OBJECT BASED LEARNING: A TEACHING TOOLKIT

SUPPORTING AND EMPOWERING SCHOOL TEACHERS
Object-Based Learning: A Teaching Toolkit

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Intended audience: Qatar-based educators, primary & secondary level
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What is Object-Based Learning?

Object-Based Learning (OBL) is a type of educational practice using *material culture* and first-hand experience instead of lecturing, copying, and memorizing. This learning is facilitated – as opposed to free exploration with objects, teachers instruct students through a variety of activities so the learning outcome is uniform.

Objects can be used in a variety of ways:

- to enhance specific subject knowledge (zoologists might examine taxidermied animals, or art students might examine a specific print in close detail)
- to facilitate learning research, observation, and practical skills (drawing, using descriptive language)
- to make *interdisciplinary* connections (relating objects to other subjects they’re studying)
- to facilitate learning transferable skills (discussion, drawing, observation, research)
Ancient Egyptian shabti statue from the UCL Petrie Museum, used in teaching.

Students at UCL have described OBL:

“[OBL] encourages problem-solving, [as it is a first-hand learning experience.]”

“You are involved in learning so can learn better. Can ask questions and discuss.”

“[OBL] inspired me to do more independent thinking. [It is] good to see how lots of different theoretical ideas relate to the real world.”

Terms

Material culture – everyday objects, works of art, museum specimens, archaeological artifacts, heritage objects.

Interdisciplinary – relating to more than one field of study. This can be helpful to find the biases of each and produce greater understanding. For example, epidemiology blends medicine and human behavior studies.
Principles of Object-Based Learning in Education

OBL is based on Kolb’s *experiential learning cycle* (1984).

- **Concrete experience**
- **Reflective observation**
- **Abstract conceptualisation**
- **Active experimentation**

In this cycle, concrete experiences (handling objects) allows students to reflexively observe (think about what they are handling). This allows experimentation with thoughts about the object and the nature of objects, leading to abstract thinking (“what does this object mean in context?”), reinforcing these ideas with additional objects. Every time we practice these activities, the ideas are reinforced.

We also work with Gardner’s *theory of multiple intelligences* (1993). Not all students learn in the same way – while classrooms usually focus on verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical learning, we can learn in many different ways. Some students learn better through play or sports, some through music, some through observing nature. We tend to forget that we can all learn in multiple ways, including through touch. When students handle objects, it encourages them to learn in a new and different way. In addition to being a fun activity, it allows them to look at the world around them with new and original ideas instead of being told what to think. It also allows them to experience the world the way scientists, researchers, and artists do.
Working with objects activates *kinesthetic* and *interpersonal* learning. By holding and observing an object, they are encouraged to ask questions. They can discuss these questions with the instructor and fellow students to develop ideas. (Sometimes the ideas they come up with are not entirely correct – which is ok! The purpose is to work on observation and storytelling skills. You can correct them at the end of the activity.)

It is rare for people to only learn in one way; the theory is only a guide to different learning strategies.

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We can learn a lot from objects. Here’s a guide to some of the things we can start to get students thinking about.
Use this web to guide discussions about objects. When handling an unfamiliar object, encourage students to ask:

- Who made it?
- When/where was it made? What materials is it made from?
- How did it get here – to this country, and to this class?
- How is it used? Who uses it?
- Is it beautiful? If so, why? If not, why not?
- Does this object have cultural significance to you?
- Is it similar to objects made by other cultures? What do they have in common?

Feel free to think of your own questions.
Object Based Learning in a school context

OBL has been used in all levels of education, from primary school to university, and has also been implemented in training for professionals, including teachers and museum educators. The same activities and objects can be used with all ages (with the exception of fragile or dangerous objects, which must be handled carefully and may not be suitable for young children) – the discussions about them might change, but young children can often be as insightful as adults.

