

Archeology of the Future

Tony Castro

Lesson Overview: Students will be introduced to the basic vocabulary of archeology and basic artifact analysis procedures.

Objectives: Students will

- Use various archeological terms
- Classify artifacts and make inferences
- Make a chart for analyzing artifacts

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS):

Social Studies, Grade 7

- Social Studies 113.23 (8A), create a thematic chart
- Social Studies 113.23 (21B), analyze information by drawing inferences and conclusions
- Social Studies 113.23 (22C), transfer information from one medium to another
- Social Studies 113.23 (22D), create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information

English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 7

- English Language Arts and Reading 110.23 (1C), understand the major ideas supporting evidence in spoken messages
- English Language Arts and Reading 110.23 (6C), locate the meanings of unfamiliar words
- English Language Arts and Reading 110.23 (9E), study as history
- English Language Arts and Reading 110.23 (15C), write to inform such as to explain, describe, report and narrate

Materials: “Uncovering an Archeological Site in the Year 3010” student handout; “Dating an Archeologist” crossword puzzle; Photos students bring from home or magazine pictures of different rooms in a house or other places.

Activity:

Step 1: Have students bring pictures of their homes or places they have visited. Divide students into groups of four. Ask each student to give their picture to another person in the group. Based on the picture only, have students make a list of the different objects in the picture. Students then discuss what they can tell about the place from the evidence of the picture only, and explain which objects give them the most clues as to location and function of the particular place (i.e. kitchen, living room, back yard, park, etc.)

Step 2: Explain that archeologists use artifacts, such as the objects in the pictures, to make inferences about different places and the people who lived there in the past.

Step 3: Give students the handout “Uncovering an Archeological Site in the Year 3010.” Students read it and complete the artifact chart. Students make inferences about the culture based only on the evidence of the artifacts. Some inferences may be different from what we know to be true, but if they can be logically explained based on the evidence, that is OK. The point is to analyze the artifacts (the evidence) and construct inferences based on that information.

Closure: Discuss how the students analyzed the artifacts and the inferences they made. Have students explain their inferences based on the evidence of the artifacts so that everyone can understand the reasoning.

Extension: Students complete the crossword puzzle “Dating an Archeologist.” Answers to the crossword are: 1. Archeological site, 2. Pleistocene, 3. Excavation, 4. Flake, 5. Evidence, 6. Symbol, 7. Context, 8. Midden, 9. Deface, 10. Stratigraphy. Answer to Annie’s question: Rock’n-bones.

Uncovering an Archeological Site in the Year 3010

Recently researchers from the Institute of Historic Research uncovered an **archeological site**, a place where human activity occurred and material remains have been left behind. Researchers have just begun to find out what this site was. The **stratigraphy**, or the layering of deposits of soil, indicates that the site must have been more than 1,000 years old. In fact, experts in the field are suggesting that this site dates back to as early as 1970. Before we describe what was found at this site, let's take a quick look at the history of archeology.

Archeology in the Twentieth Century:

The study of archeology really began in the early twentieth century. Archeology is a method of studying past human cultures and analyzing material evidence (artifacts and sites). The **artifacts** are objects made or used by humans. Archeologists use artifacts as **evidence**—data which are used to prove a point or give clues about a past situation. Archeologists study **prehistoric** sites, or sites that existed before the development of writing or written records. Some of these sites are as old as the **Pleistocene** age, or Ice Age. By **excavating**, or uncovering and recording artifacts at a site, archeologists come across many artifacts. One good place for excavation is a **midden**, or trash dump. Middens offer a wide range of artifacts such as **flakes**, which are pieces of stone. Flakes were made when early man tried to make tools or arrowheads out of stone. Flakes are the “scraps” or left over parts from stone tool manufacture.

When excavating an archeological site, it is important to document and record what is found and where it is found. The context of the artifact is important in telling us about what the artifact was. **Context** refers to the surroundings of the artifact. Now, that we know a little about the history of archeology, let's look at the artifacts that were found at this site.

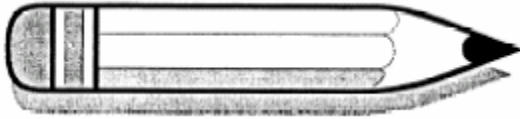
Excavating Archeological Site 41 TV3 12

Archeologists were very fortunate that most of the artifacts that they found were not defaced, or spoiled or marred on their surfaces. There is still some debate as to what some of the artifacts were used for. However, our primary purpose is to decide what each artifact tells us about this early culture (beliefs, values, behavior shared by members of society).

