

## KIDDING AROUND IN THE 1980s

Grade Level: 3 to 5

### IN THIS LESSON

**By sampling the pop culture of the 1980s through movies, music, toys, and magazines, students will make personal connections with how kids entertained themselves in that era.**

### OBJECTIVES

- To develop historical empathy with kids of the 1980s
- To understand the relationship between past, present, and future
- To develop creativity, visual acuity, and writing skills

### 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

#### MOVIES

*The Smurfs—Season 1 Volume 1*  
*Back to the Future*  
*Ferris Bueller's Day Off*  
*Muppets Christmas*  
*Pretty in Pink*  
*Star Wars*  
*Return of the Jedi*  
*The Empire Strikes Back*

#### TOYS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Vintage magazines (*Tiger Beat*, *Mad*, *Cracked*)  
Yearbooks  
Cabbage Patch doll  
Monchichi doll  
Cash register bank  
Snoopy doll  
Handheld baseball video game

#### MUSIC (RECORDS/CASSETTES)

Prince, *Purple Rain*  
Duran Duran, *Seven and the Ragged Tiger*  
Huey Lewis and the News, *Sports*  
Michael Jackson, *Thriller*  
Phil Collins, *No Jacket Required*  
Wham!, *Make it Big*  
New Kids on the Block  
Billy Joel, *The Nylon Curtain*  
Air Supply, *Greatest Hits*  
Styx, *Edge of the Century*  
Rick Springfield, *Working Class Dog*  
John Cougar Mellencamp, *Nothin' Matters and What If It Did*

### ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Artifact Analysis worksheets (<http://www.greatchicagostories.com/classroom/artifact.php>)

Document Analysis worksheets ([http://www.greatchicagostories.com/pdf/worksheets/elementary/document\\_wk\\_elem\\_edited2.pdf](http://www.greatchicagostories.com/pdf/worksheets/elementary/document_wk_elem_edited2.pdf))

Photograph Analysis worksheets ([http://www.greatchicagostories.com/pdf/worksheets/elementary/photograph\\_wk\\_elem\\_edited2.pdf](http://www.greatchicagostories.com/pdf/worksheets/elementary/photograph_wk_elem_edited2.pdf))

VHS or DVD player  
Construction paper  
Art supplies

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*This lesson was developed and written by Linda Murakami.*

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### ACTIVITY

#### DAY 1

1. Show students a Smurfs cartoon or another cartoon from the 1980s. Afterward, lead a discussion about the similarities and differences between the old cartoon and cartoons today.
2. Divide students into three groups and assign each of them a category from the artifact list on the previous page: Movies, Music, and Toys/Entertainment. Make sure all students have a chance to interact with all of the artifacts in their category. Have students choose a favorite object and complete the applicable worksheet (Artifact, Document, or Photograph Analysis).
3. Have students lead a short discussion on their object. Does anyone in class recognize the artifact? How is it similar to or different from what we have or use today?

#### DAY 2

1. Distribute vintage advertisements from magazines of the 1980s. Lead a discussion about the similarities and differences between advertisements then and now.
2. Have students create a vintage-style ad for their chosen artifact.

#### DAY 3

1. On the board or chart paper, lead the class in creating a Venn diagram comparing objects from the past with what we have now.
2. Using all the information they have discovered, have each student create a museum label for their artifact. It should list the name, date, significant facts, and the student's interpretation of the object's place in Chicago's history and culture.
3. Display the artifacts and labels as a "mini-museum" exhibition.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Have students imagine that they are a kid in 2050. What does a product of the future look like? Have students write a short essay or create an ad for the product they have imagined. For inspiration, see Lesson 4 of "The Best of the Fair" unit from the Great Chicago Stories website. (<http://www.greatchicagostories.com/pdf/unit/elem/fair/FairLesson4.pdf>)