

MEMORY KEEPERS

TEACHER MATERIALS

Thank you for choosing a field trip and education program with the National Museum of American Jewish History. We are sure that your experience will be both enjoyable and educational for your students. Please use these materials to help prepare your class for their upcoming field trip or outreach program, and to provide a context for the Museum lesson. In addition, there are suggested follow-up activities for you to do in the classroom after your visit. Please feel free to adapt these lessons to the appropriate grade level and ability of your class.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

Established in 1976 and situated on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, the National Museum of American Jewish History presents educational programs and experiences that preserve, explore, and celebrate the history of Jews in America from the mid-1600s to the present day.

The Museum serves as an important resource for information about Jewish life and culture, exposing visitors to American Jewish history through its changing exhibitions and complementary programming. It also offers a wide range of public and school programs related to the Museum's exhibitions. Exhibitions are interpreted through age appropriate lessons designed for elementary through high school grades.

A BRIEF SURVEY OF AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY

By the time the first European settlers arrived in the New World, Judaism was already thousands of years old. Before reaching these shores, Jews had developed ways of living that combined an ancient yet evolving religion and the culture of the people with whom they interacted. America has had a profound impact on Jews and the Jewish people have had a profound impact on America. Over the course of more than 350 years here, generations of Jewish Americans have found different ways of being Jewish in America and different ways of reconciling their ancient heritage with their new home. The history of American Jews exemplifies important themes in American history: freedom, opportunity, and the struggle for

inclusion. Learning about this history illuminates how the United States became a single nation comprised of many peoples. Students will come to understand the challenges that all immigrants faced in coming here and how they both transformed and were transformed by America.

Jewish settlement in North America is generally considered to have begun in 1654, the year a group of refugees from Recife, Brazil arrived in New Amsterdam (New York) fleeing religious persecution. From that date, Jewish settlement in the New World proceeded sporadically. By 1789, more than a century after the first groups of Jews arrived, only five Jewish communities had been established, and the Jewish population in major cities like Charles Town (Charleston), South Carolina, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, still numbered only a few hundred. Nobody knew which communities would endure, where Jews would thrive, and whether their children would explore new destinations.

During the Colonial period, Jews settled in large port cities such as Savannah, Georgia, Philadelphia, New York, and Newport, Rhode Island. These cities were major shipping and commercial centers, offering the opportunity to participate in trade. These were also areas of religious toleration. Jews were able to live an observant Jewish life, establishing religious institutions such as cemeteries and synagogues. Jews maintained contact with other Jewish communities in the New World, building social, economic, and family ties that spanned the Colonies.

By the 1800s, Jews had joined the thousands of Americans who were moving west in search of a better life and new opportunities. Famine and political upheavals in Europe contributed to a new wave of immigration to the United States, contributing to the westward migration. Jews from Germany and Central Europe were part of this influx, and Jews settled in frontier areas such as Colorado and New Mexico. They established trade routes that linked these areas to the Midwest and East. Jews on the frontier were often isolated from the Jewish community. They had to either build new Jewish communities or find ways of being Jewish without the institutional structures that the older, East Coast Jewish settlement enjoyed.

The next wave of immigration came between 1880 and the 1920s primarily from Eastern and Southern Europe. In those four decades over 25 million immigrants arrived in the United States, more than 2 million of them were Jews. These immigrants tended to settle in ethnic enclaves, forming “Little Italy” or “Little Warsaw” neighborhoods. The Jewish immigrants of the period were no different. They formed communities where Yiddish was heard on the streets.

They created synagogues, schools, theaters, and cultural institutions such as *landsmanschaftn* (associations of Jews from the same town or village in Europe). They adapted the intimate community of the Old World to American urban life. In sharp contrast to the West, where pioneer Jewish merchants created their American-Jewish identities in relative isolation, the Eastern European immigrants faced an overwhelming array of competing claims on Jewish identity: labor unions, political parties, religious groups, and American popular culture. Jews faced anti-Semitism during this time and were attacked in popular literature with negative stereotypes about their honesty, loyalty, business practices, and religion. Immigrants also encountered contempt or paternalism (when an authority regulates the conduct of those under their control in matters affecting them as individuals as well as in their relations to authority and to each other) from established German Jews, who abhorred the poverty, traditional beliefs, and foreign appearance of the newcomers.

This flood of immigration ended in the 1920s when Congress voted to severely limit the number of immigrants allowed in the US. Each country was allowed a maximum number of immigrants based on the number of nationals already here. The quota system favored immigrants from Northern and Western Europe and discriminated against groups, such as Jews, who were primarily from Eastern and Southern Europe. Asian immigration ended almost completely.

