

SINGAPORE'S LITTLE TREASURES



EDUCATORS' GUIDE



National
Heritage
Board

N S M
National Museum
of Singapore

KNOWING THE EXHIBITIONS

SINGAPORE HISTORY GALLERY

Level 1, National Museum of Singapore

Refreshed with updated stories and content on Singapore's post-independence history, the Singapore History Gallery captures the nation's defining moments, challenges and achievements from its earliest beginnings 700 years ago to the independent, modern city-state it is today.

LIFE IN SINGAPORE: THE PAST 100 YEARS

Level 2, National Museum of Singapore

On the second level are the *Life in Singapore: The Past 100 Years* galleries, presenting snapshots of the way people lived in Singapore in the last century. Connected to the main narrative in the *Singapore History Gallery*, the *Life in Singapore* galleries take a closer look at the social and cultural histories in four main periods: *Modern Colony (1925–1935)*, which examines the formative changes when Singapore society first became “modern” in colonial times; *Surviving Syonan (1942–1945)*, which showcases the resourcefulness and resilience of people who endured the Japanese Occupation through personal accounts; *Growing Up (1955–1965)*, which looks at the nation's coming of age through the eyes of a child growing up alongside the nation, and *Voices in Singapore (1975–1985)*, which explores how creativity and self-expression in arts and culture took the front seat as a new, confident, Singapore identity emerged. These galleries uncover the special experiences and stories that epitomise the spirit of multi-racial diversity, social resilience and shared values that make up the Singaporean identity and character.

GOH SENG CHOO GALLERY DESIRE AND DANGER

Level 2, National Museum of Singapore

Also on the second level is the Goh Seng Choo Gallery, which features works from the *William Farquhar Collection of Natural History Drawings*, an important component of the national collection, on a rotational basis. A stimulating new exhibition titled *Desire and Danger* explores the complex and sometimes uneasy relationship between man and nature through selected drawings from the collection.

For more information on our exhibition galleries, please visit the museum's website <http://nationalmuseum.sg/>.

SLT LEARNING STATIONS

Travel back in time and meet different communities of people in Singapore's 700 years of history!

STATION 1: MEET THE ORANG LAUT

Singapura Section, Singapore History Gallery, Level 1

700 years ago, Singapore was primarily inhabited by the Orang Laut ("sea people" in Malay). According to early travellers, the Orang Laut were boat dwellers skilled in sailing and spearing fish. Examine the fishing equipment of the Orang Laut.

3 INTERESTING FACTS

- The trap is made of bamboo strips held together by rattan weavings.
- The trap is used to catch crabs. It has spikes that turn inward, which allow the crab to enter easily but make it impossible to escape.
- To secure the trap on the sea bed, a pole is stuck through it.



Orang Laut Trap
National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What do you see?
- What is it?
- What was it used for?
- How do we use it?
- Are these fishing equipment similar or different to the ones we have today?

What can you find in the pop-up kit?

The kit includes four images of the fishing equipment used by the Orang Laut. By showing these images to students, teachers can get them to find the fishing equipment in this section. Once the students have found the items, teachers can focus on discussing the fishing trap above.



Orang Laut Trap



Orang Laut Hook



Orang Laut Trap



Orang Laut Spear

National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

STATION 2: MEET THE EARLY SETTLERS OF SINGAPORE

Crown Colony, Singapore History Gallery, Level 1

What was Singapore like in the 19th century? Who were the people living in Singapore? What were their trades and occupations? Meet them in this section of the Singapore History Gallery.

STATION 2A: RICKSHAW PULLER

Rickshaws came to Singapore in 1880. They were the main form of transportation in early Singapore. Trams and motor cars became popular later. Rickshaws were either imported from Japan or manufactured locally. Rickshaw pullers typically wore a pair of “coolie blue” or black shorts, and a straw hat to protect themselves from the sun.

