**Using Sustained Attention to Read Objects: A LAM Collaborative**
A presentation by the Addison Gallery of American Art, Archives & Special Collections, Oliver Wendell Holmes Library, Sidney R. Knafel Map Collection, and Robert S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology at Phillips Academy

1. Describe

   A. Turn off all electronics. Put down your pencils.

   B. Spend time looking closely at your group’s object. What do you see? Discuss all of the details that you notice, and not your previous knowledge of the object, its uses, or its story. Start with the largest, most comprehensive observations and progress to more particular details. Discuss not only the images, designs, and motifs, but also physical dimensions, the materials used, the ways in which the materials are put together in the fabrication of the object, etc.

   C. What do you wonder? What additional research could you do to learn more?

2. Connect

   The method of object analysis... progresses through three stages. To keep the distorting biases of the investigator’s cultural perspective in check, these stages must be undertaken in sequence and kept as discrete as possible. The analysis proceeds from description, recording the internal evidence of the object itself; to deduction, interpreting the interaction between the object and the perceiver; to speculation, framing hypotheses and questions which lead out from the object to external evidence for testing and resolution. - Jules David Prown

3. Reflect

   Are there aspects of mind to be discovered in objects that differ from, complement, supplement, or contradict what can be learned from more traditional literary and behavioral sources? - Jules David Prown

   Questions to consider:

   - Why is it important to separate observation from analysis?
   - In what ways is guarding against bias important in your subject area and courses? How can we make sure that we remain objective in our analysis of data, of sources, or of objects?
   - Consider the relevance of using objects actively, as evidence, rather than passively, as illustration, in your subject area and courses. In what ways do you do this already? In what other areas or activities might this be relevant?
   - What senses were you using in your investigation of your group’s object? How can engaging the senses in exploration and learning enhance understanding?
   - In what ways do we or can we create opportunities for students to engage in patience and deep attention? Why is this important?
   - How can the focused observation required to read these objects lead to increased mindfulness in our daily lives?
Resources

CONTACT US

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JPEGs of works in the Addison’s collection are available through the online database: http://accessaddison.andover.edu/

Phillips Academy Archives & Special Collections, http://www.andover.edu/archives
Paige Roberts, Director, proberts@andover.edu
The second edition of Eliot’s Indian Bible, revised by Eliot and John Cotton, first printed in Cambridge, Mass. in 1663, can be accessed at https://archive.org/details/mamussewunnetup02elio

Oliver Wendell Holmes Library, http://www.andover.edu/library
Liza Oldham, Instructional Librarian, loldham@andover.edu
A guide to instructional and physical resources and ideas to incorporate mindfulness strategies into your classroom: http://owhlguides.andover.edu/mindfulness

Sidney R. Knafel Map Collection, http://www.andover.edu/Academics/HistorySocialScience/Pages/KnafelMapCollection.aspx
Emma Frey, Instructor in History and Social Science and Geographer at Large, efrey@andover.edu
A selection of the maps in this collection have been digitized by the Boston Public Library’s Leventhal Collection: http://maps.bpl.org/explore/subject/knafel-sidney-r-map-collection-phillips-academy-andover-ma

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The online catalog includes a sampling of the types of artifacts in the collections: http://peabody.pastperfect-online.com

ADDITIONAL IMAGE AND OBJECT RESOURCES


MATERIAL CULTURE RESOURCES


MINDFULNESS RESOURCES


Presentation by Harvard University professor Jennifer L. Roberts at the Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching (HILT) Conference, May 2013. The importance of focused looking and teaching students the values of strategic patience. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnQVT_p6pxg