Design a Coat of Arms

A **coat of arms** is a unique set of images or symbols that represents a specific person, family, group, or country. Coats of arms were common during the Middle Ages in Europe, but they continue to be used today in national flags, seals, and money. Elements that are common on coats of arms include shields, animals, and mottos. The colors, symbols, and imagery are specifically chosen to tell you something about that person, group, or family. The coat of arms to the right belongs to Queen Elizabeth II of England.

The Royal Arms of the United Kingdom, featuring a shield in the center and a motto on the bottom. Courtesy of Encyclopædia Britannica.

Why are symbols important?

Symbols help us communicate using images, rather than words. You probably see symbols every day without even realizing it. What do these common symbols represent?

\$ _____ ♲ _____ ☮ _____ 🚫 _____
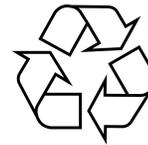
Some of the symbols, imagery, and colors commonly used in traditional coats of arms are listed below. A coat of arms is meant to highlight all of the best qualities of the person or group it represents, which is how certain symbols and colors are chosen over others.

Anchor: Hope

Arrow: Readiness

Bear: Family protection

Bee: Hard-working

Blue: Calm, responsibility

Book: Learning

Butterfly: Peace

Castle: Safety

Cat: Courage

Dove: Peace

Dragon: Courage

Eagle: Fortitude

Green: Nature

Horse: Readiness

Horseshoe: Good luck

Knot: Love

Purple: Royalty

Rainbow: Hope

Red: Power, strength

Sun: Glory

Sword: Honor

Now it's time to design your own!

Using the template on the following page, create a coat of arms for yourself or your family. Use symbols and colors that represent you. Do you have a favorite color? What about a favorite sport or hobby? You can also include some of the traditional symbols mentioned above, and you can add additional designs around your shield to fill out your coat of arms like the one belonging to Queen Elizabeth.

Share your coat of arms with us on Instagram using #frickpghkids