

Featured Artifact: Julia Child's Pyrex Measuring Cup

<http://historyexplorer.americanhistory.si.edu/resource/?key=1767>

Era 10: Contemporary United States (1968 to the Present)



Look at the artifact presented to you. In a few sentences, respond to the following questions:

Describe: Objectively describe the artifact. What do you think it is made of? What does it look like? Does it look old or new? Is it intact, or is it damaged in some way?

Analyze: When, where or how do you think this item was used? What kind of person may have created or used this item? What significance do you think the object held, either for the creator or the user? Do you see words or images on the artifact that connect it to others (besides the creator and user)?

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Share your conclusions with a partner, then discuss the following:

Evaluate : Justify why you came to those conclusions about the artifact. What further questions do you have about the object? Of those questions, which could you solve by observing the object in person and which would you need to solve with research?

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Background Information

To determine volume, weight, temperature, and time, cooks use measuring cups and spoons (for liquids and dry ingredients), thermometers of all sorts for the oven, freezer, or deep-fat fryer; for chocolate, dough, meat, candy, and jelly; scales for liquids and solids; salometers or hydrometers to test the density of a salt or sugar solution; and timers. The well-known cookbook author and television cooking show star Julia Child had a number of the most commonly used American kitchen measuring devices in her kitchen. Now in the collections of the National Museum of American History, Julia's Pyrex glass one- and two- cup measures, are marked in both English measurements (1 cup; 8 oz.) and in metric (250 ml).

After reading and considering the background information, compose a response to the following:

Analyze: Address the following object-specific questions:

- Do you know anything about Julia Child? Are you familiar with any similar television cooking personalities?
- Do you have a measuring cup like this one at home? How do you use it?

Synthesize: What does this object tell us about the era in which it was created, or the American experience as a whole? How would you describe the social, economic, or political climate of America during this time? What connections can you make between this object and other things that you have seen, read, or experienced?

Analyze: Address the following era-specific questions:

- How have economic, social and cultural developments in contemporary America shaped who we are as a country today?