

Family Time Capsule

Skills Focus

Writing, Reading Literature

Connection to Habits of Good Readers

Connecting, Inferring

Overview

What would you want future generations to know about your family? A time capsule is a great way to connect our current lives to future generations and practice reading and writing skills.

Guiding Questions and Talking Points

The following questions and talking points may be helpful to spark a discussion about a family time capsule:

- If you could travel back in time or travel to the future, which would you choose and why?
- What would be something you would want your grandchildren or great-grandchildren to know about you?
- What items or information could best tell your family's story?

Intro Activity

Ask each member of the family to answer the following question: Imagine that it is 100 years into the future. What would you most want people in the future to know about our family? Invite all family members to share answers.

Before (Background Knowledge and/or Vocabulary)

The following terms may be helpful for children as they think about constructing a family time capsule:

- **Time capsule:** a container holding documents or objects of the current time and placed in a location to be found in the future.
- **Archaeology:** the scientific study of historic peoples by the analysis of their artifacts.
- **Artifact:** an object made by man reflecting contemporary society or popular culture.

During

As a family, select and read a passage or chapter in a book about families. A few examples are listed below.

After you have read the selection, discuss how the family in the story is similar to and different from your family. What else would you like to know about this family? What questions might you ask?

Introduce the concept of a time capsule. To create a family time capsule, you will need a sturdy container, a good location for the container, and several artifacts that are meaningful or that represent your family.

Ask each family member to identify one thing they would include in the time capsule to help people in the future learn about your family. This could be a photograph, drawing, lock of hair, poem, list of answered questions, or representations of favorite books, movies, television shows, songs, and activities.

- **Emergent readers** can write a letter about a wish for the future. This letter can be included in the family time capsule.
- **Proficient readers** can write a letter to himself/herself that will be opened ten years in the future. Have your child think about what he or she might want to remember about this moment in time, what dreams they have for the future, what they hope they might be doing ten years from now, etc.
- **Advanced readers** can think about the family and popular culture as a whole. What parts of popular culture are important parts of your family's life? What artifact from popular culture could they select that would represent society as a whole and your family specifically? Have them select an item and write about how it relates to both popular culture and your family specifically.

Once all artifacts are selected, place them all in the sturdy container and find a good place to keep the container that will prevent damage to your artifacts by wind, rain, or too much light.

Family Time Capsule (cont.)

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After (Extension Activities)

- Get in touch with your local National Parks Service office and find out if they have any interesting activities.
- Visit a local museum to view artifacts found on digs.
- Do research to find out if any archaeological digs will be taking place in your community.

Web Resources

The following websites provide useful information about archaeology and archaeological digs:

- www.archaeology.org
- www.digonsite.com/links.html
- www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology
- www.archaeology.mrdonn.org/games.html

Suggested Readings

[The Hundred Penny Box](#), Sharon Bell Mathis
[Grandma's Gift](#), Eric Velasquez
[Family Pictures/Cuadros de Familia](#), Carmen Lomas Garza
[How Tia Lola Came to Stay](#), Julia Alvarez