

Learning with the Artefacts

Using artefacts in Geography can help inspire curiosity and fascination about the world and its people. They can help make learning more fun and bring a place/environment to life.

Handling the artefacts allows pupils to use their senses, develop questioning and problem-solving skills. They can help to explore geographical topics and along with maps, photos, books, etc, pupils can gain locational knowledge about a place.

Before introducing the artefacts to the class use the background information to ensure that you are familiar with the contents and what each artefact represents.

Consider how you want to use the artefacts, for example:

1. **For decoration/visual stimuli** - Demonstrate and explain each artefact before creating the display using the background notes provided and consider displaying images on the wall to create visual impact. Refer to the images and artefacts at different times during the study and encourage pupils to create labels and additional information as they develop understanding.
2. **As an educational tool to support learning** - Individual artefacts can be linked to concepts or themes such as Festivals & Celebrations. They can then be investigated at different points during the learning journey and used as a research focus helping pupils to ask and answer questions about the place.

There are many ways to use artefacts. We have included some activity ideas here as a free download, along with example exploring artefacts sheets to encourage close observations of the items. We hope you enjoy using them.

Artefacts can help to answer key geographical questions such as:

- What is this place like? (climate/industries/leisure activities/transport/etc)
- How is this place connected to other places?
- How is this place changing?
- How is this place different from or similar to other places?

Introducing the artefacts

- Teach the children how to handle the artefacts carefully and store them safely and securely.
- Some artefacts you use will be replicas. The first time that children encounter a replica, ensure that you explain that these are replicas rather than originals and discuss why this is so.
- Talk about materials/fragility/location/size/value/age of originals and explain that old and sacred objects are getting rarer, and they must be preserved for others to use in the future.
- Introduce geographical vocabulary and use the artefacts with a range of different sources to gain an insight into life in another part of the world.

Ideas and suggestions

Artefacts can be used in a variety of ways. They are perfect for discussions, creative writing, art, drama and questioning. Here are some examples of ways you could use them.

A useful preparatory activity is to ask the class to put together their own artefact pack to give the best overview of life in their country. They will begin to understand that there has to be some generalisations, and the resources can only provide us with a partial view of what life might be like in this distant locality.

1. Mystery Suitcase

Pack the items into a suitcase and take out an object at a time and talk about it. Observe each artefact closely using your senses to describe them. Explore a globe and maps to find out where in the world these artefacts are from.

2. Getting Close Up

Observe and make drawings of the artefact. Look closely, thinking about what makes this object special to someone. Design and make a replica of it. Explore the work of artists, craftspeople and designers in different times and cultures.

3. Matching

Match an image of the artefact to its correct name and definition of the object. This is useful to assess children's knowledge and reinforce what they have learnt.

4. Developing Vocabulary

Learn the names of the artefacts. Lay them on a cloth and play Kim's game.
Who can remember all the items?

5. Be an Expert

Research the artefacts and find out how they are used. Use books, photographs, the internet, video clips and interviews with people. Present findings in different ways.

6. Interview

Exploring artefacts is an excellent opportunity to make contact and engage with people in school, and in the wider community. Invite people to talk about the artefacts and explain how they use them. Children could prepare three questions to ask the user about the object.

7. Storytelling

Objects tell stories about people, places and climates. Through hearing and telling stories the pupils will learn more about the objects and gain a deeper understanding.

8. Sharing

Share experiences. Do they have any similar objects at home? Encourage children to talk about the artefacts and the people and places that use them.

9. Reflection

Artefacts can be used as a focal point for thinking and reflecting. They can help to create a sense of awe and wonder. Allow opportunity for reflection. How does the artefact make them feel? Create a special reflection area in the classroom to focus on the artefacts.

10. Comparing and Sorting

Lay out the artefacts and compare them noting similarities and differences. Compare it with other objects and artefacts from different places and describe the features. Carefully sort the artefacts in different ways to learn more about them. Create a Venn diagram using hoops and sort according to different criteria e.g., the part of the world they come from, or the type of weather they are suited for.

11. Using Map Skills

Use the artefacts to build a physical map of the area include information about the place and identify human and physical features.

12. Role-Play

Use role-play and drama techniques to explore the artefacts. Show with mime and still images how the artefact can be used.

13. Ask Questions

Ask questions about the artefacts.
Which of the artefacts do you particularly like?
Do any hold any importance to you?
What further questions would you like to ask about the artefacts?
What is the name of the artefact, how is it used and by whom?
How should this artefact be used and handled?

14. Artefact Investigation

You may want to explore the artefacts in more detail by carrying out a deeper case study investigation into one of the artefacts your class find particularly interesting. Uncover information about people, places and environments and start to make links between different places in the world.

Observe & Investigate

Image or drawing of artefact:

Describe using your senses:

- What does it look and feel like?
- Does it make a noise?
- What is it made from?
- How big is it?
- Has it got any detail on it? Markings? Writing? What do they mean?
- Does the object remind you of anything?

Explore & Discover

What material(s) is it made of? Why might these have been chosen? (If this is a replica what are the originals made from?)

What do you think it is called? _____

What do you think the object was used for and by whom?

How might this object make someone feel?

What difference does the object make to people's lives?

Are there any symbols on the artefact, what do these symbols mean?

What can this object tell us about the climate, land, jobs in that part of the world?

Reflect & Evaluate

What geographical story does this object tell us about its place of origin?

How does the climate or landscape of the region influence how this object was made?

Has modern technology changed the way people use or make this item today?

Is this artefact a reliable source of information about the country or does it show a stereotype?

What information is missing from this object and what do we still need to find out?

What further questions does this object make you want to ask?
