



Global Education – Learning Emphases

- Identity and cultural diversity
- Social justice and human rights
- Sustainable futures

The Taj Mahal – Investigating a built World Heritage Site

Stage 3 HSIE and Visual Arts
activities developed by Julie O’Keeffe

Outcomes to be addressed through a study of the Taj Mahal:

HSIE

ENS 3.5 Demonstrates an understanding of the interconnectedness between Australia and global environments, and how individuals and groups can act in an ecologically responsible manner.

ENS 3.6 Explains how various beliefs and practices influence the ways in which people interact with, change and value their environment

- patterns of human involvement and use of environments;
- effects of human and natural changes on environments.
- ecologically sustainable development of environments.
- different perspectives about the maintenance and improvement of environments;
- selected natural or built heritage sites in the world, through case studies.

VISUAL ARTS

VAS 3.1 Investigates subject matter in an attempt to represent likenesses of things in the world.

VAS 3.4 Communicates about the ways in which subject matter is represented in artworks.

ENGLISH

RS 3.5 Reads independently an extensive range of texts with increasing content demands and responds to themes and issues.

WS 3.9 Produces a wide range of well-structured and well-presented literary and factual texts for a wide variety of purposes and audiences using increasingly challenging topics, ideas, issues and written language features.

Early morning at the Taj Mahal, Agra., Uttar Pradesh, India. Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Worksheet One: WHAT IS WORLD HERITAGE?

WORLD HERITAGE was set up by the United Nations in 1972 to protect and preserve the world's most valuable places.

To be selected by the World Heritage Committee, a site must be the best example of its kind in the world.



Minaret, Taj Mahal, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. Source: Wikimedia Commons

There are two types of World Heritage areas:

1. NATURAL AREAS
2. CULTURAL AREAS

A site chosen for its NATURAL value must be one of the following:

- an example of a major stage in the earth's evolution;
- an example of a continuous life cycle;
- a site of natural beauty;
- an area that contains important habitats of plants or animals in danger of extinction

A site chosen for its CULTURAL value must be one of the following.

- an example of unique art.
- a masterpiece;
- an example of a civilisation that has disappeared, which provides evidence of the ideas or beliefs of a particular culture.

All the countries that are members of the United Nations donate money to the World Heritage Fund to help save special places in the world and protect them for future generations.

THE TAJ MAHAL IS A WORLD HERITAGE SITE

- Read the text to decide the type of heritage area this building would be.
- List some reasons for its classification.
- Check the following websites to find out **when and why** the Taj Mahal was declared a World Heritage Site:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO_World_Heritage_Site

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Worksheet Two: INTRODUCING THE TAJ MAHAL

Students view images of the Taj Mahal, then **brainstorm** and **list** knowledge and impressions.

Students (individually or in pairs) undertake **research** on some of the following points about the site.

- Location (city, country, continent)
- Type and purpose of the building
 - Love story associated with construction of the Taj Mahal
 - Materials used for construction, and where they came from
 - Architectural style
 - The gardens
 - Employment provided by the Taj Mahal today
 - Significance and symbolism of the Taj Mahal
 - Issues facing the future of the site, and some solutions
 - How the Taj Mahal is used today.

Students decide on ways to present their information:.

(The inclusion of diagrams, maps, pictures and realia would enhance their presentations)



Images: Taj Mahal, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. Source: Wikimedia Commons

Some useful websites to support this research:

http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Taj_Mahal.html

<http://library.thinkquest.org/JO112263/history/jahan.html>

<http://www.stud.u-szeged.hu/CsokeKatalin/main.htm>

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Worksheet Three: TAJ MAHAL – WONDER OF THE WORLD

Use the Exposition Plan to support the view that:

The Taj Mahal should be included in the new 7 Wonders of the World list

INTRODUCTION

Statement of position that the Taj Mahal should be included in the new 7 Wonders of the World List.

Include a preview of arguments for:

- World Heritage status
- a masterpiece
- a major tourist destination

Argument one – WORLD HERITAGE STATUS (with elaboration)

Argument two – A MASTERPIECE construction, design, art work (with elaboration)

Argument three – MAJOR TOURIST DESTINATION

Why do 7 million people visit the site each year? (with elaboration)

CONCLUSION

Restate the position strongly in the light of arguments presented

Each argument needs to be elaborated on to form a paragraph of between three to five sentences.

Use persuasive text (high modality).

Refer to New 7 Wonders website:
www.new7wonders.com



At dawn – Taj Mahal, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Worksheet Four: THE TAJ MAHAL – POETRY

Write some poetry about the Taj Mahal

AN ACROSTIC

T

A

J

M

A

H

A

L

A CINQUAIN (a 5-line poem)

Each line must have a certain number of syllables:

Title = 2 words

Description of the title = 4 words

Action = 4 words

Feeling = 8 words

Other words for title = 2 words

Each line must also tell something about the title.

