



# Cabinet of Curiosities

This week have fun making, decorating, drawing or painting your own **'Cabinet of Curiosity'** inspired by the Holburne's Wonderful Witcombe Cabinet.

**FIND** a cereal box, matchbox, old container, jar or tin can - anything will do! If you don't like 3D why not paint or draw your curiosities?



The Witcombe Cabinet  
English Japanned and silvered wood,  
about 1697

## Wood you believe it!

The Witcombe Cabinet was produced by an unknown London workshop around 1697. The cabinet is made of oak and pine, covered with a thin layer of fruitwood with brass handles, hinges and lock plate. Inside there are ten beautiful drawers of varying sizes. (see examples)

## All that glitters...

The cabinet was decorated to look as though it was from 'the East'. The wooden stand and crest are separate and were carved and then gilded using thin silver leaf applied over a thick layer of gesso. It was intended to mimic the solid silver furniture made for Louis XIV at Versailles.

**It was probably used to house a collection of works of art and natural objects from around the world. It would have been a very grand piece of furniture – a real status symbol!**



The decoration is of extremely high quality. The 'Chinoiserie' decoration that covers the surface of the cabinet -both inside and outside – **depicts flower vases, landscapes, figures, birds and insects.**



Share a photo of what you make!  
Send to [e.blythe@holburne.org](mailto:e.blythe@holburne.org)



**You could use:**

- ◇ Any box, tin can, lid, food container or any type of packaging.
- ◇ Mixed collage, foil, greaseproof paper, newspapers, magazines, buttons...
- ◇ Glue, pen or pencil
- ◇ Scissors
- ◇ Pens, colouring pencils or paint

**ACTIVITY**

Create and decorate a container or vessel to make your cabinet of curiosities. You could take inspiration from the imagery on the Witcombe cabinet—**figures, birds, insects and flowers.**

You could use it as a decorative item, or somewhere to keep and display your collections or treasured possessions.

There are template sheets to design and decorate too.

**Have a look at the ideas board...**

**Making your 'cabinet'**



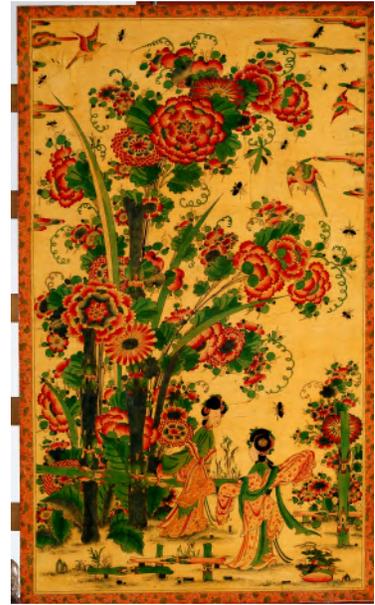
Choose your box or container. Decide on a background. You could collage, colour or paint it.

Once dried you can add decoration and embellishment. You could add 3D things like beads, buttons or paper insects. You could also add text.

What will you put inside your cabinet?

- ◇ Keepsakes?
- ◇ Souvenirs?
- ◇ Something you collect?
- ◇ A favourite trinket?





Please share an image of what you've made. We love to see your creations!  
Email an image to [e.blythe@holburne.org](mailto:e.blythe@holburne.org)  
We'll feature a selection on our Instagram  
Follow [chang-ing\\_lives\\_through\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/chang-ing_lives_through_art)

# IDEAS

