

Learning with



Artifact Description Sheets

FOR THE TEACHER

The nine artifacts included in the Artifact Exploration Kit are modern reproductions of actual artifacts excavated at seven different national historic sites in Nova Scotia, a site associated with a national historic event (the Black Loyalist Experience at Birchtown), and an international historic site (the Melanson Settlement at Saint Croix Island). Detailed information on each object is included in this kit; the information may be shared prior to or during the activities. Students can use the Analyzing Artifacts activity sheet (see Activity 7 in the *Learning with Objects* Appendix) to aid in their exploration of the objects.

BONE BODKIN

MELANSON SETTLEMENT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Function
(How was it used?)

A bone bodkin is a long, thick needle with a ballpoint end and usually has a large, elongated eye. The bone bodkin can be flat or round and is generally used for threading elastic, ribbon, or tape through casings and lace openings.



Site Description
(Description of site where artifact was found)

Melanson Settlement contains the archaeological remains of a pre-Deportation Acadian community (c.1664–1755). The archaeological resources of the site reflect the family communities settled by Acadians and the unique dykeland agriculture practised along the Annapolis River (formerly the Dauphin River).

Material
(What was it made of?)

bone (usually deer bone)

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

Sawn and filed with drilled hole

Date
(When was it made?)

18th century (modern reproduction)

Ascription
(Where was it made?)

Unknown

Size
(How big is it?)

Length—8.9 cm; width (at widest point)—0.7 cm; diameter of hole—0.1 cm

Status
(Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)

Every day

Comments

A very similar complete bone bodkin was excavated at the Melanson Settlement National Historic Site.

Artifact-Related Websites

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/melanson/index.aspx>

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/melanson/natcul/natcull.aspx>

2 WATCH FOB (SEAL)

CANSO ISLANDS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
(GRASSY ISLAND FORT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE)

Function
(How was it used?)

Originally would have been attached to a pocket watch with a ribbon/chain on a gentleman's trousers or waistcoat; fobs were pressed into a blob of hot wax to seal letters. Letters in the 18th century were not placed in envelopes but were folded with the name and/or address applied to the back of a page.



Site Description
(Description of site where artifact was found)

Grassy Island Fort National Historic Site of Canada, located on Grassy Island, one of the Canso Islands, features the ruins of 18th century fortifications and the remains of a colonial New England fishing station that are the reminders of a thriving community that was once the commercial heart of Nova Scotia.

Material
(What was it made of?)

Metal (Brass)

Decoration

The metal itself has curved features but no surface decoration. Normally fobs had engraved initials, coats-of-arms, or decorative images. This example is undecorated.

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

Cast

Date
(When was it made?)

18th century (modern reproduction)

Ascription
(Where was it made?)

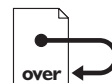
Unknown

Size
(How big is it?)

Length—2.8 cm; Width—2.0 cm; Height—2.8 cm

Status
(Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)

Fairly high status. This artifact would be used on special occasions by a gentleman.



Comments Archaeologists did find a watch fob while excavating the property of Edward How, an important 18th century merchant who lived on Grassy Island (Canso Islands National Historic Site). They also found a watch key, which would have dangled from the same ribbon or chain as the fob.

**Artifact-Related
Websites**

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/canso/index.aspx>

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/canso/index.aspx>

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/canso/natcul.aspx>

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/canso/natcul.aspx>

http://www.pc.gc.ca/apprendre-learn/prof/proj/schoolnet-rescol/PCimages/nova_scotia/grassy_island/T02f_e.htm

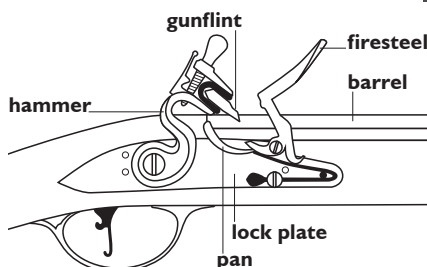
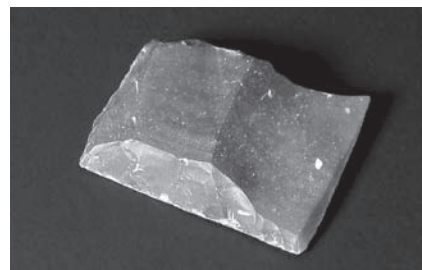
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GUNFLINT

FORT ANNE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Function
(How was it used?)

Weaponry—used in a musket gun; creates a spark when it hits a metal plate (firesteel), creating sparks that fall into the pan to ignite the powder and fire the shot (see illustration below).



