



# Explorer Station



Tour Fun for  
Pre-K Visitors

## **F**ind Shapes in the Robson House

Solomon Robson built a home in Pitt County for his family in 1742, and now you can walk through it in *The Story of North Carolina* exhibit! Find the home and help search for these shapes as you learn its story.

### **Circle**

*Hint: Dinnertime! Cast-Iron Cooking Pot*

Instead of eating at restaurants, the Robson family cooked all their meals at home. Find the pot on the floor, next to the kitchen hearth. What is your family's favorite meal?

*Hint: Where is the bathroom? Chamber Pot*

What a tricky question! The bathroom would have been a small wooden structure located outside, and it would have been called a privy or an outhouse. At night or during bad weather, a chamber pot might have been used, then stored under the bed. Is it *your* turn to empty the chamber pot?

### **Square**

*Hint: A fire is important for cooking and heating. Fireplace/Hearth*

The Robson House has two fireplaces: a large one in the kitchen, for cooking meals and providing heat, and one in the bedroom for additional heat in the winter. Women wearing long skirts had to be careful not to get too close to the fire!

*Hint: Spin yarn first, then wind! Yarn Winder*

The yarn winder is in the kitchen area of the home. Women spun cotton or wool into yarn, then wound their yarn so it could be measured and used later to make clothing, like socks. Are *you* wearing socks?

### **Rectangle**

*Hint: A cozy place to sleep each night. Child's Bed*

Do you share your room with a brother or sister? Many families once shared sleeping areas because their homes were small, usually two to four rooms. Find the child's bed; it's next to the larger bed and is open on the side so a parent could comfort a sleeping child during the night.

*Hint: Where did I put that sewing needle? Ouch! Found it. Sewing Box*

Besides needles, a sewing box like the one on the Robsons' kitchen table would contain pins, buttons, thread, and scissors for making and repairing clothes. Did you know clothing was often passed down from older kids to younger siblings?

continued on back





### Triangle

*Hint: You spin this wheel with the power of feet!* **Flax Wheel Foot Pedal**

The flax-spinning wheel in the kitchen was powered by a foot pedal and was used to spin flax fibers, which came from a plant, into linen thread that could be used for clothing or items like tablecloths, towels, or curtains. What are some ways you use *your feet* each day?

*Hint: No flashlight? Use a lantern to light your way.* **Top of Punched-Tin Lantern**

Look on the mantel above the bedroom fireplace, and find a tin lantern. The Robson family would have used a similar lantern when completing chores outdoors in windy weather. The small holes in the lantern allowed candlelight to pass through while protecting the flame from being blown out by a gust of wind.

### Heart

*Hint: If you need to rest, please sit down!* **Side Chair**

You'll find a side chair in the bedroom, but it could have been moved to any room of the house when needed. The heart is a decoration on the back of the chair. Do your chairs at home have any shapes on them?

### Oval

*Hint: Don't put all your eggs in one basket!* **Eggs**

Most families raised chickens on their farms, and children gathered eggs each day. Look in the kitchen area to find a basket of eggs. Do you eat eggs? *Yum!*

*Hint: Keep your clothes safe by locking them away!* **Chest of Drawers (Keyholes)**

Your home probably has several closets where your family keeps clothing, blankets, sheets, and other items. But the Robson House only had one closet, in the kitchen, so they probably used wooden chests for storage. Some chests, like this one in the bedroom, had locks and keys. Locate the chest of drawers, and find its oval keyholes.

**Can you find more shapes in the Robson House?** As you look around and discover how people lived a long time ago in North Carolina, think about how the Robson House is different from, or similar to, your own home . . .



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