

TREASURE TALES

Grade Level: 3 to 5

IN THIS LESSON

Students will work in pairs to explore fur trade artifacts and make connections with early Chicago history by giving oral presentations. They will then create a Venn diagram comparing modern life to life in the fur trade era.

OBJECTIVES

- To develop historical empathy with the people of the past
- To develop oral presentation skills
- To make connections between the past and the present

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

Chicago History for Kids by Owen Hurd

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

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ACTIVITY

1. Before the lesson begins, have your artifact kit out on display for students.
2. Using *Chicago History for Kids*, assign pairs or small groups a section of chapter 3. Have each group read and identify the main idea of and three supporting details about their section.
3. Have students choose one artifact from the kit that corresponds most closely with their reading passage.
4. Students should then give oral presentations (in chapter order) demonstrating comprehension of their section and how the artifact they chose relates to the reading.
5. After the presentations, create a Venn diagram comparing the fur trade era to the present day. This can be done as a class, in pairs, in small groups, or individually. The diagram could compare the number of people living in Chicago, the number and type of buildings, what people did for work, how people got from one place to another, how people transported goods, what people used to purchase what they needed, and more.

ASSESSMENT

For oral presentations, create a rubric that rates information as well as eye contact, voice control, and posture.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Have students make a visual to accompany their oral presentations.

Have students write a five-paragraph essay comparing modern life to life in the fur-trade era.

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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)