

## WOULD YOU MAKE A GOOD ARCHAEOLOGIST?



**Would You Make a Good Archaeologist?** consists of a series of activities that introduce young people to the work of an archaeologist. The activities are based on the four main areas of archaeology: research (maps), excavation (sandbox), finds processing (sorting, mending), interpretation (detective work/creating the story).

The programme has been designed so that teachers or club leaders can lead it. There are no new ideas – tried and tested activities have been used (mainly from English Heritage and CSA). There is a choice of activities to suit all learning levels, and it can be run indoors (e.g. school hall) or outdoors. It aims to inform children in an accessible way, allowing them as much practical involvement as possible, combining learning with fun. It is cross curricular.

The programme was piloted by three primary schools in Tayside (Killin, Kenmore and Glenlyon) as part of the Ben Lawers Historic Landscape Project, and also with the Young Naturalists' Club at Brodick Castle & Country Park.

Also included in this programme are ideas for **Studying Objects**.



## AIM

- To create an understanding of an archaeologist’s work
- To allow each child to learn at his/her own level
- To allow children to learn through a combination of study and fun

## DESIGN (1.5 – 2 hours) (up to 32 children)

INTRODUCTION		Discussion/Instruction Rubbish Bin	20 mins
ACTIVITIES	Research	Looking at maps/photos (juniors) Looking at objects from past and present (infants)	15-20 mins
	Fieldwork	Sand excavation	15-20 mins
	Finds Processing	Sorting materials/Mending pots	15-20 mins
	Interpretation	Lost luggage game (infants/juniors) The skeleton (juniors)	15-20 mins
CONCLUSION		Discussion	10 mins
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 sets of activities = 4 bases</li> <li>• A leader at each base = 4 adults</li> <li>• 4 teams of children (2 - 10 per team)</li> <li>• Teams move round room – undertake each activity</li> </ul>			

## TIMING

- Allow at least 30 minutes each for setting up and clearing away
- Activities 1 – 1.5 hours

## REQUIREMENTS

- Large room/school hall (see plan below)
- Pencils, paper, clipboards (if you want children to take notes)
- Items for Rubbish Bin game (itemised under activity & in Appendix)
- Items for Bases (itemised under activity & in Appendix)
- Instructions for Leaders



## TRAINING LEADERS

There should be an adult leader at each base (running the activities). It is preferable to talk to them before the session begins, taking them through the whole set of activities (and the thinking behind them). If this is not possible, provide clear written instructions at each base.



## FINDING MATERIALS (see appendix)

For Ordnance Survey maps & photos, go to your local or central library (local history section). For historical artefacts, educational suppliers, such as TTS (History in Evidence) or Articles of Antiquity, sell replica ones - or check your friends and family for genuine old items. Some historic sites sell e.g. replica coins. We obtained a skeleton (full-size, educational, plastic) from NES Arnold – this is an expensive option if you are running the activity only once - you can buy a skeleton chart or simply get a large sheet of paper and draw your skeleton (could be parts of one) - another option is to draw round someone and use the outline, or wrap someone in a sheet (find a fossilised body instead).