The immigration restrictions demonstrate the precarious position of minority ethnic groups in the United States. While the country provided them freedom and opportunity, there was also deep-seeded fear and mistrust on the part of the majority population. For most of its history, America has been a place open to Jews, where Jews could come and create communities and worship freely. However, not everyone has always shared that vision of America. Certain groups believed that immigrants were racially inferior and caused unemployment, poverty, and social problems. American immigration policies did not relent even in the face of the Holocaust. Jews fleeing the Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s found America's doors closed.

Following World War II, American Jews became more assimilated into mainstream American culture. They worked at the same jobs, attended the same schools, and spoke the same language as their gentile neighbors. They joined the general migration from old urban neighborhoods to new suburbs. Outside the embrace of the traditional immigrant community that their parents or grandparents knew, Jewish couples sought to recreate communal

connections in their new suburban lives. Suburbanization sparked the growth of hundreds of new synagogues in the 1950s and 1960s. These synagogues served as community centers, providing religious schools, gyms, and social activities for young Jewish adults.

Judaism continues to shape and respond to changes in American culture. Jews, in part because of Judaism's emphasis on social justice and in part because of Jews' experiences as a marginalized minority, led many of the protest and social justice movements of the 1960s and 1970s. In turn, feminism, environmentalism, and other social movements have influenced how many Jews practice their religion.

Today, Jews have become part of American society to an extent unimagined by the band of refugees that came here from Brazil in 1654. Even a generation ago, the idea that an Orthodox Jew could be the Democratic nominee for vice president was laughable. Joseph Lieberman's candidacy eight years ago demonstrates how Jews have become part of the fabric of American politics, society, and culture. The story of Jews in America demonstrates how a handful of people seeking freedom can shape the future of a nation. That is also the story of America itself.

ABOUT THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

(Your visit will be divided into three sections. A docent (guide) will conduct your lesson.)

1. Your class may visit historic Congregation Mikveh Israel, "Synagogue of the American Revolution," that currently shares its location with the Museum. Students will learn about the Jewish community in Philadelphia beginning in the 18th century. They will also learn about Jewish rituals, symbols, and worship. Students may examine objects and receive an introduction to the Hebrew language.
2. Your class will visit the current exhibition at the National Museum of American Jewish History titled *Shaping Space, Making Meaning*. During their visit students will learn about the steps taken when designing a new museum, focusing on the development of exhibits, an exhibition, and the role of a curator.
3. Your class may participate in an interactive lesson about how artifacts within an exhibition teach about the past and the influence a curator has on the decision making process regarding the creation of an exhibition.

If you are interested in all three components please allow two hours of time for the full program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE MUSEUM

LESSON

Memory Keepers was developed for students in 5-8th grade to complement the current exhibition at the National Museum of American Jewish History titled *Shaping Space, Making Meaning*.

This exhibition offers visitors the opportunity to learn how the National Museum of American Jewish History is creating their new core exhibition scheduled to open at its new location on the corner of 5th and Market Streets in 2010. The program will simulate the process taken by museum professionals when designing a new exhibition. Students will have the opportunity to create their own exhibit related to American Jewish identity using non-accessioned artifacts as they take on the roles of curator, registrar, and exhibit designers. Students will investigate what freedom means in America by reviewing the concept, what are the blessings of freedom and what are its costs? The importance of artifacts and the role they play in documenting history will also be addressed. This program will help students refine their skills in observation, teamwork, public speaking, and recording information.

Artifacts are objects collected or made by humans, often from earlier time periods, thought to hold some importance. They are found everywhere and can be of any size. When artifacts are handled, active learning takes place. Hands-on learning with objects is an excellent learning tool to start to understand the importance of artifacts.

Curators are the people in museums who are in charge of collecting and preserving artifacts as well as planning exhibitions. Many times they are in charge of deciding which artifacts should go on display.

What can your students learn by creating their own exhibit using artifacts?

- Students will become familiar with basic terms such as: curator, docent, and artifact and their importance in designing an exhibition.
- Students will become familiar with the basic procedures utilized when creating individual exhibits within an exhibition.

- Students will become familiar with American Jewish identity through their creation of an exhibit related to the core exhibition of the new National Museum of American Jewish History.
- Students will gain a better appreciation for what freedom means in America by reviewing the four questions of the museum: How wide the freedom? How do you maintain freedom? What impact did the Jewish struggle for freedom have on America? And what are the blessings of freedom and what are its costs?
- Students will develop a greater appreciation for the role that objects play in their everyday life and understand how to interpret those objects to learn more about society and their personal history.

PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMIC STANDARDS FULFILLED

	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 8
ARTS AND HUMANITIES	9.1.5D,E,H,I 9.2.5A,B,D,J,K 9.3.5A-E 9.4.5B,C		9.1.8E,H,I 9.2.8A,B,D,J,K 9.3.8A-E 9.4.8A,C
CAREER EDUCATION AND WORK	13.1.5A,B,C,H 13.2.5A 13.3.5A,B,G		13.1.8A,B,C,H 13.3.8A,B,G
CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT		5.1.6B,J,K	
FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES		11.1.6A,D 11.2.6C	
HISTORY		8.1.6A,B,C 8.2.6A,C,D 8.3.6D	
READING, WRITING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING	1.1.5D,E 1.6.5A,C,D,E		1.1.8D,E 1.6.8A,C,D,E

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM LESSONS

The following lessons are designed to prepare your students for their upcoming visit. Please adapt these materials to the appropriate grade level and abilities of your students.

Suggested Pre-Visit Lessons

The following lessons will prepare your students to better understand the issues that will be addressed during their visit to the National Museum of American Jewish History.

1. Word Games

Time: one class period (approximately 45-60 minutes)

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- become familiar with new vocabulary related to their upcoming visit to the National Museum of American Jewish History.
- improve their creative writing skills.
- learn to work cooperatively in teams/groups.

Materials:

- A copy of the glossary for every 3-4 students.
- Lined pieces of paper and a writing utensil for every 3-4 students.

Instructions:

- Divide students into groups of three or four.
- Give each group a copy of the glossary, a piece of paper, and a writing utensil.

- Tell students that as a group they must write a story using as many of the words in the glossary as possible. For each word attempted to be used properly they will receive one point, and for every word used correctly they will receive two points.
- Give the class 15-20 minutes to write their stories.
- When completed have each group read their story aloud to the class.
- The team with the most points at the end of the class session will be given a prize of the teachers choosing.

2. Exhibiting the Everyday

Time: one class period (approximately 45-60 minutes)

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will learn how to:

- categorize and sort objects.
- interpret and understand objects in relation to other objects.
- work cooperatively in teams/groups.

Materials:

6 boxes each filled with some or all of the following items (*not all boxes need to contain the same items*):

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| • pencils | • an index card |
| • crayons | • rulers |
| • a glue stick | • paper clips |
| • a piece of lined paper | • a stapler |
| • a piece of construction paper | • marker |

Create six boxes filled with everyday objects easily attainable as well as familiar to the students.

Instructions:

- Divide the class into six groups and provide each group with a box containing several everyday objects.
- Tell students they are curators of a museum exhibit on everyday objects. Remind students that a curator is a person in a museum who is in charge of collecting and preserving artifacts

as well as planning exhibitions. Explain to students that as curators their job is to group the objects for display in an exhibit. They need to decide what theme or category to use; for example, they could group by material, design, age, size, or function. (Example: Students could design an exhibit relating to writing utensils including markers, crayons, pencils, pens, etc.)

- When each group has completed their exhibit have them explain their choices. Discuss how this kind of sorting and categorizing affects how people understand and engage in an exhibit.

3. Share and Tell

Time: half a class period (approximately 25-35 minutes)

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- learn how to use artifacts as a way to learn about an individual.
- improve upon their observation and deductive reasoning skills.
- improve upon their public speaking skills.

Materials:

- Object brought from home by each student that tells a personal story about him/herself or his/her family. Examples: photograph, family recipe, stuffed animal, etc.

Instructions:

- Divide students into pairs.
- Within each pair have students exchange objects.
- Have students interview their partner to find out why the object s/he brought is important to him/her.
- Have each student present the object to the class, describing it and explaining what the object tells about the person who brought it.
- Allow the owner of the object to comment and expand on what the presenter said.

4. American Jewry

Time: one class period (approximately 45-60 minutes)

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- learn how to use artifacts as a way to learn about an individual.
- improve upon their observation and deductive reasoning skills.
- improve their formal writing and public speaking skills
- become familiar with American Jewry

Materials:

- Copies of images from Minnie Schwartz's 90th Birthday celebration album. This is available on the museum's website under the education link or by request from the museum.

