

UTEP's Exhibition Practices II Class  
Presents

Their Permanent Collection:  
Personal Objects and the  
Stories They Tell

In the Spring of 2019 the Exhibit Design and Development class at UTEP began planning for an exhibit to be installed in the Centennial Museum's Tom Lea Gallery.

### **COVID-19 had other ideas.**

Forced to abandon all hope of being able to install the exhibit physically, the students shifted gears and created an exhibit plan that could be put on the Centennial's website instead.

This plan included the physical style of the exhibit, the placement of the objects, the interpretation of those objects through placement and labels, and interactive elements to engage visitors had they been able to install the exhibit.

**What you see here is the result of that work...**

# Introductory Panels

## **Their Permanent Collection:**

**Personal Objects and the Stories They Tell**



Imagina tu casa y piensa en todos los objetos que contiene. No todos esos objetos son iguales, algunos tienen más significado que otros. Algunas personas coleccionan mucho de el mismo tipo de objeto, otros guardan un objeto que define quienes son y otros guardan objetos que les trae recuerdos.

En esta exhibición vas a explorar como los objetos pueden definir una parte de quien somos.

## **Their Permanent Collection:**

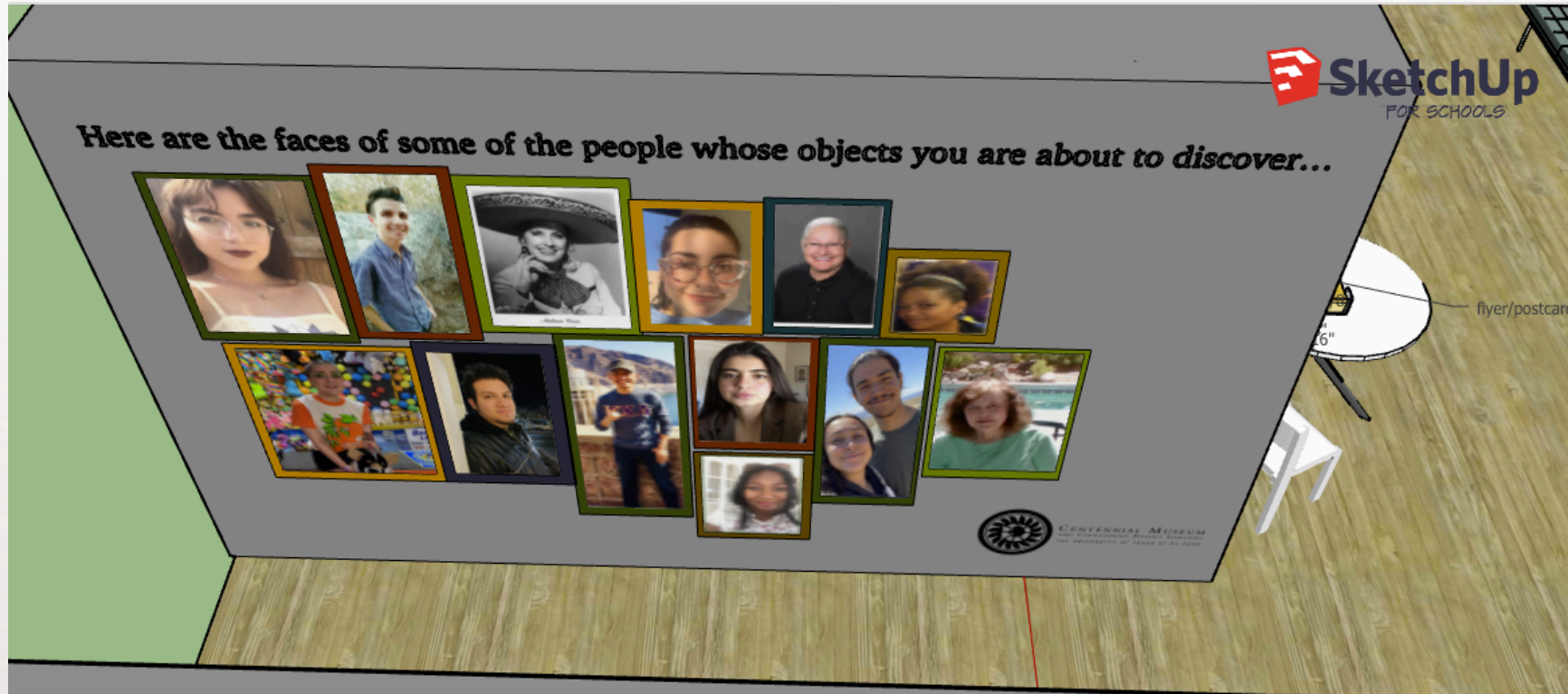
**Personal Objects and the Stories They Tell**



