Gods and Goddesses

Immortals

Ritual

Mountains and Landscapes

TAOISM
AND THE ARTS OF CHINA

Journey to Perfect Harmony
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TAOISM
AND THE ARTS OF CHINA

by Stanley Murashige
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This packet introduces four themes important in Taoism:

I. Gods and Goddesses
II. Immortals
III. Ritual
IV. Mountains and Landscapes

Within each section, you will find a brief introduction to the theme, a discussion of a selection of objects in the Art Institute’s collection, and suggestions for classroom applications. Altogether, this teacher packet covers 16 objects—slides for 12 of the objects and illustrations for four others are included.

The classroom applications can be used both as pre-visit and post-visit resources for grades 6-12. They meet 17 Illinois State Goals across the curriculum (English Language Arts, Fine Arts, Math, Science, and Social Science). The activities also address the different learning styles of students through the Theory of Multiple Intelligences.1

Because objects in the museum’s collection often rotate or may be loaned for a special exhibition, some of the works listed in this teacher packet may not be in the galleries at the time of your visit.

PROCEDURES

1. Introduce China to your students. Begin your exploration of China by asking your students:
   “What do you know about China? Can you find it on a world map? Have you seen the Disney movie Mulan? Have you heard or read about any other Chinese myth or folktale? Have you seen the yin-yang (pronounced: yahng, “ah” as in “ah hah!”) ideogram? (show students an enlarged photocopy of figure A on page 16). Have you ever eaten Chinese food? Have you been to Chicago’s Chinatown? Have you seen the Chinese dragon dance? Are you familiar with any Chinese customs?”

2. Read the essays that introduce each theme and the information on the slides. Either read them beforehand and share the information with your students as you look at the images or read them with your students after looking at the images.

3. Together with your students, look closely at the slides and illustrations using the strategies in “Looking at Art Together” on page 6.

4. Involve students in the classroom activities.

1 The eight intelligences develop students’ multiple intelligences, which are important for fuller human development. They also address the fact that students learn in different ways: when children have an opportunity to learn through their strengths, they become more successful at learning. The Art Institute of Chicago’s special exhibition Taoism and the Arts of China is an interdisciplinary exhibition. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences is an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning.

Intelligences addressed in this teacher packet: Linguistic: adept at reading, writing, listening, and speaking in one’s own or a foreign language. Logical/Mathematical: can easily discern patterns and relationships; create reasoning chains; analyze and manipulate numerical and symbolic information. Visual/Spatial: sensitive to images and forms; ability to create and manipulate mental images and the orientation of the body in space. Bodily Kinesthetic: aware of mid-body coordination; possesses excellent large- and small-body motor coordination; able to use bodies to create and problem solve. Interpersonal: can easily communicate and understand other people; effective collaborator. Intrapersonal: understands one’s inner world of emotions and thoughts; has the ability to control and work with them consciously. Natural: can observe, understand, and organize patterns in the natural environment.
LOOKING AT ART TOGETHER

1. When looking at each image, ask questions to direct and slow down the process of looking, rather than telling something about the object that you can ask. Knowledge means most to a learner when it is discovered through the learner’s own efforts.

2. Ask open-ended questions that have answers that can be found in the work of art itself. (Many suggested questions appear under the “Discussion” section in each classroom application.) They embrace a wide variety of responses and invite everyone to offer ideas and join in the discussion.

3. Generate discussion by listening and responding to each other’s questions and observations. Acknowledge the students’ responses by repeating them. Accept all responses as long as they are grounded in the artwork. Let the group discussion sort out the “truth.” Acknowledge agreements and disagreements.

4. Relate what students are seeing to what they already know, so that they can develop a connection to the artwork.

5. Comparing two different works of art can be useful in learning to look.

6. Before you begin to ask the looking questions, give students time to look closely and think about an image that they may never have seen before.

7. At the end of your discussion, take note of all you have discovered together.

8. Encourage your students to write down any questions they may have about the object. Have them find out the answers to their questions.

9. Finally ask students if they like or dislike the work of art and why. Ask them what they might remember most about the artwork.

A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE APPROXIMATE PRONUNCIATION OF THE PINYIN SYSTEM FOR SPELLING THE SOUNDS OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

The Chinese language is written with what we call “characters” and does not use anything like an alphabet to spell out the sounds of words. Simply put, Chinese characters represent ideas and words, and many, though by no means all, had their origins as simple pictures. A Chinese character may represent many different meanings and may even have opposite meanings, and characters are often combined in pairs to form words. Generally, in modern Chinese, one would need to know somewhere between 5,000 and 6,000 characters to read common publications. A specialist in a discipline would need to know more. Each character has its own pronunciation—the equivalent of a syllable—and many characters have different pronunciations in different contexts. Many, many characters share the same pronunciation. The sound “shi” (pronounced: shr) represents scores of different characters, each with different meanings.

Given the graphic nature of written Chinese, Westerners have had to devise ways for spelling out the sounds of Chinese. Unfortunately, over the history of the Western encounter with China, several different spelling or transliterating systems have come into use and not many of them were designed with the average English reader in mind. Perhaps one of the most commonly used of the earlier systems is the Wade-Giles system. This system is still used today by many specialists in the

*adapted from www.newhorizons.com/Internet.
field of Chinese studies (Sinology) and was commonly used among specialists until quite recently. This spelling system was the work of 19th-century British specialists: Minister Thomas Wade and Herbert Giles, the British Consul at Ningbo (pronounced: ning-bwo). If you do research on China, you will encounter many sources that use this spelling system.

The spelling system currently used by American newspapers and magazines and by The Art Institute of Chicago is the Pin yin system. This teacher packet also uses the Pin yin system, with the exception of the word, “Tao.” “Tao” is the Wade-Giles spelling; the Pin yin spelling is “Dao.” The museum has chosen to use the Wade-Giles spelling of this all-important word, because it is more familiar to the general public. Pin yin is a spelling system developed in the 1950s by Chinese linguists in the People’s Republic of China. It was designed for Chinese use and is the standard system of the People’s Republic of China. It is not generally used in Taiwan, the island where Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalists fled the communists in 1949. Taiwanese publications have adhered to the Wade-Giles system. What follows is a rather simplified and brief sketch of English phonetic approximations of sounds spelled out by the Pin yin system. Please keep in mind that the phonetic equivalents given here are mere approximations of the Chinese and are based on Mandarin pronunciation. If you wish to consult an extensive table for converting between the Wade-Giles and Pin yin systems, look at the conversion table given in Appendix C (pp. 462-463) of The Cambridge Encyclopedia of China, New Edition, compiled by Brian Hook and Denis Twitchett published in 1991.

A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE PIN YIN SYSTEM

Chinese Vowels as spelled in the Pin yin system are pronounced approximately in English as follows:

a: “ah” as in “father”; not the “a” as in “can”
ai: “bye” as in “good-bye”
an: “ahn” as in “Kahn”; “fan” is therefore not “fan” as in “electric fan”
ang: “ahng”; thus “Tang” is not “Tang” as in the orange drink
ao: “ow” as in “cow”
e: “uh” as in “uh-huh”; the goddess Chang E is thus: “chahng-uh”
ei: “ay” as in “bay”; “Beijing” is thus “bay-jing”
eng: “uhng” as in “bungle”
er: “are” as in “they are”

ia: “yah”; not ee-ah, but “yah”
ian: “yen” as in Japanese currency
iang: “yahng”; pronounced as one syllable
iao: “yow”; pronounced as one syllable
ie: “yeh”; pronounced as one syllable
in: “yin” as in “yin-yang”
ing: “ing” as in “ring”
iong: yoong, “oo” as in “look;” pronounced as one syllable
iu: “yo” as in “Yo”

o: “wo” as in “Woe is me”; hence: “bo” is “bwo”
ong: oong, “oo” as in “look”
ou: “oh” as in “oh no”
u: “oo” as in “goo"
quan: “yoo-ann”; but pronounced as one syllableue: “yoo-eh”; but pronounced as one syllableui: “way” “No way!”un: “uhn” as in “under”

Some Problematic Consonants and Combinations
c: “ts”; thus “cao” is “tsao,” not “cow”
ci: “ts” as in “bats”
chi: “chr” or “chur” as in “churl” not “chee”
q: “ch”
qin: “chin”
qiong: chyoong, “oo” as in “look” and pronounced as one syllable
qu: “chyo”; “iu” here is closer to “yo” and pronounced as one syllable
qu: “chü”; “u” here is like a French “u” or a German “ü”
quan: “chü-ann”; “ü” like a French “u” and pronounced as one syllable
ri: “ir” in “girl”; the “i” is silent here
si: “ss” as in “hiss”; the “i” is silent here
sh: “shr” as in “shrug”; the “i” is silent here
x: “sh”
xi: “shee”
xian: “shyen”; pronounced as one syllable
xiang: “shyahng”; pronounced as one syllable
xiong: shyoong, “oo” as in “look”; pronounced as one syllable
xu: “shü”; the “ü” is like a French “u” or a German “ü”
xuan: “shü-ann”; again, like a French “u” and pronounced as one syllable
z: “dz” as in “adze”; “zao” is thus “dzow”
zh: “j” as in “joseph”; the Zhou dynasty is thus the “joe” dynasty
zi: “dz” as in “adze”; here, the “i” is silent; thus Laozi is pronounced “lao-dz”
**INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS TAOISM?**

Taoism* (pronounced: dow-ism) is a world of beliefs, writings, ceremonial practices, study, art, and philosophy that strives to harmonize the life of human beings with the forever and naturally changing universe. To this end, over the course of its long history Taoism gave birth to philosophical writings, ideas, and beliefs about the cosmos and its workings in nature and humanity; it gave birth to a family of deities, to a litany of ceremonial rites and performances, and to a rich culture of art and aesthetics.

Like people in many cultures, practitioners of Taoism, who live all over the world, believe the world, the universe, and the cosmos consist of a perpetually changing structure or order. Since the birth of human culture, men and women have tried to understand and make sense of their world and their place in it. The power of nature and the challenges of life are universal questions and Taoism is one system of beliefs and practices among many—Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Shinto, and a myriad others—that strives to order and understand life on earth and the earth’s and our place in the cosmos.

In Taoism, the cosmos—both the world of the human being and the world of nature—has a structure, a kind of ordering principle. Nature might express this as the unfolding of the seasons, year after year, or the changes of night and day, the falling of rain or snow, or the fact that mountains aspire towards the heavens, while water seeks resting places down below, within the earth. According to Taoism, humanity participates in and is part of the structure and order of nature: we are born, grow up, and grow old; we give birth to new versions of ourselves; and we pass away, or perhaps pass on into other forms of existence. So, finally, the cosmos has its rules. But one of the principal rules of Taoism is that the cosmos is forever changing: everything is in constant movement, constant becoming, so that on the one hand, the universe seems to remain the same—it has order, structure, and predictability—yet on the other hand the universe undergoes perpetual change and is unpredictable. This paradox, this strange ambiguity (a fruitful ambiguity) is the balance of the Tao, the balance of the Way. Tao, which means “way” or “path” (it also means “to say” or “to speak”), names the Great Way, the way or path, the structure of change that is the universe.

The Tao is not a god or goddess and is itself never seen as anything quite human; it’s not anthropomorphized. And yet, there are numerous divinities—gods and goddesses—in Taoism. These divinities are in a sense personifications, ways of comprehending and addressing the unfolding of the Great Way and its rich, complexly textured order. Although expressions of the Tao, these deities are always superseded by the Tao. Taoism includes a many-layered hierarchy of divinities, perfected beings (often called “immortals”), heavenly and earthly realms, and humans as well. By means of this complicated structure, with its many rites and ceremonies, its symbols, incantations, art, writing, and imaginings, Taoism seeks less to comprehend or understand the universe than to participate to full perfection in the workings of that universe. The devotee strives to harmonize him or herself with the rhythm of change, the energy and fruitful ambiguity that is life, that is the Tao.

The Tao is change, the Tao is motion, the Tao is energy, and as energy the Tao constitutes all matter. The life that is the Tao unfolds as the rich interaction of two kinds of energy, or qi

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* Words defined in the Glossary appear in boldface the first time they are used in each section.
(pronounced: chee): **yin and yang** (pronounced yahng). **Yang** is assertive energy; **yin** is yielding energy. **Yin** and **yang** are sometimes described as opposites and to some extent they are, but they are also interchangeable, like two different points of view of the same thing. They describe two different ways in which the universe—the Way—moves, changes, and creates itself. At times when the world is more passive and quiet, it is **yin**; when the world is active and loud, even violent, it is **yang**. Sometimes we might see a single event as both **yin** and **yang**. As you read this text, are you **yin** or **yang**? We might say that you are “passively” reading what is given to you—you **respond** or **yield** to the text—then you are **yin**; at the same time, we might say that you are actively engaged with what is given to you, asserting your intellect, trying to understand what’s being said—your response is an **active** engagement—then you are **yang**. So which is it? These two qualities, **yin** and **yang**, are in constant movement, forever circling around each other, responding to each other, and as they interact, they produce all of the things we know and experience as the world, including ourselves.
I. GODS AND GODDESSES

An extensive community of gods and goddesses inhabits the universe of Taoism (pronounced: dow-ism) Male and female divinities array themselves in an orderly fashion, ranked in an elaborate hierarchy of differing levels, each with his or her particular responsibilities and attributes. The gods are imagined and depicted as courtly figures, dressed in beautiful and elaborate robes and headdresses or in the gleaming ceremonial armor of the supreme warrior. The gods and goddesses perform like rulers, ministers, generals, and government officers and in the Taoist imagination, their world works much like an elaborate bureaucracy, with its proper rules, procedures, and exchange of documents. Though the pantheon of gods and goddesses resembles the world of humankind, and though these divinities assume human form, they are but emanations and expressions—forms—of the constantly changing world of the Tao or Great Way. And as such, gods and goddesses are seen to embody various qualities of the Way and its perpetual unfolding. As expressions of the Tao, gods and goddesses may embody the purity of the heavenly realm or the Tao in its supreme perfection and refinement. Or they may express the magic and power of the Tao in its own spontaneous generation, in its creation of new life, in its work that brings about the extraordinary metamorphosis that is the life of human beings and of nature. Gods and goddesses in their special relationship to each other and to the universe give expression to the order that is also very much a part of the spontaneous change of life that is the Tao. It is important for us to remember that the gods and goddesses of Religious Taoism are ultimately less important than the Tao itself. Taoism has no supreme being, only the fertile and powerful rhythm of change itself—the Tao. In Religious Taoism, the priest, adept, or practitioner “worships” the gods to invoke—call upon—them, and through them the creative and generative power of the Tao. One might invoke a deity to further one's own cultivation of the Tao, or seek assistance in the resolution of some difficulty or obstacle, perhaps an illness, or seek help for one's family or for a friend.

Slide 1


Bronze mirrors have a long history in Chinese culture; examples well over 2,000 years old survive. Early Chinese mirrors are round and range from about four to six inches in diameter. The front side was the polished, reflective side, and the back was cast with a variety of auspicious designs—
abstract forms of dragons and auspicious geometric patterns, for example. In the center of the back, as in the case of this Art Institute mirror, there would be a knob with a hole in it for looping a cord. Such mirrors were tied to the posts of short stands when they were used. Circular mirrors dating back to the Han (pronounced: hahn) dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) were often cast with cosmological diagrams of symbolic shapes and animals including the animals of the four cardinal directions—north (tortoise with snake entwined around it), south (bird or phoenix), east (dragon) and west (tiger). These emblems and creatures appear often in Taoist images: the tortoise and snake, for example, are the emblems of Zhenwu (pronounced: jen-woo), the Perfected Warrior (see figure 2 and slide 3). These early mirrors were often buried with the dead and may have been thought to have special powers. The Art Institute has several fine mirrors of this type. The mirror included in this Taoism teacher packet comes out of this ancient history, but with its lobed shape (there are eight lobes and eight is an auspicious number), it is more a decorative and fancy object than a powerful cosmological emblem, though it still retains some notions of cosmos in its subject matter. The back depicts a garden setting at the “Moon Palace,” the residence of the goddess Chang E (pronounced: chahng-uh). A more descriptive image of Chang E and her lunar garden appears in the Art Institute painting (see figure 1) in which Chang E, dressed in elegant court robes, stands beside a tree in her garden, gazing at the moon, afloat among beautiful clouds.

In the mirror, Chang E also stands beside an auspicious tree: here she grasps a pair of peaches. Across from her, the hare of the moon toils away with his mortar and pestle, while the toad of the moon watches and dances. Auspicious clouds ring the scene, indicating that this is the realm of the heavens. The meanings here all relate to the cosmic energy of yin in the complementary pair yin and yang (pronounced: yahng). Yin, associated with the power of the moon, is the energy of quiet response, of acceptance, of the yielding, of the female. The yin of the moon complements the yang of the sun, so the structure of the cosmos is implied in this image. Chang E, the toad, and the hare are linked also with the longing for immortality that is so important in Taoist practice and belief. In Chinese mythology, Chang E, who lives in a glorious palace on the moon, had stolen the elixir of immortality from her husband, a master of the bow and arrow named Yi. She fled with the potion to the moon and once there was changed into a toad. Both the toad and Chang E’s peaches symbolize immortality and long life: the toad, perhaps because it sheds its skin in a cycle of renewed life, and the peaches, because they were said to grow in the magical orchard of the immortal Queen Mother who reigns over a mountainous paradise in the west. The hare, too, symbolizes immortality: according to myth, the hare on the moon uses a mortar and pestle to pound magical herbs, making an elixir that bestows immortality to all who drink it. A mirror with such auspicious imagery and beautiful shape would have been a prize object for a member of the Tang dynasty nobility.

**Slide 2**


In this regal image, made for use on a Taoist altar, the utterly self-confident Sovereign of the Clouds of Dawn sits enthroned, dressed in courtly robes and headdress. Her strange appearance suggests an other-worldly character that belies her compassionate nature. She is the daughter of the male god of Mount Tai, one of the Five Sacred Mountains, and is thus endowed with the extraordinary powers that Taoism attributes to special mountains. With one hand she commands authority, making a sacred gesture, while two small boys stand upon her lap. The boys make clear that she is the protectress of children and of women. Often, the Sovereign of the Clouds of Dawn is accompanied by two assistants and six subordinate deities. Her two female assistants are: the Lady of Good Sight, who protects children from eye infections, and the Lady Who Bestows Children. The other six deities
work to protect children of different ages. The three phoenixes in the sovereign’s headdress are one of her distinguishing features. The appearance of a magical phoenix, which alights only upon the pawonia tree (wutong tree; pronounced: woo-toong), signals that the realm is being ruled by a just and virtuous emperor, for the phoenix appears only in times of peace and prosperity. The phoenix may also symbolize the direction of the south, the direction that is the source of new life.

When this image was made, the god Zhenwu, or “Perfected Warrior,” had become one of the most important deities in Religious Taoism. He is a martial figure, given to extraordinary powers, a protector of Taoism, the emperor, and the nation against demons and malevolent forces. Appropriately, he is shown here in this small shrine image enthroned, his left hand in an authoritative, sacred gesture, dressed in elegant court robes. He is usually depicted, as here, barefoot, with long, flowing hair (his hair reaches all the way down to his waist!). Zhenwu is “perfected” in the sense that he is a fully realized being, perfected in his harmony with the constantly changing power of the Great Way, or Tao. His residence and seat of power is Mount Wudang (pronounced: woo-dahng), in Hubei (pronounced: hoo-bay) province, and his association with this important and magical mountain endows him with the special power that Taoism attributes to such mountains (somewhat like the Sovereign of the Clouds of Dawn, slide 2). Zhenwu is also lord and commander of the north. In ancient China, he was called, Xuanwu (pronounced: shwan-woo), the Dark Warrior or Dark Lord, and was depicted in images as a tortoise with a snake coiled around it. According to legend, Zhenwu was sent by the Lord of the Heavens to battle an uprising of demonic kings. These evil kings turned the energies of yin and yang to their advantage, causing them to appear as a giant tortoise and snake, but they were no match for Zhenwu’s perfection and were subdued and became his attendants. Many images of Zhenwu still depict him with a snake and tortoise (see slide 3). When Zhenwu returned to the heavens, the Lord of the Heavens alerted Zhenwu to the continued prevalence of malevolent powers in the universe, and Zhenwu then vowed to eradicate every demonic power until none remained.

The inscription on the Art Institute piece identifies the sculptor and gives the date of the image. In the inscription, a Buddhist devotee who commissioned the image, invokes the power of Zhenwu to bring good fortune to his family and others. Unlike religions in the West, the religions in China were not
mutually exclusive or antagonistic. One could be a devout Buddhist and yet, as here, pay homage to Taoist divinities.

S L I D E 3


This extraordinary image of Zhenwu, the Perfected Warrior, is probably a shrine image, a kind of magical diagram that invokes the demon-quelling strength of Zhenwu. Zhenwu sits in the center of the painting, enthroned upon a rock set within a circle, now white, though originally painted in gold. The circle focuses the devotee’s attention on Zhenwu and suggests his divine and radiant energy: he wears long flowing hair and plants his hands confidently on his knees. He glares out into the distance with an almost angry expression, warning demonic powers against any encroachment. Unlike other images of Zhenwu, such as the gilt bronze statue in the Art Institute’s collection (see figure 2), this painting shows Zhenwu wearing shoes and not barefoot. To the right and left, his generals, dressed in ceremonial armor, stand ready: one with a white face, beneath the red sun, and the other with a red face, beneath the white moon. The sun and moon, each floating amid auspicious clouds, suggest the cycling order of the heavens and the operation of the complementary energies of yin (the moon: yielding) and yang (the sun: assertive). There is always yin present in yang and yang present in yin, hence the red-faced general poses beneath the white moon and the white-faced general, beneath the red sun. Below Zhenwu, a snake (a rather charming one) coils around a tortoise (also rather charming). Together, they are Zhenwu’s emblem, the emblem of the north.

