

Passing It On

By Heather Jefkins

Grade Level: 4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/10

Magazine Issue: "[Crafts in Canada](#)" (February 2026), *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*

Time Required: 1 lesson

Select Curriculum Connections:

ONTARIO | Social Studies 2: Changing family and community traditions | Social Studies 6: Cultural and social aspects of different communities in Canada

ALBERTA | Social Studies 1: Expressions of culture and how it can be passed on

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR | Social Studies 6: Expressions of cultural beliefs, values, and traditions and how they shape identity

BRITISH COLUMBIA | Social Studies 1, 2, 3: Diverse characteristics of communities and cultures locally and throughout Canada

NOVA SCOTIA | Social Studies 3: Examining Nova Scotian culture through stories, language, music and dance, and visual arts and crafts | Social Studies 6: Expressions of culture

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Examine how and what gets preserved / passed down within a family.

Activity:

PART I – Introduction

Have students read the article "Better, Worse, Different" to prime students for the group discussion.

As a class, ask your students: "What kinds of things get 'saved' or 'passed on' from one generation to the next?" (Examples may include artwork, jewelry, recipes, dishes,

clothing, etc). These items can be considered primary source evidence within family history, as well as representing a point in time.

Discuss what can affect the ability of things to get “handed down” from one generation to another. (Examples may include theft, fire, natural disasters, immigration, war, etc.) What determines what gets saved and what gets sold or thrown away?

PART II – Discussion

Are there any examples of items in their own families that have been passed down from one generation to another? If so, why do they think those items were saved or passed down? Do they have significance to the history of the family? Are they handcrafted? Do they relate to the cultural heritage of the family?

Finally, is there anything in their lives right now that they think might be worth saving or passing down for future generations? If so, why?

PART III – Activity

Have students create an infographic about one personal item they think might be valuable to pass on to a future family member. Students will draw and label the item, then describe its current use and why they feel it would be important to be saved.

PART IV – Wrap-Up: Sharing and Reflecting

Students will be asked to explain what factors they considered when determining what they think would be valuable to be saved for the future. Depending on the age and class make-up, they can be given an opportunity to share what they feel is important to them. Due to the personal nature of the task, this sharing should be voluntary.

Additional Activities:

- Look at a regional crafts by inviting in guests who practice traditional crafts. Learn about Dutch immigration to Canada after the Second World War by exploring the [items found in a kist](#). Discuss what they see and what choices the family might have made for what they brought with them (i.e. practical vs. personal).