

WITH THE
WALLACE
COLLECTION

Out of the Frame Loan Boxes

Stories



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Stories



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How to use the Box

The theme of this Box is **Stories** and in the Box you will find:

- A booklet which gives you information about paintings and objects from the Wallace Collection.
- Images of the paintings or objects.
- Handling items relating to the paintings or objects.
- An ipad, with preloaded resources such as images, and audio descriptions and much more.

It's all about the picture

- The picture or object is the important thing. Encourage your resident to tell *you* what they see. Guide them where necessary, by suggestion, by asking questions, by giving a finger to follow, but unless they have very poor sight, try and avoid telling them what's there. Discovery is exciting.

One thing at a time

- Keep the questions and the handling to one at a time. Too many questions, or surrounding your resident with all the handling objects at once can be confusing. Finding an interesting facial expression, stroking a feather or pondering a question will be enjoyed much more without distractions.

Break it up!

- Look at the image or object in short bursts. Introduce conversation, tactile resources, activities to give a break – then go back to it. 'Real looking' is absorbing but also tiring physically and mentally.

Share your thoughts

- There are lots of ways to read a painting, some of them based purely on personal preference. Share your opinions and feelings about the picture with your resident, especially if your tastes are very different.

Know when to stop!

- You may want to look at 'just one more thing', but if the resident has clearly had enough, take the box away and look at it on your own! Always leave them wanting more.

10 Basic Questions

These can be used to help find details in the works of art and stimulate discussion with your residents.



- ? What can you see?
- ? Can you find the...? Shall we see if we can find the...?
- ? What colour is the...? Is there anything else the same colour in the picture?
- ? How many ... are there? Shall we count them?
- ? What do you think is the most important thing in the picture?
- ? Are we looking up or down or straight into the picture?
Does that make a difference?
- ? Where do you think the light is coming from in the picture?
- ? What is lit up and what is in the shadow? Why do you think that is?
- ? What is the mood of the picture? How does it make you feel?
- ? Does the picture puzzle you, make you smile, not appeal to you?
Why?

Some Thoughts about the Pictures in the Box

Bronze

The plaquette is a style of sculpture called 'relief', a word that comes from Latin and means 'raised'. The surface of the two figures is raised above the background. The plaquette is made of bronze, and the design was first made in wax from which a plaster or clay copy was made. Small objects like these were generally cast in a small box filled with sand. The model was pressed into the sand to make an impression. Molten metal was then poured into the impression. It melted the wax and filled the space left behind with bronze, which then cooled and hardened leaving the image in relief.



Maiolica Earthenware

The maiolica dish comes from Deruta, a small town in Perugia, in the Umbrian region of Italy. Maiolica is a kind of earthenware. The clay found at Deruta is especially suited to the making of these ceramics. At its artistic peak in the 15th and 16th century, Deruta specialised in 'Bella Donna' portrait dishes such as the one in the Box. Bella Donna means 'beautiful woman'. The women portrayed might be human or possibly mythical. The dishes are tin-glazed, which gives a brilliant white, opaque surface for painting. Because of the consistency of the glaze, errors in painting are impossible to put right but their vivid colours are preserved. A second glaze gives the special shine and brilliance to objects like the dish, which are known as lustre ware.



The Nude

Hercules is shown nude, as were most heroes in ancient Greek and Roman art. This was partly to display an idealised and heroic image of their physique and also because Greek warriors were known to go into combat naked. The depiction of the nude human body is probably the most difficult test of an artist's skill and so the nude became a way of an artist showing off his prowess.



