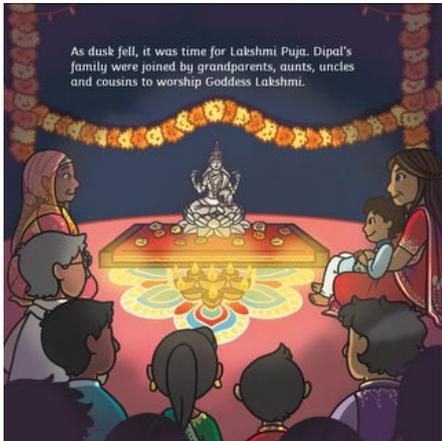


Cultural Enrichment Day in Farmers Class

In Farmers Class, we learnt all about the culture of India.

We listened to a story called 'Dipal's Diwali' and learnt how people of the Hindu religion celebrate the feast of Diwali.



Next, we found India on a map. It is much bigger than the UK!



India has more

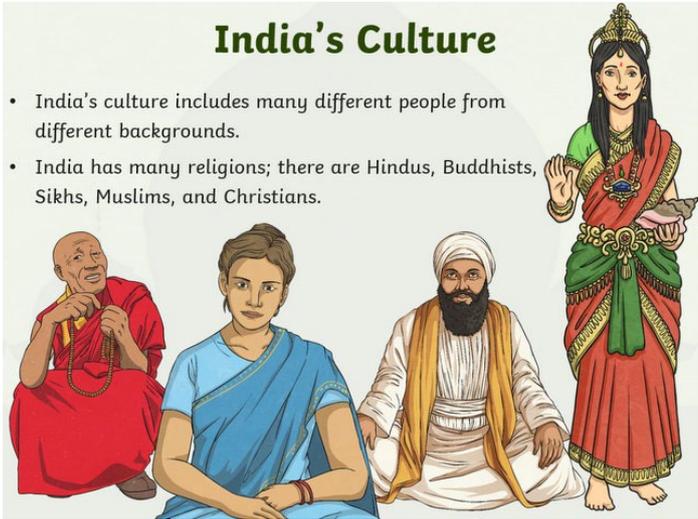
many

different religions and backgrounds.



India's Culture

- India's culture includes many different people from different backgrounds.
- India has many religions; there are Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Muslims, and Christians.



We learnt about the animals and food of India.

India's Animals

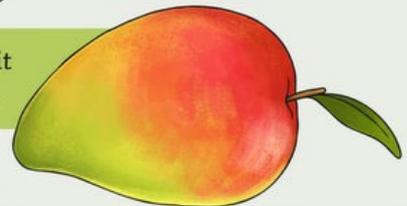
India is home to many animals including:

- the Bengal tiger
- the Indian elephant
- the Indian rhinoceros
- the Indian leopard
- the sloth bear
- the wild water buffalo
- the red panda



Common spices are curry, turmeric, and cinnamon. Garam masala is a popular spice mixture.

Mangoes and other tropical fruit are also very common in India.



Mrs Wall was wearing Indian clothing.



And we looked at a picture of the famous Taj Mahal.

Next, we learnt about



Celebrating with Rangoli

Rangoli designs are usually made during festivals and celebrations.

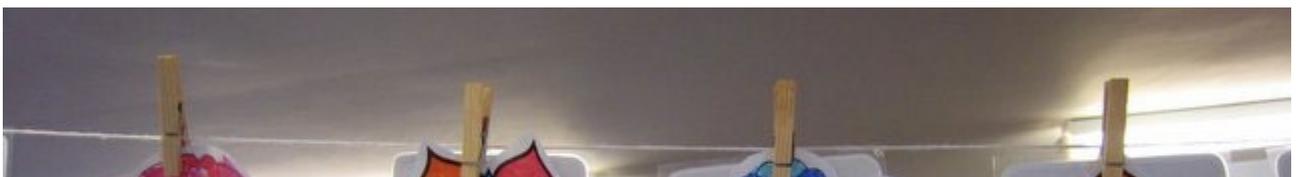
Lots of rangoli patterns are created during Diwali.



The Reception children made a rangoli design together using tissue paper.



The Year 1 children chose a rangoli design to colour – they had to make sure it was symmetrical!





In the afternoon, we learnt some Bollywood dancing with Love Ballet.
What a fun way to end our day of learning about the culture of India!



Cultural celebration day 2021



Fishermen Class

In Fishermen Class we explored the culture of Aboriginal Australia. We began by exploring some human and physical features of Australia before consider the lifestyle of people in the Aboriginal tribes.

