



Suitcase Activity ***Coming To America***

The Arab American National Museum's (AANM) *Coming To America* exhibit focuses on four distinct periods of immigration to the United States. People emigrate to new places for a wide variety of reasons, including economics, education, political conflict, family reunification and many other reasons. When people emigrate, they often bring items with them. These items can vary greatly, and include things like books, toys, religious items, clothing, spices, family treasures and more. It is also important to know that most individuals coming to the United States could not bring everything with them, so many packed strategic and important items. Now, it's your turn to pack your own suitcase and select items you would bring!

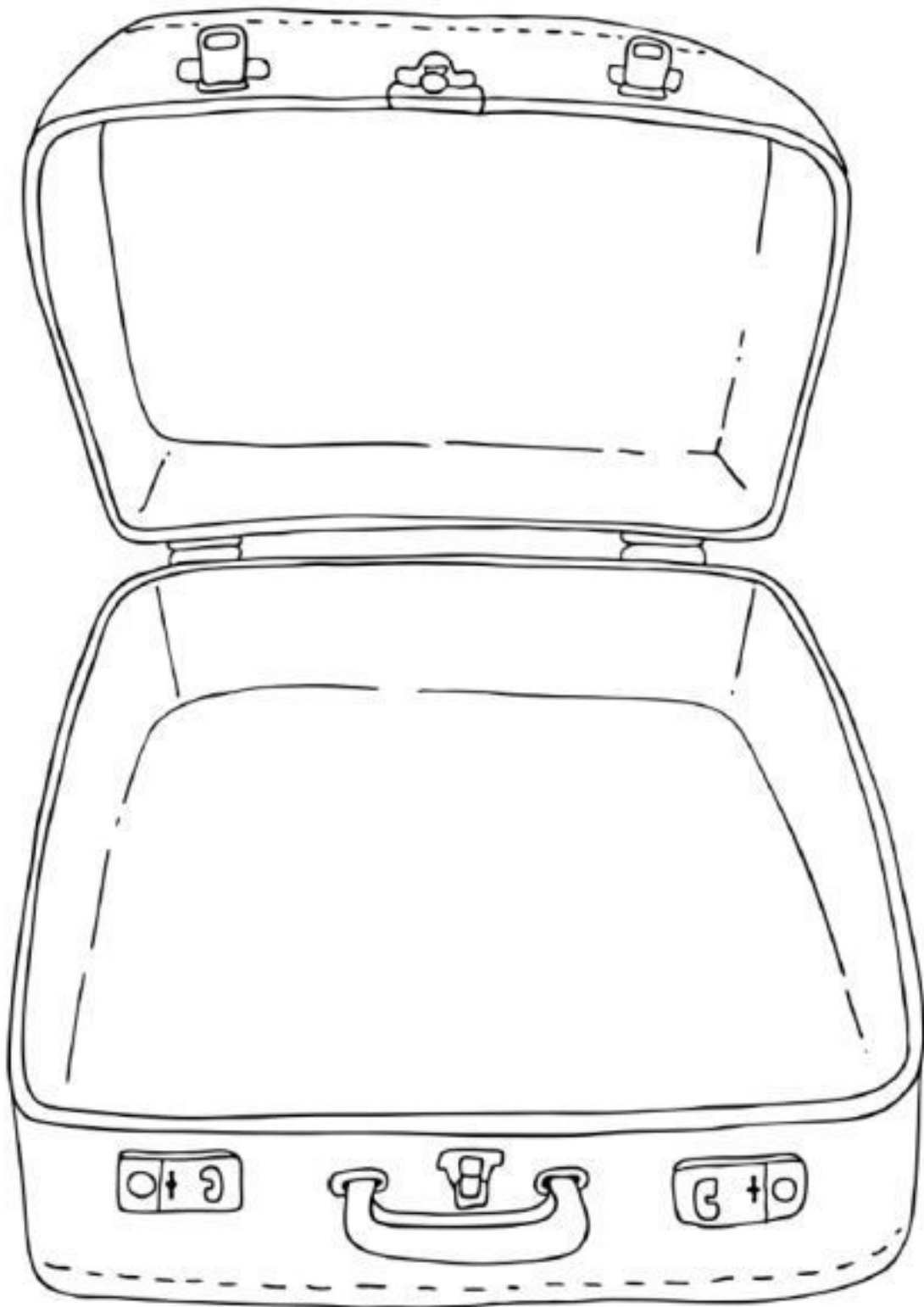
Directions: Put yourselves in the shoes of an immigrant. Imagine that you were leaving for a new country tomorrow and you needed to pack your suitcase. Think about what kinds of things you would both want and need to take with you. Choose up to 5 items and then draw them in the suitcase on the next page. Feel free to get creative and color in the items and make it your own.