Picture your house and think of all the items you have in there. Not all of these objects are the same though, some have more meaning to our lives than others. Some people collect a lot of the same object, others keep one object that defines who they are, and others keep objects that have memories attached to them.

In this exhibit you will explore how objects can define a part of who we are.

Gallery Wall (opposite wall with introductory panels)

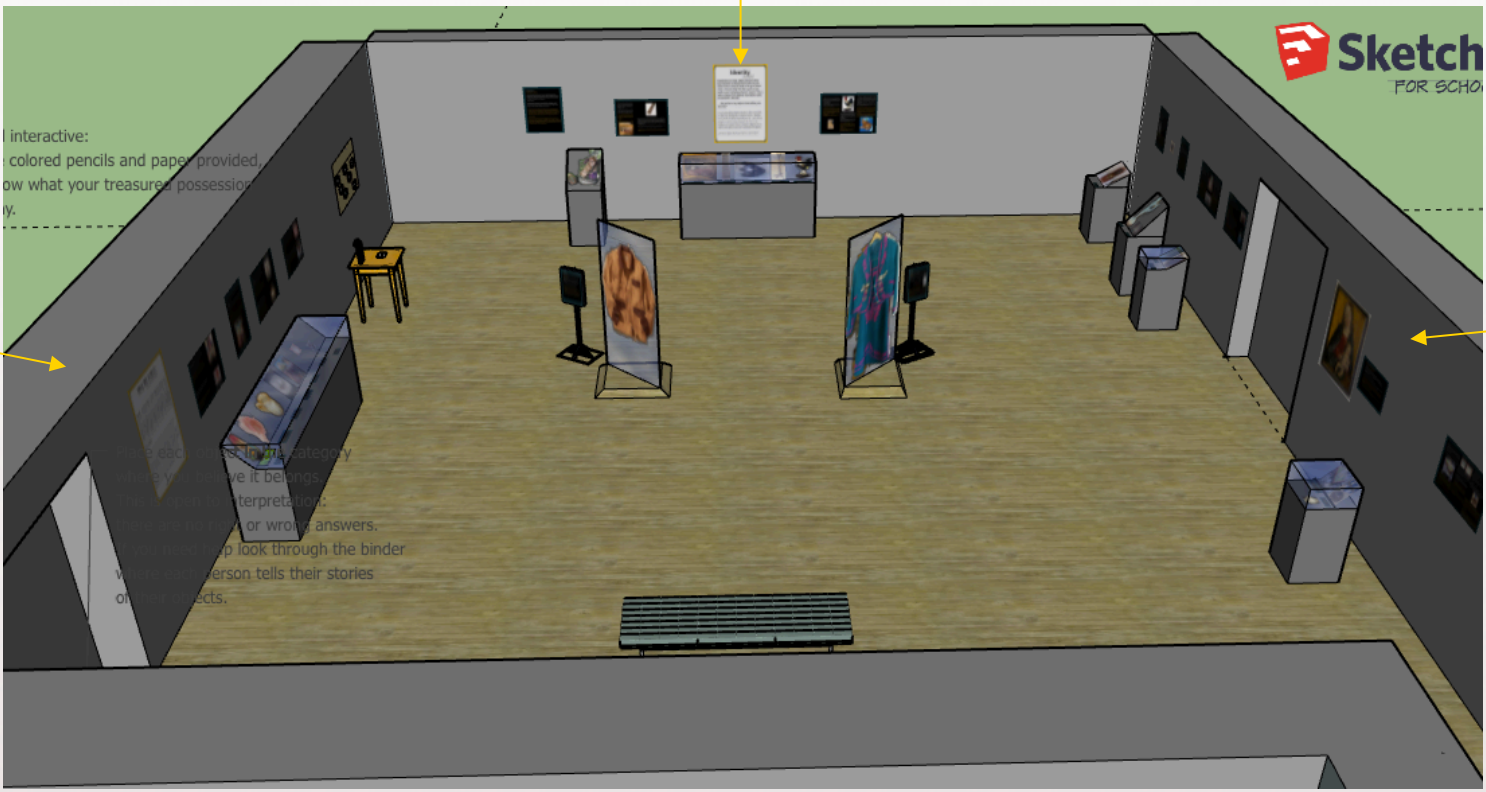


# Floorplan

Identity Section

Why we Collect Section

Memory and Emotion Section





# Memories and Emotion

## Memories & Emotion

*Memoria e Emoción*

The objects we keep often represent significant moments in our personal story. They connect to our emotions and are kept close to us because there is nothing greater than a cherished memory.

At first glance, there may be no obvious correlation between the items. You may find yourself observing details of the objects, take your time. They are each bound to a memory, or a unique history, providing treasure trove of human experience.

*Los objetos que poseemos a menudo representan momentos significantes en nuestra historia. Nos conectan a nuestras emociones y los mantenemos cerca de nosotros porque no hay nada mejor que una memoria preciada.*

*A primera vista, puede que no se vea una conexión obvia entre los objetos. Cada uno está conectado a una memoria o a una historia única, proporcionando un tesoro de la experiencia humana.*



Explore the Objects in this Section Along with  
Their Stories



---

## Orion Constellation Embroidery

*"It was a Christmas present from my best friend in 2015. She asked me what my favorite constellation was but kept her reason for asking a secret until she gave me the gift.*

*...The object itself shows the importance of friendship and also just captures something important to me on a portable, handheld scale. The fact that it has moved with me shares how I've been able to make a space feel like home no matter where I go. I always liked this particular constellation... It's become such a familiar object for me to see... I just see it automatically."*

