NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Traveling versus Permanent Exhibits

Students explore common characteristics, benefits, and disadvantages of permanent and traveling exhibits. Students consider types of artifacts best suited for particular types of exhibits and take into account the fragility and uniqueness of the *Clotilda* in deciding if it should be a permanent or traveling exhibit made available worldwide.

GRADES

6, 7, 8

SUBJECTS

Anthropology, Archaeology, Sociology, Conservation, English Language Arts, Geography, Human Geography, Social Studies, Civics, U.S. History, World History, Storytelling

CONTENTS

1 PDF, 3 Links

OVERVIEW

Students explore common characteristics, benefits, and disadvantages of permanent and traveling exhibits. Students consider types of artifacts best suited for particular types of exhibits and take into account the fragility and uniqueness of the *Clotilda* in deciding if it should be a permanent or traveling exhibit made available worldwide.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/traveling-versus-permanent-exhibits/

DIRECTIONS

Sunken Slave Ship *Unit Driving Question: How do artifacts and their preservation impact communities?*

**Uncovering the Past** Lesson Driving Question: How are artifacts and stories of past lives uncovered?

1. Engage students in analyzing the difference between permanent and traveling exhibits by reviewing several examples.
- Tell students they will consider the difference between types of exhibits that are best suited for particular types of historical artifacts. Ask students to imagine the efforts and all the considerations involved in taking a historical artifact from the water, such as the _Clotilda_, and preserving its many parts and the stories that come with them.
- Distribute the _Traveling or Permanent Exhibit?_ handout to students.
- Have students look at the following websites:

  - National Geographic's _Current Exhibition_
  - Houston Museum of Natural Science's _Permanent Exhibitions_
  - Smithsonian Institution's _Traveling Exhibitions Service_

- Have students answer the _Traveling or Permanent Exhibit?_ handout questions related to the two types of exhibits.
- Explain that by looking at the characteristics of these two styles of exhibits, they can better decide whether the _Clotilda_ exhibit they will be proposing will be best suited as a traveling exhibit or a permanent one.

2. Student groups participate in a gallery walk and collaborate to determine the similarities and differences between traveling and stationary exhibits based on their reading and personal experience.
- Divide the class into five groups.
- Assign one student per group as the recorder, the person who will write the group's response on the chart paper.
- Place five charts at different locations around the room with the headers Who, What, When, Where, Why, and the corresponding questions below:

  - **_Who_** _owns an artifact, and does that play a part in whether it should be permanent or traveling?_
  - **_What_** _exhibitions use the location of the exhibit as an actual part of the exhibit?_
  - **_When_** _might some exhibits be too difficult to transport from place to place?_
  - **_Where_** _might it make sense that the location of the exhibit is part of the exhibit itself?_
  - **_Why_** _would it be valuable to move an exhibit to multiple locations?_

- Provide students with three minutes of discussion and recording time at each station before rotating to the next.

3. Engage students in making the case for whether the *Clotilda* and its artifacts should be a permanent exhibit (a memorial in Africatown) or a traveling exhibit shown in museums around the world.

- Ask:

    - *Should the* Clotilda *and its artifacts be a part of a permanent exhibit in Africatown or a traveling exhibit that could be shown in museums around the world?*
    - *What factors have influenced your opinion?*

- *S*tudents respond to the question providing reasons to support both sides of the argument.
- Record responses on a class T-Chart labeled Traveling and Permanent beneath the appropriate label.
- Have students record whether they will be supporting the development of the *Clotilda* exhibit or memorial as a permanent or traveling exhibit on the "Connecting to the *Clotilda*" portion of their *Traveling or Permanent Exhibit?* Handout.
- Collect student handouts for review.

Tip

Step 1: Online exhibits can also be incorporated into this activity if students want to include the option for website development. Some examples of online exhibits can be found in the *National Archives.* Digital technology can also play a role in fixed or traveling exhibits—a 3D virtual tour of the entire wreck, for example, or a virtual dive as it was excavated.

Tip

To give students an idea of what putting together an exhibit entails, share the *Spinosaurus Exhibit time-lapse* video or the *Tomb of Christ time-lapse exhibit*, considering the time, manpower, and potential damage to artifacts that are involved with the building of an exhibit.

