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Amazing Objects

Lesson Plan

Grades 2-4, Cycles 1-2

Pedagogical Intent

Students learn about the history and cultures of aboriginal peoples and learn to interpret their artifacts by studying objects from the Canadian Museum of Civilization's database. Students will complete an Amazing Object activity sheet, and make a presentation in a format of their choice.

Grade: Grades 2-4; Quebec Cycle 1-2

Subjects: Social Studies, Geography, History and Citizenship Education, Language Arts, Arts Education

Themes: Aboriginal cultures and history, communities in Canada, diversity, change and continuity, meeting needs, resources, similarities and differences

Objectives and Competencies: Use information, use information and communication technology, communicate appropriately; observe, describe, summarize, reason, use critical thinking, compare, use creativity, cooperate with others, listen to others, use oral communication

Duration: 120-180 minutes

Web Resources:

- Gateway to Aboriginal Heritage web module www.civilization.ca/tresors/ethno/index_e.html

Optional Technical Equipment

- Computer with Internet access for each pair of students
- Projector connected to a computer with Internet access

Student Handouts

One copy per student:

- Snow goggles artifact record (see Teacher Preparation, Step 4)
- Amazing Objects Activity Sheet

One copy per pair of students:

- One artifact record from the Amazing Objects Collection (see Teacher Preparation, Step 5)

Teacher Preparation:

1. Ensure students have been introduced to aboriginal history prior to this lesson.
2. Select a common object from the classroom; something with easily recognizable natural materials works best (a wool mitten or scarf, a wooden spoon, a clay mug, a quilted object).
3. Visit the Gateway to Aboriginal Heritage web module. Select the Objects tab, and By Object Type from the side menu. View the available categories of objects. Select a category. A list of objects is displayed. Select the link for an object to display its artifact record.
4. Print out one copy of the snow goggles artifact record for each student as well as one enlarged image of the front view and rear view to show the class. Print the enlarged images in colour, if possible.
   - Snow goggles artifact record (one copy per student) Read the snow goggles artifact record. Here is some additional information: These ivory snow-goggles, carved from walrus ivory, were designed to protect the wearer from snow-blindness while hunting or traveling on spring ice. They were found in an early Inuit house in the eastern Arctic.
5. Depending on the number of students in your class, print out two or three copies of each artifact record from the Amazing Objects Collection. Each pair of students requires one artifact record.

Snow goggles (IX-C: 2846)

Amazing Objects Collection

 Berry basket (VI-N-52 a,b)	 Doll (III-B-418)	 Harpoon head (IV-D-1835 a)	 Snowshoes (II-D-26 a-b)	 Shirt (VI-P-19)
 Toy toboggan (III-L-418 a-f)	 Ulu (IV-X-589)	 Doll (III-I-1188)	 Mittens (III-B-654 a-b)	 Cradle (III-E-38)

Optional: Consult the artifact database and select artifacts related to a subject you are exploring; make one copy of a record per pair of students, or save the records so that you can project them.
Optional, if computers with Internet access are available: Instead of printing out artifact records for students, allow each pair of students to select an artifact from the database.

Procedure

1. **Introduce your amazing object.**
   Before you bring out your object, tell your students that you are going to show them something that will amaze them. Show the class the object you have selected. Ask your students what it is. This should be easy. The students may wonder what is amazing about it.

   Then, ask your students if they can figure out what stories your object can tell. Explain that every object is amazing because it can tell many stories, about the people who owned it, used it and made it, as well as about the community where it was made and used.

2. **Brainstorm about your amazing object.**
   As a class, brainstorm about how you could look at the object to find out its stories, and write these questions on the blackboard. Some questions your students may come up with include: What is it used for? What is it made from? Where do the materials come from? Who made it? Who used or owned it? Was the owner a man, woman, boy or girl; a housewife, tailor, carpenter or farmer; wealthy or poor? How was it used? When was it made? Where was it made? Who owns it now?

3. **Focus on the snow goggles artifact.** Hand out the snow goggles artifact record to each student. Explain that an Inuk, from Canada's Arctic, made this object. It is now considered an artifact because it is owned by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Encourage students to look carefully at the artifact and to read all of the information on the artifact record. Show the enlarged image of the artifact for a closer view. What is it? What was it used for? Brainstorm about the snow goggles and its maker and owners, using the questions the class came up with.

   What do we now know about the object? What does this object tell us about the person who made it or

owned it? What does it tell us about the region he or she lived in? What don't we know about it? What would you like to know?

4. **Introduce the Amazing Objects Activity Sheet.** Hand out the Amazing Objects Activity Sheet to each student and explain that students will now have the chance to examine an object themselves. Review each question and ensure students understand the answers that are expected. Because the database records only include information that was provided to the museum about each object, students won't find all information they need to answer each question.
5. **Hand out an artifact record to each pair of students.** Pair up students. Provide one artifact record to each pair of students, or allow each pair to choose an artifact.

Optional, if computers are available: Ask each pair to consult the database and select one artifact from a category of the students' choice.

6. **Students complete the Amazing Objects Activity Sheet and present the objects.** Ask students to complete the Amazing Objects Activity Sheet, first to describe the object, and then to reflect on the people who made or used the object. Encourage students in each pair to discuss their ideas before writing down their answers. When students have completed the Activity Sheet, ask several pairs to present their objects. Compare the objects and how each pair interpreted them.
7. **As a class, reflect on the experience.** How did looking at the objects help students better understand the people that made them or used them? Ask students to discuss their impressions of the database. Can they think of ways they can use the database themselves, such as for homework?

Extension Ideas

French as a Second Language: Use the French version of the artifact record. Ask students to describe the artifact in French, using the terms on the artifact record to assist them.

English as a Second Language: Ask students to talk about an object they use at home that is similar to one of the artifacts. Invite them to present their similar object by talking about what it is, what it is used for, how it is used, what it is made from, and who uses it.

Mathematics: Using the dimensions provided in the artifact record, calculate the area an object would occupy. Calculate how many objects could fit on a student's desk or on a shelf.

Arts Education: Ask each group to present their artifact and one or more related people in a manner of their choice. Brainstorm with students on the possible formats and subjects. Some suggestions for format: a show and tell using a papier-maché reproduction of the artifact or a modern version of the artifact, a dramatic representation, a poem, a song or a dance. Suggestions for subject: focus on the maker, the user, the community that used it, a grandchild of the maker, or a collector that has purchased the object.