

# ARCHIVES Finding Aid

Accession #:
A 2019.9
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2019 October 01

# **Kits Collection**

1938-2011, [Bulk: 1963-2000]

# **Descriptive Summary**

Collection ID: A 2019.9

**Repository:** Boston Children's Museum Archives

Title: Kits Collection

Creator(s): Museum Staff

Dates: Inclusive: 1938-2011, Bulk: 1963-2000

Extent: 11 linear feet; 27 boxes

Language(s) of Materials: English

**Abstract:** This collection consists of materials created by and related to the now dissolved Kits Department at the Boston Children's Museum. The department developed over 300 kits on topics ranging from history to geography to natural science which were sent to schools to augment curriculums or introduce students to new concepts. The collection includes correspondence and internal memos related to the development of both the program and individual kits, promotional materials (including catalogues with descriptions of the program and individual kits), and materials from the kits as they were circulated to schools.

#### **Conditions of Access and Use**

**Conditions Governing Access:** Collection is open for research.

**Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:** Copyright belongs to Boston Children's Museum. All requests for permission to publish or quote for publication must be submitted in writing to the Archives. Permission for publication is given on behalf of Boston Children's Museum as the owner of the physical items and as the owner of copyright in items.

Citation: [Item, Folder, Box,] Kits Collection, Boston Children's Museum Archives, Boston, MA.

## **Acquisition Information**

**Provenance/Custodial History:** The records in the Kits Collection were found during the 2017 inventory of the 2006 Centennial Collection. It is unknown where the materials were located pre-2006.

**Accruals:** No accruals are expected.

## **Background Information**

**Historical Note:** The Kits Department and Program at the Boston Children's Museum began in 1938 as a way to circulate collections materials and corresponding descriptive labels to local schools, youth groups, and Boston Children's Hospital. Beginning in 1963 this program expanded to include the MATCH Box Kits program—multimedia kits containing books, videos, games, and activities aimed at elementary school aged children, which could be rented out for one to three weeks, covering a broad range of topics. The program's name was taken from what its creators considered to be its primary purpose—to serve as Material Aids for Teaching Children—and was designed with the aim of providing teaching aids to educators and engaging ways of learning to students. In the following decades more kit programs and units were developed, each with unique subjects and teaching goals but all with a focus on facilitating experiential learning in the classroom, introducing students to wide ranges of unfamiliar topics, and bolstering pre-existing school curriculums. The Kits Department officially closed down in 2010, although the collection contains some thank you notes from students and teachers that are dated from 2011.

#### **Collection Information**

**Scope and Content:** This collection contains material covering the development of the Kit Program as well as specific kits. This includes internal correspondence, notes, and drafts regarding the program and kits, draft grant proposals, correspondence with schools and teachers, evaluation forms, and statistics on rental rates for kits along with reports on conservation and safety concerns regarding the materials being circulated in kits. The collection also includes kit catalogs ranging from 1965 to 2003 and press releases on new kits. The development of the MATCH Box Kit Program is significantly represented, including initial project and funding proposals, bimonthly progress reports, and several rounds of drafts and notes on the program, its teaching goals, and the individual kits being developed. The bulk of the collection is comprised of materials used in kits as they were rented by schools. This includes kit guides describing the contents of the kit with suggested activities, any additional material included in the kit created by the Museum, and packing instructions.

**Arrangement:** The collection has been divided into two series: Development and Kit Materials. The Development series has been further divided into three subseries: General Kit Development, Program Development, and Promotion. General Kit Development contains material relating to the creation and maintenance of kits, Program Development contains material relating to the Kit Program, and Promotion documents materials circulated publically to advertise the Kit Program as well as correspondence with schools, teachers, and students. Any documentation relating to the development of specific kits is included in the Kit Materials series, along with finalized kit guides and material included in kits. In keeping with the organizational system used for most of the material, both series have been arranged alphabetically. Three boxes of oversized material have been removed from the Program Development Subseries and are listed at the end of the finding aid.

**Other Relevant Collections:** Japan Collection (A 2019.7) [Series I, subseries XIII includes material related to MATCH Kits about Japan and the Japan Program]; Multicultural Celebrations Series Collection (A 2017.1) [several kits were developed in conjunction with the Multicultural Celebration Series].

