

What Have We Here?

Learning from artifacts Grade Levels 9-10

Objectives: In order to understand the essential question of, “How has the landscape in the community changed over time?” students analyze images of material objects to gain insight and understanding about the past. Students will identify, analyze and write about an artifact found in an historic photograph. *Time Needed: 5 hours*

Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities:

6.4 Historical Connection (students make connections to past and present)

6.6 Being an Historian (students make interpretations concerning history)

1.8 Reports (students organize and convey information)

Grade Level Expectations:

H&SS 9-10:1 (students initiate an inquiry)

H&SS 9-10:7 (students communicate findings)

Materials & Resources:

Landscape Change Program Archive, www.uvm.edu/landscape

Shelburne Museum Artifact kit

“What Is Material Culture Study” background sheet for instructor (below)

Artifact Research Questions Sheet (below)

Activities:

<p>1. Hook Your Students</p> <p>Show students an artifact from the past such as an old hand tool that is not used today. Model the research process for the students by having them make educated guesses to the questions on the Artifact Research Questions sheet (below).</p>	<p>4. Culminating Activity</p> <p>Students present their findings in a written report that reflects the significance to history and culture of an artifact from the past.</p>
<p>2. Introduce Concepts</p> <p>Students select images from the <i>Landscape Change Program</i>, and then select an image of an artifact (object of historical significance) such as a building, article of clothing, a tool, a vehicle, etc. for further study.</p>	<p>5. Assessment</p> <p>Report Rubric (below)</p>
<p>3. Apply Skills</p> <p>Students observe, analyze, and interpret images in photographs. Students research information about a cultural artifact and write a report.</p>	<p>6. Extensions</p> <p>Create a virtual museum of artifacts created by the students. Bring in an artifact from home. Discuss its significance in terms of culture, philosophy, economics, and social movements.</p>

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Lesson Plan Details

Detailed summary of curricular format:

Overview: Students will find an artifact in the Landscape Change Program that has personal appeal to them. The artifact will be used for further research on the Landscape Change Program, on the Internet, or in the reference library. The purpose is to interpret the significance of the object to Vermont history and culture. Students will write a research paper on their artifact aided by the questions taken from the Artifact Research Questions sheet.

1. Day One: The Hook (40-minute class)

Show students an artifact such as an old tool. Ask students the questions listed on the Artifact Research Question sheet in an effort to describe the object in greater detail. Do this activity with a number of different artifacts.

2. Day Two: Explore photographs on the Landscape Change Program. (40-minute class)

Introduce the students to searching for images on the Landscape Change Program website <http://www.uvm.edu/landscape/>. Show the following as a way to introduce examples of artifacts within a photograph: LS03128, "Man sitting on log." LS08700, "Loggers Ready for River Drive." LS11658, "Group of Miners." LS08273, "Chiseling Marble." LS11467, "Barre Granite Quarry. Ask students to list as many artifacts they can find within each photograph.

3. Day Three: Identify an artifact of interest and respond to Questions. (40-min.)

Provide exploratory time for students to search for an artifact of interest. After selecting an object students will answer the questions on the Artifact Research Question sheet about their artifact. Students can search for their artifact in other photographs.

4. Day Four: Research Landscape Change program website: Dating site. (40-min.)

Explore with the students the Dating Site on the Landscape Change Program to see object histories. During this class more time can be spent answering questions about their artifact.

5. Day Five/Six Research and Writing (two 40-minute classes)

Students will do further research on the Internet and in the library and begin writing their report. Emphasize the importance of the image. Students should make the image an important part of their research report by including photos and drawing wherever possible.

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Instructor Background: What is Material Culture Study?

Material culture is the study through artifacts of the beliefs—values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions—of a particular community or society at a given time.

By looking at the physical objects in an environment it is possible to gain some insight into the culture that produced them.

Material culture as a study is based upon the obvious fact that the existence of a man-made object is concrete evidence of the presence of a human intelligence operating at the time of fabrication. The underlying premise is that objects made or modified by man reflect, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, the beliefs of the individuals who made, commissioned, purchased, or used them and, by extension, the beliefs of the larger society to which they belonged.

Every man-made object required the operation of some thought and design. It is the assumption of material culture studies that this thought is a reflection of the culture that produced the man-made objects.

By using this method we are able to gain insights into things that are not fully articulated or into cultures that have not left written records. For social historians in particular material culture is a useful tool to gather information on the groups other than the elites. The life stories of the working class were not often recorded, and very rarely in their own words. By looking at the material objects left behind some of their story can be extrapolated.

(The Laramie Project, University of Wyoming)

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Artifact Research Questions

What is the artifact?

- What type of object is it (painting, tool, toy, clothing)?
- What color is it?
- What is it made of?
- What is its shape and size?
- How was it produced?

Who was the maker of designer of the artifact?

- What knowledge or experience did the maker have?
- Did an individual or group produce the artifact?
- Was the artifact produced by an individual or a group?
- Was either the individual or the group identified with an artistic, political, or ideological movement?

What was the occasion?

- When and where was it made?
- Did the artifact change over time?
- Did it change over time?
- What events or conditions might have effected it?
- What was the early use of the artifact? Or did it commemorate a specific event?

What is the purpose of the artifact?

- Why was the artifact made?
- Was their a hidden purpose for the object?
- How was it actually used?

Who was the audience?

- Who were the intended users?
- Did people outside the intended group use the artifact?
- What does it tell about the people who made it? Values? Philosophies? Standard of living?
- Why did people want this object?
- What does it tell you about the people's taste and habits?

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Rubric

Name _____ Date _____ Title _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Organization	Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings.	Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.	Information is organized, but paragraphs are not well constructed.	The information appears to be disorganized.
Quality of Information	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	A few grammatical spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.
Internet Use	Successfully a use suggested internet links to find information and navigates within these sites easily without assistance.	Usually able to use suggested internet links to find information and navigates within these sites easily without assistance.	Occasionally able to use suggested internet links to find information and navigates within these sites easily without assistance.	Needs assistance or supervision to use suggested internet links and/or to navigate within these sites.
Diagrams & Illustrations	Diagrams and illustrations are neat, accurate and add to the reader's understanding of the topic.	Diagrams and illustrations are accurate and add to the reader's understanding of the topic.	Diagrams and illustrations are neat and accurate and sometimes add to the reader's understanding of the topic.	Diagrams and illustrations are not accurate OR do not add to the reader's understanding of the topic.
Paragraph Construction	All paragraphs include introductory sentence, explanations or details, and concluding sentence.	Most paragraphs include introductory sentence, explanations or details, and concluding sentence.	Paragraphs included related information but were typically not constructed well.	Paragraphing structure was not clear and sentences were not typically related within the paragraphs.