

this is one of a
series of resources
looking at different
vessels in the
Sainsbury Centre's
Collections

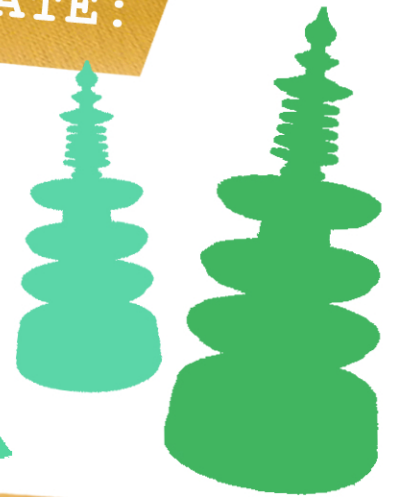
VESSELS

Pagoda
Reliquary



INVESTIGATE:

Look carefully at this vessel.
Think about it before reading
more information on the next page.
What do you see?



LOOKING

THINKING

Maybe use these questions to guide you:

- What do you think this is?
 - What might it be used for?
 - what part of the world do you think it might come from?
 - What is it made of?
 - How do you think it was made?
 - How might this be a container for something?
- What do you think it might contain?

Perhaps answer these questions or ask your own.

DISCUSSING

Do this individually, in pairs or groups.

How did you find this?
Do you agree with other people?
What are you most interested in?
What else do you need or want to know?



IMAGINE:

Maybe use these questions to guide you:

- How do you think it was once painted?

- If it could dance, how do you think it might move?



Imagine it towering into the sky.

How would it feel to stand next to it?



- If it was a tall building, what would happen inside?

- What landscape would it belong in?

Each object in the gallery has a label with some Facts and Figures.

Labels highlight what we know, and what we do not.



Pagoda reliquary containing a printed charm

- this is the Title or Description of the object.

Japan - The Production Place is where the object was made, in as much detail as possible.

Nara Period (0764 - 0770 AD), 8th Century - this is name of the Historic Period when it was made.

Wood, Gesso - the Material the object was made from, perhaps suggesting how it was made too.

Acquired by the Sainsbury Family in 1967.

Donated to the museum in 1973 - the date that this vessel was given to, or bought by, the UEA.

UEA 280a - all of the objects in the Sainsbury Centre's collections are given an **Accession Number**.

This allows us to keep records about each of them, and helps you to find out more about them online:

<https://www.sainsburycentre.ac.uk/art-and-objects/>

[Each of the objects in this resource have their number near them]

280a



SAINSBURY CENTRE

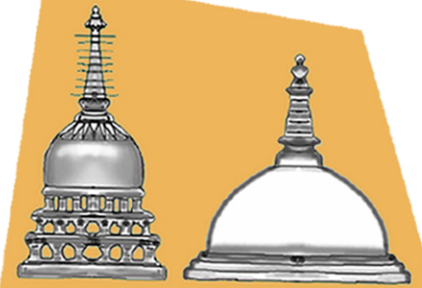
ILLUMINATE:

The Facts and Figures may have some of the answers, but there is so much more to know, to think about, and to understand.



This vessel was made in Japan almost 1,300 years ago. It is one of a million miniature Pagodas commissioned by Empress Shōtoku to give to Buddhist monasteries.

A pagoda is a tower with lots of roofs, usually a religious building. The shape of the pagoda was inspired by Indian stupas, or burial mounds.



This pagoda is made of cypress wood, which was turned on a lathe (creating the rotational symmetry).

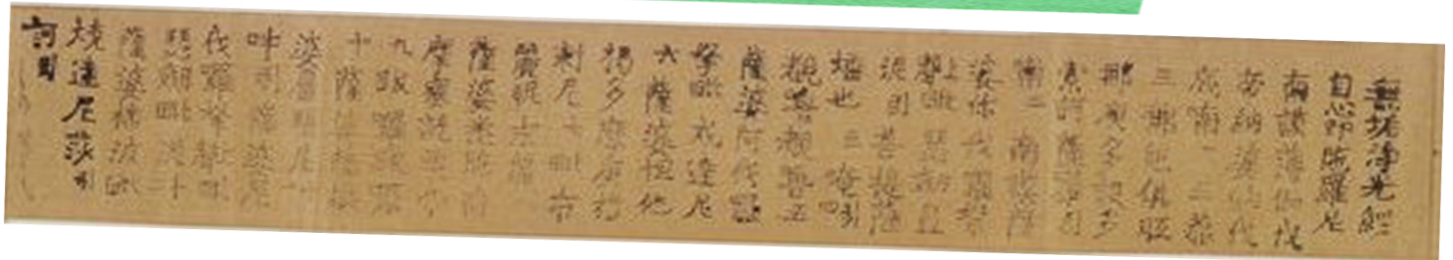
A reliquary is a container. The top of the pagoda can be unscrewed like a lid to access the contents.



There are traces of white on the surface, showing that the pagoda was once painted.

It is a hollow reliquary, and contained a paper scroll with a printed prayer of thanks to the Deities.

280b



How does this extra information change the way you see the Pagoda reliquary?

SAINSBURY CENTRE

FIND OUT MORE:

Is there even more you would like to explore?

Here are a few suggestions for further exploration:

Information about Stupas:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stupa>

Sainsbury Centre online catalogue:

<https://www.sainsburycentre.ac.uk/art-and-objects/280a-pagoda-reliquary-containing-a-printed-charm/>

Empress Koken / Shotoku

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empress_K%C5%8Dken

Hooper, S. and Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (1997)
Catalogue to the Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection
New Haven: Yale University Press in association with UEA



There are other objects from the Japanese Nara period in the Sainsbury Centre's Collection:
Search the catalogue for Accession numbers:
1124, 1145, 1211 and 1236

Photos:
Pete Huggins

1211



1145



1124



1236



SAINSBURY CENTRE

DRAW:

ACTIVITIES:

- Using metallic crayons, can you draw the pagoda on black sugar paper? It would be good to work on different scale papers; small, like A5 up to at least A3 if possible.
- Can you get the effect of the wood grain?
- How can you make it look 3 dimensional?
- Can you make it look precious?



EXPERIMENT:



- Can you trace the shape of the smaller drawing with tracing paper and cut it out of black paper? This could be collaged onto a photo of a landscape or cityscape. Or onto a painting of your imagined landscape.



- Can you use the offcut - the negative shape - in a collage too?

SAINSBURY CENTRE

BUILD:

- How many lids can you find to pile up? Can you make a tower? How high can you go before it falls?
- Does it work best with the lids decreasing in scale as you go up, or can you do it differently?



- Now might be a time for adding tiny people, to give the effect of massive scale!

- If you light it with torches what is the shadow like? Does it change the feel of it?

- Can you spike the lids onto a base? You could thread lids together onto a stick on string. Give it a spin! How do they wobble when you gently swing it? Would it move differently if you made the holes a bit off-centre rather than in the middle?



WRITE:



- Can you make your own charm, a wish for the world? You can write this or draw it, or even use a secret code
- Can you find a place in your tower of lids to hide it?