



**Activities for *Celestial Silks: Chinese religious & court textiles* for  
Chinese Language students Stage 1 to Stage 6**

These activities are developed to support an exhibition visit or be used in conjunction with the exhibition catalogue. They can also be used as post-visit activities.

Developed by Judy Shih, Teacher of Chinese Language, Saturday School of Community Languages.

***Celestial Silks: Chinese religious & court textiles***

**Art Gallery of New South Wales      31 July to 24 October 2004**

For bookings please contact the Public Programs Bookings Office tel 9225 1740

Exhibition catalogue available from the Gallery Shop \$35

**Background information for students**

What should I look for in this exhibition?

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Cat no.</b>
Ancient treasures	Silk robes from the 6 <sup>th</sup> century	1,2,3
Religious textiles	Buddhist textiles	4,5,6,7,8,9,10, 11, 12,13,14,15,16, 17,18, 19,20, 21,22,23,
	Daoist textiles	24,25,26,
Court textiles	Court robes	27, 28,29,30,31,32,33 34,35,36,37
	Ming festival badges	39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46
	Indicators of rank from Imperial China	47, 48,49,50,51,52, 53,54,55,56,57,58
	Hats and hat finials	59,60,61
	Uncut textiles: constructing dragon robes	62,63,64,65,66,67,68,69
	Others: court beads	38
	banners	70
	Mandarin boots	71

