In part 1 of the Exhibition is a Shoebox activity booklet, we learned how to start from an idea and develop the exhibition concept. We searched for specimens and objects in our immediate surroundings and learned how to preserve them. We also prepared our shoebox to become an exhibition space. The second part of this activity will lead you through the design and completion of your project.
Step 4: Select your exhibition components

Take all the specimens and objects you collected and lay them out on a table or on the floor. Look at them, and think about your concept statement. Which of these objects seem to better represent your idea? Pick them up and set them aside.

Next, take a look at the elements you have selected, and repeat the process. Ask yourself how these objects relate to the story you would like to tell with this exhibition. How do they relate to each other? Try to find commonalities and differences alike, both visually and conceptually. Continue to reduce your selection until you have an amount of specimens that you can fit in your shoebox without crowding it.

You can print and tape a photo of the specimens you selected here.
Step 5: Design the floorplan

Take your shoebox and start placing your specimen in the space. Do not fix them just yet. Try first to move them around in different positions. You can also decide to use the box lid as an additional component of your space, for instance an extension of the floor. You can decide to position your box horizontally, vertically, or at different angles.

You are now starting to design your floor plan. An important step in this process is to decide how you will install specimens in the space. Here are some options you can experiment with, but remember that with your creativity you can come up with other interesting solutions and designs.

Pedestals

Using cardstock paper, you can create pedestals to support some of the objects. You can use the sample design in this page to draw a pedestal on cardstock, cut it out with a pair of scissors and fold it into shape. Fix it in place with some hot glue.
Step 5: Continued

**Ceiling hang**

Cut a piece of cord and tie one end to the specimen or object you would like to hang. Find the correct position in your shoebox and poke a hole through the top side, big enough for the cord to slide in tightly. Fix the cord into position with a knot. For more stability, you can also tie a knot around a toothpick and let it sit on the top of your shoebox.

![Image of specimen hanging from shoebox]

**Wall Hang**

You can attach a specimen to the back or side walls of your exhibition space. Use a push pin or T pin to hang the object. Hot glue is also a good option. There is no limit to where your creativity can take you. Enjoy the process of experimenting with your specimens, shapes and colors until you are satisfied with the result.

![Image of specimen attached to wall]
Step 5: Continued

Labels and Title

If you’d like to add more details, you can create small labels for each specimen using the leftover cardstock paper, and attach them next to objects with hot glue. Write down the name of your specimen, where you found it and when you collected it.

You can also decide on a title for your exhibition. Go back to your concept statement and think about a title that will communicate to others your idea in just a few words. Now write your title on a piece of cardstock paper and copy the concept sentence underneath. This will be your introductory panel, and you can fix it to the side of your exhibition space, or attach it to one of the walls.
Step 6: Documentation

Now that your exhibition is ready, it’s time to photograph it! It is very important to document your work for future reference, and to preserve the memory of your project. Especially for temporary exhibitions that rotate frequently, documentation becomes necessary to create archival records of the projects produced in the past. Have fun with your camera. Take full shots and close ups, trying different positions and angles.
You can print and tape photos of your exhibition here.
Congratulations on completing your first Exhibition in a Shoebox! Now let’s write about your experience. Think about all the steps in your activity. Which phase did you enjoy the most? What did you learn from this experience? What are you mostly looking forward to next time you visit an exhibition at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum?