



# **CAO JUN: HYMNS TO NATURE**

## **INTRODUCTION TO CHINA AND CHINESE ART**

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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*Students will...*

- Understand the origins of Chinese landscape painting.
- Discuss traditions that have been passed down to them.
- Read five articles and practice reading comprehension with five articles on Chinese culture.
- Use descriptive words and phrases to describe a painting in the *Hymns to Nature* exhibition.
- Write a poem inspired by a painting.

### **STANDARDS**

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**CCSS.ELA.RI.6.1**

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what a text states explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, quoting or paraphrasing as appropriate. (See grade 6 Writing Standard 8 for more on quoting and paraphrasing.)

**CCSS.ELA.RI.6.2**

Determine a text's central idea(s) and how particular details help convey the idea(s); provide a summary of a text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

**CCSS.ELA.RI.6.5**

Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, section, or text feature (e.g., heading) fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

**CCSS.ELA.RI.6.6**

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

## MATERIALS

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*The Hymns to Nature Educator Resource Packet includes:*

- 1.1 Intro to China and Chinese Art PowerPoint
- 1.1a KWL Chart
- 1.1b Student Guided Notes
- 2.1a Reading 1: “School in China”
- 2.1b Reading 1: Comprehension Questions
- 2.2a Reading 2: “Chinese Landscape Painting”
- 2.2b Reading 2: Comprehension Questions
- 2.3a Reading 3: “Calligraphy”
- 2.3b Reading 3: Comprehension Questions
- 2.4a Reading 4: “Intro to the Song Dynasty”
- 2.4b Reading 4: Comprehension Questions
- 2.5a Reading 5: “Landscape Example”
- 2.5c Reading 5: Comprehension Questions
- 2a Spider Map Graphic Organizer
- 2b Column Notes Sheet
- 3a Exhibition-Inspired Poetry Guide (to be used during visit to the Museum)
- 3b Art-Inspired Poetry Guide (to be used if student can’t visit the Museum)

## VOCABULARY

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- Landscape
- Calligraphy
- Mandarin
- Yuan
- Dynasty
- Literati

## PRE-VISIT

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Go through the **1.1 Intro to China and Chinese Art PowerPoint** with or without using the accompanying **1.1b Guided Student Notes**. This PowerPoint will provide a brief overview of Chinese geography, culture, and history. The beginning of the PowerPoint directs students to fill out the first two columns of a **1.1a KWL Chart**. Students should write what they already know about China and/or Chinese art in the first column and some things they want to know in the second column. At the end, have students write a few things they learned.

Towards the end of the PowerPoint students will be presented with a writing prompt about tradition in their family. Allow students to spend a few minutes thinking about the prompt and writing their response to it. Have several students share their responses with the class afterwards. To connect the prompt with Chinese art and culture, the PowerPoint ends by informing students that many Chinese artists develop their own artistic styles by first learning to copy famous painting masters: with the techniques learned through this process, they can then better forge new paths of their own.

## READING COMPREHENSION EXERCISE

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### Option #1: Expert Groups

1. Divide students into five groups and give each group a different article on Chinese art and culture (**2.1a–2.5a Readings**). The students in this group will then become “experts” on their assigned article by reading it and either answering the questions provided in **2.1b–2.5b Reading Comprehension Questions** or by using one of the accompanying note taking strategies: **2a Spider Map Graphic Organizer** or **2b Column Notes Sheet**. (Note: You are welcome to use another note taking guide of your choice.)
2. Next, one member from each expert group will form a new group with a member from each of the other four groups so that in each new group there is at least one student who is an “expert” on each of the five readings.
3. Each student will take turns teaching the other members of their groups about what they learned from their readings.

### Option #2: Stations

*Option #2 is potentially best spread out over several days.*

1. Split students into five groups.
2. Each group should spend about 20 minutes over several days or sessions reading each assigned article (2.1a–2.5a Reading Exercises), answering the questions and/or taking notes using a graphic organizer (2a Spider Map Graphic Organizer or 2b Column Notes Sheet).

## VISIT

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During their visit, have students use the **3a Exhibition-Inspired Poetry Guide**. The Guide has students choose a painting from the exhibition and asks them to write a poem or short paragraph that expresses how the artwork makes them feel in that moment. To help students in the process, the guide asks them to brainstorm illustrative words to describe their feelings in relation to the painting as well as asks them to imagine what the painting reminds them of.

## WITHOUT VISIT

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Ask the students to find a Chinese landscape painting online that they like. Using the **3b Art-Inspired Poetry Guide**, students should brainstorm illustrative words and memories that describe the painting.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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### **Khan Academy Chinese Art**

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/imperial-china>

### **A visual vocabulary of brushstrokes**

<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/background-information/introduction-chinese-brushpainting-visual-vocabulary>

### **An introduction to ancient China**

<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/background-information/introduction-ancient-china>

### **Scroll project**

<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/lesson-or-activity/scholar-literati-scroll-project-activity>

### **Hanging scroll and name seal project**

<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/lesson-or-activity/create-your-own-hanging-scroll-and-name-seal-activity>

### **Introduction to calligraphy**

<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/background-information/introduction-chinese-calligraphy>

### **Poetry in Tang and Song dynasties**

<http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/background-information/flourishing-poetry-tang-618-906-and-song-960-1279-dynasties>

### CONTACTS

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