

Introductory Lesson 2

My Artifact Speaks

The Basics

Age Range: 4th grade to adult.

Objective: To allow participants to share an artifact that is important in his/her life.

Performance of Skill Expectations/Enduring Understandings: The participants will speak in front of the group, explaining clearly how the artifact is connected to them.

Prerequisite:

1. The lesson *The Key to Understanding*;
2. Ask each participant to come to the next gathering with one personal artifact. The artifact must be one that “speaks” to something that is very important in that person’s life. It could relate to family, hobbies, vacations, favorite places, friends, a personal collection, etc. Also, ask each participant to bring a list of 3 things that the artifact says about who he/she is. The instructor will also bring an artifact and list and serve as a model for the lesson.

Estimated Materials Preparation Time: 15 minutes (picking personal artifact and making the list).

Duration: Instructor discretion.

Materials Provided in the Box: none.

Materials to be Provided by the Instructor: smartboard, chalkboard, or easel pad, plus associated writing materials.

Other Notes: none.

Concepts/Vocabulary

- Artifact: something made or used by human beings.

Procedure

Preparation: Have the participants sit with their artifacts and lists.

Introduction/Instruction: Remind the participants that artifacts can tell people a lot about the people who make and use them. Have a short summary discussion on what was learned during the lesson *The Key to Understanding* as a warm-up.

Development:

1. Presenting the artifacts:

- a. The instructor presents his/her artifact to the group, explaining a little about it (1-2 minutes). The instructor then reads his/her list of what the artifact “says;”
- b. On the smartboard (easel pad, etc.) write down the list just read;
- c. For each succeeding participant, add an item from his/her list if the idea is a new one. If it is an idea already on the list, put a checkmark next to the item already there, so that the group knows another person said the same thing.

Variation: If the group is large, the presentations can be done in small groups. Each group will need to write down its own list.

Reflection: Generate a full-group discussion with these questions:

- How hard was it for you to pick your artifact? Did you have trouble thinking of one or did you have trouble picking ONLY one?
- Did you want to bring more than one artifact? If so, why? (Did you want people to understand that you are more than just that one artifact’s reflection of you?)

2. Discussing the list:

Look at the list that has been created. What conclusions can you make about this group specifically, or, once again, about life in Illinois today? What items came up again and again on many participant lists? What items were unique to one individual?

Reflection: Generate a full-group discussion with these questions:

- Having seen what others brought with them, would you have changed your artifact? If so, to what?
- Do you think that what you brought would have been different if you were asked to do this at the age of 6? What type of artifact do you think you would bring if you were asked to bring one 10 years from now?

Assessment: Did the group participate? Did each person bring and present an artifact and share a list that showed thought and insight? Were the conclusions they stated for the final list logical and thoughtful?