



Looking beyond books: Heritage Corner Module in Haryana

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Abstract

Department of Archaeology & Museums, Haryana came into existence in the year 1972. Owing to the responsibility of safeguarding heritage present in the State, many initiatives such as excavations, publications, collection safekeeping, awareness programs, exhibitions, museum setups etc. were part and parcel of activities undertaken by Department. Future custodians of this invaluable heritage are children, and looking into the current situation, an interactive tactile module- named as Heritage Corner- was launched in the year 2020-21. Designed on social studies curriculum matching the collections of Department, this portable kit was first of its kind in State of Haryana. The contents and elements are sure shot foundational information sources, that create awareness as well as sensitivity among all those who got benefit out of this initiative. Spreading into more educational institutions, the authors have provided the essence of this initiative, from inception to practical application, in this research article. The data that was compiled was well scrutinized by both the authors, who has personal experience on exploring the sites, museums, monuments and collection and authenticated the information through her expertise. Present authors, conceived this kit in their supervision and got guidance that made this module an acceptable and presentable entity. This module, one of its kind of promotional kits, is free of cost for State Government schools but the response received from school educators and students is highly valuable for this concept's ongoing success.



Key Words- Replica, Interactive, Resource

Introduction



Fig. 1: Heritage Corner Module - Conceptual Display

Heritage is the legacy from the past, identity of people and place. Appreciation of own roots, heritage and culture, strengthen the future generations giving them a vision of self-recognition as responsible citizens of country. Heritage is a shared responsibility which provides valuable links to the past that was indispensable part of society. It can be cultural or natural heritage. The archaeological site, historic place, ancient structures etc. are part of Cultural Heritage. Social sciences aim at developing a generalized and critical understanding of human beings and human groups in society. In this process, objects are first hand source of information that can act as connecting links between textbook information, images and the actual source of understanding those concepts.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) opines that Cultural heritage is a very important part of education today, and young people must also be aware of archaeological heritage and particularly appreciate the work of archaeologists who help historians to find out how people lived in the past.

In India, apart from global initiatives, National Education Policy 2020 also describes periodic exposure to activities outside school through the visits to places/monuments of historical, cultural and tourist importance. It also promotes significance of archaeology and museum heritage under the “Knowledge of India” module.

Inception of Concept...



Fig. 2: Kit created by first author

Children play a fundamental role as the bearers and transmitters of cultural values from generation to generation (Darian-Smith & Pascoe, 2013). Artefacts grant an immediate access to the ideas of people who created them, once you dig deeper for its multifaceted hidden meanings. Both archaeology and history share a common goal of unveiling the past for future research and lessons to learn.

Figure. 2. shows the sample kit that was designed by first author during her doctorate thesis and was part of the research concept. This was the idea to encourage low-cost portable modules for school students, and how to sensitize them about subjects like archaeology. The multisensory character of this portable kit – learning module enriches the narrative in learning endeavors. Handling objects (replicas) provokes lot of questions and generate curious dense experiences.



Using such resource kits, educators (teachers) can bring the educational power of museums in their classrooms.

The *Heritage Corner Module* discussed here involves participatory approach for both students and teachers, and is designed to integrate this new educational concept, promoting archaeology, history, museums etc. into the formal curriculum. The institutional, such as schools or formal methods, that are used for creating awareness about society and associated aspects, give away a one-way perspective to its readers/followers. Heritage protection is part of children's needs because it underpins individual and group identity (Darlan- Smith & Pascoe, 2013). Places like museums provide multiple opportunities to associate, enhance, imbibe, experiment, innovate and propagate what has been seen or learnt through texts. Archaeology has not been a regular subject at school level in many countries, but these sort of compilation shows how archaeology can enrich history teaching (in history lessons, curricula, and textbooks).

Heritage of Haryana as a rich cultural source for Curriculum

The present state of Haryana came into existence in 1966. Haryana as a distinct social and cultural region goes back to ancient times. It is the cradle of Indian civilization, tradition and culture. Systematic excavations carried out at various places in state have thrown welcome light on Pre-Harappan and Harappan civilization. The history of Haryana has more than regional value, as it portrays evidences of ancient, medieval, and modern periods.