Arendse Lund teaching primary school students in the UCL Grant Museum.
Other contexts for Object Based Learning

OBL has been used outside the classroom. I have personally used it in museum learning spaces, on archaeological excavations, on field trips, and ad hoc. It can be applied in any learning context.

![Stacy Hackner teaching archaeological objects at a secondary school.](image)

OBL has recently been used in a therapeutic context. Some of the OBL activities and other, less structured object handling time have been used with cancer and dementia patients.

These unstructured handling sessions gave patients an outlet for feelings they might not have shared with family or doctors.

“This one [a stone hand axe] I picked because I see it as a weapon... I have felt extremely angry and this makes me feel very powerful. I could use it to attack, to damage, to deface, you know, all of that stuff. It intrinsically isn’t bad but it’s symbolic of bad and I like the way it is a cross-section. I suppose in many ways this represents my potential cancer from the outside. None of us
The patients benefit from the attention of researchers in a non-medical framework: they get to take part in a reflective activity that does not directly relate to their illness. Studies found that these patients gained: new perspectives, excitement, enjoyment, learning, cheeriness, and had something to pass the time in hospital.

Object handling has been practiced in a similar way with displaced persons in refugee camps in Jordan, in prisons, and with special needs students.
Object Selection For Educators

The activities in this pack can be used alone or as a starting point for classes on world cultures, science, art, or history. Depending on the objects you choose, you can guide the students into a discussion of many issues relating to the class’s goal. The sample objects in this guide are from Souq Waqif as they are easily available. It is also useful for students to start with familiar objects because of the sense of surprise that comes from deeper learning about something they never think about.

Many of these can spark discussions about cultural heritage and being Qatari. You can develop subject-specific object sets – objects relating to scientific study (microscopes, measuring tapes, pipettes), foreign cultures or travel (clothing, printed materials, religious objects), or art (journals, tools, paints).

It is useful to have a mix of familiar and unfamiliar objects. Often students gravitate towards the unfamiliar. At UCL we have a medical collection that includes 19th-century surgical tools and an artificial hip, neither of which the students have ever seen. This allows them to think of the items as objects without knowing their cultural meaning, and they can develop their own narratives.

Unfamiliar objects encourage observation and deductive reasoning. Familiar objects (books, jewelry, electronics) are equally as valuable, but for the opposite reason. Since students are familiar with their cultural use, they can think more about their materials and production and greater cultural significance. Familiar objects encourage conversation and comparison.

Object collections are a great way to develop a nuanced narrative of your culture – choose objects that can tell diverse stories.

Have at least one object per student, and preferably a few extra to use as examples.

Decide the goal of your class, and choose objects that support it with a mix of familiar and unfamiliar objects.
Running an OBL Session

When starting an OBL session, decide how the objects will be introduced and how students will sit. This may depend on which activity/activities you choose, and your general classroom structure (individual desks vs group tables). Are the students going to arrive to see the objects already on their desks, or will you hand them out? Will there be one “key” object to increase the “wow” factor?

A real “wow” object – these beads from Sudan are over 3000 years old.

Consider how to keep the students engaged throughout. Will they always be able to touch the objects? Are they going to work in pairs or groups? Will you prompt them on the object’s historical context or use, or are they going to develop their own narratives?

It’s useful to be prepared with some of the questions discussed above. Decide ahead whether you’re going to answer student questions or let them decide for themselves. (They could be wrong, but that’s part of the learning process.)

Some further questions:

1. What’s the first thing you notice about the object?
2. What could it be used for?
3. How does this object relate to our subject?
4. (For a group) How do these objects relate to each other?
5. Which object speaks to you? Why?

