Smithsonian
Learning Lab

Getting Started
in the Smithsonian
Learning Lab

learninglab.si.edu

This guide will help you **discover**, **create**, and **share** in the Smithsonian Learning Lab.

Smithsonian
Learning Lab

Contents

What is the Smithsonian Learning Lab?

The Smithsonian Learning Lab is a free, interactive platform for **discovering** millions of authentic digital resources from the world's largest museum, education, and research complex, **creating** content with online tools, and **sharing** in the Smithsonian's expansive community of knowledge and learning.

Here's what you'll find in the Smithsonian Learning Lab:

Resources

- digital images
- texts
- videos
- audio recordings
- websites
- lesson plans
- instructional strategies

My Collection

Collections

Resource aggregations created by educators, subject experts, and students. May be as simple as a group of favorite things or as complex as a complete lesson plan aligned to standards.
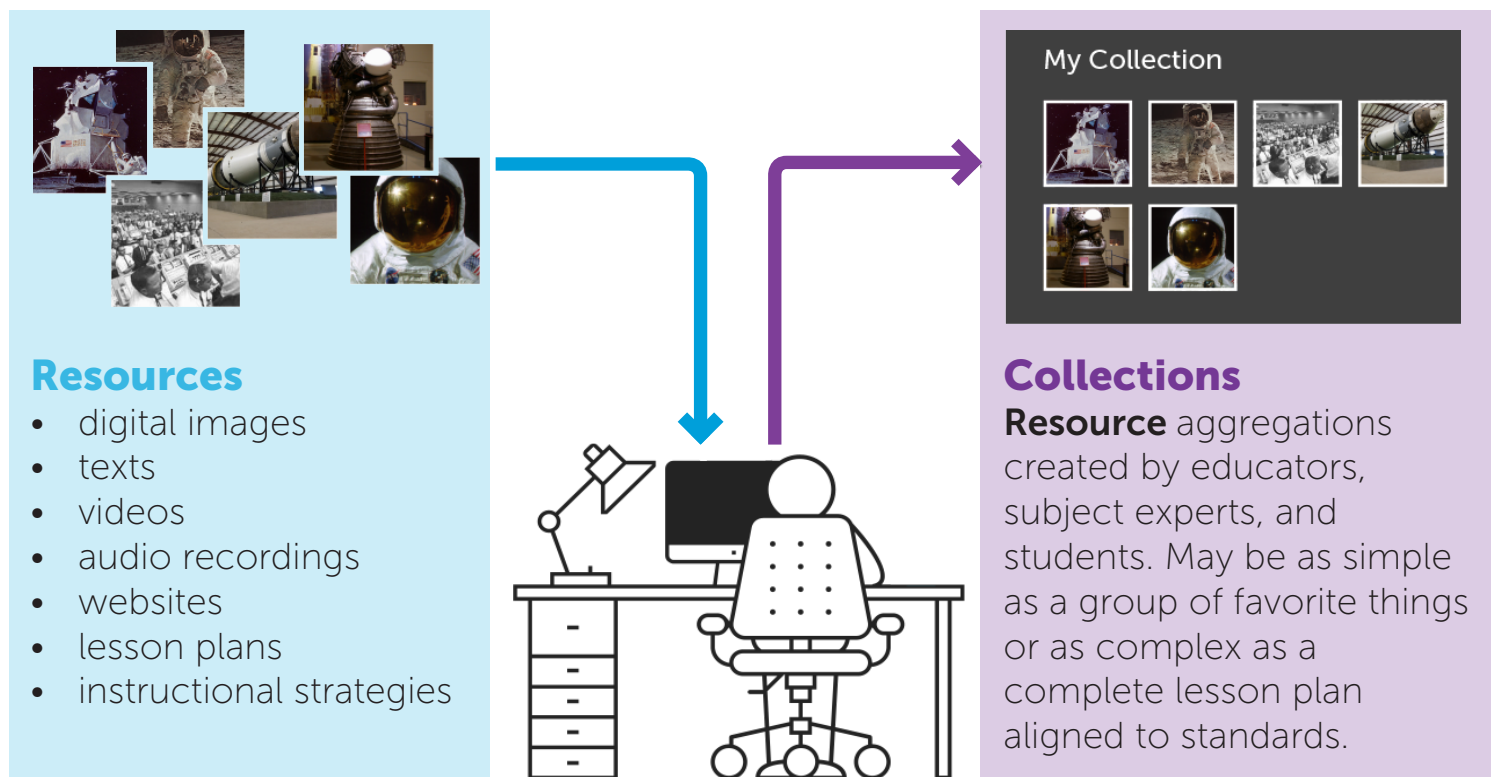
Resource Overview