The Founders of the Wallace Collection

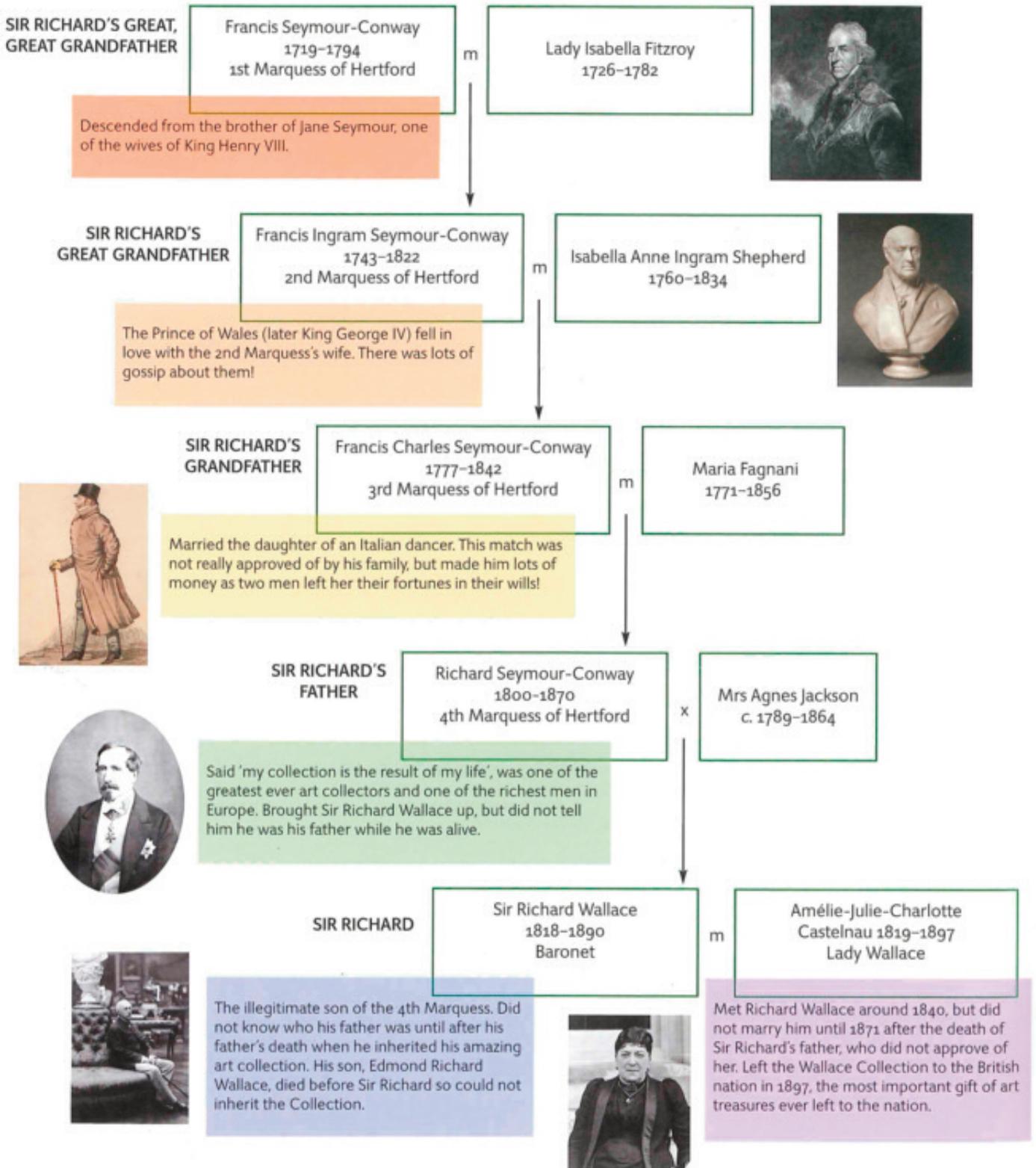


Hertford House (1776-88) and the Front State Room

Everything in this Box comes from the Wallace Collection at Hertford House, in the centre of London. Hertford House was the home of the Marquesses of Hertford and later of Sir Richard Wallace, the illegitimate son of the 4th Marquess.

- In 1797 the 2nd Marquess bought the house as a hunting lodge but subsequent owners have added to it. They also added to the Collection, but the greatest of the collectors were the 4th Marquess and Sir Richard.
- When he was 18, the 4th Marquess had a love affair with a married woman, Agnes Jackson. Six years later, she left their young son Richard with the Marquess in Paris where he lived. Richard was brought up as Richard Jackson. He was never told that the Marquess was his father and later adopted his mother's maiden name of Wallace. In his early twenties, his father told him that he must settle down. Richard made enlarging and looking after the Collection his life's work.
- Richard himself had a mistress, Amélie Castelnau, who worked in a Paris parfumerie but his father didn't approve of a marriage. When the 4th Marquess died in 1870, he left the Collection to Richard. Richard discovered that the Marquess was his father and was now free to marry Amélie.
- Sir Richard performed many charitable works for which Queen Victoria created him a Baronet. He died in 1890 and left the Collection to Lady Wallace who died in 1897. Following her husband's wishes, Lady Wallace left the Collection to the Nation.

Family Tree



Perseus and Andromeda



Tiziano Vecelli - known as Titian
Italy, probably 1554-1556
Oil on canvas, 68.8 x 74.6in / 175 x 189.5cm

Description of the picture

Perseus, in armour borrowed from the gods, soars over the gaping maw of a sea monster, sword raised to strike. Chained to a rock is the nude figure of Andromeda. Terrified, she waits for death in the monster's jaws. Far off on the right, outside his castle, her father Cepheus stands helpless, watching the scene with a crowd of courtiers, his crown glinting in the sunlight.