Sarah Ostrowidzki

The embroidery serves as a constant reminder of her friendships and allows her to carry these emotions wherever she and the constellation go.



---

### **Madonna and Child with Cherries**

*“This Northern Gothic painting c. 1476 has been in my family for multiple generations. My grandfather hand-carried it when he and his family, including my father, fled Germany in 1938. My father recently gave it to me to steward for the future. I grew up with it as part of our household but didn't appreciate it until I was an adult.”*

Elisabeth Sommer

Passed down for generations, the painting now is hung in her home and cherished as it symbolizes family ties and the lives and journeys of its caretakers.



---

## Key Chains

*“As a kid I was obsessed with keychains and spent a lot of time with my grandmother. Over the years she would gift them to me and I always thought I lost them. When she passed away, I was given this tin box full of keychains that I had ‘lost’ but really she had just saved them for me as a gift.”*

Michael Heredia

Saving these objects that they had collected together; his grandmother has been able to continue their connections and their memories together.



---

## Coin from Mexico

*"My grandma saw value in them to keep them when she was younger (around 15 she is now 88). She never spent it in Mexico, even though she could have. When I see this coin, it reminds me of the relationship I have with my grandma"*

Christopher Tennessee

This coin represents family for its owner. It is a family heirloom that has been passed on for generations, and the owner plans on continuing to pass them down.



---

## King Ranch Purse

*“Represents how I achieved my M.A. and allowed me to own an exclusive brand, costly yet worth it. Shows how far I come since I grew up in K.R.”*

Sandra Torrez

This leather purse was purchased from the King Ranch Saddle Shop in Kingsville, Texas where Sandra grew up. She bought it as a gift for herself, after achieving her master's degree from Texas A&M at Kingsville. Buying this purse was a symbol of her hard work and of the local culture in her town.



