Unit Lesson Plans: Introduction to East Asia and Chinese Inventions

Course: Honors Art- 11th and 12th grade

Instructor: Mary Nakaya

School: ArTES High School, San Fernando California

Days: 5 Days

**Objective:** Students will explore the impact that East Asia countries had upon civilization. Discussions will be on how important art and artifacts are in understanding culture and history. Students will make their own paper and ink and design their own “ancient artifact.”

Homework sketchbook assignments: will include drawing a map of Asia and highlighting the East Asian countries, reading and taking notes on the article: Rank and Style Power Dressing of China. Students will sketch different Chinese robes and objects of power and design their own robe and accessories.

**Prior knowledge:** Students are advanced in art making and have been exposed to graphite, charcoal, oil, acrylic, pen and ink, and markers. Students understand the design and thumbnail process and have taken the pre-requisite courses of Drawing I, and Painting I. Students are starting to prepare a portfolio for college scholarships, admission to art schools, or to enter the A.P. Studio Art class.

**Art skills to be taught in this unit**: paper making, marbled paper, and Asian ink techniques.

**Interdisciplinary themes:**

* Research and inquiry of historical content of China
* East Asian Literature
* Chemistry of paper and ink

**State of California Educational Art Standards:**

**Skill and Content and Objectives:**

**3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT**

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of the Visual Arts

Students analyze the role and development of the visual arts in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to the visual arts and artists.

**Diversity of the Visual Arts**

* 3.3 Investigate and discuss universal concepts expressed in works of art from diverse cultures.
* 3.4 Research the methods art historians use to determine the time, place, context, value, and culture that produced a given work of art.

**5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS**

Connecting and Applying What Is Learned in the Visual Arts to Other Art Forms and Subject Areas and to Careers

**Connections and Applications**

* 5.1 Speculate on how advances in technology might change the definition and function of the visual arts.

**Visual Literacy**

* 5.2 Compare and contrast works of art, probing beyond the obvious and identifying psychological content found in the symbols and images.

**Following Unit:** Korean, Japanese, Chinese Theatre Comparisons and the Graphic Theatre Posters of Ikko Tanaka

**Prior Lesson:** Indoor Street Art. A two day “instant success” project to get the students excited about being back to school. Emphasis is on not worrying about mistakes and becoming like a kid again, where creating was exciting and there was no hesitation. Short discussion on the artists Piet Mondrian and Scott Reeder. Process: Students will use a large piece of paper and electrical tape to mask off a quote or image that inspires them. Next, students will use spray paint to paint their paper. After drying, students pull off the masking tape to expose the white of the paper. Critique on the process and outcome. This is a great lead in lesson to talk about the purpose of art in the student’s life and the purpose of art in history.

Day I: Introduction to East Asian Art and Chinese Inventions

Materials:

* Small paper for groups
* Paper bags that contains an East Asian object (purchased from Daiso). Objects: palm fan, tiny stickers, wooden doll, ceramic lucky cat, miniature greeting cards, Girl’s day decoration, food erasers, calligraphy set, small lunch bag, fish wind decoration, small coin purse, small plastic vegetable cutter, ect.

Agenda

* 1. Take off electrical tape from Indoor Street Art Project(10 minutes)
  2. Group Activity critique on process and project (10 minutes)
  3. Introduction (5 minutes)
  4. Inclusion Activity (10 minutes)
  5. Group share-out (25 minutes)
  6. Civilization list elbow partner activity (10 minutes)
  7. Reflection (5 minutes)

**In-depth Agenda:**

1. Take off electrical tape from Indoor Street Art Project
2. Inclusion Activity: Elbow partner critique

Share with your elbow partner two things you liked about doing the Indoor Street Project. Share two things that you might not have liked about doing this project.

(After sharing with elbow partner there will be a large group discussion of what they just shared with their elbow partner).

Next, Discuss with your elbow partner where you can use this process in your other classes. Where can you use this process outside of school? (Conclusion of project. Students are able to take project home. Students will place project in their personal art storage area).

