



## Portland Classical Chinese Garden The Five Elements: ROCKS

**Allow yourself to be a Chinese landscape painter.** Imagine a mountain as a place to journey and retreat into the wilderness. **Draw your own ascent (climb) up a mountain.** Draw this journey as a discovery. Draw places where you feel you would like to mentally travel—to retreat from everything and everyone, to quietly reflect on things that are in your mind, and to explore the natural world and your relationship with nature.

**It is not necessary to try to replicate any one style of Chinese landscape painting.** You can look at Chinese landscape paintings by visiting the websites of different museums and looking at their Chinese art collection. You will begin to see that Chinese landscape paintings have common elements. You will observe that there is a harmony and balance in the work of art. Chinese painters have traditionally worked with solid forms such as rocks and mountains, moving forms such as water and twisting paths, and empty (negative) space suggested by clouds, wind, and even the suggestion of a realm beyond the earth. In this way, the Chinese landscape painter created a sense of awe and wonder inspired by nature, rather than painting in the 'realistic' style. Therefore, the viewer of the painting was invited to make a journey inside the harmony and balance found within the elements of nature. (See Chinese Landscape Drawing for an example.)

**Chinese landscape artists intend for viewers to experience their paintings** by imagining themselves changing size and wandering along the valleys, crossing bridges to pass from one scenic spot into the next, floating down streams in small fishing boats, stopping under the trees to write poetry, and finally making a pilgrimage into the mountain peaks as a heavenward ascent.

**Draw at least 5 or 6 different formations along your path.** After reading the articles on **Taishan—First of the Five Sacred Mountains**, you could artistically imagine climbing Taishan Mountain in China. Include several of the viewing stops you have read about such as: Hundred Immortals Tower, Turning the Horse Around Hill, Halfway Gate to Heaven, Not End Yet Pavilion, Suspending Cliff, Heavenly Street or Azure Clouds Temple.

**In class, this project can be done in groups of 3 artists.** Then, the drawings of each group can be assembled on long butcher paper to be viewed as a landscape scroll. In this way, as the scroll is unrolled, students can mentally travel through the mountain landscapes on a long and winding journey.