



# Learning From Artifacts at Mystic Seaport -How to Read an Object

You are a history detective today! You will be examining a primary source in the form of an artifact. Look at your artifact and fill out this worksheet.



Properties of the Object		Observations
<b>Function /Purpose</b>	What was it used for? Did it have more than one function?	
<b>Physical Features</b>	What do you think its texture, smell, sound and shape are like? Is it complete? Has it been altered or mended?	
<b>Materials</b>	What was it made of? How many different kinds of materials is it made of?	
<b>Construction</b>	Who made it? How was it made? Does it have parts? What does it tell you about the maker's technical skills?	
<b>Context and History</b>	When was it made? Where was it made? Who made it?	
<b>What would you call this object?</b>		
<b>What else would have been helpful to complete your investigation?</b>		

*This worksheet is adapted from the US National Park Service, Museum Management Program from the Hands on History Program, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC; Museum Magnet Schools, Education Resources; English Heritage, A Teacher's Guide to Learning from Objects; and the Victoria and Albert Museum education materials, London, England.*