



Learning outcomes

- Experience handling and investigating artefacts
- Understand how trademarks can be important in identifying a historical artefact

Content

Group activity handling historic glass pieces, providing a tangible link to John Sowerby.

NB the glassware used is robust and suitable for handling with care.

Preparation and resources

- Arrange to borrow the Sowerby Glass Detectives resources (glassware, crib list of pieces, fact file and identification sheet *)
- Examine the glassware and accompanying information, making sure you can identify Sowerby pieces yourself. Decide how to communicate appropriate and safe ways of handling items.

Activity

- Take the pieces out of the box or have them ready for distributing.
- Assume that everyone in the class is an apprentice auctioneer, learning to spot good pieces for auction.
- Tell them that a box of old glassware has been discovered by the St James' Heritage and Environment Group. It is believed that some of the items might be valuable since they could have come from the Sowerby glassworks, so they will be going to auction. Can the apprentices work out which pieces might sell well because of the Sowerby name?
- Put the class into groups, each with identification sheets showing what to look for plus a fact file for recording their decisions.
- Start circulating the pieces around the group tables, five minutes maximum per piece. They should check each as it comes round and note down whether it is Sowerby or not.
- Once all pieces have circulated, check the group results with the crib list and see who would make successful auctioneers.
- Make sure that at some point you ask what the children think of the glassware as this can open lots of different discussion avenues – e.g. do they like Sowerby glassware? Would you find such items in homes now? What has replaced them?
- Take the activity further by having a mock auction or use information on the crib list and get the class to guess which piece was bought for which price (some go for much more than this of course, as a look on EBay will confirm!).



*Borrow from: Pendower Good Neighbour Project 0191 272 2962 / patpen@blueyonder.co.uk