

## Pre-Visit Artifact Reading

**Lesson Overview:** When you bring your school group to Mount Independence, the students will be looking at numerous artifacts. From these artifacts, they will learn about soldiers who served at the Mount during the Revolutionary War. This worksheet guides the students through an artifact reading to prepare them for their visit.

**Standards:** This activity addresses the following standard –  
6.6 Being an Historian

**Background:** Artifacts are objects made or used by people. Historians use artifacts to learn about the culture of the people who made or used them. In this activity, students study an artifact to learn about the present. By carefully examining an object, they can make educated guesses about the person who owns or uses the object.

**Procedure:** Have each student take out a pencil. This is the “artifact.” Direct the students to examine the pencil carefully. Give them at least a minute to study the pencil. Tell them to look at the eraser, the point, any writing, any marks, and any part of the pencil that might offer information.

Next, give each student the worksheet (page 2). Ask the students to answer the questions, with as much detail as possible. There are no right or wrong answers, just observations and interpretation. Students should use rulers for measuring.

After the students have finished, talk about the answers. Complete a chart on the chalkboard. The interpretation section may require the most discussion. The chart below gives some examples.

Description	Function	Interpretation
Yellow + green Ticonderoga # 2 sharp teeth marks no eraser	Writing Drawing Throwing Drumming used at school for homework + tests	Eraser used up – owner must change mind a lot Short pencil – owner needs to buy a new one Chewed up – owner is hungry

**Connections:** When the students visit the museum, they should pay attention to what the objects reveal about the Revolutionary War and about the people living on Mount Independence. The various animal bones can provide some hints about the army’s food supply if the students take a moment to “read” the artifacts.

# Learning from a Pencil



Examine your pencil. Then answer the following questions.

## Description

1. What color is it?
2. What shape is it?
3. How long is it?
4. Is it sharp?
5. What writing does it have on it?
6. What pictures does it have on it?
7. What marks does it have on it?
8. What is it made of?
9. How is your pencil different than your neighbor's pencil?

## Function

10. What is it used for?
11. Who uses it?
12. When is it used?
13. Where is it used?

## Interpretation

14. Who owns this pencil?
15. What does the pencil tell about the owner?

## Further Research

16. What other questions do you have about the pencil?