

D. Use of Collections Objects

1. Use of Collections Objects in Exhibits

The Curator makes the ultimate determination regarding the use of objects from the collections in the Museum's exhibits' program. The

decision should be based on the condition of the object, the type of use which is proposed (in a case? in a historical building? hands on?), and the display method (simple support? attachment to a backing? suspension?). Ideally, if display in the proposed manner could cause damage to the object or markedly hasten its deterioration, the use should be modified or the object should not be used.

Display: An object should not be modified for display purposes in any way which would permanently affect it. Objects should be placed firmly and supported evenly, without stress. Small or tempting items should be displayed out of reach or in a secure case.

2. Use of Collections for Research

The Museum's collections are available for certain types of scholarly research. The Curator decides on a case-by-case basis research requests using the collections.

3. Use of Collections Items in the Museum's Educational Programs

The Curator makes the ultimate determination regarding the use of any collections item in the educational programs of the Museum. This includes items to be used in classes and those to be used in the development of Museum Traveling Trunks.

It is also the Curator's responsibility to determine the kind of use an object may have. Items might be permitted to be viewed in an exhibit case, allowed to be shown or demonstrated by a qualified Museum staff member, restricted to minimum handling by students, or used by students with few or no restrictions beyond proper supervision. The decision would be based on the condition of the object and/or on the availability of additional objects in the collections. The Curator may refuse to let a given object be used in educational programs if such use would damage the objects or markedly hasten its deterioration.

a. Use in Classes: After due research and preparation of program ideas, the education staff

should determine its collections needs. They and the Curator can look through the collections to see how these needs could best be met. Advance notice is necessary, particularly in the case of any classes which would require an unusual number or extensive preparation of materials.

1. **Deaccessioned Objects:** The Curator may elect to deaccession certain cataloged objects used continually. If items are deaccessioned to the education department, it will be the responsibility of the education staff to store and care for these items.
2. **Borrowed Objects:** From time to time the education staff might want to borrow things on a one-time basis. Each item borrowed should be checked out and in with the Assistant Curator or designated collections staff member each time it is used and records kept as part of the collections records.

b. Collections Material Used in Traveling Trunks: Traveling Trunks form a bridge between the collections and education programs of the Museum. There are both accessioned and unaccessioned objects in the Traveling Trunks. Collections staff have the ultimate responsibility for all of the cataloged items, but the Education Department has the day-to-day responsibility for care and maintenance of all contents. The Curator may withdraw any accessioned collection object from a Traveling Trunk if it is decided that it is too fragile or valuable.

c. Preservation -vs- Use: Because the mission to preserve the things of the past for the enjoyment of many to come goes beyond the immediate educational use of an object, it is unlikely that the Curator will be able to lend or deaccession objects to be used as they were originally intended. Because of the likelihood of damage and the inevitability of wear, actual use of an old tool or wearing of an antique garment is strongly advised against by writers and other professionals in the field. Should use be desired, the Collections Department staff will investigate buying or making reproductions of the appropriate artifacts. These would then be a part of the teaching collection.