

Oct. 2025 ★ Lesson #1



TEXAS FOLKLIFE

Handed Down *at Home*

This Month's Activity:

The Stories We Keep

Family members are tradition keepers — people who hold and share the memories, practices, and values that shape who we are. They pass along recipes, sayings, songs, and objects that remind us of those who came before.

Objects in our homes, big or small, can hold memories and stories worth handing down to the next generation. These may be things like photographs, quilts, jewelry, toys, or even furniture that remind us of people, places, and times that shaped our families.

This activity helps children see how *everyday things* can become part of a family's living history.



Texas Folklife invites you to explore traditions through simple activities families can do together. Each lesson celebrates the ways stories, songs, and creativity live in our homes and communities.



1. **Choose an object:** Pick something meaningful from your home — a photo, recipe card, heirloom, favorite mug, or old toy.
2. **Share its story:** Talk about who it belonged to, when it was used, or why it matters.
3. **Ask questions:** Encourage your child to wonder — “Who gave this to us?” “What did it mean back then?”
4. **Imagine together:** Ask how this object might be used or remembered in the future.
5. **Reflect:** Talk about how the story connects your family across generations.



Reflection & Connection

Ways to Expand the Lesson:

- **Create a “Family Museum”** — a small shelf or box with objects and handwritten labels.
- **Draw or photograph** each item and write its story in a notebook.
- **Call a relative** and ask about something in their home— record the story if possible.
- **Let your child choose** an item of their own to add to your collection of stories.



What Stories Live in Your Home?

Share your favorite photo or family story with us using **#HandedDownAtHome** or tag **@TexasFolklife** to be featured in next month's newsletter.



Folk & Traditional Arts Connection

Material Culture & Storytelling



The things we keep are records of who we are. By sharing their stories, we connect the past & present through everyday life.



FUN FACT:

In Texas and beyond, many families keep heirlooms that reflect their community's traditions — from handwoven quilts and musical instruments to carved walking sticks and handwritten recipes. Folklorists and museums study these items to learn how people lived, worked, and celebrated. Every object holds a story if you take the time to listen.