

ArtiFACT or Fiction Mystery – Beyond Classrooms Kingston

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_zz2l3Gn8w

Hi I'm Karla and I'm the Program Coordinator for Beyond Classrooms Kingston, and as part of the March of the Museums you may have received this piece of paper in your kit. And it says right here: "ArtiFACT or Art of Fiction," and that is what this video is about. I'm going to be showing you a picture of a mystery artifact and giving you three stories, and two of those are going to be false—based on fiction—and one of them is going to be true—based on fact. And it's up to you and your family to see if you can guess the correct story for that mystery artifact.

There's another video that you would have seen that helped you turn that piece of paper into an eight-page book, so if you need that, the link is in the comments as well for that one. But this one is going to be the one that's going to tell you a little bit about that mystery object so you can make the correct guess.

But first let me ask: what is an artifact? Artifacts are primary sources that historians use to learn about people, events, and everyday life in the past. Museums take great care of the artifacts in their collections because they are clues to the past.

Detectives solve mysteries, and historians do too. Historians look at clues, examine evidence, ask questions, and reach conclusions. By studying artifacts, we can learn about the lives of people who made or used them.

Some artifacts can be mysterious, like the object we chose for this Artifact or Fiction challenge today. But there are things you can do to try to solve the mystery. Are you ready? Let's go!

Here is a picture of the mystery object. Take a minute to look at it—you can pause the video if you need to. It is possible you've never seen anything that looks like this before. How can you begin to guess what it is?

When you see an artifact, look closely. Take time to make some observations. Your observations are clues. What do you notice?

We have to use a lot of skills to find out the stories behind artifacts. That involves looking closely, making observations, and asking questions. In a museum, we can read information and ask experts.

I'm going to give you a few clues about this mystery object, and maybe show you a few more angles since you can't see it in person.

Here's your first clue: it's found at the Frontenac County Schools Museum. That's a museum here in Kingston that holds artifacts from one-room schools of Frontenac County. Not only does

it have tons of interesting artifacts from schools, but it's set up like a replica of a one-room schoolhouse, and you can go there to experience a lesson from the past. This is an important clue because it tells you a little bit about what the purpose behind this mystery object might be or where it might have been found long ago.

The second clue is that you've probably seen a modern version of this mystery object. In fact, you may have even seen one in your school.

Here's your last clue: it's really quite heavy and although you might not be able to tell it from the picture, it can be powered electrically or with a gas attachment.

Okay, that's all of my clues for now. Now I'm going to tell you three stories and you will need to figure out whether each story is fiction—which means not true—or fact—which means a real, true story. Okay, ready?

Here's your first story: a beehive. This scientific instrument was used to teach students about honey a hundred years ago. Bees would fly in through the side. Students could look in the viewfinder to see what was happening. Do you think this story—the beehive—is true or fiction?

Now it might be hard to decide. You have to look closely at this object and think: does that make sense that it's a beehive? And you have to think about what you already know. What do you know about bees? Do you think they would like to live in a metal object like this one? Do you think they would want to build a nest and make honey there? Do you think a school would keep an object like a live beehive? What do you think? Is it fact or fiction?

Story two: a lantern or lamp. Before schools had electric lights on ceilings, lanterns were used to light the classroom. Lanterns were found at each desk to help students to see better. This would be a lantern found at a student's desk. Do you think this is a true story? Is it fact or is it fiction—made up?

When you're trying to guess, you'll want to look closely. Do you think this object would provide much light to someone who's reading? Or would it be more like a lamp or flashlight? Do all the parts look like it could be a lamp? Do you think it would be safe to have a lantern or a lamp like this at each student's desk? Why or why not? What's your guess? Fact or fiction?

Our final story—number three—is early projector. This was one of the earliest projectors and it was used in classrooms to show images on glass slides. Students could learn about subjects like science and social studies. Do you think this story is fact or fiction?

Looking at the object again, do you see any parts that you think could hold slides? Do you see a way it could project or shine light to show slides? Does it have any similarities to projectors today? You may have seen one in your classroom or at a movie theater. What do you think? Is it fact or fiction?

If you are still unsure, you can work with someone at home to do some research by searching online or in books about beehives, lanterns, and early projectors for more information. Often the biggest challenge is learning how to ask questions that will help you find the right kind of information, and also learning how to check your information sources. Curators continue to unravel the mysteries behind objects by doing research every day.

Well, I can help you with this object. Let's look at our first story: a beehive. That story is fiction. It's false. While it is true that people can build homes for bees, given the size and material of this object, it would not make a very good home for bees. And although it would be interesting to see what's happening inside the hive, it's not likely a teacher would want to keep a live beehive in a school.

Story two: lantern. This story is false—fiction. But there is some truth behind the story. The object is a type of lantern, but not the type of lantern or lamp that would be used as a light source for students at their desks. Lanterns usually needed an oil and a flame to create light, and that would be dangerous to have at a desk. Long ago, before schools had electricity, windows provided the light in a classroom—but it was still pretty dark—so sometimes oil lamps were used, but they were mounted on walls for safety.

So, you guessed it—the final story: early projector. That story is true. This object, known as the magic lantern or the stereopticon, was one of the earliest projectors, and this one was made in Toronto and is over 100 years old. These projectors were created for entertainment, but soon they became widely used in schools. And the first slides were hand-painted glass discs mounted in wooden frames. It could be operated with electricity or with a gas attachment if the school didn't have electricity. This one was used in Sydenham High School. Schools could get slides from the Ontario Department of Education in subjects like geography or science to show students images of things from around the world—long before television or the internet was invented.

Nowadays, you might have a projector at your school that looks a little like this.

Thanks everyone for joining us today to figure out what the mysterious object was. Check out our other video so you can learn how to make your own Artifact or Fiction story at home with your own mystery object. If your family wants to share it with us, be sure to tag us on Twitter @BCKYGK. And if you're looking for another activity, check out our Museum at Home Scavenger Hunt.

We want to send a special thank you to the Frontenac County Schools Museum for providing us with the pictures of this magic lantern. You should check out the magic lantern as well as many other fascinating school artifacts by visiting the school museum in Kingston.

Beyond Classrooms Kingston empowers children to be culturally aware lifelong learners and active citizens. To learn more about Beyond Classrooms Kingston or to get involved, visit www.beyondclassrooms.ca.

