

Beyond Classrooms Kingston

BCK Student Journal Workshop

Transcript

Hello BCK students and teachers. I'm happy to be here. It's Ms. Tynski from Beyond Classrooms and I'm going to be talking a little bit about today about journaling and learning from objects and why those things are so important to the Beyond Classrooms Kingston program. I know you've had a lot of practice so far with sketching and journaling and learning about the See -Think Wonder approach to journaling, but today we're going to talk about objects themselves, objects and artifacts and why they're important in history and what we can learn.

So, I have a question for you. What is an artifact? What is an artifact? Artifacts include tools, clothing or decorations that are made by people. Artifacts are not things that are naturally found in nature like a rock or a fossil. It's something that has been made by a person. The reason why artifacts are so important, and we take such good care of them in museums, is because they provide clues for researchers who study the past.

So, art or tools or clothing, they can tell you about a certain time or a certain place. That's why we have to look really closely at the object, whether it's a vase or a kitchen tool. So, the job of looking really closely, using clues, and putting them together to tell a story or to figure something out is a really important skill to have in many jobs. Can you tell me about some of the jobs that people might have where they have to look closely and record their observations as part of their job? Some of those jobs include archaeologists who have to dig for artifacts. It might be curators who study paintings from long ago, they might even look at the layers of a painting or are conservators who find ways to protect the paintings for the future. Scientists in every field need to look closely and take notes and record their observations. Detectives, when they're trying to solve a crime or figure out what happened, they use the clues and they have to put those clues together to figure out the story. Geologists, they'll study the earth, try to figure out what happened at different time periods in the world. And doctors and nurses also use their skills of observation every day when trying to figure out how a patient is or what their symptoms are. They are looking closely and trying to determine what the illness might be.

Objects themselves don't tell a story. This object that you see here, this artifact, it can't say, you know, I'm from, I'm 100 years old and I was used by, of course, we're the ones who have to look closely and figure out that object's story. So, the story might be different depending on who's looking at that object. The more training you have, like a curator, they're able to put the story together maybe more easily because they have a lot of knowledge about types of artifacts. But that's okay. Everyone can learn these skills and build on them. And that's what we're going to do today. We're going to learn the skills of looking closely So, we can put a story together about this object.

So, I've told you quite a bit about objects and artifacts, why they're important, and why museums hold on to them. Why do you think we spend so much time talking with students about how to draw and write about and wonder about these objects? Why is journaling such a big part of Young Classrooms, Kingston. Well journaling has always been really important in our program. We take time every day when we're at the museum to go off and explore and exhibit and let all students just go and choose something that really interests them and spend about 20 or 30 minutes just drawing it and writing about it and

wondering about it. This year it'll be a bit different. We can't go to the museum, but we're going to find pictures of objects in the museum and let you journal from them. So, there's still a lot you can learn just by looking at an object and thinking about it and wondering about it. An important part of journaling is not just what you're writing, but how you're sharing that with other people. Every day at the museum, the teacher and I would take the journals and look at them and write some questions and some give you some feedback. Journals are also a really important way to communicate. Maybe your teacher will like to look at your journal sometime and make some comments on your sketches. We also like to do a sharing circle every time we journal. That's a way that you can share your sketch or your thoughts or your questions with your classmates and it's really interesting to see what other people are thinking about and interested in and connecting to.

Why do we use journals? Why do we take so much time every day? Why do you think we might do this in this program? Why do we draw and write about the objects and share it with Journaling helps us slow down. When we have to go and sit for a while and draw something, it really helps us to stop. And because we're stopping and looking really closely, it really helps us to remember. And that's what we want to teach you at Beyond Classrooms, is how to slow down, look closely, and remember and really think about what you're seeing.

Many people take photographs. I know I take lots of photos with I have my camera all the time and I'm snapping pictures and Photographs are really wonderful to have and keep memories But we don't always slow down in the moment that we're taking the picture and really experience that moment When we're drawing something it takes much longer than taking a photograph Instead of just a second, we're maybe sitting for five or ten minutes really, really stopping and really looking at every aspect of that object. So, when we draw and write about that object, it helps us to slow down and remember. So, our goal at BCK is to teach you those critical skills of looking really closely and making observations and finding a way to describe what you're seeing and thinking. So, you can tell us a little bit about that story of behind that object.

So, you've already had the skills of sketching your object. Francesca gave us some great ideas on how to Look for the basic shapes that you might see and start there. Use your whole page. Use light lines and then go back and find the details. Change it from 2D to 3D by doing some shading and finally adding some labels. So that's one thing that you're going to do after this video. You're going to have your own object and do a sketch. The next thing is observations. What do you see about this object? So, look closely and make some observations about color, size, shape, material. Is it being it made by people or found in nature? Damage, designs or patterns, and writing or makers marks.

The next thing you're going to do about your object is think about your object. What do you see in this object that reminds you of something else? Just any connections you might have. Where have you seen something like this before? What does it remind you of? Also talk about why you chose this object in the first place and how it makes you feel. All of these things are important when you're really closely observing an object and trying to think about it. Do you have any clues to tell you where this might be from, where in the world, or even where it might be used, or how old it could be, or how it might have been made? Do you know how it could have been used? Who used it? Or why it's important? Does it exist today? Have you seen something like this recently or something similar? These are all things you might want to think about. Use clues to make some conclusions.

Finally, wonder. It's really important as part of Beyond Classrooms that you list the questions that you have and let us know about those questions. Your wonders and your questions are really important to finding out the story behind things and helping us to learn more. You'd be surprised how much we can learn from each other's questions. We can help each other answer each other's questions or you just might get someone thinking of something or curious about something that hadn't really thought about before. Don't underestimate the power of a good question. The important part with your questions is to list your next steps. Where are you going to look to find out more? These are important parts of inquiry in thinking about not only what your questions are, but how you're going to find information to answer those questions.