Some thoughts about the picture

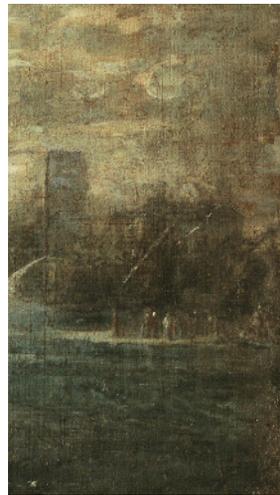
- Titian gives Perseus the 16th century idea of Roman armour: a short, kilted skirt, breastplate moulded to the torso and a shoulder-sash flying in the wind as he leaps. On his helmet and on the ankles of his sandals are the wings that show that they belonged to the Greek god Hermes. The goddess Athena had lent him her sword and shield. Below him in a choppy sea, is the monster, thrashing through the water with barbed teeth and lashing tail.
- Andromeda is shown almost life-size, filling the canvas on the left. A diaphanous silk scarf drifts across her lower torso, garnet drops hang from her ears. She is chained at wrist and ankle but manages to pull away from the drama in the centre, curving her body gracefully even though her brown eyes are huge and filled with fear as they look back towards her rescuer.
- Read the story of Perseus and Andromeda on page 16 and see how the artist Titian brings the story to life in the painting.

Discussion points: Characters

- Although Andromeda is nude, her pearly flesh, her pure silk drape, her jewelled earrings and the seashells at her feet proclaim her a princess. In the 16th century, when the picture was painted, seashells were exotic objects and no ordinary person would own them. One is a cockleshell, the attribute of Aphrodite the Goddess of Beauty whose jealousy starts the story.
- Titian, the artist, is determined we should understand the beauty and status of his heroine by all the clues he gives us. Why do you think he has added the cockleshell?
- ? Do you think Andromeda is beautiful? Do you think ideas of beauty have changed? Who were the great beauties everyone admired when you were young?
- Andromeda's father Cepheus is way off in the distance. You have to search the painting to find him. Titian has made him tiny because he's far away, but also perhaps to encourage you to return again and again to the painting to see more details.
- ? Is there anything in the painting that Titian has included that doesn't matter? Try imagining the picture without one or two people or objects and see what difference that would make.

Discussion points: Drama

- The painting is full of action and danger. Perseus' position looks very precarious. Did he jump? Was he pushed? Did he fall? Will the monster prevail? Not until you notice the tiny wings do you realise that he's a hero, he's flying, the gods are on his side, and the story will have a happy ending.
- ? Do you think Titian has chosen a good moment in the story to illustrate? How does he give the picture so much excitement? What other parts of the story would you like to see in a picture?
- ? Does the light help give movement and drama? Where is Titian using spotlights almost like a theatre? Would you light up the same parts of the picture if you were painting it?
- ? The painting is a kind of cliffhanger from a time before cinema, radio or graphic books. Do you enjoy those stories? What films do you remember that you specially enjoyed?



Hercules and the Nemean Lion



Moderno (probably Galeazzo Mondella)
Italy, late 15th or early 16th century
Bronze, 3.11 x 2.6in / 7.9 cm x 6.7cm

Description of the plaque

Tales of the Greek heroes have always been great favourites, but especially so in the Renaissance when this bronze plaque was made.

- The circle within the rectangle is made by the outline of the backs of two strong, fearless characters, the design based on a 4th century BC Greek coin. On the left is the hero, Hercules, and on the right, the Nemean Lion. The first of Hercules' Labours set by his cousin King Eurystheus, was to kill the lion and bring back its carcass.
- At first glance, it would appear that the two are whispering to each other, their curly heads close and intimate, but a second look reveals that the Lion is exhausted. Its paw lies inert and feeble on Hercules' arm as, with his superhuman strength, he strangles it to death, the two caught together in an endless circle of struggle and endurance.
- Hercules is one of the greatest of the heroes in Greek and Roman myth. He was a favourite not only because of his strength but also because of his ingenuity and wit. He is shown nude, as are most heroes in ancient Greek and Roman art. This is partly to display the perfection of their physique and because Greek warriors did go into battle naked, but also because the depiction of the nude human body is the most difficult test of an artist's skill.

Discussion points: Hercules

- This tiny image tells a powerful story. You can read it on page 17 and you can feel the surface of a relief sculpture with its raised figures and flat back, on the replica in the Box.
- ? Can you name any more of Hercules' Twelve Labours? The Slaying of the Erymanthean Boar was one. Can you think of any others?
- ? Do you admire heroes like Hercules? Can you think of other heroes in stories and films nowadays who have superhuman strength like him? Do you enjoy those stories, or do you prefer some other kind?

Discussion points: Attributes

- After the death of the Lion, Hercules wore his skin as a cloak to ward off the blows of swords and knives. This, together with his club, became his attribute, or badge. So if you see an image of a curly headed hero, wearing a lion skin or wielding a club, you can be pretty sure it's Hercules.
- ? Do you own anything, a garment, a medal, a piece of jewellery – something precious to you, that might be your attribute? What's the story behind it? Do you feel it's lucky? Do you have it in photographs of you? Can you think of anyone else who has an attribute?

Discussion points: Names

- Names like clothes seem to change fashion, the Greek and Roman names in these great stories are strange to us now, but they have a special ring to them that take us to another time: Hercules, Eurystheus, Aphrodite, Athena.
- ? What names do you remember that are thought to be old-fashioned now? What's your favourite name?
- ? Do you think some people have names that suit them and others don't?