Title

.....

Description of the title

.....

.....

Action

.....

.....

Feeling

.....

.....

Other words for title

.....

RHYMING COUPLETS (A pair of rhyming lines)

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List possible metaphors and similes that would describe the Taj Mahal

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A LIMERICK (A 5-line poetry pattern)

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A DYLAN THOMAS PORTRAIT

Have you ever seen the Taj Mahal?

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..... ;

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Worksheet Five: PRESERVING THE TAJ MAHAL

Visit the website – www.taj-mahal.net/augEng/textMM/preservation, to read about the issues endangering the Taj Mahal. Find some possible solutions by completing the following tables.

PROBLEM (Issues)	SOLUTION

Over seven million tourists visit the Taj Mahal each year. What could be some positives and negatives for the site from so many people?

POSITIVES (Pros)	NEGATIVES (Cons)

Develop a debate topic around tourism and its impact on the Taj Mahal. Exposition and discussion text could be developed from these points.



Visitors – Taj Mahal, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Worksheet Six: THE TAJ MAHAL – CLOZE PASSAGE

Choose a word from the box to complete the story of the Taj below.

Ruler	lover	22	wife	marble
Sad	world	Mumtaz	14 th	
Eat	gems	monument	workforce	

Shahjahan was a great He had everything he wanted including a vast empire, lots of money and awho he loved very much. Her name was Mahal.

Mumtaz died after giving birth to her child. Shah Jahan was very He refused to Or drink anything. After grieving for a long time, Shah Jahan was a changed man. He no longer wore heavy robes covered in He took to wearing simple white clothes and got rid of all his luxurious things. He decided to build ato remember her.

A huge strongof 20 000 worked on building the Taj Mahal and it took years to complete. It is made from white People come from all over the To see the Taj Mahal, it is a symbol of

Answer the following questions in full sentences.

1. Why do you think people from all over the world come to see the Taj Mahal?
2. Imagine if somebody built a monument to you. Shahjahan asked the builders to put precious stones and gold into the walls because Mumtaz was very special to him. How would you like people to remember you? What would be your instructions to the builders?

Mumtaz Mahal, the beloved wife of Shah Jahan
Source: Wikimedia Commons



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Worksheet Seven: THE TAJ MAHAL AND TOURISM

The impact of tourism on the Taj Mahal and the city of Agra

A Consequence Chart is used to record what students believe to be consequences of a decision or action. Charts can take different forms and enable students to explore cause-and-effect relationships, alternative consequences, or the likely consequences of alternative actions or decisions.

(BOS Units of Work, page 162)

Students work individually or in pairs to develop a Consequence Chart, showing the impact of tourism on the Taj Mahal and the city of Agra.

When the chart is completed:

Share and reflect upon students' responses, asking them to give reasons for, and justify, particular consequences.

Think about and discuss the impact of tourism on the Taj Mahal and the city of Agra through the eyes of the following people:

- Local guides
- Cycle-taxi owners
- Craftsmen souvenir makers)
- Hotel owners
- Restaurant owners
- Conservationists

Develop a list of pros and cons for the impact of tourism on the Taj Mahal and the city of Agra.



Marble grinders, working near the Taj Mahal, Agra. Source: Wikimedia Commons

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Worksheet Eight: Sketching the Taj Mahal

- View a variety of images of the Taj Mahal from different viewpoints and perspectives (ie. Close up, long distance, front view, side view, at different times of the day).
- Discuss the overall appearance, shape and features of the Taj Mahal (eg. Domes, minarets, arches, symmetry, **pietre dure**, calligraphy).
- Encourage students to look carefully at the features, proportions, angles and lines of the Taj Mahal,
- Initial drawing in pencil should start lightly, sketching the general shape of the building. Details can be added when the proportions are right. Encourage students to look for repeated lines (eg. Arches of windows, curved shapes of the domes, straight lines of the minarets).
- Add tone by shading in darker areas that have strong shadows.

VARIATIONS

- Ask students to imagine they are looking through a zoom lens, and focus on a part of the structure (eg. A window frame, top of a minaret). Draw, and add detail with charcoal or colour.
- Combine drawings of 'zoomed in' focus to create a collage of an overall impression of the building.
- Experiment with dome shapes of different sizes, overlapped.
- Add silver and gold paper and glitter to the drawings.
- Use watercolours to create an image of the Taj Mahal at sunset, when the white marble 'takes on' the pinks, mauves and yellows of that time of the day.
- Make print images of either the shape of the whole building, or parts of it.
- Use plasticine or modelling clay to make 3D models of the Taj Mahal.