

The Ancient Ones Museum Kit – Garbage Can Archaeology
2nd, 3rd, & 4th Grade



****Be sure to refer to the “Students will know” section of your unit plan for crucial concepts that should be a part of teaching and learning in this unit.**

Background Knowledge:

This pre-activity is designed to help students activate prior knowledge before they explore the kit of genuine artifacts. This activity should open the dialogue in class about what archaeologists do, and how they ask questions to uncover a story. Ultimately students are building an understanding of how studying our past helps us to better prepare for our future, while cultivating respect for natural and cultural resources.

<p>Grade Level: 2,3,4</p>	<p>Learning Event 1: Garbage Can Archaeology-Thinking About Artifacts Like Social Scientists</p>
<p>Learning Objective/Target: As an archeologist, I can infer what an artifact was used for by examining it and putting the clues together.</p>	<p>Essential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do thinkers use evidence to draw conclusions? • How can asking questions (about artifacts) help me uncover “the story”? • How do I use my background knowledge to build new understandings? • What does it mean to visit cultural site with respect?
<p>Materials/Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garbage Can Archaeology Worksheet • Large format chart paper • Primary source observation tool • Reflection tool 	<p>Assessment Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can define midden, archaeologist, and artifact
<p>PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME: Teachers can determine whether they would like to conduct this as a whole-class exercise, or students can work in small groups to make inferences about the artifacts. For kinesthetic learners, teachers can collect items they feel would tell a story about a fictional or real person.(Examples: tickets/postcards/books/tools/accessories)</p> <p>Suggested Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background: Explain to students that they will soon be receiving a special trunk, full of stories from the past that is traveling around to students just like them. These stories are extra special, because they are ancient stories. Stories about people who lived here in the Grand Valley thousands of years before us. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. These stories about the people who lived here before us were discovered by archaeologists. b. Does anyone know what an archaeologist does? (brainstorm with students archae:ancient ology:study of c. Set the Stage: Explain what archaeologists do. 	

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1. Archaeologists are the scientists who study the remains of past civilizations or groups of people. Archaeologists look at the things people from long ago have left behind. Archaeologists are interested in how people lived, their houses, clothes, bones and even their garbage! In fact, a garbage site is one of the best places to find artifacts of the past. Artifacts are things made by human beings that are important clues to understanding what people did in the past. The places where ancient humans left behind these artifacts are often garbage sites. Scientists call them middens. Over time, things and places get covered up and buried. When something lays on the ground day after day, year after year, leaves fall on it, dust blows, and little by little it slowly gets covered up.
 2. **Q** What clues do you think archaeologists use to find these sites where artifacts are discarded?
 3. **A** Archaeologists know that people need certain things to help them stay alive. These include easy access to water, trade and migration routes, and food sources. With this knowledge and some research, archaeologists can locate the most likely places where people may have lived. Archaeology is a bit like putting a puzzle together that has lots of pieces missing. It is kind of like being a treasure hunter but a lot more like being a detective.
2. Use video (1 min.): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMzpA5oCGNY> (could be used here or before lesson on exploring the actual artifacts)
 3. Tell students that we are going to practice our archaeology detection skills by making inferences about a set of artifacts.
 4. Divide students into groups or practice as a whole class. If practicing as a whole class, project worksheet image for whole-class. If working in groups, distribute a worksheet to each group to complete. (If you have time before hand, you can collect items you believe students could use to make inferences about the people those items belong to and use those instead of the image on the worksheet)
 - a. First have students make observations – discuss and identify what they see with their group mates – report back to whole-class
 - b. Second students will reflect on their observations and generate a hypothesis
 - c. Thirdly students will ask questions about the artifacts to clarify any misunderstanding
 - d. Finally students will revisit their hypotheses with their group mates, and share any new inferences.
 5. Chart student thinking as they generate questions about the artifacts and reflect on “the story” of the artifacts.
 - a. “What are your questions? What clues do you have? What background knowledge can help your thinking?” (If students aren’t generating questions, begin with who/what/when/where/why)
 - b. “Based on your thinking as archeologists, what’s the story?”

Debrief:

- “Today, we worked like archeologists to uncover the story of artifacts. What did we do?” Have students list the steps/process.
- “Why did we study artifacts?”

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Tomorrow (sometime in near future) we will investigate genuine artifacts. It will be your job to uncover the story, and figure out how and why these artifacts were used by ancient people right here in the Grand Valley”. • “This is a special opportunity, and we are lucky to have such valuable items available to us in class. Now that you have practiced being an archaeologist, you can bring your new skills to class tomorrow so we can put them to use”! • Final reflection: “Think about how scientists keep records of their work. How might archeologists keep records of their work? Create a record of your thinking today.” Students will record their observations and the story in a journal entry if students use these. 	
<p>Resource Links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary source observation tool • Reflection tool • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJO7DcGGmMg (clip from movie, “Wall-e” – shows a future world full of human artifacts/garbage) 	<p>Speaking & Listening Connections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence stems • Checklist for student listening • Vocabulary: archaeology, artifact, midden
<p>Extension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students could bring in artifacts from their neighborhood and repeat the process. • Show clip from film, “Wall-e”. Students can infer how the garbage wall-e collects represents the people of that era. • Students can compare trash of past – present – future humans. 	<p>Teacher Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This learning event doesn't necessarily have to be taught as a stand-alone lesson. It could be part of a series of lessons on close reading, collaborative discussions, or as an extension/transfer of the work with the scientific process.