Dot art:

The children explored and critiqued examples of Aboriginal Dot Art. We noticed that Aboriginal dot art is made from lots of coloured dots and frequently contains symbols and animals from their culture.

We had a go at creating our own version of Aboriginal Dot Art.



Dance:

We learned a dance to the music of a didgeridoo. We used a sequence of tribal poses to create a dance which we performed.



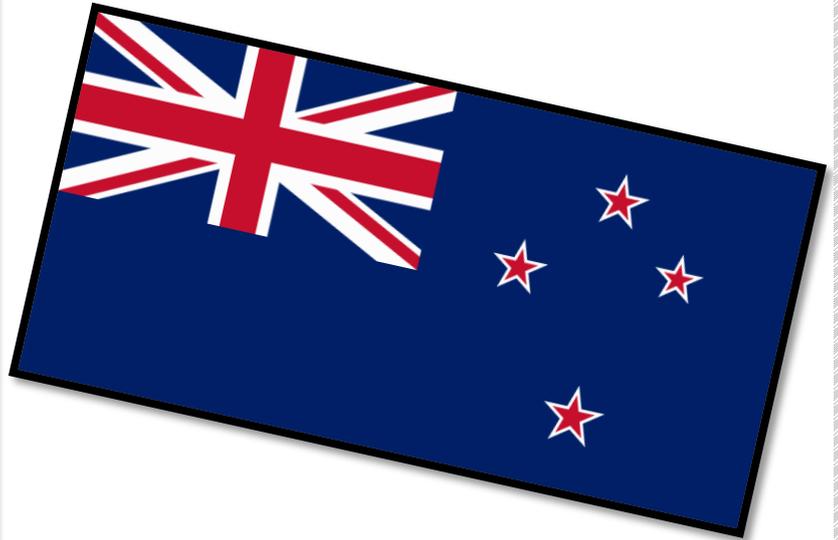
Music:

We listen to and appraised music of a didgeridoo and used cardboard tubes to make music in its style.



Carpenter Class Culture Day - 4th October 2021

NEW ZEALAND



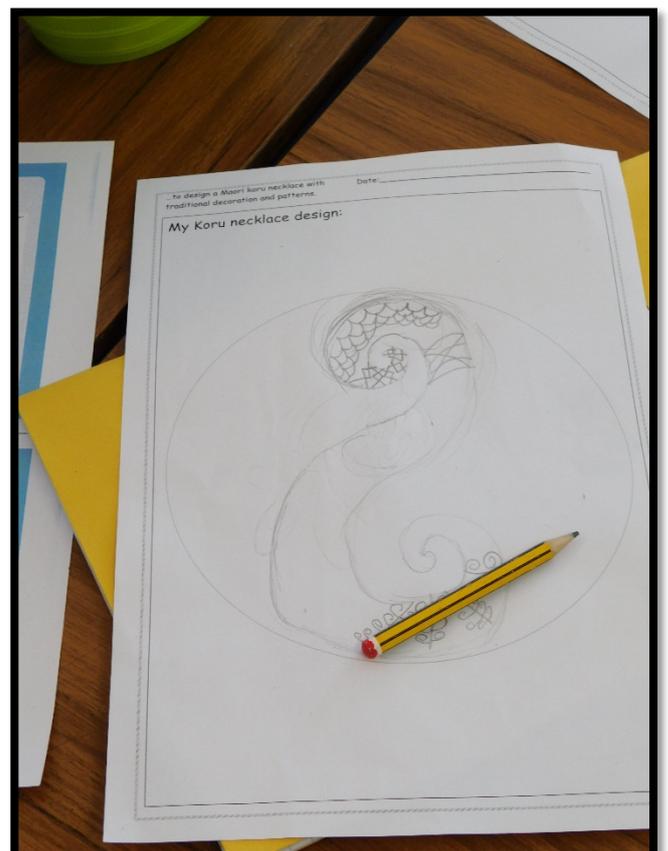
In Carpenter Class, we were learning about the country of New Zealand. We looked at the physical geography of the country and its history, from first being discovered and populated by the Maori, to the arrival of the British and it becoming a colony of the British Empire.

We learnt the names of the main cities (Christchurch, Auckland and the capital - Wellington), the names of the highest mountains on the North and South Islands and its currency - the New Zealand Dollar.

In addition to this, we learnt about native Maori culture, language and art, as well as learning and performing the Haka war dance.



Maori Artwork



For our main activity the children looked at the different Kohaiwhai patterns and their meanings and symbolism for the Maori people. We then designed and created a pendant in the shape of the koru, which represents the pitau - the uncurled frond of the silver fern - and symbolises new beginnings, birth and the unfolding of life.

