

Toys of Our Past



1. Introduce the concept of "collection"

As a class, ask the students what they think a collection is.

A collection is a gathering of a group of things of the same type. Collections can be made up of as few as a couple of times or have more than a million items. It all just depends on what the collector, collects.

Then ask the students if they collect anything, give examples such as dolls, cards, models, or Legos. What sort of things do your family members collect? Maybe you have an uncle that collects stamps, or a grandma that collects coins. What about a museum? What sort of things would they collect? Art, clothing, historical items, etc. These are called artifacts.

At the Thunder Bay Museum, they have a lot of collections such as a First Nations collection, a military collection, a clothing collection, a toy collection (like you see on the website), and much, much more.

2. Brainstorm about toys

Ask as class brainstorm why would a museum collect toys? What sort of toys would you expect to see? Where are most of the toys made today? Are there any Canadian made toys you are familiar with? What are toys made with today? What do you think toys from the past were made with? Are there any toys that are the same as they were from the past?

3. Activities

- a. Imagine what sort of toys and games the Thunder Bay Museum should collect now. Keep in mind that museums can't collect, conserve, and keep everything that people want to donate. Each artifact must have a 'case' made for its addition to the museum's collection. Have students choose a toy or game they have and defend why it should belong in a museum. Then have the class vote for which artifacts should go into the museum
- b. Museum's have also started doing contemporary collecting. Have students select a contemporary toy or game. What does this toy or game say about contemporary society? What values does it reflect? Have students write about their selection.
- c. Have students attempt the quiz found on the Toys of Our Past online exhibit