

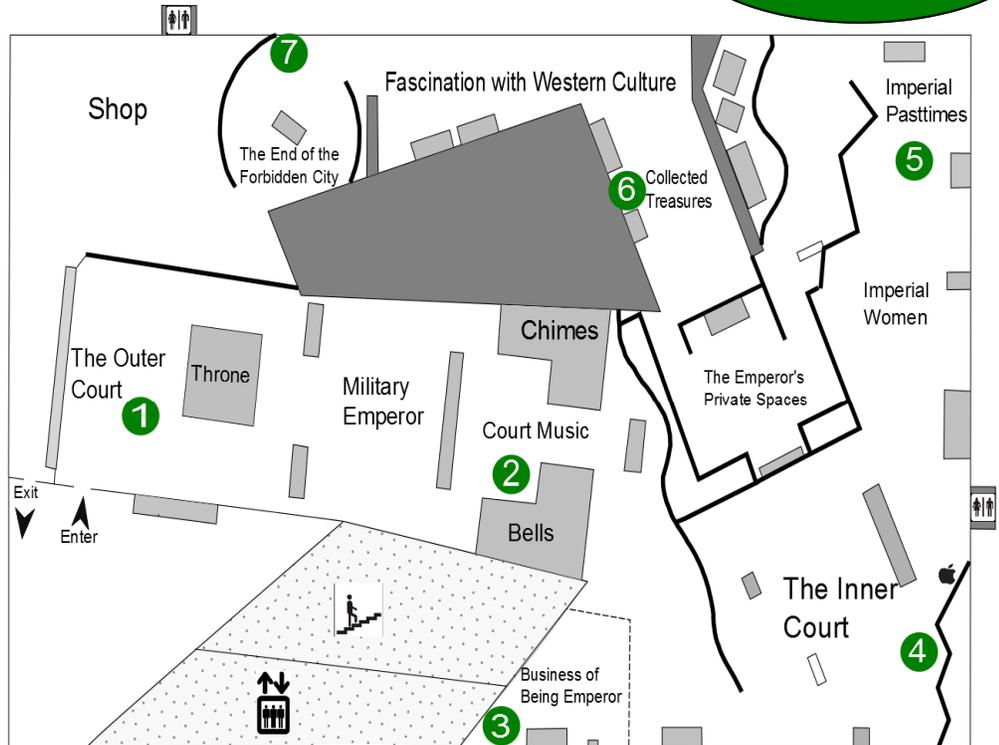
The Forbidden City: Activity Guide for School Groups

Visit the Chinese Galleries on Level 1 for more art and objects

Welcome to the Forbidden City!
For over 500 years, the gates of the world's largest imperial palace were closed to all but the emperor, his family and servants. This guide will help you explore some of their stories.

A Few Things to Remember:

- ✓ Keep your voices at an indoor level.
- ✓ Do not touch the objects unless they are at a clearly-labelled touch station.
- ✓ Be respectful of other groups, and allow ROM educators access to spaces and objects if they require them.
- ✓ Remain in the exhibition until your teacher leads you out.



The Outer Court: Power and Privilege

Stop 1: Throne

When the emperor met with officials and guests, it was important that he appear above them – literally – to convey his heavenly status.

Take a look at the throne and identify some auspicious (meaning “lucky” or “important”) symbols.

Hint: Use the labels around the throne to help you.

Pick one auspicious symbol that you like. In the space below, sketch or describe the symbol and explain why you chose this symbol.



Auspicious Symbol Tally:

As you move through the exhibition, keep an eye out for your chosen auspicious symbol. Every time you see it, add a tick to this box. Tally your ticks at the end of the exhibition.

Graph it!

Collect the class data for each symbol studied and create a bar graph of how often the symbols appeared. Which symbol seems to be used the most? Why?

Stop 2: The Bells

As Emperor Qianlong arrived and departed from a grand ceremony in the courtyard, these bells rang out in a mellow and mystical song. Take a moment to listen.

What words come to mind when you listen to the music?

This style of music has been described as a conversation between these instruments. Why do you think this is?



Build it!

Use your imagination to construct your own set of chimes. What materials will you use? Compose a song for the Emperor.

Record your song and tweet it to #ROMLearning

Stop 3: The Business of Being Emperor

Emperor Yongzheng was not in the direct line for the throne, and in order to gain power, he imprisoned or executed many of his brothers and sisters.



Although he took harsh measures to secure his rule, he was also a very private man. Few people knew the "real" Yongzheng, but the paintings in this section reveal hints of his true, somewhat eccentric personality.

Each painting shows Emperor Yongzheng playing a different "role" with a different animal companion. For each painting, list the different roles he is shown in, which animal companion is with him, and why you think that animal goes with that role:

<u>Role</u>	<u>Animal</u>	<u>Why this animal?</u>
-------------	---------------	-------------------------



Draw it!

If you could put yourself in any role, character, or occupation, what would it be? Draw a portrait of yourself playing this role in the frame. Don't forget your animal companion!

The Inner Court: Life in the Palace

Stop 4: The Twelve Beauties

Before he became Emperor Yongzheng, Prince Yinzhen commissioned 12 paintings of beautiful Imperial women. Each painting portrays the ideal life of Imperial women.

Look closely at the paintings. What hobbies and pastimes do you see that demonstrate that a lady was a very talented, cultured, and accomplished person?