---

### Best Friend Bracelet

“My object shares my value for friendship and emotional ties with humans. I purchased it, while my friend purchased the matching bracelet. This object holds a lot of meaning to me because it represents one of the strongest and most significant relationships I have had in my short life...it reminds me of one of my closest friends, who has been there for me through thick and thin”

Bettina Camacho

Purchased as a pair at Savers, the bracelets represent a strong bond between friends. Though this object does not have any monetary value, it is an example of how our memories and emotions can give objects deep meaning.

Do **you** have an ordinary object that means the world to **you**?



## Music Box

*"I was given the music box somewhere in November of 2019. My boyfriend gave it to me because he didn't know how to tell me he loved me so he gave me the music box that played the song "I can't help falling in love" by Elvis Presley. It's a reminder that I have that I am loved. I like playing it whenever I'm feeling down or just need a reminder that not everything in this world is bad."*

Paula Veytia

This music box holds a special place on its owners' desk. The music box serves as a memento of the emotions she felt during the process of falling in love with her boyfriend.

Click to hear the song from the Music Box  
<https://youtu.be/NBSb2-CLFro>

Scan with your phone's camera to hear the song from the Music Box





### Silver Necklace

*"My object says that I have a special connection with my significant other, that only us will ever take the words in the object and use them in a romantic and special way... Usually when I am by myself, I play with it or when talking about him I touch it because it is a piece of him that always travels with me wherever I go."*

Susan Gonzalez

The necklace contains a special engraved message. "My Forever + 1". Jewelry can express many meanings. Being worn and often gifted, these objects can represent expressions of love.

Do **you** have jewelry that expresses emotions of a significant person in your life?



---

## NATO Medal

*"...I was part of a NATO operation. I was awarded my medal in a ceremony at a forward operating base in Afghanistan on September 1, 2013*

*Whenever I go to a new place, I always look at the stars. Afghanistan had the best view of the stars that I have ever experienced. This object is a reminder that I made it out of Miami, FL. and that I should always look at the stars when I make it to a new place."*

Javier Leal

This medal was awarded to a UTEP student, who, like thousands before him, served his country in the harsh deserts and mountains of Afghanistan. When asked what he remembered most, it was the beautiful starlit skies, which he is further reminded of by the design on this medal.



## Cheerleading Sculpture

*"My little sister made it at school and gave it to me when I was in high school about three years ago...This object is very meaningful to me because it represents the connection I have with my sister and what I mean to her. Everything I do, I do it for my family and so my younger siblings have someone to look up to.*

*...I don't get to see my siblings due to immigration issues, so when she made this sculpture inspired of me I was very moved. It does not only symbolize the connection I have with my sister, but it reminds me that there are little humans across the border looking up to me."*

Ashley Samaniego

This sculpture represents how we continue our ties to significant people in our lives through objects and the emotions they can hold.



# Identity

## Identity

*Identidad*

Sometimes we keep objects because they have become so closely tied to who we are. Often times it may be hard to let go of these items, because they feel like a part of you (and no your cell phone doesn't count). Take a look at some of the objects that define a part of someone's identity.

**Do you have any objects that define your identity?**

*A veces guardamos objetos porque se han convertido en algo muy significativo a quienes somos. Muchas veces puede ser difícil desprendernos de estos objetos porque se sienten como una parte de ti (y no, tu teléfono no cuenta). Echa un vistazo a algunos de los objetos que definen parte de la identidad de alguien.*

*¿Tú tienes algún objeto que defina tu identidad?*



---

## Hand Carved Rooster

*"2014 – was given to me as a gift from my parents upon their return from the Philippines trip... it is important to me because it is a reminder of my roots, my ancestors, my culture, my family, these are things I keep in the present and bring with me to the future."*

Ramon Cardenas

Ramon recognizes the ties and significance that this hand-carved rooster symbolizes, between his heritage, culture and himself. It also represents the beginning of his interest in folk art.



---

## Daguerreotype

“My mother had a difficult childhood, and she told my sister and myself very little about her family and experiences growing up. By showing me this daguerreotype of my great-great-grandparents, she helped me to feel a connection to her side of the family and my Scottish heritage”

Anne Perry

This daguerreotype type was given to the owner by her mother. It provides her with a connection to her heritage and with the distant relatives of her past. The heirloom represents the everlasting ties of family.



