

## **THE MANSION'S MYSTERY TRUNK**

### 8th Grade Background Information & Requirements

#### **Background Information**

Imagine you are a curator asked to catalog the collections of the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum. As you explore the many rooms in the attic, you come across a 19<sup>th</sup> century trunk filled with historical artifacts which once belonged to the Lockwood & Mathews families. Inside the trunk is a stack of papers bound with faded ribbons. The papers are yellowed, the writing faint but readable, and include important documents such as bills, letters, and diary entries. Imagine that these artifacts and documents share an unknown piece of history about life at the Mansion. Given the contents of the trunk and the role of the former owners, your task is to piece together the story by using these sources.

**Using this information:** Craft a historical narrative about the life experiences of the families that once lived in the Mansion. Write your perspective of what took place using clear examples, rich details, and citations. Be sure to research the time period, living conditions, social roles, and daily activities that would have occurred at the Mansion.

#### **Questions to consider:**

- What do the contents of the trunk reveal about the families that once lived here?
- What consequences do these artifacts & letters hold socially, culturally, financially, and civically?
- How did these people respond to the situations you are describing?
- Why did they act in the ways they did?
- Why does this matter?

#### **Requirements**

- No more than 4 typed pages, double-spaced and 12-point font.
- Students are encouraged to research the topic to gather information for their story.
- Papers due by **Friday, June 8th.**

#### **Awards and Prizes**

- The writers of the top three papers will be awarded cash and other prizes.
- An Awards Ceremony will be held on **Sunday, November 18th.**