

Virtual Museum Challenge

Lesson Plan
Grades 9-12
Secondary Cycle 2

Pedagogical Intent

Students learn to interpret objects that were collected by folk curators, and learn about the history and cultures of aboriginal peoples and French Canadians, by researching and selecting images of objects from the Canadian Museum of Civilization's database, completing the Virtual Museum Challenge worksheet, and making a presentation of artifacts selected for an imaginary exhibition.

Grade: Grades 9-12; Quebec Secondary Cycle 2

Subjects: Social Studies, Geography, History and Citizenship Education, Language Arts, Arts Education, Mathematics

Themes: Canada's aboriginal peoples, First Nations, life in aboriginal societies before and after contact, French Canada, cultural groups in Canada, customs and traditions in North America, change and continuity, Marius Barbeau, methods of historical inquiry

Objectives and Competencies: Use information, use information and communication technology, communicate appropriately; observe, describe, summarize, reason, use critical thinking, use creativity, cooperate with others, listen to others, use oral communication, develop research skills, methods of historical inquiry

Duration: 120-180 minutes

Web Resources:

- Marius Barbeau web site
www.civilization.ca/tresors/barbeau/index_e.html

Required Technical Equipment

- One computer with Internet access for each pair of students, needed for 60-90 minutes

Optional Technical Equipment

- A projector hooked up to a computer with Internet access; if a projector is available, the Database Information Package per student is not required.

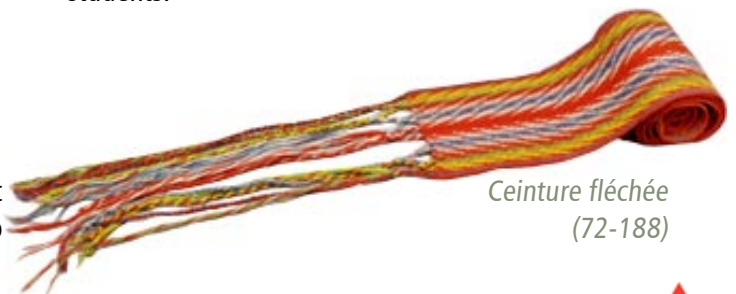
Student Handouts

For each student:

- A [Database Information Package](#) containing one copy each of the Clothing section, the "View all artifacts in the collection" page, and one artifact record of your choice (see Teacher Preparation, Step 2)
- One copy of the [Virtual Museum Challenge worksheet](#)

Teacher Preparation:

1. Ensure students have been introduced to the history of Canada's aboriginal peoples and the history of French Canadians.
2. Visit the [Marius Barbeau web module](#). Select the Objects tab, and view the available categories of objects. Select a category from the side menu, and then at the bottom of the page, select "View all items in the collection". The Catalogue Search page with a list of objects is displayed. Select the link for an object to display its artifact record. Print this record to add to the Database Information Package.
3. Familiarize yourself with the [Virtual Museum Challenge worksheet](#). You can name the theme of the exhibition yourself, or you can leave the choice of theme to the students.



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Procedure

- 1. Begin with a classroom discussion about museums and artifacts.** Have any students visited museums recently? Have they seen objects on display? Explain that these objects are artifacts. Although any object can be considered an artifact, objects in museum collections are special. Brainstorm with your class about what makes museum artifacts special. Some ideas: museums collect objects that are representative of specific cultures, places or events; they document them, store them in special conditions to preserve them, do research on them, and display them.
- 2. Introduce the Canadian Museum of Civilization artifact collection.** Explain that the Canadian Museum of Civilization has thousands of artifacts related to Canada's history: everything from clothing to furniture to dishes to tools. Surprisingly, most of these artifacts are not on display in the museum; that's because there is not enough space to display all of the museum's artifacts. Fortunately, many of them are available on a database on the museum's web site, and today, students will have the chance to look at these objects and create a virtual exhibition.
- 3. Briefly present Marius Barbeau.** Explain that Marius Barbeau lived from 1883 to 1969, and is considered one of Canada's greatest ethnographers and folklorists. During the 1900s, when he worked for the National Museum of Canada, he pursued his interest in Canada's aboriginal cultures and French Canadian cultures. He collected many recordings of songs and music, folktales, and images, took photographs, and wrote volumes of research notes. Many items from his illustrious career can be viewed in the [Marius Barbeau web module](#).
- 4. Introduce the artifact database.** Hand out the [Database Information Package](#) to each student. Ask students to look at the Clothing section. Explain that this introduces the Clothing category and highlights several artifacts. Point out the other object categories on the left side of the page; by selecting any of these categories, students will go to a similar introductory page. Look at the Catalogue Search page, showing the results of selecting "View all items in the collection" at the bottom of the introductory page. Each artifact name links to the artifact record. By selecting "Previous" or "Next", students can see more thumbnail images of artifacts. Show the artifact record that you have selected. Together, examine the artifact record, including the image and the fields of information.
- 5. Brainstorm about the selected artifact.** While examining the artifact record and image, explain that this is an object that was collected by a folk curator. Brainstorm about the artifact. What do we know about the artifact? What don't we know about it? What would you like to know?
- 6. Give students the [Virtual Museum Challenge worksheet](#).** Review the questions with them. Ask them to select an object category, and complete the worksheet in pairs or individually. Because the database records include only the information provided to the museum about each object, students won't find all the information they need to answer each question. Discuss why they should not make assumptions without complete information.
Optional, if computers with Internet access are available for more than 60-90 minutes: Encourage students to explore the Marius Barbeau web module for additional information and to do additional research about their artifact.
- 7. Students share their artifacts and text.** When students have completed the Challenge, ask them to share with the class their exhibition theme, artifact groupings, their favourite artifacts, and the text they have written about their favourite artifacts. Ask students to share some of the questions they would like to ask the makers or owners of their favourite artifacts.

Extension Ideas

Object or Artifact? Show the class an everyday object and a projection or picture of a museum artifact from the database. Ask students to brainstorm the differences between an everyday object and a museum artifact.

Create an Artifact Information Record: Ask students to select a special object they have at home; they can photograph it or draw a picture of it. Using the database artifact record as a guide, have them create an artifact information record of this object. Ask them to interview parents and others who have information to share about the object, and have students add the information they feel is necessary to fully convey the importance of the object.

What Would You Collect? You are a researcher from another country's National Museum who has come to document youth culture in 21st century Canada. What would you collect? Have students decide on the 10 objects they feel best convey their culture.

English Language Arts: Look at the origin of the word artifact: arte from Latin art, factum from factere to make. Discuss the meaning of the word, and what objects can be considered as artifacts.

French as a Second Language: Use the French version of the artifact information record. Ask students to describe the artifact in French, using the terms on the information record to assist them.

English as a Second Language: Ask students to identify a museum artifact that is similar to an object they use at home. Ask them to describe their household object, and explain what it is used for, how it is used, what it is made from, and who uses it. The class can ask questions and compare the museum artifact and object.

Arts Education: Ask students to present their artifact and one or more related people in a manner of their choice. Brainstorm with them on the possible formats and subjects. Some suggestions for format: a show and tell using a papier-maché reproduction of the artifact or a modern version of the artifact, a dramatic representation, a poem, a song or a dance. Suggestions for subject: focus on the maker, the user, the community that used it, a grandchild of the maker, or a collector that has purchased the object.