A scene from Shakespeare's Macbeth



Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps
France, c1841-42
Oil on canvas, 11.5 x 15.9in / 29.4 x 40.4cm

Description of the picture

Three ancient witches weave spells round a cauldron over an open fire in a dank room. The firelight casts eerie shadows. Their eyes stare, their arms cleave the air. One hag holds a toad over the steaming pot by one leg, another crouches with her back to us. The only other light comes fitfully through a window, high up in the earth walls of their hovel on the left. Moonbeams play on an owl perched motionless below. A black cat sits, paws tucked beneath it, on a table in the other corner. Thrown down on the stony floor is an exotic patterned carpet.

- The witches' spells are for the ill-fated Macbeth whose fortune they have told outside on the windswept, lonely moors. The three hags, lit by the crackling flames, seem to have stepped straight from a Gothic horror story so beloved by Victorian romantics when the picture was painted.
- In his song for the witches at the beginning of Macbeth, Shakespeare mentions many things the Elizabethans believed made black magic – toads, goats, wolfs' teeth, hemlock, yew and others – but the last two lines are the ones most people remember:

Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Discussion points: Witches

- Witches are great favourites in stories and the witches in Macbeth are often interpreted in different ways. These have a black cat and an owl, and make spells with a toad and goodness knows how many other creepy crawlies in their pot. Yet they wear colourful gypsy costumes with dangling necklaces and floating scarves.
- ? How do you imagine witches to look? Do you remember any plays or films about witches? Did you like them or were you scared?
- ? What sort of voices do you think the witches might have had? What other noises might you hear if you were in the picture?

Discussion points: Theatre

- William Shakespeare wrote Macbeth in the late 16th century, when people loved plays about magic, witches and other supernatural beings, and often really believed in them, too. We may not believe in them so much nowadays, but we still like plays and films about them.
- ? Do you enjoy going to the theatre and the cinema? What kind of plays do you like best? Do you remember any other Shakespeare plays?
- ? Did you ever act in a play? Or have fun dressing up? What characters did you play? How would you feel about playing a witch?
- ? The witches in Macbeth were fortune-tellers. Did you ever have your fortune told? Do you remember where it was and how it was done? Was it in a crystal ball in a seaside tent, or at home with the tea leaves? Are there any other ways you can remember?

Discussion points: Animals

- Two of the animals often associated with witchcraft are shown in the painting – a black cat and an owl. A third, the toad, is being thrown into the bubbling cauldron.
- ? If you were making a picture of a witch, what animals would you put in it?
- ? Witches, just like anyone else, probably loved their pets and made a fuss of them. Did you ever have a pet? What kind was it? What was its name?



Staircase Balustrade



Unknown artist/maker
France, 1719-20

Wrought iron, cast iron, wood, oil paint and lacquer
Height: 3.0ft / 0.915m. Length: 86.5ft / 26.448m

Description of the Staircase Balustrade

The staircase in Hertford House greets you from the centre of the hall as you enter. It sweeps up and away from you, grand and imposing. Half way up, on a short landing, it divides, turns and disappears overhead on either side of the high hallway. The stairs are white marble, the carpet is rich and red. Huge pictures hang on the walls of the foyer, stone columns glisten and an enormous hexagonal lamp shines down from the ceiling.

- Finely wrought iron makes a lacy pattern of curling acanthus leaves feathered with gold. Half concealed among them are small cornucopias of golden fruit, bags of gold coins and banknotes. Here and there are gilded sunflowers, once the badge of the King of France. Five cartouches are spaced along the balustrade, the fifth at the top on the landing. Within them, in finely wrought iron decorated with gold, is the letter L for Louis, King of France. At first glance, the initial looks like an X, but there are two Ls, back-to-back and entwined to make a symmetrical pattern.
- At the bottom of the staircase are two griffins, mythical creatures that are often used to give a feeling of grandeur. They are the guardians of the staircase. The beast crouches, black body ready to spring, golden wings spread behind it. Its gold-tipped tail twines up around the newel post at the base of the balustrade. The neck encircles an ornamental pillar, the golden beak reaching up for the tiny gilt pineapple on the top. Read the story of the balustrade on page 19 to find its history.



Discussion points: Kings of France

- The Kings of France were known as 'The Sun King' and the sunflower was their badge. They believed they were as great as Apollo the Greek God of the Sun and could control time like him.
- ? Do you think they really believed this, or was it just propaganda?
- ? We know that the staircase in the royal bank was grand because we can see it in Hertford House. But did the French Kings have even grander ones? Use the i-pod and see if you can find a picture of a staircase at Versailles, their vast country palace and compare them.
- ? Could you make a cartouche out of an initial by putting them back-to-back? Which initial would you use?