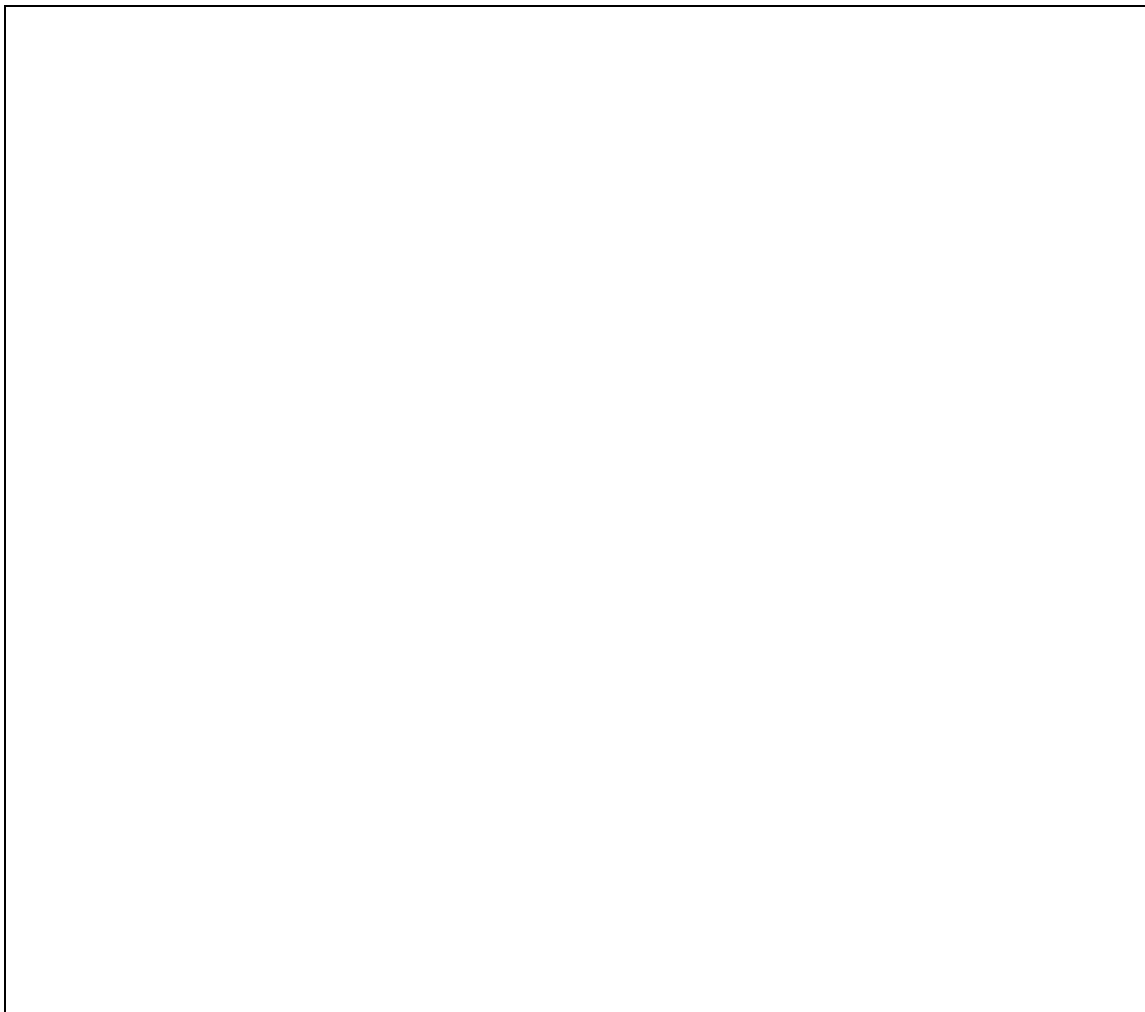
## Activity 1

### Magical Creatures

Look at the *Chrysanthemum Festival Badge* (cat no 45). This dragon looks pretty mad. What makes him look that way? Where does he live? Look closely at the patterns and colours. They are telling us about how he feels and where he comes from.


This image is much smaller than you think. It is a Festival of flowers badge that is worn on special occasions Can you see the chrysanthemum flowers in the background? This image is a silk embroidery which means that it has been hand stitched with very fine thread. The festival badge was made over 350 years ago!

The ancient Chinese believed that dragons lived in every river, lake and sea and also lived high in the sky among the rain clouds. Make a design for a festival badge of a ferocious dragon sitting on top of a rain cloud looking down on the Earth..



## Activity 2

After viewing the *Celestial Silks* exhibition, Mary wants to have a female vest similar to the Noblewoman's ceremonial vest (cat no 35) for her Year 10 Formal. Can you help her to design one?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a design for a female vest. The box occupies most of the lower half of the page.

### Activity 3 -Part A

Read the following legend about the Eight Immortals plan to celebrate the God of Longevity's birthday.

#### **Eight Immortals Celebrate God of Longevity's Birthday (八仙庆寿)**

After each showing his or her special prowess to cross the sea, Eight Immortals (八仙) were the happiest immortals that ever lived. They lived in their paradise Mount Kunlun (昆仑山). They were good friends. They never felt lonely.

One day, a crane flew to their garden and brought a letter to them. It was from the God of Longevity (Nanji Xianweng 南极仙翁) inviting them to his birthday party.

'How old is Xianweng?' asked Lu Dongbin (吕洞宾), dressed like a scholar with his sword on his back.

'Maybe five hundred years old,' said Cao Guojiu(曹国舅). 'Look at his forehead. It becomes higher and higher. It notes for his longevity.'

'What should we bring to Xianweng for his birthday present?' asked Zhang Guolao (张果老), sitting backward on his donkey.

'Of course, a bottle of good wine' called Tieguai Li (铁拐李) from the table, holding a big bottle gourd. 'I have just made some good wine. Guolao, smell it.'

'Xianweng doesn't like wine the way you do Tieguai Li,' said He Xianggu (何仙姑) waving her lotus softly. 'Why don't we play some music?'

'It's a good idea. Woman always observes more carefully than man. Let me think.' said Han Zhongli (汉锺离). He stretched his hands out from his big red robe and touched his two little hair buns.

As the other immortals were waiting for their leader quietly, Zhang Guolao performed some magic arts to change his donkey to paper and put it in his bag.

Han Zhongli said, 'Lu Dongbin, you compose a birthday song as soon as possible. Then three of us form a band. Cao Guoji plays with his castanets, Han Xiangzi (韩湘子) blows his flute and Zhang Guolao plays the yu (箏). I 'll be the singer. He Xianggu, would you please be our dancer?'

