

USS FLORIDA SILVER PUNCH BOWL

TEACHING POSTER



INTRODUCTION

Objectives: Students (Grades 3-5) will learn:

1. How artifacts relate to history, and why the Governor’s Mansion is both a repository (museum) of Florida history and a home (residence) for our Governor.
2. What is a symbol? What are symbols of Florida?
(<http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/symbols>) Students will learn to look more closely at images to provide visual clues to history.
3. Use KWL (What do I know? What do I want to know? What did I learn?) to connect text to self and teach Florida history.

This teaching poster, featuring *USS Florida Silver Punch Bowl*, was designed to prepare students for a visit to the State Dining Room in the Governor’s Mansion, where the bowl is permanently displayed. Florida school children originally helped raise the money used to commission the complete, 47-piece USS Florida Presentation Silver Collection. The set, including our Punch Bowl, was initially placed aboard a battleship for use by the ship’s officers. It is utilitarian, decorative and historic. Students will discover which images most “symbolize” Florida. The engraving at the center of one side of the Punch Bowl depicts the story of Florida’s discovery by Juan Ponce de Leon on March 27, 1513. However, the correct date of 1513 is missing; an incorrect date of 1512 was affixed by the artisans—was that an accident or intentional? Students will be challenged to use their analytical and deductive reasoning skills to decipher why a “1512” date replaced the factual date.

LOOKING AND DISCUSSING

Discussion Questions

1. **What is it made from?** (SC.A.1.2.4) The surface of this object is very shiny, smooth and durable. Discuss the color and the material—both of which are sterling silver. Does the fact that the bowl is made from a precious metal make it more important or valuable? Discuss the difference between two and three-dimensional objects (MA.C.1.2).
2. **How big is it?** (MA.A.3.2.3; MA.A.4.2; MA.B.2.2) If it holds twelve gallons, how many pints, quarts and 8 oz. cups of punch can be served? (Convert all measurements to metric system also.) Is it comprised of one, two or more pieces? The component on which the Punch Bowl rests is called a plateau. In what other context is that term used?
3. **What images do you see?** (SS.A.6.3) Describe the flora, fauna, people and technology that you see. Who are the people? (SS.A.4.3) How are they identified? Have you seen these images outside of Florida? What do you know about these images?
4. **Why are these images symbolic of Florida?** (VA.B.1.3; SS.A.6.3) What is the most important crop in our state? What weather conditions sustain these ecosystems? What animals are found only in Florida? Why do we see alligators on the base of the Punch Bowl instead of manatees? What images don't you see that you would see today if we made a new Punch Bowl?

HISTORY OF THE PUNCH BOWL AND CIVIC PRIDE

About the Ship

The USS Florida Presentation Silver Collection (of which the Punch Bowl is its signature piece) is part of an American tradition that was quite typical at the turn of the Twentieth century, and continues to the present. Naval vessels were presented exquisitely-designed hollow-ware sets, created by the leading silverware companies of the day, for two primary reasons. The first: there was a great prestige element associated with these silver collections. It was believed that the finest ships deserved the finest objects, and this was certainly a way for the American Navy to prove it had the finesse and status of its European allies. Secondly: it afforded the citizens of the various states a sense of civic pride, by which they could affirm the power and prestige of the United States Navy, their own state, and their state's battleship. The fifth vessel named USS (United States Ship) Florida (BB-30), for which this collection was intended, was launched May 12, 1910 by the New York Navy Yard, and commissioned on September 15, 1911 with Captain H.S. Knapp in command (www.hazegray.org/). There was much pageantry aboard the ship as the entire silver collection was formally presented at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon on December 18, 1911. The largest tray, with the inscription: "Presented to the USS Florida by the People of Florida", recorded the spirit in which all the objects were given by Governor Albert W. Gilchrist to Captain H.S. Knapp during the ceremonies. Pensacola was chosen as the city to host the event because at the time, it had the only harbor in Florida which was large enough to accommodate the size of the newest flagship of the North Atlantic fleet.

A TIME LINE *Florida History from 1513 until 2007*

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| 1513
Juan Ponce De Leon discovers Florida on March 27, 1513 near Cape Canaveral, Florida. "La Florida" means "the flowery land." | 1565
First permanent settlement established in St. Augustine, Florida on September 8, 1565 by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. | 1824
Tallahassee established as territorial capital of Florida. | 1845
Florida becomes the 27th state on March 3rd. William D. Mosely is elected state's new first governor. | 1907
First Governor's Mansion constructed at 700 North Adams Street. Architect: John Henry Klutho, Jacksonville, FL. | 1911
USS Florida Presentation Silver Collection created by Gorham Silver Company. Collection presented in Pensacola to Captain Knapp by Governor Gilchrist on behalf of the People of Florida. It remained aboard battleship for twenty years. |
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About the Artisans

The bowl was created by many artisans of the Gorham Silver Company, founded in 1831 in Providence, Rhode Island by Jabez Gorham. The company has been synonymous with exquisite quality, utilizing sophisticated machinery but relying, to a large degree, on the hand craftsmanship of thousands of artisans, most of whom were born and trained in Europe.

