Kentucky Historical Society

EXHIBITION EDUCATOR PACKET

KENTUCKY MILITARY TREASURES

SELECTIONS FROM THE KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS

www.history.ky.gov/military

Carved Bone "Texas Die," ca. 1848,
Donated by Russell M. Hughes, 1983.02.02

THIS CAN CONTAINS
ANTI-DIMMING STICK
FOR GAS MASKS.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE
WIPE THE INNER SURFACE
OF EACH EYEPIECE CLEAN
WITH THE SOFT RAG BREATHE
ON THE CLEANED SURFACE

KENTUCKY MILITARY TREASURES

SELECTIONS FROM THE KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS

SECTIONS	War of 1812, Civil War, Mexican-American War, World War I
OBJECTIVES	To learn about the items caried by soldiers.
CORE CONTENT CONNECTIONS	SS-EP-5.1.1, SS-04-5.1.1, SS-06-5.1.1

A SOLDIER'S ESSENTIALS

OBJECT OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS

CONTENT RECOMMENDED FOR ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

War of 1812

Often called the Second War of Independence, the War of 1812 once again pitted the U.S. against Great Britain. Impressment of seamen and infringement of commercial rights prompted President James Madison's call for war. Also, the U.S. objected to British alliances with Native Americans that frustrated its expansion westward. Kentucky contributed approximately 18,000 troops to the war and suffered a high proportion of the nation's casualties. The war ended in a negotiated settlement in 1814. Prominent Kentucky statesman Henry Clay, already Speaker of the House, played an important part in this effort.

Mexican-American War

In 1845, the annexation of Texas strained diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Mexico. When diplomacy failed, war broke out in 1846. Drawing on a strong military tradition, Kentuckians from all walks of life volunteered. Approximately 5,000 volunteers from the commonwealth served in four regiments during the two-year war. The war focused national debate on the extension of slavery into the southwest, in the name of Manifest Destiny. Internal strife over the expansion of slavery led the nation toward the Civil War.

Civil War

In 1861, following many years of debate and futile attempts at compromise over the issue of slavery, sectional tension finally erupted in civil war. A month after the outbreak of war, Kentucky chose a policy of neutrality. Four months later, Kentucky abandoned its neutral stance to support the Union, but this hardly resolved the problem of divided loyalties within the commonwealth. Kentuckians served in both the Confederate and Union armies. Over 24,000 Kentucky African Americans wore Union blue. During the Civil War, more American soldiers died from battle wounds and disease than in any other conflict. Technological advances changed the nature of warfare, making it deadlier than ever before.

World War I

Fragile alliances holding Europe together collapsed in 1914. The international war drew in the U.S. within three years. Some 84,000 Kentuckians, 13,000 of them African Americans, served in the war and about 2,400 died. The contributions of men and women left behind led to the first widespread use of the term "homefront." Deadlocked in trench warfare, the conflict caused death and destruction on a scale as never seen before. The war brought down empires, created a new and unstable world order and entangled the U.S. irreversibly in world military affairs.

ARTIFACT LIST

War of 1812

1. Powder Horn, ca. 1830 (1987.79.01)

Mexican-American War

2. Texas Die, ca. 1843 (1983.02.02)

Civil War

3. A.C. Dickens Civil War Diary, 1861 (98SC287) [online exhibition only]

World War I

4. Gas Mask and Bag, ca. 1918 (1976.100.03)

VOCABULARY

We encourage you to introduce the following vocabulary words independently or in conjunction with the pre-visit activities.

Artifact	*something created by humans usually for a practical purpose*
Battlefront	*the military sector in which actual combat takes place*
Homefront	*the location of civilian activity during war*
Powder horn	*a flask for carrying gunpowder*
Whittle	*to pare or cut off chips from the surface of wood with a knife*

A SOLDIER'S ESSENTIALS

OBJECT OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS

(CONTINUED)

ACTIVITY*

Artifact Analysis

Divide objects up amongst students and have them record observations and analysis by answering the following questions.

1. **Study the object for two to three minutes. Note your overall impressions.**
2. **Using the chart below, list the materials you think object is made of, colors and any designs/and or patters you see.**

MATERIALS	COLORS	DESIGNS

Object-Observation

3. What do you think it feels like?

Analysis

1. What do you think the object is?
2. How do you think the object could have been used?
3. Who might have used it?
4. Where might it have been used? (In the field, in camp, etc.)
5. Does it remind you of anything?

Interpretation

1. What does this artifact tell us about the life and times of the people who made it and used it?

*All artifacts and information for this activity can be found on **the online exhibition**.