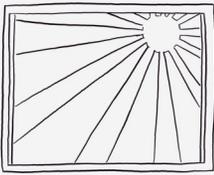


10

DAMAGE TO CULTURAL HERITAGE IS CAUSED BY AGENTS OF DETERIORATION

LIGHT



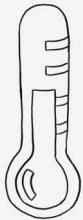
Exposure to light can fade, darken, and yellow artifacts. Light damage is cumulative and irreversible. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause yellowing, weakening, and deterioration.

WATER



Water damage can be caused by natural occurrences or mechanical failures, and is often the result of accidents or neglect. Paper materials are especially vulnerable to damage from water..

INCORRECT TEMPERATURE



High temperatures accelerate the natural deterioration of artifacts. Temperature fluctuations can cause cracking and delamination of layered materials and also contribute to fluctuations in relative humidity.

INCORRECT RELATIVE HUMIDITY



High Relative humidity (RH) promotes mold growth and chemical deterioration. Low RH can cause objects to become brittle, and to warp, shrink, and crack.

FIRE



Fires destroy, scorch, and deposit soot and other accretions on artifacts. Fires also bring water, often through sprinkler systems. Outdated electrical systems are a leading cause of fires in collections.

PESTS AND MOLD



Pests come in the form of insects, rodents and birds, and mold. Insects, vermin and birds will gnaw through and displace organic materials and contaminate artifacts with their excrement. Mold and microbes can weaken and stain objects.

PHYSICAL FORCES



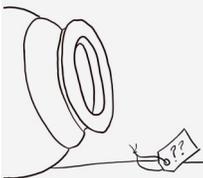
Physical forces include: impact, shock, vibration, pressure, and abrasion. Direct damage to objects occurs through accidents such as improper handling, a shelf collapse, or an earthquake.

THIEVES AND VANDALS



Objects can be stolen or displaced if not properly secured. Thieves may intentionally steal portable artifacts, either opportunistically or in a premeditated fashion. Vandalism is the purposeful infliction of damage, such as graffiti.

DISSOCIATION AND NEGLECT



Custodial neglect occurs when collections are not cared for actively, or when practices and information pertaining to care of collections is not updated. Custodial neglect also includes the disassociation of objects in a collection and their records.

POLLUTION



Pollutants can cause a chemical change in materials and may be airborne or transferred through direct contact. They may come from case materials, air, nearby artifacts, or through handling.