

# Wanted: History Detectives



## Background Information for Teachers

This program frames the series as an investigation of Wisconsin's history. Historical research is described as a process in which historians use a variety of investigative methods to examine historical topics, and historical evidence is introduced as clues to the past. The program defines history as a story of change, and encourages students to find personal meaning in the historical stories they investigate.

## Program Synopsis

Angie, the host of *Investigating Wisconsin History*, introduces herself as she looks through a family photograph album. A photograph of Angie's great-grandmother, who was a schoolteacher, sparks her curiosity. Angie wonders how she can learn more about her great-grandmother's life, and she embarks on a journey to investigate. Angie learns how written records, objects, and visual images such as photographs can help historians understand the past.

**Note:** Some activities in this chapter ask students to explore their own personal histories. To be sensitive to the needs of adoptees, foster children, or recent immigrants, you may wish to give students other options. For example, allow them to investigate a topic or time period that is of interest to them.

## Program Goals

Students will:

- consider the meaning and importance of history.
- learn that historical research is an investigative process.
- be introduced to a variety of methods for investigating history.
- learn that their own experience is an important part of Wisconsin's history.
- learn that history and historical evidence is all around them.
- understand that history involves multiple perspectives.



Angie, the host of Investigating Wisconsin History.

## Focus Questions

What is history? Why is it important? How do people learn about it?

## Career Connections

historian, curator, tour guide, archivist

## Clues in Program 1

Each clue's category is noted in parentheses. For **information about the categories**, see pages 24-25.

- photographs (Visual Images)
- artifacts from old schools (Objects)
- teacher contract, student grade book, and personal accounts (Written Records)

- information from experts\* (People)

\*Indicates clues seen in Program 1 but not mentioned specifically by Angie.

## Vocabulary

Words set in italics are not used in Program 1 but are relevant for classroom discussion.

**analyze** — To consider the possible meaning and significance of historical evidence

*ancestor* — A relative born in an earlier generation; e.g., parent, grandparent, great-grandparent

**archives** — A place where paper materials (e.g., maps, diaries, letters, photographs) are stored and preserved

**artifacts** — Historical objects

**chronological** — Events arranged in the order of occurrence in time

**curator** — A person who collects, studies, and preserves museum collections

**evidence** — A thing or things helpful in forming a conclusion or judgment

**exhibit** — A display

**historian** — A person who studies historical stories and tries to understand what happened and why

**history** — A chronological record of real people and real events

*interpret* — To analyze historical evidence in order to create meaning or understanding

**landscape** — The physical environment, both natural and human-made

**living history** — An educational program offered at some historic sites, in which a building is restored and furnished to represent a specific date; guides dress in period clothing and undertake activities of the period

**preserve** — To protect from harm or deterioration

*reproduction* — A new item created to duplicate an old item, such as a reproduction book, tool, or piece of furniture

**restore** — To return an object or building to its original appearance

## Guide Resources

- Investigating the Mystery of History graphic organizer (p. 26)
- Investigative Clues chart (p. 27)
- Wisconsin political outline map (p. 28)
- The Mystery of My History student assessment activity (pp. 11-14)
- The 1872 Heritage School Rules for Teachers (p. 15)
- Teacher Contract and Payment Record, 1846-47 (pp. 16-17)

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*The Raspberry School at Old World Wisconsin.*

- Schools, Past and Present extension activity (p. 18)
- Old photograph (p. 19)

### Pre-Viewing Activities

Ask students to name the most important thing that happened to them yesterday. Compare and discuss answers. Why do the students think their answers varied? Relate this discussion to the concept that historians make decisions about what to investigate based on what they think is important. What happens when people don't agree on what is important? Who gets to decide?

### Viewing Activities

Angie asks a number of questions during Program 1 that are intended to provoke thought and discussion, making them good pause points. (Page xviii offers viewing techniques.)

- What was it like to go to school a long time ago?
- What is history?
- Do you think you would all agree on what's important? What do you think is the most important thing that happened yesterday?\*
- How was my great-grandmother's job different from teachers' jobs today? How have classrooms changed? How about the clothes students wear?

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*Students pose with their teacher in this late nineteenth-century classroom.*

- Who could afford a camera or afford to have their picture taken? Why did people choose to pose with certain things?
- How does your classroom compare (with the one in 1906)? What's different? What's the same?
- What can you tell about the students (from these photographs)? How about the teachers?

- Can you think of other kinds of clues (besides photographs to help learn about the history of schools)?
- If someone looked in your backpack today, what might that person learn about you?
- Think about a championship basketball game. Would someone who played in the game write about it differently than someone who watched the game?
- Why do you think studying history is important?\*

\*Question is answered by the students in Program 1.



