



Boxes of Delight



Book of Delights

Resources, Activities & Games

TYNE & WEAR
archives &
museums

Book of Delights

Resources, Activities & Games

The Boxes of Delight service has been created to complement Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums' diverse learning programmes.

We understand the importance of not making a museum visit in isolation, and so have created resource boxes containing objects which can be handled back in the classroom. We believe that handling objects creates a tangible link with the past, inspires learners and helps them develop their confidence and skills.

This book has been designed to be used by teachers and other facilitators to help increase their confidence and skills when using objects. It showcases the diverse range of activities the objects in your Box of Delight can be used for.

Skills map

Learning with objects can provide learners with opportunities to develop their skills, supporting them to become confident and effective contributors.

Why use objects?

The opportunity to handle actual and replica objects from the past is a unique experience that can empower and inspire all ages.

Using objects in a learning environment can help learners to personally connect with a new topic and deepen their knowledge. Handling objects can motivate pupils when approaching new topics and provide a concrete experience which aids abstract thought and supports broader learning objectives.

Objects get us talking; aiding reminiscence, stimulating conversation and triggering new ideas. They play a vital role in building our 'museum confidence', giving us a chance to understand and interpret objects through personal experiences.

How to use this book

The Book of Delights is your key to unlocking the secret histories of objects. To ensure that you can explore your Box of Delight to its full potential this guide is split into five main sections. They are:

- **Stimulate** – building confidence
- **Communicate** – develop learners' English and communication skills using objects to debate, convey meaning and create new narratives.
- **Create** – encourage creativity by using objects as stimuli, inspiring learners' imagination and developing their enjoyment of the arts.
- **Investigate** – explore and investigate objects to improve learners' awareness of the world around them and the people of the past.
- **Innovate** – examine innovations from the past to stimulate design and investigation skills through experimentation, design, creation and investigation.

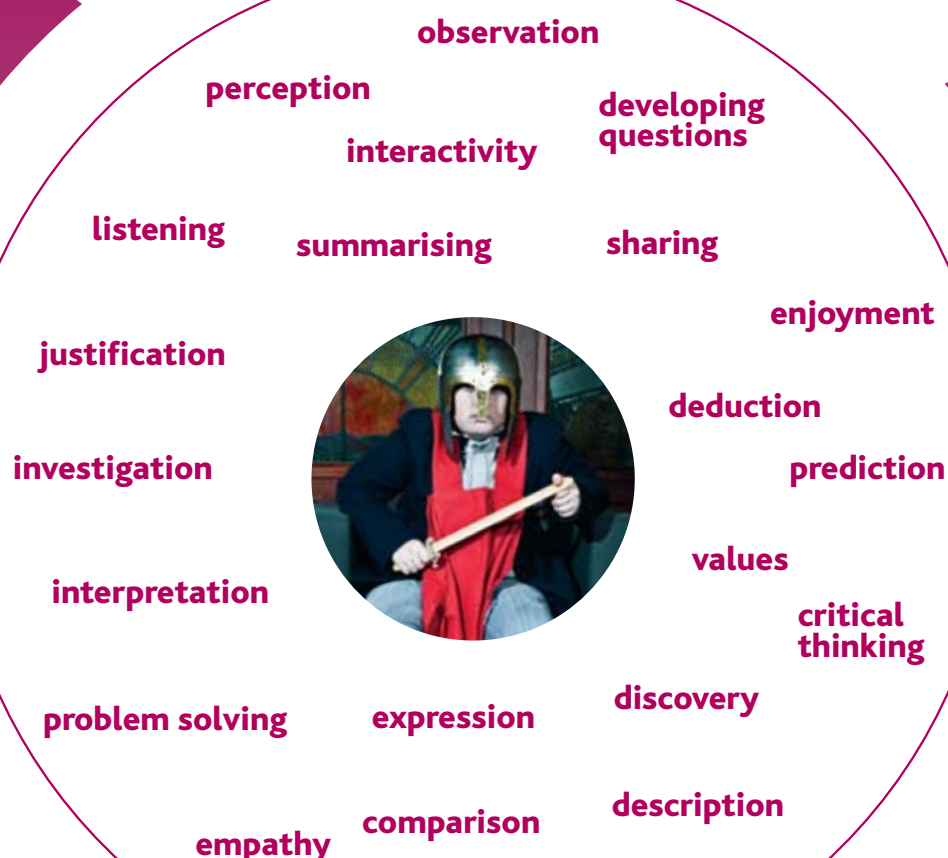
These are then followed up with activities for **plenary** sessions that are designed to aid learners' reflection and support topic evaluation.

