinoceros
ninth	paradise flycatcher	seahorse

Ji Chinese character meaning luck.

Ji-fu The Chinese word means "auspicious robe." This term refers to the semi-formal court robe worn by Manchu officials for daily activities.

Knot (also called the mystic dragon) Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune. The endless knot, "intestines," is a symbol of longevity and eternity.

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Lacquer Lacquer items are made from the sap of the lacquer tree (*Rhus verniciflora*). The sap was used to coat and waterproof objects. Lacquer is also strongly resistant to heat and acids. The Chinese were the first to produce lacquer objects.

Lan Cai-he One of the Eight Immortals of Daoism. Lan Cai he is one of the two female immortals. Her attribute is a basket of flowers, which she carries to remind viewers of the transience of life. Lan Cai he is said to have wandered the streets as a beggar while singing a song about the brevity of mortal life.

Lingzhi Fungus Also called the plant of long life or the plant of immortality; a symbol of longevity.

Li Tie-guai One of the Eight Immortals of Daoism. Because of his great skill at magic, Li Tie guai was able to free his soul from his body and to aid others in the celestial realm. His attributes are a beggar's crutch and gourd because once, while his spirit was gone from his body, a disciple decided that Li Tie guai was dead and burned his body. When Li Tie guai's soul returned from its travels, he was forced to enter the body of a beggar.

Lotus flower One of the Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune. The lotus flower is a symbol of purity, which rises unsullied through muddy water.

Lozeng One of the Eight Precious Objects, a symbol of victory. The lozeng has been related to various objects including a headdress, and, when two of them are placed together, represent a musical instrument.

Lü Dong-bin One of the Eight Immortals of Daoism. Lü Dong-bin was an 8th-century scholar who learned the secrets of Daoism from Zhuang lin Quan. His attribute, the sword, allowed him to travel the earth slaying dragons and fighting evil.

Manchu An ethnic group of agriculturists descended from nomadic tribesmen who took control of China in 1644.

Moon One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty (imperial authority), the moon is a symbol of heaven. The moon is representative of the passive principle (Yin) to the sun's active principle (Yang). A light blue or green disc enclosing the legendary hare pounding the elixir of immortality represents the moon.

Mountains One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, mountains are symbols of stability and the earth.

Peach The chief ingredient of the elixir of immortality.

Peacock The peacock is a symbol of beauty and dignity. An old Chinese legend tells of the daughter of a mighty military commander who painted a peacock on an ornament screen and promised to marry the first man who could hit the peacock twice with arrows while running. A Tang emperor put out the two eyes of the peacock on two consecutive tries and won a bride. "Selection by hitting the bird screen" thus entered the Chinese language as a euphemism for finding a husband.

Pearl (or jewel) One of the Precious Objects, the pearl is a symbol of good fortune and genius. Because of its beautiful rounded shape, the word pearl is also used to describe feminine beauty. On dragon robes, the dragons are usually depicted reaching for pearls.

Peony The peony is a symbol of love and affection and is representative of good luck and of spring in the cycle of the four seasons.

Pheasant One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the pheasant is representative of the natural world and symbolizes literary refinement. The pheasant and the dragon represent the bird and the animal kingdoms and thus the entire natural world.

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Plum The wild plum is the symbol for winter in the four seasons since this is when its branches flower. It is thus representative of longevity.

Pouches (also called pockets) Court robes had no pockets in them so courtiers took to carrying small pouches, attached to either belts or toggles, to carry the various accessories that were deemed necessary, including thumb rings, ear wax cleaners, fans, chopsticks, etc.

Precious objects The precious objects are symbols of wealth and good fortune that are usually found in groups of eight from the Ming dynasty onward. They were commonly used as decorative motifs. Included in the groups of precious objects displayed on dragon robes are the following: lozenges, coins, a pearl or jewel, pair of scrolls, a stone chime, a pair of rhinoceros horns, coral, an ingot, the lingzhi fungus, the Ruyi scepter, and the cloud.

Qing dynasty The last of the Chinese dynasties beginning with the taking of Beijing by Manchu warriors in 1644, and lasting until the revolution of 1911.

Rhinoceros horn A pair of rhinoceros horns are one of the Eight Precious Objects and symbolize happiness. Powdered rhinoceros horns were used for medicinal purposes and a rhinoceros horn cup was believed to have magical powers to identify poison.

Ruyi scepter A ceremonial sword or scepter symbolizing a number of different things but when decorating clothing it is most closely linked to prosperity. The shape is connected with the scepter of authority.

Scrolls (book) A pair of scrolls or books tied together with a fillet is one of the Eight Precious Objects and a symbol of good fortune. They symbolize learning.

Shou A Chinese character that represents longevity.

Shuangxi Chinese character which means "double happiness," and a popular wedding symbol of both happiness and longevity.

Stone chime One of the Eight Precious Objects, the stone chime is a percussion instrument made of jade and is a symbol of happiness. The word representing the stone chime, qing, is the same as the sound it makes and synonymous with the word felicity.

Sun One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the sun is a symbol of enlightenment and is represented by the legendary three-legged crow on a red disc.

Swastika Chinese character which means ten thousand and longevity. It was originally a symbol of Buddha's heart, and was a term borrowed from Sanskrit (the ancient language of India).

Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty Twelve Chinese symbols representing imperial authority, that appeared on the sacrificial robes of the emperor since the Western Zhou Dynasty (1050-771 B.C.). The twelve symbols include the sun, moon, constellation of three stars, dragons, pheasant, mountains, a pair of bronze sacrificial cups, waterweed, grain, flame, ax, and fu.

Umbrella One of the Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune. The royal umbrella symbolizes charity and the incorruptible official.

Vase One of the Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune. The sacred vase holds the water of life. The word for vase (ping) is pronounced the same as the word for peace.

Wan Chinese character which represents ten thousand.

Waterweed One of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty, the waterweed is a symbol of purity.

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Wheel of the law-Karma. One of the Eight Buddhist symbols of good fortune. The wheel of the law, karma, represents the ever-turning wheel of transmigration of the soul.

Xi Chinese character which means joy.

Yin One of the two fundamental forces, Yin represents the female or passive force.

Yang One of the two fundamental forces, Yang represents the male or active force.

Zhang Guo-lao One of the Eight Immortals of Daoism, Zhang Guo-lao is reputed to have been a recluse of the 7th or 8th century. His attribute is a fish drum made of a bamboo tube with two rods with which to strike it. He traveled with a white mule that could go incredible distances and then be folded up and placed in a wallet. Zhang Guo-lao had only to add water to the mule to reconstitute it for further use.

Zhuang-li Quan Chief of the Eight Immortals of Daoism. Zhuang-li Quan was reputed to have lived during the Zhou dynasty (1050-221 B.C.) Among his many powers were transmutation and the knowledge of the elixir of life. His attribute is a fan.

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