

Lessons from Asian Art: *Time (and Place) will Tell*

Grades 9, 10, 11, 12

LEARNING TARGET

Through classroom and museum experiences, students will be able to compare and contrast the roles of a variety of three-dimensional objects from Japanese, Chinese, and Korean cultures.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students will:

- describe the form and function of various ceramic, metal, and mixed media pieces
- chronologically arrange and compare a variety of three-dimensional works, describing how the style and function of an object may change with its context and time
- compose a creative story relating to one of the objects and its journey through time

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

- Visit: *Shadows of Time*
- Post-Visit: *Tick-Tock*

FORMS

- Media: ceramics, wood, bronze, jade, celadon, stoneware, lacquer, glaze
- Symbols and Terminology: *haniwa*, *mingqi*, joss paper, funerary figures, ritual vessels, urn, patina

STEAM THEME CONNECTIONS

- Materials and the chemistry of ceramics
- The processes of casting metal
- Decomposition of wood and bronzes
- Philosophies and rituals of burial

CCSS ALIGNMENT

CCSS English Language Arts: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, High School

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.Reading History.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.Reading Science & Technology.11-12.9: Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.

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21ST CENTURY LEARNING SKILLS ALIGNMENT

CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

- Use Systems Thinking: Analyze how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems
- Make Judgments and Decisions: Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims, and beliefs

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

- Communicate Clearly: Listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes, and intentions
- Communicate Clearly: Communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multilingual and multicultural)

MICHIGAN SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

P1 READING AND COMMUNICATION – READ AND COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

- P1.2 Interpret primary and secondary source documents for point of view, context, bias, and frame of reference or perspective.
- P1.3 Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about the interpretation of sources and the application of disciplinary concepts.

P2 INQUIRY, RESEARCH, AND ANALYSIS

- P2.1: Apply methods of inquiry, including asking and answering compelling and supporting questions, to investigate social science problems.
- P2.3 Know how to find, organize, evaluate, and interpret information from a variety of credible sources.

MICHIGAN ART STANDARDS

ANALYZE

- Standard 3: Analyze, describe, and evaluate works of art.

ANALYZE IN CONTEXT

- Standard 4: Understand, analyze, and describe the arts in their historical, social, and cultural contexts.

ANALYZE AND MAKE CONNECTIONS

- Standard 5: Recognize, analyze, and describe connections among the arts; between the arts and other disciplines; between the arts and everyday life.

SOURCES

- Common Core Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>
- 21st Century Standards: <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/A-Guide-to-Four-Cs.pdf>
- Michigan Social Studies Standards:
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Final_Social_Studies_Standards_Document_655968_7.pdf
- Michigan Arts Standards: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-28753---,00.html>
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/VPAA_Standards_Accessible_Final_599577_7.pdf

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PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

DAY 1

Classify various formats of three-dimensional Asian art that incorporate ceramics, metal, and mixed media.

- SLIDES 1-5
 - Review the locations of modern-day China, Korea, and Japan using a world map, visually comparing the physical geography and potential resources of each region.
 - Please see: <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/geography/>
- SLIDE 6-7
 - Share various views of the Samurai Helmet. Based upon prior knowledge, ask students to describe the form and possible function of this piece. Ask students why the museum may have placed this piece at the entrance of a gallery that explores the themes of stillness and movement.
 - Explain that helmets helped to rank and classify samurai and that during the Edo Period, helmets such as this one were viewed more as ritual and ceremonial objects rather than as battle gear.
 - Explain that throughout this lesson, students will be exploring a variety of objects and investigating how the function of these items reflected the times and places in which they were used.
 - Discuss how objects such as the *Samurai Helmet* have survived to the present day. Explain that while many of the archaeological artifacts and works of art that survive from ancient East Asian cultures may have been found in tombs, many pieces have also been handed down from generation to generation as a way of remembering and honoring ancestors. Families often display heirlooms to commemorate and to worship the notable ancestors who had owned them.
- SLIDE 8
 - Explore the concept of tradition, rites, and filial piety with primary source readings from the “Confucian Analects,” “A Discussion of Rites,” “Classic of Filial Piety” and “The Twenty-Four Exemplars of Filial Piety”:
 - http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/confucius_analects.pdf
 - http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/xunzi_rites.pdf
 - http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/classic_of_filiality.pdf
 - http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/cup/twentyfour_exemplars.pdf
- SLIDES 9-10
 - Examine a group of objects from the museum’s collection. Describe how some of these objects may help us to understand the artists who made the objects and the people to whom they belonged.

