History Connections & Artifact Collections

TIME IN A TEAKETTLE

Grade Level: 3 to 5

IN THIS LESSON
Students will compare and contrast antique and modern teakettles in order to explore how the design and production of tea has changed (or stayed the same) over time.

OBJECTIVES
• To identify the history and use of artifacts representing cultural necessities
• To develop visual acuity, creative thinking, and historical imagination
• To develop investigative and analytical skills
• To make connections between the past and 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 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

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

SUGGESTED ARTIFACTS
Antique copper teakettle
Enameled metal teakettle
Modern stainless steel teakettle
Electric teakettle

Please note: The following items are optional. You may use them to provide further context or to complete the extension activities.

Loose tea leaves
Infuser
Teabags
Tea set and/or various cups and saucers
Tea cozy
Sugar and creamer set

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS
Artifact Analysis worksheets (http://www.greatchicagostories.com/classroom/artifact.php)
Chart paper
Crayons, markers, and/or other art supplies

This lesson is part of the History Connections & Artifact Collections project, made possible by a generous grant from the Polk Bros. Foundation.

This lesson was developed and written by Lori Plier.
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ACTIVITY

1. Divide students into four groups and give each a different teakettle. Make sure your kettles are chosen in as wide a range of styles, materials, and time periods as possible. Distribute Artifact Analysis worksheets and ask students to fill them out.

2. After they have completed their worksheets, students should draw a picture of their kettle on chart paper, being sure to label all its parts.

3. Have each group come forward to post its drawing at the front of the room and give an oral presentation based on their answers to the Artifact Analysis worksheet.

4. Lead a class discussion. What features do the kettles have in common? What features are different? Why? Has the teakettle changed much over time? What does this tell us about the history of some household items? Have they changed a lot or not very much? What does this tell us about history in general?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Hold a class tea party. Demonstrate the various ways of brewing tea (loose leaf, teabag, etc.). Have students read and/or demonstrate selections from the following books: *Children’s Tea and Etiquette: Brewing Good Manners in Young Minds* by Dorthea Johnson, John Harney, and Anne Noyes; *Emma Lea’s First Tea Ceremony* by Babette Donaldson and Jerianne Van Dijk; and *Tea for Felicity—A Play About Felicity* by Valerie Tripp.

Have students research the history of tea and/or tea ceremonies and etiquette around the world.