The activities are simply set out with keys:

examples

tasks to help you extend activities further

Each activity has been specially designed for use with the objects in the Boxes of Delight. The activities are designed to be flexible so that they can work with most groups of objects, however not all activities may be suitable for the box you have borrowed.



How to look after your museum objects



The objects are intended to be handled and examined rather than simply displayed. Each object has been specially selected to stimulate individual and group learning through handling.

While we actively promote object handling, please take care when handling the objects in the box as many of them are original and irreplaceable.

When using your Box of Delight we ask users to:

- Watch out for any sharp edges or points
- Be aware that some objects are heavy
- Use both hands when handling objects and hold over a work surface or table so that if they are dropped, the fall will not be too severe
- Support objects by placing one hand underneath and one on top
- Remember that objects are fragile, even if they do not appear so
- Make sure you leave time to carefully pack up the items at the end of the session
- Report any damages, losses or broken items to the Museum when you return the box
- Make sure your group only tries on replica, and not original, costumes or accessories
- DO NOT try on the World War II gas masks (although they have all been tested for asbestos and radiation)

Above all, the Boxes of Delight team would like your group to have a fun and valuable experience when using your loans box. If you would like further advice on handling your objects then please contact our team by emailing boxesofdelight@twmuseums.org.uk



Stimulate

Handling objects can be an empowering experience for learners and help develop their confidence.

Objects can initiate conversations and provide exciting new topics for discussion. They can inspire and stimulate our imaginations and can help us to start talking.

The activities below have been designed to develop learners' confidence with objects, supporting them to move from familiar objects to the unfamiliar. These activities have been selected to use as ice-breakers that will help to initiate conversation and are suitable to use with all age ranges and group types.

Activities

1. Describing familiar objects

This simple exercise supports learners' first steps towards confidence with objects.

Ask each learner to pick and examine a familiar or personal object and then think of five pieces of information or **descriptive** words that **describe** their object.

example

Rucksack

- colourful
- fasten with zip
- heavy
- reflective patches
- dirty



Build on this by asking students to complete the same task with an unfamiliar object from the Box of Delight.



2. New use for an object

Develop learners' creative thinking by turning object uses on their head... there are no wrong answers when you use your imagination!

Choose an object. Invent a brand new use for it. What amazing uses can you think of?

examples

Darning mushroom = an umbrella for mice, a fairy's toadstool, an earplug, a lost nail from a giant's kitchen table...

3. Mice and giants

Use this as a quick discussion topic, or as a starting point for stories and poems.

Select an object and imagine you're a giant or a mouse. How would you use your object if it was really big? How would you use it if it was really small?

examples

- **Curling tongs** = a hair clip for a giant's wife
- **Tudor ruff** = a napkin ring at a giant's Christmas party
- **Diabolo** = a mouse's bath or wash basin



4. Feely bags

Inspire learners to use their senses when working with objects

Place a mystery object in a bag without allowing anyone else to see it.

Ask a member of the group to be the artist and to draw the object from the descriptions given by the group. Without looking, the group passes the object between them, using an adjective to describe the object to the artist, without revealing what it is.

This can also be played as a team game with teams describing their objects to their chosen artist in a race to identify their object before the other team. Alternatively, learners can work in pairs with one describing the object and the other person drawing it.

5. Story circle

Help learners to get their creativity flowing and use objects to trigger their imagination with a group object story.



Each learner chooses an object from the Box of Delight or a personal object they have brought.

The story starts with the first object holder who begins the group narrative.

example

A bowler hat = 'This bowler hat belonged to a famous time traveller...'

The story then passes to the next member of the group who weaves their object into the story being told.

example

Scarab beetle = ... Each time the time traveller left the house he would take a scarab beetle, that he had picked up on his travels, to give him good luck....

