

Location, Location, Location: Using a Grid to Determine Context

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Lesson Overview: This lesson introduces students to making inferences about artifacts based on context, or where the artifact is located in relation to other artifacts or its surroundings. This lesson also reinforces the use of a grid system to find location.

Objectives: Students will

- Use a grid system to study archeology
- Make inferences about artifacts
- Make conclusions about the past Lifeways of ancient Texas

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS):

Social Studies, Grade 7

- Social Studies 113.23 (21A), use primary sources
- Social Studies 113.23 (21B), analyze information by making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions

Mathematics, Grade 7

- Mathematics 111.23 (7A), locate and name points on a coordinate plane
- Mathematics 111.23 (13A), identify and apply mathematics to everyday experiences

Materials: “Using a Grid System to Place Artifacts in Context,” “A Grid Map of the Artifacts,” “Archeological Site Analysis,” a set of clue cards for each group; three signs that say “Area 1” “Area 2,” and “Area 3” respectively; 11 signs with letters A through K (one letter on each sign); and the tiled floor.

Activity:

Step 1: Place the signs on the wall or around the room as follows: under “Area 1,” put the letters B, D, J, and K; under “Area 2,” put letters C, E, G, and I; under “Area 3,” put letters A, F, and H.

Step 2: Divide students into groups of four. Give each group the handout “Using a Grid System to Place Artifacts in Context.” Explain that archeologists learn important information from artifacts based on where they are found in relation to other artifacts and the surroundings.

Step 3: Designate a recorder, leader, materials person, and secretary. Students follow the procedure on their handout, “Using a Grid System.”

Step 4: Students prepare the handout “A Grid Map of the Artifacts” by numbering each block 1-15, across the top of the horizontal axis, and putting letters A-O along the vertical axis, with A at the top (therefore the top block on the left will be A1). Then students record the coordinates for each area and each artifact of the grid. As a guide to creating their grid map, they should use the floor tiles. Each floor

tile should represent one square on their grid system. If some of the tiles are rectangular, ask the students to have two grid boxes for each tile.

Step 5: Based on the information in their grip map, students arrange the artifact cards into three separate areas.

Step 6: Students then answer the questions on “Archeological Site Analysis” sheet.

Note: Even if the dimensions of the tiles are not exactly square, they should still be used to guide students in locating artifacts or items on their grid.

Closure: Have students select one of the areas and discuss how the artifacts and clue items in that area tell them what happened.

Extension: The group shuffles the clue cards and then selects three cards in random order. Students write down what they think might have happened in an area if these three clue cards were found close together.

Using a Grid System to Place Artifacts in Context

Introduction: In archeology, context refers to the relationship artifacts have to each other and the situation in which they were found. Context provides important clues about the artifact and what it was used for. Therefore, archeologists are careful to record the exact location where each artifact is found.

The purpose of this activity is to make you more aware of how important context is. You will make a grid map of the classroom and record the locations of several artifacts and clue items throughout the room. Please follow the instructions carefully.

Group Products:

1. A grid map of the classroom. This grid map should be drawn to scale using the floor tiles as your guide. Make sure that you are using the proper lengths according to the grids.
2. Draw artifacts and clue items where they are located on the grid.
3. Answer the analysis questions on the next page.

Activity:

Step 1: Have students get into groups of 3 or 4.

Step 2: Each person will receive a grid form. With the help of the other group members, everyone will plot and draw the location of the various artifacts and clue items in the classroom

Step 3. Along the top of the grid label each line (1-15). Make sure you begin with the very top line of the grid.

Step 4. Now, letter the grid along the left side with A, B, C, D, E, and so forth. This means that the top left corner of the grid should be marked 1A.

Step 5. There are several signs that represent an artifact or clue item located on particular places throughout the room. Some of them are on the desks, some elsewhere. **Do not touch or remove the signs.**

Step 6. Draw these signs on the grid system. The other group members should help locate each sign and make sure each person has drawn the artifact or clue items correctly on the grid. Write down the coordinates of each sign on the Coordinate Recording Sheet.

Step 7. Once the grid map is completed, arrange the clue cards in order of where they were found on the grid. Turn to the Archeological Site Analysis Form and answer the questions about each area.

Coordinate Recording Sheet

Please give the coordinates for the following signs or artifacts:

Sign A (human skull): _____

Sign B (rock with sharp edge): _____

Sign C (corn): _____

Sign D (animal skull): _____

Sign E (burnt rock): _____

Sign F (bone): _____

Sign G (mussel shell): _____

Sign H (shells placed around skull): _____

Sign I (mano and metate): _____

Sign J (bone): _____

Sign K (arrowhead): _____

Archeological Site Analysis

1. Throughout the room, you will notice that there are three areas with specific artifacts and clue items in each area. Describe what you have found in each area.

Area 1:

Area 2:

Area 3:

2. Based on the items found in Area 1, describe what you think happened here. What do you think happened to the animal?
3. Based on the relation of the items to each other, describe what kinds of activities took place in Area 2.
4. In Area 3, describe what you think happened. Why do you think there is a roll of shells placed around the head of the human?

5. Imagine that in Area 3, you found no shell and cordage, but instead found an arrowhead near the bones. What would you think happened now?

6. Based on the location of each item, what is the difference between the purpose of the rock with the sharp edge (item B) and the burnt rock (item E)?

7. Based on Areas 1 and 2, what kinds of things do you think these people eat? What leads you to this conclusion?

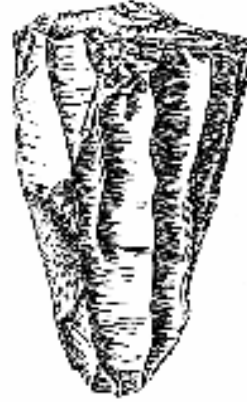
8. In what ways is context important to determining the function of artifacts?

Artifact and Clue Items

Clue Item: A
Human Skull



Artifact Item: B
Rock with Sharp Edge



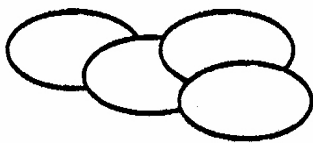
Clue Item: C
Corn



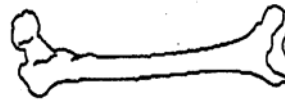
Clue Item: D
Animal Skull



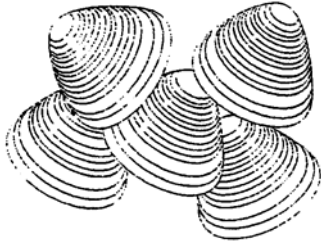
Artifact Item: E
Burnt Rock



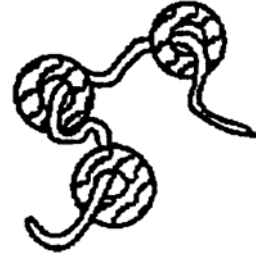
Clue Item: F
Bone



Clue Item: G
Mussel Shells



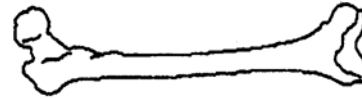
Artifact Item: H
Shells and Cordage



Artifact Item: I
Mano and Metate



Clue Item: J
Bone



Artifact Item: K
Arrowhead