文化日

中國

Wénhuà rì
Zhōngguó

Culture Day

China

Sometimes, Chinese dragons seem to be everywhere. We see these symbols in sports, on clothing, in books, and in movies. Some people even have dragon tattoos.

You've seen dragon iconography, but have you considered where dragons originate or what they symbolise? How much do you know about the many types of Chinese dragons? Read on to discover more about China's most famous mythological creatures.

A Distinctly Chinese Cultural Tradition

For starters, it's worth noting that the Chinese dragon, or 龍 (lóng), is very different from the European dragon. For example, while European dragons breath fire, the Chinese dragon typically breaths clouds.

The anatomy of the Chinese dragon is also unique. The head, for instance, often looks like that of a camel while the eyes look like those of a demon. Similarly, the neck looks like that of a snake whereas its paws are those of a tiger. Contrary to what most people assume, the legendary Chinese dragon was usually not vengeful. Ancient Chinese people didn't usually blame dragons for natural catastrophes and other disasters. Instead, they often saw dragons as benevolent, wise, and powerful.

The Origins of Chinese Dragon Legends

No one knows exactly when legends about dragons first originated, but the symbol dates back to at least 3000 BCE. According to one theory, the legendary Chinese dragon evolved out of ancient totem-worship practices. Ancient people may have created dragons by combining the attributes of several creatures like tigers, snakes, eagles, and carp.

A different theory posits that the Yan emperor (炎帝 Yándì), a legendary Chinese leader from pre-dynastic times, was born of an encounter with a powerful dragon. As a result, Yandi was more powerful than most leaders. He partnered with Emperor Huang Di and together they conquered their enemies, unified China and, according to myth, pioneered Chinese civilisation.

As time progressed, many Chinese came to believe that Yandi was one of their ancestors, which by extension meant that they were also the descendants of dragons

Where Do Dragons Live?

In the real world, dragons do not exist (surprise!). In the mythological stories they inhabit, however, dragons reside in a variety of places. The celestial dragon, for example, lives in the sky, while the coiling dragon lives in the sea.

According to ancient Chinese mythology, some dragons live in the sea while others live in the sky.

The Importance of Dragons in Chinese Culture

Dragons are significant in Chinese culture because they're associated with the following:
Business prosperity

During Chinese New Year, many celebrations start with a dragon dance. The aim of the dance is not just to attract attention but also to ask for a prosperous new business year from the dragon gods.

Good harvest and health

In traditional times, Chinese farmers requested plentiful harvests by making offerings to dragon gods. When drought struck, they did the same in an attempt to encourage a downpour from the heavens. Some people also believed dragons could protect their lands and harvests from flood damage. In addition to Chinese New Year, the dragon is a very significant creature during the Dragon Boat Festival, a Chinese holiday that's celebrated throughout China in late spring or early summer. During this festival, dragon-shaped boat races are traditionally held.

There are many theories about how the Dragon Boat Festival originated. One theory suggests that in its earliest form, the festival was celebrated to request good health as well as a bountiful harvest from the dragon gods.

Protective tokens

In China, people believe dragons can offer protection to homes and businesses. They're seen as protective figures that can be printed or engraved on sentimental or valuable objects.

What Do Chinese Dragons Symbolise?

Dragons are powerful creatures in Chinese mythology. They're associated with the ability to control the seasons, time, and harvests. Generally, they symbolise the following:

Everything male – In traditional Chinese society, men were considered to be physically strong and powerful and were often influential in community matters. Dragons were employed as representations of this relative dominance in traditional society. Masculine traits, thus, were considered physical manifestations of the mythological dragon.

Nobleness – According to Chinese astrology, those born in the Year of the Dragon are more prosperous and noble than others. For example, 1988, 2000, and 2012 are considered dragon years (see our full article on Chinese Zodiac Animals). Many Chinese people consider those born during dragon years to be strong-willed, decisive, and self-confident.

Agricultural life – According to Chinese mythology, dragons control the weather and the seasons. Though most dragons are wingless, male dragons possess the power to fly to the heavens and bring rain, while female dragons control earthly waters like rivers, lakes, seas, and wells.

Good fortune – Some people also believe dragons symbolize fortune and good luck. Thus, people often engrave dragons on utensils and personal items to attract the best life has to offer.

Kindness – In China, dragons are symbols of kindness and warmth. (Remember, the Chinese dragon doesn't breathe fire as its European counterparts do.) However, there are some exceptions, as we will see below.

Note the faded dragon symbol on the clothing of the Yongle Emperor (1360-1424 CE).

What is the Symbolism Behind Dragon Colours?