Encourage the students to discuss these *with each other*, not just with you or a teaching assistant. This is *decentralized learning*, and empowers students to think of themselves as sources of knowledge.
Getting Students Started

If your lessons are usually lecture-based, it can be challenging to get students in the right zone to learn using OBL. It might be helpful to preface OBL with a discussion of *things we touch*. Have students list the things they have touched in the last five minutes (pens, desk, door handle, clothes, shoelace), then in the last hour, and then in 24 hours. A useful book is Paula Zuccotti’s *Every Thing We Touch*. Show some pages, and have students guess who is represented in the photographs based on what they touched.
Now, have them think more deeply and make a new list of what they touched in the last 24 hours – it should be much longer than the previous one!
OBL Activity 1 – Meet Your Neighbor

This is an introductory exercise to get students thinking about their relationship to objects. You can start by introducing yourself through an object. I often use my wristwatch:

“Hi, I’m Stacy and my object is my watch. I wear it every day. It was a gift from my dad, who collects watches. It’s important to me because I always need to be on time, and I like to hear the ticking when I work. When I’m not wearing it, I feel uncomfortable because I don’t know what time it is.”

This shows students an insight into your life, and has them primed to think about what objects mean to the people using them.

**Goal:** Getting students to discuss a familiar object in detail.

**Learning outcomes:** Description, communication with peers, communication to a group, interpretation

**Materials:** One personal object per student

**Instructions:**

1. The day before the activity, instruct students to bring in an object that has personal meaning to them. Do not give ideas of any objects – allow them to decide on their own.
2. Divide students into pairs and give them two minutes each to discuss their object.
3. Go around the room and have each student introduce their partner through their object. For example, Alex introduces his partner: “This is Maria, and her object is her necklace.”
4. After each few students, reflect on what has been important and why.
5. Ask the students to identify some themes in their objects.
**Making meaning**

Many of the objects students in London choose are mobile phones or jewelry. You can use this to discuss what’s important in their lives – connection to family, gifts, communication, watching videos, social media. Ask what their lives would be like without these objects, or what it would mean if they lost them. What happens when we find an object someone might have lost? How do we know its value to that person?

**Material culture**

Ask if they know what materials their objects are made of. Group them into categories, if there are enough – natural, artificial, composite. Where would these be in a museum?

**Greater themes**

For phones, discuss communication over the ages. For jewelry, discuss the significance of metals and money. These discussions can be tailored to your expertise and the students’ objects.
OBL Activity 2 – Blind Object Drawing

This activity uses the objects in your collection.

**Goal:** Describing an object in detail to a partner.

**Learning objectives:** Descriptive language, drawing, communication

**Materials:** Paper, pencils, manila folders, one object per pair of students

1. Each pair is given one object, but only one person (“the speaker”) can see it. Either the students sit back-to-back, or place a manila folder between them so it’s hidden. Make sure they don’t peek! If the objects are unfamiliar, do not tell them what they are.

2. The speaker describes the object to their partner, but they are not allowed to say what it is or what it does, even if they know. For example, if the object is a coffee mug, they can describe it as “a cylindrical object, round at the top and bottom, with a handle on one side, and hollow inside.” This can be very difficult if the only way you have previously described it is “it’s a coffee mug.” Spend five minutes describing.

3. As they describe, the second student (“the artist”) draws what they hear as accurately as possible. Even if they figure out what the object is, they must keep drawing what they hear.

4. Guide the students with words to use.
   a. Shape: round, square, oval, rectangular, circular, curvy
   b. Texture: rough, smooth, fluffy, squishy
   c. Size: tall, short, squat, long
   d. Color (if they’re using colored pens)

5. Then have the artist show the speaker their drawing. (This is usually funny.) How do they compare? Spend a minute talking about it. You might ask the following questions:
   a. How did you find the process?
   b. What have you learned about the objects?
   c. What have you learned about your own approach to them?
   d. How would you improve your describing/drawing based on this?
6. Now, reassign the objects while the students close their eyes, so each pair has a new object.
7. Repeat the activity.
8. Compare the first set of drawings to the second.