Discussion points: Staircases

- We take staircases and steps for granted, but they are often very important in our lives.
- ? Do you remember a staircase that was important in your life? Perhaps the ones you climbed every day, or on a special occasion? And did you slide down the banisters?
- ? Did you ever walk up or down a staircase as grand as the Hertford House staircase? Did it have a beautiful balustrade? How did you feel when you were walking on it? What were you wearing?

Discussion points: Mythical Beasts

- The griffin at the foot of the stairs is made up of three real animals put together to make a mythical beast: an eagle's head and wings, a lion's body and a serpent's tail. Can you make out these different parts? This is how many of the strange creatures in mythology were imagined.
- ? Do you know any other mythical beasts? A sphinx is one. What different animals are they made of?
- ? If you were going to make a story or a picture about a mythical beast, what real animals would you put together to make it? And what would you call it? Would yours be a threatening beast, or would it protect something or someone?



The Deruta Dish



Unknown artist or maker
Deruta, Italy c1500-1515
Tin-glazed earthenware, painted and lusted
Diameter: 15.3in / 38.9cm

Description of the dish

There is no story to this magnificent dish, or if there is, it's a mystery.

We know that it is maiolica and that it was made in Deruta in Italy, five hundred years ago. We know that Sir Richard Wallace bought it in the 1870s. Who the pale-faced young woman was and what the words on the scroll signify we don't know, and perhaps we never will. But there are clues to give us some ideas and perhaps create stories of our own.

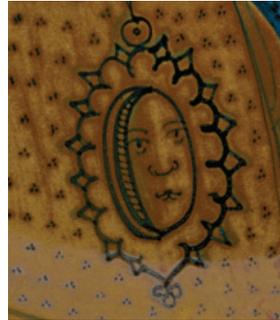
Some thoughts about the dish

- The exquisite lustre and detail on the dish suggest that it was made for a special occasion. The young woman gazes into the distance, her long neck, classical profile and white complexion, her elaborate hair and headdress proclaim her to be no ordinary young woman. Round her neck is a locket containing a face. Is it a picture, or a mirror? If it's a picture, who is it? Perhaps her lover, her future husband, her father or brother? Perhaps it's not a man at all. If a mirror, then who is reflected? Certainly not her. We can't meet her eyes to read her mood. Is she sad, thoughtful, disappointed, even angry? Was she a real person, imaginary, or a creature of myth?
- Other dishes of this kind made at the time show other enigmatic young women. But the scroll may be a clue, depending on how it's interpreted. It reads: 'Sola. sperança. elmo. cor. te ne'. In archaic Italian, this means: 'My heart has only hope.' Does this tell us about a betrothal, a lost love, or is she patiently waiting for the return of someone far away?



Discussion points: The Young Woman

- There is no story for you to read about this beautiful dish, still vibrant and glowing after five hundred years, so perhaps you could make your own stories about it and solve its secret for your own delight.
- The young woman's profile is very straight and she is pale as marble, like a Greek statue, yet her hair and her sleeve decoration are complicated and stylish in the fashion of her day.
- ? What kind of person do you think she is? Do you think she's real, imaginary or a creature of myth?
- ? Who or what do you imagine she is thinking of? Whose picture is in the locket? Why is there nothing but hope in her heart? What do you think is her story?



Discussion points: Flowers

- The flowers are very stylised and may not be real flowers at all, but they most closely resemble hollyhocks, which were newly imported into Italy at the time and so, fashionable. In the 16th century, plants of all kinds were used in medicines and the hollyhock was no exception. They were eaten in salads, and ground up in recipes for many minor ailments. Flowers were also given symbolic meanings, and the hollyhock was a symbol of fertility and wealth.
- ? Do you remember being given home cures when you were young? Which do you believe are beneficial? Do you know of any plants that are harmful?
- ? What is your favourite flower?
- ? Did you enjoy gardening? Did you have a garden, pots on a balcony or an allotment perhaps? What plants did you grow?
- ? What are the smells you remember most about being in a garden?
- ? Do you think the flowers have a meaning for the young woman on the dish, or are they just decoration?



The Story of Perseus and Andromeda



Andromeda was the beautiful daughter of King Cepheus and Queen Cassiopeia. One day, the Queen was unwise enough to say within the hearing of Aphrodite, Goddess of Beauty, that she was more beautiful than the goddess and all her nymphs. In revenge, Aphrodite asked her brother Poseidon, God of the Sea, to send a monster to kill Andromeda.

Now, the hero Perseus was on his way back from beheading Medusa, the terrible Gorgon with snakes for hair. To speed him on his way through the heavens to find her, the god Hermes had lent Perseus his winged helmet and sandals. The goddess Athena lent him the magic sword and shield without which he would fail, as many others had done before him. To prove her death, Perseus was to bring back her head in a special bag that hung at his waist.

As he flew through the air over land and sea, Perseus heard the cries of King Cepheus beneath him on the shore: 'Someone help my daughter! Someone rescue her before it's too late!'