Haryana had been the seat of pre-historic and historic cultures. The first tool-making men appeared in the Shivaliks and Aravalis over million years ago. The region is watered by river Ghaggar, its tributaries and summer monsoon. Many Harappan sites have been discovered all along the river Ghaggar and tributaries. The main urban settlement in the State has been excavated at Bhirrana, Banawali, Kunal, Mitathal, Farmana, Girawad, Rakhigarhi, Madina and Bhagwanpura, which provide rich archaeological remains to understand and reconstruct content of the existence of Harappan civilization in Haryana. Around 2000 BCE, the urban centres in the region fell into decline and became scattered. The early historic period in region saw the emergence of sixteen great states. During the early historic period, Haryana formed part of the Kuru Mahajanapada. The region fell under influence of Buddhism during the 6th century BCE. The Kuru kings, do find mention in Buddhist literature as well. During the fifth century BCE, Panini, the renowned grammarian, mentions in his *Astadhyayi* a number of towns of Haryana.



The area was populated in subsequent period is further proved by the number of settlements of pre Mauryan and Mauryan times found during explorations in region.

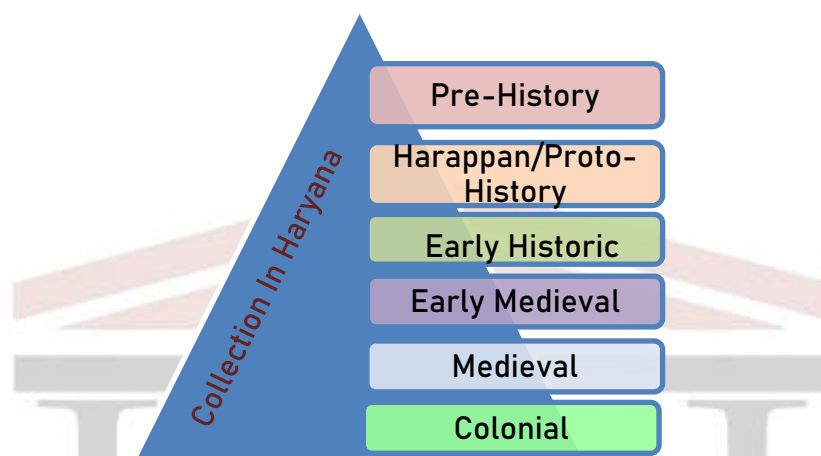


Fig. 3: Categories of Collection in State of Haryana

Project Description: Heritage Corner Module

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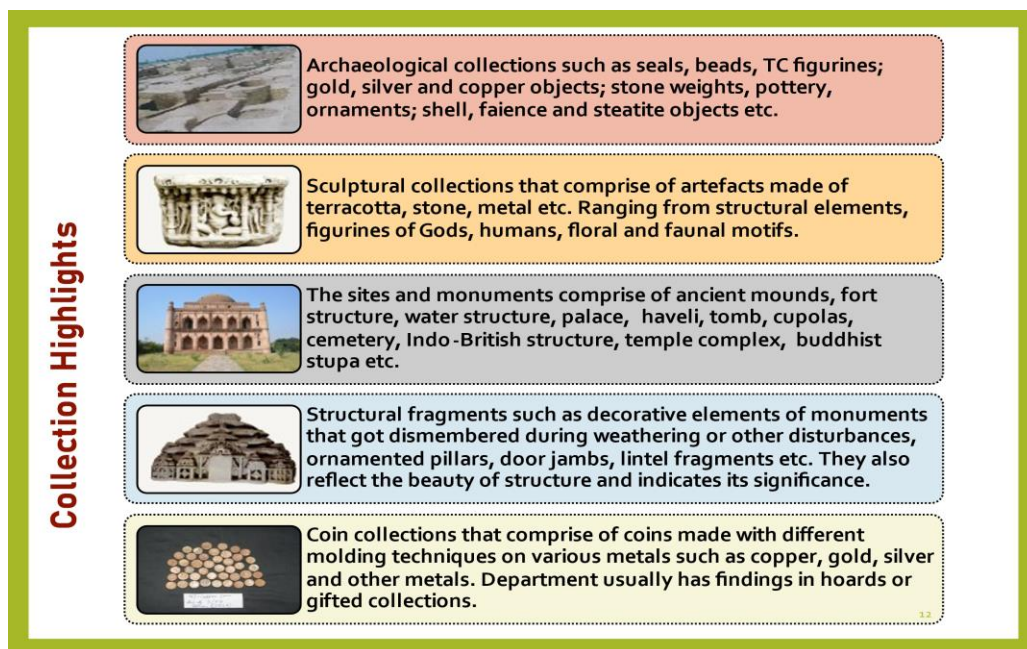