3 INTERESTING FACTS

- The hood protects the passenger from the sun or rain.
- This rickshaw can only take one passenger.
- The support stands at the back were also used to hang the passenger’s bags.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What do you see?
- What is it?
- What was it used for?
- How do we use it?
- How many people do you think can sit on it?
- Would you want to travel around in it? Why?
- What kind of transportation do we have now? How similar or different is this transportation compared to ones we have now?



Hong Kong Rickshaw
National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

STATION 2B: INTERACTIVE MARKETPLACE

With the **pop-up kit**, set up your own interactive marketplace with *tutu kueh*, fruits and various types of goods. Dress up as a little *nonya*, Chinese boy or English gentleman with costumes, hats and umbrellas. Experience selling and buying goods at a street market. The designated place to set up the interactive marketplace is at the sub-section titled “Early Settlers”.

STATION 2C: NIGHT-SOIL COLLECTOR

In the early days of Singapore, the night-soil collectors would arrive at the various households with empty buckets to exchange for filled ones. A night-soil collector would carry the buckets on his shoulders using a pole.

3 INTERESTING FACTS

- The bucket has handles on its sides.
- Collection was done mainly at night and the filled bucket was covered with soil to reduce the stench, hence the name “night-soil”.
- The night-soil bucket system only ended in the 1980s when the island-wide sanitation system was introduced.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What can you see?
- What is it?
- What do you think this is used for?
- How do we use it?
- How kind of sanitation system does we have now?
- How do we maintain the hygiene of our toilets in schools and at home?



Night-soil Bucket
National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

STATION 2D: CHETTIARS

The Chettiars originated from India. Most of them are moneylenders. Prior to paper becoming commonly used in the late 19th century, the Chettiars kept their accounts on traditional ola leaf scrolls.

3 INTERESTING FACTS

- The ola leaf scroll is made from treated palm leaves.
- The Chettiars wrote on the leaf by piercing its surface with a stylus and then inking it to make the letters visible.
- Palm leaf receipts for donations made to temples are smeared with turmeric for auspicious significance.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What can you see?
- What is it?
- What do you think this is used for?
- How do we use it?
- What other materials can we write on?
- Do you know of any other traditional writing materials before the widespread use of paper?



Ola Leaf Scroll
National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

STATION 3: MEET WILLIAM FARQUHAR AND THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF OUR RAINFOREST!

Desire and Danger, Goh Seng Choo Gallery, Level 2

William Farquhar was interested in recording the different plants and animals he saw in Singapore and Malaya. He hired Chinese artists to paint the plants and animals in the region. Find out more about the characteristics and uses of these plants and animals in this gallery.

CANDLENUT

3 INTERESTING FACTS

- Candlenuts are a key ingredient in *ayam buah keras*, a chicken curry flavoured with the oily seeds.
- In the past, children used these seeds to play conkers, a game in which one tries to smash another's candlenut.
- Candlenuts were used to make candles, soap and paint.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What can you see?
- What is it?
- Can it be eaten?
- How do you think it tastes?
- What do you think the different parts of the plant can be used for?
- What other uses can you think of for this plant?

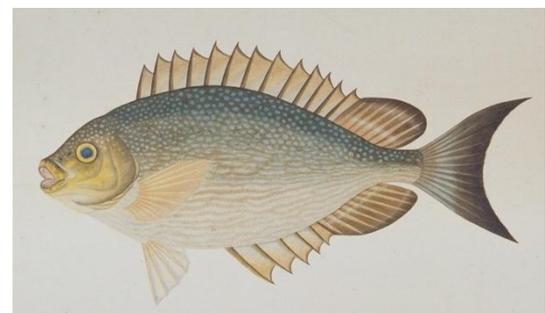


Drawing of Candlenut
National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

RABBITFISH

3 INTERESTING FACTS

- The rabbitfish is poisonous.
- The name "rabbitfish" comes from the fish's diet of seaweed.
- The Chinese eat a certain species of the rabbitfish (*bai du* in Mandarin) during the Lunar New Year as a symbol of abundance.



