

# BEYOND TIME & PLACE

A Teacher's Guide to the Tour

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# THE J GARDEN japanese

The Cheekwood Japanese Garden provides students the opportunity to experience Japanese culture as they learn about the diversity and customs of another country. This tour will inspire students to look at the world around them with a unique, new perspective. Please use this guide to prepare for your visit.





# PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT

The **Beyond Time and Place: Japanese Garden** Educator Guide was prepared with the classroom teacher in mind. We hope you will find this packet helpful as you prepare your students for their visit to Cheekwood and also when you return to the classroom.

**Garden Etiquette**—*very similar to indoor museum etiquette*

- Visitors are asked to stay on the paths for the protection of the plant collections and for their own safety.
- Please do not touch or pick the plants unless invited to do so by the Garden Guides.
- Speak in a normal 'inside' voice. Please do not disturb other guests in the garden by yelling or shouting to others.
- Many varieties of wildlife and insects make their homes at Cheekwood. Please do not disturb these valuable members of our ecosystem.
- Stay with your group. Cheekwood is very large, and it is easy to get distracted. We do not want anyone to get separated from their group.



A pineapple designates topics for discussion and pre/post –visit classroom activities.

# EXHIBITION INTRODUCTION

## Beyond Time and Place: The Japanese Garden Tour

### Japanese Gardens

Japanese Gardens are designed to show us some of the finest features of the natural world. Gardens were originally introduced to Japan by Buddhist monks visiting from China, where they had been popular for hundreds of years. By the 6th century, similar gardens began to spread throughout Japan. The Japanese refined the elements of garden design to an art form, raising it to the level of painting or poetry in cultural importance. The Japanese believed in strict rules for garden design, finding beauty in simplicity. Three main considerations are integrated into each design: the nature of man, the physical layout of the site, and the aesthetic quality of beauty of the natural materials used in construction.

The philosophy of the Japanese Garden makes it different from other gardens. A Japanese garden is identified with its harmonious relationship with nature. Every component has a symbolic meaning. As you enter the gardens you will often see lanterns, representing the concept of enlightenment. Gates to the garden are always open, so as not to shut anyone out. Because the Japanese believed that evil spirits could only travel in straight lines, garden paths wind around, leaving any evil spirits behind. Paths are also usually set with uneven stones, focusing a visitor's thoughts on their walk rather than on the problems of the outside world.



# Shomu-En

## The Japanese Garden at Cheekwood

This garden is named Shomu-En, which means “pine-mist”, because in summer the flowers of the smoke tree look like mist or fog rising from the valleys and water. The Japanese Garden at Cheekwood has four different sections and is a place of serenity and meditation. A Japanese garden is a reflection of nature and a retreat where people and nature are one. The designer uses rocks, water (or the illusion of water), shades of green, shadows, reflections and textures to create a peaceful landscape.

Each element in a Japanese garden has a meaning, and all the elements are carefully placed in relation to each other. Simplicity and harmony are the goal, while symmetry is almost always avoided. Imagination is encouraged. A single rock may represent a mountain or an island; a tree may represent a forest. Sand or gravel raked in patterns can give the illusion of streams or large bodies of water.

**The Crooked Path (Roji) :** At the entrance to the Japanese Garden, there is a stone lantern, a symbol of enlightenment. The gate always stands open as a sign of welcome. It is said that evil spirits travel in a straight line., and the crooked path sends the evil spirits out of the garden.



**The Bamboo Grove:** The beautiful stand of Yellow-Groove Bamboo creates a tall, dark tunnel that is supposed to turn your mind inward and prepare you for the garden ahead. The bamboo grove, hedges around the garden, walls, and even the surrounding scenery create a sense of enclosure and a feeling of safety. Look at the bamboo and think about its many uses. Ask the students to name items that are made of bamboo. Notice that you are still on a crooked path.

**The Courtyard:** At the entrance to a Japanese Garden there is often water, a symbol of purification. The plants around the water basin are *nandinas*, a symbol of domestic harmony. The maples are symbols of long life.



**The Viewing Pavilion:** As you go up the steps, a scene unfolds before you. You see a great body of water, stark islands, a distant mountain, and a stream to one side. There are twisted trees along the shore. Let your mind wander through the view. Allow yourself to be transported by this peaceful setting. What adventures might take place in this garden? Ask the students to share ideas or stories.

