

Mystery Artifacts



After Your Program

Thank you for participating in the *Mystery Artifacts* program. Please take a moment to complete the attached *Program Evaluation Form*, which will provide Bennington Museum with information about the content of the program and about the way in which it was presented. This sort of input from classroom teachers and program leaders is important to us.

You may wish to extend the experience of the *Mystery Artifacts* program by engaging your students in one or more of the following activities.

Science Connection

When we look at material objects from long ago, it is easy to forget that we are only looking at the things that have survived through time. There are many factors that contribute to the decay of human-made materials, including humidity, mold, temperature fluctuations, and more. Some materials last longer than others, depending both on what they are made of and the environment in which they exist. Look around your classroom. If the classroom were to suddenly stop being used today, which items might investigators find remaining in 100 years? How about 1000 years? What might happen to affect which items were preserved and which decayed?

Here are a couple of websites that examine the issues of preserving artifacts:

<http://blog.americanhistory.si.edu/osaycanyousee/2011/06/what-do-julia-childs-spatulas-say-about-preservation.html>

<http://www.titanicatlanta.com/the-artifacts.html>

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2010/08/100818-titanic-3-d-expedition-shipwreck-science-collapsing/>

Use Wear

During the *Mystery Artifacts* program, your students were introduced to the concept of *use wear* – how an object is changed through use. Send your students on a search for use wear in the classroom. They can work individually or in teams to find evidence of the effect use has on a variety of objects. Challenge the class to find as many examples as they can, then create a list of everything they found. Be sure that they can explain how the wear and tear they identified explains the use of the objects.

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What Artifacts Tell Us

Artifacts are important because they help us understand what life was like in the past as well as what kinds of things people of a particular place and time valued. Imagine that a scientist from another planet came to your empty classroom and wanted to learn about your people. What sorts of things in the room would help the alien scientist determine what sort of room it is and what it is used for? Look for context clues: chalk boards, desks, reading materials. Guide your students through this imagination activity. Once the alien scientist determines that this is a room used for educating the society's young people, you can go beyond your walls. There are other rooms like one. In your town there may be other schools as well, for younger and for older students. What will the alien scientist conclude about our culture based on these buildings? What do the adults of this society value and want for their young people?

Things Change

Many of the artifacts in the *Mystery Artifacts* program are objects that have fallen out of use over time. Why do we no longer use these items? Are there any that are still in use but in different forms? Have students explore items from their everyday lives – a cell phone, for example. Encourage them to write thorough descriptions of the object's physical characteristics, its uses and purposes, and its effect on their lives. When they have completed this activity, have them interview older people (parents, grandparents, older neighbors, etc.) about how the object has changed over time. Have them work with the older person to complete a description of the object as it was in the past. Use the Internet to find images of the object as it was at various points during the past. Create an image time line of the evolution of the object. Ideas for objects include: telephones, televisions, movie theaters, mp3 players (cd players, cassettes, 8-track, record players), computers, toaster ovens, cars.



Educational Program Evaluation

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation. Your input helps us to improve our educational programs.

Grade/Age Range of Students: _____ Number of Students: _____

School Name (optional): _____

Teacher (optional): _____

Program Title: _____

In-House/Outreach
(Circle One)

Museum Educator: _____

Was this your first experience with a Bennington Museum educational program? Yes/No
(Circle One)

PART I: Please tell us about the **program**. Rank the program in each of these categories, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. Please explain any scores of 3 or less.

	Poor		Good		Excellent	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Pre- and Post-Visit Materials	1	2	3	4	5	
Duration of Program	1	2	3	4	5	
Age Appropriateness	1	2	3	4	5	
Program Pace	1	2	3	4	5	
Relevance to Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	
Program Format (lecture, hands-on, exhibit exploration)	1	2	3	4	5	
Student Understanding of Content	1	2	3	4	5	
Student Involvement	1	2	3	4	5	

Score Explanations/Comments:

How could this program be improved?

In what ways did participation in this program enhance your students' understanding of the subject matter?

Part II: Please tell us about the **Museum Educator** who presented the program. Rank the Educator in each of these categories, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. Please explain any score of 3 or less.

	Poor		Good		Excellent	
Set Expectations (rules, introduction, schedule, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	
Appearance	1	2	3	4	5	
Professionalism	1	2	3	4	5	
Friendliness	1	2	3	4	5	
Knowledge of Material	1	2	3	4	5	
Age-Appropriate Delivery	1	2	3	4	5	
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5	
Ability to Engage Students	1	2	3	4	5	
Group Management (maintaining order, moving through museum, behavior management, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	

Score Explanations/Comments:

How could this educator improve his or her presentation?

Additional input for this educator:

Please return to:

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