

Object Desire: Pre-Visit Activity



Touchable Objects

- Sewing Pattern
- Vinyl 45 Record
- Candle Snuffer
- Ball and Jacks

Place these touchable objects in various stations in the classroom and have each student (or have student teams work as small groups of four or five) make observations and assessments about each object in five-minute increments to stop, look, and record what they notice.

Instructions:

1. Pick up each object, turn it around, look at it from all angles.
Pay attention to 'clues' or identifying marks on the object.
2. Write down what you notice about this object. . .
What color is it? What shape is it?
What is it made of? What are its special markings?
Describe qualities of the materials used in fabrication.
3. Based on these observations, and/or what you may already know, what do you think it is (or was) used for?
When was it made?
Is it useful today?
Do you think it might improve one's life and how we live? Why or why not?
Do you have one in your house today? Why or why not?
Would you want one in your house today? Why or why not?
What do you know about this object? What more can you find out?
Does this information change what you think about this object? Why or why not?

Object Desire: Post-Visit Activity I



Writing Activity

List three things (household objects) you could not live without in your home.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What three things (household objects) could you live without?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What three things (household objects) do you want, but do not have?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Discuss and Debate as a Group:

Compare how we live to how someone else lives in another town or part of the world.

Consult *How Children Live Around the World* to consider the structures, lifestyles, and basic needs of others in relation to the objects that surround us. Think about a time and place in which we didn't need "stuff."

What objects enhance our lives to the fullest?

What are the barest necessity household items we need to survive?

What household objects could improve one's life no matter where he or she lived?

What things/objects could we stop needing?

ADVANCED: Insert research related to economic development, manufacturing and the world economy, and local industry into the discussion. How does this impact our perception or opinion of need?

Object Desire: Post-Visit Activity II



Design & Make an Object: The Victorian Calling Card

Social Etiquette...

By the beginning of the 19th century, the etiquette of “calling” or paying a visit in person was a firmly established ritual in society, and the calling card an essential part of introductions, invitations, and visits. Calling cards evolved in England as a way for people to get into the elite social circle, and for those already there to keep out the unwanted. Calling cards were essentially a screening method for seeing who you wanted at a convenient time.



The Cards Themselves...

A lady's card was larger than a gentleman's. A man's card had to fit in his breast pocket.

The engraving on the card was generally in simple type, small and without flourishes, although script became more elaborate as the 19th century went on.

Rules for Calls and Leaving Cards...

A lady would start making calls as soon as she arrived in town, to notify everyone that her family had arrived. She remained in her carriage while her groom took her card and handed it in.

Cards from visitors were placed on a silver tray in the entry hall—the more impressive names displayed on top. In less wealthy households, china bowls were used to hold cards. A turned-down corner indicated that the card had been delivered in person, rather than by a servant. Some elaborate cards had the words [Visite](#), [Felicitation](#), [Affaires](#), and [Adieu](#) imprinted on the reverse side, on the corners. So whichever corner was turned up, one of those corners appeared and explained the reason for the visit.

Formal calls were made following ceremonial events, such as marriage or childbirth, and also as acknowledgement of hospitality. Calls for condolence and congratulations were made about a week after the event. Visits were short, lasting from twenty to thirty minutes. If another caller arrived during a visit, the first caller left within a moment or two.

A newcomer waited until she received cards from neighbors. It was then good manners to call on those neighbors who left cards. A call should be returned with a call, a card with a card, within one week, or at the most, ten days.

Design & Make an Object: The Victorian Calling Card



Materials:

- Markers • Pencils • Colored Pencils • Watercolor Pencils • Rulers • Gluestick • Rulers
- Cardstock (cut into desired sizes) • Magazines or Comic Books • Typeface or Font examples
- Stickers • Colored or Patterned Paper • Scrapbook Paper • Business Card examples

1. Share the history of Victorian calling cards and their function. Compare this history and function to contemporary society and business cards/use of the phone/internet/ etc. and discuss differences and similarities.
2. Examine past/present examples of Victorian cards and contemporary business cards and discuss design elements of each card: font or type face, color usage, and imagery or logo use. Consider what elements are critical to expressing something personal about you.
3. Hand sketch (or use a computer design tool, such as Photoshop or InDesign or MSWord) to explore some ideas that might graphically express something about you. Include your name, a title for yourself, an image, and/or a phrase or aphorism (an observation that contains a general truth) or metaphor (a saying, action, or phrase that is symbolic or represents something else). Consider how to best put these items together in a small composition or space. What colors will you use? What elements might not be needed? What other ways can you embellish or decorate your card?
4. Cut out and glue varied shapes or bits of paper to collage design elements to your card or sketch/draw with markers to enhance your name. Add stickers if you wish.
5. Share your calling card with others and explain what your design expresses about you.