

DIG DEEP LESSON PLAN
ANALYZE ARTIFACTS AND SOURCES

Lesson Title: RELEVANT ARTIFACT INFORMATION

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Do we have permission to publish the contact information? Yes

Course: Washington State History

Grade Level: Sophomores or 8th graders

Summary of Lesson: Students will examine artifacts supplied by the teacher to learn what is needed in figuring out the purpose of that specific artifact. Final objective is to understand how archaeologists study artifacts. See attached pages for the actual lesson.

Time Required: 2-3 class periods of actual in class work and additional week to do research and prepare paper or presentation. One final day will be needed for any oral presentations.

CBA Components

Essential Question: What information is necessary to understand the purpose or use of an artifact?

Central Guiding Question: Specifically, what does a person need to know to understand what an artifact is and what was its purpose?

Required CBA Components:

A responsible citizen can use historical thinking to develop thoughtful participation in a democratic society. To develop your thinking skills, you will develop and support a thesis on a historical question based on your analysis of artifacts and historical narratives

TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH MATERIAL CULTURE

From Minard, B.D.

Why do we save things?

“The women sat among the doomed things, turning them over and looking past them and back....no, there isn't room.... How can we live without our lives? How will we know it's just us without our past?”

John Steinbeck

What is an artifact?

An artifact is any object made by or used by human beings.

What is the value of an artifact?

50% = fact that it exists and still survives.

50% = the story, place, names or events it represents.

What is a replica?

A replica is a copy or model of an artifact. It is made by a contemporary craftsman.

Reading an object.

“...everything that someone makes, or decides to use, is a crystallization of that person's choices, ideas and values pursued within the context of a society that offers certain expectations, limits and possibilities. I also know that a careful, critical 'reading' of an object can uncover at least some of those choices values, ideas, expectation, limits and possibilities.”

John Hennigar-Shur

Become an investigator

Object –centered learning does not depend on your expertise with the item. It relies on using what you already know to ask questions about the object in order to gain more knowledge.

Ask Questions.

Of what kind of materials is this object made?

How was this object made? Who made this object? Why?

Who mused this object? How was this object used?

Does the design of the object suit the purpose and/or use?

Are there any marks, stains, changes, damages, alterations of this object?

What size is the object?

Is the object decorated? How? Why?

Is this an item a person might have one or several? Why?

Are other items made out of the same materials? How?

Is this object used with other items? How?

Is this object made by using other items as part of the process? How?

Is this object used to make other items? How?

Are any items today similar to this object?

What are the similarities or differences? Why?

PIECE TOGETHER THE BIGGER PICTURE

Culminating Activity

In a persuasive paper or presentation, the student will:

1. develop a thesis on an historical question that is supported by the analysis of specific artifacts.
2. describe in detail how an artifact demonstrates the lifestyle of a different generations.
3. describe the relevance of the time and place an artifact was in use, and explain how that environment affected the development of the object

Relevant Secondary Sources: It should be the student's responsibility to find sources for their artifact information. Obvious sources would be the public library, internet sites and the Clark County Historical Museum.

Relevant Primary Sources: Students should interview someone who is at least 40 years older than they are, about an artifact that person has. Ideally, this would be a grandparent or older relative. The artifact should be something the elder has from his/her childhood. If there is no one available to interview, then it is recommended the student visit the Clark County Historical Museum to view their "Vancouver Uncovered" exhibit and use one of their artifacts. Teachers or other people who may have an object of historical interest are also excellent primary sources.

Museum Connection: Students are given extra credit for visiting the museum and doing the scavenger hunt. Since a visit to the museum would cost students money, it can only be an extra-credit (but strongly recommended) project. The "Vancouver Uncovered" exhibit shows the students how common-place an artifact is. In the future, the next exhibit, or the permanent exhibits also demonstrate the importance of "daily life" as history.

Support Materials: Teacher will provide artifacts to begin the lesson. The attached hand-outs will be used throughout the lesson.

