

Learning Standard USI.28: Explain the emergence and impact of the textile industry in New England and industrial growth generally throughout antebellum America.

Learning Standard USI.28 C: Explain the rise of a business class of merchants and manufacturers.

Title: Material Timeline

Statement of Purpose: In this lesson I would like to introduce students to the idea of history as material culture and have them assess economic, industrial, social and cultural growth of the US through the study of objects.

Objectives:

- Students will analyze objects from the Memorial Hall Digital Collection.
- Students will construct a timeline to represent the material culture presented.
- Students will show connections between material culture and the social, economic and political trends that develop over the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries.

Schedule: This is one 45 minute Lesson. (For larger classes, more slides will be needed and time would be extended to two periods to include timeline assessment in class.)

Preview Question: Give students three minutes to respond to the following prompt in their notebooks: If you had to pick one object that you own that you identify the most with, what would it be (for example t-shirt, tennis racket, etc.)? Describe the object and explain what it says about you.

Debrief: Ask for volunteers to share their prompts with the class. Tell students they are about to view objects of material culture from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries to learn something about how people lived in those specific periods of time. Explain that they will need to answer questions about each object which they will later present in a timeline format to include their own ideas about why materials change.

Activity:

- Place blown up images of slides in different areas of the room where 4 students can sit comfortably and view images.
- Break students up into small groups
- Give students about 6 minutes to spend with each slide.
- Time the activity to have groups switch.
- Once all groups have completed 5 stations handout the image sheet and timeline assessment.

Assessment

For homework, have students cut out the photocopied objects and glue them in order on a timeline created in their notebook. In between each entry, have students write one explanation why they think material culture changed from one object to the next on the timeline. Reasons for change can be economic, political, cultural, or social. For those who need additional assistance have them use their history books as a reference.

References

Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth*. Vintage Books, (New York,) 2001.

Memorial Hall Museum Online. The Digital Collection. <http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/>

Materials

Printed Object slides with questions

Timeline Handout

Material Culture Timeline Handout

- 1) In your notebooks, create a timeline lengthwise across the page.
- 2) Place the following dates on the timeline in chronological order: 1700, 1795, 1850 and 1900.
- 3) Cut out the pictures below and paste them in the correct spot on the timeline.
- 4) Using the information you gathered through observation and analysis of the objects, write a few sentences in between the objects on the timeline about what you think has changed politically, economically, culturally or socially between the objects in the timeline.
- 5) Use your history books if necessary.

