

LESSON 3: EXHIBITING A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER

GRADE 5-8

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Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

Objectives

- *Understand the purpose of a museum, museum exhibits and exhibit labels.*
- *Experience hands-on analyzing of artifacts*
- *Identify an object from the Civil War Soldier learning kit*
- *Research exhibit design.*
- *Discuss and determine ideas/plan for artifact exhibit*
- *Write an exhibit label to explain their artifact and its story*
- *Develop needed textual exhibit support documents*
- *Strategize the publicity of the exhibit and design and create artistic marketing tools*
- *Assist in interpreting their exhibit*
- *Write creatively about their research findings*



INTRODUCTION

A museum is a place where objects are collected, protected, and displayed or exhibited so that people can learn from them. Museums use objects to tell stories about the past or present.

Objects or artifacts are a part of material culture – the physical evidence of human existence. Artifacts include things that people leave behind; things people make from the physical world like farm tools, pottery, houses, furniture, toys, clothing, photos, letters and documents. Artifacts can tell

us stories about our past. A story behind an artifact can tell us about the people who used it and the society in which they lived. Understanding the past can be easier when we study artifacts and ask questions like:

- Who owned this item?
- Who used this item?
- Who made this item?

Using artifacts in the classroom to explore stories from the past is an excellent way, not only to study history, but to improve oral language development

which in turn can enhance students' reading and writing skills. Artifacts are tactile, hands-on history and add a real-life element to history.

In this lesson, students will analyze reproduction artifacts from the Civil War Soldier learning kit, including objects, primary documents, images, and more. Then, using what they know about the artifacts, students will design artifact labels and create a Civil War Soldier artifact exhibit to showcase and interpret to other classes, teachers, and parents.

Materials

- *Reproduction artifacts, documents and images from the “Civil War Soldier Kit”*
- *“Artifact Analysis Worksheet” (in this lesson plan)*
- *“Photo Analysis Worksheet” (in this lesson plan)*
- *“Primary Document Analysis Worksheet” (in this lesson plan)*
- *“Exhibit Artifact Brainstorming Worksheet” (in this lesson plan)*
- *Markers/poster board*
- *Access to Computer*

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PROCEDURE

1. Using the following questions, discuss museums and exhibits w/students.
 - How many students have visited a museum? What type?
 - What type of exhibits were there?
 - What stood out about the exhibits?
 - What colors drew attention?
 - Did students read artifact labels?
 - What makes a label interesting?
 - Are more or fewer objects better in an exhibit?
2. Define “artifact” and discuss why we study artifacts. (See Top 10 Reasons)
3. Teacher should distribute an artifact from kit to each student.
4. Depending on the object assigned to them, students use the enclosed “Artifact Analysis Worksheet,” “Photo Analysis Worksheet,” or the “Primary Document Analysis Worksheet” included in this lesson to examine and identify their artifact.
5. Using what they know and their imagination, students put themselves in the place of the artifact – they become their artifact. Students write a creative, *first person* paragraph, no more than 75 words, that tells the story behind the object’s experience in the War. This paragraph will be the artifact’s label and will tell its story. The label should contain general information like the artifact name and purpose, as well as interpretive information like who used it, why it was important to someone and something special about its use during the Civil War.
6. Students should read their label to the class to determine if it meets the criteria.
7. Discuss with students that, as a class, they will organize an artifact exhibit. The exhibit will be organized according to the following criteria:
 - Civil War theme must be recognized throughout exhibit.
 - Exhibit set-up must be easy and efficient for viewers to navigate and see.
 - Exhibit’s labels, texts, images and graphics must be easy to read and understand and must be written with correct grammar.
 - Exhibit label must answer who, what, when, where questions about artifacts.
 - Communication between exhibit planners and visitors must be clear.
 - Story on label must be believable.
8. Have students use the “Exhibit Artifact Brainstorming Worksheet” to determine which artifacts they will use in their exhibit.
9. As a class discuss the following:
 - How should artifacts be displayed? Individually? In categorized groups?
 - Where will the exhibit be held? When?
 - Who will be invited?
 - How will the exhibit be advertised?
 - What will be needed to set up the exhibit?
9. Assign student groups to design and create brochures, posters or ads to accompany the exhibit.
10. Students create exhibit advertising tools (posters/flyers) and an invitation to potential visitors to view the exhibit.
11. Students should be on hand to act as interpreters for the exhibit.