In the rectangle above Zhenwu’s court turns the circle of the Eight Trigrams, a symbol of cosmic change. The trigrams are relationships of yin and yang energy. Each comprises three lines, a combination of either continuous or broken lines. The continuous lines represent yang and the broken ones, yin. Thus each trigram symbolizes a particular ratio of yin to yang. Three continuous lines means that yang energy is at its height, and conversely, three broken lines means that yin energy is at its height. Ancient history constituted ratios of yin to yang in eight proportions: the Eight Trigrams. The trigrams symbolize the mechanism of change that defines the workings of the universe. In Taoism, the universe is perpetually undergoing change; this is the principle and nature of the cosmos. The Great Way, the Tao, is what underlies this principle of change. The changing ratios of yin and yang are what produce all things in all of their diversity as the universe, the Great Way, undergoes its metamorphoses. Zhenwu, as the Perfected Warrior, derives his demon-quelling power from his perfect attunement to the changing power of yin and yang, and as such his is a potent force in the Taoist cosmos.

Within the rotating circle of the Eight Trigrams is Ursa Major, the constellation the Northern Dipper, or Big Dipper. In the Taoist cosmos, Zhenwu is linked with the north and its constellation, Ursa Major. The Dipper is part of the heavenly order, the heavenly cycle, much as are the sun and the moon.

The rest of the painting comprises 72 magic symbols, or talismans, each painted in gold against a midnight blue background and laid out in neatly arranged rows and columns. The talismans depict symbolic arrangements of stars and magical writing and each is identified in Chinese writing by its purpose. The talismans ward off malevolent forces of many different kinds, protecting against disease, natural disasters, nightmares, and demons. In defeating the demonic, talismans invite and help insure prosperity and long happy lives.
SUGGESTED CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS FOR “GODS AND GODDESSES”

Middle School

Moon Stories and Festivals

Students research the moon festival in China and compare it to festivals centered on the moon from other cultures and religions. Then, students write a magazine article based on their research and class discussion.

Related Object(s):
- Slide 1 of Lobed Mirror with Images of the “Moon Palace”: Hare Pounding Elixir, Toad, and Chang E Holding Peaches of Immortality
- Figure 1 of Chang E, the Moon Goddess

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Social Science

Materials:
- descriptive texts on the above images, (see pages 11–12)
- a slide projector
- an encyclopedia
- suggested book(s):

Discussion:
- Look carefully at slide 1 and figure 1 of Chang E with the class. Ask students:
  - What do you see? Whom do you see?
  - What are they doing?
  - How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
  - Where are these scenes taking place? What do you see that makes you say that?
  - What kind of patterns do you see?
  - How do you think the textures of these objects might feel? What do you think these objects are made of? How do you know?
  - How do you think they were used? What leads you to believe that?
Discuss the answers to these questions. Read the information on these objects and share it with your students.

Activity:
- Have students read the Chinese myth on how Chang E flew to the moon. Discuss the story and how the characters in it symbolize the cosmic energies of yin and yang and the Taoist longing for immortality.
- Have students read about the moon festival in China. Ask students the following questions:
  - What is the importance of the moon in Chinese culture? How is it celebrated?
What is the lunar calendar? What are the differences between lunar and solar calendars? Discuss students’ findings.

Next, ask students to research stories and festivals centered on the moon from other cultures and religions; compare them to the story of Chang E and the moon festival in China. Have them find similarities and differences among the stories. Discuss with students why some ancient cultures worshipped the moon, and why certain cultures attributed the female principle or the male principle to the moon. Have students research cultures and religions that follow the lunar calendar.

Based on the class discussion and above research, ask students to write a magazine article on “Our Relationship with the Moon.”

The Circle of Balance
Students research the Taoist deities Bixia Yuanjun and Zhenwu and the concepts of yin and yang. Then, using a compass, students draw and paint the Taoist symbol taiji (figure A) that represents these two complementary energies.

Related Object(s):
1. Slide 2 of Sovereign of the Clouds of Dawn (Bixia Yuanjun)
2. Slide 3 of Zhenwu with Eight Trigrams, Ursa Major, and Talismans
3. Figure 2 of The Taoist God Zhenwu (Perfected Warrior); Supreme Emperor of the Dark Heaven

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Math

Materials:
1. descriptive texts on the above images, (see pages 12–14)
2. the introduction to “Gods and Goddesses,” (see page 11)
3. a slide projector
4. black and white tempera paint
5. 8-1/2 x 11 inch pieces of white construction paper
6. compasses
7. rulers
8. pencils
9. erasers

![Figure A](image)
The Taoist yin-yang ideogram taiji.
Discussion:
- Look carefully at slide 2 of Bixia Yuanjun with the class. Ask students:
  - What do you see? Whom do you see?
  - What are they doing?
  - How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
Discuss answers to these questions.
- Next, look carefully at slide 3 and figure 2 of Zhenwu and ask students to compare and contrast his image to the image of Bixia Yuanjun. Have them think about the personalities of Bixia Yuanjun and Zhenwu, their clothing, posture, and attributes. Discuss the similarities and differences.

Activity:
- Provide students with information about these two Taoist deities. Ask students:
  - What is their position in Taoism? What are their functions?
- Show students the Taoist symbol taiji (figure A) and explain how it represents the concepts of yin and yang.
  - Are men and women only yang and only yin? Or, are they both?
  - Is there anything yang about Bixia Yuanjun and anything yin about Zhenwu?
- Next, provide each student with a piece of white construction paper. Have them draw a circle as large as possible using their compasses. Then, ask them to create the Taoist symbol taiji. Remind them that both sides must be equal—the tear-drop shape as well as the tiny circle on each side. (Hint: using the same length, draw two half circles that begin at the circumference and end at the middle of the diameter on both sides of the circle.)
- Using black and white tempera paints, have students paint their circle of yin and yang.

Alternate Art Activity: Moon Festival Mirrors
Students create paper plate mirrors in the shape of the full moon and illustrate their wishes for another person.

Related Object(s):
- Slide 1 of Lobed Mirror with Images of the “Moon Palace”: Hare Pounding Elixir, Toad, and Chang E Holding Peaches of Immortality
- Figure 1 of Chang E, the Moon Goddess

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
- descriptive text on the above images, (see pages 11–12)
- a slide projector
- paper plates
- foil paper, tin foil, or aluminum foil
- colored pencils
- scissors
- glue
- hole punch
- decorative cord, colored string, or twine

Discussion:
- Follow the discussion questions on page 15.
Activity:

1. Ask students:
   - What shapes do you see in this object?
   - What do mirrors and full moons have in common?

Mirrors are round to reflect the full harvest moon. Therefore they are symbols of unity. Mirrors are given as gifts at the Chinese autumn moon festival as a symbol of well-being and family togetherness. Mirrors are believed to counteract bad luck and send good wishes to someone special.

2. Have students illustrate their wish for another person in the center of the paper plate with colored pencils. Using the book on Chinese symbols mentioned above, students can draw specific symbols to illustrate their wish.

3. To give a reflective effect to the paper plate, have students cut a circle of foil and paste it on the other side of the paper plate.

4. Have them write their wish on the border of the paper plate. Encourage students to share their illustrated wishes with the class.

5. Punch a hole and send a cord through to hang the paper plate mirrors.

Objectives

Illinois State Goals:
State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual, community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.
State Goal 6: Demonstrate and apply a knowledge and sense of numbers, including basic arithmetic operations, number patterns, ratios, and proportions.
State Goal 7: Estimate, make, and use measurements of objects, quantities, and relationships, and determine acceptable levels of accuracy.
State Goal 12: Have a working knowledge of the fundamental concepts and principles of the life, physical, and earth/space sciences and their connections.
State Goal 13: Have a working knowledge of the relationships among science, technology, and society in historical and contemporary contexts.
State Goal 18: Understand, analyze, and compare social systems with an emphasis on the United States.
State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.
State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced.

Multiple Intelligences:
Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence
Interpersonal Intelligence
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence
Natural Intelligence
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
Visual/Spatial Intelligence
**SUGGESTED CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS FOR “GODS AND GODDESSES”**

*Secondary School*

**Talking with the Gods**

Students create a dialogue between Bixia Yuanjun and Zhenwu on how each defines *yin* and *yang*. Next, they make a list of masculine and feminine characteristics that they exchange with a partner of the opposite sex. Then, students discuss each other’s observations on the two sexes and the responses of Bixia Yuanjun and Zhenwu.

**Related Object(s):**
1. Slide 2 of *Sovereign of the Clouds of Dawn (Bixia Yuanjun)*
2. Slide 3 of *Zhenwu with Eight Trigrams, Ursa Major, and Talismans*
3. Figure 2 of *The Taoist God Zhenwu (Perfected Warrior); Supreme Emperor of the Dark Heaven*

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts and Fine Arts

**Materials:**
1. descriptive texts on the above images, (see pages 12–14)
2. a slide projector

**Discussion:**
1. Follow the discussion questions on page 17.

**Activity:**
1. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about these two objects. Have students read about these two Taoist deities. Ask students:
   - What is the deities’ position in Taoism? What are the deities’ functions? Discuss the answers to these questions.
2. Explain the concepts of *yin* and *yang* (see Glossary, page 78). Ask students:
   - Is there anything *yang* about Bixia Yuanjun and anything *yin* about Zhenwu?
3. Ask students to create a dialogue between Bixia Yuanjun and Zhenwu on how each defines *yin* and *yang*. Have students write down their responses.
4. Then ask students to make a list of masculine and feminine characteristics. Have them exchange their lists with a partner of the opposite sex. Ask them to see if they both agree or disagree with each other’s observations about the two sexes and the responses of Bixia Yuanjun and Zhenwu.
5. Write down two characteristics from each two-person group on the blackboard. Using this list and the following questions, open up the discussion to the class.
   - Are women and men always either *yin* or *yang*? Or are they both?
   - What does the idea of *yin* and *yang* say about human relationships?

**Yin and Yang**

Students read a passage from the *Daode jing* (pronounced: dow-duh-jing) on *yin* energy and write an essay on the concepts of *yin* and *yang* in relation to the position of women in Taoism. Then students read selections from *The Joy Luck Club* and discuss the roles of women that are encountered in this novel. Finally, students design a visual motif that interprets their idea of *yin* and *yang*.

**Related Object(s):**
1. Slide 1 of *Lobed Mirror with Images of the “Moon Palace”: Hare Pounding Elixir, Toad, and Chang E Holding Peaches of Immortality*
Slide 2 of Sovereign of the Clouds of Dawn (Bixia Yuajun)
Slide 3 of Zhenwu with Eight Trigrams, Ursa Major, and Talismans

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Social Science, and Fine Arts

Materials:
- the chapter “Introduction: What is Taoism?,” (see pages 9–10)
- the introduction to “Gods and Goddesses,” (see page 11)
- descriptive texts on the above images, (see pages 11–14)
- a slide projector
- suggested book(s):
- the Internet:
  www.chinapage.com
  www.chcp.org

Discussion:
- Look carefully at the slide 1 of Chang E, slide 2 of Bixia Yuanjun, and slide 3 of Zhenwu with the class. Ask students to compare and contrast the three images by asking the following questions:
  What do you see?
  What are they doing?
  How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
  Where are these scenes taking place? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Have them think about Chang E’s, Bixia Yuanjun’s, and Zhenwu’s personalities, their clothing, posture, and attributes. Discuss the similarities and differences.

Activity:
- Have students read the passage below from the Daodejing, where the Tao is described in the following manner:

  The Valley Spirit [i.e., the Tao] never dies.
  It is named the Mysterious Female.
  And the Doorway of the Mysterious Female
  Is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang.
  It is there within us all the while:
  Draw upon it as you will, it never runs dry.

  Having read the above poem, ask students:
  What is yin?
  What is your interpretation of the relationship between yin and yang?
  Discuss the answers to these questions.
- Have students read about these three Taoist deities. Ask students:
  * What is their position in Taoism?
  * What are the functions of the female deities in comparison to the embodiment of the yang force Zhenwu?
  * Is there anything yang about Bixia Yuanjun and Chang E, and anything yin about Zhenwu?
  * Are men and women only yang and only yin?
  * Does the idea of yin and yang reflect gender equality?
What does the idea of yin and yang say about human relationships?
Discuss the answers to these questions.

1. Next, ask students to write an essay on yin and yang in relation to the position of women in Taoism.
2. Then, have students read selections from The Joy Luck Club. Discuss the roles of women that are encountered in this novel. Using examples from the book discuss the position of women in China as described in this book.
3. Finally, have students design a visual symbol that interprets their idea of yin and yang. Have them think about the color and shape of their motif. Encourage them to share their designs with the class and explain the meaning behind them.

The Earth and the Moon
Students research the moon and the earth’s relationship with the moon. Then students create a visual display that depicts the different aspects of the moon and the earth’s relationship with the moon.

Related Object(s):
1. Slide 1 of Lobed Mirror with Images of the “Moon Palace” : Hare Pounding Elixir, Toad, and Chang E Holding Peaches of Immortality
2. Figure 1 of Chang E, the Moon Goddess

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Science

Materials: 2
1. descriptive texts on the above images, see pages 11–12
2. an encyclopedia
3. the Internet
   - www.starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov
   - www.chinapage.com
   - www.chcp.org; http://peacock.tnjc.edu.tw/moon/moon-festival.html
4. styrofoam
5. wire
6. Play-Doh or modeling clay
7. posterboard
8. colored markers
9. glue
10. scissors
11. suggested book(s):

Discussion:
1. Follow the discussion questions on page 15. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about these two objects. Have students read about Chang E.

Activity:
1. Have students research the moon festival in China. Ask students the following questions:
   - What is the importance of the moon in Chinese culture? How is it celebrated?
What is the lunar calendar? What are the differences between the lunar and solar calendars?

Discuss students’ findings.

Many ancient cultures worshipped the moon and believed that it greatly influenced their lives. Modern science has proved that the moon does influence the earth. Have students research the moon. Ask students:

- What is a moon?
- How does the moon function in our solar system?
- What is the source of light for the moon?
- How does it move in space?
- How did the moon originate?
- What does the surface of the moon look like?
- What are some similarities and differences between the surfaces of the moon and the earth?
- What is the distance between the moon and the earth?
- How does the moon influence the earth? What is its influence on ocean tides?
- From when and how has man studied the moon? Which countries/cultures and individuals have contributed to studies on the moon? When did man’s firsthand exploration of the moon begin?

Based on these questions, have a discussion about the earth’s relationship with the moon.

Divide the class into groups and assign each group to research one aspect of the moon and the earth’s relationship with the moon.

Next, have students create a visual display that uses words and images to depict the different aspects of the moon and the earth’s relationship with the moon. Encourage students to use different media to communicate these ideas; have them try to include a variety of two- and three-dimensional works and time arts (videos and film) to articulate their ideas.

Objectives

Illinois State Goals:
- State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
- State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual, community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
- State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
- State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
- State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.
- State Goal 12: Have a working knowledge of the fundamental concepts and principles of the life, physical, and earth/space sciences and their connections.
- State Goal 13: Have a working knowledge of the relationships among science, technology, and society in historical and contemporary contexts.
- State Goal 18: Understand, analyze, and compare social systems with an emphasis on the United States.
- State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.
- State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced.

Multiple Intelligences:
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence
- Natural Intelligence
- Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
- Visual/Spatial Intelligence
II. IMMORTALS

Becoming an immortal was one of the principal goals of a Taoist, though this goal by no means defines Taoism (pronounced: dow-ism). The idea of immortality is a difficult one, and it changes in meaning during the history of Taoism. For some, immortality meant actual physical immortality, for others, a kind of immortality after death. In many cases, immortality meant a kind of complex union of a transformed body and spirit that resulted from the assiduous practice of spiritual and physical disciplines that often included moral and ethical integrity. The Taoist seeker of immortality might practice various methods of meditation and concentration, various forms of inner visualization and imagining; there might be special forms of gymnastics and exercise, breathing exercises, dietary restrictions, and special rituals and potions. These, it was hoped, would lead to perfect union and harmony with the Tao and its powerful transformations. The Tao undergoes perpetual motion and change, and the immortal lives forever in supreme union with these changes. In Taoist writings, the immortal lives in the heavens or in mountain paradises (see the slides and discussion under the topic Mountains and Landscapes in this packet). Mountain paradises are often depicted in art as the dwelling places of immortals; indeed the Chinese character for immortal is made up of two parts: one that means “person” and the other that means “mountains.” Immortals are light and airy beings and often appear in elegant court robes floating through the heavens above mountains or riding atop dragons or phoenixes.

**Slide 4**


Here we see two energetically charged silhouettes of winged immortals, flying through the heavens riding on the backs of dragons. These images are not necessarily Taoist but are examples of ideas and images that were absorbed into Taoism after the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.—220 C.E.; pronounced: hahn). Dragons are auspicious creatures in China, linked with the dynamic and active energy of yang force in the equation of **yin and yang** (pronounced: yahng). Dragons embody the life-giving and life-renewing power of water, mist, and clouds; dragons bring the rains of spring. Immortals in later Taoist images often ride upon dragons as they do here. The “S” shape of the dragons is common in much of Chinese art and suggests the fluid rhythm and energy of life.

The Art Institute’s immortals and dragons were part of the structure and decoration of a tomb. Indeed, immortals and other auspicious creatures, like dragons, tigers, phoenixes, and magical plants, adorned the architecture of Han dynasty tombs. The Art Institute also owns a set of Han dynasty tomb chamber doors that are covered with similar creatures and auspicious designs (look carefully, they’re small!). The presence of immortals and magical creatures brought auspicious powers that helped fend off malevolent forces, protecting the spirit of the deceased.

Descriptions of immortals appear in some early writings. Here is the early Chinese philosopher, Zhuangzi’s (pronounced: jwahng-dz) description of a perfectly realized Taoist sage, a kind of immortal; the description dates to about the third century B.C.E.:

He said there is a Holy Man living on faraway Gushe Mountain (pronounced: goo-shuh), with skin like ice or snow, and gentle and shy like a young girl.
He doesn’t eat the five grains, but sucks the wind, drinks the dew, climbs up on the clouds and mist, rides a flying dragon, and wanders beyond the four seas. By concentrating his spirit, he can protect creatures from sickness and plague and make the harvest plentiful. (translation by Burton Watson)

**SLIDE 5**

*Miniature Mountain with Shoulao (the God of Longevity), the Eight Immortals, Scholars on Horseback, a Monkey with a Peach and a Deer with Magic Mushroom of Immortality.* Ivory. Ming dynasty (1368–1644), 16th century. Arthur Rubloff Bequest, 1995.258

This marvelous paradise in miniature may well have adorned the desk or table of a well-educated scholarly gentleman, a devotee of Taoism and skilled in the literary arts and perhaps the arts of calligraphy, painting, and music. Despite its small size, this carving provides a wealth of detail. The subject is a Taoist mountain paradise where immortal beings and magical flora and fauna grow. Reigning supreme is Shoulao (pronounced: show-lao), one of the three Star gods and the God of Longevity. Shoulao reigns over the region of the southern sky (sometimes called “the Southern Dipper”), the region of new life, and he is sometimes called, “the Old Man of the Southern Pole.” He is usually depicted, as here, dressed in long layered robes and possessed of an extraordinarily large head. He has a long wispy beard and long eyebrows, testaments to his old, old age. Shoulao rides upon a crane, a bird that, like Shoulao, symbolizes longevity and immortality; sometimes he rides a dragon. Here, the crane carries Shoulao above the mountain summit, flying through auspicious clouds. Down below, at the base of the mountain are the Eight Immortals, important beings of great Taoist transcendence. They are not gods, but rather human beings who through extraordinary experience and encounters managed to achieve the supreme condition of perfect harmony in the workings of the Tao. Six of the immortals stand arrayed at the base of the mountain, and two stand above and behind them. The lower six are, from right to left: He Xian’gu (pronounced: huh shyen-goo), Cao Guojiu (pronounced: tsao gwo-jyo), Han Xiangzi (pronounced: hahn shyahng-dz), Li Tieguai (pronounced lee tyeh-gwai), Lan Caihe (pronounced: lahn tsai-huh), and Zhang Guolao (pronounced: jahng gwo-lao). Behind them are to the right, Zhongli Quan (pronounced: joong-lee chwahn), and to the left, Lü Dongbin (pronounced: loo doong-bin). The Eight Immortals are quite a cast of characters and often appear together with Shoulao, the God of Longevity, as they do here. There are many legends about each of the Eight Immortals, and there isn’t anything in particular that knits them together as a special group other than tradition. Eight, though, is a particularly auspicious number and even today many Chinese think of eight as a number of good fortune. The pedestal that supports this miniature mountain has eight sides. (And keep in mind the mirror with Chang E, slide 1, which has eight lobes.)

Zhongli Quan is the leader of the group. Here he is dressed in simple long robes, though he is usually dressed even more casually, with his large belly pushing out of his partially open robe. Also not shown here, he often carries a fan, which he uses to bring the dead back to life.

Lü Dongbin is often shown with a sword. In this Art Institute carving, the handle of his sword peeks out from behind his right shoulder. He followed Zhongli Quan into the mountains to learn the secrets of Taoism and Zhongli taught him the art, or Way, of swordsmanship. His sword was a tool for conquering passion and ignorance, but it could also slay demons.