This story is then passed around the group until each person has added their object to the narrative. The last person then completes the story with their object.

example

Teddy bear = 'time for bed' thought the time traveller as he tucked himself up to sleep with his teddy bear.

There are no wrong answers in this story, the more imaginative the better!

Why not incorporate the 'Talk for Writing' strategy into this activity? As the children are talking, or afterwards, scribe the story into a story map - which can then be remembered, retold and expanded on.



Communicate

This section is designed to help stimulate and develop learners' speaking, listening and communication skills using objects to debate, convey meaning and create new narratives.

Activities

1. Charades Guess the object, charades style

Give a player an object from the Box of Delight, without anyone seeing. Using mime and gesture the player must help the rest of the group to guess the object. But remember, the player cannot speak or show the object to the group!

example Roman sandal

- Two words
- First word = two syllables
- First syllable = row (do rowing action)
- Second syllable = man (hopefully you can point to a man at this point!)
- Second word = two syllables
- Sounds like = handle – mime using a door handle or point to a handle on a bag

You could extend this activity by moving onto guessing what the object might have been used for/ investigate what the object was for, then act it out.



2. Hot seating

Have you ever wanted to ask a courtier what it was like to woo a Tudor Lady, or how a Victorian maid felt emptying her employer's chamber pot? Hot Seating gives you a chance to do just that.

Tip: Children will need background knowledge to answer the questions so ensure they have enough information in their heads to ensure they don't get stuck or anxious when in the 'hot seat'!

Ask a member of the group to choose an object and a character that they think might have used or found the object.

The group then interviews this character.

examples E.g. Object: Canopic jar Character: Egyptologist

Where did you find this object?

Egyptologist: "I was taking part in an archaeological dig in the heart of Egypt at the Valley of the Kings when I discovered an Ancient Egyptian tomb."

How did you feel when you discovered this object?

Egyptologist: "I was so excited. This was my first dig and finding the canopic jars was beyond my wildest dreams."

What did you think was inside?

Egyptologist: ...

examples Object: A.R.P Warden's helmet Character: Air Raid Precautions (A.R.P) officer

When do you wear this helmet?

A.R.P Warden: Every night I go and join the watch at the end of my road and watch for enemy planes in the skies. I have to take my helmet with me to make sure I keep myself safe.

Has it ever saved your life or have you saved someone else's life?

A.R.P Warden: I have been very lucky not to have had to test the strength of my helmet. I have assisted in lots of rescues, particularly down at the shipyards where there has been a lot of bombing raids.

3. 'Theft in the museum; precious object stolen!'

An ideal link to journalistic writing is this fun, imaginative activity. The Museum of Britain has had a precious object stolen from its store. As a journalist you must help the Museum to recover their stolen object, by writing an article.

1. Select an object.
2. Write an article for your newspaper detailing the theft

4. Make your own museum

A fantastic 'real' opportunity for your learners to write an information text! Your museum has just begun to ask learners to help write the exhibition text ready for the 'grand opening'.

1. Each member of the group picks an object from the Box of Delight.
2. Each person then needs to write an object label, answering the following:

examples

What is your object called? What is it made of?
What does it do? Who did it belong to?
How did it end up in the museum? How old is it?
Does it have any interesting features you think visitors should make a point of looking at?

3. Once all of these questions are answered the group is ready to create the exhibition.

Introduce this activity by using 'Museum mix-up' (see page 15). Extend this activity by asking the group to organise a 'grand opening' for their exhibition, thinking about the guest list, marketing and using a 'budget' to organise the event.

You need to include:

Details of the theft: time, date, location
The object stolen: what it looks like, when it dates from, how big it is, a short history of the object etc.
Reward: how much will the museum pay for information?
Why not fill in an object report form before you try this activity? (page 26)

Create

Encourage creativity by using objects as stimuli, inspiring learners' imagination and developing their enjoyment of the arts.

Activities

1. Object entrepreneur

Every object has unique features so let your learners try their hand as object entrepreneurs, and test their abilities to sell to the toughest customers.

