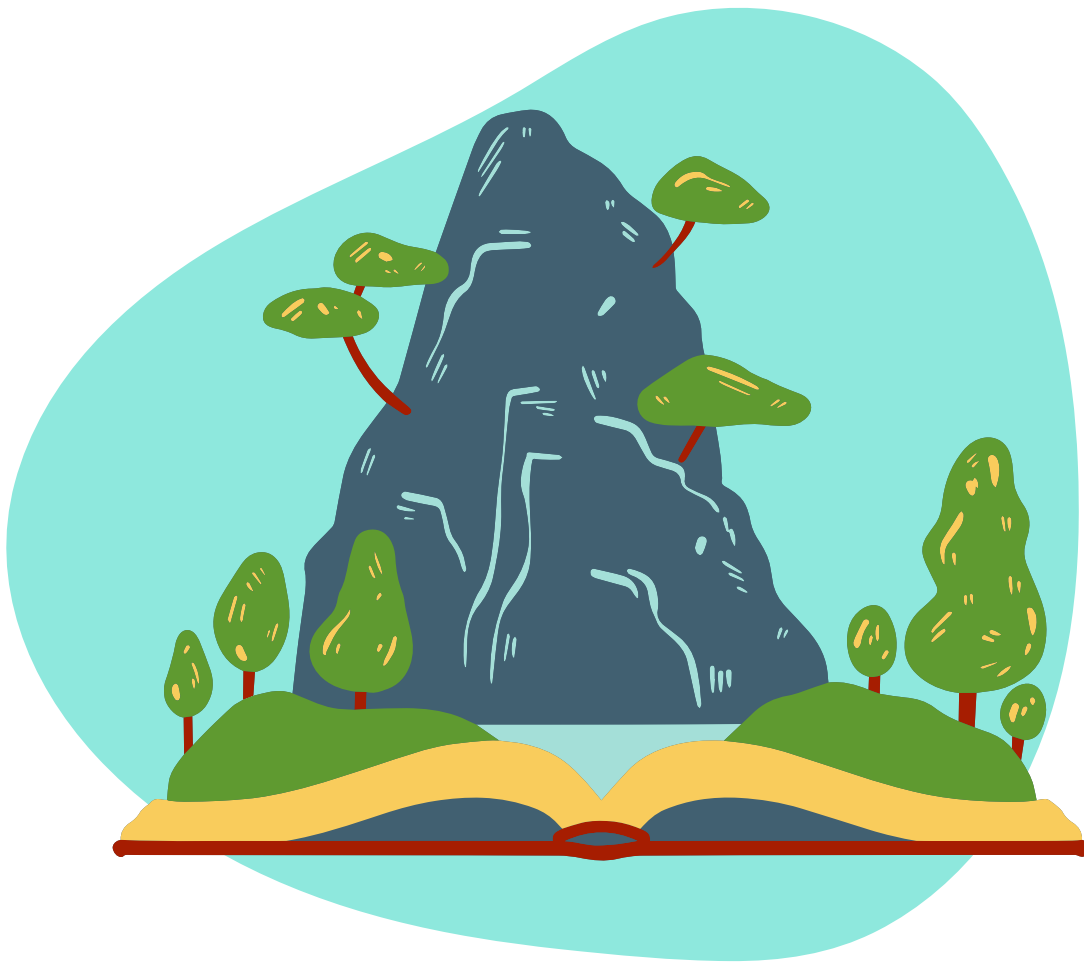


Buddhist Sculpture Explorer's Notebook



*A Multisensory Experience
Inspired by a Buddhist sculpture at Glencairn Museum*



Hello explorers!