*A student at the State Normal School, Oshkosh, about 1929.*

## Post-Viewing Activities

1. Ask students why they think history is important, and discuss their responses. Guide them to understand that history is important because it helps people today understand the choices people made in the past. Emphasize that it is important to respect the past, and that the role of historians is to understand — not to judge — what happened. Remind students that, as they study Wisconsin's history, they will need to use their imaginations to understand the situations people were in and the choices they made.
2. Have students compare how history is like a story. Discuss the comments Angie makes at the end of the program. Ask students to reflect on what these words mean to them.
3. Label Angie's destinations in Program 1, listed below, on the [Wisconsin political outline map](#) (p. 28). For additional site information, see Angie's Destinations on page 10. (Geography connection)
  - Sheboygan Falls ([Sheboygan County Historical Research Center](#))

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- Green Bay (Neville Public Museum of Brown County)
- La Crosse (Smith Valley School Museum)
- Madison (State Historical Society of Wisconsin)

**Note:** This mapping activity will be carried through the entire series.

### **Student Activity for Assessment**

The Mystery of My History activity (pp. 11-14) introduces the graphic organizer that will be used in activities throughout the *Investigating Wisconsin History* video series. This tool, along with the Investigative Clues chart, will help students to organize and evaluate the clues of historical research.

### **Extension Activities**

1. Invite a curator, historian, or archivist to visit the class to discuss his or her job.
2. Take a field trip to a local museum or historical society. Ask if a curator can show the class the storage area or discuss behind-the-scene aspects of being a curator. For a list of historical societies in Wisconsin, refer to *Celebrating Everyday Life in Wisconsin History* (see Teacher Resources, under References and Resources, on page 9).
3. Prompt students to investigate the history of their own household by finding the oldest object in their house. What is it and why is it there? (This could correlate with Extension Activity 4.)
4. Conduct an artifact analysis exercise by showing students several items that are not familiar to them (e.g., obsolete kitchen gadgets or tools, flea market finds, etc.). Or, ask students to bring in artifacts from their own homes that might stump their classmates. Have them study each object, then ask the following questions. Compare the students' answers.
  - How might the object have been used?
  - Who might have made, owned, or used it?

*Artifacts help historians understand the people who made, owned, or used them.*



When students return with their maps, post the maps on a bulletin board and compare them. How extensive an area does the geographical/historical map of the students' combined experiences cover? (This activity is adapted from *My Backyard History Book*; see Teacher Literature, under References and Resources, on page 10.) (Geography connection)

9. Ask students to draw pictures of important events in their own life histories (e.g., getting a pet, first day of school, moving to a new neighborhood). The images then can be assembled to create a pictorial time line. (Art connection)
10. Share the [1872 Heritage School Rules for Teachers](#) (p. 15) and [Teacher Contract and Payment Record](#) (pp. 16-17) with students. What can they determine about the life of schoolteachers from these archival records? Ask them to write an informative essay based on these documents. (Language Arts connection)
11. Share the following historical quotation from Program 1: "In our one-room school, we had just a wood stove for heat. Students near the stove roasted while their schoolmates sitting away from the stove did not warm up until midmorning." (Paraphrased from "Little Prairie School," by Stanley A. Sprecher, in *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 1955.)  
Ask students to write an imaginative essay based on this quotation. (Language Arts connection)
12. Share the photograph of the two girls (p. 19). Help students interpret what they see. What clues might help students identify the date the photograph was taken? Why might the props (flour bags, dolls, vase) that appear in the photograph have been chosen?
13. Gather historic photographs or postcards of schools in your community. These can be found at antique stores or local flea markets, from school yearbooks and archival collections, or may be available for duplication at local historical societies.  
Show students the oldest photograph and have them study it for clues (clothing, furniture, equipment, etc.) that show what life was like for the students who attended school at that time.

Ask them to identify things that have changed over time. What has stayed the same? Do the same with other photos.

Distribute the **Schools, Past and Present activity** (p. 18) to students. They may either work alone, in pairs, or as a class (using an overhead projector or a large tagboard chart). Help students analyze the evidence they record. What other types of research would help them learn more about the schools they are comparing?

14. Arrange a visit to a restored school. Many restored school-houses in Wisconsin offer tours; contact your local historical society for suggestions. Several restored historic schools that offer tours are listed on page 88 of the *Exploring Wisconsin Our Home* teacher guide (see Teacher Resources, under References and Resources, on page 9).
15. Take a walking field trip of your community, or go to the town square or city center. What historical evidence can be found? What clues do old architecture, sculpture, monuments, and murals provide?

