

Summer Institute 2024: Cross-Cultural Perspectives Along the Silk Road

Partnership with the British Library

**Lesson Plan Template**

Please include the following sections in your lesson plans in the order printed. The standard format will help support the placement on the website to be shared with other teachers interested in the topic. This format may be used for unit design as well as a specific lesson. The preliminary lesson will be presented to peers at the end of our trip in July. The final plans are due by August 5, 2024, and may be submitted to Karen Williams, SMCOE, by August 5, 2024. The lesson plan will be uploaded to the Tang Center for Silk Road Studies website:  
<https://ieas.berkeley.edu/centers/tang-center-silk-road-studies-tcsrs/k-12-connections/k-12-connections-lesson-plans>

Name: Andrea Conte School: Nevada City School of the Arts Grade Level: 7th grade
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Title of Unit/Lesson:

THE RELIGIONS AND PEOPLES OF THE SILK ROADS.

Creating and curating a multicultural exhibit. Developing our own narrative from different perspectives

Organizing/Essential/Guiding Questions:

**How can the cultural diversity of the Silk Roads inform our current world?**

**What can we learn from the ways that archaeologists, museums, and explorers come to comprehend the civilizations they study and come into contact with?**

**How do museums and other institutions organize, present, and inform our learning?**

**How can we best use this knowledge to create an exhibit that explains our learning of the Silk Roads?**

Introduction/ Overview:

Students will curate a display featuring historic items discovered around the Silk Roads. The display will highlight the various cultures, ideologies, and customs that are represented in the texts and objects found in the Mogao caves, as well as the archeological sites that are still under investigation. Students will carefully consider the purpose they will choose as they create a layout and content suitable for their audience. They will examine the ways in which educational

establishments, nations, private benefactors, etc., shape public opinion through the presentation of information, both in and out of context.

#### Content Standards

7VA: Cr 1.2

7VA: Cr 2.1

7VA: Pr4

7VA: Pr5

7VA: Re7.1

#### Objectives

**1- Visual literacy: developing the ability to understand and analyze how one's surroundings are created and the narratives that are formed based on the visual information that is intentionally chosen for them.**

**2- Digital exploration: exploring museums through various curated websites that showcase art, relics, conservation strategies, and stories related to the Silk Roads.**

**3- Skill application and selection: experimenting with several techniques to find the one that best fits their skills, the artifact, or the narrative they have chosen to represent.**

**4- Collaborative museum installation: Create a museum display that considers the viewership, the narrative, and the lessons discovered.**

#### Materials/Resources

**Clay, paper, tape, wire, watercolor/pigment/egg, paper, brushes, bed sheets, chromebook computer projector, pencil. Curated websites and digital resources such as: CANVA, SmartHistory, IDP website, British Library and Museum, etc.**

#### Special Equipment

#### Teacher Preparation

There are several sets of essential skills students will need to have in order to complete this unit.

**Artistic techniques:** Clay Sculpture - Watercolor painting - painting - Printmaking -

CANVA/google slides presentation - paper folding - animation tools - drawing.

These can be developed in this unit in relation to specific artifacts or in distinct, separate lessons spread out throughout the course of the academic year.

**Literacy:** summarizing - reading and listening to text - interpreting words/visual.

The teacher will have to preselect a series of curated websites that showcase the artifacts and period of time appropriate for the lesson, as well as age group and learner variability. Vocabulary clarification should be prepared in advance, as well as the different images, interpretations, and perspectives from all of the voices that will be presented throughout the project.

**Executive functions:** spatial awareness - collaboration - time management.

The teacher should also provide examples of different venues' layouts and opportunities for students to collaborate prior to the building of the exhibit. A clear timeline for the creation of the artifacts, museum script, and exhibit.

Time/Timeline

18 sessions total (if choosing to have students participate in all of the learning opportunities).

Procedure:

There are 5 different learning opportunities designed to engage and develop a deeper knowledge of the region, diverse cultural practices, artifacts, religions, the role of museums, archaeologists, and other institutions, and the people that take part in the curating of cultural exhibits. It is important to remind students that the goal of the unit is for them to create their own cultural exhibit, centered around the Silk Roads.

Learning experience#1

**Introduction to Silk Roads and Mogao Caves from a Visual Arts Perspective**

Review the knowledge acquired during their Social Studies class regarding the Silk Roads, including routes, religions, and cultures (G eography R eligion A chievements P olitics E conomy S ocial structures).

