Animals of all kinds can be found in artworks throughout the Museum.

Some of these creatures come from faraway jungles or deep oceans, while others look a lot like our furry friends from home. You may even find a few imaginary creatures!

As you explore the galleries, list some of the different animals you see.

What makes each animal special?

Does it have glistening scales or a very long tail? Does it crawl, run, fly, or jump? What sounds does the animal make? Why are these animals important to the artworks?

Find THREE favorite animal artworks. For each one, choose a feature or detail that you think is especially interesting. Sketch that detail in one of these boxes. You may decide to draw the entire animal—it’s up to you!
Find this picture!
Need directions? Ask a gallery attendant.
We are glad to help!

Michelangelo Buonarroti, Italian, 1475–1564
The Torment of Saint Anthony
c. 1487–88, tempera and oil on panel

Let's see how the famous Renaissance artist Michelangelo painted imaginary creatures.
Do you have a favorite animal that you like to draw? Do you ever make up imaginary animals?

Michelangelo painted this when he was 12 or 13 years old. It's his very first painting! He worked very hard to paint imaginary creatures that look believable.

How many different creatures do you see? What are they doing? Does the man in the center seem concerned? How would you describe his expression?

Do some of these creatures remind you of real animals? See the spiny-backed creature on the right side?

Michelangelo went to the fish market to study real scales so he could paint this.

Create Your Creature
Try combining the details from your three favorite animal artworks to make your own imaginary creature.

Don't forget to name it!