

The Stories We Cannot See: Inside the Crest Pole



Hidden Narratives

Let the objects speak

What is a Crest Pole?

Below is a picture of a crest pole. They were made by the Haida people from the Haida Gwaii Islands, Canada. Crest poles were decorated as a record of important histories and events. They also showed a family's position within the community. We are unsure of the story this crest pole tells, but we can explore the possible meanings of its symbols. Take a look at the animals, what might they tell us?

I am a frog. I rely on the bear to look after me. In exchange, I bring knowledge from both the kingdoms of land and sea. Touch my tongue and I will sing you songs of divine wisdom and introduce you to worlds unknown.



I am a bear. I bring power, courage and strength. With my fanged teeth and giant paws, I will protect all who need me. No spirit is a greater leader than I, the 'Elder Kinsman'.

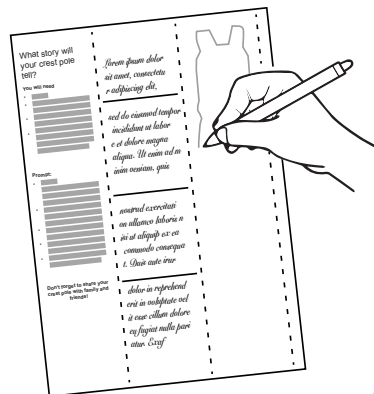
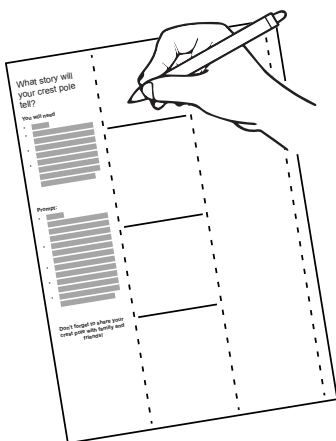
I am a wolf. I am the most loyal of all creatures. The bear may protect you, but my tall ears and sharp teeth mean my senses are stronger. Therefore, I am the greatest hunter and will feed you and your loved ones for as long as you require.

I am a killer whale. Though I may look fierce, I will bring you love and harmony in helping you find a partner for life, as I have found mine. I may be large, but I cannot survive alone. Together, we will guard you and your family, bringing luck and happiness to all.

Make Your Own Crest Pole:

Here are the instructions on how to make your crest pole, see the next page to start!

1. Choose 4 prompts and create your storyboard in Section 2.
2. Create drawings of your stories in Section 3.
3. Fold the paper along the dotted lines. Glue the right side. Fold and stick. (It will be a triangle-shape.)
4. Your crest pole can stand now! You can also add more pieces like wings, nose...



What story will your crest pole tell?

You will need:

- Glue
- Drawing materials (colour pencil, pastel, paint, etc)
- Scissors (make sure you have adult supervision)
- Any materials you'd like to use for adding elements (old magazines, newspaper, card...)

Prompt:

- Draw something to represent an important event in your life. (e.g. birthday, holiday...)
- Draw something to represent an important person in your life.
- Draw your favourite place in the world.
- Draw something you are good at.
- Draw something to represent a dream you have. (e.g. actor, singer...)

Don't forget to share your crest pole with family and friends!



Newcastle University

Section 1

Fold

Section 2

Fold

Section 3

Put glue here