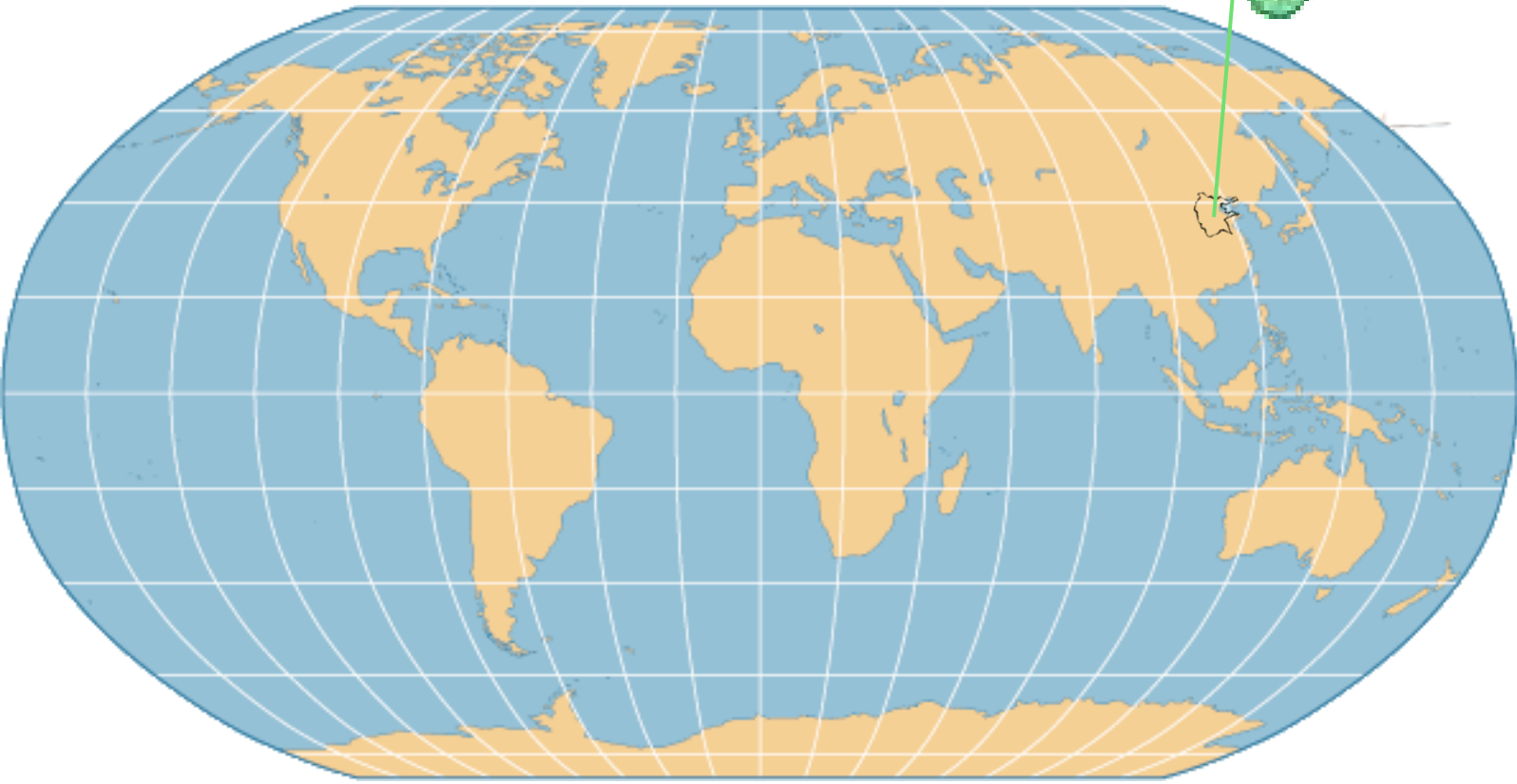
Today, we're going to be exploring an object from China that was made in 552 CE, more than a thousand years ago. It's a Buddhist sculpture made of stone showing people and divine beings praising Buddha, who sits on a lotus flower in the center. Long ago, before Buddha was called Buddha, his name was Siddhartha Gautama. He was a wealthy prince with anything he wanted. He lived happily for many years, but eventually wanted to see what life was like beyond the walls of his splendid palace.



Seated Buddha
China, 552 CE
09.SP.1582

Outside of his life of riches, he saw people suffering and struggling. He abandoned his life as a prince and began on the path to enlightenment, or a knowledge of spiritual things. When he eventually achieved enlightenment, he became known as the Buddha. In Sanskrit, a language spoken in India, "Buddha" means "enlightened one."

Take a look at the map on the next page. It's a map of the Northern Qi dynasty in 552 CE. The white star shows the city of Ye, where this sculpture was probably made.



This sculpture shows people holding things that are valuable and important to them. What is something that is valuable and important to you?

Have a good adventure!



