



# PRESERVATION EDUCATION CURRICULUM



NORTHEAST  
DOCUMENT  
CONSERVATION  
CENTER

CLASS 2 LESSON PLAN

## Context for the Cultural Record

### Overview

The purpose of this class is to give students contextual and historical information on the cultural record and its relationship to preservation. Books and electronic formats will be discussed, as well as ethics and concepts of value. Throughout this class the emphasis will be on maintaining the original *physical* format of the cultural record as far as possible. “Reproductions cannot retain all evidence of the original text or of the form in which the text originally appeared. Further, the original form of the presentation of print is itself a cultural object and has scholarly merit and value in its own right” (McCorison, 85). Although the greater portion of this lesson is devoted to print materials, this description of the importance of the “original form of the presentation” also applies to nonprint formats.

The lesson is divided into three parts:

**Part I: The Importance of Context.** In this section students examine the importance of the historical and evidentiary contexts of a work and the importance of analytic bibliography as a method of discovering those contexts. As part of this examination, students will be introduced to the main areas of scholarly research that depend on these contexts for validation.

**Part II: Physical Aspects of Context.** In this section students are introduced to various physical aspects of cultural objects that comprise their “contexts,” particularly the art and practice of bookbinding. They then examine how these aspects support contextual studies and thus the foundations of their own “cultural record.”

**Part III: Preservation of Context.** In this section students examine the relationship of various treatment options to the preservation of context. They will be made aware of and discuss the central roles of ethics and values in conservation of the cultural record.