Li Tieguai is usually depicted as crippled in tattered clothing. He supports himself with an iron crutch (his name means “iron crutch Li”), and he is often seen with a double gourd, or calabash.
The calabash is an important symbol of the Tao and it is also a container that Li used to hold medicines. Sometimes the calabash is said to hold a medicine that bestows immortality.

Zhang Guolao was particularly famous for his skill at Taoist magic. Often, though not here, he is shown riding his magic mule (sometimes sitting backwards). This mule could travel for 1,000 miles without stopping; and when Zhang arrived at his destination, he could fold the mule up into a small pouch. When he needed the mule again, he would sprinkle water on it and it would return to its full shape. Zhang appears here with what is called a “fish drum.” It consists of a long bamboo tube with two hooked rods inserted in it. It is recorded that Zhang could make quite a racket with this instrument.

Han Xiangzi was grand-nephew of a famous historical Tang dynasty (618–906) statesman. He is usually portrayed as a young man playing the flute, with which he attracted birds and animals. In the Art Institute's carving, he is playing the flute, but his back is turned towards us.

Cao Guojiu is shown here as a young man, carrying one of his attributes—a pair of clappers or castanets. He is said not to have cared a whit about money and if any were ever given to him, he would scatter it on the ground.

Lan Caihe is often shown carrying a flower basket, though here he is not. Instead he seems to be holding a pair of castanets or clappers, though it's difficult to tell. Lan is of ambiguous gender: sometimes he seems to be a “he” and sometimes he is regarded as a woman or sometimes a hermaphrodite—a being combining both sexes. He was given to high spirits and eccentric behavior, such as wearing only one shoe, and while in a drunken stupor, he liked to wander the streets singing songs to the accompaniment of his castanets.

He Xian'gu is the only woman among the Eight Immortals and she is often shown carrying a basket of peaches or magic mushrooms that bestow immortality. Sometimes she holds a single lotus flower. Here, she seems to hold a bamboo ladle, also her attribute, that peeks out over her right shoulder. According to one legend, in a dream she was told by a spirit to ingest the ground powder of a stone called “mother of clouds” (some sources identify this as mica). She followed the instructions and attained immortality.

On the right side of the Art Institute's miniature mountain, a deer, a symbol of immortality, perches on rocks and nibbles at a lingzhi (pronounced: ling-ji), a magical fungus or mushroom that grows on certain mountains and bestows immortality. On the other side of the mountain, the left side, a small monkey stands on its hind legs and gazes at a large peach, another symbol of immortality, that he holds in his hands. Perhaps this alludes to the legend of the monkey-king who stole all of the peaches of immortality from the orchard of the Queen who reigns over the Western mountain paradise of immortality.

At the back of the mountain, three scholars, dressed in robes and the caps of educated men, engage in lively discussion while riding on horses; a little boy and crane peek out from behind the hind quarters of the last horse. Perhaps the owner of this miniature identified himself with the scholarly gentlemen on horseback. Such gentlemen often appear in Chinese landscape imagery; there is an association of learning and of the learned gentleman with the Taoist idea of wandering in a mountain paradise.
The center of this large platter depicts the female Taoist immortal Magu (her name means “Hemp Lady”). Hemp is a strong plant fiber used to weave rope or coarse fabric. Magu may not have been specifically a Taoist immortal but was perhaps brought into Taoism (as were many deities and other assorted characters) from popular and folk religion. She appears here dressed in elegant, flowing red-orange and green robes that are hardly hemp at all. She seems to float, as if caught in a gentle breeze that blows her fine silk garments. Three red bats hover around her. Bats are auspici-
cious and red bats even more so. The pronunciation of the Chinese word for bat is *fu*, the same as the word for “good fortune,” and red is an especially auspicious color. Magu’s attendant stands behind holding Magu’s long staff. Hanging from the gnarled branches of the staff are a few colorful scrolls and a large scroll-shaped mushroom or fungus all bound together by a silk cord. The fungus is the *lingzhi*, the mushroom or herb said to grow on special mountains that imparts immortality to all who eat it. In front of Magu is her small carriage, built like a box and pedestal on a pair of decorative wheels. Set atop the carriage is a gigantic strange-looking fruit that squats and spreads under its own ponderous weight. Often Magu is depicted with a peach, but this certainly is not a peach. The fruit is a bright orange-red, decorated with bands of abstract patterns. Is it a gourd or a persimmon? The strange fruit probably also symbolizes immortality. An antlered, yellow-spotted deer turns back to eye his cargo as he pulls the carriage forward. The deer, like Magu herself, is a symbol of longevity and also a symbol of hoped-for wealth. The Chinese name for deer, *lu*, is the same pronunciation as for the word that refers to good salaries.

On the bottom of the platter, rows and columns of the Chinese word for longevity, *shou* (pronounced: show) appear in myriad variations. The style of the writing follows ancient styles that are also used for document seals. Some examples render the word as constellations of stars—circles linked by lines. The repetitions and variations echo the movement of the Tao, which forever repeats itself and yet is always different. Auspicious subjects such as these often appear on porcelain ware. Even on inexpensive dishware one finds traditional images of peaches, bats, and other emblems of longevity or immortality.

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS FOR “IMMORTALS”
*Middle School*

*Riding a Dragon!*
Students imagine that they have a chance to ride a dragon and write a story about their adventure.

Related Object(s):
- Slide 4 of *Immortals Riding Dragons: Sections of Tomb Pediment*

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
- descriptive text on the above image, (see pages 23–24)
- the introduction to “Immortals,” (see page 23)
- a slide projector
- paper
- pencils
- erasers

Discussion:
- Look carefully at slide 4 of the *Immortals Riding Dragons* with the class. Ask students:
  - What do you see? Whom do you see?
  - What are they doing?
  - How are they dressed? What does this tell you?
  - What just happened, what is going on now, and what will happen next?
  - Where might they be going?
Have students describe the image in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Read the information on this object and share it with your students.

Activity:
Tell students that next it’s their turn to ride a dragon! Have them imagine that they have a chance to do so. Ask students the following questions:
- If you rode on it, how would you feel?
- What would your dragon look like? How different or similar would it be to the Chinese dragon?
- How would you climb onto it? How would you climb down from it? Where would you sit on it?
- Where would you go?
- Would you talk to the dragon? If it talked back to you, what would it say?
Have them address these questions as they write a story on their adventures “Riding a Dragon!”

Alternate Creative-Writing Activity: My Travels as a Miniature Figure
Students imagine that they have shrunk to the size of the miniature figures in the miniature mountain and keep a daily journal on their journey as a shrunken person in the miniature paradise.

Related Object(s):
- Slides of Miniature Mountain with Shoulao (the God of Longevity), the Eight Immortals, Scholar on Horseback, a Monkey with a Peach, and Deer with Mushroom of Immortality

Subjects Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
- descriptive text on the above image, (see pages 24–25)
- the introduction to “Immortals,” (see page 23)
- a slide projector
- paper
- pencils
- erasers

Discussion:
Look carefully at slide 5 of the miniature mountain with the class. Ask students:
- What do you see? Whom do you see?
- What are they doing?
- How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
- Where are they? What do you see that makes you say that?
- What has just happened, what is going on now, and what will happen next?
Have students describe the image in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Read the information on this object and share it with your students.

Activity:
Have students imagine that they have shrunk to the size of the miniature figures in the object mentioned above! Ask students:
- Where would you explore?
- What sounds might you hear? What smells might you detect?
- Will you try to climb to the top of the mountain?
- On the way up, what will you see and whom will you meet?
- Will you try to nibble at the lingzhi, a magical mushroom?
- Will the monkey share his peach of immortality with you?
- How many days will it take for you to reach the summit? If you reach the summit, what will you see below?
At the top of the mountain is Shoulao, the God of Longevity. You may have seen him, with his extraordinarily large head, in Chinese restaurants. What will you ask him? Have students address the above questions as they keep a daily journal on their journey as a shrunken person in this miniature paradise.

**Dragons Galore!**

Students read about Chinese dragons and dragons from around the world and write a magazine article comparing dragons from the East to dragons from the West.

**Related Objects(s):**
- Slide 4 of Immortals Riding Dragons: Sections of Tomb Pediment

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Social Science

**Materials:**
- Descriptive text on the image mentioned above, (see pages 23–24)
- A slide projector
- Suggested book(s):
- Paper
- Pencils
- Erasers

**Discussion:**
- Follow the discussion questions on pages 27–28.

**Activity:**
- Have students read about dragons in China. Ask students the following questions:
  - Are Chinese dragons considered to be good or evil? What do they symbolize?
  - What kind of stories did you find? What kind of characters do dragons have?
  - What kind of functions do Chinese dragons perform?

Discuss the answers to these questions. Encourage students to read out loud a story on a Chinese dragon that they especially liked.

- Next, have students compare Chinese dragons to dragons from all over the world. Have them read stories on dragons from around the world. Write a magazine article comparing dragons from the East to dragons from the West. Encourage students to share their findings.

- Ask students:
  - Did dragons exist in the past? If yes, why do you think so? If not, why did people come up with these mythical creatures?
  - Were there animals in earth’s history that looked similar to dragons?

Discuss the answers to these questions.
My Plate of Immortality

Related Object(s):
1. Slide 7 of Dish with Taoist Female Immortal Magu and Attendant with Deer Cart
2. Figure 3 of the back view of the object mentioned above

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
1. descriptive text on the image mentioned above, (see pages 26–27)
2. the introduction to “Immortals,” (see page 23)
3. a slide projector
4. paper plates
5. tempera paints
6. water cups
7. mixing trays
8. brushes
9. paper towels
10. pencils
11. erasers
12. scraps of paper
13. photocopies of the writing sheet for the Chinese character “Immortal,” (see page 89)

Discussion:
1. Look carefully at slide 7 and figure 3 of the dish with the class. Ask students:
   - Who do you see? Whom do you see?
   - What are they doing?
   - What are they wearing and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
   - What colors, shapes, and lines do you see? What kind of patterns do you see?
   - Where are they? What do you see that makes you say that?
   - What just happened, what is going on now, and what will happen next?
   - How do you think it was used? What leads you to believe that?
   - How do you think the texture of this object might feel?
   - What do you think the object is made of? How do you know?
   - How do you think the artist moved while creating this artwork?
   - What kind of tools do you think the artist used? How can you tell?
2. Have students describe the object in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Read the information on this object and share it with your students.

Activity:
1. Ask students:
   - Who is an immortal in your opinion?
   - What does an immortal look like?
   - Where does an immortal live?
   - Discuss the answers to the above questions.
2. Provide students with paper plates and other materials for the art project. Have students paint their own version of an immortal on the inside of the paper plate.
3. Then on a piece of paper, have them practice writing the Chinese character “Immortal.” Ask them to follow the brushstroke order that appears on the photocopy. When their painting dries, ask them to flip the paper plate over and write with a pencil the Chinese character “Immortal” on the
back. Have them do an all-over design, or a specific one along the edge of the paper plate, or in
the center. Then, using a brush, have them paint over the penciled lines. If they are confident about
their Chinese writing skills, encourage them to directly write the characters on the paper plate with
a brush!

- Display plates in classroom and compare designs.

**Objectives**

**Illinois State Goals:**
State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual,
community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate,
and communicate information.
State goal 13: Have a working knowledge of relationships among science, technology, and
society in historical and contemporary contexts.
State Goal 16: Understand and analyze events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the
history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations.
State Goal 18: Understand, analyze, and compare social systems with an emphasis on the United
States.
State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.
State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced.
State Goal 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

**Multiple Intelligences:**
Interpersonal Intelligence
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Natural Intelligence
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
Visual/Spatial Intelligence

**SUGGESTED CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS FOR “IMMORTALS”**

*Secondary School*

**The Eight Immortals and Their Adventures!**
Students read a story about each of the Eight Immortals. In their assigned groups, they create a
story about one of the Eight Immortals and write a script for a short play about their immortal.

Related Object(s):
- Slide 5 of *Miniature Mountain with Shoulao (the God of Longevity), the Eight Immortals, Scholar on
  Horseback, a Monkey with a Peach, and Deer with Mushroom of Immortality*

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts and Fine Arts
Materials:
- descriptive text on the image mentioned above, (see pages 24–25)
- the introduction to “Immortals,” (see page 23)
- a slide projector
- suggested book(s):
- paper
- pencils
- erasers

Discussion:
- Follow the discussion questions on page 28. Furthermore, ask students:
  - If you could walk into the image, where would you explore? What sounds might you hear? What smells might you detect?
- Have students describe the image in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about this image. Have students read about this image.

Activity:
- Have students read a story about each of the Eight Immortals. Discuss the stories that they read considering the characters, the plot, the settings, and the meanings behind each story.
- Divide the class into eight groups. Assign one immortal to each group and have students create a story about their assigned immortal. Have them write a script for a short play. Ask students to assign a character to each person in the group. Have them think about the setting, plot, characters, costumes, and music for their play.
- Expand on this activity by encouraging students to share their scripts and ideas with the other groups. Have students combine the eight scripts and create a larger play on “The Eight Immortals and Their Adventures.” Encourage students to perform their play in class.

Essential Inventions from China
Students research inventions made by the ancient Chinese and create a visual chart that depicts their findings.

Related Object(s):
- Slide 4 of Immortals Riding Dragons: Sections of Tomb Pediment
- Slide 7 of Dish with Taoist Female Immortal Magu and Attendant with Deer Cart
- Slide 6 of Landscape with Taoist Immortals Playing Weiqi

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, Social Science, and Science

Materials:
- descriptive text on the above images, (see pages 23–27)
- suggested book(s):
- a slide projector
- a compass
Discussion:
Look carefully at slide 4 of *Immortals Riding Dragons* with the class and follow the discussion questions on pages 27–28. Furthermore, encourage students to write down any questions they may have about this image. Have students read about this image.

Activity:
The dragon in China is the animal of the east. In ancient China, the four directions—east, west, north, and south—were believed to have magical qualities and each had its respective animal. To help find the four directions, the ancient Chinese invented the compass. Ask students:

- What is a compass? How does a compass help human beings?
- How does it work?
Discuss the answers to these questions. Using a compass in the classroom or playground find the four directions.

Discussion:
Look carefully at slide 7 of the dish and slide 6 of the hanging scroll with the class. Ask students:

- What do you see? Whom do you see?
- What are they doing?
- How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
- Where are these scenes taking place? What do you see that makes you say that?
- How do you think they were used? What leads you to believe that?
- How do you think the texture of these objects might feel?
- What do you think these objects are made of? How do you know?
- How do you think the artists moved while creating these objects?
- What kind of tools do you think the artists used? How can you tell?
Discuss the answers to these questions. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about these images. Have students read about both images.

Activity:
The dish and the hanging scroll were created from porcelain and silk, two inventions of the Chinese. Have students research how porcelain and silk were created. Have them find the answers to the following questions:

- What were they used for in ancient China?
- How did those technologies arrive in the West, if they did?
- How are silk and porcelain used in the present world?
Discuss their findings.

- Divide the class into groups. Have students find out about other inventions made by the ancient Chinese (e.g., the seismograph). Create a list on the blackboard. Assign each group an invention to research. Ask students to address the following questions:
- How was it created?
- What was it used for?
- Is it still used in the present world? Is the use still the same?
Next, as a class, have students create a visual chart that uses words and images to depict
“Inventions by the Ancient Chinese.” Students’ chart should include the date and an illustration of
the invention. Ask students to try to include a variety of two-and three-dimensional works and time
arts to articulate their ideas.

Have students present their findings to the other groups.

The Hanging Scroll of Immortality
Students create a hanging scroll that depicts their definition of immortality.

Related Object(s):
Slide 6 of Landscape with Taoist Immortals Playing Weiqi

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
descriptive text on the image mentioned above, (see page 26)
the section “Chinese Painting,” (see pages 49–60) from The Arts of Asia: China, Korea, Japan.
a slide projector
photocopies of the writing sheets of the Chinese character “Immortal” and “Longevity,” (see
pages 89–90)
suggested book(s):
construction paper 12 x18 inches
craft paper
brushes
black ink
glue
gold paint
paper towels
mixing trays
water cups
scraps of paper
wooden dowels
string

Discussion:
Look carefully at slide 6 of the hanging scroll with the class. Ask students:
What do you see? Whom do you see?
What are they doing?
How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
Where is the scene taking place? What do you see that makes you say that?
Which season is it? How can you tell? What time of day is it? Why?
What colors, shapes, and lines do you see? What kind of patterns do you see?
From what point of view do we, as viewers, see the scene?
How would you describe the composition in this painting?
How does the artist use proportion?
What just happened, what is going on now, and what will happen next?
How do you think the texture of this object might feel?
What do you think the object is made of? How do you know?

How do you think it was used? What leads you to believe that?

How do you think the artist moved while creating this artwork?

What kind of tools do you think the artist used? How can you tell?

Discuss the answers to these questions. Identify the elements of a Chinese landscape painting. Explain their symbolic significance. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about this image. Have students read about this image. Discuss with students the difference in composition, perspective, color, material, and format between a Chinese landscape painting and a Western landscape painting.

Activity:

1. Have students create their visual concept of immortality by using the Chinese symbols for longevity and immortality and the Chinese characters “Longevity” and “Immortal.”

2. First ask students to brush gold tempera paint (diluted in water) as a wash across their piece of construction paper. While it dries, have them practice writing the Chinese characters “Longevity” and “Immortal” on scraps of paper by following the brushstroke order that appears on the photocopies. Next, ask students to create three gradations of gray with the black ink and water. Then, using the Chinese motifs that symbolize longevity and immortality, have them paint their own concept of immortality. Encourage students to use the paper vertically and not horizontally. Then, when the painting has dried, ask them to try out their new-found skills in writing Chinese on their painting of immortality!

3. Now, have students attach craft paper to the four sides of the construction paper to represent the rich embroidered borders found on hanging scrolls. Remind them that the craft paper on the top and the bottom should be wider than on the sides.

4. Have them attach two wooden dowels to the top and bottom of the scroll. Using glue, ask students to wrap the edges of the craft paper around the dowels. The width of the dowels should be longer than the construction paper. Have students tie a string to the jutting out parts of the top dowel in order to hang the scroll.

5. Display the hanging scrolls in the classroom and discuss the designs.

Objectives

Illinois State Goals:
State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual, community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.
State goal 13: Have a working knowledge of the relationships among science, technology, and society in historical and contemporary contexts.
State Goal 16: Understand and analyze events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations.
State Goal 18: Understand, analyze, and compare social systems with an emphasis on the United States.
State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.
State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced.
State Goal 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

**Multiple Intelligences:**
Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence
Interpersonal Intelligence
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Natural Intelligence
Visual/Spatial Intelligence
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
III. RITUAL

Communities, families, and individuals communicate with the divinities of the Tao (pronounced: dao) through rituals. Unlike the rituals of the Roman Catholic Mass, the Jewish Sabbath, or the Islamic calls to prayer, many, if not most, important Taoist rituals are performed on an “as-needed” basis. However, there are rituals that are performed regularly, such as those connected with annual renewal in the celebration of the New Year. There are two major categories of Taoist ritual: those rituals for the living, or yang rites, and those for the dead, yin rites. Rituals for the living are performed to ensure prosperity, guarantee harvests, cure and prevent illnesses, or exorcize evil. Rituals for the dead serve to benefit not only the living members of a family or community but also their ancestors. Such rituals work to ensure the proper release of the deceased’s spirit and his or her ascent into the celestial paradises. The rituals often involve fasting, the presentation of offerings, and the confession of transgressions, in the hopes that any merit gained might transfer to the deceased and incline the heavenly divinities to hear the participants’ requests.

Rituals may be performed for an entire community, for a family, or for an individual person. Often a ritual performance is specially commissioned in response to a particular situation, like family illness, or the start of a new venture. Some of the most important Taoist rituals bring about the renewal of a community’s vitality and energy. Such rituals might be performed when a new temple is built, at the beginning of a new year, or, in earlier times, at the beginning of a new 60-year cycle. In traditional China, large spans of time were measured in cycles of 60 years: after 60 years a new cycle would begin. Appropriately, Taoist temples would plan, organize, raise funds, and administer a major ritual event involving the contributions and participation of important members of the community. The ceremonies might last anywhere from three to five days and entail the summoning of divinities, the recitation of Taoist writings, rites of purification and of exorcism, and ceremonial offerings. A Taoist priest or priests would administer such rituals, and through them, the community would renew its vital balance and its full and hopeful harmony with the Tao.

Smaller or individual rituals might last from one to several hours and might take place at a family home or at the home of the Taoist priest. In some cases, a ritual altar or shrine might be set up outdoors in a place deemed appropriate and suitable for the particular situation and for the particular ritual. Taoism is all about harmonizing oneself with the infinite and ongoing permutations of the Tao, so that Taoist rituals are flexible and adaptable, ready to respond to the needs and demands of the moment, of the individual, or of the community.

_Slide 8_

Garments are a crucial part of any ritual ceremony; they transform the wearers by giving them special form. When the priest dons his robe, cap, and shoes, he begins the ceremonial process, assuming a new guise and acquiring a new persona. This transformation of his body and appearance removes him from his day-to-day self and allows him to enter into the powerful and extraordinary realm of the Tao.
The robe is basically a large square of embroidered silk and satin with a slot or hole cut into it for the priest's head. The front and back of ceremonial robes display embroidered symbols and emblems, each auspicious, that identify the robe and its wearer, the priest, with the cosmic order of the heavens, earth, and water. Cranes, dragons, bats, deer (see the other entries in this packet for a discussion of the meanings of these creatures), and other auspicious creatures appear with the sun and moon, stars, symbols of the various heavens, auspicious clouds, and even pagodas (a borrowing from Buddhism).

