

# From Scraps to Cache: A Case for Structured Education Collections



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# Structured Education Collections

- What is an education collection?
- How are education collections valued?
- How does this value affect use?
- What should the future of education collections look like?

# What is an Education Collection?

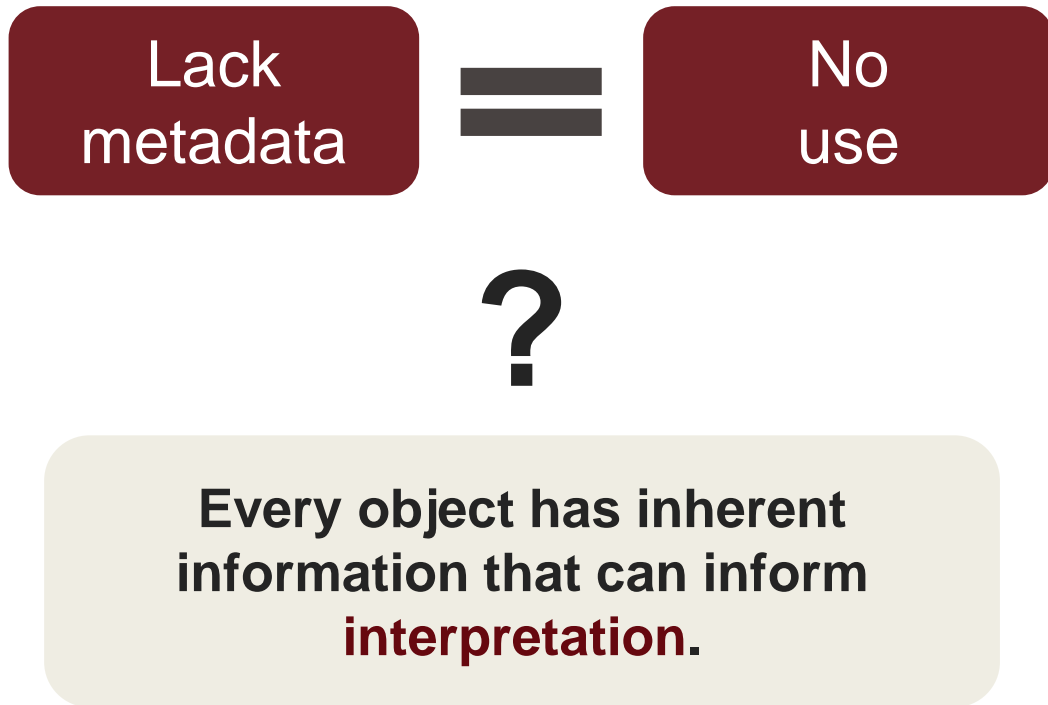
- ✓ Specimens intended for **hands-on learning experiences.**
- ✓ Specimens that are **consumable.**
- ✓ Typically managed by **education staff.**

*Often misfits...*

- **No** record.
- **No** use metrics.
- **No** thematic organization.



# What Does This Mean for Education Collection Use?



- Taxonomy
- Morphology
- Relationship to other objects within collection
- Relationship to institutional mission

# How Do We Structure Object Information?

## Metadata records!

- Reference institutional and knowledge-based standards
- Apply collections management standards *to every collection type*

Through structure, we give specimens tangible value.

Biodiversity  
Information  
Standards  
T D W G



# How are Education Collections Valued?

Measure value through:

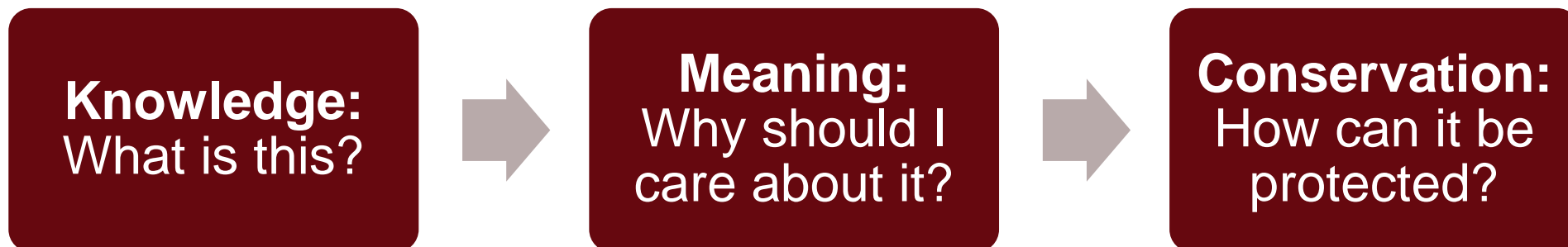
- **Use** in programming
- **Type** of patron
- **Number** of patrons served
- **Loans** records provide further metrics about the external *impact* of your collections



# Let Thy People Touch!

If we apply the same management practices as "real" specimens, **should we let visitors touch?**

- The more accessible the specimen's metadata, the more patrons care about maintaining the quality of future collections.