Exploration 1: I Spy



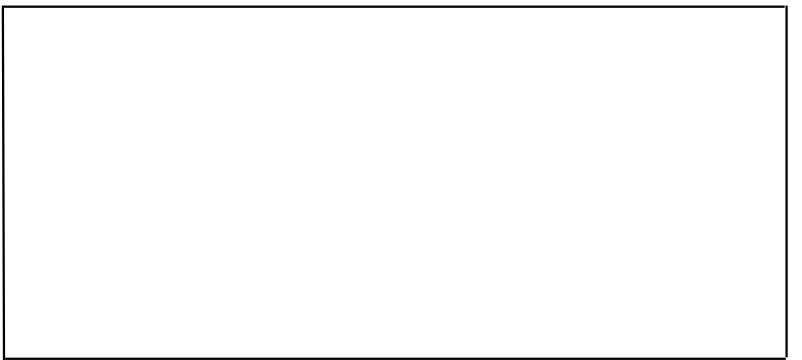
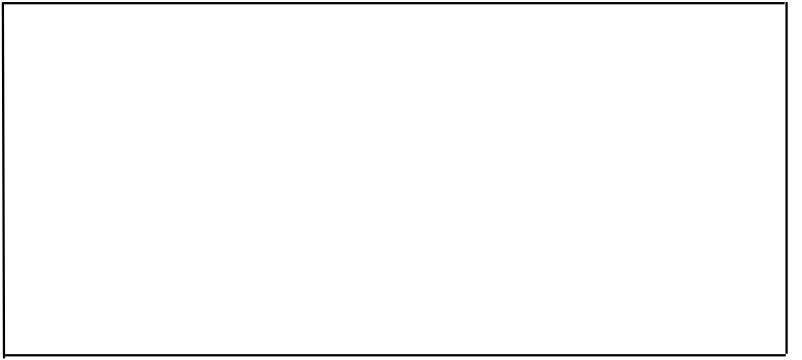
Check off each item as you find it! I spy...

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Six flying beings called feitian | <input type="checkbox"/> Five pedestals (things to stand on) made of lotus flowers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Two guardian lions | <input type="checkbox"/> Two people with their palms pressed together |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A person holding a flame over their head | <input type="checkbox"/> Three people with halos around their heads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Two feet that the rest of the body has broken off of | |

Exploration 2: Sculpt Yourself

There are lots of figures in this sculpture, each one doing something different. You can embody the sculpture by posing like a few of these figures. Examine each figure closely to discover what they're doing and how they're sculpted. Then, try their pose out for yourself. What does it feel like? Is it awkward? Are they in a comfortable pose? You can write a few words about what it was like to pose as each figure or draw a picture of what doing each pose was like.





Exploration 3: Making Mantou

One of the most well preserved Chinese books about farming plants and animals, veterinary medicine, brewing, cooking, and more was written by a man named Jia Sixie during the Northern Wei Dynasty, which existed just before the sculpture we're exploring was made. The book, called *Qimin Yaoshu*, included 280 recipes!

Today we're going to explore making mantou, or steamed buns, which may date all the way back to 300 BCE in Northern China, and many countries today have a version of a steamed bun.

Have you ever traveled somewhere and tried a new food? What did it taste like? What did it smell like? Did you like it?

Mantou Recipe

There are many recipes for mantou. This recipe is by Wei Guo, and you can learn more about her and her cooking [here!](#)

You will need:

- 250 g all-purpose/plain flour
- 1 teaspoon dried active yeast
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon sugar, or to taste
- 130 ml lukewarm water
- 4 Chinese dates, for flower-shaped buns, optional



Prepare the dough

- IF KNEADING BY HAND: Mix flour, yeast, baking powder and sugar. Add water gradually. Mix with chopsticks/spatula until no more loose flour can be seen. Combine and knead briefly into a dough. Leave to rest for 10 minutes (covered). Knead again until very smooth.
- IF KNEADING WITH A STAND MIXER: Mix flour, yeast, baking powder, sugar and water in the bowl. Knead on low speed until a very smooth dough forms (about 8 minutes).

Shape the buns

- IF MAKING ROUND BUNS: Divide the dough into 6 pieces (4 pieces if you prefer bigger buns). Knead and fold the dough piece towards the centre of the ball resulting in a smooth outer surface. Rotate the ball between your hands to form a slightly raised shape (Please refer to the video below).
- IF MAKING FLOWER BUNS: Divide the dough into 4 pieces. Roll one piece into a long, thin rope. Fold both ends in a “J” shape in opposite directions. Turn each end towards the centre of the rope until they meet.
- Take a pair of chopsticks placing one either side (in the centre) and squeeze to form a flower shape. Place a Chinese date in the centre of the flower.

Rest the buns

- Place the buns in the steamer basket (line with steamer parchment paper or brush a thin layer of oil to avoid sticking). Make sure to leave ample space between each bun.
- Leave to rest for around 30 minutes. Well-rested buns should be slightly bigger (not double the size) and very smooth on the surface. When pressed gently, the dough bounces back (see note 2).

Steam the buns

- Place the steaming basket onto a pot/wok filled with cold water. Start cooking with high heat.
- Turn down to medium-low once the water is at a full boil. Count 10 mins from this moment (add 2 mins if your buns are bigger). Serve warm.