Fig. 4: Collections at Department of Archaeology & Museums, Haryana

The Department of Archaeology & Museums, Haryana has heritage collection across the State in the form of monuments- archaeological & historical sites, museums, and artefacts which are stored or either displayed in various districts of Haryana. Keeping an aim of mutual benefit for school students, teachers and Department, a **Heritage Corner Module** has been created that can be implemented to enhance heritage sensitivity and awareness among all. This initiative created fresh avenues of knowledge. The elements of module are brainstorming aspects that explore the Cultural Heritage of Haryana and can be adapted to local situations. They are made with an aim to sensitize the subject of Haryana's Heritage and its multifaceted aspect through various modes and promotional material (such as replicas and souvenirs). The illustrations that are being added to the content are a valuable source of illuminating past through visual experience. Over this module, learning turns into richer and qualitative in terms of understanding Haryana. This is first of its kind foundational information source, especially designed for younger audiences, for knowing archaeology and museums, along with the historical developments in the region. The primary aim is to make children acquainted with the surrounding testimonies of the past. The source is designed in such a way that it is always open for the educators (teachers) for multiple explorations and further research, to develop understanding in own perspectives.



Fig. 5: The Heritage Corner Module Kit in making

Authors compiled a resource kit (Fig.5) for the same purpose which corresponds to the National Educational Policy 2020. The aspects that match the curriculum have been dealt here using NCERT textbooks as core references. The Gazetteers of various districts of Haryana were used to add to authentic archaeological and historical information pertaining to sites, monuments and collections. These are valid references being Nationally accepted as sources of information that have been well approved by government agencies. The information that is being generated from these sources, gels with the teachings imparted in formal institutions of education (here one may refer schools). Quoting further, the National Curriculum Framework, 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. Social science which includes subjects like Archaeology and History, aid in understanding how this present evolved. So, the idea is to amalgamate their common aims of knowing about the past in a better perspective.

Fig.6 further shows glimpse of the compilation about how the handmade replicas were mounted, placed, labelled and packed. These aspects add to the portable handling and minimal loss of information. A Replica booklet Fig.7 & Fig.8 is also part of the kit that has



images of original objects and replicas along with relevant information that may be discussed while using these sources in classroom activities.



Fig. 6: Kit contents being compiled for use in school vicinities

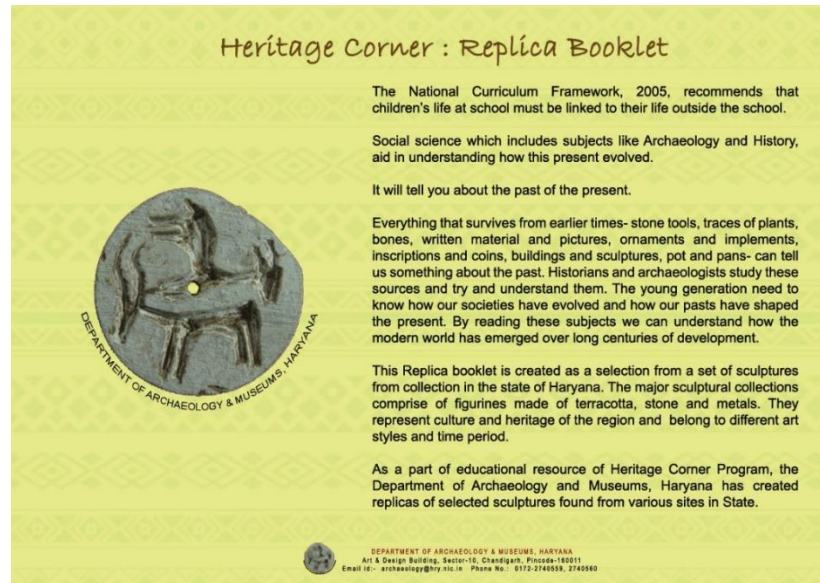


Fig. 7: Replica booklet contents



Fig. 8.: Replica booklet contents

The concept of Heritage Corner is helpful to orient school children (when they are planning to visit a museum or heritage site) about the display available, waiting for them to be checked



out in much detailed and innovative manner. A pool of sources such as maps, photos, replicas, etc. related to the theme of the collection and sites were put together for the same.