## References and Resources

### ***Teacher Resources***

*Another Look: Wisconsin Photographs Past and Present*, by Bobbie Malone.

Wisconsin Historical Society, 1998, ISBN 0870202979 (paperback).

This educational packet contains 16 pairs of photographs showing a historic image and a modern view of the same place or subject, as well as a teacher guide and teaching suggestions. Available from the [University of Wisconsin Press](#); to order, see page 37.

*Celebrating Everyday Life in Wisconsin History: A Classroom Exhibit Resource and Planning Guide*, by Bobbie Malone. Wisconsin Historical Society, 1997, ISBN 0870203002. This idea-filled packet, distributed statewide to school libraries, helps teachers and students explore the history that occurs close to home. Research and exhibit ideas focus on five themes: the seasons, changes in work, changes in foodways, childhood, and the built environment. Available through the [University of Wisconsin Press](#); to order, see page 37.

*Exploring Wisconsin Our Home*. [Wisconsin Educational Communications Board](#), 1995. This 220-page teacher guide (item #20247) supports the award-winning instructional television series of the same name. Available from the ECB; to order, visit [www.ecb.org/history/abouttheguide.htm](http://www.ecb.org/history/abouttheguide.htm).

*National Standards for History*, from the National Center for History in the Schools. University of California-Los Angeles, 1996.

### ***Teacher Literature***

*My Backyard History Book*, by David Weitzman. Little, Brown, 1975, ISBN 0316929018 (hardcover), 0316929026 (paperback). This book contains numerous activities designed to help students ages 9 to 12 explore their own family and community history.

*One-Room Country Schools: History and Recollections from Wisconsin*, by Jerry Apps. Amherst Press, 1996, ISBN 0942495535. This volume provides a wealth of local history for anyone interested in knowing more about early Wisconsin schools.

### ***Student Literature***

*Early Schools*, by Bobbie Kalman. Crabtree, 1982, ISBN 0865050155 (hardcover), 0865050147 (paperback). This book — one in the Early Settler Life series — offers a good overview of life in a pioneer school. Ages 9-12.

## **Angie's Destinations**

For more information about these sites, which Angie visited in Program 1, contact:

### [Smith Valley School Museum](#)

N3393 Smith Valley Road, La Crosse, WI 54601-2988  
Telephone: 608/783-3497

### [Sheboygan County Historical Research Center](#)

518 Water Street, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085-1455  
Telephone: 920/467-4667

### [Archives Reading Room](#)

Wisconsin Historical Society  
816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706-1482  
Telephone: 608/264-6460

### [Neville Public Museum of Brown County](#)

210 Museum Place, Green Bay, WI 54303-2780  
Telephone: 920/448-4460

# The Mystery of My History

## Time Needed

About 45 minutes

## Activity Goal

Students will apply and evaluate three methods of historical inquiry in their own investigation.

## Materials

- Student copies of the [Investigating the Mystery of History graphic organizer](#) (p. 26) and a set of eight [Investigative Clues charts](#) per student (p. 27)\*
- Student copies of [The Mystery of My History activity](#) (p. 14)
- [Teacher example](#) of The Mystery of My History activity (p. 13)

\* The graphic organizer and the charts will be helpful tools for remembering the different clues used to investigate history. These tools are referenced in subsequent chapters (under Post-Viewing Activities); it is recommended that they be used throughout the series.

## Teacher Instructions

1. Use the Investigating the Mystery of History graphic organizer to review the three main types of clues (photographs, artifacts, and archival records) that Angie used to investigate the life of her great-grandmother, the schoolteacher. Only three of the eight investigative methods will be discussed (i.e., objects, visual images, and written records). Other methods will be discussed in future programs.
2. Use the appropriate Investigative Clues charts to critique the advantages and limitations of each of these three clues. Is some evidence better than others? How do historians account for people who didn't leave any objects behind, didn't write their stories down, or didn't have their photos taken?

**Note:** Steps 1 and 2 can be done with a large group or individually.

3. Distribute copies of The Mystery of My History student activity and ask them to discuss the clues with family members. This project requires students to apply their understanding of the three investigative methods discussed in Program 1. See the teacher example on page 13.

**Note:** This activity asks students to investigate what life was like the year they were born. To be sensitive to the needs of adoptees, foster children, or recent immigrants, you may wish to give students other options. For example, they could write a story about a special day in their lives, such as the first day of school.

### Criteria for Assessment

Students are proficient in the stated goals of this activity if they:

- appropriately apply the discussed investigative methods to their question.
- recognize the limitations of each method.

