

Edo Avant Garde

Playing with Perspective

FEATURED ART

[*Tale of Genji* – Unsigned](#)



Tale of Genji – Unsigned

Objective One

Students will be able to describe how people can use folding screens to define space and encompass viewers.

Objective Two

Students will be able to explain the effects of the use of gold and other special materials in the creation of a work of art.

Objective Three

Students will be able to closely explore a work of art to find specific visual clues to draw an informed conclusion.

Recommended Readings for Teachers

1. [Yukio Lippit on Folding Screens and Gold Leaf](#)

LESSON PLAN

Objective One

Students will be able to describe how people can use folding screens to define space and encompass viewers.

On [Google Slides Page 1](#)

Image	Tale of Genji – Unsigned
Video	A Seated Perspective
Worksheet	Tale of Genji

Show the video *A Seated Perspective* and discuss what students noticed. Provide each student with the *Tale of Genji* Worksheet and ask them to position a ruler at the edge of each screen panel and fold it vertically. Have them crease each fold in both directions so the panels of the Worksheet can fold in either direction. Then ask students to stand their screen up, as in the video.

Give each student a small object such as a popsicle stick or a letter block. Using the stick to represent a standing person or the block to represent a seated person, change the ways in which a viewer could experience their Worksheet folding screen. Have students describe what they See, Think, Wonder, and Feel about their work of art based on their imaginary interactions with it. How does what they See, Think, Wonder, and Feel change as they shift positions?

Objective Two

Students will be able to explain the effects of the use of gold and other special materials in the creation of a work of art.

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Images	Tale of Genji – Unsigned Willow Bridge – Unsigned
Video	Shifting Perspectives

Ask students to take a closer look at the *Tale of Genji* screen and compare it to *Willow Bridge*. Identify the materials used by the artists to create these screens. How are materials used in the *Tale of Genji* to divide the space? How are materials used in *Willow Bridge* to connect space? Ask students to describe how materials like gold make them feel.

Ask students to choose between the two screens to answer the following two questions: Can you describe where you are in this picture? Why might the artist have chosen this perspective for the viewer? After students have written their responses, have them share their answers with the person next to them.

Show the video *Shifting Perspectives* and watch how students react as the camera moves across the screen. Comment on how their bodies moved. Did their heads turn, or did they sit up straighter? Discuss how our perspectives as viewers seeing *Tale of Genji* and *Willow Bridge* make students feel. Does anyone feel powerful? Disconnected? What other feelings are they experiencing?

Objective Three

Students will be able to closely explore a work of art to find specific visual clues to draw an informed conclusion.

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Images	Tale of Genji – Unsigned Willow Bridge – Unsigned
Video	Multiple Perspectives – 1:16 to 2:07 Folding Screens in Candlelight
Worksheets	Viewfinder Template Tale of Genji Willow Bridge

Show the second half of the *Multiple Perspectives* video from 1:16. Now that the students have watched the videos of *Tale of Genji* and *Willow Bridge*, how would they recommend “entering” the scenes and viewing these works?

Ask students to first imagine themselves walking along the path in *Tale of Genji*. Divide the class in half, asking one half to write down what they see along the right side of the path, “walking” across the bridge from the top right hand corner down to the bottom left hand corner. Ask the other half of the class to write down what they see on the left side of the path. Partner students who viewed opposite sides of the path to share what they saw and decide which side of the path is most interesting to them as the viewers. The right or the left? Why?

You may also assign this activity using *Willow Bridge*.

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Social Studies

Extending the activities included with the first objective, discuss how this screen might function differently in a public space as compared to a screen set up in a home, referencing Yukio Lippit’s interview. If students had to choose between the image on the screen in the video and the image on the foldable screen that they made, which would they prefer to set up in their home? Why? How and where might they set it up?

Art

Print out the Viewfinder Template and cut out each one to help students investigate one of the screens. Using the viewfinder for a close-looking activity, have students search the screen of their choice to find any evidence of shadows. Show the video *Folding Screens in Candlelight*. While both screens might reflect the viewers' shadows when lit by candlelight, the artists did not paint any shadows or depict a specific time of day, as explained in the video *Multiple Perspectives*.

Language Arts

Watch the video *Folding Screens in Candlelight* to see how human shadows can be reflected on a screen. Based on the works already investigated and the screen in this video, ask students to select one screen they would like to "enter into" and further explore. Have students write a short description of what else they might see if they were to step inside their chosen work, basing their ideas on the visual clues presented by the artist.