

# Mondays with MoMA



## Step 1 Look closely

### Questions

1. What items did the artist use to create this artwork?
2. How are the items arranged?
3. Make up a story that incorporates all the items in this artwork.

## Step 2 Learn more

Bettye Saar made this work by collecting different objects and arranging them in a composition, a process called assemblage. She once said about her studio, "My studio is jam-packed full of everything that I think I might use – a friend once said, she's a psychic – all these things in your room, they're asking what are we doing here? What are we doing here? And I say don't worry, one day you're going to be art."

She made this work with items that belonged to her great-aunt Hattie Parson Keys a year after she died. She included letters, autographs, hankies, scraps of lace, and fabric, and framed them with a pair of gloves. The name of the artwork, *Keep for Old Memiors*, comes from a note that Saar found among her aunt's belongings where the word "memoirs" is misspelled - Saar decided to keep this misspelling as part of the artwork.

## Step 3 Activity: Create a Shadowbox

Learn more about making assemblages and shadowboxes by watching this video:

<https://bit.ly/2WTvXOk>

Materials: Small box, assorted items from around your house (old letters, magazines, newspapers, natural objects such as rocks or shells, pieces of old clothing, etc), and glue (optional)

1. Find a small box to be the basis of your shadowbox. Jewelry boxes, mint tins or tea boxes work well, but you can use any small box you have at home.
2. Collect objects that you would like to put in your shadowbox. You can choose objects that remind you of a special person or event or tell a story.
3. Arrange the objects in your box. You can layer things on top of each other or cut items to fit in your box. Keep rearranging until you are happy with your composition.
4. *Optional* - Glue items in place to secure them. Or you can take them out and start again with different objects.

## Step 4 Share!

Tell a friend or family member the story behind your shadowbox and how you made it! Or, you can email it to us at MoMA:

[schoolprograms@moma.org](mailto:schoolprograms@moma.org)



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Image: Bettye Saar. "Keep for Old Memiors". 1976. Pencil on paper, printed papers, and printed fabric sewn and pasted on fabric with lace, leaves, and feathers, mounted on painted frame with gloves. Gift of Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder.