



READING CLUB

COMMON
CORE
ALIGNED

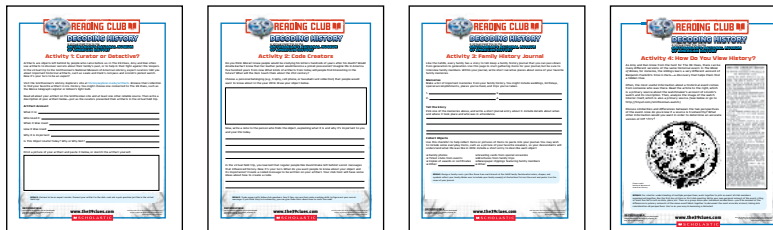
DECODING HISTORY

A Virtual Field Trip to the
**SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF AMERICAN HISTORY**

Dear Book Club Host:

We've teamed up with our allies at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History to create an exciting virtual field trip called **Decoding History**. Join renowned author (and top Cahill agent) David Baldacci as he takes students on a special, behind-the-scenes look at important artifacts from U.S. history, including the Lewis and Clark compass featured in David Baldacci's book, *Cahills vs. Vespers: Day of Doom*. Be sure to visit scholastic.com/decodinghistory to start the adventure with your club members, if you haven't already.

This month's activities are inspired by the webcast and have been designed with the ELA Common Core State Standards in mind—with a The 39 Clues twist, of course. History's greatest stories are waiting for your intrepid Cahill minds. Visit scholastic.com/39cluesclub to download the activity pages. And keep on exploring history by visiting the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History online at historyexplorer.si.edu/home.



Activity 1: Curator or Detective?

Prepare ahead: 1) Photocopy the **Curator or Detective?** handout so there are copies for every club member. 2) You will need a computer with internet access to screen the virtual field trip and for student research. 3) Supply pens, crayons, and markers for club members.

This activity asks Cahills to investigate artifacts featured in the **Decoding History** virtual field trip. Watch the webcast, and then read the **Curator or Detective?** handout aloud to the group. Ask club members to conduct research and prepare their own accounts of famous artifacts in U.S. history. In order to fulfill writing standards 2 and 7, club members should cite evidence in their informative pieces from both the webcast and their independent research.

When club members are done, you might choose to cover speaking and listening standards by inviting members to report their findings in the fashion of the virtual field trip. If available, use a video camera to record each student's account and to make your own videos showcasing the famous artifacts.

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Activity 2: Code Creators

Prepare ahead: 1) Photocopy the **Code Creators** handout for each club member. 2) Prior to the club meeting, tell club members to bring in a personal object or come prepared to talk about an object that someone five hundred years from now might need to know about in order to understand the 21st century.

Invite club members to share their personal artifacts with the group. Then distribute the **Code Creators** handout. Each club member should draw his or her object in the box provided, then write a note explaining its significance. Keep in mind that in five hundred years, people might not understand things like cell phones, so club members should give specific details about how an object is used. To address writing standard 2 for explanatory texts, club members should introduce their topic, elaborate using facts and examples, include key vocabulary words that relate to their objects, and end with a concluding statement.

Then, just like David Drake did with his pottery, ask club members to use the code suggestions below to leave a secret message on their object. If time permits, divide club members into groups to swap papers and call on their Cahill training to crack the codes.

- A number might correspond with a letter of the alphabet (1=A, 2=B, 3=C, and so on)
- A letter could represent a different letter in the alphabet (“Bnz boe Ebo” means “Amy and Dan”)
- Individual words can be written backward (“IlihaC” means “Cahill”) or an entire message might be written backward (“.srepseV eht potS” means “Stop the Vespers.”)

Activity 3: Family History Journal

Prepare ahead: 1) Make copies of the **Family History Journal** handout for each club member. 2) Gather supplies like glue, scissors, and stickers, as well as notebooks or paper for making the journals. (See below.)

Every family has a story to tell, whether it’s the secret tale of hiding a Clue in the Paris catacombs, or the account of a relative’s journey to America. Ask club members to explore their own past and create history journals to document their family’s legacy. Club members can use the space on the handout to brainstorm items they might add to their journals—an important part of the planning process, which aligns to writing standard 5. Then, using oral interviews and primary sources, club members can write short narrative pieces in their journals that address writing standards 3 and 7.