Lesson Plan:

Day 1

Teacher will hand out the artifact glossary to all students. Then, students will break up into groups of 4-5 students. Each group will be given an object (provided by the teacher) to examine and try to figure out what it is and what its purpose is. (I will be using a cherry pitter from 1955, sealing wax blotter from 1776, needlepoint threader from 1970, musket shell from 1865, and cochina from 1500's). Students will be given 10-15 minutes to try to figure out what they are examining. Next, I will ask students what they need to help their group. I will then supply the time period for the object they are holding. After another 10 minutes, I will supply the place the artifact is from. Collect all artifacts before students leave with them.

(Use the DIG DEEP ARTIFACT ANALYSIS worksheet from the OSPI's CBA site)

Day 2

I will display artifacts from my childhood (1950's) specifically canning supplies to show the skill needed, and share this essential family process of that time period. At that point, I will explain the project. See attached page 1. Have students brainstorm people they could use as a primary source for this project.

Day 3

Because this is a research project, it will be done outside of class. After one week, or however long the teacher feels his/her students need, students will present their findings in a 3-5 minute presentation or in a 2-4 page written research paper. (again, use the OSPI's DIG DEEP for rubric)

Teachers need to understand, this is a lesson plan, not a unit.

This is recommended as a way to introduce students to artifacts and make the lesson more relevant to their personal lives.

PERSONAL ARTIFACT RESEARCH

Each student will find a primary source of a person who is at least 40 years older than the student and ask for an artifact from that person's youth. If a primary source is not available, the student may use an artifact from the Vancouver Museum's "Vancouver Uncovered" exhibit.

The goal of this assignment is for every student to discover an artifact from an earlier generation and find out the following information as part of historical research. Students may either give a 3-5 minute presentation showing the artifact and answering the following questions, or write a 2-4 page research paper answering the same questions. Either project must cite all sources.

1. What is the artifact's name?
2. When was it used?
3. How was it used? Demonstrate
4. Who used it?
5. How many years was this object in use? Is it still used?
6. What was it made of then? If it is still used, what is it made of now?
7. Specifically, describe the object. Size? Design?
8. Does the artifact have a present day use? Is there something similar today that has replaced it?
9. Where would this artifact have been found? Why? Does the artifact have relevance to a specific area or region?
10. Who was the inventor of the object? (this one is extra credit due to its difficulty in finding the answer)
11. Any added information will improve the student's grade so feel free to be creative in your information gathering.

If the research is being shared as an oral presentation, the student must bring in the artifact (it does not need to be handled by anyone else, so it should be safe) or a large drawing if the object can not be brought into the classroom. If the research is a written

paper, the object must be accurately drawn (or scanned) showing the exact measurements.

I recommend use of the DIG DEEP STUDENT CHECKLIST from the OSPI's CBA site to help students understand expectations.

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Expected pre-knowledge: students should already know the difference between an artifact and fossils or other natural remains. Students will have already studied early history of the state (or nation) and recognize that archaeologists and anthropologists use artifacts to tell the story of previous cultures.

Pre-assessment: students will attempt to decipher what the teacher provided artifacts are and use reasoning skills as well as prior-knowledge to figure out what the artifacts actually were. Students will share their “theories” about the artifacts they hold and the teacher will guide the discussion to help them understand what information helps a person understand the purpose of an object.

Daily classroom activities: see previous lesson plan.

Extension possibilities: A classroom visit to the local historical museum is strongly recommended. Clark County Historical Museum has an excellent scavenger hunt for students to help them recognize artifacts and get an idea of what they can use for their project. A guest speaker from a different culture, nation and/or era would be very beneficial. (WWII prisoner of war, depression era, one-room school house teachers are all available locally)

Connections to other curricular areas: Any biography, from the time period studied, that stirs the student's imagination should be given extra credit. My students have been fascinated when I have had Makah tribal leaders come in and share their culture and pass around objects that are part of their tribal life. I recommend interviewing as many

“older” people as a student can find, especially if that person has artifacts to show.

Creativity should be rewarded. Have students make replicas of artifacts.

Students are fascinated by old coins and their value as well as whom or what is on the coin. That could be incorporated into a math class.

For science, students can study how the environment affected the development of tools.