## The Mystery of My History

Your first mystery mission is to investigate what life was like the year you were born or another important year in your life. Use the clues listed below to solve your personal mystery. Talk with your family about the clues. For each clue, record what you learn and make note of problems you had with the clue. Use what you have learned to write a summary of what life was like in the year you are investigating.

**I Am Investigating the Year** \_\_\_\_\_

Clues	What I learned from the clue	Problems I had with the clue
Photographs, videotape	<p><i>Our house had not been fixed up yet. Mom and Dad had different hairstyles and clothes. A game of checkers was set up. Dad said he and Mom used to play checkers a lot. Now we just play games on the computer.</i></p> <p><i>Cars in our neighborhood looked a lot different. There weren't as many houses.</i></p>	<i>The pictures and video only showed our house and the hospital.</i>
Written materials	<p><i>My parents saved a newspaper from the day I was born. It gave weather information and news. It showed what our town looked like and the clothes people wore.</i></p> <p><i>I also have a baby book. I read a list of people who sent me a baby card. I don't know most of them.</i></p>	<i>I didn't really understand the news stories. It was hard to read the writing.</i>
Objects	<i>A piggy bank was given to me when I was born. I guess money was important. The basement couch was in our living room then. It has a really strange design. I guess that was the style. An outfit from when I was a newborn is really small!</i>	<i>We only had a few things from when I was born.</i>

## The Mystery of My History

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your first mystery mission is to investigate what life was like the year you were born or another important year in your life. Use the clues listed below to solve your personal mystery. Talk with your family about the clues. For each clue, record what you learn and make note of problems you had with the clue. Use what you have learned to write a summary of what life was like in the year you are investigating.

I Am Investigating the Year \_\_\_\_\_

Clues	What I learned from the clue	Problems I had with the clue
Photographs, videotape		
Written materials		
Objects		

# 1872 Heritage School Rules for Teachers

Courtesy of Sheboygan Area School District HERITAGE SCHOOL Research Records.

## SHEBOYGAN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

1. Teachers each day will fill lamps and clean chimneys.
2. Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's session.
3. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual taste of the pupils.
4. Men teachers may take an evening each week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.
5. After ten hours in school, the teachers may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.
6. Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.
7. Every teacher should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.
8. Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity and honesty.
9. The teacher who performs his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of twenty-five cents per week in his pay, providing the Board of Education approves.

# 1846-47 Teacher Contract and Payments

Courtesy of Sheboygan Area School District HERITAGE SCHOOL Research Records.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS CITY OF SHEBOYGAN FALLS

I do hereby agree with the Trustees of School District No. 2 in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin Territory, to teach at their school at Sheboygan Falls for \$14 per calendar month and for four months, except Sundays and every other Saturday, and board during this time amongst the patrons of this school or at their expense (at their option), and to commence services on the 20th of October 1846.

**Joel B. Foster**

Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin Territory  
September 18, 1846

We, the Trustees of School District No. 2 of Sheboygan County at Sheboygan Falls, agree to pay Joel B. Foster \$56 out of the money appropriated to our school district and such monies as may be collected for the purpose of paying the teacher and for teaching at our school for four calendar months from the 20th day of October 1846 (except every other Saturday and Sundays); he boarding among the patrons of the school or they pay his board at their option provided always that he obtain a certificate of qualification from the school commissions and that he gives general satisfaction.

**Chas. D. Cole**

**Wm. W. Robinson**

Trustees of School District No. 2  
Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin Territory  
September 18, 1846

This is to certify that J. B. Foster has taught school in district no. 2 at Sheboygan Falls for the term of 3 months and 11 days at \$14 per month; amount is \$48.42.

**Chas. D. Cole**

Received of C. D. Cole, one of the trustees of the above school district, the sum of \$25.00, it being in part pay for teaching said school for the term above mentioned.

**J. B. Foster**

J. B. Foster has taught school on the above contract through 3 months and 11 days, amounting to \$48.42, and I have paid him out of the same \$25 — the balance \$23.42 to be paid in April 1847, after the apportionment of the school funds is made by the county commissioner at the quarterly meeting in April.

**Chas. D. Cole**

Trustee of School District No. 2  
Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin Territory  
February 4, 1847

Received the whole balance, \$48.42, from C. D. Cole on June 7, 1847, for teaching school in the above during the winter of '46-47.

**Joel B. Foster**

## Schools, Past and Present

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in the chart below as you compare and contrast schools of long ago with schools of today.

How were schools 100 years ago <b>similar to</b> modern schools?	How were schools 100 years ago <b>different from</b> modern schools?