Artifacts Found at Site 41 TB 312

Artifact #1

Materials: wood, metal ring, rubber



Artifact #2

Materials: paper, bark, with **symbols** (something meant to represent something else)
This artifact/tool opens and closes.



Artifact #3

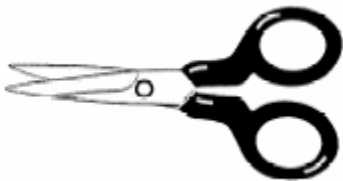
Material: Rubber



Artifact #4

Material: Metal

The two sides meet and close.



Artifact Chart
For Archeology in the Year 3010

Carefully observe the artifact pictures and fill out the chart below. To describe the artifact, write a few words that tell what it looks like (pretend you do not know what it really is!). Under "Function," brainstorm as many ways as you can think of that the object could be used. To make an inference about the culture that made the artifact, think about what the evidence shows you.

For example, if you were examining an artifact like a ceramic teacup, you could infer 1) that the people know how to make ceramics, or 2) that the people traded with others who actually made the teacup. These inferences tell us something about the manufacturing and trade of the group.

<u>Artifact #</u>	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Inference</u>
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1.

2.

3.

4.

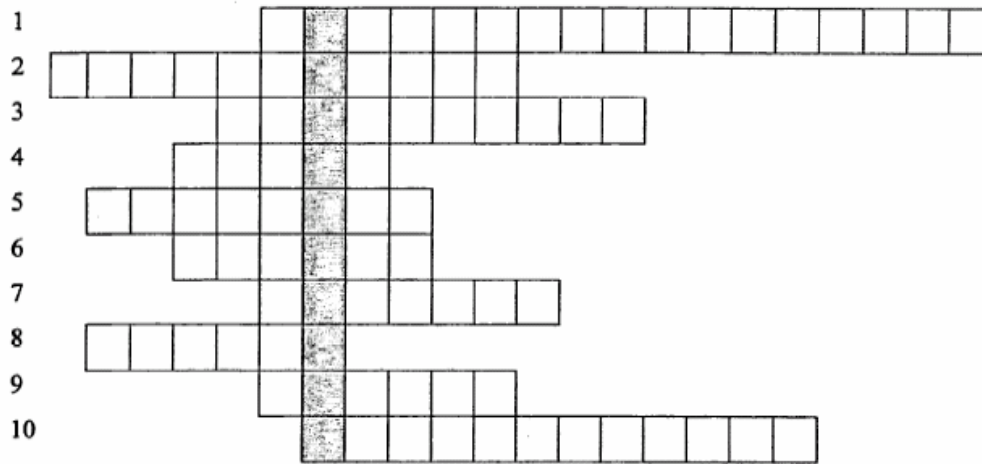


Dating an Archeologist

“But soft, what light...”

Romeo is at it again, but this time he may have gone after someone a tad more difficult than Juliet. Our good friend, Romeo, has fallen head over heels for Annie the Archeologist. Annie isn't just any ole' girl. She's an **archeologist**, someone who likes studying past human cultures by analyzing the material evidence they left behind. She calls these remains **artifacts**.

Romeo has been trying to get a date with her for a long time. Annie finally, tells him, “I'll go out with you, only if you can tell me what kind of music I like. Answer the following questions correctly, and I'll think about it.” Help Romeo find the key to Annie's heart.



The Questions!! (Do it for Romeo!)

1. This is a place where human activity occurred and material remains were left.
2. This is another word for the Ice Age (talk about cold!)
3. This means the scientific uncovering and recording of an archeological site.
4. This refers to a piece of stone removed from a rock these scrap pieces provided evidence of projectile point making.
5. This is data that is used to prove a point or which clearly indicates something about a situation.

6. This refers to something that represents something else.
7. This word deals with the relationship that artifacts have with their surroundings.
8. A trash dump.
9. To spoil or mar the surface or appearance of something.
10. The layer of deposits in archeological sites which indicates clues about the age of artifacts.

Word Bank:

1. Deface
2. Stratigraphy
3. Flake
4. Evidence
5. Archeological Site
6. Context
7. Symbol
8. Pleistocene
9. Midden
10. Excavation