

POP-UP MUSEUM



This lesson will introduce students to the world of museums and their role in preserving and sharing objects of cultural significance.

This activity is excerpted from Unit 1 of the *Through Their Eyes: Major Causes and Events of the American Revolution Teacher Resource Guide*. To see the full lesson and all supporting materials, visit: www.amrevmuseum.org/teacher-resource-guides

CONTEXT

Museums are amazing places that give people access to all kinds of objects and artifacts representing cultures and ideas from around the world. Museum staff must design exhibits and experiences that are engaging for guests and that share information in ways that can be easily understood.

AIMS/OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Analyze the role and responsibilities of museums in society

Design a museum exhibition and justify their decisions for inclusion of objects

MATERIALS

Links:

MoAR Virtual Museum: <http://www.amrevmuseum-virtualtour.org/>

MoAR Virtual Field Trip: <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/education-museum/students-and-teachers/virtual-field-trip>

Other Resources:

Student Response Worksheet

PROCEDURES

- First, ask students to name as many museums as they can, paying special attention to ones they've visited themselves. Have students identify the purpose of each museum, as well as similarities and differences between the museums they've named. (Students who have never been to a museum can be instructed to draw or describe what they imagine a museum does and looks like.) Have students brainstorm answers to the following questions: How, and why, do you think museums are founded? What sorts of things get put in museums? Students can record their responses on the student response worksheet.
- Next, have students watch the Museum of the American Revolution's [Virtual Field Trip](#) to hear about the kinds of stories a museum can tell and to meet some of the people that work here. Students can then answer the question: "Who gets to decide what goes in a museum?" and "How do you think people decide what belongs in a museum?" Afterward, students can investigate the Museum of the American Revolution's [Virtual Tour](#) and use the internet to investigate the collections of other museums.
- Provide students with a list of 20 common objects that exist in classrooms, or in the home if students are learning at home. Have individuals or small groups propose their own museum, using at least 5 of the objects you provided. Each museum should have a theme and each individual or group should make an argument for why they chose each object and the story it tells within the larger theme of their museum. Have students share their proposals with the rest of the class. Afterward, ask students to reflect on the following questions and share their thoughts with a partner or adult: How were your museums similar to and different from each other's? Were you surprised by the stories other groups selected their objects to tell? What did this process tell you about the decisions curators and historians in museums make?
- Students can submit their worksheets and museum collections to their teacher for review.

RESEARCH EXTENSION

Individually or in small groups, have students make an argument for and create a prototype of a museum they believe their community (school, neighborhood, city, nation, etc.) needs today. Students should gather evidence for the importance of their museum from peers, trusted adults, and other sources, such as newspapers and research organizations. Findings – including objects or types of objects to be included, examples of programming and educational resources – can be presented with a visual collage, presentation slideshow, or other forms of digital media.