# **Processing Information**

**Processed by:** Hayley Mercer, 2019.

**Archivists Note:** Many kit guides were originally held in binders or folders with metal fasteners and were removed in the interest of preservation.

# **Contents Inventory**

#### Box 221

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series I: Development	1960-2011, undated	
Sub-Series I: General Kit Development	1963-2003, undated	
Checklists, Various Kits	1975-1987	
Discovery Kit Inventories	1983	
Kit Content Lists, 1983 (1 of 3 A-H)	1983	
Kit Content Lists, 1983 (2 of 3 I-O)	1983	
Kit Content Lists, 1983 (3 of 3 P-Z)	1983	
Kit Content Lists, c. 1983-1987	1983-1987	
Kit Content Lists, c. 1987-1995	1987-1995	
Kit Content Lists, 2003	2003	
Kit Content Lists, undated	undated	_
Kit Development Worksheet and Guidelines	1988	
Kit Guide Folders	1975-1987	
Kit Inventory Blank Sheets	undated	

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series I: Development (continued)	1960-2011, undated	
Sub-Series I: General Kit Development (continued)	1963-2003, undated	
Kit Project Orders	1979-1983	
Map Information for New Boxes	1980, 1981	
MATCH Box Production Notes	1973	
Source Acquisition and Activity Planning,	1968-1974	
Various Kits		
Teachers' Guides First Drafts	1963-1975	
Title Headings for Kit Guides	1975-1987	
Title Page Originals, Various Kits	1975-1987	
Sub-Series II: Program Development	1960-1986, undated	
American Science and Engineering Inc., Signed	1970	
Original Contract		
Assorted Invoices and Receipts	1971	
Center for Occupational Hazards (COH) Report	1984-1986	
Re: Asbestos, Toxins in Kits		
Conservation Survey and Maintenance	1980	
Discovery Kit Program Memos and Notes	1982	
Final Reports: Kit Development Project	1980	
Kit Development and Circulation Seminar	1983	
Kit Rental Books—Summer, 1981	1981	

Kit Rental Books—Summer, 1982	1982	

Folder Titles	Dates
Series I: Development (continued)	1960-2011, undated
Sub-Series II: Program Development (continued)	1960-1986, undated
Kit Rental Books—Summer, 1983	1983
Kit Rental Books—Summer, 1984	1984
Kit Rental Books—Summer, 1985	1985
MATCH Box Project Final Box Reports (1 of 3)	1965-1967
MATCH Box Project Final Box Reports (2 of 3)	1965-1967
MATCH Box Project Final Box Reports (3 of 3)	1965-1967
MATCH Box Project Progress Reports	1966-1967
National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Visiting	1979
Specialist Grant Application	

#### Box 224

Folder Titles	Dates
Series I: Development (continued)	1960-2011, undated
Sub-Series II: Program Development (continued)	1960-1986, undated
Packaging Ideas	1969, undated
Reports re: MATCH Box Program	1964-1965
Reports re: MATCH Box Program	1966-1967, undated
Statistics	1960, 1967, 1983
Transporting Kits	1986
Sub-Series III: Promotion	1963-2011, undated
"Carousel of Kits", 1983	1983
"Carousel of Kits", 1987-2003	1987-2003
"Carousel of Kits", undated	undated
Catalogs	1965-2003
Correspondence with Teachers	1975
Flyers and Handouts	undated
Kit Rental Evaluation Forms	1963-1975
Loan Brochure (drafts)	1973, undated
Press Release re: New Kits	1988
Thank You Letters from Schools	2007-2011

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials	1938-2010	
Africa Loan Exhibit	1966	
Africa Loan Exhibit—Development	1966	
African Americans: Past and Present (used for	1995	
Great Black Americans, 1995)		
African Arts	1979	
African Arts—Development	1979	
African Arts—Development (1992)	1992	

Alaska Loan Exhibit	1969
Alaska Loan Exhibit—Development	1969
Alef-Bet: Exploring Jewish Culture (1980)	1980
Alef-Bet: Exploring Jewish Culture (1982)	1982
Alef-Bet—Development (correspondence)	1980-1996
Alef-Bet—Development (drafts, notes)	undated
Alef-Bet—Development (evaluation forms)	1982
Alef-Bet—Development (prototype sheets)	1980
Algonquins—Prototype	1965
Algonquin History and Culture	1969
Algonquin History and Culture—Development	1969
Amphibians and Reptiles	undated