The cosmos of this Art Institute robe unfolds gloriously against a light bluish-green background. On the back of the robe, a large circle of radiant light circumscribes a luminous pagoda, flanked by white birds, probably cranes, symbols of immortality. Red, blue, and green circles arrange themselves around the pagoda and represent stars and constellations. Above, between the red sun and white moon (look for the bird of the sun and the hare pounding the elixir of immortality in the moon), three representations of heavenly palaces float atop colorful auspicious clouds. Five large circles surround the central pagoda and contain colorful worlds of auspicious symbols: red bats, dragons, butterflies, and colorful clouds. Red bats also appear with Magu on the large porcelain plate (see slide 7). A talismanic (magical charm) version of the Chinese character for long life shou; (pronounced: show) also appears, as it does in multiple variations on the underside of the plate that depicts the immortal, Magu (see slide 7). The green field and borders of the robe also abound in all manner of cosmic and auspicious symbols: dragons, and numerous precious objects wrapped in ribbons—a sword, a calabash, a fan, books, scrolls, etc. Along the border on the left, there also seems to be a board for playing weiqi (pronounced: way-chee), a kind of Chinese chess game. This game is played by immortals, as well as by human beings. It appears in many paintings, such as that by Dai Jin (see slide 6). The front of the robe shares the elaborate borders of the hem but is much more open in design, embroidered only with a pair of pagodas, each floating atop the colorful patterns of auspicious clouds.

SLIDE 9
Taoist Ritual Sword Inlaid with the 28 Lunar Mansions. Steel, brass and animal (reptile?) skin. Qing dynasty (1644–1911), 18th century. Gift of Mrs. E. F. Jeffery, 846.1930

Ceremonial swords (used only for ceremonies, not for combat) are an important part of the Taoist priest's ritual paraphernalia. Special swords were thought to contain the cosmic energy of the Tao and thus were a complete cosmos unto themselves, a cosmos corresponding to that of the human body as well as to the great cosmos of the universe. Their ornamentation endowed swords with special strength and power, qualities brought out and perfected by their use during ritual performances. Magic swords were incorruptible and permanent, important in the Taoist quest for longevity. Though a sword might rust, its spirit remained indelible and constant.

The special power of ceremonial swords suited them to the elimination of malevolent powers. During rituals, Taoist priests brandished them, sometimes tracing magic patterns, or talismans, in the air. The auspicious balance of energy in swords would expunge demons and other malevolent
forces from any place or person. One of the most popular of the Eight Immortals, Lü Dongbin, often appears with a sword, as he does in the miniature ivory carving of a mountain (see slide 5). The hilt or grip of Lü Dongbin’s sword sticks out from behind his right shoulder. One legend about Lü claims that once, while wandering among mountains in south China, a dragon presented him with a magic sword that enabled Lü to hide in the heavens. The immortal Zhongli Quan, also one of the Eight Immortals (see slide 5), is said to have taught Lü the art of swordsmanship. Though skilled at swordsmanship and though he used his sword to slay demons, Lü believed that his sword was truly a weapon for conquering one’s passions, aggressiveness, and ignorance.

The Art Institute’s sword is an outstanding example of a ceremonial sword. Such ritual objects were often, as in this example, decorated with astrological inscriptions. The sword’s inscription, engraved on one side of its blade, reads:

\[
\text{Qian} \text{ (pronounced: chyen) descends essence} \\
\text{Kun} \text{ (pronounced: koon) responds to the numinous; The sun and moon are imaged,} \\
The sacred peaks and rivers are formed. Spreading thunder and lightning, Moving the mysterious stars; Harmful wickedness is destroyed, Beneficial purity is received.
\]

This is a rather cryptic inscription and difficult to understand. Qian refers to the power of yang, the assertive, and kun refers to the power of yin, the yielding. The first line of the inscription refers to the tendency for qian, which is here associated with the spiritual energy of the heavens, to descend and to move toward yin, the yielding, the earth. Kun refers here to the yielding energy of yin and the tendency for yin to rise and move toward the spiritual realm of the heavens. Yin and yang (pronounced: yahng) move toward each other and rotate around one another; they produce or generate the cycling rhythm that creates all things. Thus, according to the inscription, are the sun and moon (the heavens) and mountains and rivers (the earth) given form. The last part of the inscription proclaims how this auspicious and powerful rhythm of yin and yang, in perfect balance, slays evil and restores the purity of the universe.

Special swords were linked with the stars and constellations and embodied both celestial as well as earthly authority. Meteors and comets were identified with swords, and swords such as this one were often engraved or ornamented with patterns of stars. They were depicted, as here, with circles or dots linked by lines. (The painting of Zhenwu with the sun and moon [see slide 3] has similar depictions of stars). One of the most common such constellations was Ursa Major, the Big Dipper or Northern Dipper. On one side of the Art Institute’s sword blade, the constellations of the 28 Lunar Mansions appear, inlaid into the sword in brass. The 28 Lunar Mansions are constellations situated along the moon’s path as it makes its way around the earth each month. They are called “mansions” or sometimes “lodges,” because they were stopping places for the moon on its journey. They helped administer the celestial and earthly realms, each ruling over one of 28 special mountains on the earth, as well as over corresponding realms in the heavens.

The hilt or grip (the handle) of the Art Institute’s sword ends in a marvelous lion’s head (strongly recalling the ancient mask form that appears on Chinese Bronze Age ceremonial vessels of which the Art Institute owns a number). The lion’s mouth opens, and the blade of the sword shoots out from the mouth like a long tongue. Both the hilt and the scabbard are covered in a blue-green animal (possibly reptile) skin. To complement the lion on the hilt, a pair of dragons (see the discussion of dragons on page 23) climb up the scabbard, one turning back to peer at the other. When wielded in symbolic gestures, this sword would have been a dazzling sight.
SUGGESTED CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS FOR “RITUAL”

**Middle School**

**Adventures with a Magical Sword!**

Students imagine that they are given a chance to wield the sword and write a story about their adventures with it.

**Related Object(s):**
- Slide 9 of *Taoist Ritual Sword Inlaid with the 28 Lunar Mansions*
- Figure 4 of the scabbard

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts and Fine Arts

**Materials:**
- descriptive text on image mentioned above, (see pages 38–39)
- a slide projector
- paper
- pencil
- erasers

**Discussion:**
- Look carefully at slide 9 of the sword and figure 4 of the scabbard with the class.
- Ask students:
  - What do you see?
  - What kind of animals do you see?
  - What do you think those dots and lines mean?
  - What might those Chinese characters say?
  - How do you think the texture of these objects might feel? What kind of materials do you think were used to make the sword and the scabbard? How do you know?
  - What do you think the sword may have been used for? What leads you to believe that?

Have students describe the objects in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Read the information on these objects and share it with your students.

**Activity:**
- Ask students to imagine that they are given the chance to wield this sword. Addressing the following questions, have students write a story on “My Adventures with a Magical Sword.”
  - If you held it in your hands, how would it feel? Would it be heavy?
  - How would you hold it? How would you carry it? Would you put it inside the scabbard?
  - How would you use the sword? What kind of demons would you vanquish?
  - What kind of powers would it have? What kind of magical patterns would you trace in the air?
  - Where would you go with the sword?

Encourage students to share their stories by reading them out loud.

**Star Search**

Students research the 28 Lunar Mansions, Ursa Major, and the Big Dipper and write a story on how the Big Dipper originated.

**Related Object(s):**
- Slide 9 of *Taoist Ritual Sword Inlaid with the 28 Lunar Mansions*
Figure 4 of the scabbard
Slide 3 of Zhenwu with Eight Trigrams, Ursa Major, and Talismans

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, Science, and Social Science

Materials:
- descriptive texts on above images, (see pages 14, 38–39)
- a slide projector
- an encyclopedia
- suggested book(s):

Discussion:
- Look carefully at slide 9 of the sword, figure 4 of the sheath, and slide 3 of the painting of Zhenwu with the class. Ask students:
  - What do you see? Whom do you see?
  - What are they doing?
  - How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
  - Where are they? What makes you think so?
  - What kind of animals do you see?
  - What do you think those dots and lines mean?
  - What might those Chinese characters say?
  - How do you think the texture of these objects might feel? What kind of materials do you think were used to make the sword and the scabbard? How do you know?
  - What do you think the sword may have been used for? What leads you to believe that?

Have students describe the objects in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Have them compare the images and find the similarities and differences between them. Read the information on these objects and share it with your students.

Activity:
- Taoist ritual swords were linked with the stars and constellations. Have students research stars and constellations. As they conduct their research, have them consider the following questions:
  - How is a star created? Is it eternal?
  - What is the difference between a star and a constellation?

Chinese swords, like the example illustrated in the slide, were often engraved with patterns of stars. The pattern here depicts the 28 Lunar Mansions. Have students find out what the 28 Lunar Mansions are. Discuss their findings.

- In the painting of Zhenwu, within the rotating circle of the Eight Trigrams is Ursa Major. Within it is the Northern Dipper, or Big Dipper. Have students research Ursa Major addressing the following questions:
  - What is Ursa Major?
  - What shape does the Big Dipper take?
  - Have you seen this shape in the night sky?

Have students search for the Big Dipper on a clear night. Have them find stories behind the creation of the Big Dipper. Encourage students to read the stories out loud in class. Then have students create their own story on how the Big Dipper originated. Encourage them to share it with the class.
**My Constellation!**
Students design their own constellation and write a story on how it came to be in the sky.

**Related Object(s):**
- Slide 9 of *Taoist Ritual Sword Inlaid with the 28 Lunar Mansions*
- Figure 4 of the scabbard
- Slide 3 of *Zhenwu with Eight Trigrams, Ursa Major, and Talismans*

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts and Fine Arts

**Materials:**
- descriptive texts on the images mentioned above, (see pages 14, 38–40)
- a slide projector
- black construction paper 8-1/2 x 11 inches
- silver sequins
- silver paper
- silver tempera paint
- glue
- pencils
- erasers
- scissors
- brushes
- watercups
- paper towels
- scraps of paper

**Discussion:**
- Follow the discussion questions on pages 41.

**Activity:**
- Have students brush silver tempera paint diluted in water as a wash over their black piece of black construction paper to give the effect of the Milky Way. While it dries, have them design their constellation on a scrap of paper. Using dots and lines, ask students to create their constellation on the black construction paper. Have students use the sequins for the dots and cut the silver paper for the lines.
- Have students name their constellation and write a story on how it came to be in the sky. Encourage students to take turns showing their constellations to the class and telling the stories behind them.

**Alternative Art Activity: My Mini Taoist Robe**
Students create a mini-robe and decorate it with shapes that are on the Taoist robe.

**Related Object(s):**
- Slide 8 of *Taoist Priest’s Robe*

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Math

**Materials:**
- descriptive text on the image mentioned above, (see pages 37–38)
- the chapter “Rituals,” (see page 37)
- a slide projector
- white construction paper 11 x 18 inches
- rulers
Discussion:
Look carefully at slide 8 of the robe with the class. Ask students:
What do you see?
What colors, shapes, and lines do you see?
What kind of patterns do you see?
Who would have worn this robe? For what kind of an occasion would it have been worn? When do you wear special clothing?
How do you think the texture of this object might feel?
What kind of materials do you think were used to make this robe? How do you know?
What kind of tools do you think were used to make this robe? How can you tell?
Have students describe the object in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions.
Discuss with students the definition of a ritual. Ask students:
What kind of daily rituals do you observe?
What is the difference between daily rituals and religious or cultural rituals?
What rituals are observed in your community?
Are there rituals that people from Illinois observe together?
Are there rituals in which people from all over the United States participate?
Discuss the answers to the above questions. Read the information on Taoist rituals and share it with your students.
Activity:
The dimensions of the actual robe are 53-1/4 x 74-1/2 inches. Using a 1/5 scale reproduction of the actual robe, have students calculate the length and height of their mini-robe by dividing the actual dimensions by 5. Have students use two pieces of white construction paper to create their robe. Then, using the calculated length and height, cut the pattern of the front of the robe with one piece of paper. Then, have them cut out the pattern of the back of the robe with another piece of white paper.
Ask students to choose a background color of any hue and to paint their mini-robos with tempera paints. While it dries, ask them to think of the shapes and images they saw on the Taoist Priest’s Robe that they would like to have on theirs. Ask them to cut out shapes with the different colored construction paper.
After the paint dries, they can attach the front and the back of their mini-robe at the top and the sides with glue. Remind students to leave a hole at the top center for the neck. Then, they can glue the cut outs of auspicious motifs on the front and the back of their robes. Using colored pencils and markers, they can enhance their designs on the front and the back.
Discuss the designs on the mini-robos.
Objectives

Illinois State Goals:
State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual, community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.
State Goal 6: Demonstrate and apply a knowledge and sense of numbers, including basic arithmetic operations, number patterns, ratios, and proportions.
State Goal 7: Estimate, make, and use measurements of objects, quantities, and relationships, and determine acceptable levels of accuracy.
State Goal 11: Have a working knowledge of the processes of scientific inquiry and technological design to investigate questions, conduct experiments and solve problems.
State Goal 12: Have a Working knowledge of the fundamental concepts and principles of the life, physical, and earth/space sciences and their connections.
State Goal 13: Have a working knowledge of the relationships among science, technology, and society in historical and contemporary contexts.
State Goal 16: Understand and analyze events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.
State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.
State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced.
State Goal 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

Multiple Intelligences:
Interpersonal Intelligence
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence
Natural Intelligence
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
Visual/Spatial Intelligence
SUGGESTED CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS FOR “RITUAL”

Secondary School

A Poem for a Magical Sword
Students interpret the inscription on the sword and write a poem for it.

Related Object(s):
- Slide 9 of Taoist Ritual Sword Inlaid with the 28 Lunar Mansions
- Figure 4 of the scabbard

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
- descriptive text on image mentioned above, (see pages 38–39)
- a slide projector
- pencils
- paper
- erasers

Discussion:
- Follow the discussion questions on page 40. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about this image. Have students read about this image.

Activity:
- Ask students to read the poem on page 39, which is the translation of the astrological inscription on the sword that they saw in the slide.
- Ask students to write down their interpretation of this poem. Discuss each other’s explanation of the poem.
- If students were given the chance to write the inscription for this sword, ask what it would be. As they write their poem, ask them to consider the sword’s function—how it is used and where it is used. Ask them to incorporate the motifs found on the sword into their poem—the dragons, the lion’s mouth, and the 28 Lunar Mansions. Encourage students to share their poems with the class.

Astronomy throughout the World
Students research stars and constellations, Halley’s comet, and the history of astronomy in different cultures.

Related Objects:
- Slide 9 of Taoist Ritual Sword Inlaid with the 28 Lunar Mansions
- Figure 4 of the scabbard

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, Science, and Social Science

Materials:
- descriptive text on image mentioned above, (see page 38–39)
- a slide projector
- an encyclopedia
- suggested book(s):
Discussion:
Follow the discussion questions on page 40. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about this image. Have students read about this image.

Activity:
Taoist ritual swords were linked with the stars and constellations. Have students research stars and constellations. As they conduct their research, have them consider the following questions:

How is a star created? Is it eternal?
What is the difference between a star and a constellation?

Swords, like the example in the slide, were often engraved with patterns of stars. The pattern on this sword depicts the 28 Lunar Mansions. Have students find out what the 28 Lunar Mansions are. Discuss their findings.

Scholars in ancient China were both astrologers and astronomers. Chinese emperors consulted these stargazers in order to stay in power. Through this need to understand the stars, Chinese astrologers were the first to record Halley’s comet in about 12 B.C.E. Have students find out the difference between astrology and astronomy and research Halley’s comet. Discuss their findings.

Divide the class into groups. Research the interest of cultures other than China in astronomy. In their assigned group, have students research the history of astronomy in a particular culture. Have them find out about astronomical theories and the objects created by their assigned culture to look at the stars and planets.

Using different sources (e.g., print, the Internet) have each group create a visual chart of its discoveries. Have students compare primary and secondary sources for accuracy. Encourage students to try to include a variety of two- and three-dimensional works and time arts to articulate their ideas in their presentation.

Discuss their findings.

Looking at the Heavens
Students research the Big Dipper’s movement across the night sky during each season. They create four charts of the northern night sky with its constellations for each season and create four more charts that depict the constellations in the southern night sky for each season.

Related Objects:
Slide 9 of Taoist Ritual Sword Inlaid with the 28 Lunar Mansions
Slide 4 of the scabbard
Slide 3 of Zhenwu with Eight Trigrams, Ursa Major, and Talismans

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Science

Materials:
descriptive texts on above images, (see pages 14, 38–39)
a slide projector
suggested book(s):
black construction paper 12 x 18 inches
silver sequins
silver paper
silver paint
glue
pencils
erasers
scissors
brushes
watercups
paper towels
scraps of paper

Discussion:
Follow the discussion questions on page 41. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about the two images. Have students read about these images.

Activity:
In the painting of Zhenwu, Ursa Major is within the rotating circle of the Eight Trigrams. Within it is the Northern Dipper, or Big Dipper. Have students research Ursa Major addressing the following questions:
What is the Ursa Major?
What shape does the Big Dipper take?
Have you seen this shape in the night sky?
Have students search for the Big Dipper on a clear night. Ask them:
What happens to it throughout the year?
What other constellations do you see in the northern night sky during each season?
Discuss their findings.
Divide the class into four groups and assign a season to each group. Have students create four charts of the northern night sky showing the Big Dipper’s movement during the four seasons. Ask students to include the shapes or designs of other constellations that can be seen in the northern night sky in each season. Next, create four more charts that depict the constellations in the southern sky for each season.
Have students brush silver tempera paint diluted in water as a wash over their piece of black construction paper to give the effect of the Milky Way. While it dries, research the pattern or shape of the Big Dipper and the other constellations in the northern night sky during their assigned season. Together, on scraps of paper, practice drawing the Big Dipper. Using dots and lines, ask students to create the constellations in the northern sky on the black construction paper. Have students use the sequins for the dots and cut the silver paper for the lines.
Next, have students research the pattern or shapes of other constellations of the southern night sky for their assigned season. Create a chart for them using the same method.
Display charts in class and discuss their findings.
Objectives

Illinois State Goals:
State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual, community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.
State Goal 11: Have a working knowledge of the processes of scientific inquiry and technological design to investigate questions, conduct experiments and solve problems.
State Goal 12: Have a working knowledge of the fundamental concepts and principles of the life, physical, and earth/space sciences and their connections.
State Goal 13: Have a working knowledge of the relationships among science, technology, and society in historical and contemporary contexts.
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State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.
State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced.
State Goal 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

Multiple Intelligences:
Interpersonal Intelligence
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Natural Intelligence
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
Visual/Spatial Intelligence
IV. MOUNTAINS AND LANDSCAPES

From ancient times to the present, mountains have had special meaning in Chinese culture. Taoism (pronounced: dow-ism) has its own special meanings for mountains. As Taoism developed over centuries, it built on earlier beliefs about mountains and contributed its own understanding. Indeed, it’s often difficult to separate Taoist ideas about mountains from what might simply be general Chinese beliefs. In Taoism, mountains are magical, almost sacred places. Indeed the word “sacred” is used to refer to particular mountains, like the Five Sacred Mountains. But the use of “sacred” is perhaps not quite an adequate way of understanding such mountains. Mountains are places of extraordinary vitality and energy; they are full and perfect expressions of the forever changing permutations of the Great Way, or Tao. The energy of the Tao, or qi (pronounced: chee), obtains particularly refined and powerful concentration in certain mountains. In ancient China, five mountains were identified as such; these became the Five Sacred Mountains, marking north, south, east, west, and center. There are many, many other special mountains, like Wudang (pronounced: woo-dahng) Mountain, home of Zhenwu (pronounced: jen-woo), one of the most important gods of Taoism (see figure 2 and slide 3). Mountains, with their special qi, illuminate the magical operation of the complementary forces of the Tao, yin and yang (pronounced: yahng). Mountains join the heavens with the earth and serve as gateways that allow humans to traverse the universe, from the earthly and earthbound to the heavenly and transcendent. Mountains are where immortals dwell and where the magical lingzhi (pronounced: ling-ji) mushroom that bestows immortality grows. Special mountains have many caves or grottoes, sometimes called “cavern-heavens” or dongtian (pronounced: doong-tyen; dong means cave and tian means heaven). These cavern-heavens are portals to the heavens and to wondrous paradises of immortal existence. Many tales record how wanderers discovered utopian lands at the other end of caves.

In Chinese, the word “landscape” refers to mountains. The Chinese word that we translate as “landscape” literally means “mountains” as well as “water” or “rivers.” Indeed, the subject of landscape imagery in China is mountains and water, water in the form of rivers, streams, waterfalls, clouds, and mist. The flat plains of Illinois would not constitute “landscape” in the Chinese sense. The notion of “mountains and water” also reflects the important balance of yin and yang that is the Tao and the Tao of mountains. The hard, upward thrusting force of the mountain expresses the dynamic and assertive, or yang, character of the Tao in nature; whereas the downward flow of water, the fluid almost intangible character of water, clouds, and mist constitute the yielding, non-assertive, or yin, aspect of the Tao in nature.

From early in Taoist history, Taoist temples were built in precarious places on important mountains, and such sanctuaries often appear as part of the conventional vocabulary of Chinese landscape painting.

Slide 10

Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu). Brick-red earthenware with green lead glazes. Western Han (pronounced: hahn) dynasty (206 B.C.E.–9 C.E.). Lucy Maud Buckingham Collection, 1924.239
Incense and the incense burner are crucial elements of Chinese religious practice; this is especially true of Taoism. In Taoist ritual, the incense burner was perhaps the most important implement. Incense was more than a fragrant offering to a god, its sweet aroma lured and encouraged the god to approach the ritual altar and the Taoist priest conducting the ceremony.