Why teach with artifacts? Top 10 Reasons:

#1

Artifacts help immerse students in history by providing a solid, tactile connection to the past. Artifacts are “hands-on” history.

#2

Artifacts add a real-life element to history by offering a glimpse into the lives of those who created or used them.

#3

Artifacts stimulate curiosity and encourage speculation as students try to understand what they are and how they were used. Observation skills are developed and enhanced as students ask:

Who made this?

What is it?

Why was it made?

Who used it?

How did it survive to present day?

#4

Artifacts help develop vocabulary and reading comprehension skills as students research and write about a particular object.

#5

Artifacts help students develop inquiry skills by learning to ask questions and research answers. Students become historians in their quest for answers.

#6

Artifacts make connections to local history. They introduce us to people we have not met.

#7

Artifacts help students develop empathy for the human condition.

#8

Artifacts help students analyze different points of view.

#9

Artifacts help students understand that history is a continuum and we all make our own personal histories through the artifacts we leave behind.

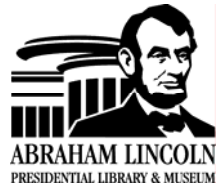
#10

Artifacts help students develop research skills, analyze sources and form opinions.

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PHOTOGRAPH ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Name _____



Observation

Study the photograph carefully. Fill in the chart with the appropriate information

People	Objects	Activities

Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Knowledge

Why is this photograph important to history?

What do you know about this time period or event?

Questions

What questions does this photograph raise in your mind and what resources would you use to find the answers to them?

Activity

Write a diary or journal entry or write a newspaper article as a companion to the photograph.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Name _____

1. Circle the type of document

Letter	Speech or Address	Telegram	Map or Chart
Meeting Minutes	Political Cartoon	Report	Resolution
Public Law	Diary/Journal	Patent	Public Record
Executive Order	Newspaper or Magazine Article	Email	Press Release
Other _____			

2. Does the document have any unique physical qualities?

Letterhead	Handwritten	Seal
Notations	Watermark	Other _____

3. Who is the author (or creator of the document)?

4. Is the document dated ____Yes ____No If yes, what is the date? If no, are there clues in the document to help you date it?

5. What is the author's title or position?

6. For what audience was the document written?

7. List three things the author said that you think are important.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

8. Why do you think this document was written?

9. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

10. Does this author state opinions? ____Yes ____No If yes, give example of an opinion the author presented.

11. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written.
 - a.
 - b.

12. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document.



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ARTIFACT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Name _____

1. Describe the physical qualities of the artifact. What material(s) is it made of: bone, pottery, metal, wood, stone, leather, glass, paper, cardboard, cotton, wood, plastic, or other materials.

2. Describe how that artifact looks and feels: shape, color, texture, size, weight, moveable parts, anything printed, stamped or written on the object.

3. Study the artifact.

A. What might it have been used for?

B. Who might have used it?

C. Where might it have been used?

D. When might it have been used?

4. What does this artifact tell us?

A. What does it tell us about technology or the culture of the people who made and used it?

B. Does the artifact tell us anything special about this period in history?

5. What questions do you have about this object that you can't answer?

6. Name a similar item today or an item that has replaced the function of this object?



EXHIBIT ARTIFACT BRAINSTORMING WORKSHEET

Name _____

Artifact	Story it Tells	Why I Want to Share It

I plan on using _____ for our class exhibit because:

