



Heirloom Worksheets



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Heirloom

We are a part of everything we have come from. Our ancestors' experiences created the world that we now inhabit. Often, their lives are described in clues all over our houses.

So what can we learn from the tangible objects that have been passed down within our families?

Heirloom is a participatory exhibition that provides an opportunity for girls to learn about their own families' histories through interviews and researching old photographs, artifacts, and heirlooms.



Choose Your Heirloom

Have you ever wondered what the story is behind your great-grandmother's ring? Or that smile from an old photograph?

Choose your favorite family heirloom, artifact, or old photograph that you want to learn more about. Take a photo to document your choice.

What makes it special to you?

What do you already know?

What do you want to know about it?

Who can you ask to help research the story?

Think about these questions as you begin your journey.

Ask, Listen, Learn

Educational Standards

Common Core

Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 - Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Literacy.WHST.6-8.7, 9-10.7, 11-12.7
Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Now, start talking. Find out what your family members know about the object. Ask how long it has been in the family, where it has been, what it was used for, and if there are any stories behind it.

Do you or your family members have special memories of the object? Take notes on everything you discover - you will probably end up learning many interesting things about your family!

Once you have finished your interviews, look for other sources of information. Do you know something special about who the object belonged to? Take that as your cue to research in local archives and libraries.

Questions to ask:

- How long has the heirloom been in the family?
- Where has it been?
- What was it used for?
- Does anyone have special memories of the heirloom or its owner(s)?
- What time period did the heirloom come from?
- Who bought/acquired it, and why?
- Where did he/she live? What did he/she do (occupation or hobby)?
- How did the heirloom end up with you?

Dig Deeper

Researching at archives is about researching people. Archives help us learn more about our families and their connections to the world. Some types of records you can find include:

- Birth and death certificates
- Marriage and divorce certificates
- Legal records
- Census records, including who lived with who
- Military records
- Newspaper articles
- Published papers, books, and pamphlets
- Church or service organization records
- Similar photographs or artifacts

Think about these questions as you research:

- Who are you trying to find, and what connections to the military or other organizations do you know he/she had?
- Who else is connected to the heirloom?
- What year did he/she live or acquire the heirloom?
- Is your heirloom a local object or photo? Was it unique to your hometown? Who made it?
- What other events happened in the year your heirloom was made or acquired?

Educational Standards

Common Core

Literacy.CCRA.W.7 - Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Literacy.CCRA.W.8 - Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 - Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Literacy.RH.6-8.1, 9-10.1, and 11-12.1 - Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Write the Story

Educational

Standards

Common Core

Literacy.CCRA.W.2 -
Write
informative/explanatory
texts to examine and
convey complex ideas and
information clearly and
articulately.

Literacy.CCRA.W.4,
6-8.4, 9-10.4,11-12.4 -
Produce clear and
coherent writing in which
the development,
organization, and style
are appropriate to task,
purpose, audience.

Literacy.WHST.6-8.2,
9-10.2, 11-12.2 - Write
informative/explanatory
texts, including the
narration of historical
events.

Once you have finished your interviews and research, it is time to write your story. Read through all of your research and think about the stories you have gathered to see how they relate to your life.

In your story, answer the following questions:

What is the object, and how did you find it?

Who did it belong to? Was it passed down or stored in a safe place?

Why is it important as a family heirloom?

What do you know about its original owner? Who was he/she, and why did they acquire it?

How did your heirloom impact girlhood experiences in your family? Does your heirloom have connections to any local, regional, or national moments in history? If so, how is it connected?

Ultimately, the story you tell is up to you. It can be short or long, focus on one person or many.

Girl Museum

We are the first and only online museum dedicated to girls.

We exhibit, educate, and raise awareness about the unique experience of being born and growing up female around the world in the past and present.

As a community of passionate and creative individuals, we acknowledge and advocate for girls as forces for collective responsibility and change in the global context, not as victims and consumers.

We are a registered 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization.

Learn more and get involved at www.GirlMuseum.org



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Share Your Story

Educational Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST
.9-10.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

The last step is easy! Send your unique heirloom story along with a photo of your heirloom to heirloom@girlmuseum.org.

We will post your story on our Heirloom project website for all to see. Be sure to share with your family and friends!