# IGWS Education Collection



IGWS Education Collection, 2016

## Problem

- Unorganized
- Lacked identification
- No use records

## Solution

- ✓ Identify
- ✓ Organize
- ✓ Interpret



# IGWS Education Collection



## 2016-2018

- Applied Darwin Core and institutional vocabulary
- Assigned unique identifiers
- Created an inventory of 2,200+ rock, mineral, and fossil specimens

EXHIBITION AND EDUCATION COLLECTION

IGS INDIANA GEOLOGICAL & WATER SURVEY INDIANA UNIVERSITY 611 N. Walnut Grove Ave., Bloomington, IN 47405-2208

DEED OF GIFT

The undersigned ("Donor"), hereby irrevocably and unconditionally conveys, by way of gift, without limitation or restriction, all rights, title and interest in, arising from and to the tangible personal property listed herein (the "Object") to the Trustees of Indiana University on behalf of the Indiana Geological and Water Survey ("IGWS-IU").

The Donor represents and warrants that the Donor has complete and clear title to the Object and the full authority to transfer the Object to IGWS-IU.

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_ Object(s): \_\_\_\_\_ [Blank space for donor and object details]

BY SIGNING BELOW, I/WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPT THE FOREGOING CONDITIONS.

SIGNATURE DONOR / AUTHORIZED AGENT WITH DATE

ACCEPTED FOR THE INDIANA GEOLOGICAL AND WATER SURVEY

BY SIGNATURE EDUCATION OUTREACH COORDINATOR / COLLECTIONS MANAGER / AUTHORIZED AGENT WITH DATE

Deed Of Gift

EXHIBITION AND EDUCATION COLLECTION

IGS INDIANA GEOLOGICAL & WATER SURVEY INDIANA UNIVERSITY 611 N. Walnut Grove Ave., Bloomington, IN 47405-2208

BORROWER'S AGREEMENT

Loan #: \_\_\_\_\_ OLYEAR:# \_\_\_\_\_ Loan Duration: \_\_\_\_\_ Extension Review: \_\_\_\_\_

The Indiana Geological and Water Survey ("IGWS") hereby lends the undersigned ("Borrower") the object(s) described herein (the "Loan") for the purposes listed herein and subject to the Terms and Conditions governing the loan agreement (see reverse).

IGWS CONTACTS: Polly Sturgeon, Education Outreach Coordinator, proot@indiana.edu, 812.855.1378; Jennifer Lanman, Archivist and Collection Manager, lanmanj@indiana.edu, 812.855.7785; Kimberly Cook, Curatorial and Collection Assistant, kijucook@indiana.edu, 812.855.7636

BORROWER INFORMATION: Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE OF LOAN: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHEDULE OF OBJECT(S): 1. \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

SIGNATURES: We certify that we have full authority to enter into this agreement, and that we agree to the conditions governing this loan.

SIGNATURE LENDER / AUTHORIZED AGENT WITH DATE SIGNATURE BORROWER / AUTHORIZED AGENT WITH DATE PRINTED NAME AND TITLE PRINTED NAME AND TITLE

Loan Agreements

IGWS Metrics

Usage History

Table with columns: Date Out, Name, Specimen No., Cabinet No., Purpose, Date In

Inventory spreadsheet showing columns for Item Number, Description, Location, Date, etc.



# IGWS Metrics

Enables us to **track** specimen activity & provide richer **context** to patrons.

- ✓ Using structured Ed Collection specimens in outreach programming has led to **239% increase** participation over past 3 years.

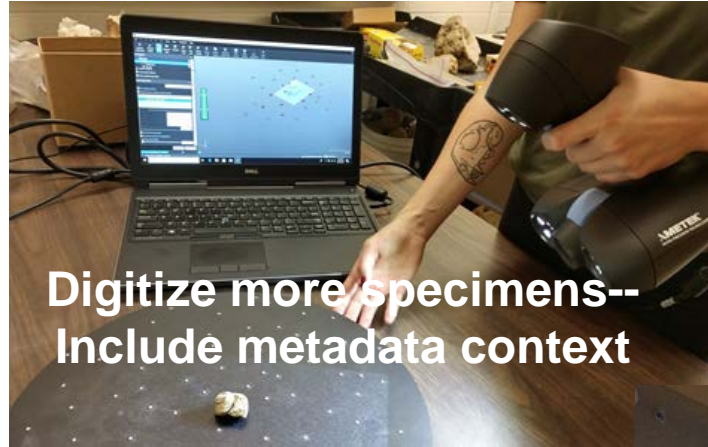


# Future of IGWS Education Collection

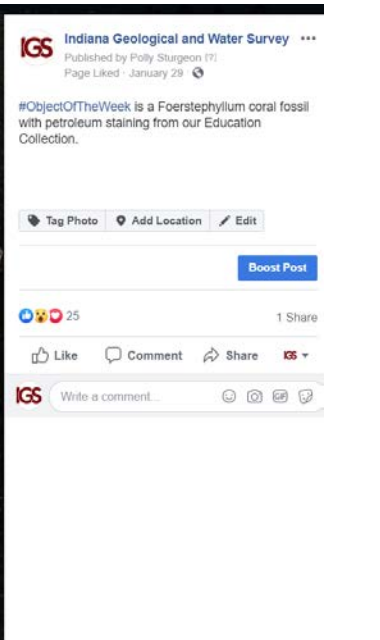
Develop more Traveling Trunks--  
Increase external metrics



