What is a collection?
Joseph’s First Collection

“Our class is studying mineralogy and I am getting a collection and I want to know if I can take yours that you got on Mount Holyoke.”

(Joseph Skinner (age 13) - September 19, 1875)

“I don’t think I have told you how many minerals I have. I have about 42 that is quite a good for just starting I think, don’t you?”

(Joseph Skinner (age 13) - November 14, 1875)
The Natural World: Rocks & Minerals

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5.
The Natural World: Sea Life

1. [Image of a large shell]
2. [Image of a small shell or sea creature]
3. [Image of a spiky shell]
4. [Image of a striped shell]
5. [Image of a coral or sea creature]
“I bought some Aztec relics from Aaron Bugg who informs me they were brought out of Mexico, fifty of more years ago. There were eight pieces which look much like Indian pieces, bowls & pitchers.”

(Joseph Skinner - April 29, 1941)
What are Ethnographic Objects?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6.
Early American Objects

1. Sign with "L. Smith"
2. Ceramic pitcher with eagle design
3. Portrait of a man
4. American flag
5. Proclamation by John Hancock
6. Portrait of a child
Maritime Objects

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5.
Arms and Armor

1. [Image of a firearm]
2. [Image of a sword]
3. [Image of a firearm]
4. [Image of a suit of armor]
Skinner Expands His Collection

Where and how do you think Skinner acquired the objects in his museum?
Africa

1. The African continent
2. An elephant and a man
3. Wooden bench
4. A tusk
Skinner Puzzler

What was I?
Hippopotamus
Egypt

1. [Hand mirror image]

2. [Statue image]

3. [Historical photograph of camels and people]
The South Pacific
Japan
Europe

1.

2.

3.
Skinner the Collector: Summary

“Over at the museum quite a time this afternoon. It is fine and I always find something new to look at.”

(Joseph Skinner (age 79) – July 16, 1941)
Pre-Visit Questions

Things to consider on your visit

- Why do so many of us collect?
- Map the Museum – What are the different collections on display?
- Why did Skinner think these objects were important?
- What messages was he trying to convey to visitors?
Curating a Classroom Collection

*It’s time to make our own classroom collection!*

- In small groups, you will brainstorm 10 objects from the classroom that represent our class, our time together, and why that story is important.
- Which objects best tell the story of our class?
- In what order will you arrange the objects and why is that important?
- Sketch your objects and come up with an exhibition title.
- Share your exhibition design with your classmates.