

Feeling and reflecting: Objects and memories

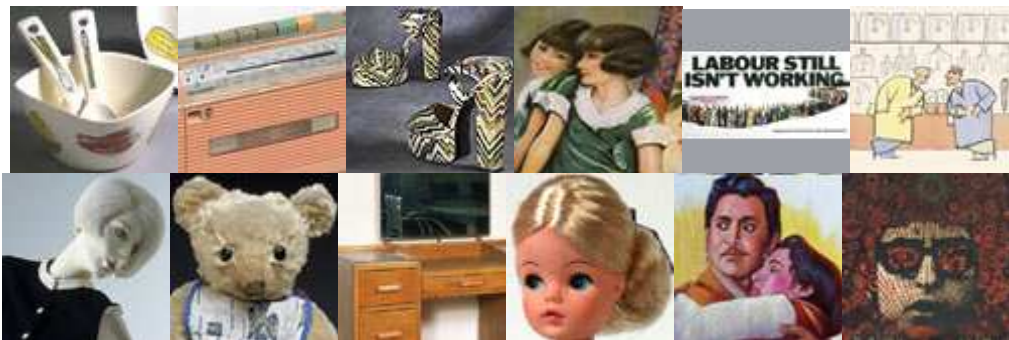
Aim of the exercise:

To use an object as a focus for working with memories

Certain objects, such as domestic objects and personal objects (for example handbags, wallets and powder compacts) evoke powerful memories in individuals. Begin by choosing an object that evokes a strong memory from your past.

If you are in the V&A, you may like to start by looking at some 20th century objects.

If you are working from your computer, here are some images to choose from:



Consider working with an object, and a memory, with which you feel less than comfortable. Take a risk: go for the embarrassing, the disturbing, the painful. Your writing will probably be stronger for it.

Write notes about the memory that the object brings up for you. Be as thorough about this as you possibly can be.

Making memory notes

- Try to locate the memory. Where were you? What can you remember of your surroundings?
- When did it happen? If it is a childhood memory, do you know how old you were, or roughly how old?
- Were you alone when this incident or moment occurred, or with a brother or sister? Is this memory an 'I' memory or a 'we' memory?
- What other people were around at the time?
- What sensory impressions do you connect with it?

Be as precise as you can about what you remember taking in through your senses:

- Scent: don't just say something smelled of a single thing; most scents are combinations of different odours
- Colours: try and be exact about the precise shades
- Feel: remember the feel of the clothes you were wearing, the sensation of touching objects or surfaces
- Sound: remember voices, noises, sounds going on in the background

If you could only describe one aspect of this memory, what would it be?

Once your memory notes have been completed, have a go at writing either:

- A short prose piece (under 1000 words)
- A poem