



Creature Connection

Wyvern

Stories about dragons are found all over the world. And because the people who created these stories came from different lands, many different kinds of dragons were born.

Dragons from the East tend to be friendly and helpful. They often have important lessons to teach humans. They live peacefully. Killing one of these dragons would be a tragedy.

The tradition in the West is to write about dangerous dragons. These fire-breathing creatures often burn villages to the ground, hoard treasure, and eat sheep, cows, and sometimes children. Stories about western dragons tend to be about a hero who must slay the dragon in order to save a village and even a damsel in distress. Western dragons guard their treasure and will kill anyone who tries to take it.

The dragon hatchling that Ben found on his bed was a wyvern. The wyvern is one type of western dragon. It is different from other western dragons because it has two legs rather than four. Descriptions of wyverns differ from story to story, but most describe them as ranging from muddy brown to a greenish color. Like other western dragons, the wyvern has wings and can fly. In some stories it shoots flame, while in others it shoots poison. It is often said to have a barbed tail and a neck and head that is very snakelike. Some say wyverns come from Africa and that their favorite food is the elephant. But this dragon became very popular in the Middle Ages in Britain, especially in a region known as Wales.

Back in those days, knights would gather together for tournaments, fighting one another in contests to see who would become the champion. Because knights wore heavy armor and their faces were covered by helmets, no one could tell who was who. So these knights carried flags and coats of arms to identify themselves and to honor their families—this is called heraldry. Many used the wyvern as a symbol on their flags. To wear the wyvern on your coat of arms meant that you were strong and fierce.

Story Idea

Imagine that you found a wyvern hatchling on your bed and you decided to keep it. You've been feeding it table scraps and hiding it in your closet, but one day you come home and discover...

Art Idea

Pretend you are a knight in shining armor and you are going to compete in a tournament. What will your flag look like? Create your own flag using an image of the wyvern. Remember, it has two feet instead of four.