**Practicing describing**

It’s difficult to describe something very familiar without referring to its purpose. This encourages students to think of new ways to describe something familiar, examining its shape and thinking of other objects it looks like. Seeing the drawing shows them a visual representation of their words.

**Practicing interpreting**

The artist practices listening and interpreting. They don’t need to be good at drawing to do this – only listening to their partner. The drawing won’t always look like the object – in fact, the more different that drawing is from the object, the funnier students find it. It might be useful to have them reflect on how they could improve their description to make a better drawing.

*A hedgehog specimen and the blind drawing by a student who had not seen it.*
OBL Activity 3 – Slow Looking

This activity is for more advanced students, as younger students sometimes get bored.

**Goal:** Sit with an object to observe it

**Learning objectives:** Self-discovery, reflection, independent work, focus

**Materials:** Paper, pencil, one object per student

1. Each student receives an object. Let them choose which one appeals to them.
2. Have students put away all phones and watches.
3. The students sit with the object and observe it for five minutes. (Ten minutes for older students.) They are allowed to draw and make notes.
4. Divide into groups of three and have students discuss their objects.
   a. Ask students for reflections. What did they learn from five minutes that they would not have learned in one?
   b. What are the objects made of?
   c. How old are they?
   d. What were/are they used for?
   e. Consider their context – social, historical, scientific, etc.

**Being a researcher**

Long looking is an activity used by researchers and specialists. Not all research needs to be active. By observing without distraction, new insights can occur. Not everything you learn needs to come from being told; by observing, we independently come up with ideas.

**Practicing drawing**

Some students might choose to sketch their object. What have they learned from drawing it for such a long time? In observational sciences (archaeology, anatomy, geology) we can spend hours drawing just one object to learn about all its details.
OBL Activity 4 – Feelings

This activity is similar to that practiced in hospitals. It is less about the nature of the object – it’s about the students’ relationship to it.

Goal: To relate to an object.
Learning objectives: Self-reflection, describing feelings, storytelling
Materials: One object per student

1. Allow each student to pick an object. Have them think about it silently for one minute.
2. Divide the students into groups of three. Have them each discuss the following questions:
   a. What does this object mean to you?
   b. How does it make you feel?
   c. Does it trigger any particular emotions?
   d. Does it remind you of any experience you’ve had?
   e. If you could keep this object, what would you do with it?
3. As a class, discuss any interesting reflections they might have shared.

Sometimes OBL is less about the object itself than our relation to it. This is a continuation of the “meet your neighbor” activity, exploring the relationship we have with objects. Maybe a student is attracted to it because of the material, or the shape, or because it looks like something familiar. This activity explores the emotional reaction to that familiarity. Like the Blind Object Drawing activity encouraged students to practice descriptive words, this activity encourages students to practice emotional words.
For more advanced students (age 10-16), you can assign them a research project. Using an object from the teaching collection, they can do more research on it using the library or the internet. This activity can be included in a regular classroom curriculum, and can fit into other subjects like History, Literature, or World Cultures. If the objects relate to Qatari daily life, they can conduct interviews with older relatives or classmates.

**Goal:** To produce a new piece of research about an object.

**Learning Objectives:** Library research, interviews, writing, independent thinking

1. Assign each student an object. Let them know what it is and where it comes from, if they do not already know.
2. Instruct the students as to the length of the research paper (1-3 pages), the grade structure, and what resources they have available (library, school computers, etc).

An example of our assignment brief for secondary students is on the following page.
Select an object either from the ones we worked with today, one you saw on display at the Grant Museum or one from the UCL Museums & Collections online catalogues. In your own time research this object, responding to as many of the headings below as you can. This should lead to a c.500 word report or narrative.

