

Pack Like a Soldier



Pre-Program Lesson: Artifacts

In the ranger-led portion of this program, students will examine the items soldiers on both sides of the Civil War kept with them. These items provide tangible evidence of soldiers' experiences during the war. The teacher-led lesson below will introduce key concepts concerning the study of artifacts, which will be expanded upon in the second pre-program lesson and the ranger-led activity. Teachers are encouraged to modify the lesson to better suit their class needs.

Learning Goal

- Students will understand the significance of artifacts as they pertain to history.

Guiding Questions

- If someone were studying your personal history, which objects would be significant artifacts?
- What gives artifacts their value?

Vocabulary

- **Artifact:** an object made by a human being, typically an item of cultural or historical interest.
- **Value:** the regard that something is held to deserve; the importance, worth, or usefulness of something.

Materials

Any assortment of school or craft supplies will do such as...

- Construction paper
- Crayons or color pencils
- Paint
- Glue
- Magazines or newspapers
- Modeling clay
- String

Lesson

- Have the students showcase one or two "artifacts" that are particularly meaningful to their lives, such as a painting, a photograph, or a special song. They may also have true examples of artifacts from the past. Students must explain what gives the artifact value.
- Choose a medium from the material list, and have them create an artifact that represents their life.
- Have students share their artifacts with the class.

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Pre-Program Lesson: Collections

Now that students have a grasp on concepts concerning artifacts and their value, students will consider how artifacts can be examined and understood as part of collection of items.

Learning Goals

- Students will be able to group artifacts by their common attributes.
- Students will be able to understand why collections are preserved.

Guiding Questions

- Do you have a collection? If so, why?
- What to the items in your collection have in common?
- How would you feel if your collection were lost?
- Why do we preserve collections?

Vocabulary

- **Collection:** a group of things or people.

Materials:

- Pencil
- Notebook or loose-leaf paper

Lesson

Part One

Have your students:

1. Record what would be in their personal collection, or what is already a part of their collection.
2. Identify what attributes the items in their collection share.
3. Record why the collection is valuable.
4. Record how they would feel if the collection were destroyed.

Part Two

Have students assign a category name for each set of items below. Then have students name one item that might also fit in that collection. This can be done individually or in groups.

- blanket, stuffed bear, charm
- pencil, glue stick, marker
- leaf, twig, stone
- bowl, blender, baking sheet
- wheat, corn, coffee

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Post-Program Lesson: What's in Your Pack?

Following the ranger-led program, students will have examined artifacts of the Civil War and gained an understanding of soldiers' living conditions. In this teacher-led activity students will gain a new perspective on those experiences by creating their own gear packs. As with the pre-program lessons, teachers are encouraged to modify the lesson to better suit their class needs.

Learning Goal

- Students will relate to the experiences of Civil War soldiers by considering what personal affects they value most.

Guiding Questions

- What significance did the artifacts have for Civil War soldiers?
- How did the items make their lives easier or more comfortable?
- Which items were necessary for survival?
- Which items held more personal value?

Materials

- Backpack

Lesson

1. Have students imagine a scenario in which they are spending weekend in the wilderness of Georgia. They can only take one large backpack with them. Then have them consider the following questions independently:
 - a. What do you need to survive?
 - b. What can you bring to make yourself more comfortable?

The rest of this exercise can be imagined and written down OR carried out with real items and a backpack.

2. Have the students pack their backpacks with their essentials.
3. Ask for volunteers to share what is in their packs one item at a time (we recommend at least four volunteers). Have the rest of the students raise their hands if they have the same item. If you have a large group, you can separate students into breakout rooms.
4. As a class, discuss which items you all had in common and which items differed. Consider which items would have been available to soldiers in the past and which wouldn't.

RESOURCES



[Non-Fiction](#)

- *The Civil War: 1860-1865* by Christopher Collier and James Lincoln Collier.
- *Civil War A to Z* by Norman Bolotin.
- *Civil War Battles and Leaders DK series*, edited by Aaron Murray.
- *The Civil War For Kids* by Janis Herbert.
- *Fields of Fury: The American Civil War* by James McPherson.
- *Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco.

[Fiction](#)

- *Across the Lines* by Carolyn Reeder.
- *Before the Creeks Ran Red* by Carolyn Reeder.
- *Hear the Wind Blow* by Mary Dinning Hahn.
- *Flying Free* by Sharon Dennis Wyeth.
- *Freedom's Wings*, by Sharon Dennis Wyeth.
- *My America Series* by Mary Pope Osborne.
- *The Storm Before Atlanta* by Karen Schwabach.
- *The War Within* by Carol Matas.