1. Introduction thoughts, share outs, and questions:

So you just did a two day art project. You talked about how you felt during the process, your purpose behind your piece, and your feelings of the outcome. Now let’s take what you learned and reflect in history of the purpose of art. Let’s think back to a time when there were no cameras. Why were people in history creating art and objects? Where does that drive come from? And now let’s think about what would the world be like without artifacts and art? What were the purposes then?

Now, I want to share a pretend situation.

Let’s pretend you never knew about a culture and you were only left with writings. You could read the writings but maybe it said that the person wore a Kimono. Without images and artifacts, you might think that a kimono was something that you wore on your head, or maybe on your feet. Maybe you thought a Kimono was a necklace. Honestly how would you know what a Kimono was or looked like without a drawing or a sculpture? Artifacts make it possible for us to understand the past and the culture of ancient civilizations. Today you will be introduced to the East Asian culture by artifacts in a fun way. Each of you will be given a mystery bag to open, discover, and discuss with your group member what you think your artifact tells us about East Asian cultures.

1. Small Group lesson Activity: Mystery bags

Hand each group of 2 students, a paper bag that contains an East Asian object (purchased from Daiso). Objects: palm fan, tiny stickers, wooden doll, ceramic lucky cat, miniature greeting cards, Girl’s day decoration, food erasers, calligraphy set, small lunch bag, fish wind decoration, small coin purse, small plastic vegetable cutter, ect.

Tell the students that they are to believe that they only know that the Americas exist and they have no idea that there are other cultures in the world. One day they were walking along the beach and came across a ship that contained these items in their bags. Students are asked to view their object and make guesses on what the culture is like and what type of civilization advancement they needed to know in order to create it.

1. Group share out

After each group of two has discussed and written down what they learned about the culture from their object and the technology advancements that the culture had to have to produce the object, then each group will go to the front and discuss their object and observations. Students can then pass the objects around (students love holding things and observing objects upclose). Each group will take about two minutes.

1. Technology Advancement Team list activity:

So we learned a lot about technology advancements and your observations of these objects. With your team member I want you to write what you think is the way that civilization emerged with technological advancements. Think about the cave man and how he started out with rocks, then what? What did he learn next in order to progress? Write down the list of inventions/knowledge of how you think civilization developed.

Reflection: On our next class we will be going over the order of civilization advancements and the importance that the Chinese culture played in history and civilization advancements. Your homework is to look up Chinese inventions and what the ceramic lucky cat represents (the object in one of the bags). We will see you next time. Please pass in your group papers.

**Day II: Chinese Inventions and Paper-Making**

Materials:

* 11 Envelopes with 20 civilization advancements cut into strips,
* Recipe cards
* Sketchbooks (buy hardbound sketchbooks)
* Handouts: sketchbook homework requirements
* Handout: Rank and Style: Power dressing of China,
* Handout: Chinese fashion images.

Agenda:

1. Opening: Envelope game (10 minutes)
2. Chinese Invention Game, Discussion and Time-line (15 minutes)
3. Discussion on Chinese paper making and video (10 minutes)
4. Recipe Card Activity (20) minutes
5. Sketchbooks passed out and homework explained (15) minutes
6. Reflection (5 minutes)

**In-Depth Agenda:**

1. Opening: Envelope game

“First, I want you to share with your neighbor what you learned from your research homework last night.

Next, when I say go, you are going to open the envelope that contains 20 civilization advancements and line them in order of when they were invented. Once you feel like they are correct, then I will inspect. The team that gets them in correct order first will win.”

1. Chinese Inventions Discussion and Time-line

“Now that we have talked about inventions let’s see who can pull off to the side the inventions that China was the first to discover.” After this we will use these websites to verify the information of which teams remembered their homework and were able to correctly guess the Chinese Inventions.

Chinese Inventions websites:

<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/readings/inventions_ques.htm>

<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/readings/inventions_timeline.htm>

1. Discussion on the invention of paper making

How did the Chinese make paper?

What did they use to create it?

What did the world use to write on before paper was invented?