Store the buns

- Once completely cooled, place the buns in an airtight container/plastic bag. Keep in the fridge for up to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 2 months.

Reheat the buns

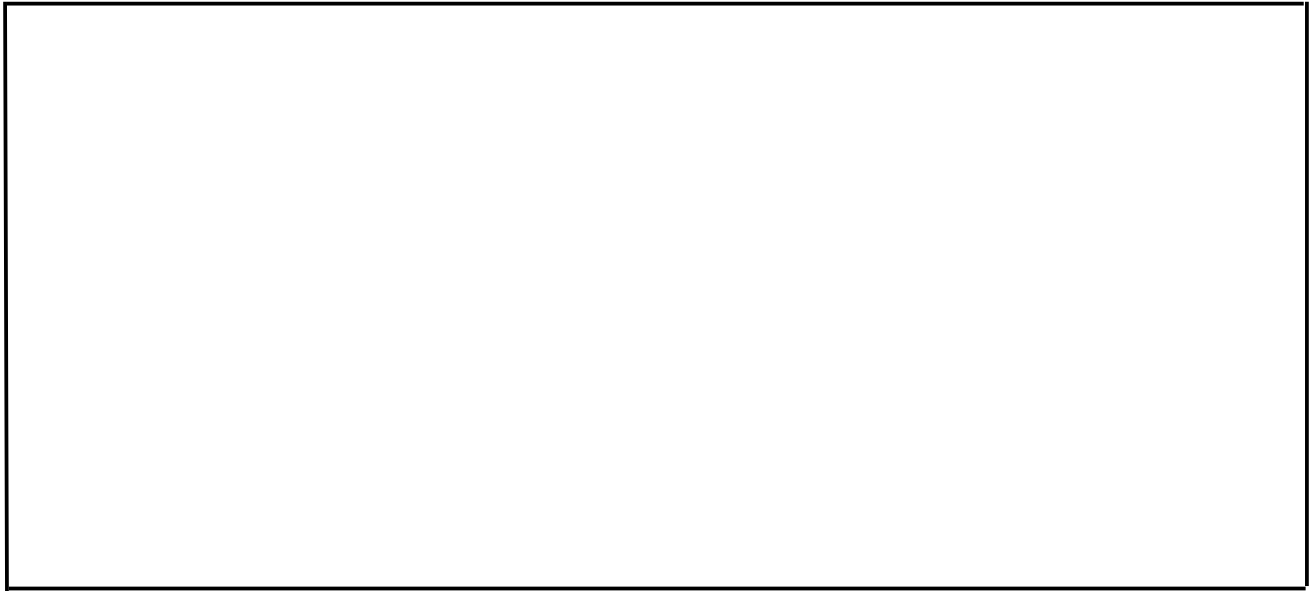
- Steam fridge-kept buns for 5 mins. If frozen, steam for 7 mins (without defrosting).

You can also watch a video of Wei making the mantou to help you!