This Art Institute incense burner (see slide 10) is earthenware, a ceramic object made of clay and fired at a low temperature, lower than for the harder stoneware and much lower than for the sharp, delicate brilliance of porcelain. Earthenware is a softer, more porous ceramic and a less expensive product. This incense burner was also painted in leaded glazes, which have gained a certain iridescence (a kind of rainbow-like luminosity) from centuries of burial. Some of the glaze has flaked off. Earthenware objects, such as those in the Art Institute’s Han dynasty galleries, were made expressly for burial with the deceased and were for their use and support in the afterlife. This earthenware incense burner is unlike the fancier, more ornamented bronze version of such a mountain incense burner in the Art Institute’s collection (see figure 5). Bronze was a more precious material and was suited to fancier effects. The bronze version, unlike its earthenware sibling, was probably used in life and not made specifically for burial.

Both incense burners depict mountain paradises, the homes of immortal beings and mythical beasts. The bronze version is more decorative with its fancy leaf ornaments and openwork design. The ceramic version is a bit more narrative and descriptive. In the ceramic version, the mountain rises out of a basin, set upon a post as if blossoming atop the stem of a plant. Incense was placed in the bowl-shaped bottom of the mountain and lighted. When the mountain or lid of the burner was replaced, smoke would rise through the triangular holes that pierce the mountain’s decorated surfaces. The rising smoke would coil around the summit, suggesting the swirling vapors of rapidly stirring mists and clouds. The lid is made by pressing wet clay into a mold and depicts the extraordinary world of the magic mountain. Trees, human-like figures (probably immortals) and animals of various sorts appear. Although some are hard to make out, there is a deer, what may be a tiger, a bear (perhaps?) standing on its hind legs with its mouth agape; below the bear, a tiger (?), and above, a lizard of some sort. Behind the bear, stands an immortal, holding what seems to be a quiver for arrows, his hunting bow slung over his shoulder. Behind him, a dog on a long leash looks on. Above the dog what looks like a rabbit dashes away. Up and behind the dog an immortal stands on a ledge and pulls the dog leash taut, while behind him lurks another animal. Below, near the foot of the mountain lies an immortal (is he sleeping?); his head is gone, having flaked away in
the course of centuries of burial. This mountain paradise abounds in events that would perhaps
stir the spirit of the deceased in his or her tomb.

**Slide 11**

*Horizontal Stone with Large White Veins.* Ying limestone. Huanghuali wood (stand). Gift of Ian and Susan Wilson, 1999.842

This is an example of a scholar’s stone or “spirit stone,” one of the sort collected by Chinese
emperors and educated gentlemen for centuries, but especially during the Ming (1368–1644) and
Qing (pronounced: ching; 1644–1911) dynasties. Such stones and even larger, monumental rocks
were dredged up from famous lakes. Large examples were set in estate and imperial gardens; the
smaller stones became prize possessions in the scholarly or imperial study. Such stones rested on
stands and decorated the tabletops of the connoisseur, philosopher, poet, artist, and aesthete.
They were admired for their raw, awkward, and natural beauty. These stones were thought to be
embodiments of natural energy, qi (pronounced: chee), the energy of the Tao in nature. On a
smaller scale, they corresponded to the grand structures of mountains. To own such stones was to
have in one’s presence the vitality and power of the mountains in nature. “Spirit stones” became
places for imaginary wandering and many were given special names based upon their shape and
configuration. Like this one, the stones often were of limestone. While it was preferrable to find a
completely natural stone, it was not objectionable to have a stone’s particular character
“enhanced” by a bit of artifice (a chisel here, a chisel there...).

The Art Institute’s stone emerges in flat ridges at the left end, ridges that begin to twist and
stretch, first down toward the right and then back up in the opposite direction, turning into a
churning squared peak that aspires towards the heavens. Sharp ridges, notches, and cuts give the
sense that the stone is born of movement and growth. The veining and subtle changes of tone and
shape create shifting effects of color and light. The stone lives and breathes like a living sculpture,
like the frozen energy of growth, the qi that is the way of the Tao.

**Slide 12**

*Brush Holder (Bitong, pronounced: bee-toong) Depicting a Taoist Paradise*

“Spinach” Jade (nephrite) Qing dynasty (1644–1911), Qianlong (pronounced: chyen-loong) period, dated 1795
Palmer Bequest, 1967.88

From early in Chinese history, jade was valued as a precious stone. Archaeologists have found jade
artifacts in elaborate Neolithic burials, dating back to 5,000–4,000 B.C.E. But the Chinese word for
jade was originally a general term for any kind of hard, warm, precious stone. Many of the early
jades were a mineral called nephrite. The Art Institute has an excellent collection of early Chinese
jades, and many of the Neolithic and Bronze Age examples are of nephrite. Later jades are more
commonly jadeite; most of the modern jades one finds in shops are jadeite.

Jade is an extremely hard stone and very difficult to work. Premodern jade workers did not carve
jade but worked it with water and abrasive grit applied with tools that sawed, ground, and drilled.
It was not until the development of tools made of hard metal alloys that jade could be carved.

From ancient times, it seems that jade had important value in Chinese burials of the high-ranking
deceased. Neolithic burials have turned up evidence that small implements of jade were inserted
into the orifices of the deceased, and many high-ranking deceased were buried atop ritual imple-
mants of jade. During the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.), a number of high-ranking persons,
both men and women, were interred in complete suits of jade. Some dozen or so such suits have been excavated. These suits were made of thousands of jade plaques, drilled with holes and stitched together, sometimes with gold thread. It was thought that jade could preserve or perhaps transform the physical body, enabling it to become immortal. From this, one can understand the importance of jade for Taoism. Jade also was associated with the magic and power of mountains and mountain paradises. One finds “jade mountains” or “floating jade mountains,” usually painted in mineral greens and blues, a common subject of Chinese landscape painting.

As the tool for writing and painting, the brush played a crucial role in Chinese culture. Along with the other implements of writing and painting—ink, stones for grinding ink, brush washers, brush rests, brush holders, and seals—brushes became emblems of the profoundly learned person. It was by means of brush and ink that the calligrapher and painter could render in writing and imagery the rhythms of the universe and of one’s own harmony with the universe. In Taoist thinking, the character of one’s writing could fully express the creative power of the Tao. Indeed, many Taoist talismans consist of mysterious writing.

The Art Institute’s brush holder recreates a fantastic universe of mountains and caverns—a magical paradise far away from the fetters of what was called “the dusty world,” where immortal beings, perfect in the Tao, passed their unending days. Paradise unfolds in layers of sharply cut cliffs and ridges and actually appears to be a series of three large caverns. Caverns, often called “grotto heavens” or “cavern heavens,” were magical gateways that led to paradises within the mountain. Grotto heavens were also portals to the celestial realm, well above and beyond the messy world of mere mortals.

As we wander through this paradise of jade mountains, we pass through the caves. In one, we happen upon a densely packed view of a double-eaved pavilion, partially hidden, that looks out onto a vista of sharp rocks, hanging from the heavens (or the ceiling of the cave?), a stream pushes back to a distant, gushing waterfall. A boy enters at the lower right, strolling across a stone bridge. Perhaps he came down from the stony ledge behind him, for high up above and behind him, a set of stairs, hidden among the branches of a pine tree, suggests a path. The boy walks to the right, looking out toward us, a hoe resting on his left shoulder. Hanging from the handle of the hoe is a small basket holding what seem to be flowers.

Wandering right, we enter a second grotto. Here, two bald old men with beards and caps—immortals—engage in lively conversation. The man on the left wields a staff, while the other holds a large fruit that may be a persimmon. It doesn't look like a peach. Beside them, three glorious pine trees fill the space of the grotto. The pine, an evergreen tree, often full of knots and gnarled with age, symbolizes endurance, perseverance, and longevity—an appropriate reference to a Taoist immortal’s paradise. Hidden behind the tallest pine—the one in the center—a set of steps leads to a mostly obscured pavilion. Its double eaves peek out from behind a rock wall.

Finally, we reach the last grotto. A large woman with double-knotted hair strolls in below walking right. She carries a basket of flowers. Lower, and in front of her on the same path, two old men encounter each other. One is bald and presents a large fruit to the other. His friend wears a broad-brimmed hat and holds a flower branch. Directly above them, two gentlemen—two more revered senior citizens of the mountain paradise—cross a natural stone bridge. One walks with a long staff and the other has a calabash (a double-sphered gourd) strapped to his back. Behind these two old men, yet another pavilion appears, partly hidden by the branches of a large pine. The right side of this third grotto is filled with the branches of two large pines. To the right, standing among the
lush branches, an old man holds a large peach while his youthful attendant stands by, grasping a branch with peaches.

The top of the rim of this brush holder has an inscription composed by the Qianlong Emperor, who reigned from 1736–1795. The emperor identifies the piece of jade used for this brush holder with Mount Kunlun (pronounced: koon-loon), the mythical mountains of immortals to the West and suggests that the spirit of the immortal is transmitted within the stone itself.

Spring is a favorite theme in Chinese landscape painting: it heralds renewal and new life. We know that it is early spring because the prunus trees, commonly called plum trees, are in blossom. Chinese tradition identifies the prunus or plum blossom with the advent of spring; its appearance in paintings tells us that the new season has arrived. Yuan Jiang gives us a grand view of a fancy garden, set among mountains and mist. This is a common subject of landscape painting and depicts a perfectly harmonious life among magical mountains. In a sense, the garden-mountain scene refers to a kind of paradise. Though the people who live in this setting probably are not Taoist immortals, they, in a general way, allude to a similar kind of perfection.

The setting is quite fancy. The buildings—a large study, adjoining covered walkways, a small courtyard—reflect palace architecture. The strange rocks and rather fantastical prunus trees suggest the garden of a fabulous estate; perhaps this is an imperial garden. Some imperial gardens were enormous, spanning thousands of acres and mapped with man-made mountains. The strange, cloud-shaped rocks in the courtyard are the kin of the smaller “spirit stones” (see slide 11) that adorned the tables of elegant gentlemen. Likewise, the mountains above the garden setting find their ancestors in the mountainous paradises of early mountain-shaped incense burners (see slide 10 and figure 5).

The garden invites us to share in the activities of the people who live there. Out in the courtyard, a young gentleman and a servant arrange some branches of prunus blossoms in a vase. In the study, which has a wonderful view of the courtyard, an elegantly attired gentleman watches intently, even anxiously, as a female attendant manipulates what seem to be tea leaves dumped upon a low table.
The gentleman (who is of the scholarly sort, given the stacks of books in boxes that line the shelves behind him) raises his feet to the table. If they are indeed tea leaves piled on the table, then perhaps he’s “reading” the tea leaves, an old form of fortune telling. The reading of tea leaves was one form of divination practised in traditional China, though the common method was to drain the cup of tea and then read the arrangement of leaves that remained in the cup. Though there isn’t necessarily a particular story depicted in this painting, we take close interest in the gestures and activities of the people who live here.

The extraordinary prunus trees are large and old; their old branches give birth to fresh new blossoms. New life always comes from old, and old and new always live together and illuminate each other. This is part of the Way of nature, part of the rhythm of life and the Taoist balance of yin and yang. The prunus trees grow tall and stretch beyond the confines of the garden, leading us up through mist into the mountains high above. As our gaze wanders from the courtyard to the trees and through the mist to the mountains, we make a kind of journey from the realm of the earth to that of the heavens. In viewing the landscape painting, we, in a sense, traverse the vertical expansion of the cosmos, from the earth to the heavens. Perhaps the painting can be a gateway, just as the mountain is in Taoism. If the mountain in Taoism links heaven and earth, the painting likewise bridges this universe by recreating for us this very experience.

Like the Tao, the world of this mountain-garden is forever shifting. Our point of view is never fixed: one shape leads to the next, the form of a rock twists and turns, mist flows over the surface of the painting, and the mountains climb heavenward like a dragon. The world of nature is full of vibrant, changing energy, qi, and the ever-changing forms of nature give expression to the constantly changing power of the Great Way, the Tao.

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS FOR “MOUNTAINS AND LANDSCAPES”

Middle School

Nature Poem
Students create a poem using a list of details they observe in two images of landscapes and then write a poem imagining entering that landscape.

Related Object(s):
1. Slide 12 of Brush Holder (Bitong) Depicting a Taoist Paradise
2. Slide 10 of Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu)
3. Figure 5 of Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu)

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
1. descriptive texts on the images mentioned above, (see pages 49–54)
2. the introduction to “Mountains and Landscape,” (see page 49)
3. a slide projector
4. a thesaurus

Discussion:
Look carefully at slide 12 of the brush holder and slide 10 and figure 5 of the incense burners with the class. Ask students:

What do you see? Whom do you see?
What are they doing?
How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
Where is the scene taking place? What do you see that makes you say that?
What season is it? How can you tell?
What colors, shapes, and lines do you see? What kind of patterns do you see?
What do you think the objects are made of? How do you know?
How do you think these objects were used? What leads you to believe that?

Have students describe the landscapes in as much detail as possible. Have them compare the two images and find similarities and differences between them. Discuss the answers to the above questions.

Activity:

Ask students to choose one of the above objects and make a list of details that they can see in that object. Then, ask them to imagine that they have entered the landscape. Have them consider the following questions as they continue their imaginary journey into the landscape:

What natural or man-made things do you see?
Which part of the landscape will you explore?
How do you feel standing under the soaring peaks?
What sounds do you hear and smells do you detect and textures do you feel?
Will you meet someone?

Addressing these questions and what they might experience when they walk into one of the images have students write a poem using the diamante format (see page 93) on the theme of nature, using their list of details. Encourage students to use adjectives to describe the place and to create similes using “as” to show something special about the landscape.

Save the Earth

Students research how nature is viewed in Taoism and find stories on nature and the earth from around the world. Then students write down a list of environmental problems, research the problems, and write a magazine article. Finally, students think about what would be the perfect environment for the earth and write a story that details how they would show their respect for the earth and help save the environment.

Related Object(s):
1. Slide 12 of Brush Holder (Bitong) Depicting a Taoist Paradise
2. Slide 10 of Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu)
3. Figure 5 of Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu)

Subject Area: English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Social Science

Materials:
1. descriptive texts on the images mentioned above, (see pages 49–54)
2. the section on “Mountains and Landscape,” (see page 49)
3. a slide projector
4. suggested book(s):


**Discussion:**

1. Follow the discussion questions on page 55.

**Activity:**

1. Have students research how nature is viewed in Taoism. Have them consider the following questions:
   - Is nature considered to be sacred?
   - How does a Chinese landscape painting capture this idea?
   - How are mountains seen in Taoism?

Discuss their findings.

1. Ask students to think about cultures that consider nature as sacred, especially mountains. Have students find stories or myths about nature and the earth from around the world. Encourage students to take turns in reading the stories out loud in class. As they read these stories, ask students why these stories were created. Next, discuss the stories and the meanings behind them.

1. Next, have students consider the following questions:
   - Do people around the world still treat nature as sacred?
   - What has happened to the environment over time?
   - What kind of air, water, and ground problems do human beings face today?

Have students write down a list of environmental problems. Ask students to share their lists with the class.

1. Divide the class into groups and assign each group an environmental problem, such as water pollution, the use of pesticides, toxic wastes, etc. Have students research their assigned topic. Then ask each group to write a magazine article on its assigned problem and present it to the class.

1. Finally, as an individual project, have students think about what would be the perfect environment for the earth. If they treated the earth well, paradise would be on earth. Ask students:
   - How would you turn the earth into a paradise?
   - How would you help save the environment?
   - What would you do for the earth to show your respect for it?
   - What kind of materials would you need to implement your plan?
   - What kind of support would you need from your community to carry out your plans?

Addressing these questions, have students write a story detailing how they would show their respect for the earth and help save the environment.
**A Poetic Landscape**

Have students think about their personal definition of a landscape and create a hanging scroll with a painted version as well as a poem.

**Related Object(s):**
- Figure 6 of *Early Spring Landscape*

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts and Fine Arts

**Materials:**
- descriptive text on the image mentioned above, (see pages 53–54)
- a slide projector
- 12 x 18 inches white construction paper
- black ink
- gold tempera paint
- pencils
- erasers
- plastic cups to hold water
- paint brushes
- mixing trays
- glue
- wooden dowels
- a string
- craft paper

**Discussion:**
- Look carefully at figure 6 of the landscape with the class. Ask students:
  - What do you see?
  - Where is this scene taking place? What do you see that makes you say that? What season is it? How can you tell?
  - What shapes, patterns, and lines do you see?
  - From what point of view do we, as viewers, see the scene?
  - How would you describe the composition in this painting?
  - How does the artist use proportion?
  - How do you think the artist moved while creating this artwork? What kind of tools do you think the artist used?
  - How do you think the texture of this object might feel? What do you think the object is made of? How do you know?

Have students describe the images in as much detail as possible. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Read the information on this object and share it with your students.

**Activity:**
- The word for landscape in Chinese is *shanshui* (pronounced: shan-shway), meaning mountain and water. Have students think about the following questions:
  - What is your personal definition of landscape?
  - What kind of natural or man-made elements might you include in it?

Discuss the answers to the above questions.
- Provide students with white construction paper and ask them to paint their definition of a landscape. First, have students brush gold tempera paint diluted in water as a wash across their white construction paper. While it dries, using black ink, ask students to create three different gradations...
of gray. Using the black and the different grays they created, have them paint their definition of landscape.

1. Remind them to leave a two-inch border on either side and a three-inch border on the top and bottom. Ask students to cut out pieces of craft paper and paste them onto the edges of the painting as in the illustration of the hanging scroll.

2. Encourage students to include the poem that they wrote earlier for the creative-writing exercise (see page 55). Or have them write a totally new poem on their definition of a landscape. Follow the instructions on page 55. First have students write it out on a piece of paper. Then ask them to copy it in their best handwriting onto their painting.

3. Finally, have students attach two wooden dowels to the top and bottom of the painting. Ask students to cover them fully with the craft paper. The width of the dowels should be longer than the 12-inch construction paper. Have students tie the string to the jutting out parts of the dowel in order to hang the hanging scroll.

4. Discuss the definitions and poems with the class.

**Objectives**

**Illinois State Goals:**
State Goal 1: Read with Understanding and fluency.
State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual, community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.
State Goal 12: Have a working knowledge of the fundamental concepts and principles of the life, physical, and earth/space sciences and their connections.
State Goal 13: Have a working knowledge of the relationships among science, technology, and society in historical and contemporary contexts.
State Goal 17: Demonstrate a knowledge of world geography, as well as an understanding of the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.
State Goal 25: Know the language of the arts.
State Goal 26: Through creating and performing understand how works of art are produced.
State Goal 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past, and present.

**Multiple Intelligences:**
Interpersonal Intelligence
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Natural Intelligence
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
Visual/spatial Intelligence
A Poem about Nature
Students read a Chinese poem on nature and write their own poem.

Related Object(s):
- Slide 12 of Brush Holder (Bitong) Depicting a Taoist Paradise
- Slide 10 of Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu)
- Figure 5 of the Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu)

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
- descriptive texts on the images mentioned above, (see pages 49–54)
- the introduction to “Mountains and Landscape,” (see page 49)
- a slide projector

Discussion:
- Repeat the discussion on page 55. Then, encourage students to write down any questions they may have about these images. Have students read about these images.

Activity:
- Read the poem below by Li Bo, a famous Tang dynasty poet.

  Dialogue in the Mountains
  You ask me why I lodge in these emerald hills;
  I laugh, don’t answer—my heart is at peace.
  Peach blossoms and flowing waters
  go off to mysterious dark,
  And there is another world,
  not of mortal men.

  —Li Bo (From Steven Owen’s The Great Age of Chinese Poetry: The High Tang, p.136)

  Ask students:
  What kind of a landscape is Li Bo describing?
  What does Li Bo mean by the second line? Why is his “heart at peace”?
  What is “mysterious” and “dark”?
  What is this other world that is “not of mortal men”?

  Keeping these questions in mind, have students write down their interpretation of this poem by Li Bo. Encourage students to share their interpretations.

  Ask students to choose one of the above objects and make a list of details that they can see in that object’s landscape. Then, ask them to imagine that they have entered the landscape. Have them consider the following questions as they continue their imaginary journey into the landscape:
  What natural or man-made things do you see?
  Which part of the landscape will you explore?
  How do you feel standing under the soaring peaks?
  What sounds do you hear, smells do you detect, and textures do you feel?
  Will you meet someone?

  Addressing these questions and asking what they might experience when they imagine walking into
one of the landscapes, have students write a poem using the diamante format (see page 93) on the theme of nature using their list of details. Encourage students to use adjectives to describe the place and to create similes using “like” or “as” to show something special about the landscape.

**Picking Stones**

Students research limestone and jade, then collect stones, examine them closely, and create a display box for the class.

**Related Object(s):**
- Slide 11 of *Horizontal Stone with Large White Veins*
- Slide 12 of *Brush Holder (Bitong) Depicting a Taoist Paradise*

**Subject Areas:** English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Science

**Materials:**
- descriptive texts on the images mentioned above, (see pages 51–53)
- a slide projector
- a piece of limestone and jade
- a microscope or a magnifying glass
- different kinds of stones, pebbles, and sand
- an encyclopedia
- suggested book(s):

**Discussion:**
- Look carefully at slide 11 of the stone and slide 12 of the brush holder. Ask students:
  - *What do you see?*
  - *What colors, shapes, and lines do you see?*
  - *What kind of patterns do you see?*
  - *How do you think the texture of these objects might feel? What do you think these object are made of? How do you know?*
  - *How do you think they were used? What leads you to believe that?*
  - *How do you think the artist moved while creating this artwork? What kind of tools do you think the artist used? How can you tell?*

Have students describe the objects in as much detail as possible. Have them compare the two images and find the similarities and differences between them. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about this image. Have students read about this image.

