

Learning Goals

- Understand that world cultures throughout history had different ranks.
- Discover how clothing and other apparel was a useful way to quickly convey the wearer's rank to others.
- Identify how hats were worn by the emperors and empresses in imperial China to denote their rank and status.

Learn

Background Information

A hat was an important part of the Imperial ensemble; it was a very visible and easy way of showing that someone was a person with power and status. Emperors and empresses both wore impressive court hats of red silk trimmed with sable fur and adorned with gold and pearls. The imperial concubines and the empress would secure their hair first with a diadem or circlet of gold, decorated with pearls and precious gems, which would be visible beneath the brim of her hat.

Activity: Make an Imperial Court Hat



2 hours



Individual



Grades: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6



Classroom or flat workspace



6-7, 8-10, 11-14

Make a court hat like the ones worn by the emperors and empresses of China, and show everyone who's boss!







Can you spot the empress' hat with the diadem?



Materials

- template [[PDF](#)]
- glue
- cardboard or Bristol board
- scissors
- markers or crayons

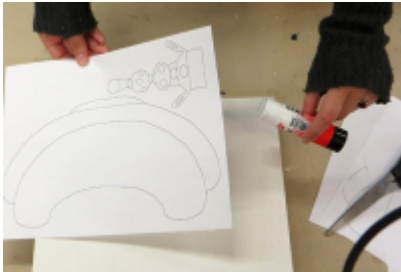
- embellishments (stickers, felt, feathers, rhinestones, buttons, beads, etc.)
- your imagination!

Preparation

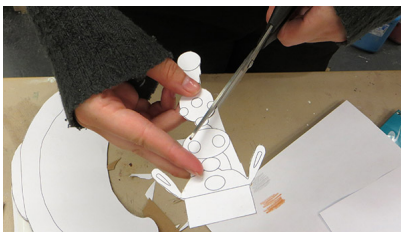
Look up images of Chinese royalty and try to spot the difference between the different types of hats.

Can you see different colours in the spheres on top of the hats? Hat spheres helped denote a person's station and rank.

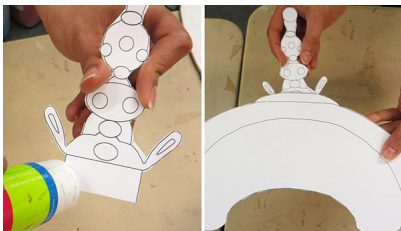
Instructions



Print the [downloadable template](#) on card stock, or glue it to some leftover cardboard (like a cereal box) so that it will stand up on its own.



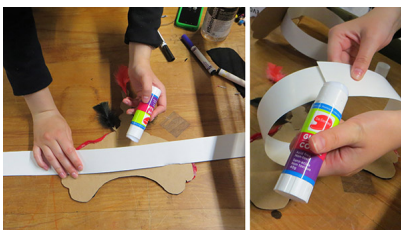
Cut out the hat and the ornament.



Put some glue on the tab at the bottom of your ornament, and glue the ornament to the top of the hat.



Colour in and decorate your hat. You can be creative. Don't forget to include the circlet at the bottom if your court hat belongs to a concubine or empress. The hat in the picture below does not have a circlet, since it is being made for an emperor.



Make a circular band that fits your head out of cardboard or Bristol board. It should be about 5cm wide. Attach the circular band to the back of your hat.



Model your new Imperial court hat and tweet a picture to **#atROM**.

Follow-up

- Imagine that you are a curator in a museum, and you are putting this hat into an exhibition. Write a short label for the hat that answers some or all of the following questions:
- Who wore this hat?
- When did they wear it?
- What is it made from?
- How does this hat convey information about the person wearing it?
- What garments do people in other cultures wear to show leadership?
- What do people wear at your school to show leadership?

Teacher Reflection

- Does the finished product demonstrate an understanding of the purpose and function of such attire?
- Did the student create a straightforward reproduction or creatively interpret the assignment? Did the interpretation they chose convey the intended message about the hat and its wearer?

Glossary

Forbidden City

The Forbidden City was the largest palace complex in history, home to the emperors of China and their families from 1420 to 1912.

Diadem

A type of crown, like an ornamental headband, worn by royalty.

Concubine

A woman who lived with a man, but who was not married to him. An emperor usually had many concubines in addition to the empress, who was his wife.