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- Figurines like the musicians and other objects representing daily life, called *mingqi*, provide insight into the belief systems of the time period in which they were created.
- Identifying the characteristics of an object's creation, such as the specific artist or time period in which it was made, is part of describing the object's attributions. The chronology of the ownership or location of an object is known as the object's provenance, some of which may be described on the museum's website.
 - Example 1: *Shigaraki Ware Water Jar*, which includes a fingerprint left by the maker, may have been passed down from tea master to disciple
 - Example 2: *Set of Equipment for the Shell Game*, part of a game that high ranking samurai often included in their daughter's dowries; the emblems on the storage boxes are family crests
 - Example 3: *Central Asian Musicians*, which would have provided music in the afterlife while serving as symbols of living family members' ability to provide for their relatives; these objects give viewers a glimpse of instruments of the time period in which they were made as well as being examples of cultural exchange
 - Example 4: *Incense Burner in the Shape of the Mountain of Immortals*, which as a tomb object would help to connect the deceased with the immortals
 - Example 5: *Comb Case with Auspicious Symbols*, an object that was sometimes received as a wedding gift
 - Example 6: *Pillow with Lions*, an object owned by the elite
- Reclassify objects based on visual characteristics as well: figurative pieces, geometric works, natural forms, etc.
 - How does the form of each object relate to its purpose?
 - What does the size of these objects say about their function?

DAY 2

- SLIDES 11-13
 - Identify the ways in which Chinese, Korean, and Japanese ceramics, wood, and metalwork provide a record of ongoing exchanges between generations of artists and viewers.
 - Examine the following examples from the DIA's collection to identify their materials, to predict in which present-day country these objects may have been found, and to surmise how the objects might have been made and what the intended function of each piece might have been. These objects may also be compared to other similar objects; for example, many *haniwa* are figural while the example in the museum's collection is geometric.
 - Example 1: *Cinerary Urn*
 - Example 2: *Haniwa*

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- Example 3: *Ritual Wine Vessel*
 - Discuss how burial customs and the influence of religious beliefs and practices on these customs have changed over time, using <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/prb/journey.htm> and <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/cosmos/index.htm>
 - Discuss the differences between burials and cremations
 - Describe the purpose of burial goods as they were meant to assist the deceased in the afterlife
- Describe how family connections were strengthened and reinforced through burial traditions.
 - Review the importance of filial piety in Asian cultures, both past and present
 - Discuss how offerings, such as joss paper objects, help to show this respect for ancestors
- Share other objects which also show evidence of cultural traditions being passed on through time, objects that they will see on their museum visit. Discuss how these objects are different as they would most likely be passed down from generation to generation rather than be buried with the deceased.
 - Example 1: *Korean Box with Auspicious Symbols*
 - Example 2: *Samurai Helmet*
- Investigate the ways in which outside forces may impact how we view these objects today:
- SLIDES 14-15
- Review the geographic locations of several objects found in the collection using the Focus Works list in this lesson as a guide. Compare the materials used for these pieces.
 - How might climate affect the quality of these pieces?
 - Explain how an object's patina reflects chemical changes in some pieces.
 - Make a career connection by describing the role of today's museum conservator.
- Divide students into teams, giving each team one of the following questions for discussion. After these groups have had time for talking about their question, create a round-robin discussion by forming new groups with one representative from each question/response team.
 - Team A: What challenges may have faced those who tried to hand down heirlooms from generation to generation?
 - Team B: What possible historical events threatened the ability for goods to "serve" the deceased in the afterlife?
 - Team C: Is it right for such funerary objects to become part of a museum collection--why or why not?
 - Team D: Is it better to bury an object with the deceased for them to have in the afterlife or for the family to keep those items and hand them down as objects of remembrance from generation to generation? Why?