What are some hobbies and pastimes that you enjoy? What do these activities communicate about you?



Swipe it!

Use the iPads next to the paintings to learn more about the Imperial beauties, or download the Twelve Beauties app by the Palace Museum, available on the iTunes store.

Stop 5: Imperial Pastimes

Explore this section and describe some of the activities the Imperial family did together in each season.

Spring	Summer
Autumn	Winter

The Imperial family spent a lot of time in their gardens. If you were designing the ultimate garden for your family, what would you include in it?

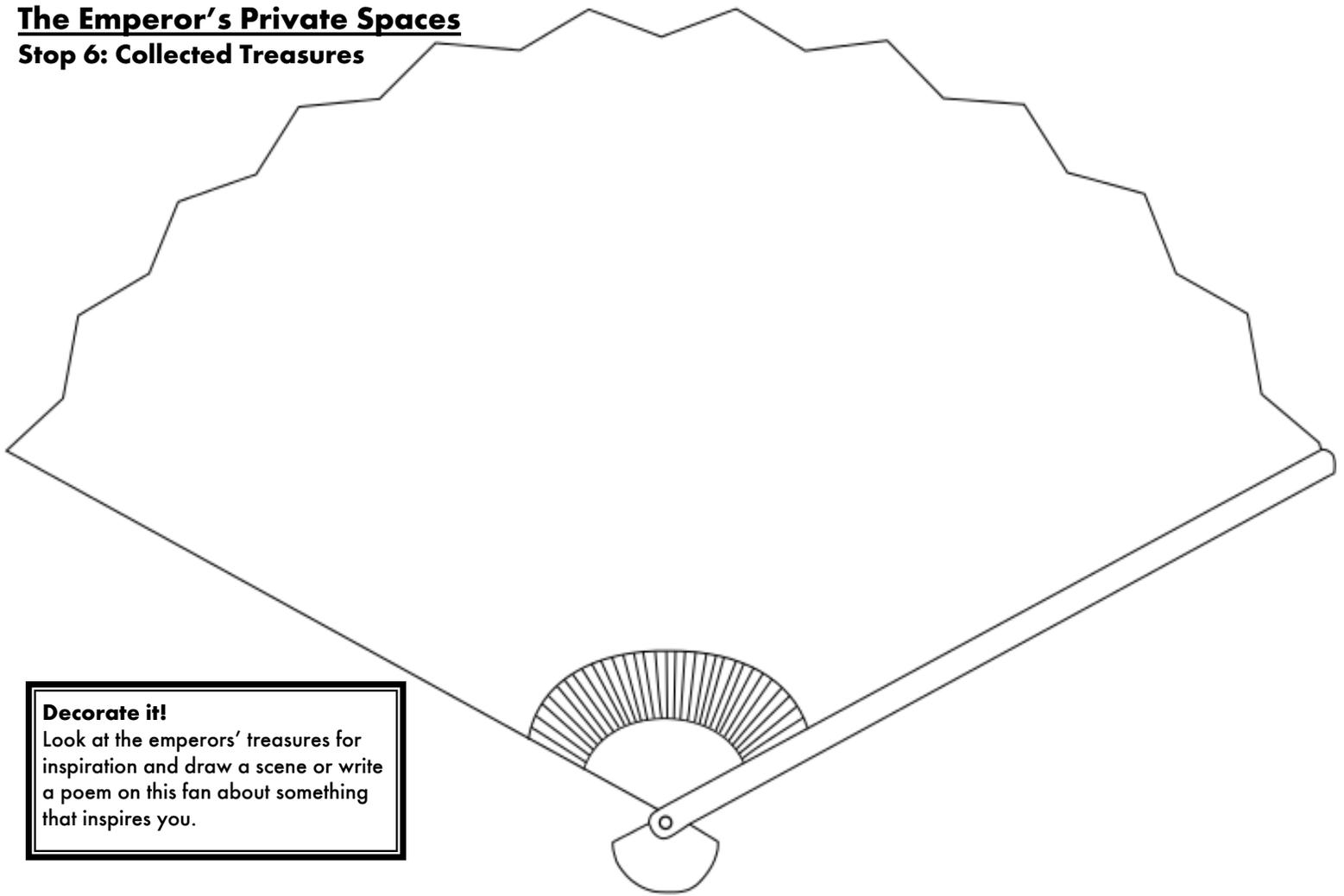


Write it!

Emperor Qianlong loved tea so much that he wrote poems on his favourite tea wares. On the teapot, write a poem about your favourite pastimes.

The Emperor's Private Spaces

Stop 6: Collected Treasures



Decorate it!

Look at the emperors' treasures for inspiration and draw a scene or write a poem on this fan about something that inspires you.

Stop 7: The End of the Forbidden City

A seal is a stamp that can be used to make an identical impression many times, either by pressing into a soft material (like wax or clay), or by dipping it in ink and pressing it on paper.

The emperors of China passed down a set of 25 imperial seals as symbols of their legitimacy and power. When Puyi, the last emperor, was forced to leave the palace in 1925, the seals were turned over to the government of the Republic of China.

Look at the 25 seals. Which one do you think you would use most often if you were the emperor or empress, and why?

Seal it!

Design a seal that could be used as your own personal signature. Use words, pictures, or both, to describe your personality and character.

Use your design to make a seal out of clay!

★ Remember, remain in the exhibition until your teacher leads you out!