Resources may be from the Smithsonian or may be uploaded by Learning Lab users.
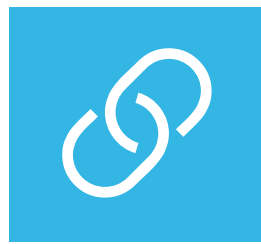
Photos, artworks, specimens	Video, audio recordings	Texts, scanned books	Websites, lesson plans	Instructional strategies

Each resource page supports a variety of interactivity:

Start a new **search**.

Learn more about the resource (who made it or where it came from).

Save the resource into a collection you are creating or have previously created.

Favorite, or bookmark, the resource.

Share the resource through social media and email, or embed it on a website.

Generate a citation in MLA, APA, or Chicago style.

Format a print-friendly version, including its descriptive details.

Download to your computer or device.

Alert the Learning Lab team to a concern, broken link, or something you find to be awesome.

Access your collections, favorites, and more.

Zoom in or out to explore details.

Reset the zoom level.

32 USA

1995   Brian Hailes, age 13

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Collection Overview

Collections are aggregations of resources. Using the Learning Lab's online tools, users can customize and enhance groups of resources to engage learners, or freely adapt ones already created. Collections can be as simple as a group of favorite things or as complex as a complete lesson plan, complete with standards and interactive activities.

Each collection page shows actions you may take, as follows:

Start a new **search**.

Access your collections, favorites, and more.

**Title** of the collection.

Name of the collection's **author**.

Description of the collection.

Collection **resources**. Click on any thumbnail to view the resource and learn more about it.

Environmental Stewardship through Art

Eveleen Eaton

11 Favorites | **2** Copies (view)

Cultures +4 | Age Levels Primary (5 to 8 years old), Elementary (9 to 12 years old)

This collection was designed for elementary classes to infuse global competencies into an established study of open space and environmental stewardship. Birds are often a topic of study in primary classrooms, and this framework can help students start thinking about environmental stewardship through an initial study of birds. Guided by thinking routines, students examine birds and think about how other cultures have shown their interest in nature. They will also start thinking about why studying the needs of local birds is important to taking care of their local environment. Finally, students begin to explore why taking care of the birds and environment also might be important to the world.

This collection is meant to be used as a unit over several days. Please feel free to copy and adapt it for your own use.

The art used in this collection comes from the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery collections. Many pieces were featured in an exhibition called "Dream Worlds: Modern Japanese Prints and Paintings from the Robert O. Muller Collection", which...

Read More »

⧉ **Copy** the collection to your account so that you can modify it to better suit your needs. Copying the collection does not affect the original version.

♡ **Favorite**, or bookmark, the collection.

⩇ **Share** the collection through social media and email, or embed it on a website.

⚑ **Alert** the Learning Lab team to a concern, a broken link, or something you find to be awesome.

❞ **Generate a citation** in MLA, APA, or Chicago style.

ⓘ **Learn more** about the collection (how it might be used, age ranges, and applicable standards).

⊞ **Navigate back** to the main collection view when viewing a resource in a collection.