‘It would be my great honour,’ smiled He Xiangu.

‘What should I do?’ called Tieguai Li. ‘I don’t know how to play any musical instrument. Look at my leg. I can’t...’

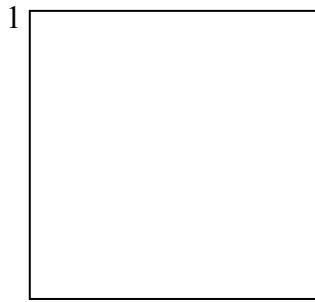
‘Me too! Don’t worry, my brother,’ said Lan Caihe (蓝采和). ‘You can help me to pick the flowers early in that morning. I’ll carry the basket of flowers. You will be our representative to say our wishes to Xianweng.’

It came to the great Nanji Xianweng’s birthday. The Eight Immortals started out.

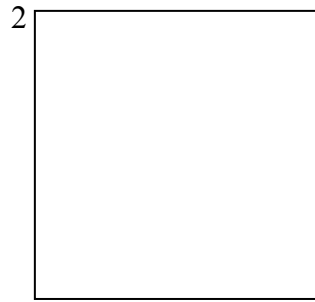
Do you know what Tieguai Li will say to Nanji Xianweng? View the Daoist hanging (cat no 24) to find out more information about the Nanji Xianweng’s birthday party.

### Activity 3 - Part B

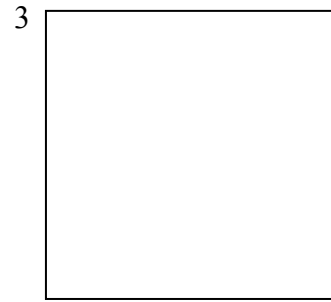
Look at the Daoist hanging (cat no 24). Find Nanji Xianweng and the Eight Immortals in the hanging. Draw them or photocopy the hanging from the catalogue and place them in the appropriate spaces below. You might use some hints from the story in Part A.



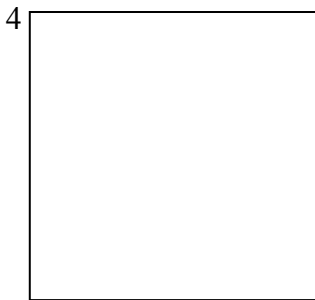
Nanji Xianweng 南极仙翁



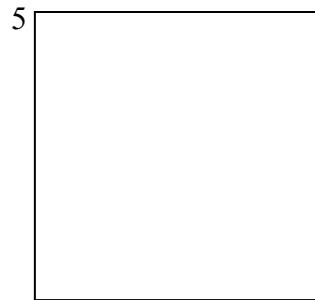
Lu Dongbin 吕洞宾



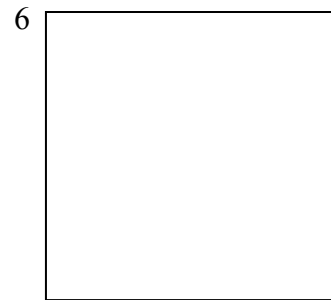
He Xiangu 何仙姑



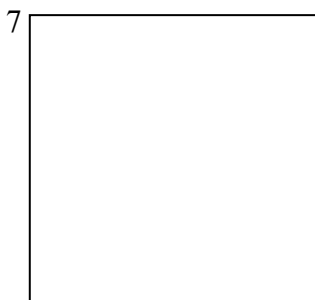
Cao Guojiu 曹国舅



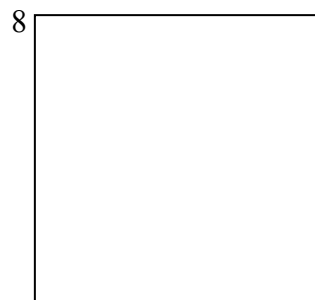
Han Xiangzi 韩湘子



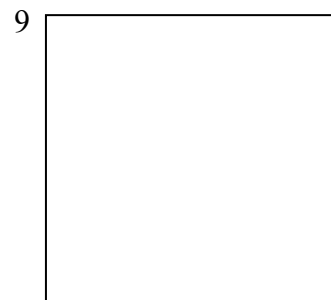
Tieguai Li 铁拐李



Lan Caihe 蓝采和



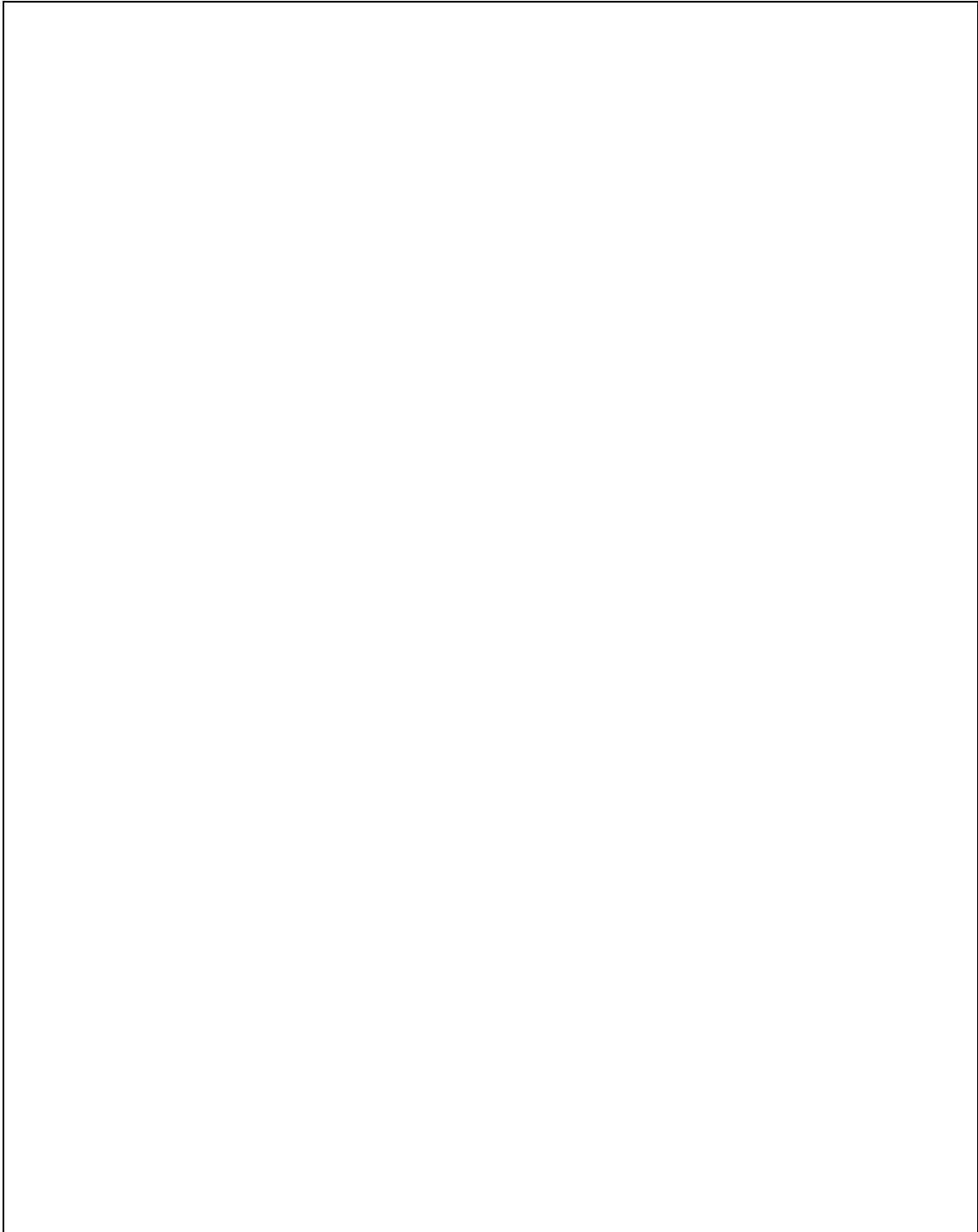
Zhang Guolao 张果老



Han Zhongli 汉钟离

## Activity 4

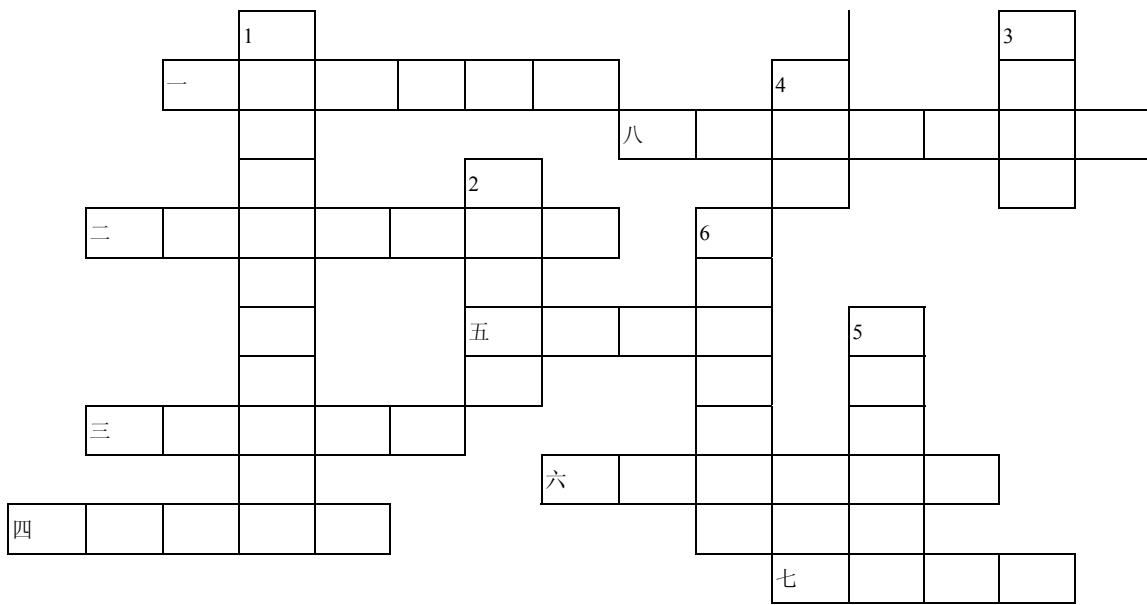
Draw a Chinese birthday badge with some symbols of longevity for your best friend's birthday present.



## Activity 5

### Pinyin crossword puzzle

Complete this crossword in Hanyu Pinyin. Don't worry about the tone marks!



#### Across

- 一 Chinese name of Tibet
- 二 The religion developed within China, originated as a philosophy
- 三 Popular Chinese exercise
- 四 Eight sets of three horizontal lines, the Daoist belief
- 五 Chinese word means longevity
- 六 The auspicious colour celebrations
- 七 Monks of Tibetan Buddhist
- 八 Capital of China

#### Down

- 1 The Silk Road
- 2 the colour of the hat knobs of 3<sup>rd</sup> rank official
- 3 symbol of imperial power and authority
- 4 black half in the taiji circle, regarded as feminine
- 5 Buddhist monk's robe
- 6 lover of the Spinning Maiden (织女)



## Activity 6

### Writing (写作)

试根据这次展品内容，为本地中文报章采访新南威尔士艺术馆馆长 Edmund Capon，探讨举办这次巧夺天工中国丝绸（宗教服饰与官服之丝织品）展览对推动澳大利亚中小学生学习中国文化的影响。（全文不得少于 450 字）

Imagine you are a reporter for a local Chinese newspaper.  
Interview Edmund Capon, Director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, to discuss the impact of the Celestial Silks exhibition on the promotion of Chinese culture to Australian K-12 students. (NOT less than 450 Chinese characters)

