

## **Introduction:**

The purpose of this assignment is to have individuals learn about their peers through openness and curiosity. Individuals will ask questions about objects and try to learn what they can about others through one object – thus learning the complexity of culture and celebrating both similarities and differences. Participants will engage in an object based “show and tell” where individuals, originally not knowing the identity of the object holder, will make guesses about that individual’s life and possible culture.

## **Facilitator Notes:**

To facilitate the virtual version, participants will share their objects by emailing an image to the facilitator prior to the activity facilitation. The facilitator will then compile the images into individual PowerPoint slides to share with participants. Virtual instructions are included in the Activity Instructions further down in the lesson plan.

## **Objectives:**

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Develop awareness of the complexity of culture while celebrating similarities and differences.
2. Ask complex questions about other cultures and articulate answers that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.

## **Time:**

30 minutes.

## **Group Size:**

Pairs.

## **Materials:**

Each participant should bring an item from their “individual archive;” Participant Instructions (in [Downloads](#)); a PowerPoint slide for each item (if facilitating virtually).

## **Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:**

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

## **AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:**

Curiosity

- To ask complex questions about other cultures.

- To seek out and articulate answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.

## Openness

- To initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others.
- To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

## Other Skills:

Friendship; Teamwork; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

## Activity Instructions:

1. **In-person option pre-assignment:** Participants should prepare to bring to the activity facilitation an item from their own "individual archive." This could be a document, photograph, clothing – anything from their past that they feel represents themselves and their culture. Participants should not tell anyone what object they will be bringing to the facilitation to share.

***Virtual option pre-assignment:** Participants should send a photo of their item ahead of the activity facilitation. The facilitator will need to compile an individual PowerPoint slide for each item to send out during the activity facilitation.*

2. **In-person option:** At the beginning of the activity facilitation, participants should (as discreetly as possible) give their items to their instructor to be stored in a large box. Next, instruct participants to pair up and give each of the pairs a random object from the box. Instruct participants to answer the following questions:

- What do you know?
- What do you think?
- What do you wonder?

Instruct participants then to observe the physical evidence of the item and then try to draw conclusions about its origin and meaning and what they can learn about the original owner. Each pair of students will share their conclusions and try to guess the owner.

***Virtual option:** The facilitator should first send each participant a randomly assigned slide with one item from a fellow participant and then paste into the chat the following instructions:*

*Discuss the following with your partner in your breakout rooms:*

- *What do you know?*
- *What do you think?*
- *What do you wonder?*

*Observe the physical characteristics of the image and then try to draw conclusions about its origin and meaning and what you can learn about the original owner. Share your conclusions and try to guess the owner.*

*The instructor should then place participants in pairs into breakout rooms. Preferably, each participant will be paired with someone from a different country. Give participants ample time in breakout rooms to discuss the questions above.*

- 3. In-person option:** Come back to the large group and instruct each pair of students to share their conclusions and guess who the owner is. After all pairs have shared their thoughts, instruct each participant to reveal which is their item, the true nature and meaning of the item, their relationship to the item, and the relationship of that object to their culture.

**Virtual option:** *After returning to the main virtual room, instruct each pair of students to share their conclusions and guess who the owner is.*

*After all pairs have shared their thoughts, instruct each participant to reveal which is their item, the true nature and meaning of the item, their relationship to the item, and the relationship of that object to their culture.*

- 4. Both in-person and virtual options:** Debrief with the entire group.
  - What is something that was surprising to hear your peers assume about yourself and your object? What ended up being correct?
  - Why did you pick the object that you did? After doing this exercise is there an object you wish you had brought instead?
  - How can you use this exercise when looking at objects in an individual's home, at a shop, in a museum, etc.?
  - If you were not available to answer your peers' questions and present on your object, what misleading information would your peers learn? What can this teach us about culture?
  - What was the object you learned the most about today?