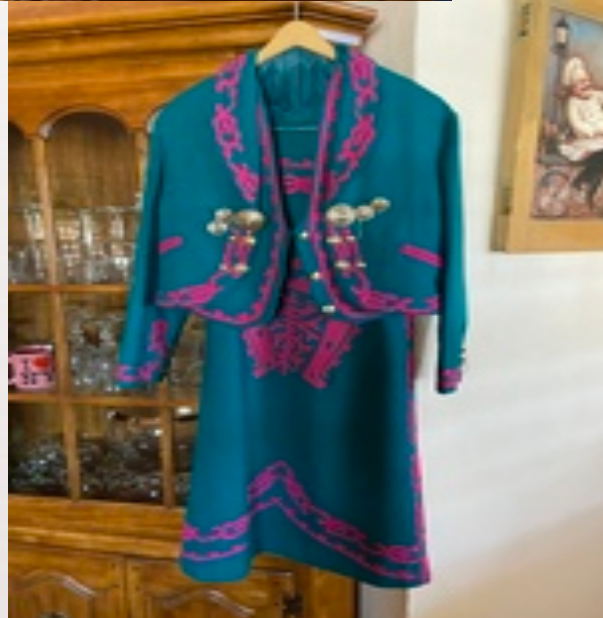
## Mariachi Suit

*"Singing has become a part of my life. It has been my image since I started singing. I feel special when I wear it, because that is how people recognize me when they see me. It represents me."*

Malena Cano

This mariachi suit was made by its owner, who was a mariachi singer in Mexico. She had a long career, and this suit is the last one she made to perform in.

**Click** to hear the music sung by Malena Cano  
<https://youtu.be/GCSB2qvzljI>



**Scan** to hear the music sung by Malena Cano



---

## Ballet Shoes

"Pointe shoes hold memories of an achievement level in ballet, and a reminder of dual career paths for my sister and I. The bejeweled creations of my sister were the perfect Mother's Day... gift from us. They are relevant as trophy/tools of the trade, reminders of the wonderful teachers, dancers, performances and travels we experienced."

Pamela Angeles

As with most elitist pursuits, ballet was set aside for only the rich and powerful to enjoy as a *divertissement*. Ordinary people were neither expected to dance at this level nor welcomed into the classical dance arena as contemporaries. The use of specialized equipment, such as pointe shoes, emphasized the elite nature of the art form.



---

## King Ranch Jacket

*"It shares the story of my heritage and how it shaped me into the man I am today. It also has the brand of the King Ranch, which helps me to always remember who I am and where I came from."*

Matthew Torrez

This object was obtained by its owner in early January at The King Ranch Saddle Shop in his hometown. He was taught to always work hard and he sees this reflected in this jacket.



---

## Candle Stick

*"I bought it because I used to work with birds of prey, beyond that it was the first homegood that I bought outside of a thrift store, it is symbolic of the first time in my life when I was financially stable enough to do so. I think it is aesthetically pleasing but it is also symbolic of my love of animals."*

—

Nikketa Burgees

This candlestick holder captures nostalgia for its owner. It represents a very special time in her life when she worked as a veterinary technician.



---

## Monocular

*"This object shares my life story, my grandfather's teachings, and the desire for exploration and the study of any object. Since early times, my grandfather has taught me everything he knows from the world. He has taught me the importance of education and a passion for it, this object symbolizes my curiosity and desire to know what is far from the naked eye."*

Angelli Lopez

At night Angelli sometimes lays on the grass and uses the monocular to stare at the stars, providing her with a clear view of the night sky. While this object might seem odd to others, it is very special to its owner.



