

**Clark County Historical Museum
Historical Artifacts Education Kit Review
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During the 2009 – 2010 school year I piloted the History Artifact Education Kit with a select group of students. They provided feedback as to what went well and what could be changed. Several aspects worked well during the pilot of this educational kit but there were also several challenges. I will review these two topics in this order.

After introducing the kit and providing the appropriate background for the students we began the project. The aspects that worked well are as follows:

1. Students worked in small collaborative groups.
2. Allowed for student centered learning (opposed to teacher centered)
3. The project was hands-on.

Students worked in small collaborative groups cross-mending and identifying artifacts, which allowed students to develop the skills to work efficiently as part of a team. Students were able to share their points of view and provided ample opportunities for debate and discussion, which also benefitted student success when it was time to complete the written part of the project.

This project allowed for a student centered learning atmosphere as opposed to the teacher filling a vessel with information. Students were able to learn from each other as well as from me, the teacher. As a result I, the teacher, also became a student, in a way. In this interaction my students were able to draw on a broad knowledge of social studies and history and personal background to work throughout this project.

Students were authentically engaged with this project because it was hands-on and involved understanding and learning from local history. They were able to discuss this project with their parents and grandparents because it was real as opposed to reading the textbook or taking notes to learn about the topic.

There were a few challenges/weakness of the project my students shared at the end of the project. These are adjustments that I would like to make in the future.

1. The maps were not tied to the assignment as well as they could have been.
2. Acquiring a room appropriate for this assignment.

3. There would not be a sufficient amount of materials for a high school teacher, typically having between 130-150 students throughout, to use throughout the day.

I struggled to incorporate the maps into the overall project. The maps need to be used as an introductory activity where students could become familiar with the historical growth and overall geography of Vancouver. Even though students knew where the artifacts came from because of the background reading we had done in class the maps provided little use for the overall project.

To effectively complete the artifact cross-mending and identifying aspect of this assignment it was necessary to have a room with sinks and enough room for the artifacts to dry. My room has neither of these available. I was able to work a deal with one of the science teachers and use his room during their plan period. And not that it is necessary to use this kit with every class but if that is the case it can be frustrating securing enough rooms to accommodate this project.

If a high school teacher was going to use this project throughout the day with potentially 150 students working in small groups they would need, on top of finding suitable room, enough materials to satisfy all the students. As an alternative idea the teacher may want to use this as an extra credit assignment or with just one class.

In conclusion I feel this project went well. I would like to take some time, after I have completed my National Board Certification and revisit this project and make a few adjustments. I would also like to hear suggestions from other teachers.