

Exploring the National Museum of Korea

MAP
TAILS

👤 Ages 10-11

📍 National Museum of Korea

🌐 English

Name: _____ Date: _____ Weather: _____

🎯 Learning Goals

Welcome to the National Museum of Korea, where history comes alive! As you step inside, you'll be greeted by the grand architecture that houses countless treasures from Korea's past. Imagine standing before the golden crown from the Silla dynasty, its intricate designs shimmering under the lights. Or picture the serene expression of the Bangasayusang, a statue deep in thought. Each artifact here tells a story of ancient times, waiting for you to uncover its secrets.

💡 Key Vocabulary

artifact

An object made by a human being, typically of cultural or historical interest.

dynasty

A line of hereditary rulers of a country.

ceramics

Objects made from clay and hardened by heat.

symbolism

The use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities.

meditation

The practice of focusing the mind for relaxation or spiritual purposes.

📖 Curriculum Link

초5 사회 2단원 — 고려와 조선의 문화

Activities



Activity 1

The Mystery of Comb-patterned Pottery

Why Chain

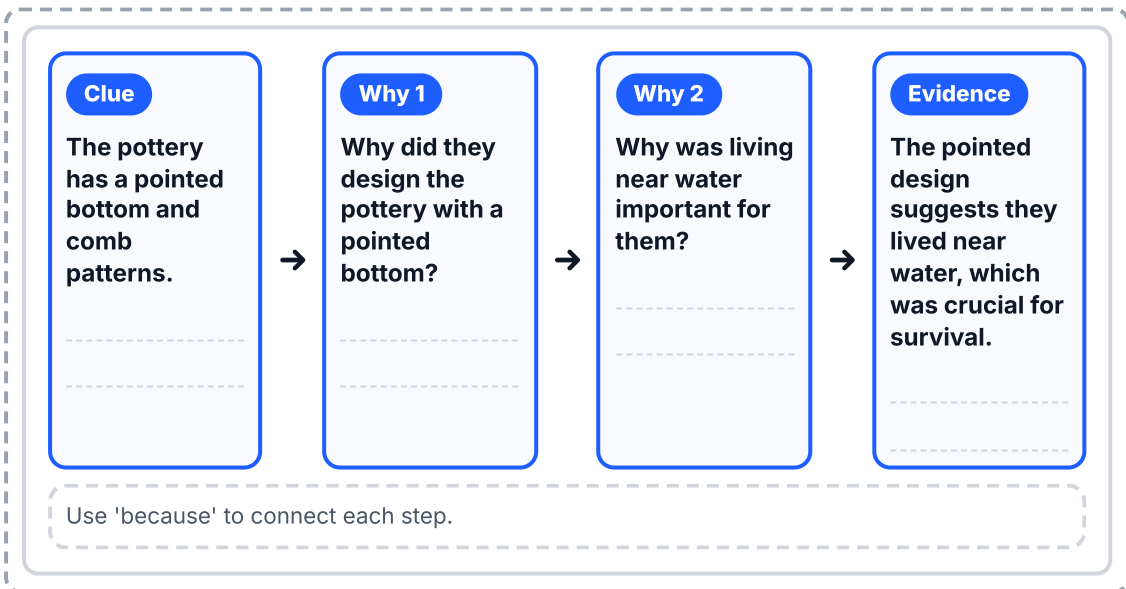
Comb-patterned pottery from the Neolithic era has a pointed bottom, unlike the flat bases we see today. This design allowed the pots to be easily placed in sandy riverbanks, suggesting that the people lived near water.

The comb patterns might have helped grip the pot or prevented it from cracking during firing. This pottery was discovered in 1925 during a flood in Amsa-dong, Seoul.

Today, our pots have flat bottoms for stability on tables. Why do you think this change happened?



Explore why the design of pottery changed over time.





Activity 2

Decoding the Silla Crown

Claim Check

The Silla crown is adorned with tree-like branches and antler shapes, crafted from gold. These decorations symbolize the king's authority and the power of nature.

The crown was found in the Hwangnam Daechong tomb, a royal burial site. Some scholars believe the crown was worn during special ceremonies, while others think it was purely symbolic.

Today, it is a testament to the craftsmanship and beliefs of the Silla people. What do you think the crown's decorations tell us about their society?



Evaluate the claim about the Silla crown's purpose.

CLAIM TO CHECK

Claim: The Silla crown's decorations were purely ornamental.

What is right?

What part of the claim is correct?

What is missing?

What is missing from the claim?

Evidence clue


Which detail about the crown helps you evaluate this claim?



