

Teaching Korea - Cheomseongdae

Teaching Suggestions

Retrieval Practice

Why not create some short multi-choice quizzes to test what students can recall about the content they have just learned about? Create a quick test of 8, 10, 12 or 20 questions. Here are three examples:

1. The Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory was built during the reign of which monarch?
 - a) Queen Seondeok of Silla
 - b) King Jinji of Silla
 - c) Jinheung the Great
2. Cheomseongdae was designated Korea's 31st national treasure in what year?
 - a) 1852
 - b) 1962
 - c) 1988
3. In what century was the observatory built?
 - a) Seventh
 - b) Eighth
 - c) Nineth

OBSERVATORIES AROUND THE WORLD

Ask students to research the other early observatories from around the world. This could be an individual or group project.

Two other early observatories are mentioned on the website – the Senseidai observatory in Japan (675) and the Duke Zhou's observatory in China (723), for example.

Students could create fact files on these – or look for others around the world. They could even take it up to modern times – for example, the Keck Observatory (Hawaii) can see farther into space than the famous Hubble Telescope.

WRITE AN ONLINE ENCYCLOPAEDIA ENTRY FOR THE THE CHEOMSEONGDAE ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY

The Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory is clearly a very significant building.

Therefore, why not ask your pupils to research and write an online encyclopaedia entry for the observatory?

It is a good idea to structure their research and give them a specific word count to limit how much they can write. This adds challenge.

Pupils could work individually, in pairs or in groups. You could use these headings to structure their research and then help them to write their entries:

- Brief overview
- The structure (how it was built)
- Symbolism
- How it was used

WHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD?

The Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory was built in the 7th Century (probably in 633) during the reign of Queen Seondeok of Silla, who ruled from 632-647.

Ask pupils to research important who people lived at this time, or what other important events or developments took place.

This could have a Korean focus or it could be expanded to give a global perspective. You might want to widen the period of study to the whole of the 7th Century.

For example, at this time, the Arabian Peninsula is united under the central authority of Abu Bakr – and this is the time of the great expansion of the Islamic Empire.

In England, the 7th Century is a time of great battles between rival kingdoms during Anglo-Saxon times.

WRITE AN OBITUARY FOR QUEEN SEONDEOK OF SILLA

The Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory was built during the reign of Queen Seondeok of Silla.

It was very unusual in the 7th Century for a woman to rule the Kingdom of Silla.

Queen Seondeok was a significant figure during this period of history and continues to be today.

Interestingly, Queen Seondeok was the focus of a 2009 Korean drama entitled Queen Seondeok.

Ask you pupils to investigate her life and then as write an obituary for her.

Pupils could focus their research on:

- Seondeok's early life
- Why Seondeok became Queen?
- Threats Queen Seondeok faced from abroad
- Achievements improving life in Silla

- Why was the observatory built?

WRITE A PLAQUE FOR THE CHEOMSEONGDAE ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY

Ask your pupils to write a plaque for the replica in the Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory.

They could work individually, in pairs or in groups.

You could support them by giving them to following headings to find out about:

- When was it built?
- Why was it built?
- Who decided to have it built?
- Uses of the observatory
- Why is it significant?

After they have completed their research explain to them that they need to write a plaque for the observatory.

Give them a word limit of 40 to 50 words. This makes the task much more difficult as they will have to choose their words carefully.



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