



ANTIQUES

Teaching Guide

INTRODUCTION

Interest is high in antiques today. Nostalgic is big business this year and items that aren't necessarily antiques (100 years old or older) are selling for amazing prices. Kitchen utensils such as cream crocks and old teakettles are moving into contemporary parlors. So are French telephones, lacy old valentines, weathered inn signs and Tiffany lamps.

Many antiques can be hung on the wall, left standing on the coffee table or used as a useful accessory.

LESSON

What is an antique? Besides being old it should possess o\an element of charm, a suggestion of the creative act in it's concept, design or execution.

It may be a work of excellent craftsmanship or beauty, a simple functional article of the past, the creation of a careful, but amateur hand, a piece of mechanical ingenuity, a knick-knack or a souvenir.

COLLECTING

In antiques, the rewards of collecting are really the same whether much is spent or little. It is a good idea to "think small" at the outset, as with more experience one becomes more knowledgeable and discriminating.

First, learn to enjoy some of the things from your own family's heritage. Then collect what you are attracted to. The place in your life and home you can give to a collection. The amount of money you can spend.

GUIDELINES

1. Authenticity--Marks may be found, especially on china, silver pewter, also glass and occasionally furniture.
2. Condition -- If you plan on using the piece for display only it may not matter so much, although damaged piece never beings top prices at resale.
3. Know value and prices--Visit a variety of shows and shops.

4. Your own taste -- A well preserved and reasonably priced piece is ONLY A GOOD BUY if it pleases the collector's eye and enhances his collection.

WHERE TO STUDY ABOUT ANTIQUES

1. Museums
2. Antique shops
3. Historical restorations (many around the state and country)
4. Library -- books and antique magazines. There are many general books, but if you are interested in a particular kind of antique, the best books are those devoted specifically to that item.

Books

Check your library (list a few good ones.)

Publications

Available by subscription or from the library.

Spinning Wheel
Antique World
Collector's World
Antique Trader
The Antiques Journal
Magazines for Women (Woman's Day)

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Ask each member to bring something "old" from home. Tell what it is, some of its history and perhaps how it is used in her home. Encourage members to ask their parents about history of some of their prized possessions.
2. If anyone has visited a restoration such as Sturbridge in Massachusetts, Dearborn, Cornish in Wisconsin, etc. to bring any pictures they might have.
3. Ask in a speaker. Examples could be someone from an antique shop or someone who has a special interest in antiques.
4. Arrange to go to an antique shop--perhaps the shop keeper could talk about some of the things in the shop.
5. Visit an historical museum.
6. Attend an antique show.