

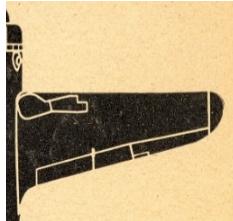
Houston Wing – Educational Hands on Exercises

Aircraft Recognition Exercise

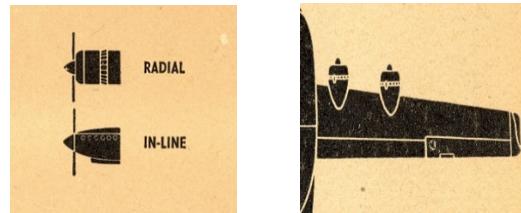
With school and other youth groups we start this exercise by teaching the kids how people visually identified aircraft during WWII.

They are taught the **WEFT** method of identification which means check the silhouette for the following.

Wing Shape



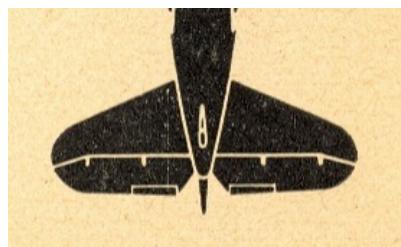
Engine Configuration (Number and location)



Fuselage Shape



Tail Shape and Type



Then we split the groups into teams and give each of them a piece of paper with an Aircraft Recognition chart for US Army Air Corps aircraft on one side and Japanese aircraft on the other.



We take them to an area outside of our Museum entrance where we have mounted a 4 X 8 sheet of wallboard to the ceiling. This wallboard is painted sky blue and has 10 black silhouettes mounted on it. Five of these silhouettes are US Army and five are Japanese aircraft. They are then given 5 minutes to see how many of these silhouettes they can identify using their recognition charts. (They take the aircraft recognition charts home with them.)



NOTE: This aircraft recognition exercise is always set up in our hangar and during our Open Saturdays many visitors take one of the provided Aircraft Recognition Charts, study the wall mounted WEFT Chart and then try to identify some of the silhouettes on the ceiling mounted wallboard.

Other - Hands on Exercises

During our Open Saturday's one of our Museum Docents sits in a back corner of the museum and lets kids handle our Gibson Girl radio (turning the crank until the light comes on, indicating power) while we explain how it worked and how the antenna was raised (by balloon or box kite) once the aircrew was safely in the life raft.

We also have a tank periscope they can look through, a paratrooper's helmet they can put on and they can try to use our Army Trench Shovel. In another area they can use our WWII Anti-Tank mine detector. (We continue to try to expand this hands on area.)

These hands on experiences keeps the kids interested while the adults take time to look at our museum. We try to have docents available who explain the exhibits or answer questions, but we have taken a lot of time to label all artifacts and have them well organized.

In our hangar we also have a small home built aircraft "Thunderduck" (a Watson GW-1 Wind Wagon) which has been painted to look like a fighter. Kids are allowed to get into this small aircraft and try on a helmet. This is very popular with small children on our Open Saturdays as parents like to get photos of their kids in it. (We ask for a \$1 donation and do surprisingly well with this.)



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We have the wings for this small aircraft but we only put them on during our annual Open House as it takes up too much room in the hangar with its wings attached.