Have club members create their own journals by using bound notebooks or by folding sheets of construction paper in half and stapling them together. Because a family history is an ongoing process, be sure to leave extra pages at the end. If you want to go paperless and create interactive journals, club members can use PowerPoint or a secure online scrapbook website in order to meet writing standard 6.

Once club members finish their journals, invite families to a celebration honoring family history. Host a small gathering during which members present their journals—a fun way to practice speaking and listening skills.

Activity 4: How Do You View History?

Prepare ahead: 1) Photocopy the **How Do You View History?** handout, making enough copies for every club member. 2) Have extra paper and plenty of pencils available for every club member. 3) You'll need a computer or interactive whiteboard with internet access to watch the virtual field trip.

Replay the section of the virtual field trip about Lincoln's pocket watch at www.scholastic.com/decodinghistory. Instruct club members to pay careful attention to the story about the secret inscription. To support speaking and listening standards 1 and 2, have club members work with a partner to paraphrase the story of the watch.

As a group, discuss the differences between a primary source and a secondary source. A **primary source** is a firsthand original account, record, or evidence about a person, place, object, or event. A **secondary source** is an account, record, or evidence derived from an original or primary source or sources. (Harry Rubenstein's discussion of Lincoln's watch in the virtual field trip is a secondary source.)

Ask club members to brainstorm ideas about what primary sources Harry Rubenstein might have used when preparing his account of the watch. Who would be able to give a firsthand, original account about the pocket watch and be considered a primary source? Then distribute and read the **How Do You View History?** handout, which features a record of a newspaper article and an image of Lincoln's pocket watch. The article, from the April 30, 1906 edition of *The New York Times*, shares the watchmaker's account about the story, making it a primary source. However, the actual watch is also a primary source.

Have club members analyze the similarities and differences between these two primary sources to gather information about what really happened. Highlight how important it is for historians to look at multiple perspectives as one person may not have all the details of a given event, or may get information wrong (like the watchmaker's memory of the inscription wording). The ability to analyze these documents is an important skill addressed in reading standard 6 and reading in history/social studies standards 6 and 9. For more information about teaching with primary sources, visit <http://historyexplorer.si.edu/teacher>.

In support of writing standards 3 and 8, use extra paper to have club members participate in a bonus activity by writing their own narrative accounts of an event they all experienced together, like a recent assembly, the first day of class, or a first club meeting. They should cite at least five facts. Have the group share their firsthand accounts and notice how each account will have a different perspective. Most of the time, these perspectives will just include different details depending on who is speaking, but sometimes, like in the case of the watchmaker, one person's memory is wrong. Like Harry Rubenstein, the museum curator, club members will need to consult multiple sources of information (primary sources whenever available) in order to get the most complete version of what really happened.

Common Core State Standards:

The activities in this month's reading club support the following Common Core anchor standards:

| | Reading | Writing | Speaking and Listening | Reading in History/Social Studies (grades 6-8) |
|---|---------|------------|------------------------|--|
| Activity 1: Analyzing Artifacts | 1, 7 | 2, 7 | 2, 4, 5 | 1, 7 |
| Activity 2: Code Creators | | 2 | 1 | |
| Activity 3: Family History Journal | | 3, 5, 6, 7 | 1, 4, 5 | |
| Activity 4: How Do You View History? | 6 | 3, 8 | 1, 2 | 6, 9 |

Bonus: Looking for extra practice with **text-dependent questions** to meet the rigors of Common Core? Click [HERE](http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Excerpt) (<http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Excerpt>) to download an excerpt from *Cahills vs. Vespers: Day of Doom* in which Amy and Dan visit the Smithsonian to see the Lewis and Clark compass. You can also access an audio excerpt [HERE](http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Audio) (<http://tinyurl.com/Scholastic-DayofDoom-Audio>). Then have club members answer the discussion questions that follow by digging through the text and virtual field trip for evidence.

