



*Photograph of the 1924 time capsule laid inside the cornerstone of the Liberty Memorial Tower*  
Online Collections Database, LMA.261, [www.theworldwar.org/research/database](http://www.theworldwar.org/research/database). National WWI Museum and Memorial.  
Online.

## Capturing a Moment in Time

Recommended Grade Levels: 3-5, 6-8

Course/Content Area(s): Local history, Community, U.S. History

Supported by the Pritzker Military Foundation

Authored by: National WWI Museum and Memorial

<b>LESSON OVERVIEW:</b>	In 1924, as the cornerstone for the Liberty Memorial Tower was being placed, the Liberty Memorial Association provided a time capsule to be left for the people of Kansas City 100 years later. The capsule included objects from local, national, and even global history, capturing the memory of the Great War, the country, and the space. In this lesson, students will discover how and why time capsules are created, in order to thoughtfully design their own time capsule.
<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	<i>Students will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore the purpose of time capsules</li> <li>● Discover how a community builds a time capsule and why they choose objects that go inside</li> <li>● Design their own time capsule</li> </ul>
<b>STANDARDS ALIGNMENT:</b>	<b>Common Core State Standards English Language Arts:</b>  <b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4</b> Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.  <b>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6</b> Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
<b>TIME NEEDED:</b>	2 24-minute classes
<b>INTERDISCIPLINARY:</b>	Missouri History, Current Affairs, World History, ELA
<b>PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No prior knowledge is necessary for this lesson</li> </ul>
<b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Links to the following videos and a space to project them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">1924 Time Capsule Unveiling</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">1924 Time Capsule Unveiling Ceremony</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Watching this entire video is optional, depending on the depth of content to explore.</li> <li>■ To go directly to see what was inside and learn what was in the time capsule itself, skip to 7:16</li> <li>■ To see live opening of the final objects, not opened by Museum and Memorial staff in advance, skip to 11:45</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>● <a href="#">Time Capsule Slides</a></li> </ul>

# LESSON

## INTRODUCTION:

Ask students (slide 1):

- Do you know what a time capsule is?
- Have you ever seen the contents of one?
- What do you think their purpose is?

Engage students with the images on slide 2 of the provided PowerPoint. Tell students that these images are of objects from a time capsule. Ask students:

- Where do you think this time capsule was made?
- When do you think this time capsule was made?
- What memories does it seem like the creators of this time capsule were trying to ensure made it into the future?

## DIRECTIONS:

Part 1: Example Time Capsule

1. Provide students with the definition of a time capsule (slide 3)
2. Use that same slide to go over a few time capsule facts
3. Share with students that today, they are going to learn about one example of a time capsule, created in 1924, and placed in the cornerstone of the Liberty Memorial tower (images of the event on slide 4)
4. Show students the short video of the day the time capsule was opened in 2024 (slide 5)
5. To provide students with even more context, select portions of the entire unveiling ceremony (slide 6)
  - Watching this entire video is optional, depending on the depth of content to explore.
  - To go directly to see what was inside and learn about what was in the time capsule itself, skip to 7:16
  - To see live opening of the final objects, not opened by Museum and Memorial staff in advance, skip to 11:45
6. Have students discuss their observations by answering the questions (slide 7):
  - What are some things they decided to place into the time capsule in 1924?
  - Why do you think they chose those objects?
  - What do those objects tell us about the world, the United States, and Kansas City in 1924?

Part 2: Designing Their Own Time Capsule

- Slides 8-10 include different prompts for different types of time capsules. Decide in advance which you would like students to create and use the appropriate slide
- Personal Time Capsule:

- Select 10 items that tell the story of your life so far
- They should include objects that have specific memories attached
- Create a list of those items
- Write a short description of what makes each item worth including for a time capsule
- Decide when in your life you think you should return to your personal time capsule
- Decorate a box for your items – ensure it includes an exterior note stating what year it should be opened and that it reflects who you are or what life is like in this moment. It could include photos, poems, wrapping paper, magazines, etc.
- School Time Capsule:
  - Select 10 items that tell the story of our school so far
  - They should include objects that have specific memories that affected the whole school
  - Create a list of those items
  - Write a short description of what makes each item worth including for a time capsule
  - Decide when in you think the students of the future should open the time capsule
  - Decorate a box for the items – ensure it includes an exterior note stating what year it should be opened and that it reflects what life is like in this moment. Be creative!
- Community Time Capsule:
  - Select 10 items that tell the story of our community so far
  - They should include objects that have specific memories that affected the whole community
  - Create a list of those items
  - Write a short description of what makes each item worth including for a time capsule
  - Decide when in you think the community members of the future should open the time capsule
  - Decorate a box for the items – ensure it includes an exterior note stating what year it should be opened and that it reflects what life is like in this moment. Be creative!
- After students have designed their time capsules, they should share their designs with the class or with a group.
- Decide if you want students to commit to creating a time capsule – they can include printed photos of objects they cannot directly obtain or are too precious to include.