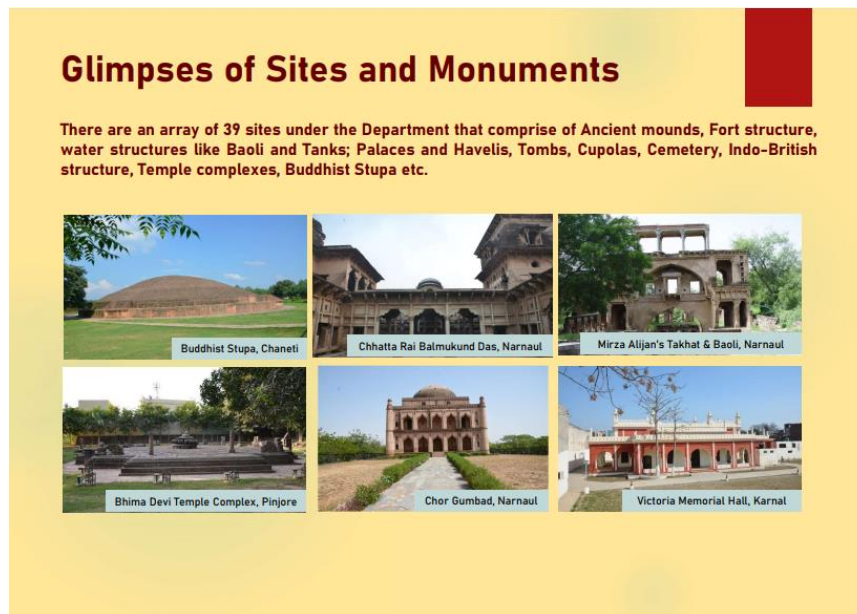


Fig. 9: Introduction page of Site booklet

The value of interactions as aptly mentioned in National Curriculum Framework 2005, is that learning takes place through interactions with environment around, nature, things, and people, both through actions and through language. The kit that was designed inhouse by authors, had following contents, neatly packed and labelled in a portable movable light weight box, so that the whole concept can be used in classrooms, open area or any other place of activity in a very convenient manner. The kit contents are -

- 1) Flex: Map (bilingual) and Introduction (of concept) content that can be printed on a laminated/sample sheet almost as big as A2 size.
- 2) Replicas: Total 10 replicas were added and one booklet giving their details having image as well as description was printed in A/4 size. Five samples that were available in Department replica section were chosen: Vishnu head, Lakshmi head, Musician medallion, Brahma, and Surya. Also, five samples that were created by first author under guidance of second author, using moldable clay were: Mother Goddess, Geometric Seal, TC cart frame/wheel from an



archaeological site; Animal/ Bird TC figurine; Sample of TC objects (miscellaneous) such as bead, bangle, game object etc.

3) 5 potsherds with painting were recreated to be included to give sample of pottery findings from sites of Haryana.

4) Two souvenirs showing Harappan seal (paper weight) and one Monument (magnet) are portable objects for giving glimpses of collection in (3D) tangible form.

5) Two Booklets in which one containing description of all 10 replicas and recreated samples was included. Other flip (Fig.9) booklet was added having images and description of sites and museums of Department, that can be used as Information cards. Any student if visits or reads about a site, may then plan to work it in as an educational project or tour through these sources.

6) Labels/Box: Separate replica objects were wrapped in butter paper/tissue paper, and the printed things put in appropriate size leaf folders.

This whole compilation (excluding the five Department replicas) was kept in an appropriate plastic box with handle (like mini trunk). The Department replicas were wrapped in butter paper/newspaper and kept in a cardboard box being they owe weight and bigger in size and they were to be displayed as per available space of a particular organization. A big size openable Plastic box (with wheels) was used to keep all these things in one place for easy movement.

Launch of the Module- Demonstrations and Distributions

Authors had clear idea in mind that before actually handing over the kits, a preliminary training session of the educators was essential to get their inputs and feedback on the project. Thus, a teachers' demonstration session at a school in Panchkula district was first look of the module in Haryana. Initially the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Haryana had an overview of the kit during a meeting and further provided permissions to go ahead with the concept in Government State Schools. Worthy Principal Secretary (A & M), also boosted the project time to time and guided that resources should be planned to give a shape to this proposed module. He was of the opinion that any sort of improvisations would be highly beneficial if the demonstration received positive feedback.



Fig. 10: First complete display setup for Hon'ble CM, Haryana

An Orientation cum Demonstration workshop was conducted at Sarthak Govt. Model Integrated Sr. Secondary School, Sector 12 A, Panchkula, on 22nd July 2021, initially for 10 teachers of history and allied stream from 5 different schools of vicinity of Panchkula.