# How to Use This Guide

This teacher guide will enable you to make the best use of *Investigating Wisconsin History* in your classroom. It contains suggested activities, which are designed to appeal to multiple learning styles and intelligences, to help you incorporate the video programs into your curriculum.

Each chapter corresponds to a program in the video series and offers activity suggestions specific to that program. There also are several techniques and activities designed to be used consistently throughout the series.

In addition to introducing and reinforcing content about Wisconsin history, *Investigating Wisconsin History* will help students understand how to investigate historical questions. If the series is used in its entirety, students will learn which tools and methodologies historians employ as they search for new understandings of the past. Students also will develop critical thinking skills as they analyze new information.

## Teacher Preview

It is always worthwhile to preview each program before sharing it with your class. In particular, look for points where you may wish to pause the videotape and discuss a question or idea with students.

In each program, Angie, the host of *Investigating Wisconsin History*, asks one or more questions that are answered by target-age children in the program. Angie also asks questions that are not answered directly in the program. Both types of questions are listed in each chapter of the teacher guide, under the heading “Viewing Activities.” As you preview the program, listen for these questions so you will know when to pause the videotape.

## Pre-Viewing Activities

Pre-viewing questions or activities are offered in each chapter. You may want to create word maps on the chalkboard as students brainstorm responses.

Before viewing a program, ask your class the questions that Angie asks of the children who appear in the video program. These questions are listed under the heading “Viewing Activities” and are marked with an asterisk. Record the students’ responses. After viewing the program, compare their responses to the ones given by the children in the program.

### ***Expanded KWL Charts***

You may wish to create an expanded KWL chart on a chalkboard or an overhead projector to help students focus their thoughts about topics presented in the programs. Traditional KWL charts employ three columns: “What I Know,” “What I Want to Know,” and “What I Learned.” Students complete the first two columns prior to beginning an activity, and finish the third after the activity.

An expanded KWL chart used in conjunction with *Investigating Wisconsin History* could include two additional columns. The first two columns stay the same. Label the third column “Where Can I Find Out” and encourage students to brainstorm ideas for pursuing their questions. This will reinforce the inquiry methodologies presented in the video programs. Label the fourth column “What I Learned,” and label the final column “What I May Never Know.” This will help students identify historical questions that can be hypothesized but never answered with certainty.

## **Student Viewing Activities**

As mentioned earlier, Angie asks a number of questions during each program that are not immediately answered. These questions are intended to provoke thought and discussion. Pausing the tape for discussion at one or more of these points during each program can maximize students’ learning potential.

### ***“Fact or Opinion?” Activity***

The “Fact or Opinion?” activity helps students develop their critical thinking and observation skills. This activity appears in printed form in Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 7. If you wish to use the “Fact or Opinion?” activity with other programs, provide students with several statements from the video before they view it. After seeing the program, students can mark which statements are facts and which ones are opinions.

## **Post-Viewing Activities**

### ***Have Map, Will Travel***

In this continuing activity, students will become acquainted with geographic locations that Angie, the series host, visits in the *Investigating Wisconsin History* video programs. Each chapter in this guide contains a list of these locations. (If a particular location is very rural, the nearest town is noted.)

Using a Wisconsin Department of Transportation Official State Highway Map, students will use the map’s coordinates to locate communities of, or nearest, the featured sites. (You can obtain these maps at tourist information centers and by

contacting the office of your local state legislator.) Students then will plot and label the sites on the political outline map of Wisconsin (page 28). You can provide students with a fresh outline map for each program, or have them use the same map for the entire series.

### ***Time Line***

Chapters 3 through 11 contain a program-specific time line that notes milestones relating to the program's topic. You may want to post a long time line in your classroom, and ask students to plot the milestones after viewing each program. This activity will help students gain a sense of chronology and understand the chronological perspective of key events.

### ***Original Documents***

Some chapters contain reproductions of original documents pertaining to the program topic. Using the document and activity suggestions will enhance students' ability to examine primary documents critically.

### ***In Their Own Words***

Some chapters contain a sampling of original descriptions or thoughts relating to the topic. These can be read aloud in class or used to facilitate discussion. (Some quotes have been edited slightly for punctuation or fourth-grade readability.) For example, you might ask: What does the quote say about the time period in which it was written? What does it say about the experience and perspective of the author? Or, ask students to choose one quote and write an imaginative story about the author and his or her experience.