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- Team E: How might technology have impacted the production of these traditional goods over time? Is that change for better or for worse?

TOUR ACTIVITIES

DAY 3

GUIDED TOUR EXPLANATION & RATIONALE

For the most beneficial experience, before the day of the field trip, it is important that the students can:

- identify the various media used in the production of these works
- describe the significance of form and scale in the creation of 3D pieces
- understand the importance of filial piety and ancestor worship in East Asian cultures

DIA Guided Experience (1 hour)

When booking a guided experience at the Detroit Institute of Arts, please specify that you wish to see objects that align with this specific lesson plan. A suggested list of objects is located below. Gallery Teachers will select objects that are located in areas of the museum that provide opportunities for comparisons across various cultures, places, and time.

- Chinese Galleries: tomb objects (bronze vessels, money tree, and ceramic figurines)
“A Tradition Transformed” discovery drawers
- Korean Galleries: ceramics (*Cinerary Urn, Pedestal Stand, Moon Jar, Pillow with Lions*)
Happy World-Scattered Crumbs
- Japanese Galleries: *Samurai Helmet* and *Creature*

Self-Guided Experience (45 Minutes)

- Students spend time in the DIA’s Asian Galleries, focusing on the following pieces:
 - China: tomb objects (bronze ewer, money tree, and ceramic figurines) and “A Tradition Transformed” discovery drawers
 - Korea: ceramics (urn and pedestal stand, moon jar) and *Happy World-Scattered Crumbs*
 - Japan: *Samurai Helmet* and *Creature*
- SLIDE 16
 - Ask students to find key works using the “**Shadows of Time**” graphic organizer, identifying the pieces, media, and function of the objects seen in silhouettes. There are three different versions of this worksheet, with six objects on each sheet. Students should try to find four of the six objects shown.
 - Using the pieces identified on the graphic organizer, have students find a comparable piece for each work, sketching the outline of that piece and describing how its form or function relates to the initial work.
 - Make sure to stop by the “A Tradition Transformed” discovery drawers with joss paper goods in the gallery featuring “Art and the Afterlife in Ancient China” to interact with

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the display. The ritual of burning incense and other offerings, such as objects made of joss paper, have been an important means of connecting the living with the deceased throughout the centuries, especially in China.

- As time allows, students can explore other works in the Asian galleries to make additional notes.

Contemporary Connections

- SLIDES 17-18
 - In the Korean arts gallery, multiple works feature the traditional white stoneware moon jars in both 2D and 3D forms. While moon jars were primarily made during the Choson Dynasty of the 17th and 18th centuries, today they have become a cultural symbol of Korean art. How are these objects a reflection of Korean culture, both past and present? Read the labels of the Moon Jar and Ik-Joong Kang's *Happy World-Scattered Crumbs* to help. Additional resources include an article in the 2018 *DIA Bulletin*, vol. 92, "Korean Moon Jars, Transported, Transfigured, and Reinterpreted" by Haely (Haeyoon) Chang.
 - In the Chinese art gallery, the "A Tradition Transformed" discovery drawers provide students with an opportunity to connect ancient funerary objects with contemporary cultural material. What objects in the drawers relate most to the students' own lives?
 - In the Japanese art gallery, the DIA combines old and new in its pairing of the traditional Edo *Samurai Helmet* next to the contemporary work by Tomoko Konno, *Creature*. In this piece, Konno uses *nerikomi*, the traditional technique of kneading colors into clay, to create a work of art that she says is "always moving, changing, and growing." How does the artist's idea reflect Japanese culture today?

Other Items of Note

- Questions are often raised regarding the appropriateness of displaying objects meant for tombs. A museum setting helps to preserve these works of antiquity and educates the public about their cultural and historical contexts.
- While the DIA includes dates on its labels, it does not include the names of dynasties because of shifting borders, cultural exchange, and the transformation of artistic practices that do not always align with political change.
- The DIA's collection of Asian works spans more than 4000 years and includes over 7000 objects. Only a portion of this collection is on display.

