

Lesson Plans and Activities

Lesson Plan 1: Rank Badges

Grade Level

Can be adapted to any grade level

Objectives

Students will discuss rank badges of Korea, their construction, design motifs, and significance as an indicator of social status.

Students will design and make a rank badge from paper, cloth, or embroidery.

Materials

6 × 6-inch pieces of construction paper

Additional scraps of construction paper in different colors

Markers and crayons

Glue and scissors

OR

6 × 6-inch pieces of felt or burlap

Scraps of felt

Batting

Yarns of different colors

Scissors, glue, large-eyed blunt needles

Image 31 Rank Badge (*hyungbae*) with Paired “Tiger-Leopards”

Image 2 Bird-Shaped Vessel

Image 32 Ox-Horn Box

Introduction

Discuss symbolism and how animals, plants, colors, and shapes may stand for an abstract idea. In the United States government, elephants, donkeys, hawks, and doves represent political parties or ideas. Discuss how animals, plants, and colors symbolize concepts or popular beliefs in Korean art and culture, using the guide on pages 151–52 and some of the slides.

Look at **image 31**, a rank badge, and ask students to imagine how these might have been worn. In the fifteenth century, the Korean court adopted from the Chinese a rank-badge system to indicate the status of civil and military officials. These square cloth badges were worn on the front and back of court costumes. They were beautifully embroidered in brightly colored silk thread with images of both real and imaginary birds or animals indicating the wearer’s position and rank. Who might wear a rank badge with tigers? What might the tigers symbolize? In Korea, the king and members of his immediate family

wore dragons, civil officials wore birds, and military leaders wore animals. A badge with two animals indicated a higher rank than a badge with one animal. Ask students if they have seen military officials in uniform; rank badges can be compared to the medals that indicate the rank of general, corporal, sergeant, etc.

Draw the students' attention to the images, the bright colors, and the patterns in the rank badge. The animals fill most of the space, and each one is shown in a different position — notice the curving of their backs, their paws, the position of their tails and heads. They look as if they are circling each other. Their mouths are open to show teeth; they may be roaring. Their fur is striped and spotted, and their eyes are large and staring. The background is filled with stylized waves, drops of water, and forms suggesting mountains.

Show students examples of embroidery or demonstrate the technique for them. They may have a relative who does embroidery or some other kind of needlework. Using the information in the object entry, discuss how women made the rank badges and the importance of the skill of embroidery.

Ask students to choose an animal that they feel is symbolic of their personality. They may wish to choose one of the animals from the list on page 151.

For younger students, use construction paper. Distribute 6 × 6-inch pieces of paper and have them pick one or two additional contrasting colors from the scraps. They should cut or tear one or two large animal shapes from the contrasting color and experiment with positioning these on the square of paper. When they have decided where the animals should go, they may glue them. Additional scraps may be used to embellish the space with clouds, trees, and other elements. The background may be decorated with markers or crayons, and details such as eyes, fur, and whiskers may be added to the animals.

To complete the badge, punch a hole in the top two corners, attach a long string, and adjust it so that the badge can be worn around the neck. Ask students to discuss the impression they were trying to convey by choosing particular animals, colors, and other symbolic elements.

This project also may be done with felt appliqué, embroidery, or a combination of the two. Students can cut their animal shapes from felt and glue or sew them to a square of burlap or felt. If they are sewing these forms, they may wish to pad the shape by lightly stuffing it with batting. If burlap is used as the backing of the badge, embroidery details can easily be stitched with a large-eyed needle. The burlap may

be entirely covered with a variety of stitches — satin stitch, chain stitch, etc.—or parts may be left to show through. Additional embroidery stitches, such as French knots, may be added to the animals for texture and details.

Extensions

Social Studies/Government. Older students may wish to design rank badges for United States government officials, such as the President, Vice-President, Speaker of the House, Cabinet members, etc., using symbols of their position, power, and personalities.

Resources

Chung, Y. Young. *The Art of Oriental Embroidery*. New York: Scribner's, 1979.

Lesson Plan 2: Korean Ceramics

Introduction

Grade Level

Can be adapted to any grade level

Objectives

Students will look at Korean ceramics and learn to identify and discuss characteristics relating to shape, decoration, function, and technique.

Students will make a ceramic vessel that incorporates one or more of these characteristics.