Drawing of Rabbitfish
National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What can you see?
- What is it?
- Why is it called a rabbitfish?
- Which parts of the fish do you think are poisonous?
- Can it be eaten?
- How do you think it tastes?

What can you find in the pop-up kit?

In the kit, you will find a set of brushes and two jigsaw puzzles of the paintings (candlenut and rabbit fish) on display. You can use the brushes for "air painting". Schools are encouraged to complete the jigsaws outside the gallery if the group size is more than 10.

STATION 3: DISCOVER THE TOYS FROM THE 1950S AND 1960S!

Growing Up, Life in Singapore Galleries, Level 2

What was it like to grow up in the 1950s and 1960s? Explore this gallery to find out more about the traditional childhood games and toys that your grandparents might have played with when they were young!

3 INTERESTING FACTS

- *Tikam-tikam* ("random pick" in Malay) was a popular game among children in the 1950s to 1970s. One could pay a few cents to select a numbered ticket at a provision shop and win prizes such as toys or soft drinks.
- The popular Matchbox series of vehicle toys was introduced in 1953, named for their miniature size akin to that of a matchbox.
- The Universe Explorer was produced in the 1960s when space exploration was popularised as a result of successful American space expeditions.



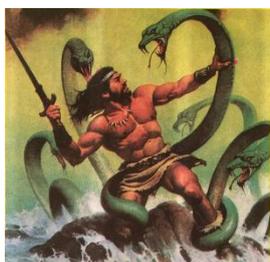
From Left: Tikam Tikam, Ferrari (Matchbox Series), Universe Explorer
National Museum of Singapore Collection
Image Copyright © National Heritage Board

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What games and toys do you see? Do you recognise any of them?
- Which is your favourite toy? How do you think it is played?
- What kind of games and toys do you play with now? How are they similar or different from the games and toys of the past?

What can you find in the pop-up kit?

The kit includes images of parts of these toys above. Get students to identify these toys with these images provided.



Tikam Tikam



Matchbox Series of Toy Vehicle



The Universal Explorer

BOOKING PROCEDURES

BOOKING SLOTS

There are two slots available every Monday and Friday at the following timings:

Session 1	10.00 am – 12.00 pm
Session 2	1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

These slots have been reserved exclusively for schools participating in the Singapore's Little Treasures programme. Please note that the maximum capacity of students per slot is 40. For your safety, please move in groups of 20 or less if parents are joining the group.

BOOKING FORM

Please complete the booking form from the museum's website and fax, email or post it to us. Bookings received via emails, fax or post will be dated and processed in order of receipt. Please note that bookings cannot be made via phone.

POP-UP KIT

There are up to 2 pop-up kits for each participating school to reserve and sign out. Please let the museum know your plans and any other innovative ideas that you might wish to undertake in the museum at the booking stage. Each kit is to be enjoyed by 10 preschoolers with at least 1 teacher.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

- We hope everyone will have an enjoyable experience at the National Museum of Singapore. To ensure the best museum trip for your preschoolers, please have at least 1 teacher facilitating 10 preschoolers.
- Schools will need about 15–20 minutes at each SLT learning station, and are advised to focus on no more than two stations in each gallery.
- Schools can decide if they wish to spend their second hour at PLAY@NMS or tour the rest of the Level 2 galleries on their own. Please note that schools will need at least 45 minutes to complete a tour of the Level 2 galleries. More information would be shared at booking stage.

APPENDIX

Station	Location	
Station 1	Singapore History Gallery, Singapura Zone	
		
Station 2A	Singapore History Gallery, Crown Colony Zone	
		
Station 2B	Singapore History Gallery, Crown Colony Zone	
		

Station	Location
Station 2C	Singapore History Gallery, Crown Colony Zone 
Station 2D	Singapore History Gallery, Crown Colony Zone 
Station 3	Goh Seng Choo Gallery 
Station 4	Life in Singapore: The Past 100 Years Galleries, <i>Growing Up</i> 