

Activity: Looking at Objects in Context

Please note: These activities were originally designed for use in the Museum galleries. As written here, they reflect adaptations for classroom use.

Classroom resources related to India are available to local teachers for free loan.

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Recommended grade level: 7 (can be adapted for older students)

Use images of the following sculptures. (These may be downloaded from this website.)

- **The Offering of Four Bowls to the Buddha** (Early South Asian sculpture)
Gandhara Region, 2nd century CE
Schist; 90.35
- **Varaha**(Northern Indian sculpture)
Possibly northeastern Rajasthan, southern Haryana, or Uttar Pradesh, Mathura region,
Late 11th century
Phyllite; 82.5.1
- **Consort Goddess** (South Indian sculpture)
Tamil Nadu, Kaveri delta region, mid to late 10th century
Bronze;91.23

Materials needed:

- Prompt sheet (see below)
- Pencils
- Diagrams and photographs of Hindu and Buddhist sculptures in situ
- Images of Indian sculptures
- Optional: Catalogue of the exhibition, *Fashioning the Divine*, available for purchase from the Ackland Art Museum (\$15)

Time needed: 30 – 45 minutes

Objectives:









- Review contextual information for a selection of Indian objects.
- Examine form and function based on visual characteristics.
- Compare objects from different locations in South Asia.

Instructions:

1. Have students work with a partner or in groups of three to look carefully at one sculpture from a particular area of India. They can either use a pre-selected object (see above), or they can choose one of several from the same geographical area.
2. Students will read the prompts in each section of the worksheet and try to answer as many questions as they can in about 10 – 15 minutes.

- 3. If information is available, invite students to read it ONLY after they have exhausted everything they can think of, based on what they see.
- 4. Everyone will reconvene and share their findings with the whole group.

Learning style(s) addressed:

logical 123	kinesthetic 	musical 	spatial 	linguistic 	interpersonal 	intrapersonal 	naturalistic 	existential 
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What material was used to make this object? Based on this knowledge, do you think the object was meant to be permanent or portable?

Look at the details. What can they tell you about the object? (Note hand gestures, facial expression, posture, jewelry, other details.)

Original Context

Where do you think the work was placed in the sacred site? Why?

What questions do you have about this object?