



OUTREACH EDUCATION PROGRAM

<http://www.museumsandgalleries.act.gov.au/artefactchat/>

Artefact Chat: This is old, what's new?

The Artefact Chat box contains items representative of their time, and relate to life in the past in Australia. Unlike the collections at ACT Historic Places museums, these objects can be handled by your class as they are from our Education Collection. The Artefact Chat box items offer an excellent link to artefacts students can see by accessing the ACT Historic Places virtual tours; **Mugga-Mugga**, **Calthorpes' House** and **Lanyon**.

The Artefact Chat box also contains a selection of History Mysteries books. Each book contains a series of themed illustrations that follow English family life from 1900 to 1990. The books and artefacts correspond to a range of themes, including, *Travelling*, *At School* and *Cooking*, or *Washing* and *Shopping*, or, *Bathtime* and *Toys*. In addition, at the end of each History Mysteries book there is a list of 'Things to do' ideas for teachers so that students can further develop their understanding of history and artefacts.

Please note: The artefacts are fragile, for example, glass, metal, ceramic, paper and cardboard, and they need to be handled with care. Most artefacts are individually wrapped inside a calico bag – please return the box and contents in good order.

Suggestions for use:

1. When you first open the box, ask the students to explore the artefacts and work out how each one is used. The answers range from the very easy, like clothes pegs, coat hangers, toys or a hat, to more difficult like a bean slicer, wooden washing tongs or a kerosene lamp.
2. Encourage your students to handle the items and experiment with their use – under supervision and as appropriate.

3. **This is old.** Discuss the artefacts in the context of program concept; people who used these artefacts in the past might tell oral histories about them. For example, do the students think an adult or child would have used the item, or would a man, woman, or both have used it? Which room in a house, or in what context outdoors, could each artefact be used? The artefacts could then be categorised into groups according to which room in the home, as well as outdoors, they could have been used.

4. **What's new?** Because the timeline of the History Mysteries series stops more than 20 years ago, a class activity could be to choose a number of the focus artefacts in the books, and find out what the modern equivalents are.

5. Similar to the activity above, the artefacts in the box are representative of the past, and in response to these items students could work out if there is a modern equivalent.

For example;

Past: A slate.

Present: A computer screen.

Past: A felt hat.

Present: A baseball cap.

Past: A wire soap saver.

Present: Plastic liquid soap pump container.

Past: A wooden jigsaw puzzle.

Present: An electronic game device such as an iPod.