

Symbol in the Sky

What was the most recognized symbol of the Century 21 Exposition?



UNIT-AT-A-GLANCE

Primary Objectives: Students will learn about the variety of symbols used to promote the Century 21 Exposition.

Student Activities: Students will research primary sources to identify the postcards and ephemera from the Century 21 Exposition. Students will design an individual postcard which promotes the fair. What would be important to include?

Extension Activities: Students will locate Seattle area postcards from 2011. What symbols are used to showcase the area of Seattle?

Materials Included: Teacher background information, primary source sites

Materials/Equipment Needed: computer, projector, copy machine or color printer, card stock, and art supplies

Time Management:

Day 1: Introduce Century 21 Exposition with a variety of primary sources including postcards and other ephemera.

Day 2: Continue to explore symbols of the fair followed by a class discussion.

Day 3: Create a postcard to promote the fair.

Grade/Subject Recommended: 4th grade Washington state history

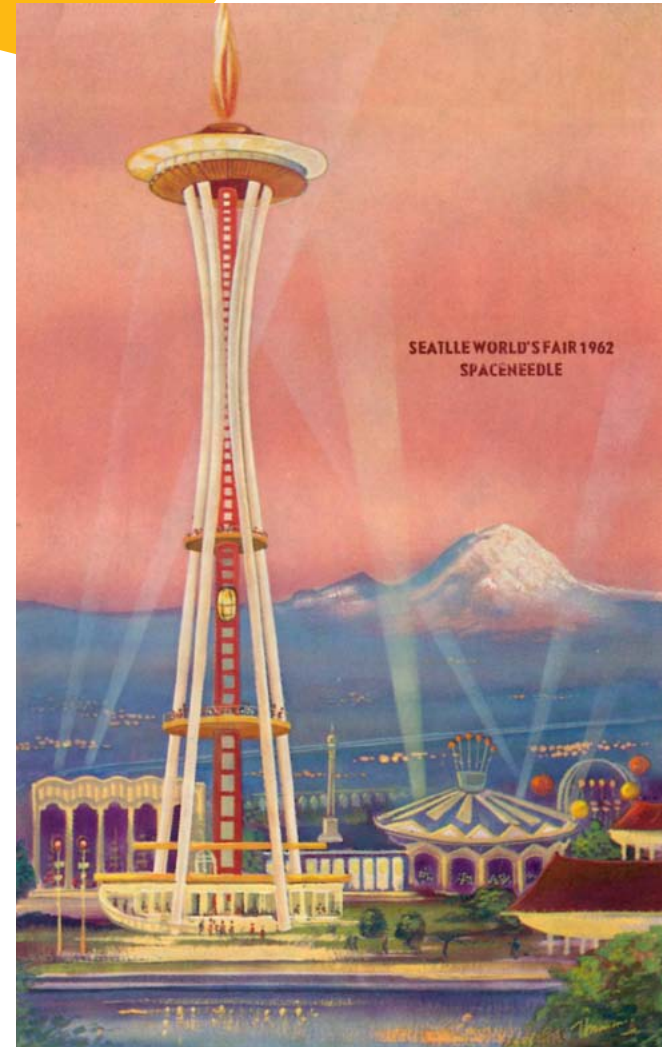
Content and Performance Objectives

Content Objectives: The student will...

- learn the importance of images as a way of remembering or identifying an event.

Performance Objectives: Students will...

- research a variety of Century 21 Exposition symbols found on primary sources, specifically souvenirs and postcards.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What is a Souvenir?