Organize students into groups of 3 and provide a blank map of the region and space where students will record their previous knowledge. they can try to identify, regions, civilizations, geographical landmarks, monuments, roads, cultures, etc.

Some questions to consider:

What religions were practiced along the Silk Roads?

What country/es are located along the Silk Roads?

What geographic formations do they think people encounter along the Silk Roads?

Why do they think we might be studying these roads?

Who travelled these roads and why?

Why are they called the Silk Roads? Who decided that was their name?

Locate them on the map to the best of their ability.

Show the video: [Cave Temples of Dunhuang: Art, History, and Conservation](#)

As students watch the video, they should answer the following questions:

What was the importance of Mogao besides its proximity to Dunhuang?

These caves comprise the largest collection of what?

What was the name of the cave the priest (Wang) discovered?

What type of environmental factor do you think might have a negative effect on the art inside the cave?

Have students revise their maps, locate the caves and review their answers to see if they can add any new information or perspective on the topic of the Silk Roads.

### **Caves Virtual Visit**

Students will now “visit the caves” virtually by accessing their choice of one or more of the following videos: (Make note that the videos are in Chinese.)

[Dunhuang: Mogao Cave 96 \(敦煌: 莫高窟 96\)](#)

[Dunhuang: Mogao Cave 17 \(敦煌: 莫高窟 17\)](#)

[Dunhuang: Mogao Cave 323 \(敦煌: 莫高窟 323\)](#)

[Dunhuang: Mogao Cave 428 \(敦煌: 莫高窟 428\)](#)

[Cave Temples of Dunhuang: Buddhist Art on China's Silk Road 敦煌莫高窟](#)

### **The telling of stories**

In a review of Jataka tales, compare and contrast different religions and cultures and ways to communicate and impart moral values.

[Story of Buddha - Jataka Tales | Buddha Sutra - Episode 3](#)

How are Jataka stories read on the walls? How do we read and retell stories from a visual perspective?

### **Cave Game:**

Allow students to play on the cave exploration game developed by the Dunhuang Academy  
<https://dlc.e-dunhuang.com/>

Learning Experience #2

### **Environment survey: How do we perceive our world?**

(Context and Use)

Students will begin to critically analyse the way things are presented in their world. They will investigate how the methods in which objects are presented to people shape their understanding of meaning. They will study their surroundings and inquire as to who creates their visual perceptions and how meaning is derived from the organization of their surroundings.

The teacher will organize students in groups of three (3) to participate in a survey of their environment using the provided form.

The teacher will model in class how to use the survey form and review vocabulary. Make sure to find a suitable space, such as the art room, to explain the purpose of the survey.

[Survey](#) or school environment.

Classroom discussion:

Students will report back on their survey and compare their findings with other groups.

Students will engage in a discussion regarding the four (4) different categories within the survey.

### **Collaborative scroll project:**

After students have created a sketch of the room surveyed, set up a “scroll” paper to begin a collaborative drawing project.

Art connection: Japanese Gassaku silk scroll work. Gassaku refers to a single work of art or literature produced collaboratively among multiple artists.

Students will draw their sketch of each of the rooms surveyed on the provided scroll. They will devise ways in which to connect the different drawings to make one continuous drawing of different scenes.

Students could use ink and bamboo brushes for this activity.

Teach students the proper hold and use of ink to recreate their sketch.

Here are some videos that show how to hold the brush and create brushstrokes:

Basic Chinese Brushstroke [Lesson](#)

Artifacts to use as source of inspiration:

[Japanese Gassaku](#)

[Painting Banner \(Cave 17\)](#)

[Painting \(handscroll\), sutra \(Cave 17\)](#)

For further artifacts, visit the [British Museum](#) online collection.

Extension activity:

Write a story from the scroll based on the narrative you see emerging from the different perspectives presented by the different artists and classrooms surveyed.

Learning experience#3

### **Museum exploration and Vocabulary:**

Create a document that provides links for students to visit online exhibits. Ideally, there should be a 360 type of experience where they can navigate the site and even manipulate objects.

The sites should reflect different ways in which different artifacts are exhibited.

Have students explore the curated sites, paying close attention to how things are showcased, the layout of the rooms, modes of accessing the artifacts, and the hierarchy in which artifacts are located. Have students review the way in which artifacts are explained, as well as their provenance, ownership, and intended use.

Have students survey their favorite site using the [survey](#) form.

Have students sketch and describe their favorite display.

Have students share their findings in a circle class discussion format, comparing and contrasting their experiences.

