



ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES

Leader's Guide

TEACHING OBJECTIVES:

1. One should collect according to a plan in order to satisfactorily include antiques and collectibles in the home.
2. Age, historical and cultural significance, sentimental value, investment and market price must all be considered when determining worth and value of antiques and collectibles.
3. Use good consumer skills and avoid buying things at random.
4. Learn about and respect antiques for their history, construction and character.
5. Take responsibility for safeguarding your investments by keeping current home inventories, adequate insurance and giving proper care to those items that you have collected.

INTRODUCTION

Interest is high in antiques today. Nostalgia is big business and items that aren't necessarily antiques (100 years old or older) are selling for sometimes surprising prices. Even such items as kitchen utensils, including cream crocks and old teakettles, are moving into contemporary parlors. You'll also find such items as French telephones, lacy old doilies, weathered inn signs and Tiffany lamp and many other items of interest to collectors are used all through the house.

Antiques and collectibles can be used in many ways. For instance, depending upon the particular item, an antique can be hung on the wall, left standing on the coffee table or used as a useful accessory. Whether on display to be seen and enjoyed every day or stored in a drawer or closet, all antiques and collectibles should be given proper care and be included in your household inventory.

PRESENTATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

1. Interest Approach: Ask club members to share experiences about an antique. Some suggestions are as follows:
 - A. A wooden item.
 - B. A family item.
 - C. An item purchased on a trip.
 - D. An item that had a utilitarian function.

2. Discuss how antiques and collectibles affect individuals and families by giving a sense of history, learning about family heirlooms and gaining an appreciation of a variety of skills and cultures.

Introduction

What is an antique? Besides being old it should possess an element of charm and have a suggestion of the creative process in the concept, design or execution of the work.

It may be a work of excellent craftsmanship and beauty or a simple functional article of the past. It may be the creation of a careful, but amateur craftsman or work done with tools and showing ingenuity. It would be a knick-knack or a souvenir or a treasured family heirloom made many years ago by ancestor.

The rewards of collecting antiques are really the same no matter how large or small the cost involved. When getting started, it's a good idea to "think small". Then as you get more experience and become more knowledgeable and discriminating, you can expand your collection.

First, learn to enjoy some of the things from your own family's heritage. Then collect the types of items that especially interest you. The type and number of items collected should be determined by the strength of your interest, the amount of space in your home and the amount of money you can afford to spend.

LESSON GUIDELINES AND ACTIVITIES

1. Antiques should be collected according to a plan. Discuss main points of publication, including:
 - A. What is an antique?
 - B. How to know what is worth keeping?
 - C. What is the difference between value and worth?
 - D. Discuss some guidelines for determining the value of antiques and collectible (page 2 of the lesson leaflet). Note these additional thoughts that may be considered:
 1. Authenticity – Marks may be found, especially on china, silver pewter, some glass items and occasionally furniture.
 2. Condition – If you plan on using the piece for display only the condition may not matter so much. However, damaged pieces never bring top prices at resale.
 3. Know value and prices – Visit a variety of shows and shops. Ask questions of antique dealers and other collectibles.
 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.

- E. Review guidelines on shopping for antiques and tools of the trade (page 2 of the publication, Antiques & Collectibles).
- F. Discuss considerations in shopping for antiques and collectibles at auction galleries, flea markets and house or farm sales. Encourage others to share their experiences and what they have learned by them.
- G. Show magazine pictures, photos or items in a house where you are holding the meeting to illustrate how antiques and collectibles can be used in today's homes. Discuss some of the history of the items and how they may originally have been used.
- H. Discuss the importance of properly insuring and caring for treasured antiques and collectibles. Although some prized family heirlooms can never be replaced, adequate records, photos and video will be of tremendous help with insurance settlements in the event of a fire, tornado, flood or other disaster. Encourage members to share ideas on how they have made an inventory (written, computer program, videotape, photos or others), how they have organized the information, whether they feel the records are complete and where to keep the completed information. Stress the importance of keeping these records current. It's much easier to do it than to have disaster strike and then try to remember.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES (Select those of interest to your group)

1. If anyone has visited a restoration such as Sturbridge in Massachusetts, Dearborn, Cornish in Wisconsin, etc. ask them to bring any pictures they might have or to share some of their impressions of the visit.
2. Ask a speaker to talk to your group. Examples could be someone from an antique shop or someone who has a special interest in antiques.
3. Arrange to go to an antique shop. Check with the shopkeeper ahead of time to see if someone could talk about some of the items in the shop and tell what to look for when shopping for antiques and collectibles.
4. Visit an historical museum in your area. Learn more about the items on display, such as their history, how they were made, their value, etc.
5. Attend an antique show or auction. Arrive early enough to inspect the items before the sale begins. Select a few items and decide on a price that you would be willing to pay for them even though you will not be bidding on them. Then study how the items are sold, what it said about the pieces as they are being sold and how much the items bring. Would you agree with the selling price? Why do you think the item was sold at that price?

FOR FURTHER STUDY ON ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES...

As you learn more about antiques and collectibles, you'll find that there is still more to know. This can be a life-long interest and study whether it's a specific item (period of furniture, glassware, signs, quilts, etc.) or furnishings in general. There are many good sources of information on antiques and

collectibles. Here are just a few suggestions on where to look.

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

PUBLICATIONS ON ANTIQUES...

Available by subscription or from the library.

Spinning Wheel

Antique World

Collector's World

Antique Trader

The Antique Journal

Magazines for women, such as Woman's Day, etc.

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