

Typewriter Repair Shop
Duration: 20 minutes
Grade levels: 3rd and 4th

Program Synopsis: Students will become acquainted with the precursor to the computer – the typewriter – through hands-on experience. They will learn how the typewriter revolutionized communication in the world and changed the face of the American work force. They will participate in a hands-on exercise involving copying a passage from an age-appropriate book by hand, on a typewriter, and on a computer.

Standards: This program covers standards in the areas of History and English Language Arts and Literacy by utilizing skills such as comparing and contrasting how communication has changed over the last one hundred years, analyzing the differences between the three methods of copying information,

Background for Teacher: Shawnee Town's typewriter repair shop was owned by Joseph P. Yotz and stood at what is now 5817 Nieman Rd. Mr. Yotz's business was almost entirely through mail order. He received typewriters from all over the country which were mailed to him in large wooden crates. He was also Shawnee's jack-of-all-trades. He was a handyman and contractor, town constable, chicken hatchery owner, property owner, and real estate salesman. Yotz advertised his typewriter repair business through advertisements in farm publications. The typewriter revolutionized communication in this country and opened new professions for women who up until this time had been teachers or nurses. It changed the nature of business and, along with other new machines, changed the "look" of the office. They represented the beginning of a modern, progressive era. The small farming community of Shawnee was moving up in the world!

Pre-visit Activity: The purpose of this activity is to familiarize the students with what we will be doing at the Museum and to sharpen their analytical and motor skills before they come.

1. Locate a typewriter (or use a computer) and ask students to type the following pangram (words or sentences using every letter of the alphabet at least once). "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog." Note the number of mistakes, the time it took, and whether or not there were fewer mistakes after the sentence had been typed more than once.
2. Ask students to find out the following: a "QWERTY" typewriter keyboard (look at the keys on the top left hand row of letters), can they find out the name of one typewriter company (Remington, Royal, Underwood, Corona, etc.), does anyone in their family own a typewriter – who and how old is the typewriter and the person? Is the typewriter still used? Was anyone a typist or secretary in their

family? Man or woman? Where do the students learn to type/use the computer now? How old are they when they start.

Museum Activity:

- The Interpreter will deliver a brief presentation with questions directed to the students about the typewriter and how it changed communication forever.
- Three students will be asked to participate in the activity of copying a book passage by hand, on the typewriter, on the computer, and on a cell phone. Other students will observe the process. They will be asked to type the passage as fast as they can, then at a normal speed and then at a slow speed. How did they do on mistakes each time? How are mistakes corrected in the handwritten passage, the typewritten passage and then on the computer and cell phone? The Interpreter will have the students demonstrate.
- The class will answer and discuss the questions (see below) led by the Interpreter after observing the exercise and looking at the four samples which the students completed.

Props: Typewriter
Telephone
Radio
“Flip book” showing 1920s office machines
Typing paper and carbon
Eraser/ white out for correcting mistakes
Laptop
Cell phone
Paper for writing or a writing tablet (Chief?)
Pen/pencil
White board for sharing differences/similarities

Post-visit Activity:

1. The students may compare how society has changed over the last one hundred years in communication by letter and social media; travel by horse, auto, train, and plane; cooking by fire, stove and microwave, etc. Have the students compare the time involved, cost, level of comfort, etc. with one of the above or one of your own choosing. Chart/graph these differences and hang on the wall for discussion. Is change always good? Is speed always a good indicator of something better in our lives? Does food taste better over an open fire (hot dogs/hamburgers) or in a microwave? Do new inventions always better our lives? Why or why not? Ask the students to give examples from their own lives.
2. The above activity would make a handy presentation or hallway exhibit to another grade, the principal or parents.

Typewriter Repair Shop – Questions/Exercises led by Interpreter

1. Ask students to compare and contrast the three pieces of equipment from a visual perspective first. How much more complicated are they than using their hands?
2. Have them place the paper and carbon with another sheet of paper behind it in the typewriter. Have them guess what the carbon paper is for. Where do we put the paper for the laptop? How do we print out the exercise from the cell phone?
3. Have them type the sentences from the book provided. What's the same and what's different? Which of the four forms of communication is fastest and easiest to use? Why? Which turns out the most legible product?
4. Look for mistakes in their writing, typing. How are they going to correct it? Which machine is easier to use in making corrections? Why?
5. If you were going to send a letter to a relative or friend, which would you prefer to use – hand-written, typed, computer-generated or a text message from your cell phone? Why?
6. Would you like to purchase the typewriter, computer or cell phone or continue to write your letters, homework, etc. by hand?

Add/Need: Smells (machine oil, typewriter ribbon, coal, coffee),
Sounds (radio music, news reports and radio shows)