## Memory Stick

*"I received this object when I was 16, a junior in high school... Everyone in the organization, which was called The F.O.G. (The Federation of Geeks) received memory sticks in different colors. Eventually, I received the gold memory stick; specifically for the highest-ranking members.*

*...I think this object reflects how I got to where I am today ...I gained national recognition for being the youngest person to obtain the 'Security + Certification'. The technology department for my school district was informed and the Chief of Technology offered me a job. I'm still working for the same department today."*

Samantha Sianez

This object represents Samantha's educational journey, her love for technology and how it has led to her pursuits in new areas, such as sociology. Technology remains her hobby.



# Why We Collect

## Why We Collect

*Por qué coleccionamos*

People are motivated to collect different objects for a variety of reasons. We choose to surround ourselves with items that signal our tastes, interests and values. We select and collect objects in an effort to express ourselves. People do not always collect objects intentionally. Sometimes they treasure objects that possess social and emotional value, and a collection of one can evolve into something much bigger.

*Las personas están motivadas a coleccionar diferentes objetos por varias razones. Elegimos rodearnos con posesiones que denoten nuestro gusto, intereses y valores. Seleccionamos y coleccionamos objetos en un esfuerzo para expresarnos. La gente no siempre colecciona objetos intencionalmente. A veces sus más preciados objetos poseen un valor social y emocional y una colección puede crecer a algo mucho más grande.*



---

## Seashell

This well-preserved conch shell was recovered from a beach during a family vacation. Its owner enjoys both its aesthetic impact and the memory it carries. The large and textured pink conch shell embodies a warm memory of the ocean shore.



---

## Souvenir Dish

*"I think that my object shares that I have an interest in history and foreign places. I mainly was drawn to the image on it."*

This is a painted souvenir dish purchased from a local antique shop. This dish is painted with the image of Trafalgar Square, where it was originally from. The owner of this item admired the design; she did not know that it was a souvenir from a celebrated destination in central London. She finds it inspiring.



---

## Ring

“I believe that my object expresses my personal admiration for copper jewelry, Native American folk-art, and handcrafted objects. The ring as a whole symbolizes the larger concepts of guidance, personal direction, and the path of one’s life. The object also reminds me of my mother since she was with me at the time I obtained it. “

Stephen Polando

The owner of this ring purchased it from the Native American cultural arts festival during the Ysleta Del Sur Pow Wow. The item was handmade from copper.



---

## Gnome

*"I was gifted a large garden gnome from my parents. When I came home one day from school, he was gone. That moment I decided to keep all my gnomes inside. I slowly started collecting more and more. They make me happy."*

Kathlynn B. Christmann

This gnome belongs to a larger family of other garden gnomes. He is so old that his owner does not remember when she acquired him.



## Hot Wheels Car

*"It was obtained by purchase at my job a few months ago. It's a toy but in specific, it is a muscle car. It may be childish, but in reality, it is what illustrates my childhood. "*

Orlando Malonado

Orlando collects Hot Wheels cars; he is an automotive enthusiast. Cars that would be otherwise difficult to obtain have become easily accessible to him in toy form.



---

## Olympic Coin

“When I see this coin, it reminds me of the relationship I have with my grandma. Through her giving me this coin, I also learned that she collected coins too and I found it interesting that that was something we both shared.”

Christopher Tennessee

This coin is an heirloom. The owner received it from his grandmother who received it from her mother. For its owner, this Olympic coin symbolizes family. This coin is also rare due to its age and condition and thus a true “collectable.”