Following the drawing exercise, please answer the following questions.

- 1.) Why did you choose to take these specific items in your suitcase?
- 2.) Do you feel these items say something about who you are as a person? Why or why not?

Following the activity, below are some items people brought with them when they came to the U.S. You can click on the items below to learn more about their history and the person who carried them. You can find more stories and items in our "Items from Our Collection" document found in the "Resources" folder.

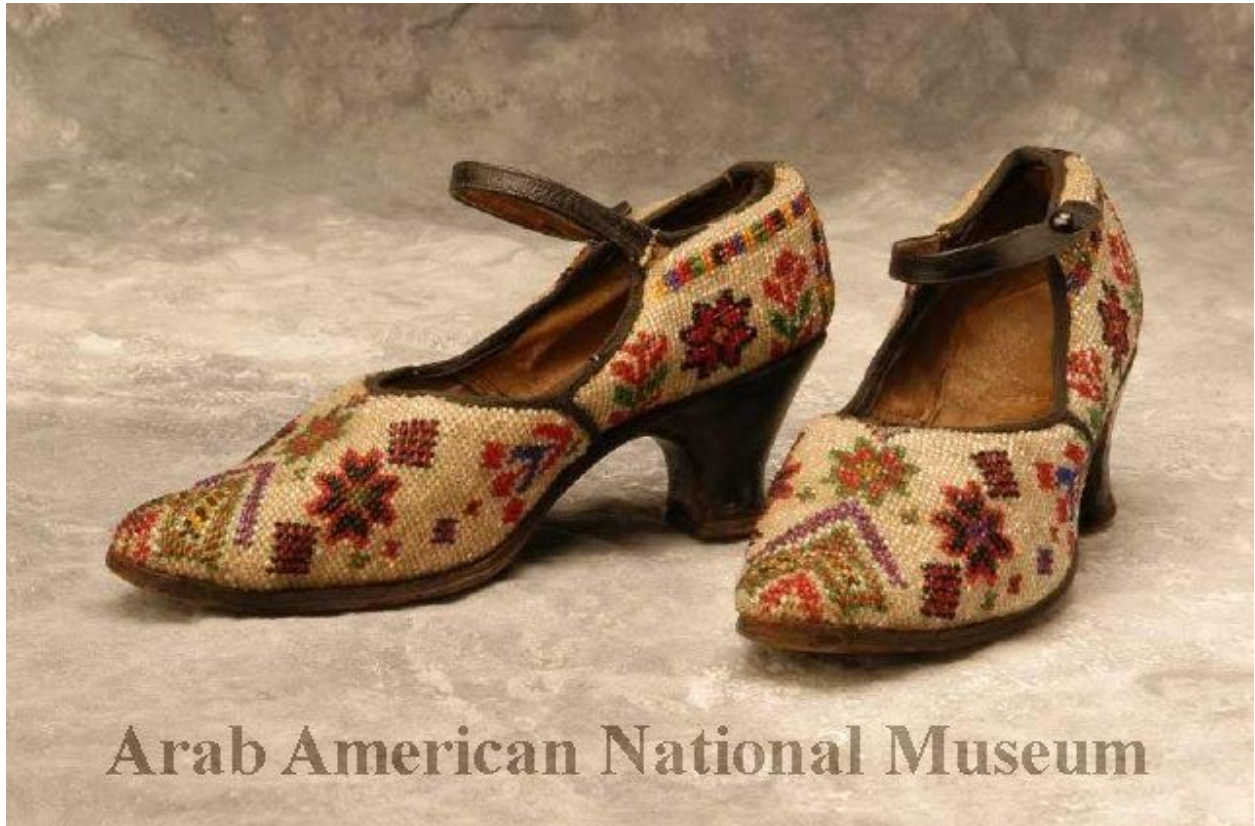
What would I take with me?



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Additional Resources: As we saw in the virtual tour, people brought a lot of different objects with them - books, religious items, special clothing, medical records, etc. Here are a couple more stories that highlight the different types of items people brought with them when they came to the United States. More items can be found under the *Resources* tab titled, *Items from Our Collection*.

Click on the image below to learn more about Sara Abdulla's beaded shoes and their journey to the United States:



Beaded Shoes
Pre-1923, Syria
Donated by Marie and Ollie Abdalla
Arab American National Museum Collection

Click on the image below to learn more about Mohamad Abdallah's story:



Arab American National Museum

Straw Hat

1980s

Donated by Mohamad and Erma Abdallah

Arab American National Museum Collection

Click on the image below to learn more about Laila's prayer rug:



Prayer Rug
Donated by Laila Al-Jabiri
Arab American National Museum Collection