### ***Extension Activities across the Curriculum***

Chapters 1 through 11 in this teacher guide offer an Extension Activities section that describes ways of integrating a program's theme into various curricular areas. Activities that are relevant to curricular areas other than history — such as language arts, science, mathematics, or art — have the curriculum correlation noted in parentheses. The list below indicates which chapters feature extension activities for the various curricular areas.

- Art ..... Chapters 1, 2, 4-11
- Dance ..... Chapter 6
- Drama ..... Chapters 2, 5, 9
- Geography ..... Chapters 1-11
- Language Arts .... Chapters 1-11
- Mathematics ..... Chapters 3, 4, 6-9, 11
- Music ..... Chapters 4-7, 9, 10
- Science ..... Chapters 1-11

### ***Assessment Activity***

Each chapter contains a classroom-ready assessment activity. These activities are designed to have students apply concepts presented in the video programs. The results can be used to assess students' grasp of basic ideas for each new topic.

## **For Future Investigation**

One of the goals of *Investigating Wisconsin History* is to help students understand that history is not a remote and abstract collection of facts. Rather, history is an unending series of mysteries about their own lives, families, and communities. You are encouraged to help your students explore local topical connections after viewing each program.

### ***Kathleen Ernst***

Project Director

*Investigating Wisconsin History*

## Background Information for Teachers

In each program of *Investigating Wisconsin History*, Angie, the series host, asks a question about the past. Her questions are inspired by the places she visits, the people she meets, and her own personal experiences. In her quest to find answers, Angie discovers new investigative methods and clues that help reveal stories from the past. Angie analyzes these clues to resolve the history questions she raises in each program.

As you explain this process to students, you may wish to use the following model:

1. In each program, Angie asks a question about the past. This becomes the mystery she will investigate during the program.
2. Angie employs a variety of investigative methods to discover clues to the past. This action step is symbolized by the arrows on the accompanying graphic organizer. Examples include participating in an archaeological dig, examining the landscape, interviewing an elder, participating in an old folk dance, talking to a scholar, and visiting a museum.
3. After gathering information, Angie analyzes the clues she has found. The clues have been organized into eight broad categories on the [Investigating the Mystery of History graphic organizer](#) (p. 26), each labeled with an icon. (These categories are described below.) In most cases, Angie's analysis leads to an answer to her original question. Sometimes, though, it leads to more questions or brings Angie to the conclusion that her question may never be answered with certainty.

Clues and sources of information Angie explores are organized into these eight categories:

### Visual Images

Examples include photographs, films, slides, drawings and paintings, and posters. Historians examine visual images to learn what places looked like, how people dressed, etc. They also can learn which events, objects, and people early photographers found important enough to document on film.

### Written Records

Examples can include census reports, land deeds, newspaper articles, maps, mail-order catalogs, handbills, and historical fiction. Primary sources include letters, diaries, and other personal accounts written by an individual who experienced or observed a time or event in history. The information in secondary accounts has been synthesized by the author from other accounts he or she has heard or read.

**Objects**

Examples include artifacts such as pottery, tools, and clothing, bones, period reproductions, plants, and animals. Historians study artifacts to learn more about the people who once made, owned, or used them.

**Folklore**

Examples can include songs and music, storytelling and oral tradition, visual art, performance art such as dance and theatre, holiday celebrations, games, and cookbooks. Folklore helps historians understand facets of culture that may have never been written down.

**People**

Examples include information from academic experts, elders, or anyone with a particular skill or firsthand knowledge of a certain time or experience. Historians and folklorists often use audio tape or videotape to record family histories, first-person accounts, or demonstrations of folk arts.

**Landscape**

Examples of human-made features include buildings, statues, murals, highway signs, effigy mounds, and historical markers. Historians also examine the natural landscape when considering how people once living in or traveling through an area may have perceived or used their surroundings.

**Places**

Examples of places historians visit to find information include repositories, such as museums and libraries, and historic sites, such as cemeteries and restored buildings.

**Reference Materials**

Examples include encyclopedias, dictionaries, textbooks, brochures, and the Internet. Reference materials most often provide compilations of information that others have found and analyzed.

## Investigating the Mystery of History





# Investigative Clues Chart

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Program	Clue	Advantages	Disadvantages

# Political Outline of Wisconsin



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# Helpful Research Skills

*Compiled by Howard Kanetzke, former curator of education at the State Historical Museum in Madison.*

As you choose a project and begin to study and research facts, you will do many things. You probably will do all these things more than once. When you find yourself doing them, make a note of it.

## Observe

Develop your eyes and thinking. Take time to look carefully with your eyes, looking at both large and small objects. Take time to make careful and complete notes. Organize notes carefully. Look at objects in their settings. Are there sounds to make note of? Are there railroad tracks near factories? Streams near mills? What natural and built objects do you find in parks? Study details.