**Activity:**
- Have students research limestone and jade. Ask students to consider the following questions:
  - *What are their origins? Where are they found?*
  - *What are their physical and chemical characteristics?*
  - *How has limestone helped us to find out about the Earth’s chronology and development?*
  - *What is the commercial importance of these stones?*

Discuss their findings.
Next, have students collect different kinds of stones, pebbles, and sand from your school, home gardens, beaches, or a nearby park. Ask students to write down the characteristics of the stones they collected. Have them think about the natural process that may have changed the surfaces of the stones. Ask students to look up the definitions for stones, pebbles, minerals, and sand, and consider their differences. Have them look at their findings more closely and see what else they could find out about the stones using a microscope or a magnifying glass. Ask students to research and try to find out the names of the examples they have collected.

Have students choose the best examples and make a display box for the class.

**Alternative Research Activity: The Landscape of the World**

Students research the topography of China and label topographic features on their maps of China (see page 79). Then, students research the topography of the United States and label their maps. Finally, students research different geologic formations on the earth and conduct research on them.

**Related Object(s):**
- Slide 12 of Brush Holder (Bitong) Depicting a Taoist Paradise
- Figure 6 of Early Spring Landscape
- Slide 10 of Mountain-Shaped Incense Burner (Boshan Xianglu)

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts, Fine Arts, and Science

**Materials:**
- descriptive texts on the images mentioned above, (see pages 49–54)
- a slide projector
- suggested book(s):
- an encyclopedia
- a world map
- photocopies of the map of China, (see page 79)
- a map of Illinois
- a map of the United States
- photocopies of a map of the United States

**Discussion:**
- Look carefully at slide 12 of the brush holder, slide 10 of the incense burner, and figure 6 of the landscape.
  - What do you see? Whom do you see?
  - What are they doing?
  - How are they dressed and what are they holding? What does this tell you?
  - Where is the scene taking place? What do you see that makes you say that?
  - What season is it? How can you tell?
  - What colors, shapes, and lines do you see? What kind of patterns do you see?

Have students describe the objects in as much detail as possible. Have them compare the objects and find similarities and differences between them. Discuss the answers to the above questions. Encourage students to write down any questions they may have about these images. Have students read about these images.
Activity:
1. Ask students what they think China’s topography looks like when they look at artwork that depicts the landscape of China (for example slides 12 & 10 and figure 5). Ask students:
   - What types of foliage do you see?
   - What kind of mountains do you see?
   - What are the elements of a Chinese landscape?
   - Were Chinese artists accurate or imaginative when they depicted China’s landscape?
Discuss the answers to these questions.

1. Have students locate China on a world map. Photocopy the map of China on page 79 and hand it out to students. Have students find out what the terrain and vegetation is like in China and what the important rivers and mountain ranges are. Discuss their findings. Ask them to color and label their maps with this information.

1. Ask students if Illinois is flat or mountainous. Have them find important geographic features in this state. Look at a map of Illinois together. Discuss their findings.

1. Ask students what the topography of the United States looks like. Together, look at a map of the United States. Have students find important rivers and mountain ranges. Have them read about the vegetation. Hand out photocopies of the map of the United States to the students. Ask students to color and label their maps with the information they found. Ask students if there are similarities in the terrain between the U.S. and China. Discuss their findings.

1. Together with students look at a world map and find different geologic formations on the earth. Divide the class into groups where each group has a geologic formation to research. Ask students to consider the following questions:
   - How are these geologic formations, especially mountains, created?
   - What are the characteristics of a mountainous landscape and a coastal landscape?
In their groups, have students write a report and present it to the class.

Mountain Water Landscape

Related Object(s):
1. Figure 6 of Early Spring Landscape

Subject Area: English Language Arts and Fine Arts

Materials:
1. descriptive text on the image mentioned above, (see pages 53–54)
1. a slide projector
1. 12 x18 inches construction paper
1. black ink
1. red tempera paint
1. gold tempera paint
1. plastic cups to hold water
1. paint brushes
1. mixing trays
1. glue
1. scissors
1. dowels
1. string
1. craft paper
Discussion:
Follow the discussion questions on page 57.

Activity:
The word for landscape in Chinese is *shanshui*, meaning mountain and water. Have students think about the following questions:

- *What is your personal definition of a landscape?*
- *What kinds of natural or man-made elements might you include in it?*

Discuss the answers to the above questions.

Provide students with white construction paper and ask them to paint their definition of a landscape. First, have students brush gold tempera paint diluted in water as a wash across their white construction paper. While it dries, ask them to practice writing the Chinese characters mountain and water (photocopy the sheets for your students). Have them follow the stroke order that appears on the photocopies. Next, ask them to create three different gradations of gray using black ink. When the gold paint has dried, have them paint their definition of landscape by using the Chinese characters for “mountain” and “water” and the different grays they created.

Remind them to leave a two-inch border on either side, and a three-inch border on the top and bottom. Ask students to cut out pieces of craft paper and paste them onto the edges of the painting as in the illustration of the hanging scroll.

Encourage students to include the poem that they wrote earlier for the creative-writing exercise (see pages 59–60). Or, have them write a totally new poem on their definition of a landscape. Follow the instructions on pages 59–60. First have students write it out on a piece of paper. Then ask them to copy it in their best handwriting onto their painting.

In China, a person’s signature is often stamped by using a personal seal. Have students make their own seal by using the flat side of half of a potato. Outline the shape of the half potato on a piece of paper. Design a seal, then, using an X-Acto knife, have them cut out the design of their seal. Cut away the flat area around the design, so that it sticks out from the background. Have them press the seal into red tempera paint and try it out on a scrap of paper. Then, have them stamp it on their painting.

Finally, have students attach two wooden dowels to the top and bottom of the painting. Ask students to cover them fully with the craft paper. The width of the dowels should be longer than the 12 inch construction paper. Have students tie the string to the jutting out parts of the dowel in order to hang the hanging scroll.

Discuss the definitions and poems with the class.
Objectives

Illinois State Goals:
State Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
State Goal 2: Understand explicit and implicit meaning in literature representing individual, community, national, world, and historical perspectives.
State Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
State Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
State Goal 5: Use the language arts for inquiry and research to acquire, organize, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information.
State Goal 11: Have a working knowledge of the processes of scientific inquiry and technological design to investigate questions, conduct experiments and solve problems.
State Goal 12: Have a working knowledge of the fundamental concepts and principles of the life, physical, and earth/space sciences and their connections.
State Goal 13: Have a working knowledge of the relationships among science, technology, and society in historical and contemporary contexts.
State Goal 17: Demonstrate a knowledge of world geography, as well as an understanding of the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.
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Multiple Intelligences:
Interpersonal Intelligence
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Natural Intelligence
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence
Visual/spatial Intelligence
Adept: someone who is good at doing something. A Taoist adept is someone who has achieved a high level of mastery of Taoist knowledge and practice.

Aesthete: someone who loves and understands beautiful things, such as art and music.

Aesthetics: the study and philosophy of beauty, especially beauty in art.

Afterlife: the life that some believe happens after death.

Alloys: new metals produced by the fusion of two or more metals combined through melting under extremely intense heat.

Altar: a table or flat, raised surface, that is the center of many religious ceremonies, its surface is used for ceremonial objects and for the presentation of offerings.

Ambiguity: having more than one meaning, so that it is not clear which is intended; difficult to understand.

Anthropomorphized: an object appearing in or endowed with human form or qualities.

Archaeologists: people who study ancient societies through the examination of what remains of their cities, buildings, graves, tools, implements, writings, art, etc.

Archaeological: of or pertaining to this special study of ancient societies.

Astrological: of or pertaining to the study of the magical influence of the movements of the stars, planets, and other heavenly bodies on people and events.

Attunement: the state of being in harmony with something

Auspicious: of or pertaining to good fortune or good luck.

Auspicious number: a number that will bring good luck.

Bronze Age: the era in the history of a culture when bronze was used to make tools and weapons. The Bronze Age in China lasted from about 1700 B.C.E. to about the 3rd or 4th centuries B.C.E.

Buddhism: a major world religion, which spread rapidly from India, to South and Southeast Asia as well as to Central and East Asia, based on the teachings of Shakyamuni Gautama, a 6th-century B.C.E. prince. There are many diverse forms of Buddhism. In its philosophical teachings, Buddhism seeks the liberation of the individual from the suffering that it believes is the normal condition of life.

Bureaucracy: in any government or institution, the complex network of managing and administering offices and officers. In early China, the Buddhist Hells were seen as a kind of bureaucracy.

Calabash: a large, tropical, hard-shelled fruit; when dried, the shell can be dried and used as a bowl or dipper. The Taoist calabash is a double-sphered form.

Calligraphy: the art of lettering; in China, the art of writing Chinese characters. Calligraphy was recognized as an art form early in Chinese history. The earliest surviving essays on calligraphy may date to the 5th century C.E., and two of the most famous calligraphers in Chinese history lived during the 4th century C.E.
Cardinal directions: the four directions, north, south, east and west. In China, the cardinal directions start with south and on traditional maps, south, not north, is at the top.

Celestial Masters Taoism (also called Heavenly Masters Taoism): the first formal Taoist religious organization, founded in the 2nd century c.e. (late Han dynasty), by a Taoist master named Zhang Daoling (pronounced: jahng dowling). Celestial Masters Taoism was also called Five Bushels of Rice Taoism, because member families were required to contribute five bushels of rice (a valued commodity) to the organization every year. Zhang Daoling was able to take advantage of late Han dynasty turmoil to establish his new organization in Sichuan Province (pronounced: ss chwahn; in western China, famous in the West for its spicy food). He claimed to have received teachings from the now deified Laozi, who lived in the Heavens and called himself a “Celestial Master.” The Celestial Masters addressed the religious and spiritual needs of the community. Communal rites were performed regularly, in particular, during periods of important seasonal changes. Among the most important rites were those that ensured community renewal. The Celestial Masters were also responsible for healing. Illness was thought to be the result of evil. To be healed, one had to confess one's misdeeds to obtain forgiveness. One way to obtain forgiveness was to record one's misdeeds on paper, along with one's request for forgiveness, and address them to the rulers of heaven, earth, and water. Zhang Daoling was famous for the healing power of his written talismans, and Taoist priests today continue to use his talismans as models. In China, the Celestial Masters remain active to this day.

Ceramic: clay that has been baked or fired at high temperature; any object made by that process.

Ceremonial, ceremonies: formal or traditional set of repeatable roles, actions, clothing, words, and music used to mark and help define important social or religious functions.

Chan Buddhism: a form of Buddhism developed in China that borrows heavily from Taoism and also to some extent, Confucianism. Said to have been brought to China by an Indian monk, Bodhidharma; in the 6th century, Chan emerges as a school of Buddhism in the Tang dynasty and achieves particular importance in the Southern Song dynasty, during the 12th and 13th centuries. It is known as Son Buddhism in Korea and Zen Buddhism in Japan.

Christianity: the various religious sects whose belief and practice are based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Civil service: the government departments that manage the affairs of a country. The civil service was a particularly important political, cultural, and historical force in Chinese history from the Han dynasty up into the modern era.

Codify: to organize, arrange, or systematize. In Religious Taoism, this meant that the organized institutions of Taoism, the Taoist bureaucracy, officially edited a text or document and formally incorporated it into the collections of approved Taoist writings.

Commission: a private or public request for an artist, musician, or writer to produce a work, composition, or piece, for which they are usually paid.

Confession: in religion, a private admission to a priest about the wrongs that one has committed.

Confucius: Kongzi (pronounced: koong-dz, “oo” as in “look”), 551–479 B.C.E. Founder of Confucianism, he was born into a noble Chinese family. According to tradition, he wrote a number of works that became the basis of his teachings. His philosophy, which was first a political philosophy, concentrated on the harmonization of family and human relationships.
Confucianism: A philosophical practice that first emerged as a political philosophy based on the teachings of Confucius. Confucianism offered a model of rulership that emphasized the cultivation of the ruler’s moral quality. This moral quality entailed the correct and harmonious fulfillment of one’s family (extended family) relations. Indeed, the proper fulfillment of these relations was the key to Confucian practice. The relationship of father and son provided the model for all relationships, including that between a ruler and his ministers. These relationships were all seen as hierarchical and mutual. Later Confucianism of the Song dynasty incorporated a cosmological dimension to this basic moral practice. In this later, Neo-Confucianism (so called by Western scholars), one’s moral practice had cosmological implications. Confucianism has exerted and continues to exert great influence on Chinese culture and has had great impact in Korea and Japan.

Cosmology, Cosmological: the science of or beliefs about the origin and structure of the universe, especially as studied in astronomy. In Chinese cosmology the structure and operation of the universe included not only the heavens, but also the earth, and human beings. Cosmology here refers to how each of these realms works together and affects the others.

Cosmos: the whole universe, especially in a harmonious state. Cosmos often refers specifically to the stars, planets, galaxies, outer space, and to space and time, but it is also often used to mean the universe, including the skies, the earth, nature, and human beings.

Courtly: of the court, the official place where a king and queen or emperor and empress live and work.

Crane: a tall water bird with a very long neck and long legs. The crane has long had special meanings for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean culture. In Taoism, the crane is the symbol of the immortal and of immortality.

Cultivation: the deliberate development and nurturing of a particular quality or skill. The cultivation of mind and body through various practices was an important part of Taoism.

Daode jing (also spelled, Tao-te-ching, and pronounced: dow-duh-jing): the earliest known text of the Taoist tradition, which is said to have been authored by Laozi. The title of the text may be translated as The Classic of the Way and Its Power. It is a compilation of various writings collected over the course of generations. The text as it currently survives may have assumed its general form by the third or fourth centuries B.C.E. Though now seen primarily as a philosophical treatise, the Daode jing was most likely a document of political philosophy in competition with other such philosophies, such as Confucianism, that emerged during a period of great turmoil in early Chinese history. The Daode jing comprises poetic passages, sayings, fragments of political treatises and texts for recitation and served as the foundation for both the philosophical and religious traditions of Taoism. An extremely popular document in the West, it has been translated numerous times, even by people who know no Chinese, Stephen Mitchell and Ursula K. Le Guin among them.

Deify: to make into a god or goddess.

Deity/deities: gods or goddesses.

Devotee: a follower or practitioner of a particular belief system; a very religious person.

Diagram: a drawing or plan that shows where something is, what something looks like, or how something works.

Divination: the process of receiving or gaining supernatural insight into the future. In Chinese divination, this insight is sometimes into one’s present circumstances and not necessarily into the future.
**Divinities:** gods and goddesses.

**Dongtian:** (pronounced: doong-tyen, “oo” as in “look”) literally, “grotto heavens” or “cavern heavens,” they may be the homes of mountain gods or of immortals. They also are joined to heavenly residences and are thought to be self-contained worlds. They share in the power of mountains as places of particularly pure energy, and this vital energy is said to issue from them.

**Dynasty:** Chinese history is traditionally measured in dynasties. A dynasty identifies a period of rule by a particular clan or family. However, the names of the dynasties in Chinese history are not family names but names chosen by the new dynasty.

**Earthenware:** Opaque, ceramic ware fired at a temperature between 600 and 1100 degrees centigrade (a low temperature for firing); it produces a thudding sound when struck. Impurities in earthenware clays allow a hard product to be made at such a low firing temperature. Earthenware is porous unless sealed by a covering glaze. The clay is usually red, gray, brown, black, or buff. Mostly early (pre-Tang dynasty) Chinese ceramics are made of earthenware.

**Eight Trigrams:** these are symbols of the cycle of yin and yang energy present in all things, according to early Chinese thinking. Each of the Eight Trigrams consists of three horizontal lines, each line representing either yin or yang energy. Yang energy was depicted as a continuous line; and yin energy by a broken line. Each of the trigrams embodied a particular configuration of yin and yang, ranging from completely yang, with three unbroken yang lines, to completely yin, with three broken or completely yin lines. The Eight Trigrams appear in different orders, arranged in a circle. This circle symbolizes the cycling rhythm of yin and yang in all things. The Eight Trigrams are not specific to Taoism but were absorbed into Taoism as it became an organized religion. It is not certain when the idea for the Eight Trigrams came into being.

**Elixir:** a magical liquid or potion.

**Emanations:** power, light, energy, or some other phenomenon that flows or emerges from something or someone.

**Emblem:** a picture, shape, or symbol that represents an idea, principle, or person.

**Emperor:** as opposed to a king, an emperor rules over many territories and kingdoms and thus supersedes a king in power and authority.

**Exorcize:** to force evil spirits to leave a place or someone’s body by using special words and rituals in a ceremony known as exorcism.

**Fan:** a broad, thin, flat object that when waved produces cooling air. The circular fan mounted on a stick is native to China, while the folding fan was imported into China from Japan and Korea during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644).

**Fasting:** to eat little or no food for a period of time, especially for religious reasons.

**Fengshui:** (pronounced: fuhng-shway) literally, “wind and water,” this refers to a Chinese form of geographical and architectural divination. Fengshui is a practice that helps determine the location and orientation of buildings and spaces within a building so that the energy that is believed to flow through these spaces obtains proper balance and harmony. Fengshui, which is still widely practiced, is thought to help prevent illness and misfortune, and in turn ensure success and prosperity.
**Five Sacred Mountains**: though the word “sacred” may not be quite appropriate, it does suggest the powerful magic of these mountains. According to **Taoism**, mountains are places in nature of particularly pure and magical energy and the Five Sacred Mountains, located along the Five Directions—north, south, east, west, and center—were particularly special mountains. They occupy powerful places in the Taoist geographic universe. Each of the Five Sacred Mountains had important Taoist temples built to communicate with the **deities** of these mountains. **Immortals** were also understood to inhabit these mountains, and one could hope to find on their slopes a magical mushroom or fungus that when eaten would bestow immortality. The sacred mountains are not single peaks but are actually networks of peaks, cliffs, gorges, hills, ravines, etc.

**Fortune teller**: someone who uses magical methods to determine for people what will happen to them in the future. In China, a fortune teller may instead strive to determine the conditions of a person’s present, rather than future, circumstances.

**Glazes**: a glassy coating on the surface of a **ceramic** object. Glazes seal the clay making it impervious to water and serve to add decorative color or texture.

**Generative**: of or pertaining to someone’s or something’s ability to produce something.

**Geomancy**: a form of **divination** that interprets the layout of geography and space. The Chinese version of this is called **fengshui**, and is less about divining the future than about arranging and designing places and buildings to produce the most **auspicious** conditions.

**Hand scroll**: a painting or piece of **calligraphy** in the form of a horizontal scroll (roll). Such scrolls were specifically intended for occasional viewing. They were brought out when one wished to view them and then rolled up and stored when finished. Like the **hanging scroll**, the hand scroll format responds to and participates in the unfolding social situations of human culture. Hand scrolls are designed for intimate viewing and generally only viewable by two or three people at most. These scrolls were viewed in the same way that Chinese was read, unrolled a section at a time, from right to left. Hand scrolls varied considerably in length, some are quite short while others may extend longer than 70 feet.

**Hanging scroll**: a painting or piece of **calligraphy** in the form of a scroll (roll) that is displayed by hanging it vertically from a wall or from the end of a pole held by an attendant. Such scrolls varied in height, depending on the height of the image and were suited for easy storage and display. Unlike oil paintings, scroll paintings could easily be changed to suit the tastes of visitors or different occasions, such as the different seasons. Hanging scrolls were popular throughout China, Korea, and Japan. Scroll paintings were and are remounted every few decades (or when necessary) to repair any damage or wear and to help preserve the image. Slide 6 and figure 6 in this teacher packet are hanging scrolls.

**Headdresses**: something worn on one’s head as an adornment on a special occasion. Headdresses may be signs of high social standing or authority.

**Heavens (heavenly)**: in **Taoism** and in Chinese culture generally, Heaven refers to the sky or the celestial realm, the residence of the sun, moon, stars, etc. It is the complement of the Earth; and in early Chinese **cosmology**, occupying the crucial place between the Heavens and the Earth were human beings. In Religious Taoism, the Heavens, the Heavens, along with mountains, and certain other places, became the residences of various **deities** and of special human beings called **immortals**. The Heavens, especially in **Confucianism**, are not understood to have the qualities or characteristics of a human being or god. Instead, Heaven was seen as a kind of abstract moral principle that bestowed rulers with the moral right to rule.
**Hemp**: a species of plant important for its strong fiber; from ancient times, it was used to make rope.

**Hermaphrodite**: someone born with both male and female reproductive organs.

**Hierarchy, Hierarchical**: a social structure in which the relationships among people are arranged like a pyramid. In a hierarchy, some people occupy higher rank, standing, or importance than others.

**Hinduism**: a general term for the main religious and social system of India that includes beliefs in reincarnation, several gods, and a caste system.

**Imaginings**: situations or ideas that you imagine that are not real or factual.

**Immortals**: in Taoism, immortals are people who have achieved perfect harmony and realization of the Tao. Having achieved such perfection they become immortal. One may become an immortal through various kinds of **meditation** or **inner visualization**, through special kinds of physical training and breathing, through the ingestion of special **elixirs** or potions and through moral behavior. Taoist immortals may dwell in the **Heavens**, in cave heavens (**dongtian**) in mountains or other magical **paradises**.

**Immortality**: the condition of living forever; in Taoism, a condition that one obtains through the achievement of perfect union with the Tao.

**Incantations**: special words or sounds spoken or chanted in the practice of magic.

**Incarnation**: the appearance or presence of something in the form of a human body; a **personification**; often one speaks of a supernatural being, like a god or goddess, having an incarnation.

