

Furniture Styles

Summary

In this lesson, furniture styles are taught using a PowerPoint presentation and a group activity.

Main Core Tie

Interior Design 2

[Strand 6](#)

Additional Core Ties

Interior Design 2

[Strand 6 Standard 2](#)

Time Frame

1 class periods of 90 minutes each

Materials

1. Introduction - PowerPoint Presentation
2. Worksheet on Styles
3. Furniture Styles - PowerPoint Presentation

Background for Teachers

Furniture Styles

Jacobean

Seventeenth Century

The dominant style during the time of the Pilgrims

Heavy and rectangular

Geometric or floral carvings

Turnings

Stools and benches were more common than chairs

Chairs had straight backs and hard plank seats

The furniture was often painted black, red, or yellow

Chests and cupboards were important for storage

Tables were less common than chests

William and Mary 1700-1725

Delicate and intricate

Fine carvings and trims

Chairs, the most common piece of furniture, had curved backs and seats of rush

Gateleg table -- a table with legs on each side that swing out to support drop leaves that are pulled up from the sides

Highboy -- a chest of drawers mounted on legs

Queen Anne 1720-1755

Graceful curved lines

Cabriole leg -- a leg that curves out at the middle and then tapers inward just above an ornamental foot

Upholstered furniture became widely available

Wing chair -- an arm chair with a high back and high sides, or wings, extending from each side and designed to give protection from drafts.

Windsor chair -- a chair with stick legs and a spindle back inserted into a saddle-shaped seat
Chippendale

Thomas Chippendale was the first to publish a book of furniture designs

Claw-and-ball feet

Oriental inspired designs with straight legs

Camelback sofa - curved back and sides

The furniture was heavier and more solid than Queen Anne

Sheraton

Chairs had square or rectangular backs

Reeding -- a decorative carving consisting of vertical lines that resemble thin reeds or stems of tall grass

Hepplewhite

Chairs -- had a decorative backs in the shape of a shield, an oval, or a heart with tapered legs

Duncan Phyfe

Pedestal tables with curved legs and brass feet

Chairs with backs shaped like lyres -- musical instruments resembling a small harps

Shaker

Plain and simple

Victorian

Characterized by highly carved dark woods and curved lines

Inlaid floral patterns with rich upholstery

Modern Contemporary

Instructional Procedures

1. Give the introduction in a PowerPoint presentation. Divide the class into teams, then, like the Price is Right, the team that gets the closest gets the point. Have them guess when the furniture originated. Examples: Klismos chair = Greek, Tubular furniture = 1930s, etc. The team that gets the closest gets candy.
2. Why study furniture styles? Before starting the styles impress upon them that we study furniture styles because it reflects on people. Furniture arose out of a human need. Some furniture is for function and other furniture arose for appearance. Have them think about this as you study styles.
3. From magazines have the students find a piece of furniture that they really like.
4. Divide the class into groups, enough so that you have five people in each group. Now in each group have them number off 1 to 5. Divide into second groups according to their numbers. All the ones go together, all the twos, etc. Put labels on the tables. For example, there are a Jacobean and a William and Mary table. Each of the new groups was assigned two of the styles.
5. Hand out the worksheet for them to fill in. Emphasize that, at this point, they only have to fill in the two styles they are assigned. They have ten minutes to take notes on their styles. They need to write down any distinguishing features and main information. They must be thorough enough to go back and teach their first group about their style. They also need to look in the book and find some examples of the style to show to the group.
6. Move back to original group. Each group member will report to the other group what they learned about their styles. There is to be no copying.
7. To reinforce what they have just learned show the Styles PowerPoint presentation. As you show it, have them write down on their furniture pictures (cut out from magazines) any distinguishing features the furniture may have and from what period it could have originated.

Bibliography

1. Homes Today and Tomorrow by Ruth F. Sherwood Copyright 2002
2. Nancy Lunak

Authors

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