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Sign Up and Basic Navigation

Become part of the Smithsonian learning community.
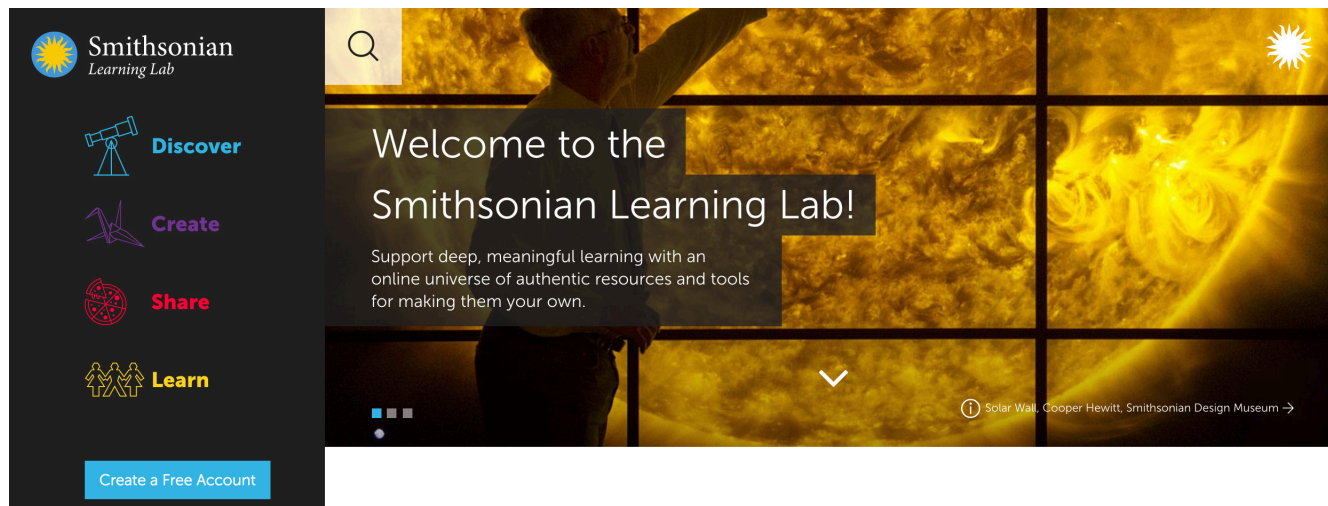
On the homepage, click "Create a Free Account" and follow the prompts

Click the Smithsonian sunburst in the upper-right of your screen at any time to access your collections, favorites, and other Smithsonian Learning Lab pages.

Click this button, located in the lower-right of your screen, to turn screen tips on or off, access the Help page, or submit feedback.

Personalize Your Public Profile

Add a profile picture and tell others a little about yourself.
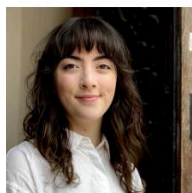
Tess Porter
Digital Content Producer
Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access
Language Arts And English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts
Smithsonian Staff

I'm the Digital Content Producer at the Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access. Here, I research and develop learning resources focused on the topics of history, art and culture for projects both within the Smithsonian and in collaboration with other institutions. I also train educators on how to create their own customized content in the Lab.

learning@si.edu | twitter.com/smithsonianlab

To access your profile, click the Smithsonian sunburst in the upper right and click "Profile." As you publish collections, they will appear on this page for others to access. Click the pencil icon to edit your profile.