1. Select an object.
2. Design a poster for your object highlighting its unique selling points and why your customers should buy it. Your customers are from the same time period as your object so try to design your poster to appeal to your audience.
3. Once you are satisfied with your poster get ready for the market. Use some research questions (examples to the right) to think about your sales pitch to your customers.
4. Once both tasks are completed the group is ready to hold 'Market Day'.

The day has come to sell your object - Market Day

Thinking about:

- The time the object is from?
- Who might want to buy your object?
- What it is used for?
- Your competitors
- What makes your object special?
- What other similar objects might have been available?

5. In turn each entrepreneur must try to sell their object to the rest of the group who are acting as their potential customers.
6. Once they have finished their pitch the rest of the group should decide whether they would like to purchase this product. Each person who would like to purchase should put their hand up.
7. Create a tally of the number of customers for each product. The person with the most votes or sales is the entrepreneur of the day!

To make this more challenging, ask some learners to try and sell the same object. Will each entrepreneur successfully make the same amount of 'sales'?



2. Kenning riddles

Get your learners enthused by playing with describing words and create a poem in minutes.

A) Warm up - fast connections

Start off by making word connections

1. Ask your group to form a circle.
2. First person says a word.
3. Follow on round the circle with each person saying an associated word.

example words

First person: Scissors

Second person: Cut

Third person: Blood

Fourth person: Hospital

Fifth person: Ambulance

... and so on

4. This must be a fast game, no time for deep thinking!

B) Object circle

1. Place an object in the middle of the circle
2. Ask the group to shout out what the object makes them think about

blackout
bedtime
birthdays
flames
warmth
dark night
Christmas
dripping wax
CANDLE

example words

You could begin to introduce poetic features here by brainstorming words that sound familiar or have alliteration. Or up-level your children's knowledge by using thesauruses to create new word-banks to describe objects.

C) Kennings

Kenning is the Norse word for riddle

1. Guess the object from these kennings:

example words

Kenning 1

Rain drops

Pouring down

Windy gust

Inside out

Blown away!

Kenning 2

Pink, blue

Plastic handle

Bristles sharp

Teeth shine

Big smile

2. Now your learners are enthused about describing the object they could move into writing their own kenning! Try and write your own kenning for the objects in your Box of Delight.

Use the following rules:

example words

- Use two word phrases
- The riddle must be over four lines long
- It doesn't have to rhyme
- Don't mention the object

Answers for above:

Kenning 1

Umbrella

Kenning 2

Toothbrush



"I found the box a fantastic resource. The children loved the hands on experience of investigating the artefacts. We spent a whole afternoon looking at and discussing the objects. The artefact report forms were useful too! A super idea!"
Year 3 Teacher



3. Story maker

The story maker activity supports learners with their debate and discussion skills. By harnessing their creative drawing and writing skills learners are encouraged to create stories and reflect on the objects they have chosen.

1. Divide your group into pairs and ask each pair to select an object.
2. Allow each pair time to discuss the historical context of their object thinking about ...
3. Ask them to then choose the three most significant moments in the story of their object. Each pair then writes or draws these moments on to their storyboard. (page 27).
4. Using their answers, ask each pair to use their storyboard to create a short story. They could expand their storyboard into a visual story map to add more detail.
5. Ask each group to present their story to the group, using their storyboard/map to help.

examples

- How it was used?
- What is it?
- How old do they think it is?
- Who used it?
- How old were they?
- Were they rich or poor?



Beginning

This roman sandal was made in Italy and sent to Northern England.



Middle

The soldier who owned it marched 25 miles up and down Hadrian's Wall every day.



End

When the sandal was too worn to wear, it was left out in the snow and forgotten about.

Alternatively, ask the group to perform their storyboards using freeze frames or by developing a 'one minute' speed play.

Why not link your stories in with the Talk for Writing approach? Build-on retelling the stories, using actions to help remember the main points, before moving onto innovating new details or events to expand them even further.

4. Magnify the mystery

Use individual and group observation skills to guess the object.

1. Ask learners to choose an object, making sure they keep it a secret from the others.
2. Each person must then select a small area of their object and enlarge it on paper.
3. The pictures should then be collected in and shuffled.
4. Once the drawings have been well shuffled, hold up each image and ask learners to guess which objects have been drawn.