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POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Tick-Tock: Using what they have seen at the museum through either a Gallery Teacher-led or self-guided experience, students will complete a graphic organizer. Based on these examples, students will write a creative tale describing the life of one of these objects over the course of time.

DAY 4

- SLIDES 19-20
 - Share and review the works seen during the museum visit.
 - For those on the guided visit, use the set of cards from the Toolbox to help review.
 - For those on the self-guided tour, what objects did they find similar to the silhouettes on their graphic organizer? What did they compare those works to, and how were they different?
- SLIDE 21
 - Distribute the “**Tick-Tock**” clock graphic organizers and have students work in teams to select a series of objects from the galleries and their “**Shadows of Time**” graphic organizers to use in the creation of a chronological framework. Use the photos of collections objects from the “**Time and Place Will Tell Artworks**” to help with this activity.
 - What do these objects tell us about the time and place in which they were used? How do these works reflect the people who used them? How were they used? How did those functions develop and change over time and place?
 - What are the most important objects which reflect change over time in East Asia? Which objects show continuity? How do those objects relate to each other? In what ways are they different?

DAYS 5 and 6

- SLIDE 22
 - Using the visual evidence gathered, have students individually complete the following:
 - Have students select one object from the collection that they feel best represents the importance of time in various East Asian cultures.
 - Ask students to imagine themselves as part of that piece and write a one page essay chronicling its journey through time. Have students creatively describe when and where they were created, how they were made, what their function has been and what they have seen throughout their existence. Have students consider the time period in which they were “born”, the materials with which they were made, where they were stored, their intended function, in whose homes they would have lived, and how these factors may have affected their survival.

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- Have students share their object stories in small groups before selecting a few for class presentations.

MINI PROJECT (This can be done in conjunction with the art teacher if desired)

Students can create a replica of the object they selected for their stories using any materials from modeling clay or paper mache to a 3D printer. Make sure to have students write a museum label for their piece to display along with their written stories.

This educational resource was developed by Art teacher Angie Stokes in collaboration with the DIA Education Programs and Curatorial teams.

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ARTWORKS

Chinese. [Camel](#), 618–906 CE. Earthenware with three-color glaze, 22 × 6 1/8 × 15 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of C. T. Loo. 22.22

Chinese. [Central Asian Musician](#), 618–906 CE. Earthenware with three-color glaze, 8 1/8 × 3 × 3 7/8 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, City of Detroit Purchase. 53.172

Chinese. [Deep Footed Bowl](#), 1388–1122 BCE. Copper alloy, 8 1/2 × 6 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Allan Gerdau. 51.300

Chinese. [Female Musician](#), 581–618 CE. Earthenware with cream-colored glaze, 7 5/8 × 2 1/4 × 2 3/8 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Ton-Ying and Co. 27.189

Chinese. [Incense Burner in the Shape of the Mountain of Immortals](#), 206 BCE–220 CE. Earthenware with iridescent glaze, 8 3/4 × 8 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, City of Detroit Purchase. 41.79

Chinese. [Jade Cylinder](#), 8th century BCE. Jade, 9 3/8 × 2 1/4 × 2 1/4 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of anonymous donor. 68.261

Chinese. [Jade Disc \(Huan\)](#), 3000–771 BCE. Jade, 1/8 × 3 3/4 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of anonymous donor. 68.259

Chinese. [Lady with Phoenix Headdress](#), 618–906 CE. Earthenware with three-color glaze, 17 1/2 × 4 × 3 5/8 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, City of Detroit Purchase. 29.342

Chinese. [Lion-headed Earth Spirit](#), late 6th–early 7th century. Earthenware, paint, 13 3/8 × 6 × 6 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Theodore and Diana Golden. 2001.149.2

Chinese. [Mirror with Dragons and Tigers](#), ca. 206 BCE. Copper alloy, 5/8 × 7 3/8 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Friends of Asian Arts and Cultures Acquisition Fund. 2015.22