## Plants in the Japanese Garden

**Japanese Maple**  
*Acer palmatum*

**Amur Maple**  
*Acer ginnala*

**Serviceberry, Juneberry**  
*Amerlanchier laevis*

**Japanese Cedar**  
*Cryptomeria japonica*

**Ginkgo**  
*Ginkgo biloba 'Autumn Gold'*

**Yellow-Groove Bamboo**  
*Phyllostachys aureosulcata*

**Japanese Black Pine**  
*Pinus thunbergiana*

**Weeping Yoshino Cherry**  
*Prunus subhirtella 'Pendula'*

**Azaleas**  
*Rhododendron 'Evening Song'*  
*Rhododendron 'Delaware Valley'*



# HANDS ON FUN!

## Sumi-e

### Black Ink Painting

The beautiful black ink painting of the Sumi-e (the 'e' is pronounced like a long 'a') seem very simple. In fact, before the brush ever touches the rice paper, artists spend a lot of time observing their subject. Sumi-e paintings often feature objects found in nature, such as a blade of grass, a flower, or a fish. By focusing on that object alone, the painting reveals its beauty. Sometimes an entire landscape can be expressed by just a few skilled strokes. Many sumi-e paintings are done on long, vertical scrolls to hang on walls.

Japanese alphabet characters or words are also popular subjects, and the art of calligraphy is a highly prized skill. It is said of calligraphy that one is always a student, never a master. This is also true of brush painting. Once a mark is made, it is there. There can be no corrections.

Mixing the *sum*, or ink, is part of the painting process. Artists usually grind their own ink using an ink stick called a *sumi* and a grinding stone called a *suzuri*. Most ink sticks are made of densely packed charcoal ash from bamboo or pine soot, combined with glue extracted from fish bones, called *nikawa*. The ink sticks are sometimes ornately decorated with landscapes or flowers, and can even be highlighted with gold. An artist puts a few drops of water on the ink stone and grinds the ink stick in a circular motion until a smooth, black ink of the desired concentration is made. Prepared inks are also available, but are of poorer quality.

## PAINT A YELLOW-GROOVE BAMBOO

Bamboo is a classical Japanese subject. It is a study in straight lines and requires several different kinds of brush strokes.

1. The stems may be painted in pale ink. There are sections along the stems. Paint straight lines, lifting the brush at the end of each section.
2. The joints are often dark ink and show the rounded edges of the sections. They are made with short strokes.
3. The branches are thin and wiry.  
Use light, even strokes of the brush tip.
4. The leaves are long and tapered. The brush is pressed down and then lifted. Notice the angles of the leaves on the branches.



### HELPFUL HINTS

Supplies for sumi-e may be purchased from art supply companies like Sax and Dick Blick or in local art supply stores. Fine Japanese materials can be purchased from specialty companies; however, for classroom projects the less expensive materials work well. India ink, water, bamboo brushes, Oriental Hake brushes, and watercolor paper are all that are needed to do sumi-e. Thin the India ink with water for lighter shades of grey. Be aware that India ink is permanent, and may not be suitable for very young students. Water soluble inks can also work well for easier clean-up.

## SUMI-E "BLACK INK PAINTING"



## HAIKU

Haiku is a classical form of Japanese poetry that was popular in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. It developed from an older, longer form called **tanka**. Haiku is usually about nature and tells of a simple moment in time.

Haiku has three lines and does not rhyme. The first and third lines have five syllables. The second line has seven syllables, making the combination 5-7-5. In the English language, the numbers may vary somewhat, using fewer syllables to convey the same thought. Haiku is written in simple language and expresses:

- A response to nature
- A place
- A time or season
- An emotion or feeling
- A contrast or conflict

### WRITE A HAIKU!

Line 1: Write words with a total of five syllables.

Line 2: Write words with a total of seven syllables.

Line 3: Write words with a total of five syllables.

Example:

The butterfly is

Fluttering through the bamboo

As wind blows gently

1

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2

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3

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# HANDS ON FUN!

Being in a rock garden can be very relaxing. If you sit quietly, take deep, even breaths, and listen to sounds like the wind in the trees, birds chirping, and water trickling in a fountain or stream, you can feel your muscles relax and your heart rate slow down.

Japanese gardens are traditionally places of relaxation and meditation, where the elements of the garden are symbolic and inspire you to connect with nature and focus on your thoughts.

**Test this theory!** Have your students take their heart rate sometime before they enter the garden and then again after they have spent time 'meditating' in the garden.

