

Yvonne Palka



Mythical Powers

Goals

Increase vocabulary. (Word choices will depend on the story chosen.)
 Discuss abstract concepts, like fearlessness, jealousy, peace, wisdom.
 Show connections between legends and natural events.

Basis

A number of books are well suited to this activity. Some examples:

The Dragon's Tale, by Demi

The Dragon Emperor, by Wang Ping

The Sons of the Dragon King, by Young

The Dragon Prince: A Chinese Beauty & the Beast Tale, by Yep

Start by asking students to explain the meanings of words like *angry*, *sad*, *scared*, and *happy*. Lead the discussion into the idea of concepts, and introduce similar vocabulary, based on the story chosen. Examples reminiscent of dragon lore might include envy, respect, greed, or generosity. Then share the story with the students, emphasizing how various abstract concepts make the story. (For example, a prince steals the dragon's prized pearl out of envy.)



Use illustrations in the chosen book to emphasize the role of nature. (For example, dragons who live in a river change the river's course, but we might call that a flood.)

Crafts/Activities

Ask students to imagine their own dragon in a particular setting, such as a mountain cave, a large island, the clouds, or a deep lake.

Then ask students to choose one primary talent or attribute that their dragon has, perhaps the ability to blow steam and create more clouds, or such powerful wings that he/she can affect the weather and summon a typhoon.

Finally, encourage the students to assign one important character quality to their dragon. Maybe the dragon who can create typhoons is compassionate and doesn't want to destroy the homes of the humans, so typhoons only come occasionally. Or the dragon with the powerful legs and claws stirs only when angered and so earthquakes don't happen often.

Finish these creative excursions with a written story, illustrated by the student. If there is enough classroom help, bind the stories to present to each student.

For a final touch and some integration with the Beach lessons, ask the student to design the unique footprint of his or her own dragon. Attach to each book.