---

## Clay Mug

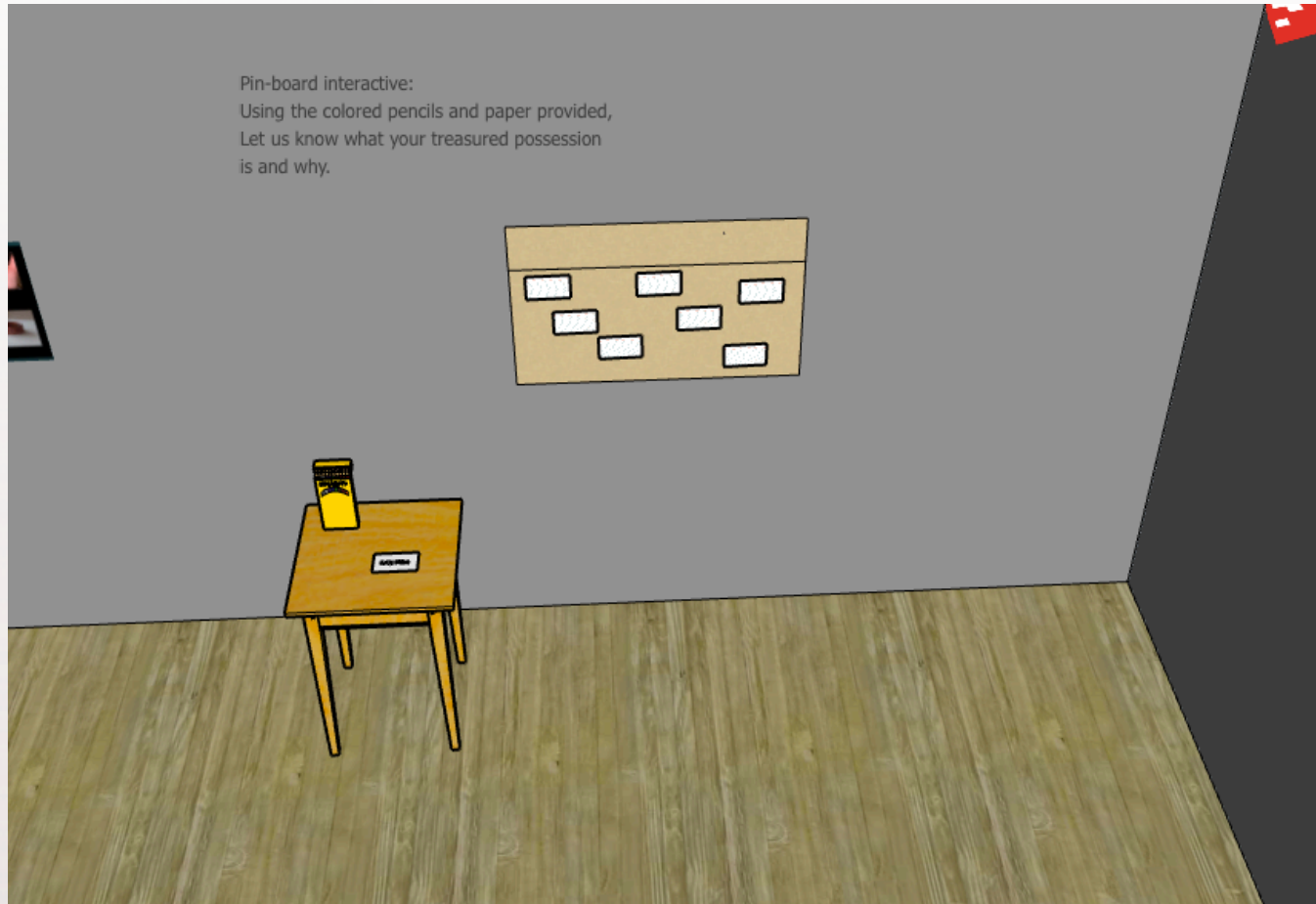
*"It means a lot to me. It is made of clay from North Carolina, not porcelain or any other material. It was made by hand. My sister put a lot of thought into it and bought it for me. It is relevant because I drink a lot of tea."*

Stephen Wallace

This mug is especially suited for serving tea; it is made of clay, which stores heat, and it has a small incision for the string of a tea bag.



