



What's It Wednesdays: Artifacts

This AH-HA (At Home History Adventures) project introduces the idea of Artifacts and how things can 'talk'!

Who:

- Your whole family

What:

- **Artifacts** are Man-Made items – meaning anything that isn't natural or 'nature-made'. Artifacts can be anything: A chair, a dress, a cup, a house. Sometimes we think artifacts can only be something really old. That's not true! Modern day items are artifacts too.
- A **collection** is a group of artifacts that usually share something in common: maybe they are all baseball cards, maybe they are all pieces of art work owned by one person, maybe they are all things owned by a museum.
- **Museums** are places where collections of artifacts are kept. Some museums collect man-made artifacts and others collect nature-made items (Zoos for example are museums of animals!) Museums are fun places – you can have a museum of baseball artifacts, or a museum of trains, or a museums of boats --- there are museums for anything you can imagine even Jell-O! (<https://www.jellogallery.org/>)
- **Curators** are people who take care of collections of artifacts. You'll find a lot of curators at museums! Curators make sure the items are taken care of so they don't get broken, or dirty or lost. Curators also use the artifacts to help tell a story. Tell a story? Can artifacts talk? YES! By looking carefully at artifacts, we can tell stories. (More on this in the weeks to come)

How:

- Man -made vs. Nature-Made: Which of the following are man-made items: Cars, rocks, pencils, computers, flowers, grass, video games, phones, Legos, puppies, water bottles?

- Look around the room you are in right now. Make a list of 10 artifacts you see. What are some things these artifacts in your list have in common? (Perhaps they are all the same color? Or maybe they are all used in schools? Or maybe they are all about the same size? You decide!)
- Not just museums collect things. Lots of people collect things. Some people collect dolls, or baseball cards, or old cars, or books. Do you have a collection? What do you collect? Why do collect those things? Take a picture and post your collection on our Facebook page!
- What about your family? Do any of them collect things? Why do they collect the things you do?
- Contact a family member or friend who doesn't live with you. Ask if they collect something. Ask why they collect what they do? Ask an older person if they collected things when they were little. What did they collect?
- If you could collect anything in the world what would it be, and why?

Tips for Parents/Teaching adults:

- The concept of man-made vs. nature-made can be challenging at first. We refer to man-made as anything created by people whether that is made by hand or made by a machine. Nature-made are things that occur in the natural world – like humans, plants, animals, rocks, water.
- Over the next weeks, we are going to be building on the idea of artifacts and how they tell the story of our lives or the lives of people in the past. Younger children in Elementary School are still learning about the past as a concept so you'll want to focus on more present-day or recent past; older children are beginning to understand the concept of 'The past'. They are the perfect age for digging deeper.
- Remember: We are here to help! If you have a question, please email us at info@heritagesylvania.org

Extensions for older students:

- One idea for older children is to begin to think how will you explain what is happening right now with the Coronavirus pandemic when you get older. Ask them, what do you think you'll remember most? What artifacts will you remember as being a part of this time? As we progress further with this theme, we are going to give you information on creating an exhibit to tell the story of the Coronavirus Pandemic in 10 Artifacts that we might even put on display in our museum. We will work towards that!