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DISCOVER

Search for Resources and Collections

Use the magnifying glass at the top of your screen to begin a search.
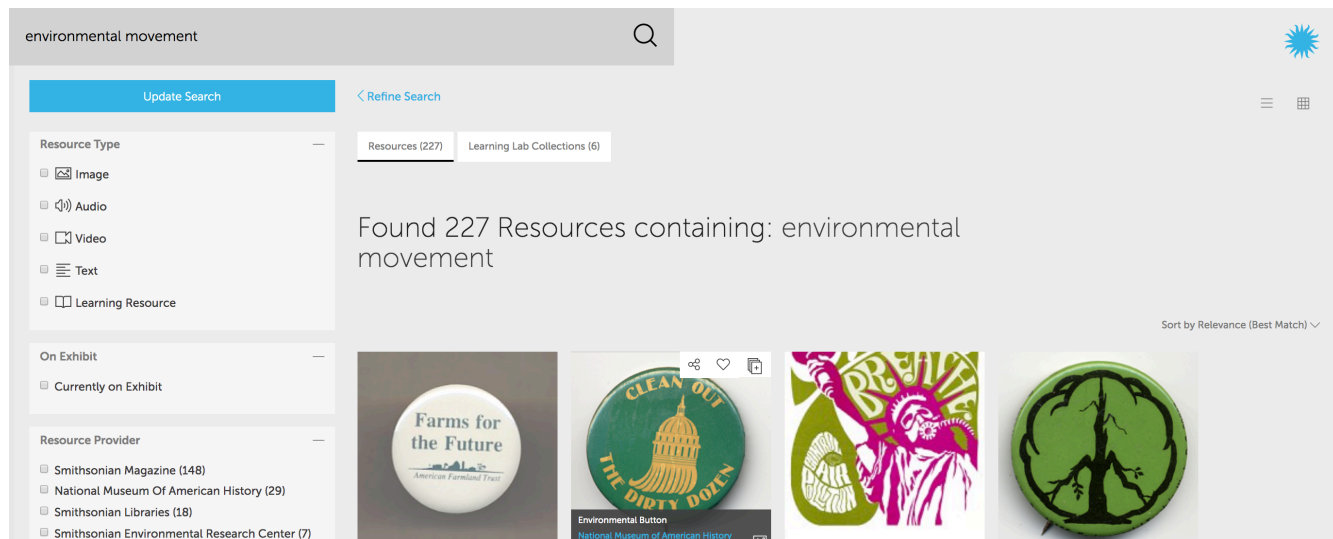
Try This: Search for a topic such as "Environmental Movement."

- Each image is a search result. Just click any thumbnail to view the item and learn more about it.
- You can search for resources or collections. Toggle between the "Resources" and "Learning Lab Collections" tabs at the top of the page.
- Narrow your search results by clicking "Refine Search" and selecting from the filters on the left.
- Toggle between a grid view and a list view of search results using the icons in the upper right:

Try This: Seach "inquiry strategies" to find simple, research-based inquiry techniques that engage students meaningfully with resources.

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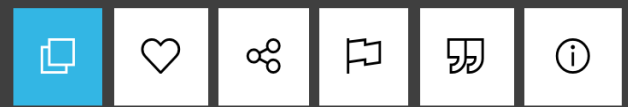
CREATE

Create a Collection

Create a collection in two ways: by **adapting an existing collection** or **making a new collection.**

Note that any collection you make is private unless you publish it. All collections are unpublished by default, which means they are private unless you send their URL to someone else. See **Publish Your Collection** (p. 14) to learn how to make your collections public and searchable.

Adapt an Existing Collection
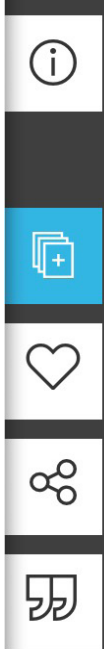
If you find a published collection you may use it as is or adapt it for your own purposes and circumstances. Typical adaptations include removing or adding resources, renaming the collection, or rewriting the descriptive text to change the reading level.

Click this button to copy a collection into your account so that you can adapt it. Copying the collection does not affect the original version.

Make a New Collection

Organize Smithsonian resources and ones you upload into a new collection.

To create a new collection, first find a resource you would like to Include. On that resource's page, click this button and you will have the option to create a new collection or add the resource to one of your other collections.

Enhance and Refine Your Collection

Write or edit text, add or upload resources, and add interactive features.
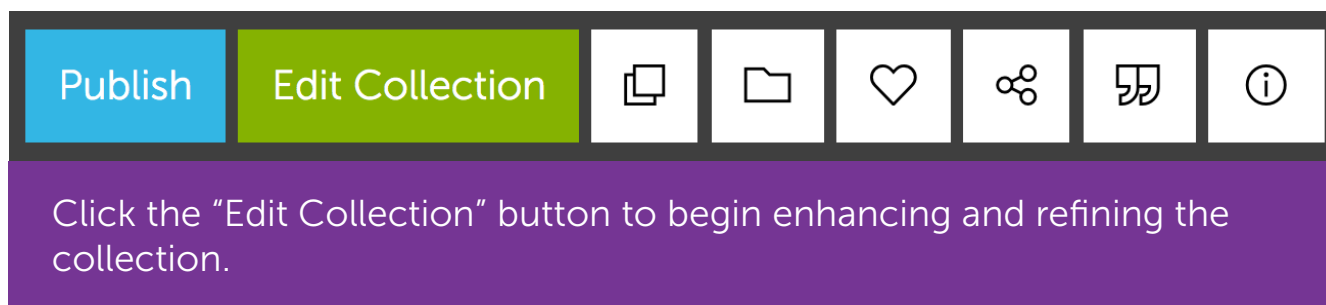
Click the "Edit Collection" button to begin enhancing and refining the collection.