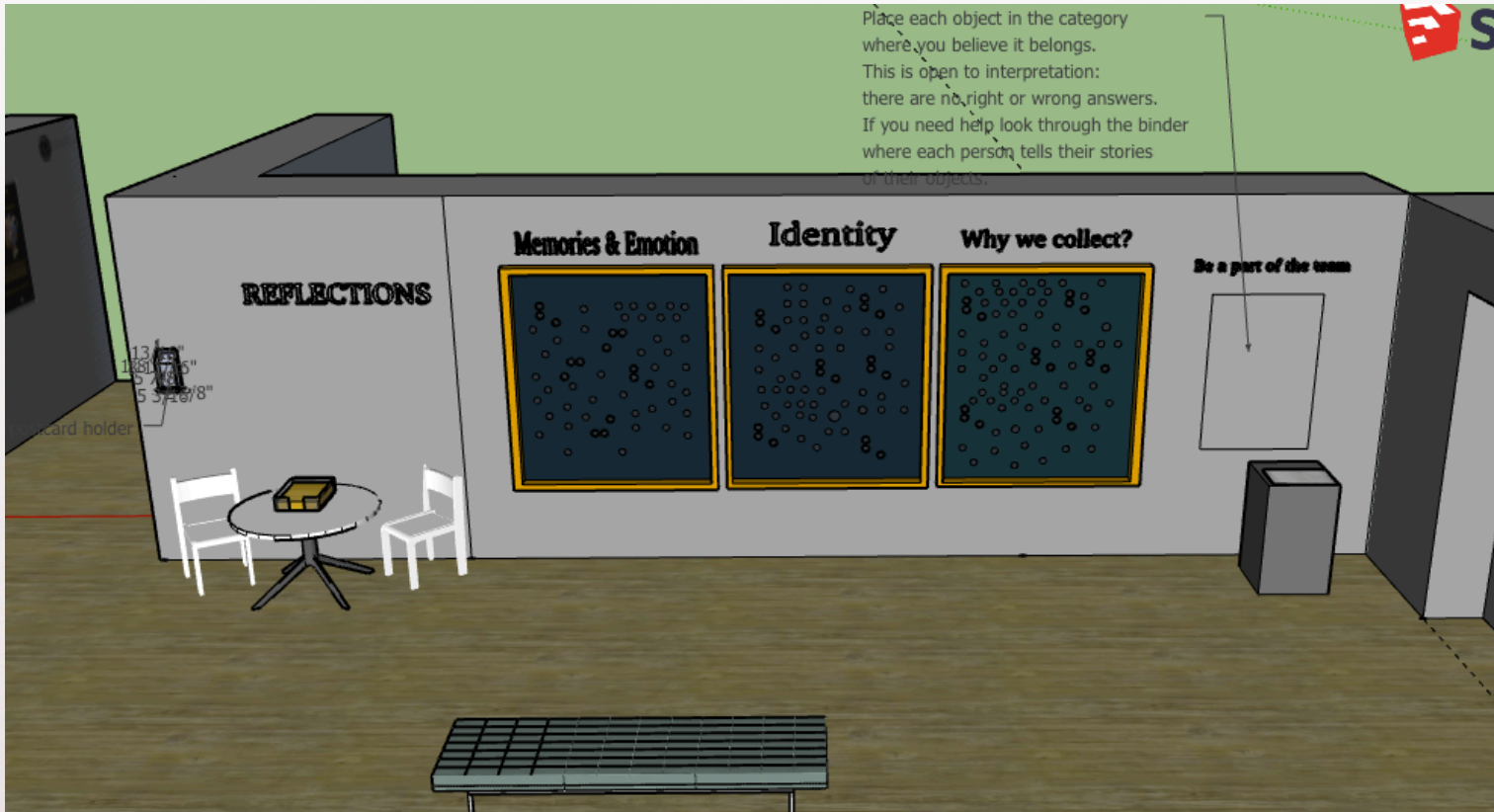
# Pin Board Interactive (in physical exhibit plan)



## Instructions

Using the colored pencils and paper provided on the table, let us know if you have a treasured possession and why you treasure it.

“Be a Part of the Team” Interactive (in physical exhibit plan) Consists of exhibit object images on Velcro and three boards with Velcro strips.



## Instructions

The exhibit team placed the exhibited objects into one of three categories, but many fit into more than one. Place each object into the category where **you** believe it belongs. There are no right or wrong decisions. To help you decide, you can look through the binder where each owner tells their stories.

# The Exhibit Team:

Pamela Johnson Angeles

Mariana Briseño

Michael Heredia

Andy Moncayo

Luisa Perez

Carlo Salazar

Jacqueline Sierra

Alare Slack

Augustin Ternoir

Matthew Torrez