

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 - Day 3

**LO: I can discover mythical creatures and the power of imagination and creativity**

What do you already know about unicorns?

### **Task**

1. Look at the pictures in our Year 5 folder and notice what they tell you about unicorns. Have a go at answering these questions in your book:

- Where do they live?
- What do they look like?
- What can they do?
- What emotions do they feel?
- How do they behave?
- How can we describe their character traits?
- If there was a unicorn in your school, where might it be hidden? What door in your school might it be behind?

You may wish to read the Unicorn Fact File sheet in our Year 5 folder too!

Unicorns are mythical creatures. Mythical creatures are creatures that appear in stories. Many hundreds of years ago, there were not many discoveries in Science – so instead, mythical creatures were used to explain the world, especially things that seemed wonderful and unexplainable. An example is China. Here, before people had studied the water cycle and realised how the rain was made, stories were told in China about a rain dragon who would rise up and breathe into the clouds to make rain in order to make the farmers' fields green. Through mythical creatures, you can see how creative and imaginative storytellers could be. We are now going to meet some more mythical creatures, such as dragons, griffins, mermaids!

2. Read the story that the Unicorn Lady tells Tomas and the other children (below).

This is a story about what happened a long, long time ago when one day it started to rain, and never stopped. It just went on and on. It began because God was very angry at the world, because he saw the world was full of wicked people who didn't care about one another, nor for the beautiful world in which they lived. They had become cruel and selfish and greedy, and God wanted to teach them all a lesson they would never forget. He decided there was only one way to do this. He would destroy all those wicked people, but he needed to be sure that the few people that were good and kind would survive, and the animals, too – after all, the animals had never done anyone any harm, had they? This way he would be giving the world a second chance, a completely new start.

“So God chose the wisest and kindest man he could find. He was an old man called Noah. He told Noah he must build himself a great ship, a wooden ark, and he must begin it right away, and he had to make it big, the biggest ark ever built, because there had to be room not just for Noah and his family, but for two of every kind of animal on earth. So Noah and his family cut down the tallest trees. They sawed the wood into planks and began to build a huge ark, a gigantic ark, exactly as God had told him. Of course, all their neighbours thought they were barking mad to be building a ship in the middle of the countryside – off their heads, doolally. But that didn't bother Noah and his family, not one bit. They just ignored them and went right on building. It took them years and years to build such a huge ark, but finally when it was done they set about finding the animals. Two by two they brought them in, one male, one female of every kind of animal you can think of. There were lions and tigers, elephants and giraffes, cows, pigs, sheep, horses, deer, foxes, badgers, wolves and bears, wombats and wallabies – and bees and butterflies and grasshoppers too, insects of every sort. But, no matter how hard they searched they could not find unicorns anywhere, not even one.

Now Noah's grandchildren (and he had plenty of them) especially loved unicorns, as all children do. They spent weeks and months scouring the countryside all around just looking for unicorns. By now the rain was beginning to fall, a hard, heavy rain, a driving rain, a lashing rain, a constant rain, rain such as Noah and his family had never seen before. From the safety of the ark, filled now with two of every living creature on earth – except unicorns, that is – Noah and all his family looked out and saw the lakes and rivers filling, saw the land flooding about them and felt the ark beginning to float beneath them. Every valley was now a rushing, roaring torrent. All the towns and

villages were swept away and all the wicked people with them. Still it rained and still it rained, until all that was left of the land were a few distant mountain tops.

Inside the ark Noah and the family might have been safe, but they were not at all happy, his grandchildren in particular.

'What about the unicorns?' they cried, time and again. 'We haven't saved the unicorns.'

It wasn't Noah's fault, nor his children's, nor his grandchildren's. They were all busy down below feeding the animals in the ark. They didn't see, they didn't know that high on a nearby mountain top, watching the ark drift right past them, stood the last two unicorns left alive on this earth. How they neighed and whinnied! How they reared up and pawed the air with their hooves! They tossed their heads and shook their manes, but it was no use. All too soon the ark had disappeared over the horizon. So the unicorns were left stranded on the mountain top in the wind and rain, with nothing at all around them but the heaving sea. Lightning forked and flashed through the clouds. Thunder rolled and rumbled round the world. Twisting tornadoes whipped the sea into a frenzy of fury. The great flood was spreading out over all the Earth and drowning it.

As for the poor, stranded unicorns, the waters rose and rose around them until first their hooves were covered, then their backs, so that in the end, like it or not, they simply had to swim. They swam and they swam for hours, for days, for weeks. Then at last, at long last, the rain stopped, and the skies cleared above them. But still there was no land in sight. The unicorns swam on and on, always hoping to find land. But they never did. Far away and quite unbeknown to the unicorns, Noah's ark had come to rest on the top of Mount Ararat. Noah let the animals go as God had told him he should, two by two, so that once again the Earth would be filled with creatures of all kinds, from grasshoppers to giraffes. From the wood of his ark, Noah built himself a house, while his family spread out all over the world. The unicorns swam and swam so far, for so long, for so many years that in the end they didn't need their legs any more at all.

And slowly, slowly, very slowly they turned themselves into whales. This way they could swim more easily. This way they could dive down to the bottom of the sea to feed on whatever they wanted, and of course whenever they wished they could come up for air again. But in all this time they never lost their magical powers, and they never lost their horns, either. Which is why there really are to this very day whales in the sea with unicorns' horns. We call them narwhales.

**Michael Morpurgo, *I Believe in Unicorns* (2006).**

3. **Select your favourite mythical creature from our Year 5 folder. Imagine mythical creatures once walked the Earth and still do - in the form of another creature we know today. For example, as a unicorn became a narwhale, a hippocamp could become a seahorse!**

4. **Based on the structure of the Unicorn story, create your own story about how a mythical creature became a creature alive today. You may wish to copy the template in our Year 5 folder to plan the story.**

**# Challenge** Practise rehearsing your story orally (out loud). You will soon hear how you have been as imaginative as your ancestors!