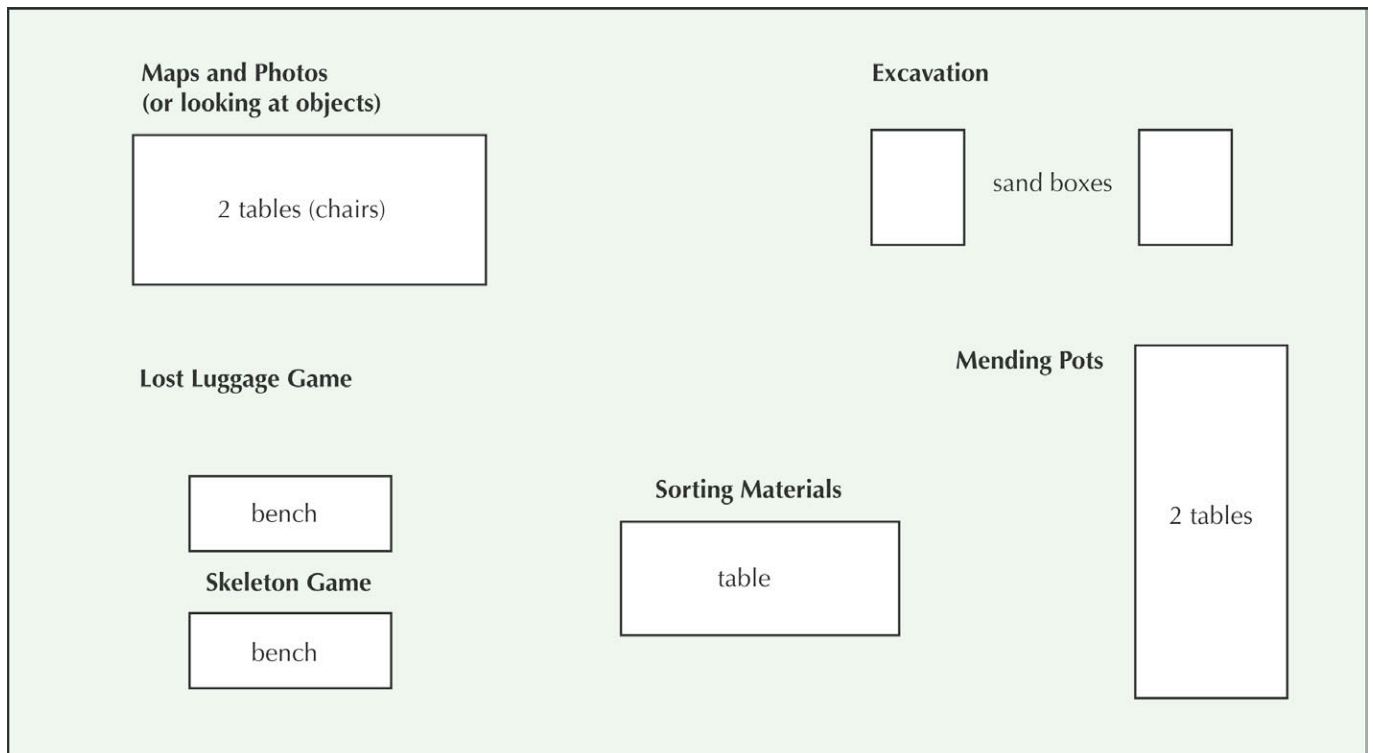
Plastic crates, child-safe sand, 6-inch trowels, plastic trays (for the excavation) are sold at large DIY suppliers. Archaeologists use 4-inch trowels – these are harder to obtain and may need to be ordered from a good hardware store – or use spoons. Get stubby children’s paintbrushes. Thick polythene (to go under crates) can be obtained from any builders’ suppliers.

You’ll need a variety of items for the excavation & Sorting Materials, both artefacts and natural objects e.g. old coins, old glass bottles, bits of pottery, tiles, buttons, buckles, marbles, bones, shells, wood, stones. Beaches are good places to collect some things e.g. shells, smooth glass, bones, wood – or take a walk in the country.

You can buy cheap pottery and break it (Excavation/Sorting Materials/Mending Pots) – try saver or charity shops. Masking tape, buckets and small hand shovels (e.g. coal shovels) can be obtained from hardware stores.



## SUGGESTED LAYOUT



## ACTIVITY PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

#### Discussion and Instructions (10 minutes)

- Discuss - definition of archaeology; the work of an archaeologist
- Provide instructions:
  - children to be divided into 4 teams
  - there are 4 bases in the room (4 sets of activities)
  - the teams will rotate round the room in a clockwise direction
  - each team will try each activity
  - there will be an adult leader at each base to help them
  - one leader will call when it is time to move to the next base
  - they must follow instructions at each base
  - they must treat the artefacts with respect
  - at the excavation (practice dig), they will learn how to excavate objects as if they were archaeologists, and must take great care
- Provide a brief description of each activity (putting them into the context of an archaeologist's work)

#### The Rubbish Bin (10 minutes)

This will encourage the children to think for themselves – and get them into the right frame of mind for completing the activities.



## THE RUBBISH BIN

Explain that archaeologists have to be good detectives – they find things that have become buried in the ground and have to work out when they were buried and what sort of people may have owned them. Archaeologists often find things that people have thrown away – they look at people’s rubbish.

The children are going to become detectives: they will look at some modern rubbish and work out what sort of people owned it.

### The children may know only three things:

- this is a rubbish bin owned by a family
- each member of the family threw away 3 things (for infants, you may want only 2 items per family member)
- they had pets and there is 1 item for each in the bin

### You need:

Rubbish bin

3 items of rubbish per member of the family

1 item of rubbish per pet

e.g.

grandpa: tobacco tin, slipper, false teeth powder, Saga magazine

dad: car magazine, razor, talc for men

mum: part of shopping list (torn), suntan lotion, pair of tights

teenage daughter: boy band CD, hair slide, part of letter to boyfriend (torn)

young son: football team poster, airfix plane, schoolbook

toddler: bag for toddler size nappies, duplo, Mr Men or Little Miss book

dog: old collar

cat: worming tablets carton

### What to do:

- Take one item from bin and ask the children who owned it. Put each item into suggested pile – if there are more than 3 in one pile, ask them which they want to keep in that pile/move to another one
- If you want someone to read out parts of the evidence (e.g. the letter) – ask for volunteers who like reading
- Once you have completed each pile, ask who was in the family and how many were in the family. Was the family poor or comfortable? Ask the approximate age of the children, whether the dog was small or large, etc.
- With juniors, you can discuss bias – should we assume that e.g. it was the mother’s shopping list or that the brother loved football? (The children have probably already discussed this when deciding which item to put in which pile.) You may want to ask about the ethnic origin of the family – what did the children envisage?
- Archaeologists sometimes have to make educated guesses when creating a picture of life in the past. (They will do as much research as they can.)



