

Students participating in the Art of the Samurai tour will learn how the samurai warrior class influenced the art and culture of Japan. Students will also analyze the role of symbolism and nature prevalent throughout Japanese art. Use the suggestions below either before or after your museum visit to encourage further inquiry in the classroom.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Compare and contrast the arts of war (Bu) and peace (Bun) practiced by the samurai. What are the rules for each? Have students research in groups and make a list of what both the arts of war and the arts of peace entail. After visiting the museum, make a list of which objects you saw that related to each of these arts.
- Students will learn the art of calligraphy and Sumi-e painting as practiced by the samurai. Study the attached image of the scroll painting from our collection. How is brush painting different from other methods of painting? What makes it challenging? How does brush painting correlate with other Asian art themes you have learned so far? Have students create their own brush painting.

Books: *Sumi-E Kit* by Shingo Syoko

*The Art and Technique of Sumi-E* by Kay Morrissey Thompson

- Explore images of the kabuto or helmet worn by the samurai. Study the kabuto in the Walters collection. What kind of symbols are typically depicted? Why would the samurai want to have these symbols on their helmet? What is a family crest? Where have you seen family crests before? Why would the samurai want their family crest on their helmet? Have students design their own kabuto using 2-D or 3-D materials, incorporating their own personal symbols.

Resources: Kabuto Origami: <http://www.marubeni.com/shosha/origami59.html>

Parts of Kabuto: <http://www.sengokudaimyo.com/katchu/katchu.ch02.html>

#### VOCABULARY

Bu - The arts of war.

Bun - The arts of peace.

Bushido - Literally meaning “the way of the warrior,” this is the term for the samurai code of honor. It was influenced by Zen and Confucianism, and is similar to the chivalry of the medieval knights.

Calligraphy - The art of beautiful writing.

Cha-no-yu - The Japanese tea ceremony.

Daimyo - Nobles who owned large estates in the provinces.

Feudalism - A system of agreements in which land was held in return for service or loyalty



## VOCABULARY (CONTINUED)

Gusoku - Distinctive suits of armor worn by the Samurai.

Gusoku-shi - The highly skilled craftsmen who created gusoku.

Samurai - A Japanese feudal warrior, literally meaning “one who serves.” The class of professional warriors in the service of a daimyo or shogun mounted or on foot, armed with bows, two swords, and a dagger. They adhered to a strict code of behavior (bushido), and were at the top of the class system.

Shinto - The “way of the Gods.” The native religion of Japan, it is the belief that all things in nature have their own vital forces, spirits or gods called kami, that must be worshipped.

Shogun - Meaning “great general,” the shogun is the military dictator of Japan.

Tsuba - A sword guard which separated the handle from the blade. Tsuba were often decorated with imagery from nature and other symbols reflective of its owner.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.samurai-archives.com/>

<http://www.americankangdukwon.com/samurai.html>

*Samurai Warriors* by Stephen Turnbull,

*Fold Out / Find= Out: The Samurai Warriors* by Philip Steele

Borrow an *Arts of Japan* Teacher Resource Kit from the Walters for more lesson ideas, resources, and images of objects!  
Email [schoolprograms@thewalters.org](mailto:schoolprograms@thewalters.org) for more information.



溪山高隱圖

昔甲子仲春

為

寶壘道兄寫於

洛陽官署之

陸君軒

王履邦



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