

Lesson Plan: A Marble Masterpiece - The Story of the Taj Mahal

Materials Needed:

- Pictures or short video clips of the Taj Mahal
- White paper
- Drawing supplies (crayons, markers, colored pencils)
- Optional Building Supplies: White building blocks (like LEGOs), sugar cubes, or large marshmallows with toothpicks
- A small, safe mirror
- A globe or world map

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Tell the simple story of why the Taj Mahal was built.
- Point out three main parts of the Taj Mahal: the dome, the minarets, and its symmetrical shape.
- Create your own model or drawing of the Taj Mahal.

Lesson Activities

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Hook:** Show a picture of the Taj Mahal. Ask, "What do you think this building is? Is it a castle? A palace? A giant, fancy marshmallow house? Today, we're going to travel to a faraway country to learn about one of the most beautiful buildings in the world and the love story behind it!"
- **Locate on Map:** Use the globe or map to find India. Say, "The Taj Mahal is in a country called India, which is very far away from here!"
- **State Objectives:** "By the end of our lesson, you'll be able to tell the story of this amazing place, point out its special parts, and even build or draw your own version!"

2. Body of the Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Part A: The Story & The Parts (I Do - 7 minutes)

- **Storytelling:** "A long, long time ago in India, there was a powerful emperor named Shah Jahan. He loved his wife, Queen Mumtaz Mahal, very, very much. When the queen passed away, the emperor was heartbroken. He decided to build the most beautiful tomb in the world for her, a special palace to remember their love forever. That palace is the Taj Mahal!"
- **Introduce Key Features:** Show clear pictures of the Taj Mahal as you explain.
 - "Look at this big, round roof on top. It looks like a giant onion! This is called a **dome**."
 - "Do you see these four tall, skinny towers on the corners? They are like guards watching over the palace. These are called **minarets**. Let's count them: one, two, three, four!"
 - "The whole building is made of a beautiful, shiny white stone called marble. It sparkles in the sun!"

Part B: Discovering Symmetry (We Do - 5 minutes)

- **Guided Discovery:** "Now for a magic trick! What do you notice about the building? If we drew a magic line right down the middle, what would you see?" Guide the student to see that both sides are exactly the same.
- **Mirror Activity:** "This is called **symmetry**. It means something is a perfect mirror image of itself." Place the small mirror down the center of a picture of the Taj Mahal to demonstrate how one side reflects to create the other.
- **Formative Assessment (Quick Check):** "Can you point to the big dome? Now, can you show me one of the minarets? What do we call it when something is the same on both sides? (Symmetry!)"

Part C: Become the Architect! (You Do - 10-15 minutes)

- **Instructions:** "Now it's your turn to build a monument for someone or something you love! You have a choice: you can either **draw** your own beautiful Taj Mahal or you can **build** it using these blocks (or marshmallows/sugar cubes)."
- **Creative Work Time:** Allow the student time to create their project. Encourage them to include the key features they learned about. Play some quiet, instrumental Indian music in the background to set the mood.
- **Success Criteria:** "A great Taj Mahal creation will have a big dome in the middle and will try to be symmetrical—the same on both sides!"

3. Conclusion (5 minutes)

- **Show and Tell:** Invite the student to present their creation. Ask, "Tell me about your Taj Mahal. What is your favorite part? Who did you build it for?"
- **Recap and Reinforce:** "You did an amazing job today! Let's quickly remember what we learned.
 - Who built the Taj Mahal? (An emperor named Shah Jahan.)
 - Why did he build it? (Because he loved his wife, Queen Mumtaz Mahal.)
 - What's the big round part on top called? (A dome!)
 - What do we call it when something is the same on both sides? (Symmetry!)"
- **Final Thought:** "The Taj Mahal shows us how art and buildings can tell a powerful story of love that lasts forever."

Assessment

- **Formative (During Lesson):** Observe the student's participation. Do they correctly answer questions during the 'We Do' section? Can they point to the features on a picture?
- **Summative (End of Lesson):** The student's final creation (drawing or model) serves as the primary assessment. Evaluate based on:
 1. Inclusion of at least two key features (e.g., a central dome, minarets).
 2. An attempt at symmetry.
 3. The student's ability to verbally share the simple story of the Taj Mahal during the 'Show and Tell'.

Differentiation

- **For Learners Needing More Support (Scaffolding):**
 - Provide a coloring page or a simple outline of the Taj Mahal to trace and decorate.
 - Focus on identifying just one feature, like the dome.

- Give step-by-step instructions for building (e.g., "First, let's make the big square building. Next, let's add the dome on top.").
- **For Learners Needing a Challenge (Extension):**
 - Encourage them to add more details to their creation, like the reflecting pool in front of the Taj Mahal or the gardens.
 - Have them look up one more fun fact about the Taj Mahal (e.g., it changes color depending on the time of day).
 - Ask them to write one sentence describing their creation or the story.