

# DRAGONS

Dragons are mythical creatures. That means they aren't real. They're important in many cultures around the world. People from North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Oceania, and Asia talk about them in myths and fairy tales, but different cultures see dragons differently.

In Asia, dragons are beautiful and magical creatures, and some stories about them are more than 4,000 years old. Asian dragons don't have wings. They look like giant lizards, but they aren't scary. They help people, and they can bring someone good luck. One example is Fuku Riu, the Japanese lucky dragon.

In Europe, North America, and South America, however, stories about dragons usually show them as evil. Western fairy-tale dragons live in caves. They have giant wings and breathe fire, so they're usually scary! However, there are some stories about good dragons in Western culture.

Dragons also have a very long history in Australia and Oceania. Some of the dragon myths there are more than 50,000 years old. There are many different types of dragon, but the most famous is the bunyip. This scary mythical monster is made from parts of different animals. It lives in the water and eats animals and sometimes people.

The only real dragon alive today is the Komodo dragon, a very large lizard that lives on an island in Indonesia. It can be scary because it hunts and eats almost anything: deer, pigs, other smaller dragons, and even big animals and humans! The Komodo dragon is now an endangered species because of predators and changes in its habitat, so people are trying to help save it from extinction.



## 15 Read and complete.

breathe    giants    lizard    mythical  
myths    real    scary    wings

There's only one <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ dragon. It's the Komodo dragon, and it lives on a tiny Indonesian island. Actually, it isn't a dragon, it's a very large <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_. All other dragons are <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ creatures. That means they exist only in <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ or fairy stories.

Some dragon tales are very frightening – they tell us about <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ beasts. These beasts are very large – they're <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ of the sky. They have enormous <sup>7</sup>\_\_\_\_\_, and they <sup>8</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ fire.



16

**Find four pairs of synonyms and three pairs of antonyms.**

1 tale

a story

2 giant

b frightening

3 humans

c evil

4 good

d south

5 scary

e mythical

6 real

f people

7 north

g very big

**THINK  
BIG**

**Do you know any myths or fairy tales about dragons? What are they?**