The Heritage Corner Kit (sample box) was displayed at the venue along with Introduction and Map flex about Haryana. A PowerPoint presentation briefing about the components of the module, its benefits, application in history teaching and further brief about upcoming (proposed) Chapter on Heritage of Haryana, was done. This formal interaction was crucial to get feedback about the concept from the educators who can implement the module successfully in the schools taking this legacy forward.

The teachers were mostly history, arts and subject related gathering who after the presentation and display review, also shared their verbal as well as written feedbacks. The representatives

from both organizations provided insightful feedback on whole presentation and interaction. They added to the concept through their expert opinions.



Fig. 11. & 12. (below): Teachers Demonstration Session, Panchkula



The core input was that such a program is essential for children in Haryana as the State didn't have good resources to connect heritage with curriculum and make social science interactive as



well as experiential. They were impressed by the initiative and demanded for the kits for their schools.

Heritage Corner Module: Distribution in Schools

The highlights of each school that got benefit from this module is discussed further which shows how effectively these kits were being received and utilized by educators. Ultimately, the goal for many museum educators is to help learners gain understandings, both cognitive and affective, that enrich their ability to make informed decisions in life (Hohenstein & Moussouri, 2018). Here teachers have been approached by authors, in order to add heritage sources (objects, places, monuments, data etc.) to their learning endeavors. This in turn will add to awareness as well sensitivity towards field of heritage. Children being the future custodians of this existing heritage of Haryana, they have all potential to safeguard it for coming generations. Such projects develop a habit in beginning years, which concretize once they become responsible citizens, and decision makers.

First Kit- Government Model Sanskriti Senior Secondary School, Morni hills, Panchkula in September 2021.

The first Heritage Corner was setup at Morni Hills School, Panchkula district. Fig.13. shows the gathering at venue.



Fig. 13: Launch Day of Heritage Corner Module, Morni Hills School, Panchkula



Fig. 14: Display of Heritage Corner Module at Morni Hills School, Panchkula

मोरनी स्कूल के हैरिटेज कॉर्नर से छात्र जान सकेंगे प्राचीन इतिहास को : अशोक खेमका



प्रिंसिपल
चीफ
सैक्रेटरी
पुरातत्व
विभाग
हरियाणा
अशोक
खेमका
स्कूल को
फिट भेट
करते हुए।
(सतोष)

मोरनी, 16 सितंबर (सतोष) :
स्कूली बच्चों को अब किताबी ज्ञान
के साथ-साथ अपनी प्राचिन
ऐतिहासिक धरोहरों तथा संग्राहकों
को जानने का अवसर प्राप्त होगा।
जिसके लिए स्कूली छात्र शिक्षक
और पुरातत्व विभाग आपस में
मिलकर स्कूल में एक हैरिटेज कॉर्नर
का निर्माण करेंगे। यह विचार आज
अशोक खेमका प्रिंसिपल चीफ

सैक्रेटरी पुरातत्व विभाग हरियाणा ने
मोरनी मॉडल सांस्कृतिक विद्यालय में
स्कूली बच्चों को संबोधित करते हुए
कहे। उन्होंने कहा कि इस प्रयास से
स्कूली छात्र अपने आसपास तथा
अपने राज्य की विरासत को बेहतर
ढंग से जानेंगे। उन्होंने बताया कि
पुरातत्व विभाग द्वारा एक किट बनाई
गई है जो राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक नीति 2020
से मेल खाती है। यह हैरिटेज कॉर्नर

6 वीं से 12 तक के छात्रों को
जरूरतों को पूरा करेगा। दूसरी आवृ
वर्ग के बच्चों भी इससे लाभ प्राप्त
कर सकेंगे। इस मौके पर उनके साथ
पुरातत्व विभाग के उनिदेशक डा.
वनानी भट्टाचार्य, सुपरवाइजर सुरेश
चावला, मोरनी पंचायत के सरपंच
माम चंद भंवरा, प्रिंसिपल कर्मवीर
शर्मा, मनविंदर सिंह, सविता समेत
स्कूल का स्टाफ मौजूद रहा।

दैनिक सवेरा Fri, 17 September 2021
epaper.dainiksaveratimes.org/c/63162379

Fig. 15: Media coverage of Launch of Heritage Corner Module in Haryana



Fig. 16: Heritage Corner setup at Morni Hills School, Panchkula

The Heritage Corner Kit was setup in school at Morni hills using a convenient space in a classroom accessible to children. Teachers who participated in the session appreciated the content quoting that it is very good and designed as per level of understanding of school students. The concept is new for school students and as it was delivered, is sufficient for them to gain interest about the field of heritage. This new information can let students understand how archaeology and history work in better way to inculcate understanding of past. Session was very informative. The content and demonstration were satisfactory, and more such interactive programs should be organized in order to stay connected with heritage and its significance. This is first time students and teachers can experience the heritage objects, in their hands like the seals and replicas. NCERT based more related activities and films can be also made to add to the experience within State of Haryana.