Instructions:

- Divide students into groups of four.
- Give each group six images from Minnie Schwartz's Birthday album.
- Ask students to prepare a biography of Minnie Schwartz based on the information they are able to obtain from the images.
- Have each group read their biography out loud to the class.
- Discussion: How did each group find out the information they presented in their biography? Why were all the biographies different if they were about the same person? How was the life of Minnie Schwartz different because she was Jewish? How and why was the life of Minnie Schwartz different than yours?

5. Anti-Semitism

Time: one class period (approximately 45-60 minutes)

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- learn how to use artifacts as a way to learn history.
- improve upon their observation skills.
- become familiar with American Jewry.

Materials:

- Copies of the drawing Jews Drinking Mineral Water in Central Park from Harper's Weekly. This is available on the museum's website under the education link or by request from the museum.
- Copies of the front page of the Ford International Weekly: The Dearborn Independent from December 25, 1920.
- Copies of the first amendment of the constitution. *This can be found at the end of this packet on a separate page or below.*

Amendment I: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Instructions: this is intended as a class discussion

- What is anti-Semitism? *Discriminating against and persecuting Jews.* Do you think there is anti-Semitism in the United States? Why? What other groups are or have been discriminated against in the United States? Have you ever been discriminated against? *Share a story of when you were discriminated against or tell a fictional story about discrimination to facilitate a more comfortable and open environment for students to share their own stories.*
- Do you think this drawing from the newspaper is anti-Semitic? Why or why not? Do you think it is alright to put something like this drawing in a newspaper? What is a newspaper intended for?
- What is the first amendment to the United States Constitution? *The right to free speech and freedom of press and the right to practice religion freely.* The Constitution was signed only minutes away from the National Museum of American Jewish History which sits between Independence Hall where the Declaration of Independence was signed and the National Constitution Center on Independence Mall on what has been called the most historic mile in the country.

Suggested Post-Visit Lessons

These activities are developed to further enhance the students' visit to the Museum and reinforce the information they learned.

1. I am on Display

Time: one class period

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- apply the museum process for creating an exhibit to their personal artifacts.
- learn to think analytically.
- refine their descriptive writing skills.

Materials:

- Have students either bring objects from home they feel represent them well, or have students use objects they have with them at school.

Instructions:

- Have students curate an exhibit about themselves. Ask them to pick 5 objects that could best teach people about who they are.
- Have students identify the theme of their exhibit: the aspect about themselves that they want to emphasize. For each object, they should note how it relates to the theme.
- Have students create a title for their exhibit.
- Have students then write labels for their objects telling people what the object is, what material it is made of, where it was made, how long they have owned it and why they think it is significant in helping people piece together clues as to who they are.

2. Preserving Family History

Time: 1-2 class periods for students to present their oral reports.

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- practice sorting and categorizing objects.
- apply knowledge about curating objects to their personal experiences.
- research family history

Materials:

- Students will bring 3-4 objects from home that belonged to a family member from a previous generation.
- Index cards
- Poster board (optional) - This is only necessary if students develop an oral presentation.

Instructions:

- Have students, with their family's help, collect 3-4 objects that belonged to a family member from a previous generation.
- Have them examine the objects, write out descriptions on index cards, and put them in chronological order.
- Have the students research the life of the family member by talking with other relatives or people who knew him/her.
- Have students prepare a written or oral presentation that tells about the family member. The presentation should incorporate a discussion or presentation of the objects.

3. The Dictionary Game

Time: half a class period (approximately 20 to 30 minutes)

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- learn the vocabulary used during their museum visit.
- improve upon their public speaking skills.
- learn how to work in groups.

Materials:

- A copy of the words from the glossary for each student.

Instructions:

- Divide the class into groups of 5-6 students.
- Each student takes a turn at choosing a word from the list and proposing the definition. The other students in the group need to decide whether the definition stated is correct or incorrect. If the definition was incorrect, someone else from the group must share the correct definition.

4. American Jewry Continued

Time: 1-2 class periods

Grade: 5-8 adaptable

Objectives:

Students will:

- learn about American Jewish History.
- improve upon their formal writing skills.
- improve upon their public speaking skills.
- recall the information learned during their museum visit.

Materials:

- paper and a writing utensil for each student
- resources about American Jewry during WWII

Instructions:

- Have each student choose one of the individuals whose artifacts were used during their museum lesson. (Choices include: Albert Katz, Herman Katz, Rebecca Katz, Rose Jeck, Dreniel Kagan, Elizabeth Hurwitz, Jacob Hurwitz, Maurice Schwartz, and Mr. and Mrs. Milton C. Goldberg.)
- Each student will research the time period in which that individual lived and write a fictional biography. This will help improve the students deductive reasoning and research skills as

well as help cement what was learned about American Jewish Identity during their museum lesson.