Site Description
(Description of site where artifact was found)

Fort Anne National Historic Site of Canada is Canada's oldest—a present-day reminder of a time when conflict between Europe's empire builders was acted out on the shores of the Annapolis River.

Material
(What was it made of?)

Lithic (stone)

Decoration
(Describe)

None

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

Hand-knapped, blade type gunflint

Date
(When was it made?)

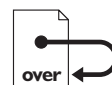
18th century (modern reproduction)

Ascription
(Where was it made?)

France

Size
(How big is it?)

Length—3.1 cm; Width (at widest point)—2.7 cm;
Height—1.3 cm



Status (Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)	Every day (hunting and military)
Comments	Gunflints are fairly common in colonial archaeological collections. Similar ones have been found at Fort Anne National Historic Site, the scene of much military activity in the 18th century.
Artifact-Related Websites	http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/fortanne/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/fortanne/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/fortanne/natcul.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/fortanne/natcul.aspx

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WAMPUM/TRADE BEADS

PORT-ROYAL HABITATION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE AND
SAINT CROIX ISLAND INTERNATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Function (How was it used?)

Europeans used these for trade with Aboriginal people, who would use these beads to decorate clothing and to make ceremonial wampum belts. The word “wampum” is thought to be derived from an Aboriginal word meaning “white shell,” as the beads were originally made in shell and strung on thin sinew (“wampum style”).



Site Description (Description of site where artifact was found)

Port-Royal Habitation National Historic Site:

This national historic site features a reconstruction of early 17th century buildings representing the former colony of the French who settled for a time along the Nova Scotian coast. Costumed interpreters and period demonstrations help recreate the look and feel of Port-Royal, one of the earliest settlements in North America.

Saint Croix Island International Historic Site (the beginning of a permanent European presence in northern North America):

The winter of 1604–1605 on Saint Croix Island was a cruel one for Pierre Dugua’s French expedition. Iced in by freezing temperatures and cut off from fresh water and game, thirty-five of the seventy-nine men died. As spring arrived and native people traded game for bread, the health of those remaining improved. Although the expedition moved on by summer, the beginning of French presence in North America had begun.

Material (What was it made of?)

Glass (tubular form)

Decoration (Describe)

Blue and white colours

Manufacture (How was it made?)

Glass blown and cut into tubes

Date (When was it made?)

17th–18th century (modern reproduction)



Ascription (Where was it made?)	Unknown
Size (How big is it?)	Each bead: 3.5 mm X 10 mm
Status (Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)	Could be used every day in trade; wampum belts themselves could be worn on special occasions/ceremonies
Comments	<p>Aboriginal people originally made their own wampum beads out of blue/deep purple and white shell and used them to mark marriages, engagements, and betrothal agreements, as well as using them in ceremonies. Early colonial people used wampum beads for currency with Aboriginal people.</p> <p>Europeans produced glass versions of these and they were very popular in the fur trade. Similar beads were found during excavations at Saint Croix Island International Historic Site, where the French settlers who founded the Port-Royal Habitation stayed in the winter of 1604–1605, just before they came to Nova Scotia.</p>
Artifact-Related Websites	<p>Port-Royal Habitation National Historic Site http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/portroyal/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/portroyal/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/portroyal/natcul/histor.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/portroyal/natcul/histor.aspx</p> <p>Saint Croix Island International Historic Site http://www.nps.gov/sacr/index.htm http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/nb/stcroix/index.aspx</p>

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FRENCH 18TH CENTURY COIN (ÉCU)

FORTRESS OF LOUISBOURG NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Function
(How was it used?)

Commerce; used as currency



Site Description
(Description of site where artifact was found)

The Fortress of Louisbourg is the largest reconstructed 18th century French fortified town in North America. Ramparts, streets, households, and interpreters help to create the look, texture, and mood of another century. Cannons on stone ramparts, a busy waterfront tavern, and the crackling of a kitchen fire all tell how people of a different age lived and worked.

Material
(What was it made of?)

Silver (reproduction made from white metal alloy)

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

Disc punched from sheet metal, then stamped

Decoration
(Describe)

One side of the coin has four crowns circling four centre fleur-de-lis that form a cross and are interspersed with four double L's (for Louis); the rim is marked with "1725" and "SIT.NOMEN.DOM.H.BENEDICT," Latin for *Béni soit le nom du Seigneur* (Blessed be the name of the Lord).

