This curriculum may be successfully used with or without a museum visit.

Developed by Sarah Anderson and David Martinez in consultation with OHS staff and advisory board

Many thanks to Garrett Riggs for his help in developing this unit.
### Pre-Visit Lesson Three

<table>
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<th><strong>Overview: What Are These Artifacts?</strong></th>
<th>Students make observations about different artifacts from the <em>Experience Oregon</em> exhibit and practice historical skills to develop theories about the artifacts.</th>
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| **Essential Question(s)**              | › How can we make observations about artifacts?  
› How can we use evidence to make good guesses about what an artifact could be? |
| **Delivery Time**                      | One 30-minute session or two 20-minute sessions |
| **Academic Vocabulary**                | *Terms that teachers may have already defined with their students, and are not necessarily specific to historical studies.*  
› Evidence |
| **Content Specific Vocabulary**        | *Terms that are explicitly defined and may be unique to this unit or not common in other areas of study.*  
› **Artifact**: An object made or changed by people.  
› **Exhibit**: A display or show that uses artifacts and documents to tell a story. The exhibit could display the first cars made in Oregon with a picture of people at that time driving the cars. This exhibit would be about old cars. |
| **Materials Needed**                   | › An object that will not be easily recognizable to students. Perhaps a kitchen tool like a flour sifter or a piece of equipment from the school’s science classroom.  
› [Student Artifact photos](#) |
| **Step by Step Instructions**          | **Step One: Modeling How to Guess with Evidence**  
Tell students that now that they have had so much practice looking at photos from the past, they are going to take the next step to becoming historians. They will be looking at *artifacts* from the past. An artifact is an object that people make or use.  
Show the class the artifact that you brought in to share. Ask students to quietly observe the artifact without making any guesses about what it is. Ask them to notice details of the artifact.
Step by Step Instructions (continued)

For example, what color is it? What shape is it? Is it shiny? Does it look smooth? Does it appear to be made of glass? Plastic? Metal? Does it look like it is made by hand? By machine?

Right now we are not trying to guess what the artifact is or what it is used for; we are just noticing details. Making observations before you make any guesses about what an artifact is or what it is used for is an important part of being a historian.

After a moment, ask for student volunteers to share their observations. If a student makes a guess about what the artifact is, redirect them to simply point out a detail. If appropriate, you could write or draw a list of their observations on chart paper or on the board.

Tell students they can guess what the artifact is and how it is used. However, they must explain why they think that. What detail or observations about the object led them to make that guess or conclusion? Giving a reason for your guess is called using evidence.

For each guess a student makes, follow up with the question:

“What is your evidence?”

Note that students will most likely not know what the objects are or be able to deduce what they are. That’s okay. What you’re looking for is not the “correct” answer, but the ability for students to back up their answers with evidence. For example, if they say that they guess that the flour sifter is a tool for draining pasta because it has a metal screen inside like a strainer, that works! If they say the flour sifter looks like a spacesuit, and their reason is, “I don’t know, I just think it is,” that doesn’t work.

Tell students that evidence is really important when you are a historian. You can’t just make guesses without reasons, or you won’t be able to use the artifacts to understand the past!

Step Two: Working in Small Groups

Tell students we will see many artifacts in the Experience Oregon exhibit. Before we go, we will practice making observations about some of those artifacts and guessing what they are, using evidence, of course!
| **Step by Step Instructions (continued)** | Break students into pairs or small groups. Give each group a handout showing an artifact from *Experience Oregon*, facedown. Tell them not to look until you tell them to. Once all groups have their pages, tell them that they will have a few minutes to talk with their group about all the observations they can make about their artifact. What do they see? What details do they notice? What comparisons can they make to other objects?

After a few minutes, tell them to now talk about their guesses. What do you think this is? Who used it? For what? Why? They will need to come up with a group theory.

After a couple of minutes to collaborate, remind them they need to have evidence. Tell them to talk with their group more and work together to agree on one or two pieces of evidence.

**Step Three: Sharing Guesses**

Have students come back together. Tell students that each group will have a chance to share their artifact with the group and talk about their guesses on what the artifact is and the evidence they used to make that guess. Encourage students to ask each other questions about evidence if it is not clear. You could project the images on a screen so the whole class can see. Remind students that these are all guesses and as long as there is evidence, no guesses are “wrong.” This may come up because different student groups will have different theories for the same artifact.

Tell students they will have the opportunity to see all of these artifacts in the *Experience Oregon* exhibit at Oregon Historical Society to find out what the objects are. Will their guesses be right? Alternatively, you could reveal the use of the artifacts at the end of this session and see what further questions come up for students. |
|---|---|
| **Assessments** | › When students share, are they citing evidence?  
 › Who is asking questions? |
| **Teacher Notes** | N/A |
| **Supports for All Students** | Only choose two artifacts and highlight important details with circles or arrows to direct students’ attention to those aspects of the artifact. |
| Extensions | Spend more time on observation and drawing skills. Consider partnering with the art teacher to continue working on drawing from life and creating several drafts of a drawing. This fun pre-lesson to observational drawing helps your students look more closely at objects.  
You can use the **Analyze an Artifact or Object Form** from the National Archives to guide your questions in step one or to create extension activities with additional objects/artifacts. |
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<tr>
<td>Additional Educator Resources</td>
<td>More <a href="#">document and artifact analysis sheets</a> from the National Archives.</td>
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| **Oregon Social Sciences Standards** | *The listed standards are pertinent to the entire unit. Please use your discretion for discerning applicability for each individual lesson.*  
› **K.2** Use and identify respectful dialogue, taking turns, and explain how rules are different in different settings.  
› **K.3** Describe roles of self and family members  
› **K.10** Locate, identify, and describe places of importance to self, family, school, and culture.  
› **K.13** Understand that events happen in a sequential order.  
› **K.15** Distinguish between past and present.  
› **K.16** Understand and create timelines to show basic personal events in a sequential order.  
› **K.17** Make connections (similarities and differences) between self and others.  
› **K.18** Compare and contrast past and present events or practices.  
› **K.20** Given context clues, develop a reasonable idea about who created the primary or secondary source, when they created it, where they created it, or why they created it. |