Chinese dragons are colourful creatures and each colour holds unique symbolism. For example, blue and green dragons symbolise nature, health, and tranquility. Some people also associate blue and green dragons with healing, peace, and rest. Other notable dragon colours are:

White Dragon

The white dragon symbolises purity, just like in the West. However, people sometimes also associate it with death and mourning and see it as a bad omen.



Red Dragon

The red dragon symbolises good fortune. For this reason, the symbol is popular at weddings and other celebrations to encourage happiness and good luck.



Yellow Dragon

The yellow dragon symbolises good fortune and power. Some also believe this dragon can control time and seasons. Since it's the most revered dragon, ancient people often used it as a symbol of empire and the emperor. People also generally associate this dragon with attributes like warmth, wisdom, and wealth.



Black Dragon

Most people associate the black dragon with vengeance. Thus, it's often linked to catastrophes like storms and floods.



Types of Chinese Dragons

The Chinese tradition includes a variety of different dragon types. Each is surrounded with a wealth of rich symbolism.

Spiritual Dragon – The spiritual dragon is blue and controls both the rain and the winds. Its job is to ensure that humans benefit from these two elements.



Winged Dragon – The fact that this dragon has wings is somewhat strange considering that most Chinese dragons are wingless. It is, however, a very significant type of dragon. It symbolises rain and at times, floods.



Celestial Dragon – This dragon resides in the sky, where it protects the celestial gods from falling to earth.



Coiling Dragon – Known to live in the sea, the coiling dragon controls time. While most dragons possess the ability to ascend to the sky, the coiling dragon is restricted to the waters.



Treasure Dragon – The Chinese believe this dragon can protect hidden treasures like precious metals, money, and personal wealth.



Underworld Dragon – This dragon controls rivers, streams, and seas. Some believe it's the feminine version of the spiritual dragon and for this reason, the two can copulate.



Horned Dragon – The horned dragon is one of the most powerful dragons in the Chinese tradition. Although sometimes depicted as having evil tendencies, it's also associated with making rain.



Dragon King – Lastly, the dragon king or dragon god is considered the most powerful of all dragons. He can appear in a variety of shapes and is often depicted as human. He is thought to reign over the seas of China in all four directions (East, West, North, and South).



We sang a Chinese Lullaby...

Mr Williams has a very expensive Yamaha keyboard that has many instruments and rhythms. He composed a tune that uses the notes of a Chinese pentatonic scale; he then chose instruments (such as the stringed instrument called a kanoon) that gave the tune an even stronger Chinese flavour.

Because Mr Williams can write nice poems, he thought he would create some lyrics with a Chinese theme. We know it as the "Chinese Lullaby"; it tells the story of three children, siblings, who were turned into creatures when they were young.

We practiced... and practiced... and practiced the lullaby until it became a bit of an earworm. However, Mrs Concannon filmed us singing the lullaby in just one take. We sounded beautiful!

Chinese Lullaby

**There flies the swallow,
Tranquil and graceful,
Destiny's calling.
Far above the clouds.**

**New dreams await her,
Life is but fleeting,
Journey's beginning,
Follow the Sun.**

**Deep in the jungle,
Panda lies sleeping,
Whispering spirits
Call him from afar.**

**Once he was human,
Happy-go-lucky,
Destiny calls him,
Follow the Sun.**

**High on a mountain,
Serpent is searching,
Brothers and sister,
Lost when they were young.**

**Swallow and Panda,
Yearn for their brother,
Spellbound forever,
Follow the Sun.**

***L Williams
September 2021
Culture Day***

Winter Olympics
Beijing 2020

We discussed the process of designing a mascot to represent the Olympic Games and the Paralympics. We had the opportunity to draw the official mascots ...Bing Dwen Dwen (panda) and Shuey Rhon Rhon (Chinese lantern) ... and to even create our own mascots.



Chinese Lanterns

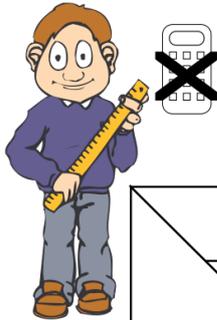
We each made a large Chinese lantern from an A3 template that Mr Williams created for us. We then added a few personal touches to make each one unique.

Traditional Chinese Dancing

Miss Amy from "Love Ballet" introduced us to some traditional Chinese dancing and we had the opportunity to learn some oriental dance moves.

Chinese Tangrams

In pairs, we made tangram puzzles from templates (of various colours) that Mr Williams created for us, we then produced some eye-catching display work.



Tangrams.

Copy and then cut out the square on the left.
Try to do it exactly the same size.
The square on the right has guide lines to help you.
Cut along all the lines.

