

Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?

Patsy Rowe

Pre-preparation:

- >Ask women to bring special or peculiar buttons they may possess.
- >Ask women to share 'button' stories (e.g.: about the special button or an occasion when losing a button, etc).
- >Ask a few women to share how Christ has been the 'button' in their lives (see Devotional)

Preparation:

- >Set up a display of buttons
- >Prepare for the memory game.
- >Have a few prizes to give out: most buttons being worn, best button story, most peculiar button, fanciest button brought
- >For refreshments, cookies can be made to look like buttons.

Introduction:

“Button, button, who’s got the button? You must remember that button game from childhood along with memories of rummaging through Grandmother’s button box, basket or tin. A Grandmother’s button box could delight children for hours with exciting colors, shapes and textures of hundreds of buttons, large and small. Grandmother could always remember the exact garment from which any particular button came. Buttons were an important commodity and once a garment was too worn to wear, the buttons were removed to be used again.”

(Liz Marren-Licht. *Sisters Vintage Buttons*. Used with permission.

[-http://www.kk-design.com/scti/in103/students/buttons/button_project/home/home.htm.](http://www.kk-design.com/scti/in103/students/buttons/button_project/home/home.htm))

Perhaps not everyone has played the game of Button, Button, Who’s Got the Button. Let’s take a little time to play it.

Game Instructions: If you have a large group, ask about 6-8 people to participate, and come to the front to sit on a chair. Then follow these instructions:

1. All people are to put their hands together similar to being in prayer, but hold the fingers pointed outward rather than upward.
2. The person standing in the middle does the same thing, but has the button in her hands.
3. She goes around to each individual, sliding her hands through each person’s hands.
4. At some point, she is to drop the button into one person’s hands without giving any indication that she has done this; the person receiving the button also has to keep it a secret.
5. Continue on to the next person until the original button person has slid her hands through each person’s hands.
6. Then, indicating one of the participants, she is to say, “(Name)- Button, button, who’s got the button?”

7. That person has to say the name of the person she thinks is holding the button. If she is right, she takes the button and starts the process again. If she is wrong, another person can be asked the question until the right person is indicated.

History of Buttons:

From my online research, I have discovered that buttons have been around for a very long time. Archaeologists have even found what they believe to be buttons or button-like objects in prehistoric burial grounds. About 3000 years ago, during the Bronze Age, buttons were worn for fashion only, and were often made from bone, horn, metal or even seashells. Can you think why they were for decoration only? The buttonhole had not yet been invented! It is believed that buttonholes were invented by the ancient Persians, but didn't appear until the 13th century in Germany, when the Crusaders brought this fantastic idea to Europe from the Middle East.

In the early 1300s buttons became a big fashion rage. However, by law, only the elite of society were permitted to wear them. By the late 1500s, they had become a symbol of status and wealth, especially for kings and queens who inlaid the buttons with gems. Around this time, the Puritans deemed that the use of buttons was sinful. But this did little to stop it.

As fashion changed, the button became more important. During the 1700s, women used buttons for decoration since they still used laces and hooks to fasten their clothing. However, men used buttons for practical functions on their waistcoats, vests, and breeches. It is interesting to note that towards the end of the 1700s buttons began appearing on the sleeves of men's coats. While it is uncertain as to why this came into use, various online resources indicate that during war, the soldiers often wiped their sweat, nose, and blood on their uniform sleeve. To deter this from happening, Napoleon instructed that buttons be put on the sleeves of the uniform. Today, even with the advent of the Kleenex, men's suits still have buttons on the sleeve.