## Compare

Compare objects or situations that are alike. Are the houses in a neighborhood alike? Are the shops along a single street similar? Different? How? Compare ways of doing things. What differences can you find between the way you dress and the ways your parents and grandparents dressed when they were your age? Spend time comparing and contrasting. Become skilled at doing this.

## Measure

There are many ways to measure. Sometimes we measure with a ruler, tape measure, or yardstick. We can measure the size of a building with great accuracy. We can also measure a person's feelings about an event (such as being in a tornado) but this is less accurate. We can measure time by asking questions such as these: How long did it take to build the courthouse? How many years was your hometown served by steamboats? Trains? Trucks? We also can measure opinions. Is the new fire engine better than the old one? In what ways?

## Consider and Speculate

Take facts that you have collected and think about them. Do they lead you to think of more questions? If you know that a factory operated on Jones Street between 1900 and 1917 and that 40 people worked there, can you discover where they might have lived? Is there a street near the factory location that has houses of the right age for the workers to have lived in them? If so, you might guess that they lived there and then set about proving yourself correct or wrong. It doesn't matter whether your guess is right or not. When you prove yourself right or wrong, you have added to your knowledge.

## Identify

Identify the questions that you want to answer and look for the answers. For example:

- Who built this house?
- Was there a celebration when the church building was finished? What happened?
- What are the names of the old tools found in the barn?

Try to make your identifications as complete and accurate as possible.

## Classify

Arrange ideas or objects into groups that are related. Grouping related items together often makes them easier to understand. For example, factory workers could be grouped by the jobs they do, by their age, by their ethnic background, or by their rate of hourly wage.

## Record

Make a careful record of all the facts you uncover. Be sure that your notes are complete. Write down the exact spellings of names and places. Double-check all dates to make sure that they are correct.

## Interview

Some facts that you may need can be found in the memories of people. You may want to collect information by conducting an interview. Here are some pointers that will help you:

1. Find out whether the person is willing to be interviewed. You may contact the person by telephone, letter, or e-mail.
2. When choosing a date for the interview, give yourself at least a week to prepare.
3. Try to meet at a time and place where you won't be disturbed.
4. Set a time limit so that you and the person you are interviewing know how long the interview will last.
5. Make up a list of interview questions. Remember, you will want to spend most of your time talking about things you wouldn't find in print.

If information about your topic can be found in books, make a list of the titles. Reading about your topic before the interview can help you write better interview questions and give you background information.

6. Make a copy of your questions and send it to the person before the interview. Be sure to take your own copy of the questions to the interview.
7. Don't take more than one person with you to the interview.
8. Be on time.
9. Wait until the person has answered a question before asking another one. Write down answers briefly, yet completely. Ask for the spellings of names that are unfamiliar to you. Be sure to make careful notes about any dates the person may mention.
10. Make a recording of the interview, but first get permission from the person you are interviewing. Be sure to test your equipment to make sure that it is working and that the volume setting will pick up every word. Even if you make a recording, you should still take written notes, in case the equipment fails.
11. During the interview, you might think of questions that are not on your list. Go ahead and ask them, but stick to the topic and remember your time limit.

12. Before leaving, review any information that is unclear to you.
13. Thank the person for his or her help.
14. As soon as possible, write a report of the interview by using your notes. Be sure to include the name of the person interviewed, your name, the date, and the time and place of the interview.

# Working with Artifacts

Compiled by Howard Kanetzke, former curator of education at the State Historical Museum in Madison.

## **Artifacts have a history.**

Every artifact has a history. Where was it made? When? By whom? Why? We can trace the ownership of objects to reveal more about their past.

## **Artifacts have been made of some materials.**

What is the object made of? Is it a mixture of materials? Iron? Wood? Plastic? Fiber? Glass? Bone? Ceramics?

## **Artifacts have construction features.**

Was the object manufactured? Was the object handmade? What quality of workmanship was employed in its construction?

## **Artifacts have design.**

What special features, styles, or forms can be noted in looking at the object? How is the design the same as or different from other similar items?

## **Artifacts have function or use.**

What was the object's intended use(s)? Does it have modern, unintended uses? How do these modern uses change the object?

Today, artifacts sometimes are used in decorative ways. Notice the walls of some restaurants, for example. You may discover that items designed to be cooking utensils have become objects to decorate walls and create a feeling of the past.

## **Examining an Artifact**

### ***Step 1. Identify the object***

What is the object? What technology was available to make it? Is it a true original or a reproduction?