The Bangasayusang is a statue from the Three Kingdoms period, depicting a figure with one leg crossed and a hand gently touching its cheek. This pose is thought to represent deep contemplation and meditation.

Made of bronze, the statue reflects the influence of Buddhism, which was spreading in Korea at the time. It was discovered in a temple site, suggesting its religious significance.

Today, it invites us to ponder the thoughts of those who created it. What might the figure be contemplating?

 Choose what the Bangasayusang might be contemplating and explain your choice.

What might the Bangasayusang be contemplating?

Position A

The figure is contemplating the nature of existence and enlightenment.

VS

Position B

The figure is reflecting on the challenges of life and human suffering.

My choice: __
Evidence: __
Opposing point: __
My response: __



Activity 4

Crafting Goryeo Celadon

Short Answer

Goryeo celadon is renowned for its jade-green color and intricate inlaid designs of cranes and clouds. The inlay technique involved carving patterns into the clay and filling them with contrasting colors.

This method was unique to Goryeo artisans and admired even in China. Celadon was used by the elite for special occasions, reflecting their status and appreciation for beauty.

Today, it is celebrated as a masterpiece of Korean ceramics. How do you think the inlay technique contributed to its beauty?



Explain how the inlay technique enhances the beauty of Goryeo celadon.

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The Simplicity of Joseon White Porcelain

Joseon white porcelain is characterized by its pure white color and simple, elegant shapes. Unlike the ornate designs of earlier periods, this porcelain reflects the Confucian values of simplicity and restraint.

It was used in royal and everyday settings, valued for its understated beauty. The porcelain's minimalism was a deliberate choice, emphasizing function over decoration.

Today, it remains a symbol of Korean aesthetic principles. Why do you think simplicity was valued in Joseon society?



Compare the reasons for valuing simplicity in Joseon porcelain.

Why was simplicity valued in Joseon porcelain?

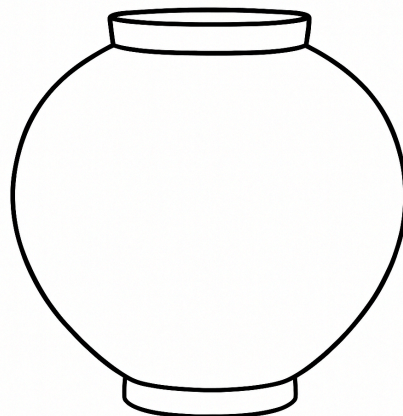
Source A

Simplicity reflects Confucian ideals of modesty and restraint.

Source B

Simplicity emphasizes practicality and function over decoration.

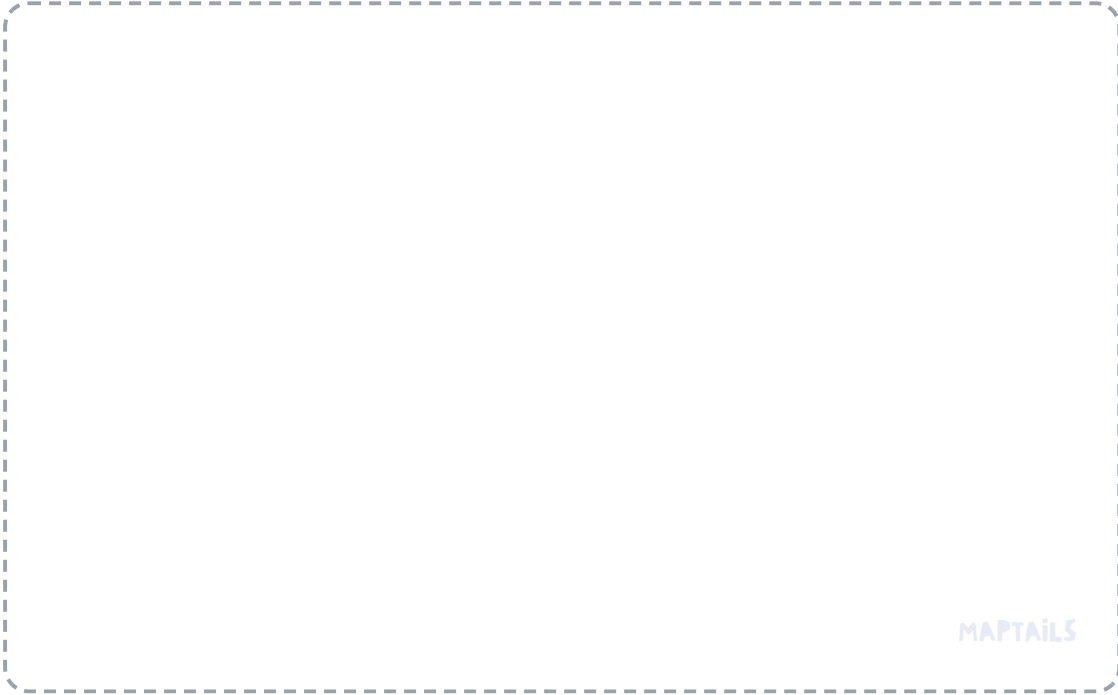
The interpretations differ because...



