

Mapping and Excavating a Jello Mold

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Lesson Overview: Children will learn how archeologists excavate sites by doing their own excavation on a jello mold.

Objectives: Students will

- Use a grid to map objects in a jello mold
- Look at three layers of jello to understand stratigraphy in archeology

TEKS [history] 5.25A; 5.25F; 5.6B

Materials: 3 sheets of grid paper for each group, 1 clear bowl of jello for each group with three different color layers with fruit or other objects embedded in it, extra bowls or buckets, and spoons. A good idea for fruit may be to have fresh grapes on the top layer, older grapes in the middle layer, and raisins in the bottom layer to show that older objects are often found deeper in the ground.

Activity:

Step 1: Teacher will prepare the three-layer jello before the class

Step 2: Split students into groups of three, 1 recorder, 1 person to excavate, and 1 mapper.

Step 3: Hand out 3 sheets of the grid paper to each group.

Step 4: Have students map the three layers of jello. Draw in each grape, raisin, or other object on the grid paper layer by layer. They will need to carefully remove each layer after they have finished mapping it so that they can access the next layer.

Step 5: Have students remove the items (grapes, etc.) from each layer of jello and write down their findings at the bottom of the grid paper.

Step 6: Have each group share a portion of its findings with the class.

Closure: Explain to the class the similarities and differences between this exercise and a real archeology excavation. If the grape/raisin example was used and no group figured out the relationship between the aging grape and archeology this would be a good time to explain it.

Grid Paper
