

Object Analysis

A “First Steps” In-Class Exercise

The following questions are designed to introduce the idea of “archaeological” analysis of a primary source. This is the first encounter between you and a cultural object. It is not as important to find the “right” answer as it is to start formulating key questions that may allow you to “step back in time” and understand why this object exists; what cultural purpose it may have had. .

Choose one object (book or other artifact), and jot down notes answering the following questions for discussion. **IMPORTANT:** please do not use any secondary source to help you understand your object. You are the sole creator of this first step toward understanding – and you are also the investigator who begins to establish what you do not know.

1. What is your selected object? Can you tell when it was made? (if so, how? If not, what would help you?)
2. For whom do you think this item was made? What might its purpose have been?
3. What is one thing about the object that you find interesting?
4. What else might you want to learn about it if you were to research it further?