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**Canva &  
Construction-  
Project Based  
Learning**

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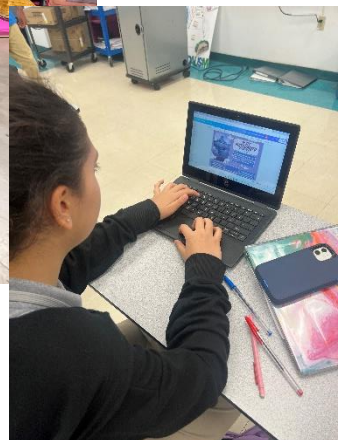
# Canva & Construction- Project Based Learning

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## **Goals and Objectives**

In this lesson students investigate the role of Japanese castles during Feudal Japan and create digital posters using Canva, sourcing images and information from classroom notes and research. They then individually or in teams build three-dimensional models of their castles, blending architectural history with hands-on engineering. This dual-format project enabled students to move beyond rote memorization and connect cultural history to tangible design. This lesson guides students as they design digital artifacts, conduct research, prototype physical models, and reflect on their learning. Teachers leave with a replicable PBL template applicable across subject areas—fostering interdisciplinary thinking, deeper content understanding, student agency, and meaningful connection between curriculum and creativity.

This activity allows teachers to incorporate project-based learning into their curriculum. This instructional strategy allows students to work through real life problems, using information learned in class. The process of selecting, developing and producing their Japanese Castle, digital poster, and 3D model mimics the real-world process engaged by marketing personnel and architects. This lesson shows teachers how to incorporate meaningful research-based activities in the classroom, how to use Canva basics for classroom instruction, how to incorporate 3-D models and simulations into the classroom, and how to use this lesson to incorporate STEAM in their curriculum. This process allows students to develop 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills that can be applied to any number of courses and careers. Skills include critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration.

Through this project, students are able to:

- Conduct scholarly research for information and pictures to use in their poster. (Based on student ability, the teacher can provide the research sites for students.)
- Write research in their own words (based on teacher-generated guided questions) in order to minimize plagiarism.
- Use Canva (accessible through Schoology) to create and share their poster.
- Work individually or in teams to create their assigned Japanese castle. They will decide what materials they need as well as create the plans for construction. (This portion can be done in class or at home.)
- Summarize their research, using an index card, as part of the 3-D model.

## **Florida Standards**

SS.912.A.1.2 Utilize a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify author, historical significance, audience, and authenticity to understand a historical period.

SS.912.A.1.4 Analyze how images, symbols, objects, cartoons, graphs, charts, maps, and artwork may be used to interpret the significance of time periods and events from the past.

SS.912.W.2.20 Summarize the major cultural, economic, political, and religious developments in medieval Japan.

SS.912.W.2.21 Compare Japanese feudalism with Western European feudalism during the Middle Ages.

SC.912.CS-CP.3.1 Create a computational artifact, individually and collaboratively, followed by reflection, analysis, and iteration.

## **Course Outline and Overview**

The 9th Grade World History social studies curriculum consists of history, geography, civics and economics. The primary content of this course pertains to the history of the world after the fall of the Roman Empire. Students are exposed to a variety of topics including history, geography, religion, philosophy, economics and politics. Students study methods of historical inquiry and how to use primary and secondary documents.

Based on the scope and sequence of this course, this activity was used to reinforce the content and standards aligned to the Feudal Japan. This activity was completed during the first nine weeks. In World History, we study a variety of political structures and how art and architecture is used to reinforce those ideals. After part our unit on the Feudal Japan, I decided to develop an activity the focused on how Japanese castles are an application of the ideals of Feudalism as well as how the role of these structures have changed over time. I selected 6 castles: Matsuyama Castle, Himeji Castle, Matsumoto Castle, Kumamoto Castle, Kyoto Imperial Palace, and Taiyuin Temple. The students conducted structured research, using guiding questions as well as teacher-provided resources on the structure and functions of their castle. Then they took their research and developed a digital poster on Canva, using pre-made templates. Students then worked, individually or in groups, to design and build a free standing replica of their castle, using the classroom materials provided. At the end, students were able to learn about the different castles through a gallery walk activity, where students presented their finding and showcased their creations.

