

Interactive Activity Using an Artifact/Object in a Gallery

Find a cart object/artifact that fascinates you and that you think museum visitors will enjoy learning about!

Purpose: To engage adult visitors in your gallery talk or tour through inviting them to handle an artifact/object/material while they learn about the people, their culture, way of life, and beliefs.

Gallery Name: Spirits and Headhunters

Docent Name: Karen Rote

Cart Artifact/Object/Approved Material:

Kina Shell Necklace (Papua New Guinea)

Gallery Artifact/Map or Visual/Concept:

Bride presentation board, photo of bride, other forms of money in the same area of the gallery

Connection: What is the relationship between the two items to be presented? Think about how they are made or used or the concept they illustrate. What do they tell you about the people, their culture, way of life, and beliefs?

All of the wealth gathered to pay for the bride would be brought to the wedding by the husband's clan and displayed on the bride presentation board. It would include kina shells, other shell money, net bags, and yams; thus these two items are connected.

Interactive activity description: Steps in presenting the activity.

Ask question about Bride Price and explain what Bride Price means

Show the Kina Shell Necklace and explain its value (value increases in proportion to the distance it had traveled in trade from its source. It was traded to the highlands areas from coastal portions of Papua New Guinea. Value also determined by size and condition of shell. Most valuable are large and have a ruddy color to them.

Talk about the Bride presentation board and how the two items are related.

Explain that there are other forms of money in the same area as the board that may have been used for the Bride Price and suggest they look for those items.

Sample interactive questions (2-3) for the audience:

When I say Bride Price, what does this make you think of? Bride Price is an amount of money, property, or other form of wealth paid by a groom or his family to the parents of the woman he has just married or is about to marry and is not intended to reflect the perceived value of the bride.

How is a dowry different from Bride Price? A dowry of property or money is paid to the groom or his family by the bride or her family.

Cross-cultural connections or related folk tale to engage people further; or research or story books.

Interesting to note that Bride Price is common in polygamous societies with a scarcity of available women. In monogamous societies in which women have little personal wealth, a dowry is common since there is a relative scarcity of wealthy men who can choose from potential women.

Date approved by the Education Committee: __March 14, 2015__