Chinese. [Money Tree](#), 25–220 CE. Stoneware with green glaze, patinated bronze, 54 5/16 × 19 5/16 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Founders Society Purchase; gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Fisher by exchange. 1996.29

Chinese. [Ox and Cart](#), 220–589 CE. Earthenware, 8 1/2 × 7 3/4 × 16 5/8 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Mrs. Robert T. Keller. 1994.144

Chinese. [Plaque in the Form of Taotie](#), 1200–1000 BCE. Copper alloy with turquoise inlay, 2 3/4 × 2 3/4 × 3 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, City of Detroit Purchase. 53.171

Chinese. [Ritual Vessel](#), 6th–5th century BCE. Copper alloy, Overall: 12 × 7 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Beverly Payne Acquisition Fund for Chinese Art. 2015.262

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Chinese. [Ritual Wine Vessel](#), 1388–1122 BCE. Copper alloy, 8 3/4 × 7 1/2 × 4 3/4 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, City of Detroit Purchase. 53.169

Ik-Joong Kang (American, born Korea, 1960). [Happy World–Scattered Crumbs](#), 2011–2014. Mixed media on wood, 59 × 59 × 6 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Contemporary Art Fund. 2015.66

Japanese. [Haniwa](#), 6th century. Earthenware, 32 1/2 × 22 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Anonymous. 2016.82

Japanese. [Samurai Helmet](#), 17th century. Wood, lacquer, metal, fiber, 26 × 16 1/2 × 14 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Robert H. Tannahill Foundation Fund. 2017.1

Japanese. [Set of Equipment for the Shell Game](#), 18th century. Lacquered wood boxes, clam shells painted in colors and gold, (Wood boxes) Height: 16 1/2 inches, Diameter: 13 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Founders Society Purchase, Benson Ford Fund. 1984.3

Japanese. [Shigaraki Ware Water Jar](#), 16th century. Jar: stoneware; lid: wood, lacquer, Overall: 6 1/4 × 6 × 6 1/16 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Ancient Art Deaccession Fund, gifts from Harold J. Quilhot, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert V. Book, Mrs. O. B. Nordstrom in memory of her parents Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wyhan, Gibbs-Williams Fund, Mrs. Byron C. Foy in memory of her father Walter P. Chrysler, by exchange. 2014.36

Joss Paper Objects in DIA Discovery Drawers. Detroit Institute of Arts, Asia Galleries.

Korean. [Box with Auspicious Symbols](#), early 20th century. Ink and paint on ox horn panels on wood, ray skin, and metal, 10 1/4 × 20 3/4 × 12 1/4 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Founders Society Purchase, New Endowment Fund and funds from the Korean Community. 1986.3

Korean. [Cinerary Urn](#), 7th–8th century. Stoneware, 4 1/2 × 5 5/8 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Klaus F. Naumann. 1986.35

Korean. [Comb Case with Auspicious Symbols](#), 19th–20th century. Wood, lacquer, mother-of-pearl, metal, 12 1/2 × 11 3/4 × 11 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Robert H. Tannahill Foundation Fund. 2015.5

Korean. [Moon Jar](#), 18th century. Porcelain with glaze, 14 1/2 × 14 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Founders Society Purchase, G. Albert Lyon Fund and L. A. Young Fund, with additional funds from Mrs. George Endicott and Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Endicott. 1984.2

Korean. [Pedestal Stand](#), 5th century. Stoneware, 13 1/8 × 11 1/2 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Robert H. Tannahill Foundation Fund. 2015.8

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Korean. [*Pillow with Lions*](#), 12th–13th century. Stoneware with slip and celadon glaze, 4 3/4 × 9 1/2 × 3 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Founders Society Purchase, New Endowment Fund, and Benson and Edith Ford Fund. 80.39

Tomoko Konno (Japanese, born 1967). [*Creature*](#), 2015. Porcelain, pigments, clear glaze, 21 3/4 × 23 1/8 × 5 3/4 inches. Detroit Institute of Arts, Museum Purchase, Joseph H. Parsons Fund. 2017.8