**Incense**: a substance (or mixture of substances) that gives off powerful and pleasant aromas when burned. The burning of incense is an important part of the **ceremonial** practice of many religions and is central in Taoist ritual performances.

**Initiated**: formally or **ceremonially** admitted into membership.

**Inscription**: a written text added to a painting, sculpted image, or monument. By the 12th century, in China, it became customary to add written inscriptions to paintings. Inscriptions were often engraved on stone monuments for **shrines**, temples, and official buildings. Religious imagery often has dedicatory inscriptions. Inscriptions often identify the subject of portraits or the location of a **landscape**.

**Inner Visualization**: a form of Taoist spiritual and religious practice. Inner visualization directs and guides the practitioner's imagination and intuition to cause some kind of spiritual transformation. Inner visualization may involve a kind of imagined journey or the restructuring of the human body in the form of a mountain.

**Iridescence**: displaying colors that seem to change in different lights, often with a kind of rainbow or Mother of Pearl effect; sometimes caused on glass or metal objects after long burial underground.

**Islam**: the religious faith of Muslims who profess belief in Allah as the sole deity and in Muhammad (c. 610–632) as the prophet of Allah. Islam was born in the 7th century with the teachings of Allah as spoken through the prophet Muhammad. The Qur'an (koran) is the text of these teachings, and its language, Arabic, is the sacred language of Islam. Despite the continuing violent history of the relationship between Christians and Muslims, Islam shares much with **Christianity**. The Bible is part of the Islamic tradition, though superseded by the Qur’an, and Islam recognizes Jesus Christ as a prophet, though not as the son of God. Islam had a substantial presence in the **Tang dynasty** capital of Chang’an (pronounced: chahng-ahn). To this day, the Muslim Quarters still thrive in Xi’an (pronounced: shee-ahn), the modern city that was formerly Chang’an.
Jade: a collective term applied to either of two minerals, nephrite and jadeite. In ancient China, the term for jade usually denoted only nephrite, though in actual use the word for jade could refer to any precious stone. The bright green mineral known as jadeite was imported into China beginning in the 17th or 18th century. All of the jades on display in the early Chinese galleries at the Art Institute are of nephrite. Jades were highly valued by the early Chinese and thought to possess life-preserving properties. Indeed, during the Han dynasty, the imperial prince Liu Sheng (pronounced: lyoe-shuhng) and his wife, Dou Wan (pronounced: doh-wahn) were buried in suits of jade plaques sewn together with silk and gold thread. Jade is too hard to carve and until modern times was worked laboriously with abrasives, making jade production a time-and labor-consuming practice. Ceremonial jade implements have been discovered in elaborate Neolithic (New Stone Age) burials dating back to the 3rd and 4th millennia B.C.E.

Jadeite: see the entry under jade, above.

Judaism: the Jewish religion based on the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), the Talmud, and later teachings of rabbis, learned scholars of religious texts.

King: the male ruler of a territory or state.

Landscape: “Shanshui” (pronounced: shahn-shway) literally, “mountains,” shan, and “water,” shui. In early China, mountains and water (streams, rivers, mist, clouds, etc.), came to represent the essence of nature. Mountains were the active and upward energy, the yang energy of nature; and water was the yielding and downward, or yin, energy. The two together constituted all of nature. By the 10th century, landscape became the most important theme for traditional Chinese painters and remains so to this day.

Laozi: (pronounced: lao-dz) literally, “old master.” Laozi is traditionally assumed to be an actual historical person and considered the author of the earliest Taoist philosophical text, the Daode jing (also spelled, Tao te ching; pronounced: dow-duh-jing). Most modern historians now believe that Laozi was more likely to have been several people living in different times in early Chinese history and that the Daode jing was compiled from various early texts and teachings. By the 2nd century C.E., during the Han dynasty, Laozi became seen as a god and remains one of the most important gods in Religious Taoism.

Limestone: a type of rock that contains calcium.

Lingzhi: (pronounced: ling-jeer; “zhi” is pronounced “jeer”) usually identified and depicted as a mushroom or rock or tree fungus, the lingzhi is a plant in Taoism thought to bestow immortality to anyone who ate it. The lingzhi was thought to grow on the legendary islands of immortals somewhere off the northeast coast of China or on magical or sacred mountains.

Lotus: a plant of the water lily family that grows in water or mud and has many meanings. In Buddhism, the lotus emerges pure and beautiful from muddy waters, because it is a symbol of the true nature of beings, which remain unstained by the mud of the world. The plant also represents fertility because of its many seeds. The lotus appears also in Taoist religious images, having been borrowed from Buddhism.

Malevolent forces: evil energy or powers, the opposite of auspicious forces.

Mandarin: a general term for the highest level of government official in imperial China. The word comes from the Portuguese, mandar, “to govern.” Mandarin also refers to standard spoken Chinese, a standard adopted in the early 20th century and based on the northern dialect spoken around the area of Beijing. It is called Mandarin because the language used by the Mandarin at this time was based on this northern dialect.
Maritime: of or pertaining to the sea, shipping, or navigation of the seas.

Martial: of or pertaining to war and fighting. The martial arts were an important part of some Taoist and Buddhist practice in China.

Meditation: refers to diverse exercises of mental concentration. Meditation may entail breathing or physical exercises, visualization, concentration on images, diagrams, words, or sounds, etc. The practice of meditation seeks to help the practitioner understand the processes of his or her own consciousness and then redirect these processes in positively transforming ways. Various forms of meditation were and are crucial to Buddhism, as well as to Taoism. Contrary to popular belief, meditation does not engender a condition akin to blissful sleep. Rather, the meditative consciousness is both calm as well as supremely alert and aware.

Merit: to deserve or warrant something good in return for your good actions.

Metamorphosis: a process in which something changes into something else; the process of change itself. The Tao is such a process of metamorphosis; in the natural world the caterpillar metamorphoses into a butterfly.

Mica: a silicate mineral found as glittering scales in granite etc., or in crystals separable into thin transparent plates; used to make electrical instruments. Some Japanese woodblock print artists used mica to give the night skies of their prints a glittering effect.

Miniature: a small-scale version of something; often quite small.

Mold: hollow form whose hollow shape is used to make an object of that shape. Molds were used to make the bronze ceremonial vessels of the Shang dynasty. The same principle is used to make jello molds or to make ice cubes: liquid is poured into the hollow shape to acquire that shape, and when the liquid is set removed from the mold.

Mortar and pestle: tools used for the grinding of substances into paste or powder. The mortar is a kind of grinding bowl and the pestle is a club-shaped tool for grinding and pounding. Materials are placed in the mortar and then ground and pounded with the pestle.

Neolithic: New Stone Age; the latest period of Stone Age, which in China, may have started about 10,000 years ago. During the Neolithic period, people began to settle in villages and make more sophisticated stone tools and weapons. The Neolithic marks the beginnings of agriculture.

Nephrite: one of the kinds of stone known as jade. Early Chinese jades are all of nephrite. It was not until the 17th and 18th centuries that jadeite also came to be called “jade.” Nephrite is known for its creamier, warmer surface and color, as opposed to the brighter crystalline character of jadeite.

Nobility: a class of persons belonging to high rank, family, or social standing.

Numinous: having a spiritual, mysterious, or holy quality. The numinous is the opposite of the phenomenal, the world of actual physical phenomena. In Chinese philosophical and religious traditions such as Taoism, the nouminal and phenomenal are not necessarily opposite or mutually exclusive. Indeed, the nouminal is understood to inhabit the phenomenal, or physical, which is in turn seen as the expression of the noumenal. In Chinese philosophy, the noumenal does not exist except in the world of material reality, and conversely, the world of material reality is nothing other than the expression of the noumenal.

Orifice: one of the holes in the human body.

Pagodas: generally, a Buddhist shrine marker in the form of a multi-storied tower, common in
China, Korea, and Japan. The pagoda (actually a word with Portuguese origins) originated in India as a sacred structure called a *stupa*. In India, a *stupa* started out as a kind of burial mound for royalty and was later taken up by *Buddhism* to serve as a shrine. When the Buddhist *stupa* idea reached China, Chinese Buddhists turned the *stupa* mound into a multi-storied tower. Pagodas are usually, but not exclusively, associated with Buddhist shrines. Pagodas, like the Indian *stupas*, were shrines that housed relics of the Buddha or of Buddhist saints. The *relics* were stored in special containers and buried in chambers dug beneath the foundation of the pagoda. Relics may also have been housed in the tall post that adorns the top of many Japanese pagodas.

**Pantheon**: all the gods of a particular religion, people, or nation.

**Paradise**: a perfect world of bliss and perfection, utterly absent of illness, death, or evil. There are many possible paradises in *Taoism*: the *Heavens*, where the Taoist deities and many immortals dwell; the legendary region of the western mountains, governed by the immortal Queen Mother of the West; the Mountain Islands said to be off the northeast coast of China; the paradises that may be found in *dongtian* or cave heavens; or those found while wandering among the peaks and cliffs of the *Five Sacred Mountains*. Taoist paradises were envisioned as places where one dwelt without end in a state of supreme union with the unfolding *Tao*. In painting, such worlds might be depicted as fantasies of mountains and streams, adorned with palaces and numerous paths for wandering. The mountains might appear in mineral blues and greens, suggesting mountains made of *jade*.

**Paraphernalia**: often small things, objects, or implements that belong to someone or are needed for a particular activity such as a ritual. Taoist ritual paraphernalia would include the Taoist priest’s robe, a ceremonial sword, an *altar*, and an *incense* burner, among other things.

**Personifications**: human forms assumed by a god or goddess or by an idea, concept, or value. *Taoist* gods are personifications of the *Tao* or Way and its unfolding. In the United States, for example, justice is personified by a blindfolded woman holding a set of scales.

**Phoenix**: the use of this word in Chinese culture is misleading, though convenient. In China and *Taoism*, the word simply refers to a mythical bird. The Chinese phoenix has nothing at all to do with the phoenix of Western mythology, a bird that arises from the ashes of fire. The name “phoenix” when used in the Chinese context should not be mistaken for the red bird of the sun associated with the direction of the south. The phoenix instead refers to a different mythical bird that is often paired with the Chinese dragon. As such the phoenix is *yin* to the dragon’s *yang*. During the *Ming* and *Qing* dynasties, the phoenix could symbolize the empress, while the dragon symbolized the emperor. In ancient Chinese lore, the “phoenix” would appear, though only on a special tree, called the *wutong* (pronounced: woo-toong) tree (pawlonia tree), and its appearance would bear testament to the peaceful and harmonious rule of a virtuous *emperor*.

**Pilgrim**: a religious *devotee* who makes a journey to visit various, often specifically sanctified, sacred or holy places.

**Pine trees**: various species of a tall evergreen trees with long, hard, sharp leaves, called needles that do not fall off in winter and usually remain green. Pine trees hold special significance in Chinese culture. They are symbols of endurance and perseverance, and of longevity and were common subjects of Chinese painting. Pine trees could symbolize the enduring Chinese scholar or educated gentleman, or they could symbolize Taoist *immortality*.

**Pinyin**: the system for spelling out the sounds of Chinese characters developed by the Chinese in the 1950s. It is currently the official Chinese system and is used by The Art Institute of Chicago, as well as by Western magazines, newspapers, and journals.
Porcelain: a hard, dense, lustrous, translucent white, high-fired ceramic ware of low porosity and thus impervious to liquid. Porcelain makes a bright ringing tone when struck. Chinese porcelains are generally made of porcelain stone (a volcanic rock consisting principally of quartz) and kaolin (a white clay) fired to about 1,300 degrees centigrade or higher. Chinese porcelains were so prized for their delicacy and beauty they were known as “white gold.”

Potent: having a powerful effect or influence on something.

Pottery: a non-scientific name for a particular type of high-shouldered ceramic vessel popular especially in China and Korea; a loosely used general term for ceramics other than porcelain.

Priest: someone who is specially trained and sanctified to perform religious duties and ceremonies. A priest is a mediator between the worldly and the spiritual or noumenal. In Taoist ritual, the priest serves as the medium through which the Taoist devotee communicates to gods, thereby hoping to tap into the power of the Tao.

Purification: in Taoism, purification is a ritual practice that removes evil from a place or person. Purification rituals would expunge a place of malevolent forces thus sanctifying the place and making it receptive to the auspicious powers of the Tao. Such rituals were an essential part of the Taoist ceremony.

Qi: (pronounced: chee) literally, “air,” “vapor,” or “breath,” a central concept in Taoism, Chinese medicine, and Chinese philosophy and art in general. Qi refers to the rhythmic energy that constitutes each and every thing: it is the fundamental energy and life of the Tao, and ultimately is not separate or distinct from the Tao. Thus all things are configurations of qi and all things are the Tao in its unfolding. This is a crucial principle that distinguishes qi and the Tao from things like the “force” in “Star Wars.” As characterized in the Star Wars movies, the force is a power separate from things, though it may move through things and empower them. It remains an external power. This is not true of qi. Qi is not external to any given thing, but is that very thing itself. In Taoism, energy and matter are one and the same, thus, according to Taoism, we are actually qi itself.

Quanzhen Taoism: (pronounced: chwan-jen) the “Complete Realization” School of Taoism. Quanzhen Taoism was founded in North China around 1160 C.E. by Wang Zhe (pronounced: wahng-juh). The word “quan,” means “whole,” “total,” “complete,” or “perfect.” “Zhen” means “truth” or “spiritual realization.” Quanzhen Taoism combined the teachings and practices of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism and its goal was to become an immortal through the attainment of perfect realization of the Tao in oneself. Quanzhen adepts practiced a strict monastic lifestyle, and encouraged women to follow such a lifestyle as well. Quanzhen Taoism still survives today, though it is less popular than Celestial Masters Taoism. The major Taoist temple in Beijing today, the White Cloud Temple, is a Quanzhen temple.

Recitation: the act of speaking for an audience from memory a poem, work of literature, ritual text, etc.

Reign titles: Chinese emperors customarily gave the periods of their reign auspicious names. These are called “reign titles.” In early imperial China, a single emperor might change reign titles during the course of his reign, but by the Ming and Qing dynasties, emperors identified themselves by a single reign title. Many of the familiar “names” for emperors, especially of the Ming and Qing dynasties, are not actually their names but are their reign titles.

Relic: an object of religious veneration identified with a saint or holy person, such as the nails of the cross upon which Jesus Christ was crucified or the bones of a saint.
Religious Taoism: a term used to distinguish the philosophical tradition of Taoism from its form as an organized, institutionalized religion. In the West, Taoism is known primarily as a philosophical tradition, and indeed Taoism is in its history first marked as a philosophy. Beginning in the 2nd century C.E. and by the 5th century C.E., one finds the emergence of Taoism as a religious, as opposed to a philosophical practice. Religious Taoism adopts the earlier philosophical writings as part of its large corpus of religious scriptures. Religious Taoism, building on the earlier philosophical foundations, absorbs various ideas on cosmology and various mystical and religious practices to create new ritual practices and new religious institutions. Religious Taoism established a priesthood, defined a canon of scriptures, imagined and depicted a pantheon of deities, and formulated a body of ritual practices, none of which were part of the early Taoist philosophical tradition.

Rites (also: Rituals): repeatable acts, often formal, that are ceremonies and often for religious purposes. Rites are social performances that communities attribute with transformative power. A wedding rite, for example, transforms two once separate individuals into a union. Taoist rituals are also thought to have transformative power. Through the ritual performance of the priest, the power of the Tao and the power of change itself are summoned and invoked.

Scabbard: a metal or leather cover for the blade of a knife or sword. The Art Institute’s Taoist priest’s sword has a highly decorated scabbard.

Scholarly gentleman: one of the ideals for men in traditional Chinese society. The word “scholarly” here refers to a mastery of writing, calligraphy, history, philosophy, literature, and the arts. While we generally locate scholars in colleges and universities, the Chinese scholarly gentleman generally sought service as a career officer in the imperial government, entering the pool of candidates for office by successfully passing a series of civil service exams that tested knowledge of the Chinese historical, literary, and philosophical classics. Many such scholarly gentlemen passed up opportunities for government service to “retire” to a life steeped in the cultivation of the arts. From the Song dynasty (960–1279) on, the class of scholarly gentlemen constituted the core of the state bureaucracy and soon established what would become the boundaries of proper artistic taste and sensibility. Not only did these gentlemen run the government, they were the writers of Chinese literature, history, poetry, drama, and the tastemakers of Chinese painting and calligraphy.

Seals: in East Asia, these are emblematic impressions stamped on documents, paintings, and examples of calligraphy. Seal emblems may be carved in stone or ivory, and seal impressions are always in red ink. On paintings or examples of calligraphy, seals show authorship, ownership, or general appreciation. The texts of seals were usually names, titles, studio names, or in the case of imperial seals, reign titles. There are cases when a seal bears a short text. The addition of seals and inscriptions to paintings or works of calligraphy was quite acceptable, but there are instances when the accumulation of too many carelessly placed seal impressions and inscriptions is thought to deface the original work. Seals and inscriptions might be added to a work over the course of centuries as the work passes from collector to collector. The study of such seals may reveal much about the history or pedigree of a work. Seal carving was considered to be a gentleman’s past time in China, and many modern Chinese artists still carve their own seals. Seals are usually square or rectangular but may be round or oval in shape. Some are even quite fancifully shaped. The text of a seal may be red or left in reserve (that is, left as the white parts of the seal rather than the red). Seals were sometimes forged (as were inscriptions and signatures) to increase the value of a painting or work of calligraphy, so the presence of a seal is not a guarantee of authenticity.
Silk Roads (or Silk Road): the long and arduous routes by which silk-traders, pilgrims, and others traveled east and west between China and the ancient Middle East. These routes are so named because silk, which was strongly identified with China and was one of its most popular exports, travelled on them to the Mediterranean. These routes stretched from the ancient Chinese capital at Chang’an (present-day Xi’an), across northwest China, into Central Asia, down to what is now Afghanistan and Pakistan, then into India, and westward towards the Middle East and the Mediterranean. The Silk Roads were active certainly as early as the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) and were quite active during the cosmopolitan Tang dynasty (618–906). Buddhism made its way from India to China along these routes and Chinese Buddhist pilgrims also followed these paths back to India.

Shinto: Japanese. It literally means the “Way of the Gods.” Indigenous to Japan, Shinto has existed as a system of beliefs and rituals from around the beginning of the common era.

Shrine: a holy place or site often connected with a holy event or person. A shrine is the site of prayer and religious ceremony. In Taoism, shrines may be part of sacred mountains or in towns and cities the place where a Taoist temple is located.

Spirit: A spirit may be the noumenal part of a life, which upon death is believed to live on in an afterlife. In philosophical terms, spirit may refer to the essential character or quality that defines what a thing or individual is or becomes. A spirit may also refer to a ghost.

Spirit stone: sometimes also called “scholar’s stone,” this is a type of stone believed to embody the same energy or qi of mountains. Such stones were collected by Chinese scholars, hence the designation “scholar’s stones.” Such stones are still collected today; they are often of limestone but may be of other minerals and were often found in lakes. The stones were particularly admired for their strange and eccentric shapes, and it was acceptable to enhance the character of a stone with a bit of judicious chiseling.

Spontaneous: happening done without being planned or organized. The notion of spontaneity is crucial in Chinese and Taoist philosophy. Nature as an expression of the Tao was said to operate spontaneously, that is without cause, without plan, quietly and silently in and of itself. Spontaneity was a value also prized in art, but the understanding of spontaneity is different from that of the modern West. In the 1950s and 1960s, many in the West borrowed notions of spontaneity from various Asian traditions such as Taoism but reinterpreted spontaneity as a mandate to follow one’s impulses often without discipline. This is most certainly not the Chinese or Taoist notion of spontaneity. Indeed, while a Chinese painting might appear done with much forethought and considered execution, in Chinese terms it might satisfy the requirements for spontaneity. The spontaneity of the Tao is not undisciplined, it is also structured and ordered. This is part of the meaning of the yin and yang symbol. The spontaneously changing Tao follows a structure and is more about a state of mind. The spontaneous state of mind practices the Tao with an attitude that is devoid of self-consciousness. Think of a theater performer, performing the structure of memorized lines and gestures but so absorbed into the role that he or she spontaneously lives out the role without self-consciousness.

Stoneware: ceramic ware that is impermeable and partly vitrified (changed into a glass-like substance) by heat but is opaque. Stoneware is made from clay mixed with a pulverized stone that under intense heat forms a non-porous coating, making it impervious to liquids. Stoneware is fired at temperatures between those used to fire earthenware and porcelain (about 1,200 to 1,300 degrees centigrade).
Symbol: an object, person, pattern, shape, etc., that stands for or represents an idea, person, culture, nation, etc.

Taiji: (also spelled t’ai chi and pronounced: tie-jee, “tie” as in “bow tie”) literally “the Supreme Ultimate,” this is the unity or singularity that produces all things and which has its source ultimately in the Tao. In a sense, the Taiji represents the creative structure and process of the Tao. We perhaps know the Taiji as the yin and yang symbol. The Taiji is a great eternally turning circle, in which the complementary energies of yin and yang turn about each other. In this cycle of alternating energy, all things are produced. The familiar symbol of the Taiji did not come into existence until the Song dynasty (960–1279).

Tao: (pronounced: dow) literally a “way” or “path.” The Chinese term tao may actually refer to many different ways. Confucianism is also a tao, as is Buddhism. The notion of the tao as a way or path suggests a principle common to many Chinese philosophies other than Taoism, in which life and the universe are in their essence change itself. The Tao became the central focus and principle of Religious Taoism.