The other side of the coin has a bust profile of a man wearing a laurel crown with a breastplate decorated with an image of the sun; the rim includes the following text: "LUD.XV.DG.FR ET NAV.REX," Latin for *Louis XV, par la grâce de Dieu, roi de France et Navarre* (Louis XV, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre).

Date
(When was it made?)

1725 (modern reproduction)—King Louis XV ruled from 1715 to 1774

Ascription
(Where was it made?)

France (modern reproduction)



Size (How big is it?)	Diameter—3.8 cm; Height—0.3 cm
Status (Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)	Fairly high status
Comments	A common French soldier on campaign in the mid-18th century earned about one écu every two months.
Artifact-Related Websites	http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/louisbourg/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/louisbourg/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/louisbourg/natcul.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/louisbourg/natcul.aspx http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89cu

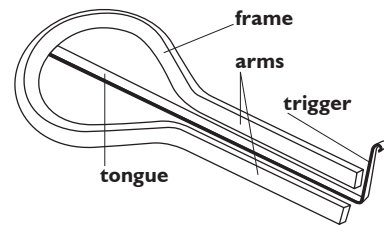
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JAW'S HARP

GRAND-PRÉ NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Function
(How was it used?)

The rounded part of the Jaw's harp is held between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand. The narrow part of the frame should be positioned on the teeth of the performer. A small, bent, metal tongue inside the frame is then plucked by the finger of the performer to vibrate the tongue producing tones.



Site Description
(Description of site
where artifact was found)

Grand-Pré National Historic Site of Canada commemorates the Grand-Pré area as a centre of Acadian settlement from 1682 to 1755 and the Deportation of the Acadians, which began in 1755 and continued until 1762.

Material
(What was it made of?)

Cast iron with a steel tongue

Decoration
(Describe)

None

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

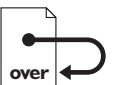
Cast in a mould

Date
(When was it made?)

Jaw's harps were used as far back as the Middle Ages. This example is a modern reproduction of an 18th century Jaw's harp.

Ascription
(Where was it made?)

Unknown



Size (How big is it?)	Length—9 cm; Width (at widest point)—4.5 cm; Width of tongue—0.5 cm; Length of tongue (minus hook)—9 cm; Length of hook—2 cm; Width of hook—0.3 cm
Status (Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)	Every day
Comments	Part of a brass Jaw's harp was found during excavations at Grand-Pré, although it was smaller than this example.
Artifact-Related Websites	http://www.music.vt.edu/musicdictionary/textj/Jewsharp.html http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/ns/grandpre/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/grandpre/index.aspx http://www.grand-pre.com/index.php http://www.grand-pre.com/en/virtual-excavation.html http://www.grand-pre.com/fr/fouilles-virtuelles.html http://www.grand-pre.com/en/for-teachers.html (high school activity) http://www.grand-pre.com/fr/consignes-pour-les-enseignants.html (high school activity) http://www.grand-pre.com/fr/

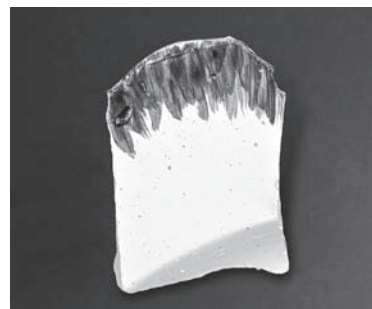
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PLATTER RIM SHERD

BLACK LOYALIST EXPERIENCE NATIONAL HISTORIC EVENT (BIRCHTOWN, NS)

Function
(How was it used?)

To serve food



Site Description
(Description of site where artifact was found)

In the 1780s, Birchtown harboured the largest concentration of free Black settlers anywhere in British North America. Though the story is a painful catalogue of broken promises and lost hope, it also represents the years of trial from which emerged the strong African Canadian community of today's Nova Scotia. After the American War of Independence, the area of Shelburne and nearby Birchtown was a major centre of Loyalist settlement. Britain had promised freedom and land to Black Loyalists who supported the British cause in America, and 3,550 former slaves had taken them up on the offer. The land grants were slow in coming and proved to be small, poor quality, and isolated. Many of the Black Loyalists starved while waiting. In 1795, over half of Birchtown's Black inhabitants left for Sierra Leone in Africa. Many of those who remained gradually left in search of work. Today, Birchtown survives as a small hamlet where descendents of the original Black Loyalists operate a museum presenting the experiences of this historic community.

Note: Excavations at Birchtown were conducted by the Province of Nova Scotia and the collections are housed at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Material
(What was it made of?)