## **Lesson Plan**

- This activity is done at the culmination of the unit on Feudal Japan.
- To provide context for the activity the teacher will show a clip for Discovery Education's *Destiny Determined: Power and Rituals in Asia*.
- Students will choose any of the following castles, temples, or historical sites in Japan today (based on their last name).

*Matsuyama Castle* (Last name A-D)

*Himeji Castle* (Last Name E-H)

*Matsumoto Castle* (Last Name I- L)

*Kumamoto Castle* (Last Name M- P)

*Kyoto Imperial Palace* (Last Name Q-T)

*Taiyuin Temple* (Last Name U-Z)

- Students will conduct research on the site you were given. The research will come from their notes, the video and the links the teacher provides. They will answer the following questions on a sheet of paper (in their own words):
  1. What role did this site play in the development, preservation, or memory of feudalism in Japan?
  2. Describe the architecture. Why is the building built the way it was? What is it made out of?
  3. What surrounded the building during the time period (make sure to mention the time period) in which it was built? What surrounds the building now?

4. What economic role does this site play in Japanese society today? Does it draw tourists to the area? Does it cost to enter? o What is its importance in Japanese society today?
- The students will use Canava to create a digital poster for your assigned castle. Note: They can access Canva through Schoology- it's on the menu on the left-hand side of the page- once you enter my class period Schoology page (type in the search bar the word poster and use any of the templates provided)
    - Make sure your poster
      - Has a title (the name of your castle)
      - Has the answers to all your questions
      - Has at least 3 pictures related to those answers
      - Has your name
      - Is informative as well as appealing to the reader
    - Submit your poster through Canva- use the share button on the top right corner of the screen- and type my the teacher's name.
    - Students will select to work individually or in groups of 2-3 (for groups they must have the same assigned castle)
    - Students are to use the proved classroom materials to design and develop a 3-D model of their assigned castle.
      - Make sure your Castle
        - Uses the materials provided (students are allowed to bring in other supplies)
        - Is free standing

- Contains elements of the original castle that was researched
- Has your name
- Is no larger than 18 inches x 18 inches x 18 inches
- Includes an index card with a summary of your research
- Students will participate in a gallery walk activity to showcase their work.
  - Each station will have
    - 3-D Model with index card
    - Tablet/laptop to display digital poster
- Students will visit each station, where they will be presented with information about the castle they are seeing. As students visit each station, they will take notes from each presentation. Those notes will be used to complete the following writing prompt:

**Discuss the importance of castles as a symbol of Japanese Feudalism.**

## **Resources**

- Discovery Education's Destiny Determined: Power and Rituals in Asia video clip-  
<https://dadeschools.discoveryeducation.com/learn/player/0488a382-5c42-4c34-827a-f24c56c78658?shared=true>
- Laptops- for research/ to create and submit Canva poster/present poster during gallery walk
- Links to research on Japanese castles
- Notebook paper/pencil- to write down research
- Building materials such as glue gun & sticks, popsicle sticks, Styrofoam, poster board, paint, brushes, markers, scissors, craft knife. (students can also bring in their own arts and crafts supplies they may need based on their plans)
- Index cards - for summary card attached to model

## ***Research Links for Feudal Japan Castles***

### ***Matsuyama Castle***

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e5501.html>

<https://www.matsuyamajo.jp/en/guide.html>

### ***Himeji Castle***

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3501.html>

<https://www.japan.travel/en/world-heritage/himeji-jo-castle/>

<https://visit-himeji.com/en/trip-ideas/himeji-castle-amazing-history-and-tips-on-how-to-enjoy-your-visit/>

### ***Matsumoto Castle***

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e6051.html>

<https://www.matsumoto-castle.jp/eng/value>

<https://www.japan.travel/en/spot/1356/>

### ***Kumamoto Castle***

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e4501.html>

<https://www.japan.travel/en/spot/638/>

<https://kumamoto.guide/en/season/detail/153>

### ***Kyoto Imperial Palace***

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3917.html>

<https://kyoto-gosho.kunaicho.go.jp/en>

<https://www.indochinatravel.com/country/japan/kyoto-imperial-palaces-and-gardens.html>

## ***Taiyuin Temple***

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3802.html>

<https://www.nikkostation.com/taiyuin-temple/>

<https://donnykimball.com/taiyuin-byo-1b521b33b1ab?srsltid=AfmBOoqtOwzSydJ8CnanyIAxzhBhPPloxSGiaKPqPgslZRtlYqWNCPLg>