



**ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL**
grades 1–4

Choose
and document

Ordinary Treasures

Description

In this activity, each student selects a personal object that is especially meaningful to him or her to present to the class. Working with family heirlooms allows students to reexamine their inherited culture as a source of continuity, connection, transmission and memory, with paths often marked by disruption and change.

The goal of this activity is to help the younger generation realize that heritage is not just about buildings or objects on display in museums, but it is alive and nourished by each individual.

The children, each with a unique object, contribute to their shared history as part of a collective heritage that is richly diverse and multicultural.

This activity encourages students to adopt an attitude of open-mindedness with regard to the many social and cultural differences around them. This value is cherished by the Ursulines.

Learning objectives

- Formulate relevant ideas, demonstrate the ability to organize ideas and clearly express them.
- Establish a sense of belonging and explore questions pertaining to this concept, learn about family traditions.

Suggested time

1 to 2 periods

Steps for the activity

1. Each student looks for a special object at home. This can be a family heirloom that has been handed down from generation to generation or it can be an object that is especially meaningful to them. Students must narrow their search down to a single object. In museums, when we choose an object for the collection, we take into consideration its history: Where did it come from, is it unique, does it have a particular significance?
2. In class, students gather the information they have about the provenance of their objects. Each student writes down information about the context in which their object was acquired and when it came into their family. Students can ask themselves the following questions when gathering information:
 - Who acquired this object?
 - For what reason(s) was this object acquired? Was it a souvenir from a trip? A gift?
 - In what year was the object acquired? Was it related to a special event in the family (marriage, death, birth, etc.)?
 - Does the object have sentimental value? What did this object represent for the person who acquired it? What importance does this object have?
3. Students prepare presentations to explain the importance of their objects. This can be a posterboard collage or a PowerPoint presentation. When presenting the results of their research, each student explains why their object should be included in the collection and describes its historical value and the place it has in their family history.

