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## Title of Lesson

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### *Goals & Objectives*

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Students will learn about aspects of aristocratic court life in the Heian Era through literature and art created from women's perspectives. Students will analyze primary source documents (from *The Pillow Book* and *Tale of Genji*) and images in order to examine court life and culture in the Heian Era. Students will discuss how these artistic pieces have left their mark on Japanese culture today.

### *California State Content and Common Core Standards*

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#### **7.5 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of Medieval Japan.**

- **7.5.5** Study the ninth and tenth centuries' golden age of literature, art, and drama and its lasting effects on culture today, including Murasaki Shikibu's *Tale of Genji*.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1](#) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2](#) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7](#) Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.9](#) Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.10](#) Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

### **Lesson Introduction**

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The teacher will project the image below (a painting on a scroll of a scene from *Tale of Genji*) on the overhead and ask the students to engage in a brainstorm discussion about who they think these women are, how they're dressed, where they are, what opinions they can form of Heian court life, and any other general observations about the painting.

### **Vocabulary**

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Students will continue adding key terms, their definitions, and example sentences/pictures to their vocabulary journals. Students may come across more vocabulary terms they do not

understand as they read the primary source documents, when this happens they'll record the word in their journals and the teacher will walk around to help explain definitions. During the class discussion of the analysis activity, students will share new terms they learned while reading and a word bank of all extra recorded vocabulary will be written on the board for everyone to copy in their journals. Key terms for this lesson include:

- Murasaki Shikibu
- Heian Era
- Sei Shonagon
- courtiers
- convovulus
- cultivated
- aristocrats
- waka
- calligraphy
- melancholy

### Content Delivery

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Before beginning the DBQ activity, the teacher will read the introductory essay below to the class. The essay will give students some background knowledge of the authors and content of the primary source documents they'll be reading and it will also give the students background knowledge of what court life in Kyoto during the Heian Era was like and will give them a mental image of the time period. Once students have the necessary background, they will be assigned numbers to read and jigsaw the excerpts from *The Pillow Book* and *Tale of Genji*.

Below are paintings of scenes from the novel *Tale of Genji*. Students will also examine these images in their primary source analysis worksheets.

### Student Engagement

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The teacher will break up the class into small groups of 3 to 4 students so that each group can be assigned to take a closer look at a set of documents. Students will jigsaw the primary source documents, each group will analyze 1 of the 3 text documents (either Lovers or Service at Court from *The Pillow Book* or the excerpt from *Tale of Genji*) and 1 of the 3 images (any of the paintings from *Tale of Genji*). The teacher will number off students 1 - 3, all the 1s will form small groups of 3 to 4 and analyze "Lovers" and the 1st image, all the 2s will form small groups and analyze "Service at Court" and the 2nd image, all the 3s will form small groups and analyze the *Tale of Genji* excerpt and the 3rd image. After the students have finished reading the documents and examining the images they will complete their primary source analysis worksheets. The last portion of the worksheet will be filled in as students meet with other groups to jigsaw their information (all group 1s will share info with group 2s and group 3s etc. until each student has a comparison of their documents with all the other available documents).

### Lesson Closure

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The teacher will go over the responses that students came up with on their primary source analysis worksheets as a class and will discuss certain aspects of modern Japanese culture that still reflect some characteristics found in the text and images to wrap up the lesson.

### Assessment

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**Formative:** The teacher will visit with each group to monitor students' understanding while they complete their analysis worksheets. If a student does not demonstrate understanding, the teacher will help scaffold concepts by asking questions and guiding them to relevant areas of the documents to find accurate information.

**Summative:** The teacher will grade students' primary source analysis worksheets to assess student comprehension and will use it to identify any areas that need re-teaching.

### Accommodations for English Learners, Striving Readers and Students with Special Needs

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The creation of a class word bank will provide extra support for vocabulary comprehension. By having the teacher read the introductory essay out loud, ELs and Striving Readers will be able to hear correct pronunciation and attain a better comprehension of the necessary background information. These students will be provided with modified or shortened excerpts of the primary source documents if they need it. Strategically placing these students in heterogeneous groups with native speakers or more academically advanced students can provide them with good support during the analysis and jigsaw as well.

### Lesson Resources

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[Asia for Educators](#)

[Annenberg Learner](#)

[Donald Keene's \*Anthology of Japanese Literature\* \(New York: Grove Press, 1955\)](#)