For younger students. Bring ceramic objects from home — cups, vases, and bowls — that can be passed around and discussed. What shape are they, how were they made, how were they decorated? Are they used for special purposes? Distribute small pieces of clay so students can see and touch the material.

Discussion. Choose slides from the list on page 122 to show in the classroom, discussing the shape, function, decoration, and technique of each Korean ceramic object. Is the piece symmetrical and regular or slightly irregular? What colors were used? How is the piece decorated? Can you see geometric or natural forms?

Activities. Basic instructions on working with clay in the classroom can be found in a variety of manuals and teaching resources; this lesson plan is designed to augment these resources. The following activities are arranged generally from the easiest to most complex. Each one can form the basis for a project on its own, or it can be combined with other techniques, depending on the time and resources of the classroom. Some may be done with air-dry clay or oven-bake clay; others work better with low-fire clay and glazes. These materials are available through art supply catalogs.

Materials

Clay, air-dry, oven-bake, or low-fire

Glazes, especially light green, white, copper red

Clay tools

Brushes for glaze

Combs, broken in small pieces

Part A: Shape	Image 1	Jar
	Image 2	Bird-Shaped Vessel
	Image 3	Stand
	Image 6	Bottle with Flattened Side
	Image 12	Melon-Shaped Wine Ewer
	Image 22	Wine Cup
	Image 23	Jar
	Image 24	Large Jar

Make a Simple Pot

Show students **images 1, 6, and 23**. Ask them to notice the shape of each pot. The pot in image 1 is made using the coil method, and this technique should be demonstrated to the students. The base can be made from a cookie-shaped flat piece of clay. Wet and score the outside edges of this shape. Roll another piece of clay into a long rope, then position it on the edge of the base and begin to wind it around in a circle, building up the walls of the pot. Add new ropes of clay as needed, pressing and smoothing the clay together with your fingers. To make the pot wider, position the coil on the outside edge of the row below it; to make the pot more narrow, position the coil on the inside edge of the row below it. Continue to smooth the outside surface as you add new coils.

The final shape of the pot can be manipulated into a regular or irregular form with paddles or with the hands. When a satisfactory shape has been reached, the pot should be put aside to dry. When almost leather-hard, the clay can be stamped with textures. When the clay is completely leather-hard, the pot may be decorated with incised lines. The pot can be fired and decorated with glazes.

Make a Pot with Applied Forms

Show students **images 2, 12, and 22**. Discuss the shape of each vessel, how the artisan has turned a basic bowl shape into an animal, plant, or drinking cup.

Demonstrate forming a simple bowl with a fist-sized lump of clay. Make a basket of your fingers to gently hold the lump of clay. Place your thumbs on top, and rotate the lump while pressing the thumbs downward to create an opening in the clay. Do not pinch the rim of the bowl; keep the sides and bottom about the same thickness— $\frac{1}{2}$ inch is good. When a satisfactory bowl shape has been created, gently press the bottom against a flat surface.

A foot, neck and lip, or handles may be created for the bowl with coils or slabs of clay. To attach clay, score the flat sides of the two areas to be joined, then add a little water or slip. Press the areas together to join them, using extra clay to smooth the seams. Clay may be added or removed to create an animal or vegetable shape, and texture may be incised into the clay when it has dried to leather-hard. The piece may be fired and glazed as well.

Make a Joined Pot

Show and discuss **image 24**. Demonstrate how a pot can be made from the joining of two smaller pots. Make two hand-turned bowls with the same top circumference; the walls should be about $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick. Score the top of each bowl, moisten with water or slip, and then attach the two halves to create a round form. Smooth the seam with more clay as needed. Let dry slightly, then determine top and bottom. Cut a hole in the top of the vessel and slightly flatten the bottom. Add a rope of clay to the top to make a lip, scoring and moistening both pieces of clay to join them. Smooth the joined area. Add a foot to the base with another carefully joined rope of clay. At this point, the clay should still be soft enough to experiment with the shape, emphasizing the join in the middle of the pot, or gently pressing or paddling the sides to form an interesting or irregular outline.

The pot may be decorated with incised lines or stamped patterns, glazed, and then fired.

Show and discuss **image 3**. Make two pots as above, but instead of joining them at the top, join the rounded sides together (by scoring and wetting the clay, then smoothing and manipulating the join) to form an hourglass shape. Build up the top and/or bottom with coils of clay, if desired. When the clay is leather-hard, use a sharp tool to

pierce the base, cutting out small pieces of clay. Be careful not to remove too much clay.