Handmade items can be difficult to identify, as models of them do not appear in mail-order catalogs. If you can find a person who once used the object, you can gather information and observations

that might not be available anywhere else. For example, if the object is a train ticket, you could ask a former railroad conductor about styles of punches, ticket sales, and stories about people who rode the railroad.

***Step 2. Evaluate the object***

What skill(s) and type of workmanship were used in making the item? Is the object the result of someone's work? Leisure time? Is the object the result of seeing a "better way" of doing a task? Does the object do what it is supposed to do? If so, how well does it do this? How rare is it? How does it compare with similar items? Is it "one of a kind?" One of a few? One of many?

***Step 3. Analyze the object***

Why was this item handmade or manufactured? What are its intended and unintended uses? Is it an item brought from another culture? If so, was it as necessary an item in America as in another place? (For example, wooden shoes, or a grooved rolling pin for making lefse, a "crepe-like" Norwegian food made from potatoes.) Has the item been kept or used as a reminder of the past, perhaps because it was brought here by an ancestor?

***Step 4. Interpret the object***

What can this object tell us? Is it only a symbol of itself, or does it have broader meaning to us? For example, Henry Ford's Model T demonstrated the success of the assembly line and standardization in manufacturing. The automobile led to many things: gas stations, garages, tire gauges, air pumps, highway construction, custom auto painting, seat covers, and even toys. The automobile changed peoples' lives.

Remember, artifacts cannot speak or write messages to us. But artifacts can tell us things if we learn to ask the right questions. Learning from artifacts is a challenge. We must search records carefully and faithfully so that we can learn about them.

# Sources of Information, Resources, and Materials

## Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction publishes a variety of innovative guides related to curriculum, classroom activities, and resources. Of particular interest to social studies teachers are *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in Environmental Education*, *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in Global Studies*, *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in Social Studies*, *Classroom Activities in State and Local Government*, and *Wisconsin Citizenship Initiative Program Guide*.

For more information, contact Publication Sales, Wisconsin DPI, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841; telephone 800/243-8782 (U.S. only); fax 608/267-9110; Web site: [www.dpi.state.wi.us](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us); e-mail: [pubsales@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:pubsales@dpi.state.wi.us).

## Wisconsin Historical Society

The Wisconsin Historical Museum, located on the Capitol Square in Madison at 30 N. Carroll Street, includes a gift shop stocked with books, objects, audio-visual materials, and other Wisconsin items useful to teachers and students exploring Wisconsin geography and history. Some of these items are available through the Society's online store, at [www.wisconsinhistory.org/shop/](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/shop/). Gift shops also are located at state historic sites (Circus World Museum, Madeline Island, Old World Wisconsin, Pendarvis, Stonefield Village, Villa Louis, and Wade House & Wesley Jung Carriage Museum).

The Wisconsin Historical Society also maintains an Office of School Services, which produces instructional materials on state and local history, offers workshops and seminars designed for social studies teachers, and provides information to teachers regarding resources available from the Society and local agencies. For more information, contact the Office of School Services at 608/264-6547 or visit the Web site [www.wisconsinhistory.org/oss/](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/oss/).

Most Wisconsin Historical Society publications can be ordered through The University of Wisconsin Press (p. 37).

## **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has a wide selection of study guides, booklets, activity sheets, and maps available free or for a nominal fee to teachers. Topics include environmental education, parks and recreation, forestry, endangered resources, wildlife, fish, water resources, environmental protection, air quality, solid waste, and recycling. An Educ'Ade Environmental Education Publications order form is available through the DNR's Web site, at [www.dnr.state.wi.us](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us). From its home page, click on the Educational Publications link.

## **Cooperative Children's Book Center**

The Cooperative Children's Book Center is a non-circulating library for adults that is dedicated to the examination, study, and research of children's and young adult literature. A part of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Education, the library's main purpose is to provide Wisconsin librarians, teachers, students, and others with informational and educational services based on the CCBC collection. Teachers seeking literature to integrate with their own lessons can call 608/263-3720 for assistance. The CCBC is located at 4290 Helen C. White Hall, 600 N. Park Street, Madison, WI 53706. Visitors of the CCBC Web site, at [www.soemadison.wisc.edu/ccbc/](http://www.soemadison.wisc.edu/ccbc/), are able to browse its collections online using the Virtual CCBC feature.

## **University of Wisconsin Press**

Books and materials produced by the Wisconsin Historical Society, including the Office of School Services, are available from the University of Wisconsin Press. Orders may be placed online, via fax or telephone, or by mail. Details on how to order are provided at the Web site [www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/](http://www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/).