

Archaeology in the Schools: **School Teacher's Guide**

Program Title: Archaeology in the Schools

Program Description: Students discover what information is contained in an archaeological site by investigating the remains of a modern picnic site. Parallels are drawn between the picnic and artifacts from an archaeological site. Students discuss the meaning of “artifact” and the importance of context while interpreting their own “finds.” Emphasis is placed on the fragility of archaeological sites and the need to conserve these places.

Time: 1.5 hours

Grade Level: 3-4 (or modified for 2 - 5)

Goals and Objectives

Students will understand:

- What is archaeology and what do archaeologists do?
- What is an artifact?
- How the use, placement and arrangement of a natural object can make it an artifact.
- How archaeologists decipher the garbage people leave behind.
- The range and extent (and the limitations) of information that can be derived from garbage.
- What an archaeological site in B.C. might look like or contain.
- The importance of archaeological site conservation.
- The students will have an enjoyable learning experience.

Post-visit Activities

- Ask students to think about a site they are familiar with (e.g., logging camp, fish boat, hospital) and list the things that would be left for someone to find 1000 years in the future. Students could work alone or in groups and then compare answers. Students could draw a picture of what their site might look like in 1000 years.
- Ask students to draw a picture of a room in their house (e.g., kitchen, bathroom) and colour red the things that might remain 1000 years from now.
- Ask students to create a collage of pictures from magazines and catalogues of the things we use every day that would not last for people

to find in the future (e.g., newspapers, magazines, toilet paper, Kleenex, cloth clothes, books).

- Having considered which of the things we use everyday would decay in the future, ask students to think about what misconceptions archaeologists of the future might have about the way we live. Remember that some clues to the decayed things might remain (e.g., buttons, zippers, plastic wrappers, metal containers). Discuss their ideas in class, then ask them to write stories or plays about how the future archaeologists might see us.
- The class could create their own exhibit with objects from their home or from school that might be found by archaeologists of the future.
- Ask students to keep a list of the garbage they throw out one night at home (or over a weekend). Use the lists to work on the “My Garbage” activity sheet included. Then, put all of the lists into a box and ask each student to draw out a list. Then ask them to see what they can tell about the person’s evening or weekend by the types and amounts of things they threw out.
- You can expand the topic to cover some environmental issues too by exploring the following questions:
 - Which of the things students threw out would not decay for a long time?
 - Which of them might be toxic?
 - Where would these things stay?
 - How might this effect the environment?
- Visit your local museum with an activity sheet for the students (example included).
- Read stories about archaeologists (list included).
- Borrow a video from the National Film Board.

The Dig (1989)

24 minutes

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Social Studies teacher Richard Edwards of Surrey, B.C. has come up with an exciting new way of piquing his students’ curiosity and making learning fun. He takes them on an archaeological excavation trip at a site that he has created with former students. He “plants” artifacts and, through prior classroom preparation and hands-on experience, he allows the imagination of the students to take flight. Their enthusiasm is ample testimony to the success and power of Mr. Edward’s method.

EXAMPLE ACTIVITY SHEET

A VISIT TO YOUR LOCAL MUSEUM

Choose your favorite display in the museum. Make a list of which things in the display are artifacts, and which are non-artifacts.

ARTIFACTS

NON-ARTIFACTS

What is the exhibit about?

Imagine you are an archaeologist in the future. What might you find if you excavated the site of this museum?

Using the evidence you have listed, what might you think the museum had been?

Do you think you would be able to tell that your favorite exhibit used to be part of a museum? Why, or why not?

MY GARBAGE

Think about your family's garbage this week. Was there anything in the garbage that might be left in the future for archaeologists to find?

What do you think might be left?

What might your garbage tell someone in the future about you? Fill in the chart showing the objects that would last and the information they would give.

GARBAGE	INFORMATION

Draw a picture of the exhibit someone in the future could make about your family using the "garbage" they found.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This list contains a number of readings which may be helpful for teachers who wish to learn more about archaeology and bring it into the classroom. The list is by no means exhaustive, but it does provide a starting point for seeking additional resources.

Books

Fladmark, Knut R. British Columbia Prehistory. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1986.

An overview of the history of British Columbia's first peoples, with illustrations.

Stewart, Hilary. Cedar: Tree of Life to the Northwest Coast Indians. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995.

Explains and illustrates the tools and techniques that have been used to make canoes, houses, poles, basketry, and many other objects out of cedar.

Stewart, Hilary. Indian Fishing: Early Methods on the Northwest Coast. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994.

Describes and illustrates topics such as fishing technology, fish processing, and the spiritual aspects of fishing.

Stewart, Hilary. Stone, Bone, Antler and Shell: Artifacts of the Northwest Coast. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1996.

Depicts a wide range of Northwest Coast artifacts, showing the tools and techniques used to shape various materials, and how they were used. All of the Hilary Stewart books are filled with illustrations.

Sturtevant, William (general editor). The Handbook of North American Indians, Volumes 3 - 17. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1978 - 2006.

A multi-volume encyclopedia summarizing knowledge about all Native peoples north of Mesoamerica, including cultures, languages, history, prehistory, and human biology.

Books you can borrow from the library **(List provided by the Victoria Public Library)**

Pringle, Laurence. Throwing things away: from middens to resource recovery. YNF 363.728 PRI

Burley, David. Senewelet: Culture History of the Nanaimo Coast Salish and the False Narrows Midden. ANF 971.13400497 BUR

Kelly, Katie. Garbage: the History and Future of Garbage in America. ANF 363.6 KEL

Bonnet, Robert. Earth Science: 49 Science Fair Projects. "Shoe Box Archaeology," pp. 68-69. YNF 507.8 BON
Discusses excavating a site and creating a model site by burying various layers of items.

British Columbia Environment, ECO Education Program. Section 2, Teacher-directed activities, pp. 9-29. YNFAI 372.35044 ECO
Includes making a mini landfill, discussion of today vs. yesterday's garbage.

Frandin, Dennis. Archaeology. (A New True Book). Easy reading, general introduction to many aspects of archaeology. YNFP 930.1 FRA

Hackwell, John. Digging to the Past: Excavations in Ancient Lands. YNF 930.1 HAC

Morrison, Velma. Going on a Dig. YNF 930.1028 MOR

Stuart, Gene. Secrets from the Past. (Books for World Explorers, National Geographic Society). Final chapter "Who will discover our secrets" poses questions about how present-day artifacts will be interpreted by future archaeologists. YNF 930.1 STU

Articles

Novelli, J. "Teaching with Trash" in Instructor. Vol. 100 Issue 3, 3c, Oct. 1990, pp. 62-67. ISSN: 0028-0712
Reports the step-by-step details of an investigation into lunchroom waste by sixth grade students. Includes an instructor reproducible copy of a daily data summary. INSETS: Garbage across the curriculum (activities contributed by two teachers).

Wilson, C.D., and W.L. Rathje. "Modern Middens" in Natural History. 2c, May 1990, pp. 54- 58. ISSN: 0028-0712
Describes the Garbage Project which studies the way modern garbage reflects present-day behaviour. Types of data collected; discovery that most people are unreliable reporters of their own behaviour; analysis of household refuse collected in Phoenix.

Lawren, B., "Sorting Out the Truth" in National Wildlife. 1c, Aug/Sep 1988, p.22. ISSN: 0028-0402
Report on archaeologist Wm. Rathje of University of Arizona, who studies trash in order to seek insight into human behaviour. Over the past 15 years, he and his students have sorted and classified household garbage from Tucson, Ariz., to Mexico City, Mex. Research and findings.