

EXPLORERS' CORNER

Tool Time by Pat Purnell, Education Associate



WHICH TOOL AM I?

How many clues will it take you to pick the correct tool?

A **tool** is a handheld device that aids in accomplishing a task. Here are three antique tools from the Museum Collections.

- 1) I was very popular in the late 19th century, when ladies' and children's clothing had lots of pleats and ruffles.
- 2) Because of me, it was a lot easier to create frills than it had been before.
- 3) To make me hot, you heated a metal stick on the stove, and stuck it into the hollow interior of my roller.
- 4) My hand crank rotated a pair of corrugated rollers, between which the fabric was drawn in, creating the ruffles.
- 5) I'm a "fluting iron", circa 1876, also known as a pleater, crimper, and ruffler.

- 1) You need a hammer to help me accomplish my task.
- 2) Even though I'm made out of cast iron, I'm called a "knee warmer".
- 3) I fit over the upper leg of a person.
- 4) My small pedestal with an indentation on top held a nut.
- 5) I'm a percussion-type nutcracker (mid-1800s). The person would put me on their leg, put the nut on top, and hit it with a hammer to crack it open.

- 1) Before the invention of the sewing machine, I helped women sew by hand.
- 2) I acted as a "3rd hand", keeping the fabric taut as one sewed.
- 3) A poem about me for little girls was "Every good child who sews with a will, should have a wee birdie to help with his bill."
- 4) When you pressed the top and bottom of my tail together, it opened my beak, which held the fabric in place.
- 5) I'm called a "sewing bird" (circa 1850 – 1900), also called a sewing clamp or gripper.