



MoFA
Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts

TITLE: *Pagoda (replica)*

ARTIST: Unknown

DATE: Unknown

SIZE: Height: 3 ¾; Width: 2 ¼; Depth: 1 7/8 inches

MEDIUM: Wood

AQUISITION #: 88.1.7

ADDITIONAL WORKS BY THE ARTIST IN COLLECTION?

YES _ NO _ UNKNOWN X

Resources:

<https://www.britannica.com/technology/pagoda>,
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/i/iconography-of-the-buddha/>,
<http://fsu.kanopystreaming.com/video/great-stupa-sanchi>,
<https://prezi.com/nzoahwiq3owv/todaiji-the-great-eastern-temple/>,
<http://thekyotoproject.org/english/pagodas/>

Context

In the third century BCE, Emperor Ashoka commissioned the first “Great Stupa” in Sanchi, India. A stupa is a large dome tomb that was created to house relics of the Buddha. The “Great Stupa” held the Buddha’s ashes and was constructed in three parts: a base, body, and decorative finial. The decorative finial is the crowning element located at the highest point of the stupa.

Throughout many centuries the design of the stupa structure evolved from the rounded monument to the multi-storied structure now known as the pagoda. Constructed and adapted throughout East Asia, the common building materials consist of brick, wood, or stone. Pagodas also range in a variety of sizes. Some are towers with high reaching crowning pieces and others are short. Today any Pagoda is a pilgrimage site.



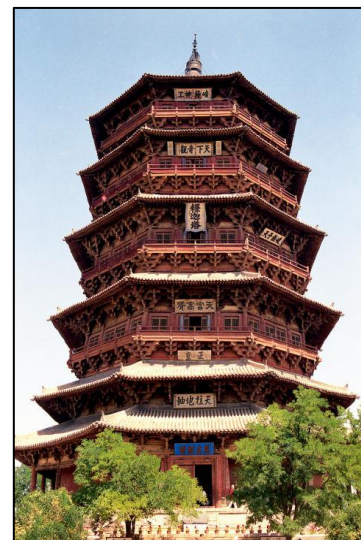
The Great Stupa at Sanchi

Sakyamuni Pagoda of Fogong Temple

The wooden pagoda in Yingxian, China is the oldest tiered structure in the world. Built in 1056, the nine-story building is 67.31 meters high. With multiple pagoda structures located throughout the world, this was the first wooden structure completed under the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing Dynasties (1644-1912).

Whereas stupa architecture consists of three different parts, the architecture of the *Sakyamuni Pagoda* exemplifies a tower structure. This evolved architecture remains significant to Buddhist practices, as it allows individuals to walk out on the balconies and reflect on the natural surroundings. Although, the main structure itself is quite different from the stupa architecture, all pagodas have a common feature that exists in the original stupa. Each pagoda is crowned with a decorative piece, known as the finial. This pagoda has a lotus bud finial, which pertains to Buddhist iconography.

Today the pagoda in Yingxian is protected under the United Nations, Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It continues to be a significant part of Chinese culture and Buddhist traditions. The architecture demonstrates the development of wooden structures within China and a continuation of Buddhist traditions that have spread throughout Asia.



Sakyamuni Pagoda of Fogong Temple



Lotus Bud Finial



Asana Pose



Buddhist Mudra

Buddhist Symbolism:

Lotus flowers – Symbolizes that which is pure and good natured. The flower acts as a reminder to strive to overcome hardships and reach enlightenment.

Asanas – The Buddha’s pose is known as asana. Buddha representations can be found in the seated, reclining, or standing position. The Buddha’s hands can be seen in a position of meditation, prayer, or raised to demonstrate a blessing being giving. Buddhas in the asana pose, like the one on the left, can be found inside the *Sakyamuni Pagoda*.

Mudras – Can also be found near or inside the pagodas. This image is in reference to the symbolic hand gesture that can be found in Buddha images or statues.