Click the "Edit Collection" button to begin enhancing and refining the collection.
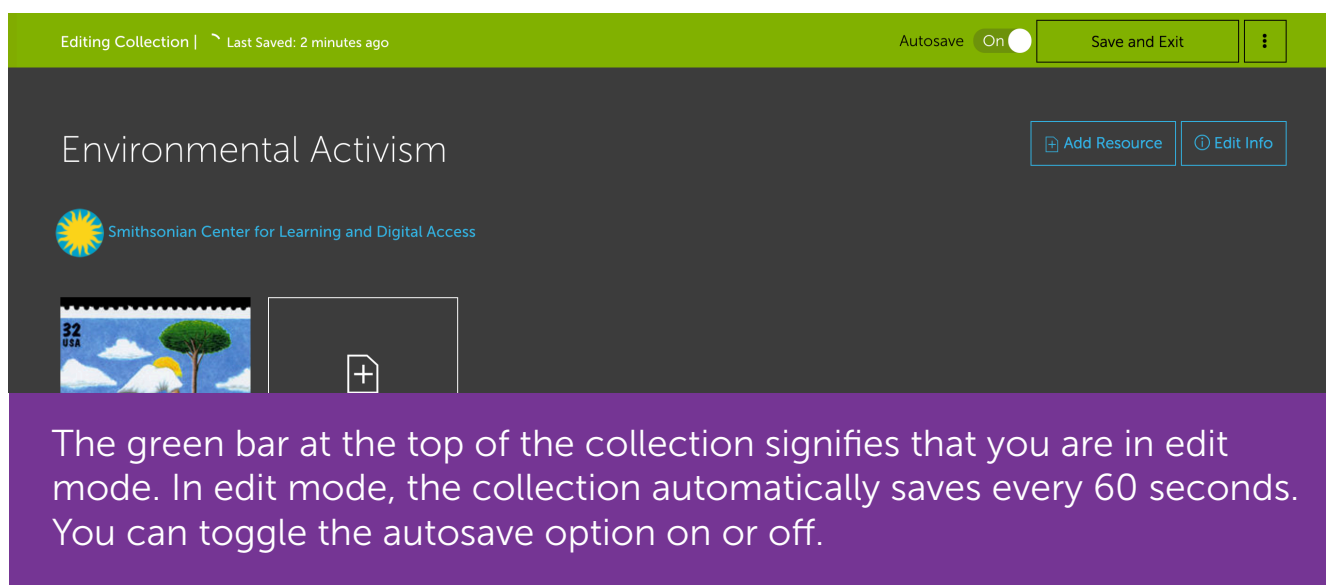
The green bar at the top of the collection signifies that you are in edit mode. In edit mode, the collection automatically saves every 60 seconds. You can toggle the autosave option on or off.

In edit mode, you can do the following:

- **Make It Interactive** by adding notes, quiz questions, or image hotspots **(p10)**
- **Add a Standalone Feature** such as notes, quiz questions, and sorting activities **(p11)**
- **Upload a Resource (File or Website)** from outside the Smithsonian **(p12)**
- **Describe and Title Your Collection** to help others find, understand, and use this collection **(p13)**

Delete the collection using the expanded menu options.

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Make It Interactive

Add text, quiz questions, or image hotspots

Click any resource to open and enhance it.

📎 Then, click the paperclip icon on the left side of the screen to add:

🔲 **Info/Text:** add descriptive details.

💬 **Quiz Questions:** includes true-false, multiple choice, short and long answer, and submitting a file options.