- Each student will read their biography out loud to the class.

GLOSSARY

Accession

Increase by something added; acquisition of additional property. Within a museum accession means to accept an artifact into the permanent collection.

Anti-Semitism

Discriminating against and persecuting Jews.

Artifact

Something thought to hold some importance that has been collected or made by humans. Often an artifact is from a previous time period.

Ashkenazim

The Jews who settled in or came from Central, Eastern and/or Northern Europe.

Assimilation

When a minority group is absorbed into the culture of a country, society, or class.

Challah

A special type of bread eaten most often by Jews on the Sabbath and other holidays.

Core Exhibition

The main exhibition in a museum.

Curator

A person in a museum who is in charge of collecting and preserving artifacts as well as planning exhibitions.

Docent

A person who leads guided tours especially through a museum or art gallery.

Exhibit

To display something to the public. A public showing of one or more objects.

Exhibition

A public showing of more than one exhibit.

Haggadah

A book, meaning “the telling”, used on Passover during the special service including a meal called a seder.

Holocaust

The systematic destruction of over six million European Jews and millions of other minorities by the German Nazis and their accomplices during World War II.

Immigration

The act of people entering a new country in order to settle there.

Judaism

A religion based on the laws and teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Talmud, the authoritative body on Jewish tradition.

Kiddush

The blessing said on the Sabbath and other holidays over wine or grape juice.

Kippah

Also known as a yarmulke; a Jewish head covering traditionally worn by males at all times. Some people only wear a kippah during prayer services or when entering a sanctuary to show respect; women have begun to wear kippahs as well.

Ladino

A Romance language derived from Old Castilian, Portuguese, Hebrew, Turkish, and some French and Greek. Ladino is spoken by Sephardim in Brazil, Mexico, Bulgaria, Macedonia, France, Turkey, Greece, Spain and other Mediterranean countries.

Mechitsah

A divider found in a synagogue’s sanctuary. It divides the area in which the men sit from the area where the women sit.

Mission Statement

A few sentences that explain the purpose of an institution or organization.

Mylar

A type of plastic in which documents can be safely stored. The plastic helps to keep out bugs, moisture, and mold that could be harmful to documents.

Passover

Passover is called Pesach in Hebrew. It is a Jewish holiday celebrated in the spring. Passover celebrates the Exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt; it is a celebration of freedom!

Pluralism

The existence of groups within a nation or society distinctive in ethnic origin, cultural patterns or religion.

Registrar

A museum registrar is a staff person who organizes and retains information about the artifacts in a museum collection. Registrars also ensure the continued preservation of artifacts, both when they are in storage and while they are on exhibition.

Seder

Literally means order; it is the ceremony for the evening meal held on Passover.

Segregation

Legally enforced separation of a race, class or ethnic group.

Semite

A person whose ancestors originated from ancient southwestern Asia, this includes the Acadians, Phoenicians, Hebrews, and Arabs.

Sephardim

The Jews of Spain, Portugal, Middle East, and their descendants

Shabbat

The Sabbath; a day of rest which comes every week from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday.

Shul

The Yiddish word for synagogue; a place of worship.

Siddur

A Jewish prayer book.

Tallit

A prayer shawl traditionally worn by Jewish males while praying and during religious services.

Tefillin

Two small black leather cube cases, containing Torah text, from which long black leather straps extend. Tefillin are traditionally worn by Jewish males of 13 years and older during the recitation of the morning prayers by wrapping the leather bands along the arm.

Tzedakah

A Hebrew word that means justice that includes acts of charity.

Yiddish

A language derived from medieval High German spoken by Eastern European Jews and their descendants. It is written in the Hebrew alphabet and contains vocabulary borrowed from Hebrew, Russian, Polish and English.

Zionism

An international movement, founded by Theodore Herzl, originally for the establishment of a Jewish national or religious community in what was then called Palestine and later focused on the support of the modern state of Israel.

RESOURCES

Brooklyn Children's Museum: Collections Central

<http://www.brooklynkids.org/emuseum/code/emuseum.asp>

Independence Park Institute

<http://www.independenceparkinstitute.com/>

Jewish Museum's Living Museum

<http://living-museum.org/>

Please Touch Museum

<http://www.pleasetouchmuseum.org/>

Saving Stuff

<http://www.savingstuff.com/>

The Giver and related resources (for middle-school age, talks about memories)

<http://www.classzone.com/novelguides/litcons/giver/related.cfm>

Toldot

<http://www.toldot.org/>

Amendment I: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.