Reflection

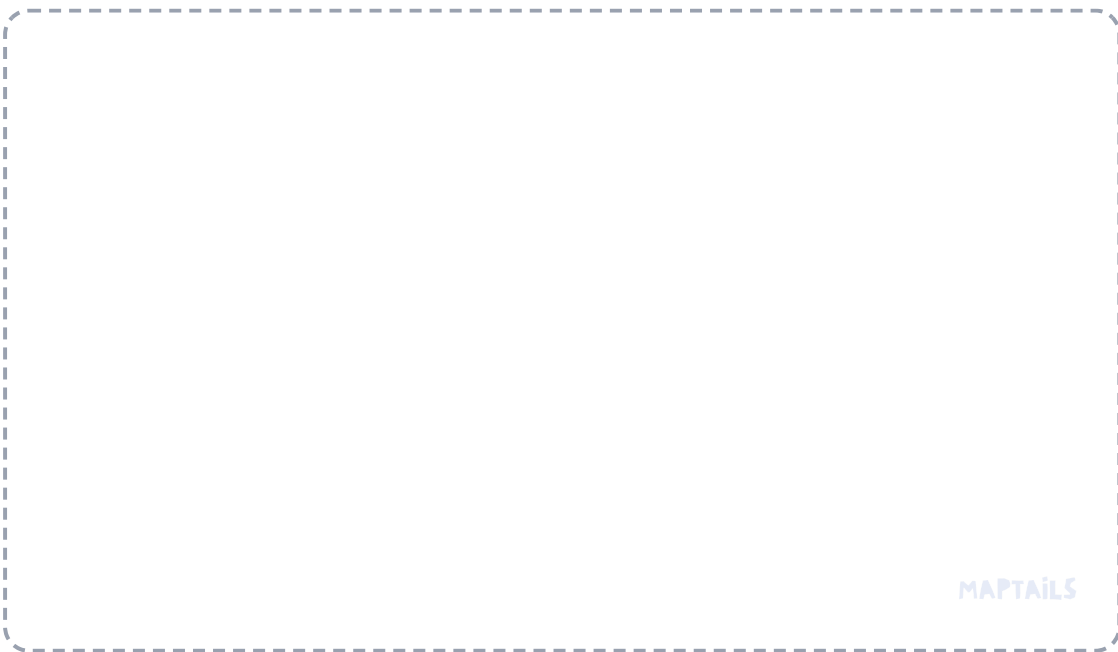
Thank you for exploring the National Museum of Korea with us. We hope you discovered new insights into Korea's rich history and culture.

Which artifact's design surprised you the most?



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After exploring activity_4, do you think craftsmanship or material is more important in art?



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✓ Answer Key

1 Why Chain

The Mystery of Comb-patterned Pottery

The pottery's pointed bottom allowed it to be placed in sandy riverbanks, indicating a lifestyle close to water. This design was practical for their environment. Over time, as living conditions changed, flat-bottomed pots became more suitable for stable placement on tables. Parents can discuss how environmental needs influence design changes.

2 Claim Check

Decoding the Silla Crown

The claim that the crown's decorations were purely ornamental overlooks their symbolic significance. The tree and antler shapes represent authority and nature's power, reflecting the Silla society's values. Parents can discuss how symbols convey deeper meanings beyond their appearance.

3 Debate Pick

The Thoughtful Pose of Bangasayusang

The Bangasayusang's pose suggests deep thought, possibly about existence or human challenges. Choosing between these interpretations involves considering the statue's religious context and the era's philosophical questions. Parents can encourage children to think about how art reflects cultural beliefs.

4 Short Answer

Crafting Goryeo Celadon

The inlay technique adds depth and contrast to the celadon's surface, highlighting the intricate designs. This method showcases the artisans' skill and enhances the visual appeal. Parents can discuss how craftsmanship and technique contribute to an object's beauty.

5 Source Compare

The Simplicity of Joseon White Porcelain

Simplicity in Joseon porcelain reflects both Confucian ideals and practical considerations. Confucianism emphasized modesty, while the porcelain's design prioritized function. Parents can explore how cultural values influence artistic choices.



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