Introduction

Welcome to the Smithsonian Garden’s *History in Full Bloom* backpack program for the Haupt Garden! The Haupt Garden is located between the Smithsonian Castle and Independence Avenue in Washington, D.C.

*History in Full Bloom* is an interpretive backpack program that allows children in kindergarten through fourth grade to engage in several multi-sensory activities throughout the Haupt Garden that will enhance their understanding of the history of the Smithsonian. By actively using the space and resources of the gardens, children will gain a wider appreciation of how gardens preserve the culture of Victorian America, as well as the Smithsonian’s long history of collecting plants and educating visitors about natural history. This program will show children that studying history is an exhilarating adventure to be experienced in full bloom. Embark on your own journey through history by exploring the activities throughout the Haupt Garden.

Our story begins with James Smithson, a wealthy mineralogist and chemist, who left his fortune and collection of scientific objects from around the world to the United States of America in 1836. His wish to create “an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men” was carried out by Congress in founding the Smithsonian Institution a decade later in 1846. Curators of the Smithsonian embarked on expeditions to collect plants from around the world and display them among Smithson’s collections. The Smithsonian led Victorian America in the effort to document, display and diffuse knowledge of its collections, seeking to express its confidence in America’s cultural and intellectual superiority. Today it remains America’s greatest cultural institution, caring for vast collections and providing educational resources for the benefit of the public.

One such collection is preserved in the Haupt Garden, a representation of American Victorian gardens during the mid to late nineteenth century (1850-1900). Located behind the Smithsonian Castle, the Haupt Garden’s central component is a symmetrically patterned parterre (French for “on the ground”), surrounded by the Moongate Garden and the Fountain Garden. Due to the Smithsonian’s perpetual interest in exploration, the Haupt Garden maintains a diverse collection of exotic plant species from around the world. The Haupt Garden continues to cultivate a collection of living artifacts that convey the history of the Smithsonian and its deep-seated roots in Victorian America.
Purpose

- Expose participants to the history of the Haupt Garden through historic photographs.
- Encourage temporal/historical thinking and problem solving by matching past landscapes with the present.
- Help students imagine the in “South Yard” from the late 1800s to the present.

Length of activity: 10-15 minutes

Age/Grade level: Grades 2-4, 7-9 years of age

Location: Various stops within the Haupt Garden

Learning Goals:

- Students will learn about Victorian culture through several activities, exploring the past through multiple subjects such as history, math, science, and English.
- Students will use the resources of the Haupt Garden to build an awareness of their physical surroundings and relate to a sense of place that they can recognize outside of the Smithsonian. This will involve making the children actors in the historical narrative of the program and allow them to create their own experiences in the garden.
- Students will understand the importance of cultural landscapes by making connections between the past and present shape of the garden, using primary sources such as photographs, poetry and sketches.
- Students will gain a better understanding of the Smithsonian’s collecting expeditions during the Victorian era by interacting with various objects and living artifacts from around the world. They will understand the importance of why the Smithsonian collected from certain places and how these collections represented wealth and the mission to increase and diffuse knowledge.
- Overall, students will develop skills to think historically about plants, gardens and landscapes that they can apply in their own backyard.

What you’ll need:

- Assorted historic photographs
- Pencil- not included
- Paper- not included
- Trivia Cards- Need to be cut out before-hand. Be sure to write the date that is printed above the card on the back.

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Activity:

The Smithsonian Institution “South Yard” represents one of the oldest elements of the Smithsonian Institution presence in downtown Washington, DC. Constructed in 1855 the Smithsonian Castle quickly became the focal point of the National Mall. While the front yard of the Castle, the National Mall, stood out in the memory of many people, few could tell what was behind the Castle. The Smithsonian called their back yard the “South Yard” because it is on the south side of the building. The South Yard held many different things over the years. Before the Smithsonian made the current National Zoo, buffalo and other animals lived in the south yard in the 1880s. The Wright brothers may have been the first to fly in an airplane but the Smithsonian tried to build one first in the early 1900s in a shed on the South Yard. The Smithsonian never gave up its connection to flying. In the 1950s and 1960s huge rockets stood in front of the Arts and Industries Building. By the 1970s, the South Yard slowly started to make its way towards becoming a garden with new greenhouses built to house new plants. Finally, in 1976 the “Victorian Garden” opened. This Victorian Garden serves as the basis for the modern Haupt Garden you are standing in today.

BEGIN:

1. Take the five old pictures out. Each picture shows this garden at a different time in the past. Can you tell when this picture was taken? Try to find the place in the garden where the person taking the picture stood. What do you see in front of you that is also in the picture? What is in the picture that is not here today? Why do you think the Smithsonian had that here? After you look at all of the pictures, think about how this garden has changed and why.

2. Now try to put them into a timeline. What other things can you think of that happened during these times?

3. Play a fun trivia game by trying to match the trivia questions to the picture that they correlate with.
Photograph #1
1886-1889
Smithsonian Institution

Photograph #2
1900-1910
Smithsonian Institution
Photograph #3
1955-1965
Smithsonian Institution

Photograph #4
1974
Smithsonian Institution
Photograph #5
1976
Smithsonian Institution
**History Trivia**

**1976**

In this year Viking 1 and 2 were the first spacecrafts operate on the surface of Mars.

**See it!** While Viking 1 and 2 were on Mars, a third vehicle, Viking Lander Proof Test Article, was used on Earth to simulate their behavior and to test their responses to radio commands. Earlier, the Viking Lander Proof Test Article had been used to demonstrate that the Landers could survive the stresses they would encounter during the mission. The Viking Lander Proof Test Article is now located in the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum, Milestones of Flight Gallery.

**1958**

In this year, the Hope diamond was donated to the Smithsonian Institution, and almost immediately the great blue stone became the Smithsonian’s premier attraction.

**See it!** The Hope Diamond is now located in the Harry Winston Gallery of the Smithsonian’s Geology, Gems and Minerals exhibition at the National Museum of Natural History.

**1908**

In this year the Model-T car started being produced. The Model T was the first automobile mass produced on assembly lines with completely interchangeable parts, marketed to the middle class.

**See it!** You can see a Model-T car in the National Museum of Natural History.

**1974**

In this year -The cost of a new home was $38,900.00 -The cost of a new car was $4,440.00 -The Median Household Income was $11,197.00 -The cost of a first-class stamp was $0.10 -The cost of a gallon of regular gas was $0.53

-Stevie Wonder won 4 Grammy Awards for Album of the Year, Best Male Pop Vocal Performance, Best Rhythm and Blues Song, and Best Male Rhythm and Blues Vocal Performance.

**See It!** See a portrait of Stevie wonder by artist Milton Glaser at the National Portrait Gallery.
In this year President Grover Cleveland married Francis Folsom in the White House Blue Room. Cleveland was the only president whose wedding took place in the White House, and at 21, Frances became the youngest First Lady.

**See it!** At the National Museum of American History’s exhibit *The American Presidency*, located on the 3rd floor east, you can see the wedding announcement as well as one of the cake boxes that were given as gifts to guests who attended the wedding.