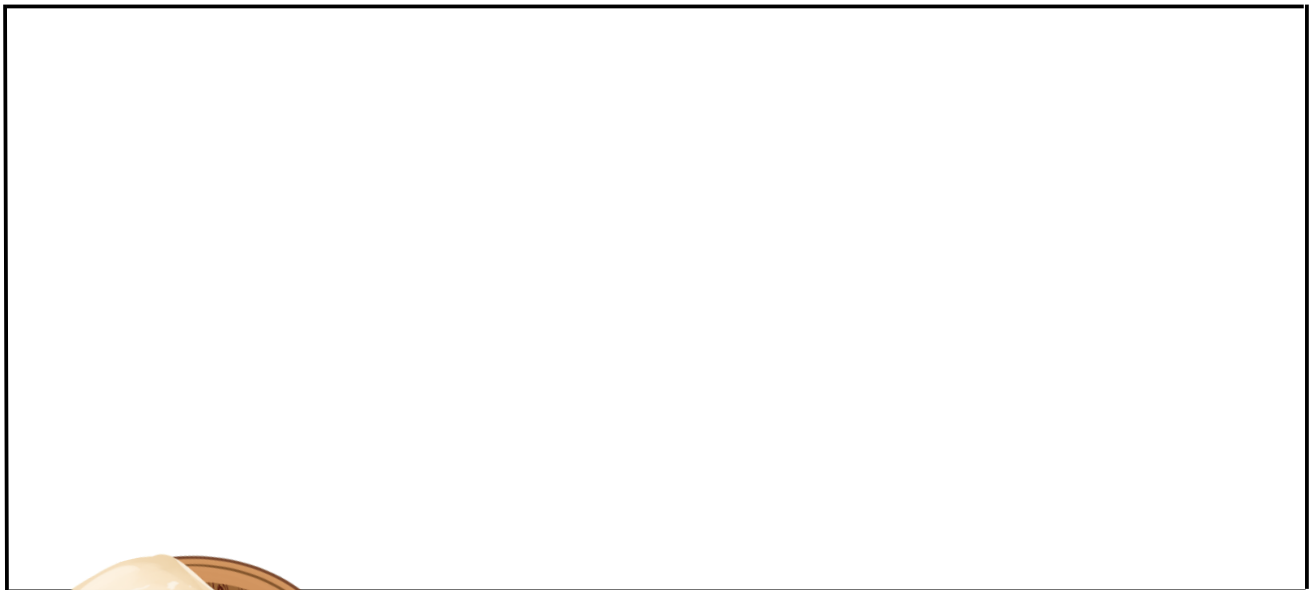
youtu.be/g19exZSr9mo



What did you smell as the mantou was cooking? You can write about it or draw a picture here.



What does the mantou taste like? Have you ever tasted something like it before? Write about or draw what it reminds you of here.



Exploration 4: Texture Treasure Hunt

What are the things shown in this statue like in real life? What would it be like to be one of the people in this statue? Explore the world around you and see if you can discover things that might feel similar to the objects shown in the statue.

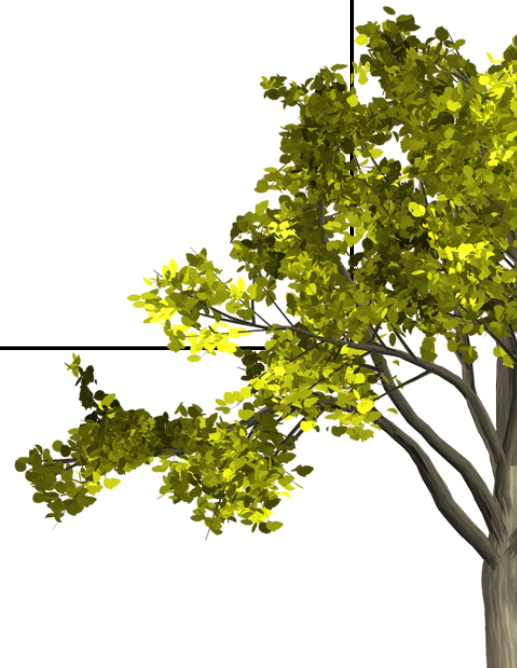
There are many lotus flowers in this sculpture, a symbol of cleanliness and purity. Can you find any flowers around you? What do their petals feel like? Write or draw about it here.



Some people are bringing offerings of silk, a kind of fabric, to the Buddha. Is there anything around you made of silk? What does silk feel like? How does it move when you wave it in the air? Draw or write about it here.



One of the figures seems to be holding a tree branch. Are there trees around you? What does their bark feel like? What do their leaves feel like? Draw or write about it here.



Exploration 5: Cardboard Kazoo

One of the people shown worshipping the Buddha on this statue is playing an instrument called a clarinet. It's difficult to make a clarinet out of paper (but you can try it!), but you can make an instrument more easily with a toilet paper tube, wax paper, and a rubber band.

You will need:

- A toilet paper or paper towel tube
- Wax paper
- Scissors
- A rubber band
- Materials to decorate the tube



1. Cut a square of wax paper that will fit over one end of the cardboard tube with room to spare.
2. Wrap the rubber band around the wax paper and the cardboard tube, securing the paper to the tube.
3. Decorate the tube, perhaps with some of the objects you can find on the sculpture.
4. By humming or speaking into the open end of the tube, you can make the wax paper vibrate and create a noise.

Additional Activity: Smelling Incense

On the front of the sculpture, there's a figure emerging from a lotus flower carrying an incense burner over their head. Incense is used in religious practices around the world. Some of the ingredients that people in medieval China used in their incense are things you might be able to find in your house.

Tanxiang, or sandalwood, was used to make incense. It has a warm, woody, floral smell. Can you find anything that smells like sandalwood? What does it smell like?



Dingxiang, or cloves, were used to make incense. Can you find cloves in your pantry? What do they smell like? What does it taste like?



Bajiao, or star anise, was used to make incense. Can you find star anise in your pantry? What does it smell like? What does it taste like?



Guipi, or cinnamon, was used to make incense. Can you find cinnamon in your pantry? What does it smell like? Do you know any food made with cinnamon?



Dahuixiang, or fennel, was used to make incense. Can you find fennel in your pantry? What does it smell like? What does it taste like?



Sources

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