

China

In this Bag:

- 1 sheet yellow construction paper
- 1 sheet red construction paper
- Dragon cut out
- Red and white paper straw
- Red, orange, and yellow crepe paper Streamers
- 12 Chinese Zodiac Signs info sheet



What you Need at Home:

- Markers, paint, colored pencils or crayons
- Scissors
- Tape and/or Glue
- Stapler



Learn about China and craft with us by following the instructional video on our virtual hub:

<http://www.creativeartsguild.org/events/annual-events/festival1/childrens-hill>

Fun Facts about China:

- The flag of China, officially the National Flag of the People's Republic of China and also known as the Five-starred Red Flag, is a Chinese red field charged in the canton (upper corner nearest the flagpole) with five golden stars. The design features one large star, with four smaller stars in a semicircle set off towards the fly (the side farthest from the flag pole). The red represents the Chinese Communist Revolution and the five stars and their relationships to each other represent the unity of the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC).
- China is the fourth largest country in the world after Russia, Canada and the USA.
- Although China is so large, there is only one-time zone!
- Most people in China live in the eastern parts of the country, the western parts are only sparsely populated.
- The Pacific Ocean forms the natural border in the east and southeast and southwest of the country. In the west, there are the Himalayas, which is the highest mountain range in the world.
- Most of the western parts of the country lie on the Tibetan mountainous plateau. In fact, mountains make up the majority of the landscape, dominating over 70% of the landmass.
- China is the most populous country in the world as it is home to almost one fifth of the world population.
- The highest mountain on the border with China is the Mount Everest, the world's highest mountains, with 8,848 meters (29,000ft).
- The longest river in China is the Yangtze River with over 6,300km (3,914miles) in length. This is also Asia's longest river.
- China has the world's longest sea-crossing bridge. The Hong Kong to Zhuhai-Macao bridge was opened to traffic in October 2018.
- The Gobi Desert which stretches over China and Mongolia is the largest desert in Asia.
- Population: more than 1.43 billion people live in China (2020). The majority of the people live in cities and towns.
- Capital: Beijing with 21.7 million inhabitants is not only China's capital city but also the second biggest city after Shanghai.
- Languages spoken are Mandarin or Standard Chinese (official language), while Cantonese (Yue) and Shanghainese (Wu) are among other most spoken languages.
- More than 96% can read and write.



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Highlights in Chinese Arts and Culture:

- It is common knowledge that China has a long history and glorious history in both arts and traditional crafts. These are just two of the many jewels in China's over five thousand-year culture. The arts and crafts are not only the embodiment of the people's longing for aesthetic beauty for themselves and as gifts for others, but also great treasures for China and the rest of the world. Many of the master artisans have had their skills handed down via one generation to the next so that only the offspring of such an artisan could learn the necessary skills required. The result being that they are the most valuable treasures both for a family and for the nation.
- Of all the Chinese arts and crafts, the most representative are Bronze Vessels, Folk Toys, Embroidery, Calligraphy, Music, Opera, Painting, Cloisonne, Jade, Kites, Lacquer Ware, Paper-Cuttings, Porcelain, Pottery, Seals, and Silk. They are not only a vivid reflection of the culture of China but also the embodiment of both the local people, and of the nation itself.
- Chinese New Year's Eve or Lunar New Year's Eve is the day before the Chinese New Year. Celebrating Chinese New Year's Eve has always been a family matter in China, it is the reunion day for every Chinese family. Chinese lanterns (the lantern festival) and traditional dragon dancers are included in this grand celebration!

- During the day of the lantern festival, the most notable and beautiful part of the many ceremonial events that take place is the lighting of lanterns to pray to the gods. These lanterns fill the sky creating a magnificent sea of floating wishes. There would be Lantern riddle events, people would write riddles on the lanterns and lit them up. Friends always get together to celebrate this event, have some wine and write poetry. Sometimes people would hide their love messages in their riddles for the person they love to figure out.



- Paper lanterns, originating from Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), mainly were used as lamps in ancient China. A variety of crafts were used in their making such as Chinese paintings, paper-cutting, and pricking and seaming and many kinds of materials such as bamboo, wood, wheat-straw and metal were used in their manufacture. Paper and silk were the major materials. Originally, monks used lanterns on the twelfth day of the first lunar month in their worship of the Buddha. During the Eastern Han Dynasty, the Emperor Liu Zhuang was a Buddhist and he ordered the inhabitants of the imperial palace and citizens to light lanterns to worship the Buddha just as the monks did. Later, this custom gradually became a grand festival among common people. During the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907), people made lanterns to celebrate their peaceful life while the splendid illuminations symbolized and celebrated the prosperous, strong and powerful country. From then on, lighting lanterns became popular in the country. Once used for lighting before the introduction of gas and then electricity, lanterns are now merely decorative or more significantly used during of the yearly Lantern Festival.

- Dragon dance is a form of traditional dance and performance in Chinese culture. Like the lion dance, it is most often seen in festive celebrations. The dance is performed by a team of experienced dancers who manipulate a long flexible figure of a dragon using poles positioned at regular intervals along the length of the dragon. The dance team simulates the imagined movements of this river spirit in a sinuous, undulating manner. The dragon dance is often performed during Chinese New Year. Chinese dragons are a symbol of China's culture, and they are believed to bring good luck to people, therefore the longer the dragon is in the dance, the more luck it will bring to the community. The dragons are believed to possess qualities that include great power, dignity, fertility, wisdom and auspiciousness. The appearance of a dragon is both fearsome and bold but it has a benevolent disposition, and it was an emblem to represent imperial authority. The movements in a performance traditionally symbolize historical roles of dragons demonstrating power and dignity.