There are several good articles and videos that explore the role and meaning of museums.

Have students review selected videos and discuss their thoughts.

<https://smarthistory.org/curated-guide/understanding-museums/>

Have students explore the ARCHES (at risk cultural heritage sites) and present them to class using the [mind map](#) form to organize their findings.

Have students decide what type of museum or exhibit they would like to create if they could design their own experience. They should choose the thematic focus of the exhibit and design the manner in which artifacts could be exhibited and organized.

For example: “The religions of the Silk Roads through time (oldest to newest)”.

“Travelers of the Silk Roads”

“Regions of the Silk Roads (decide from where to where)” .

## Learning experience#4

### **Choosing and creating your artifact**

The teacher will create a curated document where students can visit sites that house and showcase artifacts that explore the cultures that traveled through the Silk Roads.

The document should be organized based on the institutions curated for students to use, the theme of the exhibit, or the timeline.

For example, I have created a simple document that students can refer to based on two of the main religions that were practiced along the Silk Roads:

[Introduction to Buddhism](#)

[Introduction to Hinduism](#)

Students will explore the different sites and artifacts and begin making plans for their project. Students will complete a shared spreadsheet with their choices. Students may not choose the same artifact.

Have students sketch their artifact and write the basic information required in the spreadsheet with the following headings:

<b>Student Name</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Title of Work</b>	<b>Period of Time</b>	<b>Material</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>	<b>Religion</b>
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Students will choose the medium that best fits the original artifact and replicate it to the best of their ability.

Students with limited fine motor skills can decide to create a narrated presentation of an artifact that one of their peers is creating or a different one.

Students should perform a peer review once they have decided on the artifact.

Share the peer review [rubric](#) and the teacher [rubric](#) for grading the project.

## Learning Experience #5

### **Creating the Exhibit**

Depending on room availability, the exhibit can be created in the classroom or in a different room.

Students will create an exhibit for their 3rd grade buddies and their parents.

Students will create signs for the artifacts and exhibit. Students will use the provided [form](#) and write the information, paying close attention to their intended audience.

Show students how different museums and galleries show and explain their artifacts.

Students will design the type of display for their artifact as well as the setting for the exhibit.

The room can be completely open or divided into corridors. If bed sheets or large paper are available, students can use them to create different rooms within the exhibit.

Students can design interactive displays or activities for their intended audience.

All of their artifacts and labels are due on the day of the exhibit.

Extension activities:

- 1) Large Silk Roads Map locating the artifacts and highlighting important elements related to the theme of the exhibit.
- 2) Layout design competition. Students design the layout of the museum, paying close attention to entrance and exit, plus different "galleries."
- 3) Museum guide
- 4) Museum hands-on activities

Suggested Vocabulary:

Caravan  
Buddhism  
BCE-CE-BC-AD  
Jataka  
Karma  
Bodhisattva  
Stuppa  
Shrine  
Relics  
Layout  
Hierarchy  
Provenance  
Archaeologist  
Curator  
Heritage

Assessment –

Use the provided [form](#) to review the different possible assessment opportunities throughout the unit.



Title:

Period:

Date:

Culture:

Medium:

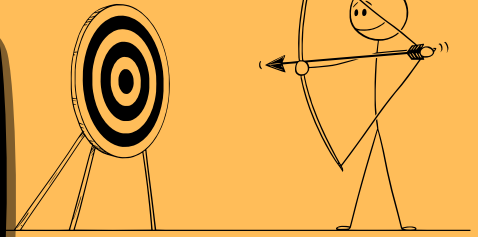
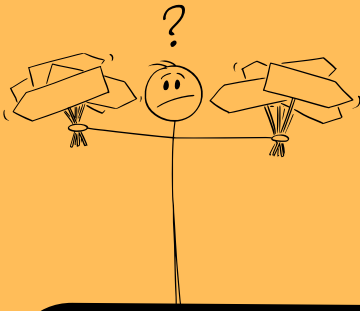
Dimensions:

Classification:

Description of work:

## INTENDED AUDIENCE

What are the tangibles that support your assessment?



## OWNERSHIP

Ownership vs stewardship vs user



## PROVENANCE

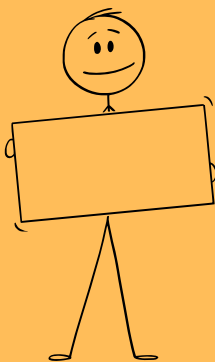
Where do these artifacts come from?



