

# Cultural History

What is the origin of the artifact?

## GOAL

Students will define artifacts of culture, their historical significance, and how they relate to their own culture by refining their own research skills and separating fact from fiction.

## OVERVIEW

There are many cultural artifacts depicted in "Now Chinatown" from the Chinese culture as well as other cultures. Students will identify these and study them in depth determining their true origin and cultural significance. This lesson is appropriate for language arts and social sciences classes.

## METHODOLOGY

- Lead the students in a discussion listing as many culturally related items as they can recall from the movie. Examples of items that may be listed are the Buddha, the mirror, opera costumes, the mah jong game, and the lucky cat.
- Request students to identify items from other cultures that another society has adopted into their own culture.
- Ask each student to pick an item to research and write an essay about its history and significance as it relates to culture.
- Instruct students to choose a cultural artifact and research the different ways that artifact is treated in one culture versus another, such as a Buddha in China versus India.

## OPTIONS

- Instruct students to hunt for actual cultural artifacts in real life. Collect them or take photos of them and present to the class how the artifact exists in various incarnations.
- Students can combine creative writing and research skills by offering two versions of history surrounding the origin of an artifact. Students can present both versions to the class and have the class vote for the "true" version.



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