

# Creating a Wall Hanging or Scroll

## Grade Level

This lesson is intended for the 5<sup>th</sup>-grade. It can be adjusted for grades 9-12.

## Objective

By using the *sumi-e* painting technique students paint a hanging scroll based on a subject from nature. (To learn more about *sumi-e* painting, go to index of lessons.)

## Key Ideas

- *Sumi-e*, a Japanese term meaning monochromatic “ink picture,” a technique that was brought to Japan around the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century CE by Zen Buddhist monks returning from China. It was used by as a teaching tool in spreading the ideas of Zen to the warlords and the samurai as the warriors’ life-or-death readiness to serve responded to the Zen attitude of eliminating all but the essential in life.
- The origins of *sumi-e* are found in calligraphy. Ideally the inspiration goes directly from the mind to the paper with the brush acting only as an intermediary. In this way the *sumi-e* painter sought to capture his inner life rather than depict outward appearances.
- “The Four Gentlemen,” Bamboo, Wild Orchid, Chrysanthemum, and Plum Branch, were the four flowers most beloved in China by the artist, the scholar, the gardener, the poet, and the craftsman, and the composite of their characteristics was thought to represent the ideals character traits of perfect Confucian gentleman. The Japanese continued the tradition, adapting it to their own aesthetics.
- Typical of painting in the Muromachi period (1334-1573) is the depiction by the monk-painter Kao of *Priest Sewing under Morning Sun*, which dates from the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century (CMA 1962.163). This painting, done with ink on paper, was executed with quick brush strokes and a minimum of detail.
- *Rock, Bamboo, and Orchids* (CMA 1972.15) painted by Gyokuen Bompo in the late 1300s or early 1400s, is another example. This ink-on-paper hanging scroll is very simple and graceful in its simplicity.
- Many 19<sup>th</sup>-century French artists--Matisse, Gauguin, Cezanne, and others—have been influenced by *sumi-e*. Many contemporary artists continue to paint in this style.

## Materials

*Puppies, Sparrows and Chrysanthemums*, late 18<sup>th</sup> century, CMA 1970.71.4

*Birds and Flowers in a Landscape of the Four Seasons*, Toyo Sesshu, late 16<sup>th</sup> century, CMA 1960.173

*Birds and Flowers in a Landscape of the Four Seasons*, Toyo Sesshu, late 16<sup>th</sup> century, CMA 1961.204

*Flowers and Birds in a Spring Landscape*, 1500s, CMA 1970.6.1-.4

*Monkeys on a Rock Ledge*, Edo period (1615-1868), CMA 1998.425.2

*Priest Sewing under Morning Sun*, c. 1350, CMA 1962.163

*Rock, Bamboo, and Orchids*, late 1300s-early 1400s, CMA 1972.15

CMA’s web site ([www.clevelandart.org](http://www.clevelandart.org)) or a book on *sumi-e* painting (*Japanese Ink Painting* by Naomi Okamoto, Sterling Publications 1996)

Pencils, practice paper

Small jars with lids

Newsprint

9" x 12" white drawing paper

7" x 18" Manila paper strips

Paper towels or Kleenex

Brushes: Bamboo: narrow, medium, and wide varieties. If several widths are not available, choose one medium brush. This one brush can produce several kinds of line – thick, thin, soft, dark, strong, or weak.

Ink stones: Japanese artists use ink stones and sticks for their work. For student projects, India ink offers an easier choice. (Water may be added to the ink in various amounts to produce a variety of values, or black watercolor paints may be used for younger students.)

Papers: Inexpensive newsprint may be used for practice drawings. Quality white drawing paper is suggested for final versions because the white of the paper is an important part of *sumi-e* painting.

### Procedure

1. Have students view the artwork discussed above on the Cleveland Museum web site ([www.clevelandart.org](http://www.clevelandart.org)).
2. Identify a subject from nature that particularly intrigues you or suggests your personality.
3. Practice the art of *sumi-e* painting. Check out books on *sumi-e* painting, such as *Japanese Ink Painting* by Naomi Okamoto (Sterling Publications, 1996) or *The Sumi-e Book* by Yolanda Mayhall (Watson-Guptill, 1989).
  - a. On 8 x 11 ½ white typing paper practice your subject using the methods and techniques of *sumi-e* painting (see above).
  - b. Use black watercolor paint with bamboo brushes.
  - c. You may add background: bamboo, flowers, leaves, and trees to your painting.
  - d. Once you have achieved your desired result, create your scroll.
4. Creating the scroll:
  - a. Roll one 12-x-18-inch sheet of white drawing paper to create a cylinder with at least a 1-inch diameter opening at both ends. Glue the edge of the rolled paper to seal it. Set the cylinder aside to dry. Repeat the process with a second sheet of paper.
  - b. Measure a 2-inch border at both the top and bottom of a third 12-x-18-inch sheet of paper held in a vertical position.
  - c. Apply glue to top border area.
  - d. Center one cylinder on the top edge of the glue covered border.
  - e. Roll the cylinder toward you until the border wraps around the cylinder one time. Repeat the gluing process at the bottom with the second cylinder and set the scroll aside to dry.
5. Crumple a piece of paper towel, use a natural sponge, or make a Styrofoam print plate to apply paint to allow for a textual design. Dab the towel onto a small amount of gold tempera paint poured onto newspaper. Apply small amounts of paint to the perimeter of the hanging scroll surrounding the subject and allow the painting to dry.
6. Design and paint your subject:
  - a. Paint your subject on a separate sheet so if you make a mistake you won't have to redo your hanging scroll.

- b. If you have accomplished an excellent practice piece than glue it to your hanging scroll
  - c. Surround the painted subject with tempera-painted textural designs.
7. Printing Stamp with Red Ink:
- a. Using a meat tray, or lunchroom tray cut a 1-inch or 1 ½- rectangle.
  - b. Using a #2 pencil indent or press in the symbols you want to complete your hanging scroll.
  - c. Use a brayer to apply the red ink to the Styrofoam printing plate and apply to hanging scroll.
8. Haiku:
- a. Haiku is a poem that is about nature.
  - b. Haiku follows a pattern like 5-7-5 syllables in three lines.
  - c. An example of haiku is:
    - Seed, blossom, flower
    - alive in my mom's garden
    - waiting to be picked

**This lesson plan was developed by Sherri Love, Westerville School District,  
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