


# HERE BE DRAGONS

Dragons can be found everywhere on Earth, from the icy depths of the Arctic Ocean in the north to the windswept wastelands of Antarctica in the south. They roam through steamy jungles and thick forests, swim across deep seas and fly above the highest mountains.



## FANTASTIC FLYING BEASTS


Their giant, jointed wings, powerful jaws, fiery eyes, horns and dazzling scaly skin set dragons apart from any other forms of life on our planet. Inside a dragon's body there is a skeleton that is stronger than steel, perfectly formed for its every task.

A dragon's sharp teeth and strong claws provide it with devastating weapons that it uses to attack an enemy, devour its prey or fight with rivals.

Watching two dragons locked in combat with each other is a terrifying sight.

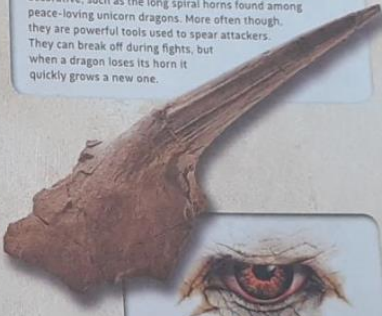
- ✦ Their fangs can inject a paralysing poison
- ✦ Inside the mouth are teeth up to a metre long
- ✦ Retractable claws can be unleashed at will or withdrawn into the body
- ✦ Jointed wings let the dragon change direction easily while in the air

## A STRONG SKULL AND JAWS




A dragon's head is usually long with a slim snout. The bone-crushing jaws are lined with razor-sharp teeth. Some dragons can unhinge their jaws to open them wider and swallow their prey whole. Others use their teeth to tear their prey into pieces and then chew.

## POWERFUL HORNS




Not all dragons have horns, but many do. Some are purely decorative, such as the long spiral horns found among peace-loving unicorn dragons. More often though, they are powerful tools used to spear attackers. They can break off during fights, but when a dragon loses its horn it quickly grows a new one.

## INSIDE A DRAGON'S LAIR




A dragon returns to its lair for many reasons. As well as providing a place to sleep and store treasure, it is also the safest place for it to shed its scales. The scale-shedding process happens once every 15 years and takes about two weeks. During this time, a dragon feels sluggish and its magical powers are dulled. It is one of the few times the beast is truly vulnerable.

## HYPNOTIC EYES



Dragon eyes come in every colour, from emerald green to sky blue. They also change colour and the pupils can change shape according to a dragon's thoughts. When you approach a dragon, never look at it directly. Its penetrating gaze can hypnotise you in an instant.

## WHY DO DRAGONS LIKE TO HOARD TREASURE?



It isn't known exactly why dragons have such a strong desire to hoard treasure. In the past, most experts believed that dragons were simply greedy. But the latest scientific research suggests that dragons may collect gleaming gold trinkets and brightly coloured jewels because these items remind them of their own beautiful iridescent scales. Collecting treasure and surrounding themselves with it makes dragons feel secure and comfortable.

### Questions:

- Name 3 places dragons can be found on Earth.
- Complete this sentence: Inside a dragon's body there is a skeleton stronger than \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is special about a dragon's claws? Which word describes this speciality?
- Find and copy 2 subheadings/ subtitles.
- What happens if a dragon loses its horn?
- When is a dragon at its most vulnerable?
- Describe 2 reasons why dragons hoard treasure.
- Discuss: Dragons do or have existed on Earth.