- In this excerpt from the book, we haven't met Isabel Kabra, but we can get of sense of her character based on what Amy, Dan, and the other says about her. Using clues in the text, describe Isabel's character traits. (RL.3)
- What can you infer about the "competition" that Amy and Dan speak about? What evidence in the text helped you come to this conclusion? (RL.1)
- Compare and contrast how information about the Lewis and Clark compass is presented in the excerpt and in the virtual field trip. (RL.9, RI.9)

Thanks for joining us on this adventure. Until next time—keep on discovering history!

—The 39 Clues Reading Club

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Activity 1: Curator or Detective?

Artifacts are objects left behind by people who came before us. In The 39 Clues, Amy and Dan often use artifacts to discover secrets about their family's past, or to help in their fight against the Vespers. In the virtual trip to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, expert curators told you about important historical artifacts, such as Lewis and Clark's compass and Lincoln's pocket watch. Now it's your turn to be an expert!

Visit the Smithsonian's History Explorers site at historyexplorer.si.edu/artifacts. Browse their collection to find your favorite artifact in U.S. history. You might choose one connected to The 39 Clues, such as the Morse telegraph register or Edison's light bulb.

Read all about your artifact on the Smithsonian site and at least one other reliable source. Then write a description of your artifact below—just as the curators presented their artifacts in the virtual field trip.

Artifact Account

What It Is: _____

Who Used It: _____

When It Was Used: _____

How It Was Used: _____

Why It Is Important: _____

Is This Object Useful Today? Why or Why Not? _____

Print a picture of your artifact and paste it below, or sketch the artifact yourself.

BONUS: Pretend to be an expert curator. Present your artifact to the club—and ask a quiz question just like in the virtual field trip!

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Activity 2: Code Creators

Do you think Mozart knew people would be studying his letters hundreds of years after his death? Would Amelia Earhart know that her leather jacket would become a prized possession? Imagine life in America five hundred years from now. What kinds of artifacts from today will people find interesting in the future? What will the item teach them about the 21st century?

Choose a personal belonging (e.g., trophy, cell phone, or baseball card collection) that people would want to know about in the year 2513. Draw your object below.

Now, write a note to the person who finds the object, explaining what it is and why it's important to you and your life today.

In the virtual field trip, you learned that regular people like David Drake left behind secret messages that influenced history. Now it's your turn. What do you want people to know about your object and its importance? Create a coded message to be written on your artifact. Your club host will have some ideas about how to create a code.

BONUS: Trade papers with fellow club members. See if they can use their code-cracking skills to figure out your secret message. If you think they're trustworthy, you can give them hints about how to crack the code!

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Activity 3: Family History Journal

Like the Cahills, every family has a story to tell. Keep a family history journal that you can pass down from generation to generation. Use this page to start gathering items for your journal, but be sure to interview family members. Within your journal, write short narrative pieces about some of your favorite family memories.

Memories

Make a list of important memories from your family history. You might include weddings, birthdays, special accomplishments, places you've lived, and trips you've taken.

1. _____ 3. _____
2. _____ 4. _____

Tell the Story

Pick one of the memories above, and write a short journal entry about it. Include details about when and where it took place and who was in attendance.

Collect Objects

Use this checklist to help collect items or pictures of items to paste into your journal. You may wish to include some everyday items, such as a picture of your favorite sneakers, so your descendants will understand what life was like in 2013. Include a short entry to describe each object:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family photos | <input type="checkbox"/> Greeting cards from special occasions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ticket stubs from events | <input type="checkbox"/> Brochures from family trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of awards or certificates | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper clippings featuring family members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

BONUS: Design a family crest—just like those from each branch of the Cahill family. Decide what colors, shapes, and symbols reflect your family. Make sure to include your family name(s) at the bottom! Cut out the crest and paste it on the cover of your journal.

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Activity 4: How Do You View History?

As Amy and Dan know from the hunt for The 39 Clues, there can be many different versions of the same historical event. In *The Maze of Bones*, for instance, the siblings learn a very different account of Benjamin Franklin's time in Paris—a discovery that helps them find a hidden Clue.

Often, the most useful information about a historical event comes from someone who was there. Read the article to the right, which is a primary source about the watchmaker's account of Lincoln's watch and its inscription. Then, analyze the image of the watch interior itself, which is also a primary source. (See below or go to <http://tinyurl.com/smithsonian-watch>.)

