

PERSONAL PILLOW BOOK

Background: Sei Shōnagon, a lady-in-waiting to the Empress during Japan's Heian period, kept a Japanese poetic diary or "pillow book." Her lists, notes, descriptions, and daily entries include beautiful images from nature, poetic language, and witty observations. Creating your own pillow book can help you better understand and appreciate Shōnagon's work.

Task: Your task is to create a personal pillow book like that of Sei Shōnagon. Together, we will glean from the Pillow Book the common habits (the good ones, anyway!) of court life and adopt those ourselves over a couple of class periods. During this time, you will chronicle your daily life and compile random notes, lists, and character sketches. Try to showcase your unique personality. Maybe 1,000 years from now, someone will be reading *your* words!

Your guiding question is simple: can you grow or glean enjoyment from the genre you've recently discovered, zuihitsu?

- You must include lists, detailed character sketches, poetry (found and original), random notes, entries about your daily life. It can include more, but must include these!
- Your pillow book must be "bound" in book form with a cover.
- Your finished product should be thoughtful, neat, thorough, and impressive.

Process: We will complete our personal pillow books during Writing Workshop in class, but you may also add to them at home.

Assessment: This is a 52-point assignment. See the rubric for scoring details.

The following items should be turned in:

- Your personal pillow book (which will include artifacts of court life)
- Self-assessed rubric