Fig. 17: The displayed kit explored by students

Second Kit- Government Model Sanskriti Senior Secondary School, Sector -26, Panchkula in October 2021.

The kit was provided to school along with an interaction session with social studies teachers. Those who participated in interaction provided positive feedback. During interaction the setup was done by first author in a classroom of school and along with display, the contents of box were described and the base about how all the components can be used as teaching-learning tool in the classroom was also discussed.

Teachers who participated in the interaction expressed that the concept is educative and rich in heritage knowledge. Educational tours can be organized in collaboration with Education Department and Archaeology & Museums Department for benefit of school children. Teachers were fascinated by new discoveries in Haryana like Mangarbani rock art paintings and collections. More such endeavors should be done for teachers and students regarding heritage awareness and about museums' significance.



Fig. 18: Teacher Interactive session at School in Sector 26, Panchkula

Third Kit- Government Senior Secondary School, Kot, Panchkula in February 2022.



Fig. 19: Kit displayed in Kot school by the teacher for students' interactive session



Fig. 20: Children doing an activity session after observing the kit contents

The teachers including Principal of GSSS Kot school appreciated the contents of module and graded them as qualitative aspect of enhancing teaching strategies. Teachers said that this module will help in lifelong learning of students about heritage. Teachers requested that On-site activities on various Protected monuments under Department should also be encouraged along with this initiative. They found these sources of information rich and helpful in teaching about monuments and artefacts of Haryana, and considered it as a good teaching aid. This initiative by Department was appreciated by school authorities. The replicas and booklets were easy and clear to understand and use as they quoted in their feedbacks.

Fourth Kit- Government Senior Secondary School, Rakhi Shahpur, Hisar in February 2022.

This kit was provided before the examinations and new session beginning, thus with change of staff the display and feedback was in process. Although teachers have started using the kit in their classroom as it was conveyed by school coordinator to the author.

All these above-mentioned updates were coordinated time to time so as to keep a check on usefulness and effectiveness of the program and how the school teachers are implementing the concept in variety of innovative ways. After seeing successful application of concept in these schools, the Department has received demand from more schools lately. These are in process.



To Summarize ...

The contents of this portable educational resource were designed for children of mixed age groups that can be experienced through the objects and textual information at one platform. This information will serve as relevant knowledge, activity ideas and perspective linkages, that can be used to guide children to understand the existing regional heritage of Haryana. Examples shared in this module are focused on object-based learning, multi- perspective learning, experience-based activities that enable tapping of resources available in vicinity of State itself. There are many points when archaeology and history meet. Children of all ages need to know how our societies have evolved and how our pasts have shaped the present. This multidisciplinary science of archaeology (and museums) can be used to teach subjects ranging from arts to the sciences both at primary and secondary levels. Social studies should be fun, interactive, meaningful, and memorable. Students are the first to tell us that learning social studies is fun and exciting when they get to go places, imagine travels, dress up in costumes, taste foods, dig up artifacts, play games, and figure things out with their friends (Pumpian *et.al.*, 2008). Many archaeological issues today revolve around how sites and artefacts are to be conserved and used as sources of information for further research. Students need background knowledge to form understanding and value of these material remains. Thus, a high level of participation with objects (here replicas) can build strong base of knowledge which is an essential aspect of experiential learning.

The future of our remaining heritage will depend largely on the decision maker generation of today. Once they are acquainted with the significant aspects, they will strengthen the fragile links of past with future. Bringing history alive combined with other curriculum areas is immersive experience for both students and teachers. This multilayered exchange of information raises awareness making social science learning meaningful and interactive.

An all-time useful teaching aid, Heritage Corner Module, has been developed that can generate a pull towards museum exhibits and appreciation of heritage. This will encourage students to preserve and support in protection and safeguarding of heritage sites of Haryana for posterity. In places such as museum settings, students do not participate in the traditional reading instruction, rather they use a variety of texts, diagrams, graphs, maps, and environmental print to gather information and provoke their intellectual wonderings (Pumpian *et.al.*, 2008). Thus, the momentum to this initiative can create a snowball effect of information among generations to come.



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