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010	
Ancient Athenian Life	1982	
Ancient Athenian Life—Development	1982	
Ancient China (1 of 2)	2001	
Ancient China (2 of 2)	2001	
Ancient China—Development	2000	
Ancient Egypt	1994	
Ancient Roman Life	1975	
Ancient Roman Life—Development	1975	
Ancient Roman Life (1996)	1996	
Ancient Rome and Greece	undated	
Ancient Rome and Greece—Development	undated	
Animal Camouflage	1968	
Animal Camouflage—Prototype	1968	
Animal Defense	1975-1987	
Animal Defense (2004)	2004	

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010	
Argentina and Chile	undated	•
Astronomy—Development	1969	
Australia	1970	•
Australia—Development	1970	
Basketry—Development	1981	
Batteries and Bulbs	1971, 1994	•
Beachcombing	1983	
Big Apple Circus	undated	•
Block Printing	1983	
Bones	1983	
Bones (2010)	2010	

Boston Middle School Science Kits	1987	
British Isles Loan Exhibit	undated	
Building Materials	1975-1987	
Burn Prevention	1975-1987	
Butterflies and Moths	1973-1978	
Butterflies and Moths—Development	2004	
Calligraphy	1971	
Calligraphy—Development	1970	

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010
Canada	1967
Canada—Development	1967
Caribbean	undated
Central America	undated
Central America—Development	undated
Central Europe	undated
Central Europe—Development	undated
China (1 of 2)	undated
China (2 of 2)	undated
China—Development	undated
Chinese Celebrations	2009
Chinese Folk Art—Development	2006
Chinese New Year	1988-1993, 1998
Chinese Shadow Puppets	2003
Christmas Customs/Christmas Around the World	undated
Christmas Customs—Development	undated

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Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010	
Communication	1975	•

Community	1965
Community—Development	1965
Echoes of China: General Material and	1979
Development	
Echoes of China: China and Her Lands	1979
Echoes of China: Chinese-American Families: Jia	1979
Echoes of China: Chinese Architecture	1979
Echoes of China: Chinese Celebrations	1979
Echoes of China: Chinese Games	1979
Echoes of China: Fine and Folk Arts of China	1979
Echoes of China: Travel with Marco Polo	1979
Electromagnetism	2010
Eraser Stamp Printing	1967-1975
Eskimos	1983
Estimating	1998
Fluid Patterns	1983
Food Power!	2008

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010
Friendship	1995
Geology of the Boston Basin, including a Geological	1964
History of New England and Geological History of	
the Boston Area	
Ghana Today	2000
Grandparents	1995
Great Black Americans	1987
Great Black Americans—Development	1994
for Great Black Americans (1995) see African	
Americans: Past and Present	
Great Black Americans (2010)	2010
Great Black Americans (2010): Profile Cards	2010
Great Black Americans (2010): Games	2010
and Activities	
Grouping Birds	1965
Grouping Birds—Prototype	1965
Hopi Culture	1968-1975

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010	
Hopi Culture—Development	undated	
A House of Ancient Greece	1968	
A House of Ancient Greece—Prototype	1965	
Houses	undated	
Houses—Development	undated	

Houses—Prototype	1966	
Hungary	undated	
Iceland—Development	undated	
Imagination Unlimited	1967	
Immigration Grades 3-5	1995	
Immigration Grades 6-8	1995	
India Loan Exhibit	1940	
India Loan Exhibit—Development	1940	

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010
Indians Who Met the Pilgrims	1974
Indians Who Met the Pilgrims Seasons Cards (1 of 3)	1974
Indians Who Met the Pilgrims Seasons Cards (2 of 3)	1974
Indians Who Met the Pilgrims Seasons Cards (3 of 3)	1974
Indians Who Met the Pilgrims—Spanish Translation	1983
Indonesia and Southeast Asia	undated
Insects	1970
Insects (1995)	1995
Insects (2007)	2007
Insects—Development	1968, undated
Iron and Steel	undated
Iron and Steel—Development	1960
Italy Loan Exhibit	undated
Japan: Getting Acquainted	1995
Japan: Getting Acquainted—Development	1995, undated
Japan Loan Exhibit	1964
Japan Loan Exhibit—Development	undated