Japanese gorintō

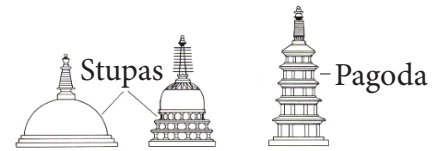


Japanese pagoda

BUILDING A PAGODA

ACTIVITY LESSON PLAN:

(9-12)



OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to describe the history of pagodas and their purpose(s).
- Students will build clay pagodas w/ bases as reliquaries for personal relics.

TIME: Several class periods

MATERIALS:

- Clay
- (Optional) "relics" (chosen by student)
- Carving tools
- Glazes
- Brushes
- Kiln
- Work surface (bat, clip board, etc.)

PREPARATION

Students will be told in advance of the lesson to bring items, each roughly the size of a matchbox, that represent things they love or are important to them. These objects will be their relics, or they can make simulacra from materials available in the classroom.

Prior to the activity, the teacher will introduce pagodas while showing students a picture of a few examples. Then, the teacher will give a brief presentation on the history of pagodas, i.e. how the design originated in India with the Stupa and spread to the rest of Asia. They will describe the different components such as the finial at the top, the base, etc. The instructor will talk about the era of Buddhist relics that began after the death of Gautama Buddha, and explain that many pagodas were reliquaries, aka houses for relics, and then lost this purpose with the iconoclasm that accompanied the persecution of Buddhists. This lesson should mostly focus on pagodas as places of respect and veneration.

ACTIVITY PROCEDURES

After presentation, students will use clay and tools to build bases which will house their relics, after which they will build pagodas of their choice. The instructor will provide guidelines for different countries' styles, for example the simplified stone Japanese gorintō, a statue which symbolizes the 5 elements in its layers (see diagram below), or a pagoda modeled after the actual buildings. After the clay has dried the students will glaze their pieces (if they want) and fire them.



Indian stupa, predecessor to the pagoda

Big Idea: Historical and Global Connections

Enduring Understanding: Through study in the arts, we learn about and honor others and the worlds in which they live(d).

VA.912.H.1.3: Examine the significance placed on art forms over time by various groups or cultures compared to current views on aesthetics.

Big Idea: Historical and Global Connections

Enduring Understanding: Through study in the arts, we learn about and honor others and the worlds in which they live(d).

VA.912.H.1.8: Analyze and compare works in context, considering economic, social, cultural, and political issues, to define the significance and purpose of art.



Chinese pagoda

OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to define "pagoda."
- Students will be able to identify symbols in architecture.
- Students will build clay pagoda finials.

Japanese pagoda finial



(K-5)

TO TOP THINGS OFF

ACTIVITY LESSON PLAN

PREPARATION

The instructor will start class by showing students pictures of barns with weather vanes on top of them, a symbol recognizable to most children. Then, the instructor will show pictures of pagodas and point out the finials on top. Instructors should describe pagodas as "places where people pay their respects," not dissimilar to graveyards or monuments. Instructor will explain the way the 5 layers of a finial represent the 5 elements (earth, water, fire, wind, void/space) in nature.



Japanese stone finial

ACTIVITY PROCEDURES

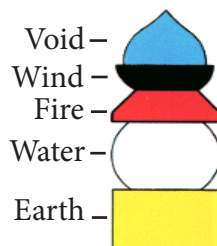
Using clay and ceramics tools, students will model or sculpt finials. Each finial will include the five distinct layers or elements included in pagoda finials. Understanding will be assessed as students work. Completed finials will be dried and fired.

MATERIALS

- Modeling clay
- Sculpting tools

Time: Several class periods

Diagram of the symbolism in Japanese gorintōs and five layer pagodas



Big Idea: Historical and Global Connections

Enduring Understanding: Through study in the arts, we learn about and honor others and the worlds in which they live(d).

VA.3.H.1.3: Identify and be respectful of ideas important to individuals, groups, or cultures that are reflected in their artworks.