Perseus looked down and saw the beautiful maiden chained to a rock, a terrible sea monster on its way to tear her to pieces and eat her. He flew down to Cepheus and said: 'I will rescue your daughter, but if I do, I want to marry her, for I have fallen in love with her at first sight.'

'Marry her today,' said the King, 'I don't care, just save her, save her!'

So Perseus flew off and with Athena's magic sword, did battle with the sea monster and slew it. He cut Andromeda free and carried her back to the palace to their wedding.

But Cepheus hadn't told Perseus that Andromeda had been promised in marriage to another man called Phineus. During the ceremony, fists banged mightily at the door. Phineus had come to claim his bride bringing an army with him. Not even a magic sword could prevail against a whole army, so in a flash, Perseus pulled Medusa's head from the bag and held it up. Her cold, dead eyes still held their evil magic and she turned the army into stone.

So Perseus and Andromeda were wed. And when they were old, instead of dying, the gods lifted them up into the sky and turned them into constellations of stars. And you can see them glittering still, far, far away, on a frosty, starlit night.

The Story of Hercules and the Lion



Hercules was the son of the god Zeus and a beautiful mortal, Alcmene. He grew up to be the strongest man on earth. One day, he fell into a fit of drunken madness and accidentally killed his wife and children. King Eurystheus, his cousin, hated him and set him twelve superhuman labours. The first of these was the slaying of the Nemean Lion. Here is one of the many versions of the story of how Hercules killed the ravaging beast.

The lion lived in a cave near a city called Nemea in the Peloponnese area of Southern Greece. Its hide was toughened by magic and no sword or dagger could pierce it. Hercules wandered in search of the lion and on the way, he met a young lad who knew that many warriors had died trying to slay it. The boy told Hercules that if he slew the lion and returned with the body, he would sacrifice another lion to Zeus. But if Hercules failed, the boy would sacrifice himself to Zeus. So, armed with a bundle of arrows and his trusty club, Hercules found the beast and prepared to fight it.

The first arrow that he shot bounced off the creature's side. He tried again but still the lion was unharmed, roaring and pawing the air with its huge claws. One after the other the arrows slithered to the ground and Hercules realised there was magic afoot.

Now, the lion's lair had two entrances. Hercules blocked one and went in through the other. The cave was dark but Hercules laid about him with his club and managed to stun the beast. The struggle went on, but at last Hercules strangled the weakened creature with his bare hands and it lay dead at his feet.

Hercules tried to skin the lion, but still nothing would penetrate the golden fur. At last, Athena took pity on him and whispered the secret. With a grin, Hercules grabbed the lion's paw and sliced into the skin with its own claw. He cleaned it and ever after wore it as his armoured cloak.

He carried the carcass back to King Eurystheus who was so frightened by it that he commanded Hercules to keep the fruits of his other labours outside the city walls. This he did and his adventures were many and hazardous but he had his cloak and his club to protect him. But no one has ever discovered whether he met the young lad again or if that sacrifice to Zeus was ever made.

The Story of Macbeth



The play starts with a rumble of thunder rolling across a lonely moor. Macbeth is on the way back to their army camp with his friend Banquo. They meet three witches, their grey locks blowing in the wind. The hags prophesy that he will be Thane, or Lord, of Cawdor, and afterwards King of Scotland. The prophecies begin to work on his mind.

At the camp, King Duncan makes him Thane of Cawdor in recognition of his bravery in battle. The first prophecy has come true. But Duncan announces that the heir to his throne is his own son, Malcolm. So how can Macbeth become king? People will have to die.

King Duncan visits their castle. Lady Macbeth makes plans to kill him in his sleep and lay blame on his guards. Macbeth hesitates but commits the murder, forgetting to leave the guards' swords by the King's body. He can't bring himself to return to the death room, so Lady Macbeth goes in and smears Duncan's blood on the sleeping guards' faces. Another Thane, Macduff, arrives and discovers the body. He suspects Macbeth. The dead King's sons flee the country.

Macbeth is made King but worries that Banquo knows of the prophecies. He has Banquo murdered. At Macbeth's coronation banquet, Banquo's ghost appears to haunt him. He hurries to the three witches for help, but Hecate, their goddess, is angry with them for interfering with Macbeth's destiny without her permission. She vows to watch his death.

This time the witches' prophecies are more like riddles. They tell Macbeth that no man born of woman can harm him and that he will never be beaten till 'Birnam Wood shall come to Dunsinane'. So Macbeth feels safe. He returns to the castle, orders the capture of Macduff's castle and the slaughter of his wife and children. Macduff is with Prince Malcolm in England. He hears of the murder and vows to kill Macbeth.

Lady Macbeth is haunted by her wicked deeds. She sleepwalks and is overheard talking of the evil she has committed with her husband.