To check your heart rate:

- While standing, gently place the second and third fingers of one hand (don't use your thumb) on the artery that is just inside the wrist bone of the other hand. Count your pulse for 15 seconds and multiply the number of beats by 4 to determine your heart rate per minute.
- Or—check your pulse on the side of your neck at the level of your Adam's apple. Count your pulse for 15 seconds and multiply the number of beats by 4 to determine your heart rate per minute.

## MAKE YOUR OWN JAPANESE ROCK GARDEN!

Students can create their own Japanese style gardens with a shoe box lid, white sand, and rocks of varying sizes and shapes.

Put sand in the shoe box lid.

Position the rocks in the sand.

Group rocks by 2, 3, and 5.

Use a fork to rake the sand in swirl patterns which symbolize ripples of water.

Concentrate quietly on the garden, imagining the sights and sounds of water lapping against the islands of stones.



## Make Your Own JAPANESE ROCK GARDEN



# PRE & POST VISIT QUESTIONNAIRE

## Beyond Time and Place: The Japanese Garden Tour

Read the following questions to your group before your visit to Cheekwood. Remind students to think about them as they tour through the garden. When your return to the classroom, discuss the question together

**tran · si · tion—** to make a change from one place, thought or thing into another

- As you visit the Japanese Garden how many transitions do you make?  
(Hint: There are at least four.)
- What kind of transitions did you make from one place to the next?
- Did your senses feel transformed? (Did you feel different? In what way?)
- How did your pace change as you moved through the garden?
- The quiet and stillness bring a sense of honor. Why do you think that is?  
How do you show honor?

# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

If you have any questions about how this tour satisfies the following TN Performance Standards, please email Cheekwood at [schooltours@cheekwood.org](mailto:schooltours@cheekwood.org).

## ART

### Historical and Cultural Relationships

4.0 Students will understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

#### 4th—5th grade

4.1 Relate works of art to different times, civilizations, and places.

4.3 Recognize how artists are influenced by cultures, history, and movements in art.

#### 6th—8th grade

4.2 Know and compare the characteristics in historical and cultural contexts.

4.4 Recognize the roles of artists in our community and society.

#### 9th—12th grade

4.2 Interpret the function and explore the meaning of specific art objects within a culture.

### Reflection and Assessment

5.0 Students will reflect and assess the characteristics of their work and the work of others.

#### 4th—5th grade

5.1 Understand that artists create work for a variety of purposes.

#### 6th—8th grade

5.1 Compare multiple purposes for creating works of art.

#### 9th—12th grade

5.1 Assess visual artworks and their meanings by using a variety of criteria and techniques.

5.2 Reflect on and evaluate artworks in order to understand various interpretations.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

### Culture

1.01 Understand the diversity of human Cultures.

1.02 Discuss cultures and human patterns of places and regions of the world.

1.04 Understand the contributions of individuals and people of various ethnic, racial, religious, and socioeconomic groups to Tennessee.



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## Websites:

[www.spaceformusic.com/bonsai/shomuen.html](http://www.spaceformusic.com/bonsai/shomuen.html)

[www.Japanesegarden.com](http://www.Japanesegarden.com)

[www.thehelpfulgardener.com/japanese](http://www.thehelpfulgardener.com/japanese)

## Books:

Tea, Heaven on Earth

by William Woodworth, 1994

The Art of the Japanese Garden

David and Michiko Young

Japanese Ink Painting

By Okamoto

The Sumi-e Book

By Mayhill

The Art and Technique of Sumi-e

Japanese Ink Painting

By Kay Thompson

CHEEKWOOD

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# VOCABULARY

**Shinto:** the main religion of Japan. It respects the elements of the universe. Shinto worships environmental phenomena like rain, sun, earth, sea, stones, and mountains.

**Sakkuteiki:** Strict rules for garden design formulated in 11<sup>th</sup> Century. Includes 10 different kinds of waterfalls, the use and arrangement of stones, and the use of bamboo.

**Shomu-En:** A pine mist garden

**Transition:** To make a change from one place, thought, or thing into another

**Haiku:** A Japanese poem that is usually about nature and tells of a simple moment in time. It has three lines that do not rhyme and has a syllable line pattern of 5-7-5.

**Tea Ceremony:** A method of preparing and enjoying the tea. May last between one and four hours, depending on the type of ceremony performed and the type of meal and tea served.

**Sumi-e:** Black ink painting.

**Roji:** Crooked path that leads to Japanese gardens; significant because the Japanese people believe that evil spirits can only travel in straight lines.

