



EAST MEETS WEST EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Chinese Classical Garden
The Five Elements: PLANTS

1. Name four of the ways that humans use plants. Add more uses of plants that you can think of beyond these four. Give examples from your own experience of different plants that you know about for each of the uses you have listed.

2. Rewrite the following sentence in your own words: “To live close to nature is, in Chinese tradition, an elemental source of inspiration not just for the eyes, but also for the intellect and the spirit.” Describe and explain how this statement applies to a place in your own life where you can be inspired in different ways.

3. Analyze: In your own words, list 3-5 reasons why an urban area with dense population (lots of people per square mile) has special needs to capture the “balance of nature” inside the city? In addition, explain how gardens and parks can fulfill this need within urban centers.

4. After reading the words of poet Tao Qian, write your reaction to this poem the late 4th century. In your own words, write your own 4 lines that express a similar feeling and/or inner need to find a place where you can retreat to find peace and quiet.

5. List the qualities that a student must demonstrate in order to excel in school.

6. According to Chinese tradition, explain why Chinese scholars would grow special plants in their garden.

7. Complete the following chart for each of the 3 Friends of Winter:

Friend of Winter.	Virtues displayed by the plant	Lessons a scholar can learn from the plant
1		
2		
3		

8. Do the math: If China has approximately 30,000 different plant species that account for one-eighth of the world's total, how many plant species are there estimated to be in the entire world? Show your work.

9. Extend your thinking: Explain why ginkgo plants can be called "living fossils."

10. Read for meaning: Explain how the quote by British botanist Ernest Henry Wilson: "China is the Mother of All Gardens" relates to specific plants that are considered "All-American."

11. Explain how the evergreen shrub *Camellia sinensis* is important in the history of China's diversity of plants gaining global importance.

12. Extend Your Thinking. Complete this Independent Research on your own paper
- ◆ Select and research one of the plants mentioned in the sections: **Plants Tell Stories of Science, History, Religion and Culture** and **"China is the Mother of Gardens."**
 - ◆ Write a brief report on its botany, history and uses.
 - ◆ Create a sketch of the plant, tree, flower and/or fruit on your own paper after you find a photo or drawing.
 - ◆ Write a visual description of the plant and its many uses.
 - ◆ Extending your knowledge: Write a poem that captures the beauty, the strength, the history, the uses, and/or the virtues of this plant.