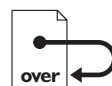
Ceramic (made from white clay)

Decoration
(Describe)

Curved incised rim edge that resembles a shell form; the glaze was hand-painted cobalt blue edge

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

Pressed into a mould by hand and glazed in a coal-fired kiln



Date (When was it made?)	Circa 1780–1840 (modern reproduction)
Ascription (Where was it made?)	England
Size (How big is it?)	Varies
Status (Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)	Every day
Comments	Sherds from similar platters were excavated at the site of a house in Birchtown believed to be owned by Stephen Buckle, the commander of the Black Pioneers and the leader designated by the British government to lead the settlers at Birchtown.
Artifact-Related Websites	http://www.pc.gc.ca/culture/mhn-bhm/page2.aspx#even http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/culture/mhn-bhm/page2.aspx http://museum.gov.ns.ca/arch/sites/btown/index.html http://museum.gov.ns.ca/arch/sites/btown/pages/sites/akdi23.html http://museum.gov.ns.ca/arch/sites/btown/pages/artifacts.html http://museum.gov.ns.ca/arch/sites/btown/pages/people.html



PROJECTILE POINT (SPEAR HEAD)

KEJIMKUJIK NATIONAL PARK AND NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Function
(How was it used?)

Originally was attached to a wooden shaft using split wood or sinew. Used to spear mammals, including animals as large as moose.



Site Description
(Description of site where artifact was found)

Kejimkujik National Park and National Historic site has a rich Aboriginal history. Archaeologists have found many examples there of Aboriginal projectile points and tools. Kejimkujik is also known for its petroglyphs (a drawing or carving on rock).

Material
(What was it made of?)

Lithic (stone)

Decoration
(Describe)

None

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

Originally side-notched by hand using another stone. Ridges produced by using a bone to make pressure flakes.

Date
(When was it made?)

Original would have been made about 2,000–2,500 years ago. This is a modern reproduction using a mould made from the original artifact.

Ascription
(Where was it made?)

Aboriginal; probably made in the area we now call Nova Scotia (formerly part of Mi'kma'k, the seven districts of the Mi'kmaq)

Size
(How big is it?)

Length—8.5 cm; Width (at widest point)—2.5 cm

Status
(Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)

Every day

Artifact-Related Websites

<http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~mdeal/Anth3291/notes6.htm>
<http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ns/kejimkujik/index.aspx>
<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/ns/kejimkujik/index.aspx>
<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/ns/kejimkujik/natcul/natcul7.aspx>
<http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/pn-np/ns/kejimkujik/natcul/natcul7.aspx>

9 REGIMENTAL BUTTON (78TH HIGHLANDERS)

HALIFAX CITADEL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Function
(How was it used?)

To fasten a soldier's jacket (doublet). The button has a curved eye on the underside that would have been threaded for fastening.



Site Description
(Description of site where artifact was found)

The Halifax Citadel has been commemorated as a nationally significant symbol of Halifax's role as a principal naval station in the British Empire and of the city's importance to Canada's development and evolution from colony to nation. The Halifax Citadel was formally recognized as a significant symbol of Canadian nationhood when it was designated as a National Historic Site in 1951.

Material
(What was it made of?)

Metal (Brass)

Decoration
(Describe)

Elephant in the centre with a crown above and wreath of laurels below. Between the elephant and the wreath is the number 78 representing the 78th Seaforth Highlanders, a British (Scottish) Regiment that served at the Halifax Citadel between 1869 and 1871. Around the top of the button are the words "Assaye," "Maida," and "Java," locations of significant battles in which the regiment participated. On the underside of the button, "Fermin, London" (manufacturer). The crown stands for Queen Victoria. The elephant is associated with the 78th Highlanders victory in the 1808 battle of Assaye, India. At the Halifax Citadel today, historical re-enactors dress and perform as the 78th Highlanders.

Manufacture
(How was it made?)

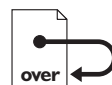
Two-piece domed button; stamped into a mould

Date
(When was it made?)

Originally circa 1840–1881 (this is a modern reproduction)

Ascription
(Where was it made?)

London, England



Size (How big is it?)	Diameter—2.5 cm
Status (Who used it? Was it used every day or for special occasions?)	Every day
Artifact-Related Websites	http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/halifax/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/halifax/index.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/ns/halifax/natcul.aspx http://www.pc.gc.ca/fra/lhn-nhs/ns/halifax/natcul.aspx