



## TIME MACHINE!

*What if you were hosting Miss Columbia way back then?*

**Objective:** Students learn about local history by researching, imagining, and assembling a plan to “host” Miss Columbia at their school in the year 1900.

### Background

Throughout Miss Columbia’s original journal, there are nuggets of information about the schools and children she visited during her travels. One way to lend more meaning to your school’s participation in *Around the World with Miss Columbia* is to ask children to go back in time — to try to understand how their commemoration of Miss Columbia might have been different 100 years ago than it is today, and how it might have been the same.

### Materials

- ◆ Diary entries, newspaper accounts, photos, and other artifacts describing life in your community 100 years ago (see Box on page 62 in Activity 3.1.1).
- ◆ Other materials as required by the student teams (see Procedures, next page)

### Getting Started

After you’ve discussed with students your school’s current participation in *Around the World with Miss Columbia*, explain that in this activity they will pretend to be hosting the original Miss Columbia during her voyage 100 years ago.

**TIME MACHINE!****Procedures**

1. Divide the class into “committees” of three to four students each. Each committee will be assigned to a special topic to research and plan as part of this 1900-style celebration of Miss Columbia.
2. Write the topics on the blackboard or an easel pad, adding your own topics or suggestions from the students if you like. Brainstorm with the class about things that might have been different in 1900. For example:
  - ◆ How would your school have found out about Miss Columbia in the first place, back in 1900?
  - ◆ How would Miss Columbia have been delivered to your school?
  - ◆ What would the school have looked like back then? What would be missing that is in the school today?
  - ◆ What would students be wearing to an official ceremony celebrating Miss Columbia? What would teachers be wearing?
  - ◆ What kinds of events might have been part of such a ceremony? What sorts of things would have been impossible back then?
3. Assign student committees to individual topics (or allow them to choose, if possible). Each committee should have a different topic. (See next page for suggestions.)
4. Ask each committee to conduct research, using the materials you’ve gathered or others they can produce themselves, into their topic in the year 1900 in your local community (or nearest community of that age). Then have them write up a plan describing what they would contribute, within their topic, to the ceremony honoring Miss Columbia in the year 1900. Have each committee present its plan to the rest of the class.

## Activity Tip

**Have It Both Ways**

If your school *is* hosting Miss Columbia, consider holding a two-stage ceremony — one that is contemporary to our times, and one that represents the ideas of students on how they might have staged such a ceremony 100 years ago. What better or more dramatic way to bring home the differences (and similarities) between life then and now?



### Possible Topics for 1900-Era Committees

- ◆ **Food Committee:** It should be fairly simple (with a librarian's help) for students to track down some recipes from the past. Have them prepare something simple to share with the class, along with some decorated "menus" describing what sort of celebratory feast they might have prepared for Miss Columbia?
- ◆ **Music Committee:** Perhaps your school's music teacher could help with this one. Students will need to explore not only what sort of music might have been played in 1900, but *how* it would have been played. (Ask: would they have been able to play records, tapes, or CDs?) The Music student team might try to prepare a brief musical presentation for the rest of the class, or play a tape of ragtime piano music, which was popular in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- ◆ **Event Committee:** What would the ceremony have been like, honoring Miss Columbia? Who would have spoken? Would students have played a significant role? Perhaps the Event Committee could write up a short speech using the language of 1900 (see Activity 3.2.1) and present it to the class. Interviews with elder community members who were students in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century would be especially helpful for this committee.
- ◆ **Logistics Committee:** This committee would grapple with issues having to do with transporting Miss Columbia and communicating with Mrs. Horton, her owner, back in Boston. How would they have accomplished these tasks back in 1900?
- ◆ **Publicity Committee:** How would the school have gotten the word out to the community in 1900 about the visit of Miss Columbia? Did community members and parents visit schools as much as they do today? What communications tools (telephone, newspaper, TV, radio, Internet, posters, flyers, "town criers," etc.) would they have had access to in 1900?

