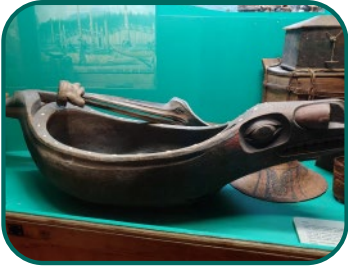


DOCUMENTING TRADITIONS

Learning about traditions or customs is a great way to know more about cultures. Anthropology and history are two fields that record traditions to learn more about how, where, and why they started. The Milwaukee Public Museum brings traditions to life in exhibits and programs.

Here are a few MPM exhibits that reflect traditions



Kwakiutl Potlatch Bowl (*Northwest Coast Plank House, Second Floor*)

This is a food bowl from a **potlatch**, a special ceremony that plays a very important role in the culture and traditions of many Northwest Coast tribes, such as the Kwakiutl. During a potlatch ceremony, people meet to feast together, share property and gifts, and make important decisions.



Thai Bronze Elephant Effigy (*Southeast Asia gallery, Third Floor*)

The elephant is an important symbol in cultures throughout southeastern Asia. This three-headed figurine from Thailand carries Indra, an important god from the **Rigveda, the oldest of the sacred books of Hinduism**. Originating on the Indian subcontinent, Hinduism involves many beliefs and customs.

Documenting Your Traditions

Think about the following questions. Use them to help guide your research. The vocabulary list below can also help keep some of the important terms straight.

- What traditions or customs are special for you, your family, or people in your community?
- How, where, and why did you start learning about the tradition(s)?
- Are they important only to children, or people of any age?
- Is there a certain time or location where the tradition(s) takes place?
- Are there artifacts related to your tradition(s)? Have they been in your family for a long time?

VOCABULARY

Anthropology: the study of people and their development.

Artifact: an object made by a person, usually of cultural or historical interest.

Custom: a widely accepted way of doing something that is specific to a society, place, or time.

Document: to record something in writing, photographs, images, and other forms.

Tradition: an established or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior.

Value: a principle or quality considered worthwhile or desirable.