

Trading Mystery

Lesson 2: Tactile Box

Essential Questions

How did Chicago become a city? What is an artifact? Why are artifacts so important to modern day people and societies? What do we learn from artifacts?

Desired Understandings

Students will understand that the area known today as Chicago evolved over centuries from a lively wilderness to a busy metropolis and that many different people and groups have worked to establish Chicago as a city. They will understand that “witnesses to history” can help all people discover their past through the artifacts they collect and the stories they tell.

Knowledge

Students will know key historical events in the evolution of Chicago, with a focus on the fur trade and Fort Dearborn. They will recognize important figures who impacted the early development of the city, including Jean Baptiste Point DuSable and the Potawatomie chief Me-Te-A.

Skills

Students will be able to use their senses and their collective and independent research skills to uncover information about life in Chicago in the fur-trade era. They will be able to compare and contrast the different historical perspectives of people and groups who laid claim to Chicago and express their findings verbally and in writing.

Illinois Learning Standards

English Language Arts

- Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
- Goal 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas.
- 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.
- Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.
- Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

In This Lesson

Students will experience sensory learning through a mock time capsule of fur trade “artifacts,” as well as the *Trading Mystery* map interactive, to expand their knowledge of early Chicago and Fort Dearborn. The story elements of setting, dramatic tension, and surprise/twist are addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Natalie Phillips.



Activity

A timer is suggested to make this activity run as smoothly as possible. Pass around a tactile box, which students should handle for seven seconds each. This can be an ordinary cardboard box with a hole cut into it so that the viewer cannot see what is inside. (Please dull the rough edges of the box with scotch tape or fabric.) Inside the box, place items such as fur (faux or real), spoons, metal bracelets, metal earrings, coins, beads, or other dull metal items. After students have been able to experience the materials, ask these questions: What do you think the items are? How might they relate to the story?

Next, read the second and third chapters of *Trading Mystery* aloud.

http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Trading_Mystery_by_Kris_Nesbitt.pdf Or you may wish to play the story audio for the class.

<http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/site/storyaudio/index.html?story=2>

Next create a three-circle Venn diagram with students. This graphic organizer will compare and contrast the time periods of the 1820s, 1890s, and the present day. Again, this chart may be created on the board or stored on butcher-block paper. You may want to place some of the primary-source photographs by the appropriate bubbles. http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/artifacts/artifacts_boots.pdf

Finally, view the “Early Chicago” tab on the *Trading Mystery* map interactive.

Here students can see artifacts from the early days of Fort Dearborn.

<http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/site/storymap/index.html?story=2>

Lesson 2 Home Connection

After having viewed the mock time capsule, have students make a time-capsule inventory for both themselves and Lily or Joseph. Caution students to suggest items that are relevant to the time period. Also, suggest that students list no more than 10 items. If students wish, they may create a mock 1890s artifact or bring in a modern-day artifact that they are willing to donate.

Materials & Resources

- **Tactile box** (See instructions on page 2)
- **Timer**
- **Computer access for students in the classroom**
- **Printouts of the *Trading Mystery* narrative:**
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/story/Trading_Mystery_by_Kris_Nesbitt.pdf
- **Printouts of the *Trading Mystery* artifact images:**
http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/pdf/artifacts/artifacts_boots.pdf
- **Butcher-block paper** (optional)
- **Markers** (optional)

Instructional Notes

Please adapt the suggested activities according to your own time, financial, and supply limitations.

Remember to use a timer to keep the tactile box circulating and to ensure that you will have time for the other activities.

Extension Activities

Have students perform portions of the narrative as reader's theater.

Explore online resources such as the *Trading Mystery* background information <http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/chicago/background.php> and the *Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago* <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org> to further research the time in which Uncle Boots lived. If feasible, have students explore answers to their own KWL questions about Uncle Boots's life.