

LIFE IN ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA: Archaeology

Tell Tales: Reconstructing A Personal Tell A Classroom and Museum Activity

Subjects Areas: Social Studies, Language Arts

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Grade Level: 6

Meets Illinois State Goals: 1, 3, 5, 7, and 16

Time Needed: 8-10 40-minute periods

Objectives:

1. To stress the importance of careful observation and the development of a vocabulary,
2. To construct a tell model with personal artifacts,
3. To examine artifacts from a model tell and make inferences, and
4. To write a description, from the artifacts found, of the owner of the items.

Materials:

Books, slides and videos

Paper and pencils

Hole punch

Wall Tacky

Newspaper

Yarn (for locus tags)

Spoons, paint brushes, and sieve (see attachment)

Plastic disposable soup bowls (one per student)

Two-thirds yard of wire screen

Masking tape

One gallon Zip-Loc bags (one per student)

Egg cartons (one per student)

Students provide:

One shoe box lined with a plastic grocery bag

Soil

9-12 personal artifacts (ones that can fit into the spaces of an empty egg carton)

Suggested Procedure:

The students will spend 4-5 days reading and discussing how archaeologists study artifacts, where the artifacts are found and how to investigate and interpret artifacts from their own lives. Videos and slides will be used to enhance their understanding of the archaeological process. Record-keeping techniques will be introduced and the various ways of interpreting data will be discussed. The students will develop a working vocabulary of archaeological terms.

The Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago

1155 E. 58th Street, Chicago, IL. 60637 (773) 702-9507

<http://www.oi.uchicago.edu>

LESSON PLAN

Vocabulary:

antiquity – ancient times

archaeology – to study what is ancient

artifact – an object created or produced by humans and then left behind

excavate – to remove or expose artifacts by digging in a systematic manner

field – a section or site to be excavated

find – any archaeological discovery

in situ – Latin phrase meaning “in place;” excavated artifacts are recorded in situ before removing them from the field

locus – locality of place; a specific location in which artifacts are found

locus sheet – card attached to artifacts detailing when and where they were found

site – a place or area to be excavated

stratified site – place people have lived for hundreds or thousands of years and built settlements, one on top of the other

tell – artificial mountain made by layers of inhabitation over centuries

After the introduction of how archaeologists learn about the day-to-day lives of ancient peoples, the students will investigate and interpret artifacts from their own lives and homes. This first hands-on activity is for homework.

Evaluation:

All aspects of this archaeological study must be completed to receive a passing grade for the unit. The students will be assigned a set number of points that can be earned for each activity. The total number of possible points is 100. The following is a description of the activity and its possible points:

10 pts. – An excavation site with personal artifacts

10 pts. – A complete excavation of the site

20 pts. – Each article drawn, numbered and described on the locus worksheet

10 pts. – Artifacts displayed in egg carton and properly tagged with locus

25 pts. – A written interpretation of the site's owner

25 pts. – Presentation of excavation results

The written assignment and oral presentation must include the correct usage of more than eight vocabulary words to earn the maximum points. The students will receive the following rubric as a guide to help them know what else is expected of them.

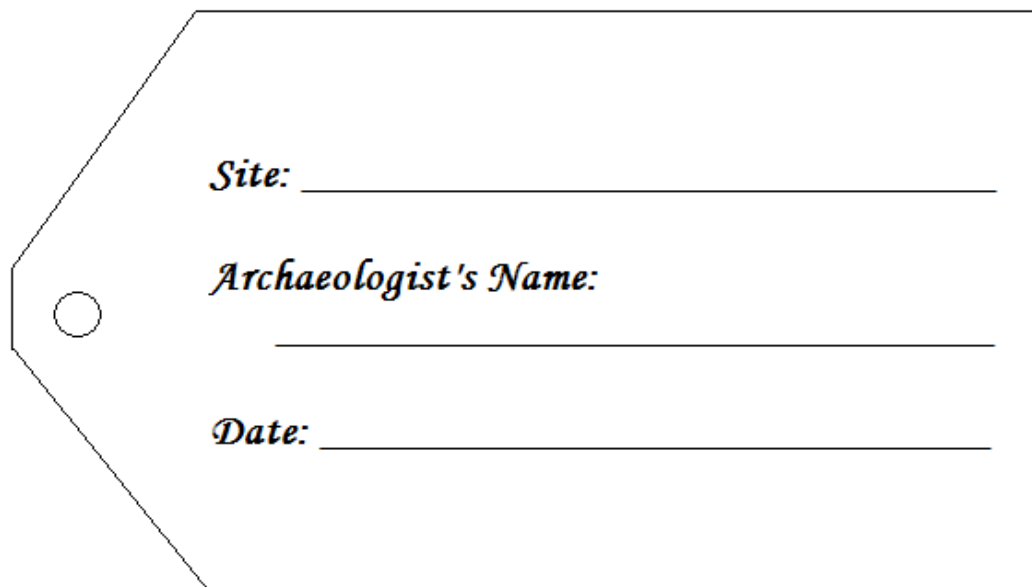
Extensions:

1. In addition to the oral presentation, the students will be required to develop a power point presentation of their own artifacts. They should include what the artifacts say about their lives and the times.
2. In small groups, students can research an ancient culture. They can find four artifacts that represent that culture. The artifacts are drawn and described on a locus worksheet and the group writes what they can tell about these ancient peoples' lifestyle.
3. Students can research pottery styles of today and interpret what they tell about our culture. They can discuss how they are similar to and different from ancient pottery.

How to Make a Sieve

1. Trace the bottom of a disposable plastic bowl onto the wire screen.
2. Cut out the circle traced on the screen and set aside.
3. Cut a circle out of the bottom of the plastic bowl leaving a $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " edge.
4. Tape the screen circle onto the bottom of the bowl.

Locus Tag



Site: _____

Archaeologist's Name: _____

Date: _____

Locus Sheet

Site: _____

Archaeologist's Name: _____

Draw one artifact in each square.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

Locus Sheet

Site: _____

Archaeologist's Name: _____

List each artifact on the same line as the box number. Give a description of the artifact.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

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Rubric for Evaluation of Archaeological Unit: Tell Tales

An "A" Student will	A "B" Student will	A "C" Student will	A "D" Student will
Complete all activities correctly and efficiently record data Points: 90-100	Complete all activities correctly and record necessary data Points: 80-89	Complete all activities correctly and record most data Points: 70-79	Complete the activities and record some data Points: 65-69
Enthusiastically participate in hands-on learning Points: 41-50	Willingly participate in hands-on learning Points: 31-40	Participate in hands-on learning Points: 11-30	Reluctantly participate in hands-on learning Points: 0-10
Participate in class discussions; listen when others talk; be non-judgmental Points: 41-50	Participate in class discussions; be attentive when others are speaking Points: 31-40	Listen quietly when others are speaking Points: 11-30	Participate in class discussions little or not at all Points: 0-10

Name: _____

Evaluation:

A = 172-200 points

B = 142-169 points

C = 92-139 points

D = 65- 89 points

Total Points: _____

Final Grade: _____

Note: Any missing assignments will result in a failing grade.