# SURVEY

## DISPLAY

Hierarchy or artifacts and contextual relevance.



## SKETCH THE SPACE



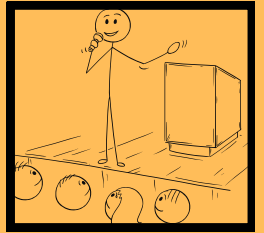
**ONE SENTENCE  
ASSESSMENT: TITLE**

# Glossary of terms:

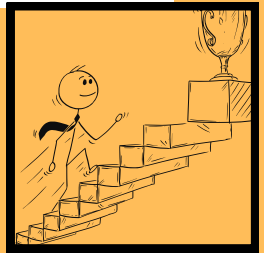
Tangibles: a thing that is perceptible by touch.



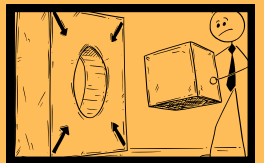
Audience: the group of spectators at a public event; listeners or viewers collectively, as in attendance at a theater or concert.



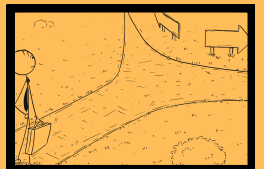
Hierarchy: any system of persons or things ranked one above another.



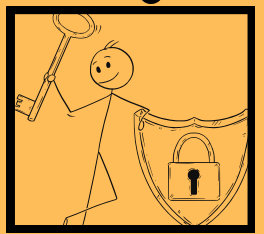
Context: the set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event, situation, etc.



Provenance: place or source of origin.

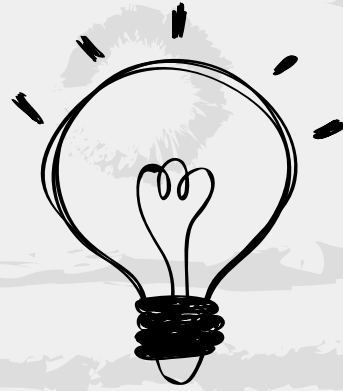


Stewardship: the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving:



Facts/Ideas

Facts/Ideas



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MIND MAP  
TITLE:

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Your conclusion

# PEER REVIEW

## ARTIFACT FEEDBACK

Name:

Date:

Artist:

Artifact

### CRITERIA

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

### YOU GOT IT!

### SOME IDEAS

#### Content

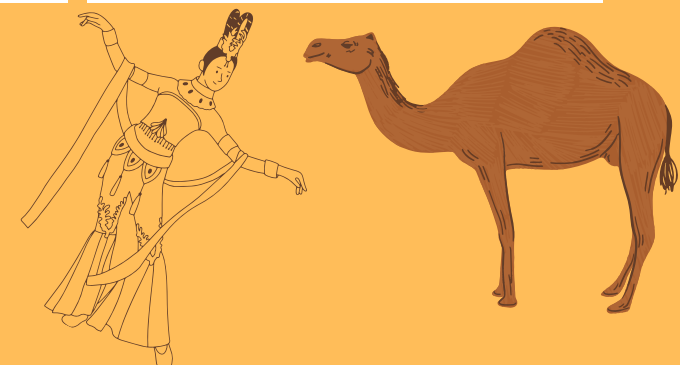
- Does the artifact belong to the Silk Roads unit of study?
- Does the artifact reflect the exhibit's theme?
- Consider: timeline, provenance, religion, and culture.

#### Technique

- Does the artifact mimic the original technique used for its construction?
- Did the artist's use of technique demonstrate proficiency?
- Does the technique explain the artifact?

#### Writing

- Has the artist chosen the most effective vocabulary to explain the artifact?
- Have they used age appropriate vocabulary?
- Did they include references?



# SINGLE POINT ARTIFACT CREATION RUBRIC

Category	Areas to grow	Criteria	Areas or mastery
<b>Investigate &amp; Revise</b>		<p>The artifact on display demonstrates a clear comprehension of its purpose, significance, and connection to the exhibition's theme. The student participated in all areas of the assignment regularly and made adjustments as needed.</p>	
<b>Audience</b>		<p>The artifact and its corresponding written explanation use language appropriate for the intended audience. The student used C.U.P.S.*, included references, and used academic language.</p>	
<b>Creation</b>		<p>The principles and elements of design applied to the creation of the artifact enhance the theme and message of the exhibit. The chosen technique was explored to its full extent and demonstrates competence.</p>	