**Object Name and catalogue number:** (What UCL collection is it from)

**Materials:** (What material(s) is the object made from or does it consist of?)

**Object description:** (Size, weight, colour, number of components, decoration, other observations, with drawings and/or photographs)

**Object Condition:** (What is the current condition of the object, how can it be studied and/or handled?)

**Manufacture/Origin:** (How was the object made/formed?)

**Function:** (How was the object used / what did it do?)

**Context:** (What was the original cultural / historical / natural context of the object?)

**Alterations:** (Has the object been modified, damaged, conserved or changed from its original state? If so how?)

** Acquisition:** How and when has the object been acquired (by the museum/collection)?

**Why is this object important/interesting to you? What can we learn from it?**
OBL Activity 5.2 - Storytelling

For younger students (age 7-12), you can assign them to write a story about their object or from the perspective of their object.

**Goal:** To produce a piece of fiction writing about an object.

**Learning Objectives:** Library research, creative writing, independent thinking

**Option 1.** Tell the students to imagine that they are the object. What do they see? What do they feel? Who touches them? What do they experience? Write a page from this perspective.

**Option 2.** Have the students write a short story about the object. Who has used it? Who bought it? How did it come to be here? Write a page.

**Feedback**

In our OBL sessions, we always get feedback to see what students liked and didn’t like to improve our sessions. Usually we use Post-It notes in three different colors, and have them answer three questions, one on each color:

1. What is Object-Based Learning?
2. What was the most interesting thing you learned today?
3. What would you have done better//what else would you have included?

The first question allows you to see if students fulfilled the learning objective. The second and third allow the students to reflect on their learning, and shows you how to improve it for another class.
Sample Activity

This section will show a variety of objects that can be found in the sous, and some questions you might ask students about them. These questions are not exhaustive – I encourage you to come up with your own. It’s ok if students don’t know the answers to any questions. The purpose is to explore them and come up with their own answers. Practice looking at these objects as if you had never seen them before, or how you would describe them to a foreigner.

Start with the Blind Object Drawing activity, then Long Looking, then Feelings. You can also place them in the context of a class on Qatari culture or history. Further, have older students do a research project where they find out who makes the objects; have younger students write a story from the perspective of the object.

Al-batoola

- What material/materials is this made from?
- Who wears it? When? Why?
- What does it symbolize?
- How would you describe this to a person from a foreign country?
- If this object could tell a story, what would it say?
Al-Thoub

- What is the purpose of this object?
- Is this object made for a particular person? An adult? A child? Who in your family wears this?
- What does it mean to wear this object?
- Have you seen this object in a museum?
- If you were making an exhibit about this object, what other objects would you include?

Perfume bottle

[As this object is a composite – glass, metal, and liquid – get students to think about these parts separately and as a whole.]

- What smell do you associate with this object? Is it good or bad?
- Who do you know who uses this?
- Do objects like this exist in other cultures?
- What is inside? How is that made?
- Think about all the places the ingredients came from. Where are they? What does that say about how Qatar is connected to other places?
- What is the importance of its name to its function?
Coffee pot

- What is this made from? What goes inside? How do we know?
- Who uses this?
- Where can this be found in the home?
- Is this used for special occasions, or every day?
- Is the design important/meaningful?
- What is the relationship between people making the coffee and people drinking the coffee?
- How have you seen this object used?

Heb

- Where are these made? Who makes them?
- Where do the materials come from?
- If you saw this object in a museum, what would you think?
- Is there one way of using this object, or is it multi-purpose?
- What is the symbolism of this object?
- Does this object exist in other cultures?

Now, come up with some of your own questions for these Qatari objects. Use the object questions web on page 6 to think of more.
Object Based Learning Collection – Qatar History

You can put together an object based learning collection in almost any subject for your school or institution. Below is a selection of objects that can be purchased from Souq Waqif to make up a Qatar History collection.