Discuss similarities and differences between the two perspectives of the event. How do you know if a source is trustworthy? What other information would you want in order to determine an accurate version of the story?

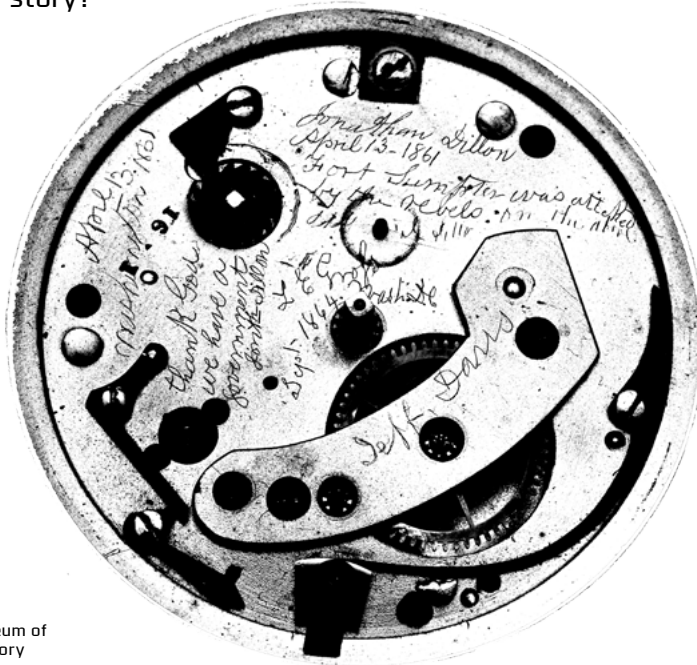


Photo credit:
National Museum of
American History

WHO HAS LINCOLN'S WATCH?

He Will Be Interested in This Story of
the 84-Year-Old Juror.

Among the jurors serving in the Supreme Court last week was one 84 years young. He said so himself. He looks and acts just as young as he says he feels. This man is Jonathan Dillon of 48 West 117th Street. He has been engaged in the watchmaking business for the best part of seventy-four years.

Mr. Dillon, who has a remarkable memory and an interesting fund of reminiscence, tells a new story which has to do with Abraham Lincoln.

"When the civil war broke out," said Mr. Dillon, "I was in the employ of M. W. Galt & Co. on Pennsylvania Avenue, near Seventh Street, in Washington. I was the only Union sympathizer working in the shop.

"I was working upstairs when Mr. Galt came up. He was very much excited, and gasped:

"'Dillon, war has begun; the first shot has been fired.'

"At that moment I had in my hand Abraham Lincoln's watch, which I had been repairing. It was a gold, hunting case, English lever watch. The late John Hay told me afterward that it was the first watch Mr. Lincoln ever owned.

"I was in the act of screwing on the dial when Mr. Galt announced the news. I unscrewed the dial, and with a sharp instrument wrote on the metal beneath:

"'The first gun is fired. Slavery is dead. Thank God we have a President who at least will try.'

"Then I signed my name and the date. So far as I know, no one but myself ever saw the inscription, and I do not know into whose hands Mr. Lincoln's watch fell at his death."

Mr. Dillon was born in the City of Waterford, Ireland, where his ancestors had been watchmakers for generations.

"I have newspapers," he said, "containing my father's and grandfather's advertisements back 150 years. I was never out of work for twenty-four hours at a time until I retired."

"How long ago was that?" the old watchmaker was asked.

"Well, I wouldn't like to admit that I have quit yet," was the reply. "My eyes are not as good as they were once, but they are still as good as those of any one I know. When I was younger I frequently amazed friends by standing on Jersey City Heights and reading signs in Manhattan. My friends often accused me of locating and learning them before I crossed the river, but that was not the case. I could actually read them at that distance."

The law does not oblige a citizen to serve as a juror after he is 70 years old. Mr. Dillon rather enjoys the work.

BONUS: For a better understanding of multiple perspectives, work together to pick an event all club members experienced together, like the first day of class or first club meeting. Write your own personal account of the event, citing at least five facts such as date, place, etc. Then as a group share your individual recollections—you'll be amazed at the differences in primary accounts of the same event! Work together to document the most accurate account, taking into consideration all perspectives. You're on your way to becoming a historian!

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