Investigate

Explore and investigate objects to improve learners' awareness of the world around them and the people of the past.

Activities

1. Annotated drawing

Support learners to investigate their object using their close observation skills and help them to focus on and record small details accurately.

1. Select an object.
2. Ask learners to carefully observe and draw the object, making sure that they draw as much detail as they can. To get really close use a magnifying glass.
3. Once they are happy with their drawing ask them to annotate the different parts of their object.

To make this activity more challenging ask students to draw the object from a verbal description only, or give them five minutes to look at their object and then get them to draw it from memory.

Even more challenging, ask them to draw the object through touch by giving them the object behind their back.



2. Museum mix-up

An excellent activity to promote deeper descriptions of each object, thinking about materials, age and use of them.

1. Split your group in to pairs and give them an object to share in secret.
2. Ask each pair to fill in a new catalogue record - page 25 (leaving the image section blank!):

Object name:

Possible date of use:

Made from:

How this object has been used:

Condition:

Good Fair Poor



3. Each pair then reads out their record to the group carefully leaving out the name of the object. The rest of the group must guess, which object is being described.
4. Once all of the objects have been guessed the image section can be filled in.



This task works well as a starting point for the 'Make Your Own Museum' activity. see page 9.

3. Unlock your object

What do you **really** know about your object? Use this activity to further develop learners' investigation skills.

Think about what you can really tell from an object. What questions cannot be answered by the object alone?

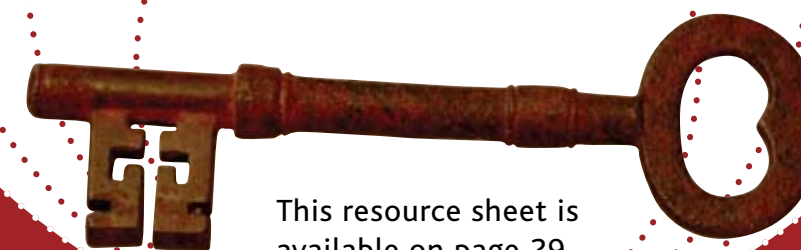


What **questions** do you still have?

What does the object **not** tell you?

What can you **guess** from the object?

What does this object tell you for **certain**?



This resource sheet is available on page 29.

Innovate

Examine innovations from the past to stimulate design and investigation skills through experimentation, design, creation and investigation.

Activities

1. Object of the day

Think about uses of your object in the past, today and future

1. Select an object.
2. Ask your learners to come up with ideas for how they would change and develop the object:
 - During its own historical period?
 - Today- is there an alternative or equivalent version of the object?
 - In the future.

Example: Tudor wooden trencher

In historical context: Make it from pewter so that it was more hygienic or add another dip indentation to the trencher to put different spices in.

Now: Use ceramic so that I could put it in the dishwasher and add a set of handles to make it easier to hold when it is hot

In the future: Use a plate that was edible so that once I had finished eating I wouldn't have to wash-up!



"A super resource box. The children loved working with the artefacts. We completed an object analysis and set up a 'mini' museum. They had to describe artefacts, state how they were used in Tudor times, sketch etc. They also made super drawings."
Colegate Community Primary School



2. Finding forces

a) Get learners active with object-led movement.

1. Divide your group into teams of four or five and ask them to pick an object thinking about how the object moves and the forces that could be involved.
2. Get each group to create a piece of movement to represent their object - perfect for Science or PE lessons.
3. Ask the rest of the group to guess which object the team are representing and the forces that are used by the object.

b) Object machine

Ask each team to create their own 'physical factory' to make their object. Each team member 'becomes' part of the machine.

Example: a whisk

First part of the machine: acts out making the handle

Second part of the machine: acts out making the shaft of the whisk

Third part of the machine: acts out fixing the handle to the shaft of the whisk

Fourth part of the machine: acts out making the metal hoops of the whisk

Fifth part of the machine: acts out the whisk being fitted together and tested



This object-led movement would fit in excellently with a KS2 Dance topic. The TOP DANCE scheme has a fantastic unit of work based around 'machines'.