The pot may be incised, decorated, fired, or glazed, as above.

Part B: Decoration

Image 10	Wine Ewer
Image 11	Oil Bottle
Image 14	<i>Maebyeong</i> (Vase)
Image 21	Flask-Shaped Bottle
Image 23	Jar

Incise. Wait until the clay is leather-hard. Using sharp tools, inscribe bands or lines in a pattern on the pot. The decoration should complement the shape of the pot. Break a comb into small pieces and use these to “comb” designs of parallel lines into the clay, if desired.

Carve. Wait until the clay is leather-hard, then use tools to carve away designs, being careful not to carve too deeply. While students are waiting for their clay to become hard enough to carve, they can draw vines, leaves, flowers, and other plant forms on paper.

Stamp. Ancient potters used readily available objects or things found in nature to decorate their pots. Try pressing a rock, a sharp object, a piece of rope, twigs, or pieces of burlap against clay that is not quite leather-hard. Pound the object gently with a paddle to press it into the clay, then carefully remove.

Glaze. Glaze can be applied to any of the ceramics after they have been fired. Try lightly glazing a pot that has been incised, stamped, or carved, and the glaze will fill the low areas and create a shadow effect. A smooth vessel may be glazed in colors that reflect those of the Korean ceramics that the students have seen in the slides—gray, light green, copper red, and white. Glazes also may be brushed on the pot in a decorative way, as in **image 23**. Again, students may wish to practice brush painting on a flat surface before they decorate their pots.

Extensions

Ceramics. Students in a secondary school ceramics class can study Korean ceramics in depth, using a wheel to make some of these forms or constructing a kiln to fire their pieces.

Science. Build an outdoor kiln to fire earthenware pots, and experiment with ash glazes. Or visit the studio of an artist who works with

these techniques. With the help of the science teacher or a visiting artist, students may wish to experiment with making their own glazes.

Social Studies. Compare Korean ceramics to ceramics around the world. How are the forms, decorations, techniques, and function of these artworks similar? How are they different? Put a map of the world on a bulletin board and find examples of ceramics to pin up on the different areas of the world. Look at examples in The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Resources for Educators, *Greek Art, From Prehistoric to Classical* and *The Art of Renaissance Europe*.

Resources

Online information about Korean ceramics

For students

Discover a Korean Dragon

<http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/discover/html/paekche.htm>

What Color is Celadon?

<http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/celadon/html/startpage.htm>

For teachers

Arts of Korea: Ceramics

<http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/Korea/koreaonline/cCeramicIDx.htm>

Kong, Ellen. *The Great Clay Adventure: Creative Handbuilding Projects for Young Artists*. Worcester, Mass.: Davis Publications, 1999.

Schuman, Jo Miles. *Art from Many Hands*. Worcester, Mass.: Davis Publications, 1981.

Topal, Cathy Weisman. *Children, Clay and Sculpture*. Worcester, Mass.: Davis Publications, 1998.

The Korea Ceramics Project, organized and operated by Dr. Arthur K. J. Park and Mary R. Park, provides onsite demonstrations of Korean ceramic-making techniques and informative printed and video material.
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Lesson Plan 3: Illustrated Manuscript

Grade Level

Can be adapted to any grade level

Objectives

Students will look at and discuss an illustrated sutra from Korea.

Students will explore the design and technique of the manuscript, its religious purpose, its narrative function, and the role of the copied text.

Students will choose a text from a fable or myth to copy and illustrate in their own folding book.

Materials

Construction paper
Markers, crayons, or paint
Cardboard
Glue

Image 17 Illustrated Manuscript of the *Lotus Sutra*

Introduction

Choose a selection of picture books that illustrate myths, fables, or religious stories from around the world. Read a few examples, or ask students to find examples of an illustrated narrative and share it with the class. How does the illustration work with the text? Explain that many cultures have religious, mythological, or folk tales that are meant to teach or instruct the reader (or listener). The wisdom that is imparted would be helpful in the everyday life of the person to whom the tale is being told.

Show **images 17A and B** and discuss the two parables and what they mean. Discuss the placement of the text and the illustrations, the way that it is read from right to left, the decorative border, and the form of the book in an accordion-folded shape.