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010	
Japan Loan Exhibit—Revisions	1975	
Japanese and Chinese Calligraphy	1975-1987	
Japanese Children's Day	1990	
Japanese Children's Day—Development	undated	
A Japanese Family—Kit Guides (1 of 2)	1968, 1970, 1997	
A Japanese Family—Kit Guides (2 of 2)	2003	
A Japanese Family—Development	undated	
A Japanese Family—Prototype	1966	
Japanese New Year and Development	1988	
Judaism	1977	
Kenyan Kids	2010	
Kids' Bridge	1995	
Korea Loan Exhibit	1967	
Leathers—Development	1956-1958, undated	

Light Celebrations—Kit Guide	2002
Light Celebrations—Activities and Celebrations Cards	2002
Live Animals—Development	undated

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010	
Living Arts of India	1987	
Lumber	undated	
Magnets—Kit Guides	undated	
Magnets—Development (evaluation forms)	1988-2001	
Magnets—Labels and Illustrations	undated	
Masks	undated	
Medical Stuff—Kit Guide and Development	1984	
Mediterranean Lands	undated	
Mediterranean Lands—Development	undated	
Medieval People—Development	undated	
Medieval People—Prototype	1965	
Mexican Crafts, Games, and Toys	1995	
Mexican Crafts, Games, and Toys (2004)	2004	
Mexico Loan Exhibit (1 of 3)	1967	
Mexico Loan Exhibit (2 of 3)	1967	
Mexico Loan Exhibit (3 of 3)	1967	
Mexico Kit Guide and Development	1984	

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010
Middle Ages Loan Exhibit	1963
Middle East—Development	undated
Migrating Birds	1963-1975
Minerals	1970
Minerals—Development	1970
Multilingual Bingo	1983
Multicultural Celebrations: Cambodian New Year	1993
Multicultural Celebrations: Happy Birthday,	1993
Dr. King!	
Multicultural Celebrations: Kwanzaa	1993
Multicultural Celebrations: Powwow and	1993
Strawberry Thanksgiving	
Multicultural Celebrations: Têt—the Vietnamese	1993
New Year	
Multicultural Celebrations: Three Kings' Day	1993
Multicultural Hopscotch	1983
Musical Shapes and Sounds—Prototype	1966
Musical Shapes and Sounds—Materials	1975
Native American Games	2001

Native American Loan Exhibits	1938-1950
Native American Moccasin Game	1980
Native American Ring and Pin Game	1980
Native American Moccasin Game and Ring and Pin	undated
Game—Development	

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010
Navajo Loan Exhibit	undated
Nesting Birds	1975-1987
Netherlands Loan Exhibit	1948
Netherlands Loan Exhibit—Development	1948
Netsilik Eskimos—Prototype	1966
Netsilik Eskimos—Development	undated
New England Farm Life	1967
New England Farm Life—Development	1967
New England Indian Basketry	undated
New Zealand Loan Exhibit Guide, Labels, and	1976
Development	
Nigeria Kit Guides	1976-1980
Nigeria—Development (mockups and drafts)	1976-1985
Nigeria—Development (notes)	1976
Nigeria—James Jenkins Internship Correspondence	1975, 1976

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Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010, undated
North Africa Loan Exhibit—Development	undated
Northeast Native American Games	1971, 1988
Northeast Native American Games—Development	undated
Northwest Coast Indian Loan Kit—Development	undated
Norway Loan Exhibit	undated
Nutrition: Breakfast, Snacks, and Fast Food	1989
Nutrition (1997)	1997
Oil	1959-1978
Pacific Islands (1 of 2)	1970, undated
Pacific Islands (2 of 2)	1952, 1970, undated
Paddle-to-the-Sea	1974
Paddle-to-the-Sea—Prototype	1964
Palestine	1960
Papermaking—Development	1994
Papermaking (2002)	2002
Plains Indians	undated