Plenary

Use these quick activities at the end of your topic to re-enforce learning in a fun and interactive way.

Activities

1. Object memory

Test your learners' memories and object knowledge.

1. Lay all of the objects from the Box of Delights on to a tray or table.
2. Give the group some time to look at all of the objects.
3. Cover over the objects with a piece of fabric. Ask the group to close their eyes while you remove one of the objects.
4. Get the group to open their eyes and see if they can see what is missing from the tray.
5. Keep repeating this until each object has been removed.

"An excellent array of artefacts! The children enjoyed predicting, and then discovering, the purpose of the objects. They were also able to use a number of items in their school assembly." Learn East

Expand on this game by keeping all the objects on the table and covering them over. Ask the group to try to remember which objects are:

- made of different materials e.g. wood, metal, plastic
- objects that have moving parts e.g. compass, meat grinder, spinning top
- type of object e.g. functional, decorative
- people who would have used the objects e.g. maids, Kings and Queens, cooks



2. Time capsule

This activity encourages learners to think about objects other cultures have left behind and debate which objects they would choose to represent their own cultures to people in the future.

1. Divide the group in to pairs and ask each pair to select an object from the Box of Delight.
2. Give each pair time to discuss their object, thinking about:

examples

- How it was used? How old they think it is? Who used it?
- Why was it important to other cultures?
- What the object may have represented to past cultures?
- Does it still mean the same thing to us now?

3. Once they have had time to think about the questions above, allow each pair in turn to present their answers to the group.
4. Using the 'Time Capsule' resource sheet (page 28) ask each pair to write down on post it notes what they would put in their own 'Time Capsule' to represent their own culture today.
5. Within the group ask each pair to share with another, then bring the whole group together and ask each member to pick a suggestion that they would like to see in a 'whole class/group' capsule (try and encourage them not to choose their own ideas!)
6. Encourage your group to discuss why they picked these objects to go in the group capsule, and what they mean to them.

"Students really enjoyed this activity, worked well with Romans 2000 years ago and looking at our objects in 2000 years time" Children's panel observer



3. Two truths and a lie

This activity helps learners to use their debating and investigative skills to establish information about each object. But can each team uncover the lie?

1. Split your group into teams so that each group has an object.
2. Give each team time to discuss their object and come up with two true things about the object and one false thing. The more plausible the lie the better.