Give students time to look through books of myths, stories, fables, parables, etc., to find a passage that they would like to copy and illustrate. The passage can range from a few sentences to an entire paragraph, depending on the age of the students. Distribute two sheets of construction paper to each student, and have them tape the sheets together on the short sides to make one long sheet. They should plan where they will place the title of their selection, where they will place the text they have chosen to copy, and where they will place the illustration(s). They can block out these areas by measuring with a ruler, if desired.

Students should use paints, markers, crayons, etc., to create the illustration, copy the text, and add decorative border elements. The way in which the text is copied should reflect its message—if it is an exciting, active passage, should the letters be large, bold, slant to one side? How could the text reflect a happy, sad, frightening, or funny passage?

When the book is completed, it should be carefully folded into an accordion shape, then pieces of cardboard glued to each side. (The teacher may wish to pre-cut the cardboard and have students use it as a template for folding their book.) The outer cardboard may be decorated with special papers, fabric, or patterns.

Students can share their illustrated texts with the class; they should note what culture and time period their choice of story represents, and why they made particular artistic and technical choices.

Extensions

Language Arts. In a creative writing class, students may wish to compose their own fables or parables.

Language Arts. Use the Korean creation myth below. Read it aloud to students and make a list of scenes that inspire illustration. Segment the text to reflect each scene. Assign or allow students to choose one of the scenes to copy and illustrate. This may be done collaboratively; divide the students into groups and let them decide who will be responsible for the beginning, middle, and end of the myth. Display the completed works in sequence.

Social Studies/Art. The form of the illustrated manuscript and the techniques and materials of making books throughout history and around the world may be studied. What kinds of inks, pigments, paper, or supports were used? How do these materials and techniques reflect the people who made the books? What kinds of stories fit this type of format? How do these handmade books compare to books today?

Social Studies. As Buddhist thought became increasingly complex, the sutra images themselves became more complex and ornamental. Older students studying Buddhism may wish to use actual Buddhist writings, creating images that reflect religious ideas and practices.

Korea's creation myth is a good story that lends itself to illustration. The legend of Tan'gun was first recorded in the *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms), compiled in about 1285.

In an old book it is written: in ancient times there lived Hwan'ung, the son of a concubine of Hwan'in. He thought often of the world below and wished to redeem mankind. His father knew of his thoughts. Down below on earth he saw Mount T'aebaek with its three prominent peaks. Through it he could bestow many blessings on mankind. Thereupon he gave his son the three heavenly seals and sent him down to rule the world. With 3,000 retainers Hwan'ung

descended to the peak of T'aebaek, took his seat under a holy *paktal* tree, and named this place the Holy City. He is called the Heavenly King Hwan'ung. With the gods of wind, rain, and the clouds he ruled over the grains, the duration of life, over diseases, punishments, good and evil—altogether he ruled over more than 360 things that affect mankind. And he guided the course of events in the world.

At that time there were a bear and a tiger, who lived together in the same cave. They continuously prayed to the divine Hwan'ung to transform them into human beings. Thereupon the god gave them a bunch of supernatural mugwort and twenty pieces of garlic and said: "If you eat this and do not behold the light of the sun for one hundred days, you will be transformed into human beings." The bear and the tiger received these things and ate them. After she had avoided the sunlight for twenty-one days, the bear assumed the form of a woman; the tiger, however, was not able to keep out of the sun and therefore did not become a man. The bear-woman had no one to marry. Because she longed to conceive a child, she incessantly recited incantations at the foot of the *paktal* tree. Thereupon Hwan'ung changed his guise and married her. She conceived and bore a son, who was called Wanggom, the ruler of the *paktal* tree (= Tan'gun).

This came to pass in the year of the tiger, the fiftieth year of the reign of Yao. Tan'gun founded his capital in P'yŏng'yang, and from this time on he called his country Chosŏn. Later he moved his capital to Paeg'ak Asadal, which is also known as Kungol-san or Kummi-dal. He ruled the country for a period of 1,500 years.

Notes

- Much of the *Samguk yusa* is based on older sources that are now lost.
- *Hwan'in* refers to the Lord of Heaven.
- The *paktal* tree is a kind of birch.
- The Chinese character that expresses the Korean term *paktal* is pronounced *tan* in Sino-Korean; *gun* = ruler, lord.
- Yao is a highly revered legendary emperor of China. Following Chinese history, the fiftieth year of Yao's reign would correspond to 233 B.C.

The above is taken from Mark DeFraeye and Vos Frits, *Korea: Scenic Beauty and Religious Landmarks* (Antwerp: Petraco-Pandora, 1996).