

STAMPIN' AROUND CHICAGO

Grade Level: 3 to 5

IN THIS LESSON

To learn about the fads and fancies that shaped the 1960s, '70s, '80s, and '90s, students will explore artifacts from these iconic decades and then create a postage stamp inspired by what they have learned.

OBJECTIVES

- To help students link artifacts to Chicago and Illinois history
- To develop habits of historical inquiry by analyzing visual evidence
- To develop interpretive and artistic skills while working with objects
- To encourage creativity

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

YOU MAY CHOOSE TO WORK WITH ARTIFACTS FROM ONE DECADE (1960s, '70s, '80s, or '90s) OR DIVIDE STUDENTS INTO DECADE TEAMS.

World Book encyclopedia (C for Chicago)

Toys (e.g. Silly Putty, Slinky, Oscar Meyer Weinermobile, Superballs, Barbie doll, Cabbage Patch doll)

Videos (*Batman: The Movie*, *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, *All Dogs Go to Heaven*)

Books (*Tilly and Tess*, *My Little Blue Story Book*)

Home decor (e.g. dog figurine/flowerpot, teapot, highball glass, macramé wall hanging)

Record player and 45 RPM records

Women's and men's clothing, jewelry, and accessories

Children's clothing and accessories

Memorabilia (e.g. Pepsi cans featuring Navy Pier or Wrigley Field)

Vintage yearbooks

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

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

Commemorative postage stamps, as examples

Construction paper and/or poster board

Markers, crayons, and art supplies

Internet access

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This lesson was developed and written by Olga Aneziris.

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ACTIVITY

DAY 1

1. Review the purpose and meaning of postage stamps with the class. Discuss various commemorative stamps created by the United States Postal Service. Show examples if possible.
2. Divide students into teams and let each choose an artifact. All the artifacts may be from one decade (1960s, '70s, '80s, or '90s) or you can have each team focus on a different decade. Distribute and have students complete the Artifact Analysis worksheet.

DAY 2

1. Ask students to research how the artifact relates to events in the history of Chicago and the United States. Students may use the internet, encyclopedias, and books. This research can be collected on an index card to serve as a "museum label" for the artifact.
2. As a home connection, have students interview a family member about his/her impressions or memories of the artifact.

DAY 3

1. Have each student create a postage stamp showing his or her artifact and some related historical event(s) of their choosing. They should glue their finished stamps into a frame made of colored construction paper or poster board.
2. Ask students to write a few sentences about their stamp and why they chose to commemorate the subject they did.
3. Have students give an oral presentation about their work to the class.

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ASSESSMENT

Create a rubric for the oral presentation that grades (in order) content, coherence and organization, creativity, material, speaking skills, and audience response.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Ask students to write an essay comparing an artifact from the 1960s, '70s, '80s, or '90s with its parallel today (e.g. a record or cassette player vs. an MP3 player).

Bring in an old yearbook to share with students. Cover the year and have students guess what decade the book is from. What three clues did they base their conclusion on?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

See the United States Postal Service website for classroom enrichment activities and resources. (<http://www.usps.com/communications/community/classroom.htm>)

American Girl's historical character Julie is a girl growing up in 1974 in San Francisco. Their website features books, games, and more. (<http://www.americangirl.com/agcn/julie/>)