Taoism: (also spelled Daoism and pronounced: dow-ism) may refer both to a philosophical system and an organized religion based on the Way that is called the Tao. More strictly speaking, the term Taoism refers to what becomes identified in the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.) as a philosophical tradition, whereas the term Religious Taoism refers to what emerges in the fifth century as an organized religion. The philosophical tradition is based on the early texts, the Daode jing (also spelled, Tao te ching) and the Zhuangzi (the teachings of Master Zhuang). Early Taoism was a political philosophy addressed to rulers that stressed a life of simplicity and naturalness, emphasizing the necessity of openness and flexibility of mind. It was argued that the tendency of the mind to define, discriminate, and objectify prevented one from fully participating in the spontaneous unfolding of the Tao.

Talismans: objects believed to have magic powers of protection. In Religious Taoism, talismans are written by Taoist priests and are forms of magical writing. Taoist talismans often resemble particularly strange and eccentric versions of Chinese calligraphy.

Transgressions: violations of some order, rule, convention, or custom.

Terracotta: baked clay; clay that has been fired in a kiln until it is hard and waterproof.

Tomb: a place where a dead person is buried underground or housed in a structure aboveground.

Transcendence: above, beyond, and independent of the material universe.

Transliterate: to represent the words or letters of one language in the words or letters of another.

Tribute: honor or homage paid to someone or something. Tribute in the form of goods and services was often paid by foreign visitors to the Chinese emperors.

Universe: all space, time and existence, including the heavens, all the stars and planets, the earth, nature, and humankind.

Virtuous: behaving in an honest and moral way.

Wade-Giles system: an older system for transliterating, or spelling out the sounds of, Chinese characters in English. Older publications in English commonly used this system, and although pinyin has become the most currently used system, some publications continue to use the Wade-Giles system.
**Weiqi**: (pronounced: way-chee) a Chinese game played with black and white stones on a grid-patterned board. The object is to overcome one’s opponent by occupying all of his or her territory. One accomplishes this by surrounding and then removing one’s opponent’s stones. The game is called go in Japan and involves great skill and strategy.

**Woodblock printing**: a type of printing in which prints are made by pressing carved wooden blocks coated with ink onto paper. The flat surfaces of prepared wooden blocks are carved with the image or text to be printed. The image or text must be carved in reverse. The surface of the block is inked and then run through a press with paper. Woodblock printing revolutionized the dissemination of writing in China, particularly in the Tang (618–906) and Song (960–1279) dynasties. Buddhist scriptures were the first to benefit from the new technology in Tang dynasty China; during the Song dynasty all kinds of information and ideas were propagated through this technology.

**Xenophobic**: to be fearful or contemptuous of foreigners.

**Yin and yang**: (pronounced: yahng, “ah” as in “ah hah!”) one of the fundamental principles of Taoist philosophy, the idea of yin and yang predated Taoism. According to yin and yang philosophy, the relationship and alternating movement of yin and yang underlies the structure and workings of each and every thing in the universe. Yin and yang represent two different kinds of energy, two different points of view. Yin is described as yielding, passive, negative, dark, and female; yang is dynamic, assertive, positive, light, male. While the two energies are opposite, they are not opposite in the sense of a Western dialectic of absolute opposites, for yin and yang are interchangeable. Yin may become yang and yang may become yin. Indeed what is yang or yin can only be determined relative to a specific situation. Consider the situation of a lecture, for example. Would the lecturer be yang or yin? Would the audience be yang or yin? We might claim that the lecturer, who is actively lecturing is yang, and the audience passively listening is yin. But is the audience only passively listening? Or are they actively listening to understand? Is the lecturer only actively lecturing, or is she also passively trying to discern whether her audience is understanding her ideas? In this situation, both audience and lecturer are simultaneously yin and yang, not in any absolute way one or the other. The behavior of yin and yang describes the structure of any event or thing; so that yin and yang philosophy may be said to describe the operation of the Tao in its alternating cycles of creation.
SHANG DYNASTY: C. 1600–1050 B.C.E.
The Shang dynasty (pronounced: shahng, “ah” as in “ah-hah”) marks the first great flourishing of Bronze Age China. Much of what we know of this dynasty derives from archaeological evidence; from inscriptions on bone, which are China’s earliest examples of writing, used for divination ceremonies; and from the many ceremonial bronze vessels and jade implements found in archaeological digs, and in museums and private collections around the world. The Shang dynasty is the first dynasty in Chinese history for which we have actual historical (that is, written at the time) evidence. The Art Institute has a fine collection of ceremonial bronze vessels from this period and the next.

ZHOU DYNASTY: C. 1050–256 B.C.E.
The longest dynasty in Chinese history, the Zhou (pronounced: joe) was the great age of early Chinese philosophy: Confucius (c. 550–478 B.C.E.), Laozi (pronounced: lao-dz; the “i” is silent; c. 6th century B.C.E.), who is probably a mythical figure, and Zhuangzi (pronounced: jwahng-dz; 329?–286? B.C.E.) date from this period. The Zhou kings, having conquered the Shang, established the Mandate of Heaven, a principle of governance that continues to resound in modern China. This mandate, bestowed by Heaven (a kind of moral power, rather than a deity or being), stipulated governance by moral quality. Without this quality, a king would lose his authority to rule. The Art Institute owns a fine collection of Zhou dynasty ceremonial bronzes and jades.

QIN DYNASTY: 221–207 B.C.E.
In 221 B.C.E., China was unified by Qin Shi Huang Di (pronounced: chin-shr-hwahng-dee; the “i” in “Shi” is pronounced like “r” here), a king who became (through self-declaration) the first emperor of China. This period marks the beginning of imperial history (rule by emperors, rather than kings) in China. Qin (pronounced: chin) is the source for the English name “China.” The First Emperor established central rule, standardized weights, measures, coins, and the writing system. Some claim that it was his idea to create the Great Wall in 214 B.C.E. to protect his country from invasions. He was a particular believer in the notion of immortality and is reported to have sent a ship of children off to find the legendary Islands of Immortals. He is also famous for his terracotta army—more than 7,000 life-size pottery soldiers that were found buried outside the boundaries of his tomb in the early 1970s.

HAN DYNASTY: 206 B.C.E.–220 C.E.
A commoner, Liu Bang (pronounced: lyoe-bahng), became the first Han (pronounced: hahn, “ah” as in “ah hah!”) emperor. Confucianism and Taoism began to flourish under imperial sponsorship during this time; and Buddhism was introduced to China from India, brought by merchants along the Silk Roads. Trading in Chinese goods, especially silk, extended as far as Rome. The first half of the dynasty was a time of great cultural and territorial expansion that brought China in contact with other cultures, including the cultures of Southeast Asia and Korea. Han dynasty China contributed much that had a continued and lasting impact on later Chinese culture: the civil service was developed; Sima Qian, an important imperial official (died c. 90 B.C.E.; pronounced: ss-mah chyen) wrote the first history of China; and the first Chinese dictionary was compiled around 100 C.E. Many of the ideas and events that became the foundations for Religious Taoism happened during the Han dynasty: notions of cosmos and immortality prevalent in the Han became part of Religious Taoism; Laozi was deified in this period; magicians and adepts of mysticism, called fangshi (pronounced: fahng-shr) whose practices contributed to the development of Religious Taoism were
active and sometimes influential at the imperial court; and the early Taoist Celestial Master movement began in the 2nd century. Ultimately, Taoist inspired rebellions brought about the collapse of the dynasty. Much of the art that survives from this period comprises many kinds of burial objects that reflect ideas about cosmology and the afterlife. The Art Institute has many interesting examples.

THE PERIOD OF DISUNITY: 220–589
After the collapse of the Han dynasty, a long period of disruption defines Chinese history until 589. During the Period of Disunity, the northern part of China was occupied and ruled by a succession of non-Chinese peoples, while the south was ruled by a succession of Chinese nobility, each striving to reclaim the old Chinese empire. Buddhism and Taoism were able to fill important human needs during the time of disruption, and the art of the period is marked by great Buddhist and Taoist imagery. During this period, the practice of translating Indian Buddhist texts into Chinese began. Taoist scriptures were also codified, and Taoism developed into a national religion as emperors were first initiated into Taoism. Fa Xian (pronounced: fah-shyen), an important Chinese pilgrim, was the first to arrive in India and he traveled to other Buddhist centers in Central Asia, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. The great early Buddhist shrines in China date from this era. The Art Institute owns an inscribed monumental stone tablet and a pair of Buddhist disciples, carved in stone and depicted as monks, that date from this period.

SUI DYNASTY: 581–617
The Sui dynasty (pronounced: sway) was first established in 581 but didn’t unify China until 589. It was a short-lived dynasty but is important in that it helped lay the foundations of unity for the Tang dynasty, one of the great periods in Chinese history. The first Sui emperor developed the Grand Canal System, which was a 1,790 kilometer network of waterways that enabled grain to be transported during famines. The second Sui emperor pursued an active foreign policy sending expeditions to Taiwan and initiating diplomatic relationships with Japan.

TANG DYNASTY: 618–906
In its heyday, Tang (pronounced: tahng, “ah” as in “ah hah!”) China was the largest and most powerful empire in the world, and its capital Chang’an (pronounced: chahng-ahn) was the world’s most cosmopolitan city. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, aristocratic power gradually declined and was replaced by professional bureaucrats who were recruited through civil service examinations. Tang power and influence was felt throughout Asia (Korea, Japan, Southeast Asia, Central Asia) and even made its way to the Middle East. The Tang dynasty was a period of great cultural fruition. New and foreign ideas contributed to a rich mixture of tradition and many ideas from the West made their way into Tang China along the very active Silk Roads. All of this is evident in the art of the period, and we can see this in many of the objects in the Art Institute’s collection (which includes several fine examples of Tang Buddhist sculpture). Buddhism was the strongest of the foreign influences. When China began to suffer invasion by foreigners toward the end of the Tang, xenophobic feelings laid the blame for Tang troubles on foreigners, and Buddhism suffered its most serious imperial persecution in 845. Taoism flourished during this period and gained much imperial support. The Tang emperors believed themselves to have descended from Laozi.

THE FIVE DYNASTIES PERIOD: 906–960
After the middle of the 8th century, Tang dynasty strength began to diminish. An internal rebellion, helped by foreign powers, had weakened the power of the emperor in 755. The Tang dynasty collapsed in 906 and was followed by a quick series of military rulers. Despite the instability of this period, it is known as the time when landscape as a theme began to establish its importance and
dominance in Chinese painting. South China began to lead the country into economic and cultural refinement. Rice replaced millet as the staple crop. Lack of a good copper supply led to the brief use of iron coinage and to “flying money”—a precursor of paper money that became legal in the following dynasty.

**SONG DYNASTY:** 960–1279 (Northern Song: 960–1126; Southern Song: 1127–1279)
With the founding of the Song dynasty (pronounced: soong, “oo” as in “look”), China was once again reunited. Not a strong military power, the Song turned to maritime trade. The growth of sea trade led to an interest in boat building, and the Chinese designed the world’s first paddle boat and invented other navigational instruments, such as the stern-post rudder. Improved woodblock printing methods led to the publication of handbooks and encyclopedias that promoted the widespread dissemination of information. The Chinese revolutionized their industries during this period. Their skills in mining, metal-casting, and mass-production reached a high level and produced standardized military and agricultural equipment. The official use of paper money led to a “commercial revolution.” New strains of rice enabled the Song to have plentiful food supplies. Facilities for river, canal, and road transportation improved. The Song dynasty saw the class of educated gentlemen who constituted the government’s civil service grow into a political and cultural power. Such gentlemen, educated in established literary, historical, and artistic traditions, ran the government bureaucracy and shaped a new and potent artistic taste that continues to affect Chinese art today. The Song emperors were among the greatest imperial patrons of the arts in Chinese history. They became avid collectors of art and supported a painting academy. New forms of philosophical thought and religious practice developed as Confucianism reinvigorated itself with Buddhist and Taoist ideas. These new Confucian ideas and practices are called “Neo-Confucianism” by Western scholars. In Religious Taoism, inner alchemy, a form of Taoist inner meditation and self-cultivation, rose in importance. The Song Emperor Huizong (pronounced: hway-dzoong, “oo” as in “look”), who reigned from 1110–1125, believed he was an incarnation of a Taoist god and initiated a new movement in Taoism. During this period several other Taoist movements appeared and popular deities were incorporated into Taoism. In Buddhism, Chan (or Zen) Buddhism became an important cultural, philosophical and religious force.

**YUAN DYNASTY:** 1260–1368
The Yuan dynasty (pronounced: yoo-ann) was a period of foreign occupation. Genghis Khan united the nomadic tribes of Mongolia on China’s northern border and began to push into China. By the end of the 13th century, the invading Mongols ruled an empire that stretched from what is now Poland to Korea, from Siberia to Vietnam, and included Persia as well as parts of Arabia. European interest in China, both diplomatic and religious, grew, and missionaries arrived for the first time. The Venetian Marco Polo worked for 17 years in the service of Emperor Kublai Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan. The second version of the Grand Canal (first built during the Sui dynasty) was built under the Mongols. Many merchants were Muslim, and some were active scientifically, building astronomical instruments and hydraulic engineering works. The Mongols preferred foreigners for government service, and the administration was bilingual, Mongolian and Chinese. The educated elites of the conquered Song dynasty were mistrusted and generally treated as second-class citizens by the Mongol Khans, though some did manage to serve as ministers in the Mongol government. Yet the Mongol occupation stimulated cultural and artistic growth. The educated Chinese responded by looking back to their past for inspiration and turned their energies to art and culture. This was the period that gave birth to Chinese drama and theater (influenced by Taoism) and that saw a new flourishing of painting and poetry. One of the great masters of painting at this time, Huang Gongwang (pronounced: hwahng goong-wahng, “oo” as in “look”), seems to have been a great devotee of Taoist ideas. He was a fortune teller, a specialist in Chinese medicine, and
a devotee of Chinese geomancy, fengshui (pronounced: fuhng-shway). The Taoist Eight Immortals became popular during the Yuan dynasty. The Quanzhen (pronounced: chwan-jen) or “Complete Perfection” sect of Taoism rose in importance becoming what is now the largest Taoist sect in China. The great Taoist temple with its extraordinary painted murals, the Palace of Eternal Joy or Yongle Gong (pronounced: yoong-luh goong, “oo” as in “look”), was built during this period.

MING DYNASTY: 1368–1644

With the Ming dynasty, China was once again returned to native rule. Tribute was received from Korea, Mongolia, Burma (present-day Myanmar), Siam (present-day Thailand), and Annam (present-day Vietnam). Six great maritime expeditions left China during this period, and one even reached as far as the east coast of Africa. In art, one senses an almost exhilarating exploration of new ideas. Yuan dynasty painting had been subdued and austere, but Ming dynasty painting speaks again with great energy and vigor. Ming patronage of the porcelain industry at the city of Jingdezhen (pronounced: jing-duh-jen) greatly developed the industry. Some of the finest Chinese dramas and novels were written in this period. A number of Ming emperors were devotees of Taoism and were responsible for the sponsorship of Taoist temples, practices, and ideas. The Taoist god Zhenwu (pronounced: jen-woo) or “Perfected Warrior” became a national protector. A Taoist temple was erected to Zhenwu inside the Forbidden City at its northernmost courtyard. Ming emperors and empresses were initiated into Taoism and sponsored the renovation of Taoist sacred sites and reformed Taoist rituals. The early Ming energy was soon superseded by a powerful conservatism, echoed in the late Ming, Confucian-dominated courts’ efforts to close China off from the outside world. What we know as the Great Wall actually dates from this period of the late Ming dynasty. Nevertheless, the Portuguese landed in China in 1514, and China also began to trade with The Netherlands in the 17th century. Jesuit priests entered Southern China and began missionary activities. Late Ming self-preoccupation was also accompanied by corruption at the imperial court, ultimately leading to yet another foreign occupation.

QING DYNASTY: 1644–1911

The Manchus, foreigners from Manchuria, took advantage of Ming imperial weakness and successfully occupied China. By the mid-18th century, Manchu China had established a protectorate in Tibet. In 1788, the Burmese began to send tribute; Taiwan was subdued in 1787–88; and in 1788–89, the Qing sent expeditions to Vietnam. In 1791–92, Manchu military prowess forced Nepalese acknowledgment of Qing overlordship. While the Manchu emperors adopted many aspects of Chinese culture and political philosophy, they also actively strove to retain their identity as Manchus. Official documents and pronouncements were bilingual. Nevertheless, traditional Chinese arts and culture continued to flourish, often with imperial sponsorship. Qing dynasty officials practiced Tibetan Buddhism, but they also sponsored Taoist rituals and maintained a Taoist temple in the Forbidden City. Much of surviving Chinese architecture dates from this period, and the great Palace Museum collections are the result of Qing imperial taste. During this period, China probably became the most populous country in the world—by the mid-18th century, there were more than 200 million Chinese. The Qing dynasty is also remembered for its often tragic encounter with the West. Missionaries had an important presence during this time and eventually so did Western commercial interests and European colonial powers. This encounter of East and West often led to serious violence, such as the Opium Wars with the British (1840–42, and 1857–60), ultimately leading to the Chinese Revolution in 1911 that established the first republic in Chinese history.


Fischer-Schreiber, Ingrid, et al. *The Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion*. Edited by Stephan Schuhmacher and Gert Woerner and translated by Michael H. Kohn, Karen Ready, and Werner Wünsche. Boston: Shambhala, 1994. A handy dictionary with illustrations, but for Chinese terms and names, it uses the Wade-Giles spelling system, rather than pinyin used in the Art Institute, newspapers, and current magazines. At the front of the dictionary, there is a chart to convert from one spelling system to the other, though it may be a bit cumbersome to use.


Ward, Barbara E., and Joan Law. Chinese Festivals in Hong Kong. The Guidebook Company Limited, 1993. Lots of color photos, very brief, introductory text. There’s a short glossary at the back, though keep in mind that the Romanized Chinese names and terms are predominantly from Cantonese, so the spellings will differ from those in the teacher packet and in the museum.


**VIDEOS**

*Among Friends: Viewing A Chinese Handscroll* (40 min.)
An unedited documentation of one session from The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s “Arts of China” seminar. A curator takes viewers step by step through the process of viewing a handscroll, with an explanation of the importance of appreciating every aspect of the experience, from removing the scroll from its box to examining the heart of the scroll (the painting).

*Among the White Clouds* (15:43 min.)
This video includes discussions of two important forms of Chinese art—calligraphy and “Mountain and Water” paintings (landscapes). Linear movement and rhythm found in both calligraphy and painting are also applied briefly to a few examples of carved jade, bronze ware, and ceramics. Produced by the Art Institute of Chicago.

*Porcelain For Emperors* (12 min.)
This video, from the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington, D. C. looks at 500 years of traditional porcelain production in Jingdezhen, China, produced exclusively for imperial use.

**RESOURCES ON THE INTERNET**

[www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gthursby/taoism/](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gthursby/taoism/)
This site provides links to online, academic studies of Taoism. It includes articles on Taoist practices, Chinese language, and other Chinese religions. It also features links to online publications of the *Daode jing* and other classical Taoist texts.

[www.geocities.com/tokyo/palace/1757/taoism.htm](http://www.geocities.com/tokyo/palace/1757/taoism.htm)
This site offers background information on Chinese art, history, religion, language, and other cultural studies. The Taoist section includes photographs and descriptions of Taoist temples and sacred mountains, in addition to information on Taoist history.

[www.chinapage.com](http://www.chinapage.com)
This site explores Chinese culture and language, including art, literature, history, and philosophy. It also includes historical information and a time line for Chinese emperors and dynasties. It is available in English and Chinese.

[www.chinasite.com](http://www.chinasite.com)
This site contains more than 8,000 China-related Web links. It includes links to Chinese art, religion, and culture, in addition to current events, business, sports, and travel.

[www.chcp.org](http://www.chcp.org)
This California-based society promotes Chinese culture through community outreach activities and research. This Web site offers information about cultural events and a “Virtual Museum and Virtual
Library” that provides detailed descriptions of Chinese art, music, and other cultural traditions.

www.npm.gov.tw/
The National Palace Museum contains the world’s largest collection of Chinese art. This Web site allows the viewer to explore the museum’s permanent collections, libraries, exhibitions or take a virtual tour. The site is available in English and Chinese.

www.askasia.org/for_educators/fe_frame.htm
Ask Asia provides Asian studies resources for teachers of grades K-12. It features Asia-related bulletin boards, lesson plans, games, and Web links.

www.artic.edu
An on-line preview of the exhibition Taoism and The Arts of China, can be accessed through The Art Institute of Chicago home page from November 4, 2000 – May 13, 2001.

www.artic.edu/aic/collections/asian/index_pc.html
The Art Institute’s impressive Asian art collection includes around 35, 000 objects spanning 5,000 years. This site explores 12 of these objects in detail. Also click on “Students & Teachers” for classroom applications and information related to the special exhibition Taoism and the Arts of China.

www.cmi.k12.il.us/Urbana/projects/AncientCiv/china.html
http://peacock.tnjc.edu.tw/moon/moon-festival.html

2 Students may need additional materials as the project moves along.
The Chinese character, xian (pronounced: shyen; also spelled, hsien): immortal or immortals.
The Chinese character, *shou* (pronounced: show, as in “showboat”): longevity, long life.
Line 1
A word that comes to mind when looking at the work of art; this word will also be the name of the poem.

Line 2
An action phrase based upon something you see or sense in the work of art.

Line 3
A comparison, using like or as, between something in the work of art (a color, a mood, etc.) and something else in the world.

Line 4
Another word that comes to mind when looking at the work of art.

TITLE OF WORK

ARTIST