Informal Assessment

Traveling or Permanent Exhibit? Review students' responses on the handout, identifying their preference and reasoning for the creation of a traveling or permanent _Clotilda_ exhibit or memorial. Check for understanding regarding the economic impact an exhibit can have on a community, as well as how the location (including online exhibits) can contribute to telling the whole story. If students are missing these points, make a note of them for the student either verbally or in written feedback on the handout.

Extending the Learning

Museum Observation Field Trip: Take students to a local museum and have them identify the various types of exhibits within the museum with a brief summary of each type of exhibit and clues about what type of exhibit it is. Does the museum have any online exhibits? If so, the students can tour that as a warm-up before they go to the museum in person.

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Sociology
- Conservation
- English Language Arts

Geography
- Human Geography

Social Studies
- Civics
- U.S. History
- World History

Storytelling

Teaching Approach

- Project-based learning

Teaching Methods

- Discovery learning
- Discussions
- Multimedia instruction

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
  - Information, Media, and Technology Skills
    - [Information Literacy](#)
    - [Information, Communications, and Technology Literacy](#)
    - [Media Literacy](#)
  - Learning and Innovation Skills
    - [Critical Thinking and Problem Solving](#)
  - Life and Career Skills
    - [Flexibility and Adaptability](#)
    - [Leadership and Responsibility](#)
    - [Social and Cross-Cultural Skills](#)
- 21st Century Themes
  - [Civic Literacy](#)
  - [Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy](#)
  - [Global Awareness](#)
- Critical Thinking Skills
  - Analyzing
  - Applying
  - Evaluating
  - Remembering
  - Understanding

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1:**

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on Grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2:**

Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.9:**

Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- **Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12: Comprehension and Collaboration, SL.6.4:**

Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

THE COLLEGE, CAREER & CIVIC LIFE (C3) FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL STUDIES STATE STANDARDS

- **D1.5.6-8:**

Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.

- **D2.Civ.10.6-8:**

Explain the relevance of personal interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when people address issues and problems in government and civil society.

- **D2.Civ.7.6-8:**

Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school and community settings.

- **D2.His.11.6-8:**

Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified.

- **D2.His.6.6-8:**

Analyze how people’s perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

Preparation

What You'll Need

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per learner

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom
- Computer lab
- Media Center/Library

SETUP

Prior to the activity, prepare the Who, What, When, Where, and Why chart papers and place them in different locations around the room.

GROUPING

- Heterogeneous grouping
- Large-group learning
- Small-group learning
- Small-group work

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

Permanent exhibits are exhibits that stay in one location. Generally, permanent exhibits are owned by the museum that houses them and are a driving force for bringing visitors to the location of the exhibit. A permanent exhibit needs longevity, meaning it should be able to engage audiences for an extended period of time.

Traveling museum exhibitions are commonly filled with artifacts that are impactful to a large group of people, such as Leonardo da Vinci's invention notebooks or Bodies: The Exhibition. These exhibits are put on display at various locations for a set amount of time, drawing visitors to the museum before they are packed up and transported to their next location. The purpose is to extend public knowledge and bring information to people rather than waiting for them to seek it out on their own.

Whether exhibits are permanent or traveling, museums are all about stories. Artifacts tell stories. Through these stories, we can connect the past, present, and future and help visitors make sense of the objects and their importance. Everyone tells stories about themselves and uses stories to understand the world around them. Just like books, museums use storytelling techniques such as setting the scene, building to a climax, or creating a twist in the tale. When developing a storytelling museum, the curator should strive to ensure that the presentation of facts and artifacts spark curiosity and help the visitor become a part of the past through their experience.

Prior Knowledge

[]

Recommended Prior Activities

- Ethnography of Africatown
- Finding the Clotilda
- From Benin to Mobile
- Meet Cudjo Lewis
- The Importance of Preserving the Past

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
archaeological	adjective	having to do with the study of ancient people and cultures.
archaeology	noun	study of human history, based on material remains.
exhibit	noun	display, often in a museum.
international	adjective	having to do with more than one country.
local	adjective	having to do with the area around a specific place.
national	adjective	having to do with the government or people of a country.
provenance	noun	origin or source of an object, work of art, or literature, the history of ownership of a valued object, work of art, or literature.

For Further Exploration

Articles & Profiles

- [Museum Planner: Traveling Exhibitions](#)
- [The National Museum of American History: 10 Things to Know About Exhibition Installation](#)

Websites

- [National Geographic: Traveling Exhibitions](#)

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC