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The following lessons were created by **Marina Lenihan**, a teacher participating in the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for Teachers entitled Touch the Past: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Region.

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### **Connecting Past and Present through Artifacts**

**Grade Level:** Middle School (7<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Subject:** Social Studies

**Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to make connections between artifacts and way of life in several regions of the United States.
2. Students will complete a research project about their assigned region.
3. Students will learn about one another's research and information through a gallery walk.

**Big Ideas:**

- How does a region shape a culture?
- What are similarities and differences between people living in particular regions?

**Standards:** Geography

Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live—local, national, and global—including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth’s surface.

Key Idea 1: Geography can be divided into six essential elements, which can be used to analyze important historic, geographic, economic, and environmental questions and issues. These six elements include: the world in spatial terms, places and regions, physical settings (including natural resources), human systems, environment and society, and the use of geography. (Adapted from The National Geography Standards, 1994: Geography for Life)

**Duration:** 2 weeks (4-5 class periods per week). If students choose to complete the extended activity they will be given the assignment to complete at home.

**Materials:**

Several artifacts that exemplify each region of the United States  
Artifact analysis worksheet (attached)  
Computers  
Research graphic organizer (attached)

**Vocabulary\*:**

Region  
Artifact  
Environment  
Food  
Housing  
Tools/Technology  
Arts/Crafts  
Culture/Beliefs  
Eastern Woodland  
Plains  
California- Intermountain  
Northwest Coast  
Southwest

\*Other vocabulary will apply contingent with the region that is researched.

**Background:**

Background will not be necessary, as students will be working on inquiring about certain artifacts.

**Setting the Stage:**

Imagine you are on a trip and you come upon these artifacts. In your groups observe and analyze each artifact and fill out the sheet below about the artifact/s in front of you.

**Procedure:**

Students will be assigned groups and given an artifact. With their group they will be asked to analyze and observe an artifact and fill out the “Artifact Analysis worksheet”.

**Lesson 1: Inquiry**

Essential question: What does an artifact tell us about the lives of people in a particular region?

During this lesson, students will be given several artifacts that are typical of the region they will be exploring. Students will fill out the “Artifact Analysis worksheet” after discussing. As a group students will come up with a hypothesis about the way of life of people living in the region according to the artifacts they have in front of them. Students will share out their ideas with the class at the end of the period.

**Evaluation:****Exit ticket:**

3-Write 3 things you learned from today's lesson.

2- Write 2 things you found interesting

1- Write one question you still have

**Lesson 2: Research (will take more than 1 class period)**

In groups, students will be assigned a region to research. Each student in the group will be responsible for a section of the research project (ex. housing, culture, arts, environment, etc). Students will also have roles in their group such as facilitator, timekeeper, scribe, vocabulary and team leader. Students will have a choice of poster or PowerPoint where they will compile their information. When students are done with their individual research, they will present the information to each other and become experts in their groups.

**Evaluation:** Students will be evaluated according to the notes they have compiled about their individual assignments. They will compile their notes on the “Research Graphic Organizer.”

**Lesson 3: Gallery Walk**

**Big Idea:** How are regions and cultures in the United States different or similar to one another?

Students will learn about each other’s projects by completing a gallery walk. When they do the gallery walk, they will take notes using a worksheet.

**Evaluation:** Students will be evaluated on the notes they take about each project.

**Lesson 4: Journaling**

Students will be asked to choose a region, other than their own region, where they would have liked to live. They will be asked to write a journal describing a day in the life of a person living in the region. They will make a choice whether they want to be a man, woman or child.

**Evaluation:** Students will be asked to follow the “journaling worksheet” and be evaluated on the components of their letter.

**Extension:** Students will research the culture of their ancestors (depending on where their family came from) and find similarities and differences between the groups living in the United States vs. South and Central American groups.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Imagine you are on a trip and you come upon the artifacts placed in front of you. Observe and analyze the artifacts one at a time. With your group come up with answers to the questions below about each artifact. Choose one person to record the answers in the spaces given below.

1. **TYPE OF ARTIFACT**

Describe the material from which it was made: bone, pottery, metal, wood, stone, leather, glass, paper, cardboard, cotton, plastic, other material.

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2. **SPECIAL QUALITIES OF THE ARTIFACT**

Describe how it looks and feels: shape, color, texture, size, weight, movable parts, anything printed, stamped or written on it.

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3. **USES OF THE ARTIFACT**

A. What might it have been used for? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Who might have used it? \_\_\_\_\_

C. Where might it have been used? \_\_\_\_\_

D. When might it have been used? \_\_\_\_\_

4. **WHAT DOES THE ARTIFACT TELL US?**

A. What does it tell us about technology of the time in which it was made and used?

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B. What does it tell us about the life and times of the people who made it and used it?

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C. Can you name a similar item today?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** As you research, fill out the graphic organizer below. Be sure to use 2-3 sources for your research project. Your sources can include online sources or books. When you are finished with your section, be sure to collect information from your teammates.

**Name of region** \_\_\_\_\_

	Plains	Northwest Indians	Southwest Indians	Intermountain	Eastern Woodlands
<b>Environment</b>					
<b>Food</b>					
<b>Housing</b>					
<b>Tools/Technology</b>					
<b>Arts and Crafts</b>					
<b>Roles of women</b>					
<b>Beliefs</b>					

**Sources:**