## LOOKING AT MAPS AND AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

### You need:

A3 or A4 extracts from local maps – showing same area, different dates

e.g. Ordnance Survey maps, 1st edition (1850s), 2nd edition (1890s), 3rd edition (1910s), modern map

Aerial photos of same area (optional)

Question sheets & pencils or Instructions for Leader (questions to ask children)

### Sample question sheet provided (see appendix)

### Why are we doing this?

This activity encourages the children to look closely at a local area, and also to read maps and photos. They learn to recognise symbols and landmarks. By comparing maps, they can see how an area has altered over time. You can discuss how and why your area has changed.

Archaeologists check an area before they excavate. They like to find out as much as they can about the place beforehand. They will look at maps, photos, documents and books. They may talk to local people. They also check whether any other archaeological work has been carried out in the area.

Old maps are especially useful when you can see nothing obvious on the ground now – they can show you what used to be there (e.g. a house, barn, castle, road). Place-names can also indicate what used to be there (particularly Gaelic names).

### What to do:

Divide the team into pairs or threes and give them a set of maps each. Show them each map and point out one or two features (or encourage them to do so). Get them to compare the same features on each map. You can discuss the maps with the children and/or get them to complete a question sheet.



## LOOKING AT OBJECTS, PAST AND PRESENT

### You need:

- Handling objects, from the past and present.
- Table and chairs, or floor-mats

### Some objects that can be compared/illustrate lifestyle:

**Clothing** e.g. modern tee-shirt and old lace blouse; tissue & hanky; stiff collar

**Cookware** e.g. iron cooking pot & modern saucepan; iron girdle & modern frying pan

**Eating utensils** e.g. wooden bowl & dishwasher-safe bowl; horn spoon & stainless steel spoon

**Washing items** e.g. washboard; washing dolly; wood tub (what do we use now?); flat iron and electric iron

**Writing materials** e.g. quill (feather), ink, sand; nib pen, ink, blotting paper; ballpoint pen

**Lighting** e.g. cruise; rushlight (soft rush); candle; torch

You can buy replica historical items from educational suppliers – or borrow them from other people (put out a request for old items).



### Why are we doing this?

This activity encourages the children to look closely at objects. By comparing them - ones used for the same purpose but from different periods of time - they gain a sense of how lifestyles have altered over the years.

Archaeologists may find all sorts of objects during an excavation. They learn a great deal from close observation. They also compare their finds with others (either in the area or, perhaps, in a museum collection). They need to know how and why an object was used, whether it was local or brought from another place, and whether it was commonly used. From asking questions like these, they can build up a picture of people's lifestyles in the past.

### What to do:

Sit the children down on chairs or floor-mats (so that they are comfortable and can't drop anything). You could pass around one object at a time, or place a set of objects before them, or ask each child to select one.

Encourage the children to examine their objects very carefully and discuss them. Perhaps each one gives three words to describe their object. They can compare objects – is this one heavier? prettier? etc.

You may want the children to test some e.g. the writing materials or the washboard, dolly and tub. (There are more ideas for studying objects, at the end of this pack.)



## EXCAVATION (using sandboxes or sandpit)

### Definition:

1. digging into the earth to recover evidence of past human activity
2. posh digging (from Kenmore schoolchild)

### You need:

- 2 portable sandpit containers with covers (or an outdoors sandpit)
- Child-safe sand
- Large thick polythene sheet to cover area of floor
- Trowels – 4-inch preferable, can use 6-inch (or you can use spoons)
- Small paintbrushes/toothbrushes
- Small hand shovels (e.g. coal shovels)
- Plastic trays (or sheets of paper/card) – to place found objects
- Plastic buckets – for sand
- Simple diagram showing stratigraphy (artefacts, layers of earth, time scales). See appendix.
- Artefacts

### Examples of artefacts (or parts of):

**Building** e.g. slates, tiles, door handles, keys, nails

**Personal effects** e.g. buttons, buckles, rings, other jewellery, old spectacle frames, coins

**Food** e.g. shells, animal bones, bits of pottery, old bottles (if safe)

**Modern** e.g. crisp packets, plastic items, coins

Check the photographs showing the equipment required. Pour the sand into the crates and push artefacts into the sand. You can either use both crates and split the team of children (two leaders needed) or use one crate at a time – the children re-bury their objects in the second crate for the next group.