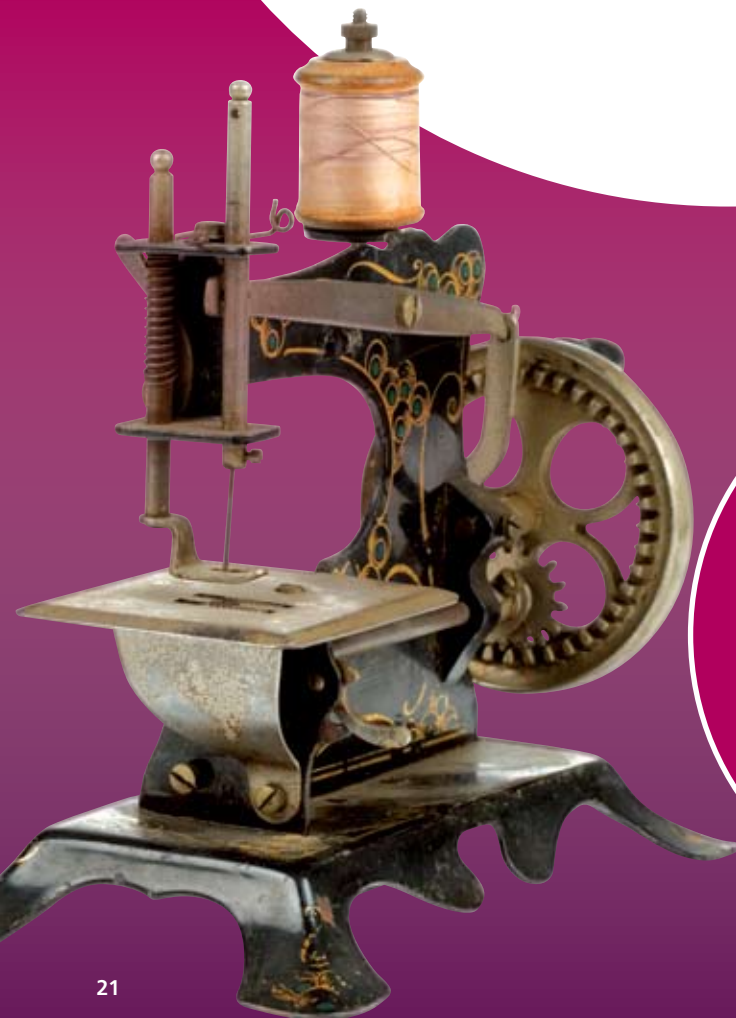
example ↗ chamber pot

Truth 1 = This chamber pot was used because most Victorians didn't have indoor toilets

Truth 2 = Another name for a chamber pot is a 'thunder pot'

Lie = Chamber pots are only found in England.

3. Each group in turn reads out their statements. The other groups then have to decide which statement is the lie.
4. The team that discovers the most lies wins.



"The children really enjoyed exploring the toys. The report sheets were great in literacy and the questions prompted learners to write an explanation. The artefacts brought the 'Victorian Toy' lesson to life."
Belmont Church of England Junior School

4. Skeleton game

Use historical objects as inspiration and support learners' speaking and listening skills. Get learners thinking about the importance of objects from the past and how they compare with our treasured objects today.

1. Divide your class into smaller groups of four or five.
2. One person in each group needs to volunteer to be the skeleton and lie on the floor.
3. The rest of the group must choose three treasured items from the Box of Delight that the person would have been buried with.
4. Once the treasured possessions have been decided they should be placed with the skeleton.
5. The group must then present their reasons for the selection to the other groups.

examples ↗

- What is important about each object?
 - Can you tell by the objects if the person was male or female?
 - What does the object symbolise?
 - Does the object show the person's status?
 - Does it have sentimental value?
 - Would their three objects survive in 500 years?
6. Ask the group which of their personal objects they would choose to 'take to the grave', if they could only have **one**, and why?



To extend this activity give the skeleton a character that fits the historical context. For example a Roman soldier, an Egyptian scribe, or a Medieval servant.

Can you think of any other objects that might have been in the coffins and may have disintegrated over time?



5. Object senses

Use all their senses to describe their object in its historical context, this activity supports learners to bring what they have learnt during the topic, and their imagination, together.

1. Ask your group to pick an object.
2. Get them to think about how each of their senses would be triggered in the period and context the object comes from.

example  Celtic brooch

Context: Celtic banquet
Taste: Lots of beer and meat
Smell: The logs on the open fire and the meat roasting on a spit
Touch: The soft woollen clothes and leather shoes that the banquet guests are wearing
Hear: The crackle of the fire and the lively chatter of the guests
See: The brightly decorated banquet hall, hung with decorations and beautiful fabrics



"The children said they found the suitcase and its contents really interesting. It made them think more deeply about the experiences of children in wartime and helped them understand the feelings and emotions of evacuees."
 High Spen Primary School



Museum mix-up

Object name:

Possible date of use:

Made from:

How this object has been used:

Condition: Good Fair Poor

Image of Object

Object
report
form

What does the object look like? What shape is it? What colour is it? Is there any decoration on your object?