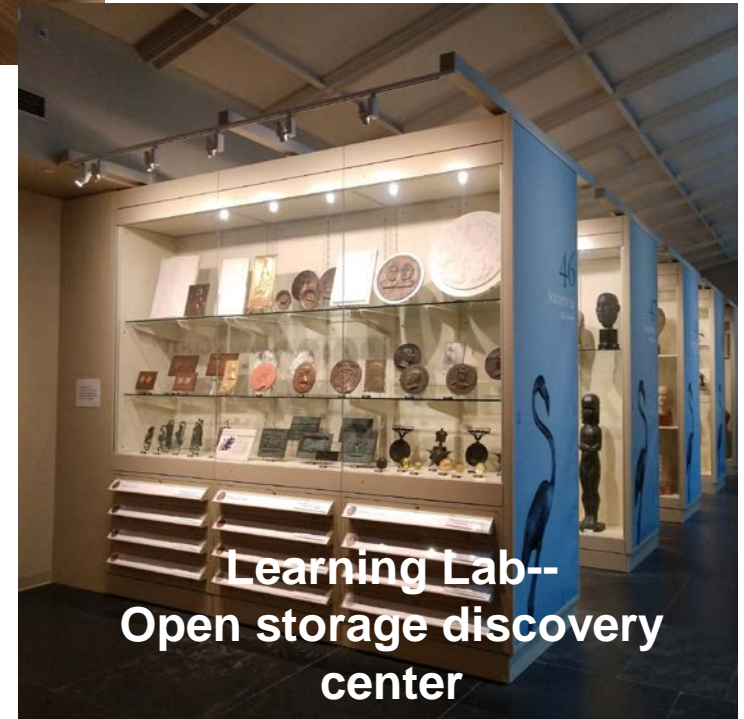
Digitize more specimens--  
Include metadata context



Highlight collection online--  
Increase digital engagement

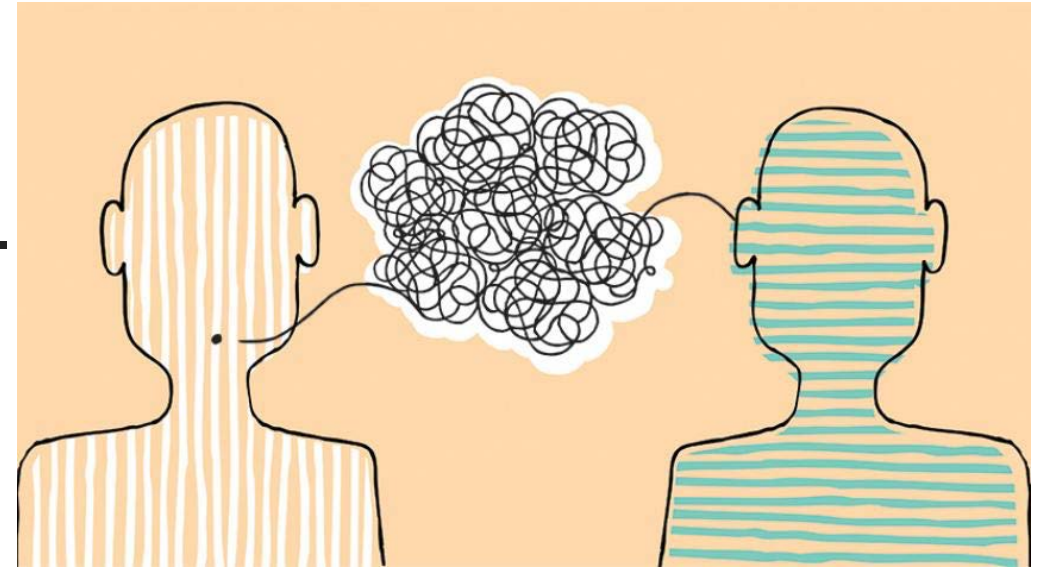


Learning Lab--  
Open storage discovery  
center



# Why Should You Collect Education Collection Metrics?

- Provide more qualitative assessment of collections & programming.
- Measure engagement beyond exhibition.
- Enhance your understanding of the impact you have on your visitors.
- Provide basis for discussing importance of natural history collections on personal level.





# Questions for Discussion

**How do you assess the way your objects are used in...**

- external loans?
- exhibition?
- educational programming?
- digital engagement?

**How does your institution label EC specimens?**

**What are some hurdles to using Education Collections?**



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