**Budget: QAR 2000**

A selection of cultural clothes for men and women native to Qatar, these items are still found today in souqs and local tailors. Some are now only worn during special occasions, while others are part of today’s everyday attire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Name in Arabic</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>البدلة</td>
<td>albatūlah</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is made from leather, and some were decorated with a layer of gold leaf. It is used as a face mask by married women in the Arabian Gulf to cover their face partially. There are various designs depending on the region.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>البحنَقٰ</td>
<td>albakhnag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is made from thin black material and gold thread. It was used by young girls to cover their hair. They were made locally by women. The item was worn every day by young girls but today is only worn during traditional celebrations such as Garangao, the 13th day of Ramadan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Name in Arabic</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>جلابِيَة</td>
<td>jalabyah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is made from colourful patterned cotton material and gold thread from India. The dress was worn by women and used everyday and on special occasions, depending on how decorative the dress was. This object is still worn today by women. The material and pre-stitched collar and cufflinks were bought at the souq.
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<tr>
<th>Object</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>الثوب</td>
<td>althoub</td>
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**Description**

This object is made from white light cotton in the summer and brown wool in the winter. It was used by male adults and children. This item today is worn every day and has not changed in design or function.

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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>العقال</td>
<td>alagāl</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is made from thick black cotton. It is used by males to secure the white/red scarf (the gutra) on their head. This object was produced locally and sold in the souq. This object is still used today.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Name in Arabic</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Image](image1.png) | algutra | |**Description**
This object is made from white light cotton in the summer and thick white and red material in the winter. It is used as a scarf to cover and protect the head and neck of men. The veil is placed over the cap (gahfiya) and under the (igal). They were produced locally and regionally and sold at the souq. They are still worn daily today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Name in Arabic</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Image](image2.png) | alqahfyah | |**Description**
This object was made from white cotton. It is used by males to cover their head before and is covered by a scarf (gutra). Young boys wear it on its own. These were made locally and sold at the souq, and some were made by female family members as well.
A selection of objects used daily in a typical traditional Qatari household, these objects were and still are used for cooking or storing items. They can be found widely in the souq.

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<td>albisht</td>
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**Description**

This object is made from thick cotton or wool, with decorative gold thread. It is used as an outer layer for the thoub during special occasions such as weddings and Eid. The thicker outer layer was also used in the winter to keep warm.

This object was made from glass and used to store perfume such as oud. They come in three sizes and each size of bottle is named after its measuring unit (Tooala, Tela and tool). This measuring unit is an old measuring unit from Asia. It is still used in the Arabian gulf today. They are the standard decorative perfume bottle found in the souq for oud.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Object</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Image](99x600 to 230x719)</td>
<td>غرشة</td>
<td>ghrsha</td>
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</table>

**Description**

This object is a small water jug made from ceramic with three handles used to store water in the house. They were produced in places like Oman and Iraq. The ceramic kept water cool for consumption.

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<th>Pronunciation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Image](97x301 to 231x429)</td>
<td>حب</td>
<td>Hib</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is a large ceramic jar used to store water or grains. They were buried in the sand or placed on a wooden stand. Burying the ceramic jar in the sand would keep the items cool and away from animals.

They were produced in places like Basra, in Iraq and bought from the local souq in Doha.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Object" /></td>
<td>مبخر</td>
<td>Mabkhar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object was made from ceramic. It was used to burn different types of incense such as bokhor, leban (Frankincense) and oud. This particular design came from Oman and was widely sold at the Omani souq in Doha.

