



## The I-Search Paper

*(Adapted from the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies)*

Museums help people understand the world. Museums are places where people collect, store, study and display objects. Museums are places where people come to explore, learn, play and be inspired.

The *Object Conversations* exhibit features 25 objects from the CU Museum's research collection and the stories those objects tell as interpreted by scientists, artists, musicians, writers, and you.

The I-Search paper starts with a question and tells the story of how you found the answer. It is a free-writing, first person narrative that describes everything you did to answer the question.

1. Visit the exhibit, wander through it, explore the objects and stories. Come up with a question about one or more of the objects or stories.
2. Start by writing what you already know about the question - first-hand experience, what other people have told you, what you learned in school or through your own research.
3. Think about the question you have. Write down your question and explain why you chose it. What are some of the ways you will find your answer? What sources will you use, or whom will you talk to?
4. Write a first-person account of your quest to find the answer. Consult primary and secondary sources, examine objects and photographs, interview experts, compare sources, etc.
5. Describe what you learned and what you still want to know. What would you do next time if you had more time? What worked and what did not? What would you do differently next time?
6. Note your sources you used. Footnotes and bibliographies help readers to assess the reliability of the search.