Watch video on traditional Chinese paper making: China View: An Ancient Craft of Tantou Paper. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9084-0IuW0>

1. Recipe Card Activity

Watch two videos on how to make paper and students will write down the “recipe” and instructions. Students will be required to bring in recycled paper, towel, and any additives of plants that they would like to use in their paper.

Video: How to make your own paper: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR_218EtLJU>

Video: Paper Alice: Start at 1:20 Stop at 4:50 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UlX87tvei7c>

1. Sketchbooks passed out and homework explained.

Each student is required to fill a 100 page bound sketchbook by the end of the school year. Explanation of this requirement along with showing personal sketchbooks and the purpose behind a sketchbook. The sketchbooks are to hold research and inquiry questions. Personal thoughts and sketches, class sketch assignments. Thumbnail and design process sketches.

Pass out the text: Power Dressing in Imperial China: <http://www.pacificasiamuseum.org/rankandstyle/html/pdf/RankandStyle_Section_1.pdf>

Students are to read and take notes of the different imagery used to represent rank and style. Students are to draw some of these symbols

1. Reflection: We learned about the inventions of the world and China in particular. Let’s have some fun next time in figuring this ancient craft. In the next class you and your team mate will be working together to make your own paper. If you need to, go watch more paper making videos. You can also bring in flowers, grass, ect to add to your paper. Make sure you bring in paper that you want to recycle. It cannot be new paper.

**Day III: Paper Making and the Chemistry of Paper**

Materials:

* Newspaper
* Old picture frames
* Heavy duty stapler
* Paper towels
* Old window screens
* Blenders
* Heat gun

Agenda:

1. Inclusion: Make a paper screen (10 minutes)
2. Team Activity: Paper making (25 minutes)
3. Group Activity: Findings (10 minutes)
4. Video: Chemistry of paper (20 minutes)
5. Reflection: (5 minutes)

**In-depth Agenda:**

1. Inclusion: Make a paper screen

Students with their new team-mate will use an old screen and old frame to make a screen for paper. Lead a group discussion on being inventive as an artist and how to do things with very little supplies and money.

1. Team Activity: Paper making

Teams of two students will work together to create their paper. They will use their own recipe cards to instruct the process.

1. Group Share Out Activity: A discussion on the process. What worked? What didn’t work? What was easy to do? What was not easy to do? When the Chinese first started making paper, what do you think they used for a screen? How would they have gotten the paper flat if they didn’t have an iron?
2. Video: Chemistry of paper

Watch video on chemistry of paper and then talk about the organic chemistry of paper. Discussion on carbons and why in the video from the day before, they used lime to break down the bamboo. Properties of carbon and lime will be discussed. Students will take notes in their sketchbooks and draw diagrams of carbon.

1. Reflection:

Brief reflection of the day, and explain homework.

**Homework:** Design your own imperial Chinese outfit. Use your sketches and research from the previous homework to inform your decision. Use the handout: Chinese fashion

**Day IV lesson: Chinese paintbrushes, Ink, and Hanzi**

How to make your own paintbrush and ink. Practice painting Hanzi(Chinese characters).

**Day V: Final Project**

Students will use their handmade paper, paintbrushes, and ink to paint one of their homework sketches of Imperial designed outfits or objects.

This is the culminating activity for the unit that uses all of their knowledge from class and out of class homework. After painting their project, students will do a write-up about their findings, the process, and why they feel like it is important to use the civilization as history as a stepping stone to doing art.

Following Unit: Korean, Japanese, Chinese Theatre Comparisons and the Graphic Theatre Posters of Ikko Tanaka

**Resources**

Chinese Inventions:

<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/readings/inventions_ques.htm>

<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/readings/inventions_timeline.htm>

Power Dressing in Imperial China:

<http://www.pacificasiamuseum.org/rankandstyle/html/pdf/RankandStyle_Section_1.pdf>

Traditional Chinese Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SMgRkhwHg0>

China View: An Ancient Craft of Tantou Paper

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9084-0IuW0>

Chemistry and Industrialization of paper:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRy523X8OaU>

How to make your own paper:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR_218EtLJU>

Paper Alice: Start at 1:20 Stop at 4:50

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