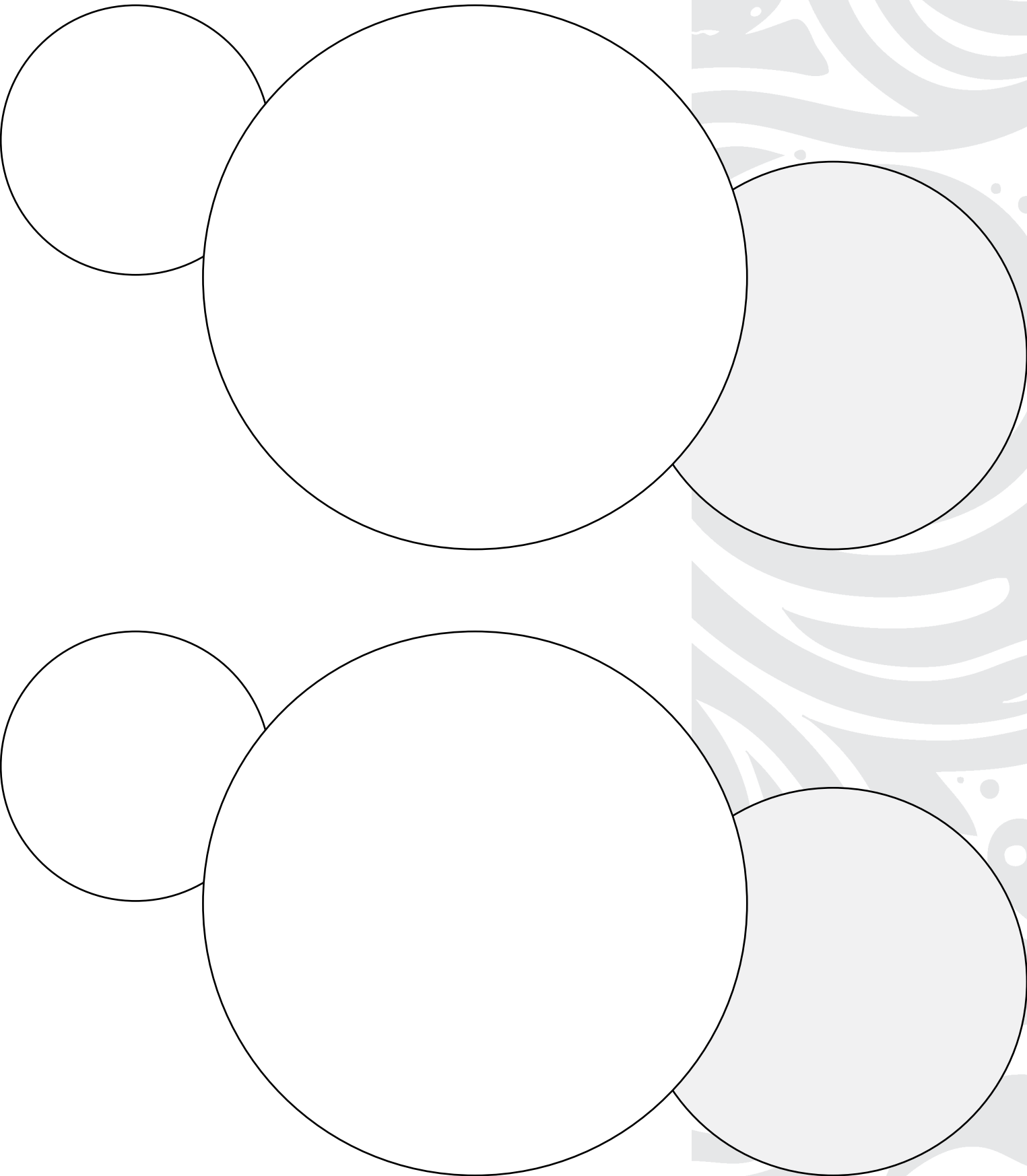
What does the object feel like? What kind of texture does it have? Is it rough or smooth? How heavy is it?

Does the object make any noise at all? If so, describe the sound it makes.

What does the object smell of (if anything)? If it has a smell, try to describe it.

Draw the object here.
Colour in and label the different parts and decoration.

Storyboard



Time capsule



Unlock your object inference

What **questions** do you still have?

What does the object **not** tell you?

What can you **infer** from the object?

What does the object tell you for **certain**?

Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) is a major regional museum, art gallery and archives service which manage 12 museums and galleries across Tyne & Wear on behalf of five local authorities and Newcastle University. We hold collections of international importance in archives, art, science and technology, archaeology, military and social history, fashion and natural sciences.

Our vision is for everyone to have access, virtual or real, to these outstanding collections and for them to value it for the significant and positive impact it has on their lives. Our mission is to help people to determine their place in the world and define their identities, so enhancing their self-respect and respect for others.

We believe that these collections are a powerful learning resource for all ages and backgrounds.



North Tyneside Council



South Tyneside Council



department for
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Quality Badge awarded by



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