

TREASURE CHEST

Grade Level: 3 to 5

IN THIS LESSON

Students will read a historical fiction narrative called *Trading Mystery* to learn what life was like in early Chicago during the fur-trade era. Students will then analyze and share their impressions of a treasure chest full of early Chicago artifacts.

OBJECTIVES

- To gain insight about life in early Chicago through storytelling and tactile interaction with artifacts
- To learn how to interpret visual information and improve visual literacy
- To develop writing and analysis skills
- To develop chronological thinking

ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.

Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

Goal 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations.

SUGGESTED ARTIFACTS

Note: Replicas of these objects are commonly available.

Tin lantern

Toy ax

Strands of beads (representing trade beads)

Candles

Calico fabric

Ribbon

Top hat

Fur pelts (real or synthetic)

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Copies of *Trading Mystery* from the Chicago History Museum's *Great Chicago Stories* website (<http://www.greatchicagostories.com/chicago/index.php>)

Copies of the artifact images from *Trading Mystery* (http://www.greatchicagostories.com/pdf/artifacts/artifacts_boots.pdf)

Copies of the *Trading Mystery* discussion questions (http://www.greatchicagostories.com/pdf/questions/Trading_Mystery_Reading_Questions2.pdf)

Treasure Chest worksheets (at end of lesson)

Highlighters

Chart paper

Markers/colored pencils

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This lesson was developed and written by Donna Daly.

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ACTIVITY

1. Divide students into small groups. Provide each group with a copy of *Trading Mystery* and the artifact images that accompany the story.
2. Have students read the story aloud as a read-around. Afterward, lead students through a discussion of the reading-comprehension and critical-thinking questions that accompany the story.
3. Review the artifact images and ask students to read the story a second time. This time, they should highlight references to the artifacts associated with the story.
4. Present the artifact kit to students in a “treasure chest.” (Explain that these are reproductions, but the real objects can be found on a visit to the Chicago History Museum.) Divide students into pairs, and distribute copies of the Treasure Chest worksheet. Ask each pair to choose one artifact from the chest and complete a worksheet to categorize its traits.
5. When worksheets are complete, ask each pair to make a drawing of their object on a large sheet of chart paper. Below it, they should copy the answers to the four “E” boxes from the form the bottom of the Treasure Chest worksheet.
6. Have students read and discuss each other’s work as a class.
7. Have students discuss the ways their object is valuable and why. Remind them that all objects are valuable for what they teach us about the past.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Provide students with reduced-size copies of the artifact images, glue, and construction paper to create an accordion timeline of the events in *Trading Mystery*.

Have students do one or more of the *Trading Mystery* lesson plans.

(<http://www.greatchicagostories.com/classroom/unit1c.php>)

History Connections & Artifact Collections

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following sources offer background information about the fur trade:

A Great Lakes Fur Trade Coloring Book by Chet Kozlak

"The North American Beaver Trade" in *Cobblestone* magazine (June 1982)

Welcome to the World of Beavers by Diane Swanson

The Red Sash by Jean E. Pendziwol

Songs of the Voyageurs (music CD)

TREASURE CHEST

| | | | | |
|----------|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| A | Our treasure is as big as a | Our treasure is made of | Our treasure feels as soft as | Our treasure smells like |
| | | | | |
| B | In a fire, our treasure would | Our treasure is found inside | Our treasure is made by | Our treasure feels as hard as |
| | | | | |
| C | Our treasure has the texture of | Our treasure weighs as much as | Our treasure is the color of | Our treasure is as cold as |
| | | | | |
| D | Our treasure looks very | Our treasure sounds like | Our treasure sparkles like | Our treasure is from the (circle one): |
| | | | | 1600s 1700s 1800s 1900s 2000s |
| E | Our treasure is important because | Our treasure is useful because | Our treasure is valuable because | Our treasure is called _____ because |
| | | | | |