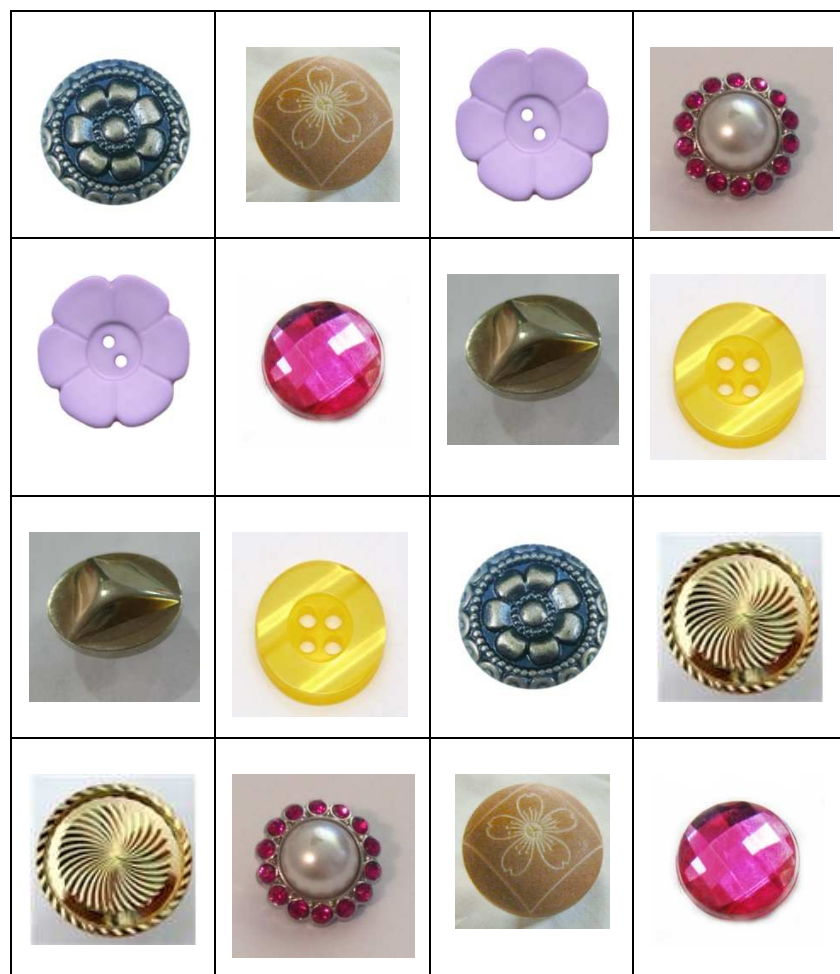
As a result of the rise of the Industrial Revolution in the 1800s, by the 1900s buttons were being mass produced. Today, buttons continue to be used for function and decoration on both men's and women's fashions. Who would ever think that such a small object as the button could become such an important part of our daily living?

Share 'Button' Stories: (eg: special buttons on clothing; losing a button)

Matching Game:

Place pictures of buttons on a board; cover and number each piece. Ladies are to locate the identical pair of buttons on the board by requesting to see the items under two of the numbers; if matched, team gets another turn; if unmatched, other team gets a turn. When all items are uncovered, the team with the most pairs win. (An assortment of buttons can be printed off from the internet)

Sample Board:



Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2: 1-22

Devotional: Faith – Ornamental or Practical

What is the purpose of a button? Historically a button has served two purposes: 1) for ornamental purposes and 2) for the practical purpose of securing two pieces of fabric together.

Keeping in mind these two purposes of the button, I ask: what is the purpose of our faith in Christ? Historically, it may hold a close resemblance to the purpose of buttons.

The biblical narrative tells us about the religious leaders of the day who believed that doing all the functions of the religious establishment would guarantee them a right relationship with God; they wore their faith as ornamentation. Lest we are apt to become judgmental of the religious leaders of Jesus' day, let us remember that even today bearing the title of 'Christian' has been used as ornamentation. "I am a Christian" – isn't that a nice sounding phrase to say? Yet, for some, this statement has also been the total extent of the Christian experience.

The second purpose of the button is the practical purpose of securing two pieces of fabric together. While faith in Christ may be worn by some as ornamentation, our faith in Christ really serves a very practical purpose. It is established and acted upon in daily living as our personal response to what Christ has done for us. Through His atonement for our sins and our acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior, He, similar to the purpose of the button, secures us together in relationship with God. Although there is nothing wrong with telling others about the blessings of God in our lives, He is not an ornamental piece that we brag about; He is the practical part of our lives that brings us hope and assurance for today and the future.

So, keeping in mind the two purposes of the button, may each of us determine that our faith relationship with God through Jesus Christ be a part of the practical activities of daily living rather than an ornamental piece.

Personal Sharing: Ask the designated women to share a time when Christ showed Himself to be the 'button' in their lives.

Choruses: Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul...

Bind us together, Lord....

Unscramble Game: Identify the material used to make buttons:

LOTCH	_____	DOWO	_____	EONB	_____
YIROV	_____	DOGL	_____	TEPERW	_____
NICAH	_____	LESLH	_____	RICACEM	_____
SABRS	_____	LESRIV	_____	SAGSL	_____

Cloth
Ivory
China
Brass

Wood
Gold
Shell
Silver

Bone
Pewter
Ceramic
Glass