

COMPOSITE ANIMALS



Much can be learned about a culture and the way they view the world by studying the images they create. Many artworks from various cultures depict imaginary creatures made from a composite of animals. These creatures often have symbolic meanings and represent admired traits, powers, and skills in humans.

Are you doing this activity at school or at home?

Follow these suggestions to make your experience fun and successful.

- Search for images of artworks on the Art Institute of Chicago's website: www.artic.edu/collection or look for other objects around you that could help you complete the activity.
- Work together with classmates, family members, or friends to complete the activity and share what you create.

Working in pairs or small groups, choose an artwork that depicts an animal or animals and consider the following:

How many different animals are depicted. What are they, and how are they represented? Discuss the unique characteristics of each animal and their relationship to the overall creature.

Use the chart on the next page to design your own composite animal that represents someone you admire. Then draw the composite animal that contains characteristics of at least three animals in the space provided.

Discuss animal characteristics that are used in connection with cars, sports teams, and TV shows. What traits do these animals represent?

GALLERY SUGGESTIONS

Chinese Art

Indian, Southeast Asian, and Himalayan Art

Arts of Africa

Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Art

Grade Level: 3–8

Common Core State Standards: SL.1, SL.2, SL.3, SL.4, W.2, W.3

To discover more resources, visit artic.edu/educatorresources.

NAME _____

PERSON I ADMIRE _____

The person I admire has these qualities...	An animal that represents each quality...	The part of this animal that captures this quality...
Example: Courage	Example: Lion	Example: Mane

DRAWING OF MY COMPOSITE ANIMAL