

History Pacific Asia Museum

What's In A Garden?

Time As needed
6

Grade Level

California History-Social Science Content Standards

6.6 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of China.

California English-Language Arts Content Standards

Writing Strategies

1.2 Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions:

- a. Engage the interest of the reader and state a clear purpose.
- b. Develop the topic with supporting details and precise verbs, nouns, and adjectives to paint a visual image in the mind of the reader.
- c. Conclude with a detailed summary linked to the purpose of the composition.

1.3 Use a variety of effective and coherent organizational patterns, including comparison and contrast; organization by categories; and arrangement by spatial order, order of importance, or climactic order.

1.6 Revise writing to improve the organization and consistency of ideas within and between paragraphs.

Writing Applications

2.2 Write expository compositions (e.g., description, explanation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution):

- a. State the thesis or purpose.
- b. Explain the situation.
- c. Follow an organizational pattern appropriate to the type of composition.
- d. Offer persuasive evidence to validate arguments and conclusions as needed.

Indicators of Achievement

- Student identifies the elements of a Literati (or Scholar) garden.
- Student identifies some of the economic and social structures and religious/philosophical beliefs in 3rd century Chinese society.
- Student writes an essay comparing the elements of their home gardens to the scholar gardens in 3rd century China.
- Student produces an illustrated postcard as if written from the garden in the transparency, describing an afternoon spent in that setting.

Materials/Resources

Transparency of Pacific Asia Museum Chinese-style garden, a visit to Pacific Asia Museum's garden, students' home gardens, Pacific Asia Museum *Visions of Enlightenment* web education module at www.pacificasiamuseum.org, *Chronicle Of The Chinese Emperors* by Ann Paludan, Thames and Hudson, *Chinese Painting* by James Cahill, Rizzoli, *The Chinese Garden* by Maggie Keswick, Rizzoli

Preparation/Background

Ask students to name a favorite family activity that takes place in their home yard and give three reasons why they enjoy it.

Activity

1. Show students the transparency of the Chinese-style Scholar's garden at Pacific Asia Museum. Discuss:
 - What types of activities would a Chinese family do in such a garden?
 - How do different types of building materials and structures in Han Chinese gardens reflect the economic and social status of its owner?
 - What can you tell about what Han Chinese people liked to do in their homes by the design of their garden?
 - Why do Han Chinese gardens have water, rocks, plants, and meandering paths, and what do they signify or represent?
 - How did Taoist and Buddhist ideas influence garden design in 3rd century China?
2. Discuss the common features in students' own home gardens. List student responses as they are given.
3. Have students write an essay analyzing what these elements tell about modern American life and comparing those elements with 3rd century Chinese life and garden design.

Assessment

Evaluate the student essays and/or postcards. Can student describe some elements of early Chinese society, including economic and social structures and religious/philosophical beliefs? Does student essay comparing their garden to the scholar gardens in 3rd century China indicate understanding of the above concepts? Do the illustrations and message on the student's post card show understanding of the elements of a 3rd century Chinese scholar garden?

Extension

Group students into teams and ask each team to design a garden that reflects one of the following: Confucian philosophy, Taoist philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, and trade of goods through the Silk Road. Apply the same discussion questions and project to architectural design. Or have students do the garden design project based upon specific geographic locations or technologies.

Contact and Field Trip Information

Pacific Asia Museum 626-449-2742
www.pacificasiamuseum.org