Macduff and Malcolm bring their army to Birnam Wood. They cut down branches to hide their troops. Macbeth hears that his wife is dead. He prepares for battle. He sees the wood apparently moving towards him, but still believes he is invincible as 'no man born of woman' can harm him. But suddenly he is told that Macduff's was a Caesarean birth and realises his time has come. In a final duel he is killed by Macduff and Malcolm is declared King. Macbeth's short reign is over.

The Story of the Balustrade



Unlike the ancient Greek myths in the Box, this is a true story and it tells a part of the fascinating history of the Wallace Collection.

Sir Richard Wallace was the last owner of the Collection. When he died he left everything to his wife with instructions for its future. In turn, Lady Wallace left the Collection to the nation, with a specific mention of the balustrade. Her Will stated that if the Collection left Hertford House, the balustrade had to be taken down and installed in whatever new building was chosen. But the balustrade wasn't made for Hertford House originally. It had been cut down and altered to fit the staircase – a very difficult task. So when it was decided that the Collection was to stay in Hertford House, everyone heaved a sigh of relief. The balustrade stayed and the Collection stayed, where you can see them both today.

Where did the balustrade come from? It was once in the Royal Bank of France in Paris, which had been demolished. Sir Richard was offered the balustrade by a dealer. He studied carefully the little details of coins, trailing leaves, fruit and above all, the entwined initial L for Louis, King of France and decided it must be saved. It had to be cut to fit and re-gilded but he knew it would look truly handsome and be the crowning glory of his London house. No one knows exactly where the dealer had found it following the demolition, but it was bought by Sir Richard in 1871.

Louis XV came to the throne when he was five years old, so he had a Regent to rule for him – his uncle Phillipe d'Orleans. The state was in debt, the Treasury was almost empty and the taxes for the next two years had already been spent. Phillipe was a supporter of John Law, a Scottish economist, who was in control of French finances and had modern ideas. Law thought that the more money in circulation, the more the economy would flourish. He introduced paper money, so doing away with the need for scarce gold and silver and encouraging shares and speculation. For a while, the economy boomed. Poor citizens became millionaires overnight. Excited crowds gathered to buy and sell shares.

It was then that John Law founded the first national bank France had ever had and the balustrade was designed for it. The cornucopias of fruit, the coins and bank notes seemed very appropriate. The magnificent cartouche of interlaced Ls paid tribute to Louis, whom John Law hoped to serve. But the bank collapsed as spectacularly as it had soared. John Law fled. Phillipe d'Orleans died, his royal protection was lost, and Law died an exile. The bank was demolished and the beautiful balustrade left to decay, until Sir Richard came to its rescue and took it home to London to grace the grand staircase in Hertford House forever.

Some Poems

to enhance your enjoyment of the pictures

These little poems are old traditional rhymes, some of them spoken at night time when stories of dragons and witches were told before bedtime.

Perhaps you remember them too:

Bring the holy crust of bread,
Lay it underneath the head;
'Tis a certain charm to keep
Hags away, while children sleep.

Robert Herrick

Monday's child is fair of face
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for his living,
And the child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is bonny and blithe and good and gay.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on.
Four corners to my bed,
Four angels round my head:
One to watch and one to pray
And two to bear my soul away.

From ghoulies and ghosties
And long-leggedy beasties
And all things that go BUMP
in the night
Good lord, deliver us!

Jabberwocky

**We know that dragons and other strange beasts don't really exist. Don't we?
In his poem *Jabberwocky*, Lewis Carroll helps us laugh at such things,
but leaves us just wondering a little...**

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious bandersnatch!'

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought –
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgy wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

'And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms my beamish boy!
Oh frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!'
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

The Listeners

**Walter de la Mare tells us a story full of atmosphere in his famous poem
The Listeners that has left many thousands of people wondering...**

'Is there anybody there?' said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor:
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head:
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
'Is there anybody there?' he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
The stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote upon the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head:
'Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word,' he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

A Small Dragon

The contemporary poet Brian Patten uses the age-old dragon myth in a new way.

I've found a small dragon in the woodshed.
Think it must have come from deep inside a forest
because it's damp and green and leaves
are still reflecting in its eyes.

I fed it on many things, tried grass,
the roots of stars, hazelnut and dandelion,
but it stared up at me as if to say, I need
food you can't provide.

It made a nest among the coal,
not unlike a bird's but larger,
it's out of place here
and it's quite silent.

If you believed in it I would come
hurrying to your house to let you share my wonder,
but I want instead to see
if you yourself will pass this way.

The Lion and Albert

**Hercules had trouble with a lion and here's a wonderful poem by
Marriott Edgar about someone else who did! You may remember the great
Stanley Holloway reciting it on the radio –
a poem truly meant to be spoken aloud and to make you laugh.**

There's a famous seaside place called Blackpool,
That's noted for fresh-air and fun,
And Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom
Went there with young Albert, their son.

A grand little lad was their Albert
All dressed in his best; quite a swell
'E'd a stick with an 'orse's 'ead 'andle
The finest that Woolworth's could sell.