📍 **Image hotspots:** highlight and annotate areas or points on an image.

Add a Standalone Feature

Include text, quiz questions, or sorting activities that appear as a standalone resource.

Add Resource

Click the "Add Resource" button.

Add Resources to Collection:

My Favorites | My Uploaded Resources | Add a Resource | Search | Add Standalone Feature | Add

Info / Text | Quiz Questions | Sorting Activity
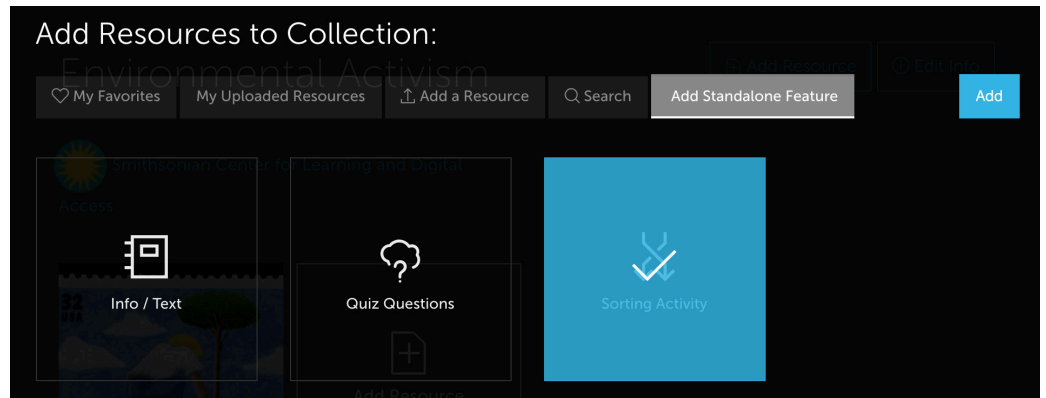
On the resulting overlay, click "Add Standalone Tool" and select one of three types of standalone features (listed below), and then click the blue "Add" button in the upper right.

Info/Text: add descriptive details.

Quiz Questions: includes true-false, multiple choice, short and long answer, and submitting a file options.

Sorting Activity: ask students to sort resources into multiple categories or in linear order with labeled endpoints.

Upload a Resource (File or Website)

Add a resource from outside the Smithsonian. First, enter edit mode (see **Start a New Collection**, p. 8) and click the "Add Resource" button.

Add Resources to Collection:

♡ My Favorites　　My Uploaded Resources　　⬆ Add a Resource　　🔍 Search　　Add Standalone Feature　　　Add

Title of your resource *

Describe your resource (optional)

● I want to upload a file　　　　　● I want to contribute a website / URL

Click the "Add a Resource" tab. Enter a title and description for this resource. Depending on the type of resource you'd like to upload, click one of the two options:

I want to upload a file from my computer

Enter information for the Creator (required), Type (required), and Source URL (optional) into the new fields. Once you've completed the required fields, a new button will appear to upload your file: ⬆ Select a File (Images and Documents)

Once the file is uploaded, click the blue "Add" button in the upper right to upload your resource. Allowed file types: jpg, jpeg, gif, png, doc, docx, ppt, pptx, xls, xlsx, rtf, txt, odt, ods, odp, and pdf.

I want to include a website / URL

Paste the website URL you'd like to include. Click the blue "Add" button in the upper right corner to include a link and screenshot of the website to your collection.

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Describe and Title Your Collection

Help other users find, understand, and use this collection.

Click "Edit Info" to change your collection's title, or add a description, relevant subjects, appropriate age levels, educational standards, and more.

(i) Edit Info

About Collection

| Description | Subjects | Age Levels | Educational Features | Standards | Done |

Title*

Environmental Activism

Description

`<>` B *I* U ☰ ☰ ☰ ☰ ⊞ ⚭ — ▶ ☰ ↶ ↷

In this activity, students will design a pin to promote awareness of and inspire action on an environmental issue of their choice. Students begin by examining a set of pins and stamps

The words contained in your title and description are searchable by other users after you have published your collection.

