

Landmarks Guide for Older Children



Bryan Hunt
American, born 1947

Amphora
1982
Bronze

Subject: History

Activity: Create a museum display for an object you use everyday

Materials: An object from your home, pencil, and paper

Vocabulary: Amphora, nonfunctional, obsolete, vessel

Introduction

An amphora is a type of clay vase with two handles that was used in ancient Greece. Thousands of years ago, these vessels served many purposes: They were used to store food, water, and wine. The vessels were often painted with figures that told stories about history and the gods. A person living in ancient Greece would sometimes have the same amphora throughout their lifetime. The Greeks did not have many other means for storing or transporting food and liquids, so amphorae were very important to them.

These vessels, which were once a part of everyday life for the Greeks, are now kept in museums, where we can see them and learn about the people who used them. We no longer use large clay vessels like amphorae for our everyday needs. We use other types of containers instead. In making this sculpture, the artist was interested in exploring how the amphora and our ideas about it have changed over time. Notice that Hunt's amphora is made of metal instead of clay; in other words, it is nonfunctional, and very different from a traditional Greek amphora.

Questions

What types of containers do we use today instead of amphorae?

What can these objects tell us about the past and the people that lived then?

Can you think of any other objects that were very useful to people in the past but that are no longer useful to us today?

What happens to objects when they are no longer useful to us?



Activity

Choose an object from your home that you use everyday. Imagine you are working in a museum in the future and you are going to display this object so people can come to the museum and learn about our time. Write a museum label that explains what the object is, when it was made, what it is made of, and how it was used. What do you want people in the future to know about your life and how this object reflects your experiences?



Vocabulary

Amphora - A clay vessel with two handles that was used by ancient Greeks to store food and liquids

Nonfunctional - Not serving a purpose or being useful

Obsolete - No longer useful

Vessel - An object designed to be used as a container