



THE DECORATIVE ARTS TRUST

For Immediate Release:

FREE COLLECTING250 EDUCATOR GUIDES AVAILABLE FOR THE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL

— Decorative Arts Trust Offers Complimentary Lesson Plans for Teachers —

Media, PA – The Decorative Arts Trust is excited to announce the publication of four complimentary educator guides related to [Collecting250.org](https://collecting250.org), a free, public resource that commemorates the United States Semiquincentennial with a celebration of 250 historic objects from all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The online collection includes meaningful and impactful objects that represent independence, identity, and community, which were submitted by over 140 museums and historic associations from across the country. This resource demonstrates how objects can tell the story of America.

The Trust’s new educator guides feature complimentary lessons and worksheets to teach art and history through the exploration of objects on Collecting250. A team of experienced educators provided lesson plans, worksheets, and extension ideas aligned with the National Standards for Visual Arts Education and the Common Core Standards. These exciting and interactive lessons are designed to encourage students at the middle and high school levels to view objects—whether historic or more modern—in a whole new way.

The educator guides focus on four themes: function, collecting, story, and traditions. The *Functions of Objects: An American Collection* asks students to examine various objects in Collecting250 and determine their function through the question, “What job does this object do?” Students present a proposal (in trading card form) for the acquisition of an object, antique or present-day, that they believe should be included in the collection. Students’ trading cards can be shared in a school display in recognition of the Semiquincentennial.

For *Collecting: Uncovering America through its Objects*, students explore reasons why humans engage in collecting. They share their knowledge of collections and role-play as private collectors. Then students curate a series of objects from Collecting250 for their own museum spaces, with peers discussing which collection is the most historically significant, the most expensive, etc. Students also investigate an object and create a “missing” poster.

— more —

The Weaving a Storyline Across 250 Years guide has students investigating various objects in Collecting250 and considering the underlying history of those objects through the question, “What story does this object have to share?” Students create a historical fiction narrative that threads the stories of various objects from the collection into a storyboard that interweaves personal student stories with the stories told by objects found in the collection.

Objects and Traditions: History Revealed guides students to consider Collecting250 objects through the lens of tradition. Students discuss traditions that are important in their families and communities, and then students examine objects and discuss how they might have been made in association with traditions. As students investigate objects, they discuss how cultural beliefs, values, and artistic expression influence the making of an object.

The Decorative Arts Trust would like to thank Dr. Marilyn Stewart, Professor Emerita of Art Education at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, for coordinating the team that developed these educator guides. The Trust learned of Dr. Stewart and her talented colleagues through the fantastic resources they have developed for Craft in America.

Collecting250 will be available for the next few years, so these lessons will be applicable for the 2026–27 and 2027–28 school years as well.

Visit [Collecting250.org](https://collecting250.org) to explore these new resources.

#

Contact: Matthew Thurlow, Executive Director, 610.627.4970, thetrust@decorativeartstrust.org