Burning incense in the house held significant medical, religious and ceremonial value.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Name in Arabic</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Object" /></td>
<td>كاب</td>
<td>caap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is made from porcelain or china. It was used to serve soup or desert. Upper-class families would buy them to serve guests. These decorative bowls were made in Europe or Japan and sold at the souq. This particular design was called Umm Kursi and was most common in the 18th century manufactured in Holland. Later versions were manufactured in Japan and sold in Qatar during the 1950s. These decorative bowls were considered valuable as they reflected the family’s monetary value.
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<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image of a bottle" /></td>
<td>تأمليت بوتيلة</td>
<td>Namlait Bu Teela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This object is made from glass and contains a small marble inside. It was used to store carbonated soft drinks; the first soft drink available in the Arabian Gulf and can be traced back to the early 1920s. Children would often break the bottle in order to get the marble inside to play with. The name Namlait comes from the mispronounced English word Lemonade, and bu teela is the name of the traditional marble game most famously played by children in the Arabian Gulf.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image of a tray" /></td>
<td>سفرة خوص</td>
<td>Sufrah khus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This object is made of dried palm leaves. It was used to serve food on like a tray. When it was not being used, it was hung on the wall as a decorative feature in the house. These palm leaves trays were produced in the local market and even made by the family.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>دالة</td>
<td>dalah</td>
</tr>
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**Description**

This object is made from brass. It is used to store and serve coffee. Objects linked to coffee culture and tradition were and are considered as a decorative object in the majlis when not in use. They were bought from the souq.

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<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>الفنجان</td>
<td>alfanjān</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is made from porcelain. It is used to drink coffee. These cups were decorated with gold ink and other colours, with patterns such as bird feet. They are considered an important element of coffee culture. One important aspect of coffee etiquette with this cup is to shake the cup when you have finished, so the host does not refill it.
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<tr>
<td>![Object Image]</td>
<td>المنفاخ</td>
<td>almanfākh</td>
</tr>
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**Description**

This object is made from wood, leather and metal pins. It is used to blow strong blasts of air over a fire to keep it going. It was bought from the souq and when not in use, hung as a decorative feature in the Majlis.

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<tr>
<td>![Object Image]</td>
<td>مبرد</td>
<td>moberad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

This object is made from wood and decorative metal pins. The funnel was used to cool coffee beans. Decorative items for coffee making are common in Qatar because it is linked to the art of hospitality in coffee culture. Now a UNESCO recognised intangible heritage.
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<tr>
<td><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Sadu Object" /></td>
<td>سدو</td>
<td>Sadu</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Description**
This object is made from woven sheep wool, used to decorate tent panels. Sadu has a distinct design and colour that varies from Arabian Bedouin tribes. It mostly consists of red, white, black and brown dyes. This object was mostly produced by women.

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<tr>
<td><img src="image2.jpg" alt="Dowshaq Object" /></td>
<td>الدوشق</td>
<td>dowshaq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**
This object is made and stuffed with cotton. This was used to sleep on like a mattress. They were mostly made in Iran and Pakistan. The traditional name Dwshq comes from the Urdu word for a mattress. They were widely found at the souq.
A selection of objects used by pearl divers before the discovery of oil, these objects can be found today at Souq Waqaf’s pearl shop.

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<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Object Image" /></td>
<td>ندني</td>
<td>Diyyin</td>
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**Description**

This object is made of cotton and wood. It was woven by hand and used to collect oysters while diving to the sea bed.

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<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Object Image" /></td>
<td>شمام</td>
<td>futam</td>
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**Description**

This object was made of wood or bone. It was used to clip on a pearl divers nose to stop water coming in. It was one of many practical pieces of equipment pearl divers used to make their lives safer.
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<td><img src="Image" alt="Object Image" /></td>
<td>الحجر</td>
<td>hajar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**
This object is made from rock and rope. It was used to weigh down pearl divers in the ocean. This diving weight was handmade by the divers from rock they would find on the beach and rope. The Arabic name for the object “hajar” means rock.
Additional Resources

Videos

- UCL OBL resources - https://www.ucl.ac.uk/culture/teaching-object-based-learning/object-based-e-resources
- Thomas Kador's 1-hour lecture on OBL - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDqfvJxYLc0
- A UCL student's experience (second embedded video) - https://www.ucl.ac.uk/basc/current/core/ol
- OBL at the Phoenix Art Museum - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPvLQ2o3vHY
- Everything We Touch: Dubai - https://vimeo.com/251022905

Academic Resources