It was not unusual for Gorham employees in that era to work ten hours a day and be divided into distinct departments (silversmiths, molders, chasers, engravers, embossers, figure and pattern cutters, etc.) in order to meet the demands of mass production for their clients. A committee, known as the Florida Silver Service Commission, chose the Gorham Company to create this collection in 1911. The price of the set was \$ 10,000. The Florida Legislature donated the initial part of the fee, and then private citizens, especially the school children of Florida, were recruited to raise the second half.

How the Collection Found its New Home at the Mansion

The entire silver collection remained on board the USS Florida for twenty years. It was used extensively by the commanding officers to entertain important dignitaries in port and at sea. When the battleship was decommissioned in 1931, then-Governor Doyle Carlton requested that the collection be returned to Florida. Originally, a bill introduced in Congress would have required that the silver collection be returned to the State Museum in Gainesville. Ultimately, the governor of the state was designated as custodian. His preference was for the USS Florida Presentation Silver Collection to have its permanent home in the Governor's Mansion. It has remained on display and in use in the State Dining Room of both the original Mansion, and in the current Mansion, since 1931.

AESTHETICS AND SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Initial Discussion Points: (VA.D.1.2; VA.B.1.2; VA.C.1.2; V.A.D.1.2; VA.E.1.2)

1. Is the Punch Bowl a sculpture or a bowl? Describe the qualities of each.
2. What is the difference between art objects and useful objects?
3. Why do we consider the Punch Bowl beautiful? Ornate? Prestigious?
4. Compare and contrast the Punch Bowl with other household items.

Activities:

1. Make your own Punch Bowl or Vessel (VA.A.1.2.1) or silver "Place Setting".
Encourage students to use clay, paper maché, or drawing of their own vessels.
What design would they use? What symbols would best represent the state of Florida today? Favorite colors? Ethnic background? Favorite heroes or heroines?
2. Construct a time line of the period of history from the time when the Punch Bowl was created until today (or, if the

1931
USS Florida Presentation Silver Collection arrives at Mansion.

1955
First Mansion is dismantled. Governor and Mrs. Collins return to *The Grove*, the First Lady's ancestral home (across the street) until new Mansion built. USS Silver Collection stored at *The Grove*.

1957
Second (current) Mansion opens on Inauguration Day in January. Architect: Marion Sims Wyeth, Palm Beach, FL.

1982
US Navy requests two pieces from collection be returned for use on nuclear submarine. Governor's Mansion Commission votes to keep entire set together, in defiance of Navy's request.

1985
Mansion undergoes major renovation after almost thirty years. Florida Room added where exterior porch had originally existed, leading to Manatee Courtyard.

2007
Governor's Mansion celebrates 50th anniversary, commencing on the Inauguration Day of 44th Governor of the State of Florida.

- Punch Bowl could talk, what stories would it tell about the Governor’s Mansion and those who lived there?) (SS.A.1.3)
- Two portraits of people important to Florida history were included on the Punch Bowl set: Seminole warrior Osceola (detail, Punch Ladle Handle) and Juan Ponce de Leon (detail, medallion at base of Punch Bowl). Research the reasons for their prominence in Florida history. (SS.A.6.3)
 - Research the battleship USS Florida (BB-30) and the submarine USS Florida (SSBN 728) of today. Compare and contrast. Define the mission that distinguishes each vessel. (SS.A.1.2.1)
 - Which governors resided in the Mansion during the period of the purchase of the collection, and the final return to the Mansion? What did the newspapers of the time report to Floridians who lived during these two events? (SS.A.6.3).
 - Chose an animal from any object in the silver collection to research. Have students write a single page of numbered facts (in complete sentences) about their selection (including genus and species). Students should be prepared to discuss why Florida is a suitable environment for its habitat, and what factors could affect its future success. (SC.G.1.2.1)
 - After studying the collection, the entire class will read about their favorite historical persons (or animals) and write and perform a play for other 3-5th graders as a class. (LA.A.2.1; LA.C.3.2; LA.E.1.2)
 - Study four sets of Coat-of-Arms at base of Punch Bowl. Students design coats-of-arms for their family and conduct some family genealogical research (SS.A.1.2.1)
 - Discuss the nature of superstitions and the long tradition of naval superstitions that resulted in the 1512/1513 date discrepancy. (VA.B.1.2; VA.C.1.2;)

EXTENSIONS AND TEACHER RESOURCES

- Compare and contrast state and federal Government. How does the Governor’s Mansion compare to the White House?
- Who lives in State Mansions? Which states do not have Governor’s Mansions for their governors, and why?
- Who owns the Governor’s Mansion? Who owns the contents of the Governor’s Mansions? (furniture, artworks, books, etc?)

Recommended Reading

The Mouse series by Peter and Cheryl Barnes introduces children to government in general (reading level 4-8): *Woodrow the White House Mouse; A Mice Way to Learn About Voting, Campaigns and Elections: A Curriculum Guide to Woodrow for President; Woodrow for President; House Mouse; Senate Mouse; A Mice Way to Learn About Government. The Kid Who Ran for President*, by Dan Gutman, is another excellent book that children love, combining humor with civic lessons.

Recommended Web sites:

www.floridagovernorsmansion.com

<http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/lessons.htm>

<http://fcit.usf.edu>

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/pad/adventure/landmark.htm>

<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-f/bb30.htm>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/tour/>

www.theorange grove.org



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