They didn't think much to the ocean
The waves, they was fiddlin' and small
There was no wrecks... nobody drowned
'Fact, nothing to laugh at, at all.

So, seeking for further amusement
They paid and went into the zoo
Where they'd lions and tigers and cam-els
And old ale and sandwiches too.

There were one great big lion called Wallace
His nose were all covered with scars
He lay in a som-no-lent posture
With the side of his face to the bars.

Now Albert had heard about lions
How they were ferocious and wild
And to see Wallace lying so peaceful
Well... it didn't seem right to the child.

So straight 'way the brave little feller
Not showing a morsel of fear
Took 'is stick with the 'orse's 'ead 'andle
And pushed it in Wallace's ear!

You could see that the lion didn't like it
For giving a kind of a roll
He pulled Albert inside the cage with 'im
And swallowed the little lad... whole!

The Lion and Albert (cont)

Then Pa, who had seen the occurrence
And didn't know what to do next
Said, "Mother! Yon lions 'et Albert"
And Mother said "Eeh, I am vexed!"

So Mr and Mrs Ramsbottom
Quite rightly, when all's said and done
Complained to the Animal Keeper
That the lion had eaten their son.

The keeper was quite nice about it
He said, "What a nasty mishap
Are you sure that it's your lad he's eaten?"
Pa said, "Am I sure? There's his cap!"

So the manager had to be sent for
He came and he said, "What's to do?"
Pa said, "Yon lion's 'eaten our Albert
And 'im in his Sunday clothes, too."

Then Mother said, "Right's right, young feller
I think it's a shame and a sin
For a lion to go and eat Albert
And after we've paid to come in!"

The manager wanted no trouble
He took out his purse right away
And said, "How much to settle the matter?"
And Pa said "What do you usually pay?"

But Mother had turned a bit awkward
When she thought where her Albert had gone
She said, "No! someone's got to be summonsed"
So that were decided upon.

Round they went to the Police Station
In front of a Magistrate chap
They told 'im what happened to Albert
And proved it by showing his cap.

The Magistrate gave his o-pinion
That no-one was really to blame
He said that he hoped the Ramsbottoms
Would have further sons to their name.

At that Mother got proper blazing
"And thank you, sir, kindly," said she
"What waste all our lives raising children
To feed ruddy lions? Not me!"

O Mistress Mine

Two short poems about love that might suggest the young woman on the Deruta dish: the first, *O Mistress Mine*, from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and the second, *So, We'll Go No More A-Roving* by Lord Byron.

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear; your true-love coming,
That can sing both high and low;
Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
Journey's end in lover's meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

from *Twelfth Night*, William Shakespeare

So, We'll Go No More A-Roving

So, we'll go no more a-roving
So late into the night,
Thought the heart be still as lowing
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul outwears the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

Thought the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a-roving
By the light of the moon.

Lord Byron

The King's Breakfast

Another poem for fun, this time about sliding down the banisters,
by A A Milne

The King asked
The Queen, and
The Queen asked
The Dairymaid:
"Could we have some butter for
The Royal slice of bread?"
The Queen asked
The Dairymaid,
The Dairymaid
Said, "Certainly,
I'll go and tell
The cow
Now
Before she goes to bed."
The Dairymaid
She curtsied,
And went and told
The Alderney:
"Don't forget the butter for
The Royal slice of bread."
The Alderney
Said sleepily:
"You'd better tell
His Majesty
That many people nowadays
Like marmalade
Instead."
The Dairymaid
Said, "Fancy!"
And went to
Her Majesty.
She curtsied to the Queen, and
She turned a little red:
"Excuse me,

Your Majesty,
For taking of
The liberty,
But marmalade is tasty, if
It's very
Thickly
Spread."
The Queen said
"Oh!"
And went to
His Majesty:
"Talking of the butter for
The Royal slice of bread,
Many people
Think that
Marmalade
Is nicer.
Would you like to try a little
Marmalade
Instead?"
The King said,
"Bother!"
And then he said,
"Oh, dear me!"
The King sobbed, "Oh, deary me!"
And went back to bed.
"Nobody,"
He whimpered,
"Could call me
A fussy man;
I only want
A little bit
Of butter for
My bread!"

The King's Breakfast (cont)

“There, there!”
And went to
The Dairymaid.
The Dairymaid
Said, “There, there!”
And went to the shed.
The cow said,
“There, there!
I didn’t really
Mean it;
Here’s milk for his porringer
And butter for his bread.”

The Queen took
The butter
And brought it to
His Majesty;
The King said,
“Butter, eh?”
And bounced out of bed.
“Nobody,” he said,
As he kissed her
Tenderly,
“Nobody,” he said,
As he slid down
The banisters,
“Nobody,
My darling,
Could call me
A fussy man—
BUT
I do like a little bit of butter to my bread!”

Ozymandias

And a poem by Percy Bysshe Shelley about kings, and riches and power, to bring to mind the Kings of France, the Sun Kings, and their fate.

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Might, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.