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Folder Titles	Dates	·

Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010, undated	
Plains Indians—Development	1964-1969	
Plains Indians Loan Kit Labels	undated	_
Plant Dyes and Dyeing	1975-1987	
Plant dyes and Dyeing—Development	1975-1987	
Playspace at Home	1975-1987	
Prehistoric Life Loan Exhibit	1973	-
Prehistoric Life Loan Exhibit—Development	undated	
Prehistoric Life Kit Guide	1975-1987	
Prehistoric Life (2008)	2008	-
Press—Prototype drafts	1965	
Press—Supplementary Materials	1965	

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010, undated
Press—Development (drafts)	1965
Press—Development (notes and correspondence)	1966-1967
Press—Final Prototype	1966
Printmaking	1984
Printmaking (2004)	2004
Puerto Rico Loan Exhibit	1973, undated
A Puerto Rican Family: Kit Guide	1988
A Puerto Rican Family: Family cards	1988
A Puerto Rican Family: Development	1988

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010, undated
Puppets—Kit guides and Templates	1976
Puppets—Development	1976
Puppetry	1975-1987
Quilt Design: the Right Triangle	1983
Rocks—Prototype	1966
Rocks—"Rock Rummy" Cards and Instructions	1966
Rocks—Development (planning notes)	1965-1966
Rocks (1996)	1996
Rubber Loan Exhibit—Development	1963-1965
Rubber Stamp Printing	1983
Salad Dressing Physics: Motion in Liquid	1983
Scandinavia	undated
Sea Life	1983
Seeds—Prototype	1966

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010, undated
Shoes	undated
Shoes—Development	undated
Simple Stenciling	1975-1987
Slice of Pond	1987
Skeletons	undated
Soils	1987
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different: Proposal	1977-1994
and General Materials	
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different:	1995
Introductory Unit	
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different:	1994
Augmentative and Alternative Communication	
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different: Deaf and	1997
Hard of Hearing	
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different: Learning	1997
Disabilities	
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different: Mental	1995
Retardation	
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different: Physical	1997
Disabilities	
Some Ways the Same, Some Ways Different: Visual	1997
Impairment	
South America: General	1963-1975
South America: Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador	1963-1975
South America: Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia	1963-1975
Southwest Indians Loan Exhibit	undated
Soviet Union	1970
Spain and Portugal	undated
Stream Table	1975-1987

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010, undated	
Suanpan: the Chinese Abacus—Kit Guide and	1989	
Development		
Sugar	1967	
Sweden	undated	
Switzerland	1964	-
Textiles	1965	
Time	1968	
Traditional China	undated	
Transportation—Development	undated	

Trees—Development	1964, undated
Turtles	1963-1975
Turtles—Development	1965-1973
Urban Wildlife	2008
Vietnam: Land, People, and culture	1970
Vietnamese Culture [Refugee Arts Group]	undated
Views and Clues	2001
Volcanoes	undated

Folder Titles	Dates
Series II: Kit Materials (continued)	1938-2010, undated
Volcanoes—Development (drafts and notes)	1948, 1961, undated
Volcanoes—Development (correspondence)	1967-1969
Waterplay—Development	1966-1969, undated
Waterplay—Prototype	1966
Weather	undated
Weather—Development	undated
Weather Loan Exhibit—Development	1971-1976
West African Village Life	undated
West African Village Life—Development	1975
Westward Expansion	1967, undated
Wheat	undated
Wigwam Life—Development	1970
Wind Ways	2001
Winter Birds	1975-1987
Winter Buds—Development	undated
Woodlands Indians	undated
Zoo Loan Exhibit	undated
Zoo Loan Exhibit—Development	undated

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Folder Titles	Dates	
Series I: Development	1960-2011, undated	
Sub-Series II: Program Development	1960-1986, undated	
Kit Rental Books—September 1979-June 1980	1979-1980	
Kit Rental Books—September 1980-June 1981	1980-1981	

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series I: Development (continued)	1960-2011, undated	
Sub-Series II: Program Development (continued)	1960-1986, undated	
Kit Rental Books—September 1981-June 1982	1981-1982	
Kit Rental Books—September 1982-June 1983	1982-1983	

Folder Titles	Dates	
Series I: Development (continued)	1960-2011, undated	
Sub-Series II: Program Development (continued)	1960-1986, undated	
Kit Rental Books—September 1983-June 1984	1983-1984	
Kit Rental Books—September 1984-June 1985	1984-1985	