

Using artefacts with senior classes

When examining an artefact encourage children to consider:

- Physical features
- Construction
- Condition
- Function
- Design

(See page 85 History Teacher Guidelines)

1. Activity : **Examine an artefact.**

- Gather artefacts that may have been used in the home in the past. Choose one artefact and wrap it up in a plastic bag so that it can't be seen.
- Organise to have the children sitting in a circle. Pass the artefact that is wrapped in the plastic bag around to the children and let them feel it. At this point they are not allowed guess what it is. (Need to have a five second rule of holding the artifact). Once circle is completed as the children to discuss what the artefact felt like, what did they notice? etc.
- Now take the bag off the object and it is passed in the opposite direction around the circle. This time the children must examine the artefact more closely. Once circle is completed the object is placed in the centre of the circle. What did you notice?
- Encourage feedback that focuses on *physical features, construction, condition, function* and design
- Divide children into groups. Distribute an artefact to each group and ask them to repeat the above procedure in their groups and to complete the worksheet entitled: '*Examining an artefact*'.
- Children draw the object and label it. Allowed date and write what they think it is and why they think that.

2. Activity : **Work as a Detective examining an artefact**

- Discuss the work of a historian- like a detective, asking questions, looking for clues etc.
- Focus on concept of changes which have occurred in relation to the items used in homes and houses over time. Gather artefacts that may have been used in homes in the past.
- Divide children into groups and explain detective game. Each groups receive work card and artefact.
- Children are encouraged to work together and examine and investigate the artefact recording on work card (Workcard 1 : 'Working as a History Detective examining historical artefacts')
- Reporters from group report to class on their findings and what they have learned about and from their artefacts.

3. **Lost Luggage**

- Place items such as car keys, a travel ticket eg train /plane ticket, a map, a labelled medicine bottle, a letter, a receipt etc. in the pockets of a bag or wallet or jacket.
- Tell the children this jacket has been left behind in the 'Lost Luggage' department and that you need their help to try and work out who might own it.
- Children have to establish facts about the owner from an examination of the contents. It is important that, through discussion, children are brought to distinguish those facts that we know from guesses and that they identify how we might find out more using the 'leads' in the evidence.
- Children complete 'LOST LUGGAGE Worksheet'.

4. **Artefacts and Oral Evidence**

- Asking someone who is familiar with how a particular object was used, or who may have used the object themselves in the past to demonstrate how it was used can really enhance children's understanding of the artefact.

5. **Create a School Museum**

- Consider gathering together any artefacts that may be in the school, any that teachers may have themselves or any that parents/ family members or other members of the community might be willing to give/lend to the school. These could be stored in a School/ Class Museum. (If storage space is an issue maybe hold them for a designated period of time, but photograph the entire collection to create a 'Virtual Museum'. They should be labelled/ catalogued as a curator in a museum would.

6. **Observing Objects- Speaking**

- Children sit in a circle. Teacher passes an artefact round the circle. Each child says something about the artefact if they can. Artefact is passed around again. Teacher encourages longer comments and adds further comments to scaffold learning. Probing questions such as : Who might have used it?; Did it belong to a man? A woman? A child?; How was it made? Used?; What is it?

7. **Consequences Game**

- Circuit. Children write questions about their objects. At a signal the children move and try to solve the questions of the previous group.

8. **Riddle Game:** What am I?

9. Thematic Museum

- Make a collection of domestic items- old irons, wash boards etc.

10. **Auction:** What would I buy?