Follow these tips to make your collection easily discoverable:

Title: Say what is included in your collection and its purpose.. Put the most important words first, as someone scrolling past your collection in the search results sees only the first few words.

Examples:
- "Investigating a Civil War Uniform"
- "Pollinators: An Introduction"

Description: Give your collection a brief description that makes its purpose immediately clear to other users. Picture another user asking, "what can this collection be used for and what does it contain?"

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SHARE

Publish Your Collection

Ensure that others can find and use your collections. Published collections appear in search results.

Make your collection public and searchable by clicking "Publish" (until you do, only you can share it by its URL.

Before publishing, make sure you've added a title and description (see **Describe and Title Your Collection**, p. 13).

Once a collection has been published, you can still edit and modify it any time. You can also "Unpublish."

Embed a Collection in Another Website

Users will not have to leave your site to interact with what you created.

You can embed a resource or a collection on another website. Click the share icon to display and copy the code.

The embedded version of your collection will be fully interactive.

Track Student Responses

Assign a collection to a roster of learners.

The Smithsonian is committed to protecting the privacy of our users; only students 13 or older will be able to use the Assignment and Roster tools. More information about kids' privacy can be found in the Smithsonian Kids Online Privacy Statement: si.edu/privacy/kids.

If you'd like to assign a collection created by another user, copy it (see **Adapt an Existing Collection**, p. 8) to your account first. Each student will need their own Smithsonian Learning Lab account in order to respond.

Create a Roster of Students
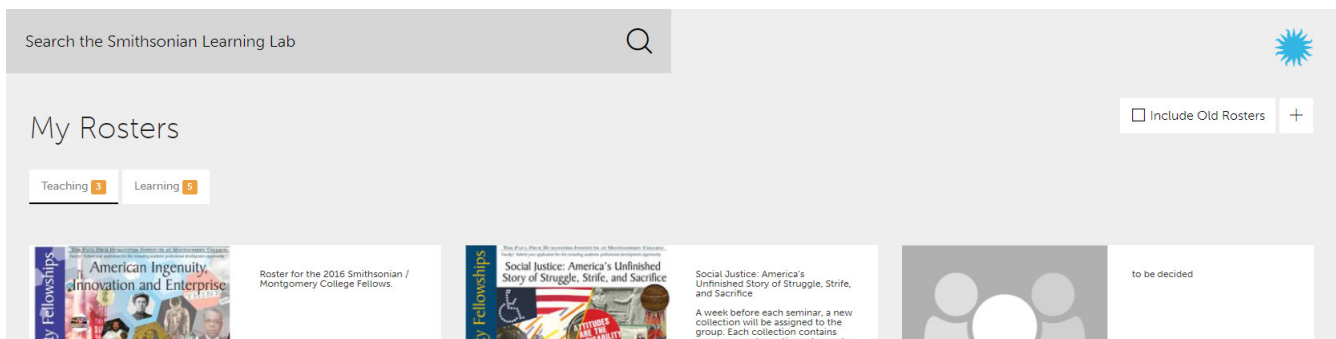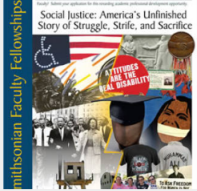
Click the Smithsonian sunburst in the upper right corner of any page, then click "Rosters."

On this page, you can:
- Create a new roster by clicking the + (plus sign) icon in the upper right corner of this page, then completing the prompts.
  - You can also create a new roster when creating a new assignment. See **Create and Manage Assignments,** p. 17.
- View and manage an existing roster by clicking on it. Here, you can access current and past assignments as well as the list of learners registered in the roster.

Manage Student Rosters

To add students to a roster, first ensure that each has a Learning Lab account. Then, copy and share the roster link and password with the users. When the users click the link, they will be prompted to add themselves to your roster.

Create and Manage Assignments

Click this button to turn one of your own collections into an Assignment. You have the options of using an existing roster or creating a new one.

Access your assignments and monitor student progress by clicking the Smithsonian sunburst in the upper right corner of any page, then clicking "Assignments." On the Assignments page, click any assignment to see the details of the learning activity, the list of learners it's assigned to, their status toward completion, and their individual responses.

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