

The Emperor of Justice and Art: Exploring Jahangir (40 Minutes)

Materials Needed

- Paper (plain or construction)
- Writing/Drawing tools (pencils, markers, crayons)
- Optional: Access to brief online images of Mughal miniature paintings or the Chain of Justice (for visual reference)
- Timer/Stopwatch

I. Introduction: Setting the Stage (5 Minutes)

The Hook: The Ultimate Fairness

Educator Talking Point: Imagine you are a regular person living hundreds of years ago, and you have a major problem—maybe someone stole your prize cow, or a powerful official treated you unfairly. Who do you complain to? The King! But how do you even get the King's attention?

Today, we are meeting Emperor Jahangir, whose name means "Conqueror of the World." He was famous for two things: loving art and making justice accessible to everyone.

Learning Objectives (Tell Them What You'll Teach)

By the end of this 40-minute lesson, you will be able to:

1. Identify at least three key facts about Emperor Jahangir's reign.
2. Describe the purpose and function of the famous 'Chain of Justice.'
3. Create a visual representation demonstrating a major focus of Jahangir's rule (Justice or Art).

II. Body: Content Presentation and Guided Practice (30 Minutes)

A. I Do: Unpacking Jahangir's Rule (10 Minutes)

Educator Talking Point: Jahangir ruled the massive Mughal Empire in India starting around 1605. He was the son of Akbar the Great, and while Akbar was famous for building the empire, Jahangir was famous for perfecting it—especially in two major areas.

Key Concepts Modeled:

1. **The Chain of Justice (Zanjir-i-Adl):**
 - **The Concept:** Jahangir installed a huge golden chain with 60 bells that stretched from his palace wall to a stone pillar outside.
 - **The Function:** If any ordinary person felt they had been wronged and couldn't get help from the normal courts, they could walk up and pull the chain. The noise would alert the Emperor, who promised to investigate the complaint immediately.
 - **Relevance:** This was a dramatic symbol showing that the King cared about every single

person's right to fairness, not just the rich ones.

2. Patron of the Arts and Nature:

- **Art Focus:** Jahangir loved miniature paintings—small, incredibly detailed artworks, especially realistic portraits of people and detailed studies of the natural world (birds, flowers, animals).
- **Self-Taught:** He wrote his own autobiography and had a deep interest in botany and zoology.

3. The Powerful Empress: Nur Jahan:

- **Role:** Jahangir's wife, Nur Jahan, was perhaps the most powerful woman in Mughal history. She was smart, stylish, and a brilliant administrator.
- **Impact:** She often advised Jahangir, handled political matters, and even had coins minted in her name—a huge deal at the time!

B. We Do: Interactive Q&A and Discussion (10 Minutes)

Activity: Justice Juries (Formative Assessment)

We are going to test your knowledge about the facts we just covered. I will present a statement. You decide if it's True or False and explain why.

Statement	T/F	Why? (Learner Response)
Jahangir's Chain of Justice was only for wealthy nobles to use.	False	It was for any common person who needed the Emperor's attention for a serious injustice.
Jahangir's greatest artistic love was painting massive, huge murals on walls.	False	He loved small, incredibly detailed miniature paintings, especially of nature.
Empress Nur Jahan was mainly famous for her beautiful gardens and rarely involved in politics.	False	She was deeply involved in politics, strategy, and administration; she co-ruled with Jahangir.
Jahangir wrote his own life story, which helps historians understand his reign.	True	He wrote the <i>Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri</i> (Memoirs of Jahangir).

C. You Do: The Imperial Seal Challenge (10 Minutes)

Success Criteria: Your seal must clearly show elements of BOTH justice (like scales or a chain) AND nature/art (like an animal or flower). Use color and detail!

Activity Instructions: Jahangir wants a new royal seal or coin design that truly represents his rule. Your task is to design a circular Imperial Seal (use your paper) that combines his two greatest loves: Justice and Art/Nature.

1. **Brainstorm (2 mins):** What symbols represent fairness? (Scales, chains, open doors). What symbols represent nature? (Specific birds, tigers, roses).
2. **Design (7 mins):** Draw the seal. Include a simple title (like "Seal of Justice and Art") and your chosen symbols.
3. **Share (1 min):** Briefly describe your seal design and explain how each symbol relates back to Jahangir. (e.g., "The tiger represents his power, and the small chain reminds everyone that he cares about fairness.")

III. Conclusion and Review (5 Minutes)

Recap (Tell Them What You Taught)

Educator Talking Point: Excellent work! We learned that Jahangir was more than just a conqueror. He was an emperor dedicated to making sure people felt heard through his famous Chain of Justice, and he deeply encouraged beauty and detail through his support of miniature art and the study of nature. He also relied heavily on the political genius of his wife, Nur Jahan.

Exit Ticket (Summative Assessment)

On a separate small piece of paper (or verbally), answer this question:

Question: If you were an advisor to Jahangir, which of his achievements—The Chain of Justice or his Patronage of the Arts—would you tell him to focus on promoting today, and why?

(Look for answers that show understanding of both concepts and justify the choice.)

Differentiation and Adaptability

Scaffolding (For Struggling Learners or Time Constraints)

- **Simplified You Do:** Instead of designing a seal that combines both elements, allow the learner to choose just one major theme (Justice OR Art) and design a seal based only on that.
- **Verbal Focus:** Instead of written Q&A, conduct the "Justice Juries" activity solely as a discussion, providing supportive prompts if the learner hesitates.

Extension (For Advanced Learners or Extra Time)

- **Historical Research:** Research Sir Thomas Roe, an English ambassador who visited Jahangir's court. Write a brief report (or draft a letter) explaining what Roe thought of the Mughal Emperor's power and wealth.
- **The Nature Catalogue:** Choose one animal or flower prominent in the region during the Mughal era (e.g., a specific bird or a rose) and draw an extremely detailed miniature painting of it, mimicking the style Jahangir loved.

Adaptability for Contexts

- **Classroom:** The "You Do" activity becomes a group project where students combine their individual seals to form a larger Imperial Banner. The Q&A can be done using whiteboards (Show-Me method).
- **Training/Adult Context:** Focus shifts to leadership style. Analyze the Chain of Justice as an early example of "open-door policy" or direct feedback mechanisms. The "You Do" becomes designing a corporate logo that represents accountability and creativity.