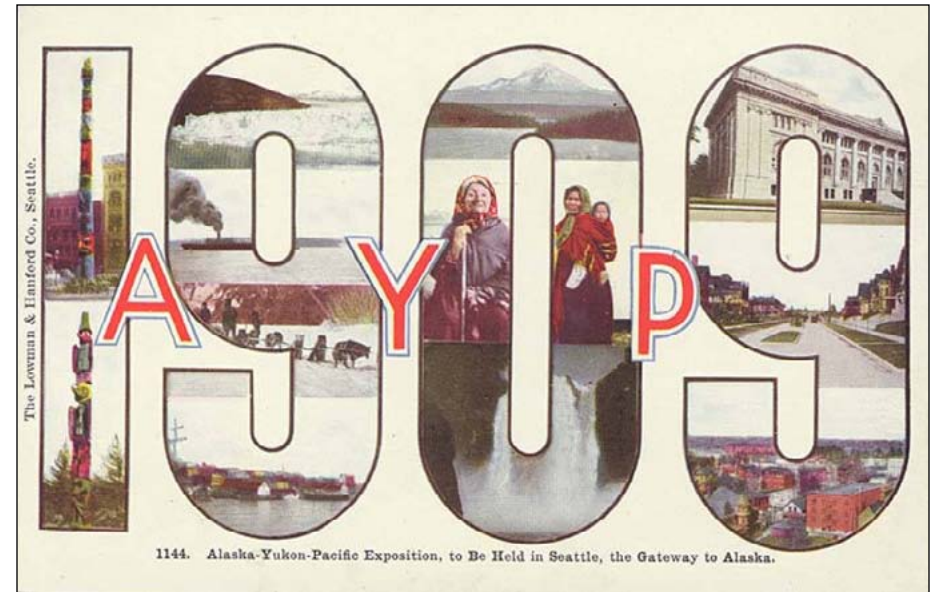
What is a souvenir (French word for “memory”)? Souvenirs are items meant to help a person remember a place or event. Souvenirs and postcards were the most commonly saved items from the Century 21 Exposition in Seattle.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What is a Postcard?

Postcards have been used since the 1860s when John Charlton of Philadelphia patented the “postal card.” The early cards did not include writing, except on the front, and many were produced privately. The divided back became popular in the US in 1907 with a message and the address on the same side. In 1909, during Seattle’s first world’s fair, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (A-Y-P), cards were used to advertise the fair and given away as souvenirs. During that era, postcards were in their “Golden Age.” Notice and compare the price of the stamp in 1909 and 1961. Did the price change? How much does it cost today to send a postcard?



Suggested Teaching Procedures

Pre-class Preparation

1. Read Background Information
2. Review objectives/outcomes for project and determine what you want class to accomplish.
3. Review sites of postcards and ephemera as included in the primary source list.
4. Arrange for computer and projector to view postcards and ephemera.
5. Gather art materials (cardstock, color pencils, markers) for the art project on Day 3.



Day 1: Suggested Teaching Procedure (45 minutes)

Explore Postcards and Other Ephemera

Materials Needed: Teacher background information; images from primary source websites.

1. Teacher will introduce the terms ephemera and souvenir with examples.
2. Students will study a variety of Century 21 Exposition ephemera found at primary source sites.
3. Group discussion and sharing: What symbol was used most frequently at the Century 21 World's Fair? What is still used?
4. Students plan for a short interview with someone who attended the 1962 World's Fair. Discuss how to find people in the community who might have gone to the fair. What questions will you ask them about the fair?
5. Identify someone in your community who attended the Century 21 Exposition. Do an interview and ask if they have souvenirs that can be shared. Do you know anyone who attended the fair in 1962? Ask if they have any souvenirs or postcards that they purchased during the fair. What was on the postcard or souvenir? Is the symbol still at Seattle Center?
Look at the site: <http://www.alamedainfo.com>
What do you see on most of the postcards?

Day 2: Continue Day 1 Activities

Day 3: Create your own postcard or souvenir of the Century 21 Exposition.

Materials Needed: Paper to design the postcard or souvenir. Cardstock, art materials as needed.

1. Choose symbols to feature on a postcard or souvenir.
2. Complete your design with the art materials available.

Key Terms

- **Ephemera** – collectible items originally designed to be short-lived
- **Souvenir** – items meant to help a person remember a place or event.
- **Postcard** – card for short messages; a card used to carry a message, usually with a picture or a photograph on one side, that can be sent through the mail without an envelope
- **Symbol** – something that represents something else: something that stands for or represents something else, especially an object representing an abstraction

Additional Resources

62worldsfair.com
historylink.org
alamedainfo.com
lib.washington.edu/specialcoll/
ebay.com
amazon.com
flickr.com/photos (slide show)
historical.ws/1962_seattle.htm

