



# A Gift from the Past

## Reflecting on the City & County Building

### Objectives

#### Students will:

- Examine their feelings about the loss of a cultural artifact.
- Explore the concept of stewardship.
- Discuss citizens' responsibility to be good stewards of our resources.
- Create a poster to raise public awareness of the importance of stewardship.

### Teacher Background

This lesson uses the destruction of an alleged family heirloom to elicit student reaction to the loss of an unique cultural artifact. For your “heirloom,” choose an item that looks old and will break easily when dropped or knocked over. You may want to make a trip to the thrift store to find it. We leave it to you to develop the story surrounding your “heirloom.” The more actual details of your family history you weave into the story, the more heartfelt and believable your delivery will be. Emphasize how the “heirloom” connects you to people in the past. (i.e., My great-grandmother used this cup. She died before I was born, but this cup is something we share. It connects our lives.)

### Setting the Stage

- 1. Tell students:** Since we have been studying the history of the City and County Building, I want to share something special from my family history with you. Take out your heirloom and tell its story. Be sure to mention that it is a “gift from the past.”
- 2.** Ask students to close their eyes and think of an object that is very important to them, their own “gift from the past.” Remind students that objects can be important because they recall good memories or remind us of important people or events. Ask students to draw their special object and write a paragraph about why it is important to them.

### Student Instruction

- 1.** Inadvertently break the heirloom as you are putting it away.
- 2.** Ask students to share their feelings about the loss of the heirloom. After discussion, reveal that the object was not really a family heirloom.

### Materials

- An expendable china cup or other fragile item
- Large sheets of paper for creating posters
- Art supplies

### Core Curriculum Objectives

**3rd Grade**  
Social Studies  
6030-0502

**Utah Life Skills**  
Responsible Citizenship



3. Ask students to remember a time when something they loved and considered valuable was broken, lost, or destroyed. **Ask students:** *How did you feel? Was the object replaced? Did you feel as strongly about the new object? Are there some things that cannot be replaced? Think of examples.*

4. Explain that the City and County Building is a gift to all Utahns from people who lived in the past. **Ask students:** *How does the City and County Building help us learn about Utah's past? What is important about the building to you? Do you think the people who built the City and County Building wanted it to last a long time? If so, what makes you think that?*

5. **Ask students:** *Do we have a responsibility to take care of gifts from the past? What respect do we owe to people in the past? What responsibility do we have to people in the future? What will our world be like if we ruin gifts from the past?*

### Student Activity

1. As a class, brainstorm examples of irreplaceable gifts that citizens have a responsibility to take care of (i.e., works of art, historic buildings, water, wilderness, open space). For each gift, ask students to think of at least one way citizens can help make sure the gift is not ruined or destroyed.

2. Divide students into teams of two or three. Assign each team to create a poster for a public awareness campaign on the importance of taking care of gifts from the past and passing them on to the future. Display posters on a “Gifts from the Past—Gifts to the Future” bulletin board.

### Extensions

Read one of these books about the importance of stewardship:

Eve Bunting, *Someday a Tree*

Susan Vizurraga, *Our Old House*

Janice Shefelman, *Victoria House*

Lisa Campbell Ernst, *Squirrel Park*

Marcus Pfister, *Milo and the Magical Stones*

Kristine L. Franklin, *When the Monkeys Came Back*

George Ancona, *Riverkeeper*

Agra Carment Deedy, *Agatha's Feather Bed*