[With larger groups, you can add other activities that are easy to explain and monitor – e.g. paper-based activities, such as history quiz sheets, word games (word search, jumbled letters) using archaeological terms, or ask the children to draw the family that owned the Rubbish Bin.]

### Why are we doing this?

This is what archaeology is all about. Archaeologists dig in the earth to see what has been left, discarded or dropped by people in the past. These people may have been living on the site or just passing by. They may have been in the area thousands of years ago or a few years ago!

The archaeologists remove the top layer of vegetation and soil and then look for any human evidence. They gradually work their way down through the soil, layer by layer. The location of an object (in which layer of earth it was found) usually indicates its age. Archaeologists record what they find – from changes in soil colour to food particles to artefacts. Occasionally, they discover hidden treasure but, usually, they find everyday things, such as pottery or building materials. In the top layer of earth, there may be bits of modern rubbish.





## Excavation: What to do (see illustrations)

1. Ask if anyone has seen archaeology programmes on TV, or visited an excavation. What is an excavation? Discuss briefly.
2. Introduce the trowel. How long would it take to dig a whole field with this?! Describe how archaeologists investigate an area and choose a site for a trench. (They decide how big the trench should be, or whether there should be two or three trenches at different parts of the site.)
3. How can you create a trench? If it is a large area, you can use a JCB to take off the top layer of vegetation and soil. Then you use garden spades. You start to use trowels when you get to the careful bits. When is that? Why do archaeologists want to be careful? They don't want to break anything that they are about to dig up. It might be very old. It could have been in the earth for hundreds or even thousands of years. When an object has been dug up, where will it go next? To a museum.
4. Quite often, though, objects have already been broken or half destroyed. Why is that? (There could be a number of reasons e.g. wet ground, hot sun, animals treading on them or digging them up - maybe they were broken by the original owner and thrown out.) Even so, we don't want to spoil the objects further – if we break something, we might lose a vital clue about what it was or how it was used.
5. Show the diagram depicting artefacts lying in the different layers of earth (stratigraphy). Explain to the children how earth builds up over many years, so objects found in lower layers are likely to be older.
6. Now demonstrate how to use the trowel – carefully scrape across the sand – try to do this in the same direction each time - the sand is scraped into a hand shovel and removed (put into a bucket). Stress that the children must be very patient and careful. When they find an object, they shouldn't pull or dig it out, but scrape the sand around that object and slowly expose it until they are quite sure it is safe to take out. Once the object has been removed, it can be gently cleaned with a small brush (paintbrush or toothbrush).
7. Allow the children to find some objects - keep a close eye on them. When someone finds something, stop the others and all inspect it. Ask questions e.g. what is it? is it heavy? what might it have been used for?
8. Try and remove one 'layer' at a time. The children are practising their excavation skills – this is a practice dig. But, as the children move lower through the sand, remind them that, if they were doing an earth excavation, they would be going back in time.
9. The children do not have to find all the hidden objects.
10. Found objects should be placed gently on paper or in a plastic tray.



## Excavation



## SORTING MATERIALS

### You need:

- Instruction Sheet
- Labels – one for each material (e.g. metal, shells, pottery, plastic)
- Lots of objects of different materials

e.g. stone, china, clay, plastic, metal, shells, organic materials (leather, bone, wood).

### Why are we doing this?

When archaeologists excavate a site, they look for artefacts (something made by humans). They may find a mixture of artefacts and natural objects (stones, wood). They need to check each object carefully, even the stones. Many years ago, some stones were fashioned into tools such as axes or simple hammers, and flints sharpened into scrapers, knives or arrowheads. Antlers were used as pick-axes.

The archaeologists place the artefacts in trays to be sorted. (If an object is especially interesting, it does not go into the tray but is documented and stored separately.) The trays of objects are then taken away to be sorted. Each object is checked again – sometimes a few ordinary stones or bits of wood have found their way into the trays. These are discarded. The artefacts (bits of pottery, china, shells, metal, etc.) are then divided into their different materials. They are put into bags and carefully labelled with the description, date, excavation code and exact location.

### What to do:

Pile the objects on a table. Put the labels on the table. Explain to the children that they should sort out the objects by materials and place them beside the appropriate label.

You might want to divide some materials into further categories e.g. metals: iron, brass, aluminium, or different sorts of china, or different shells. You can use a magnet to test for iron.

You can, of course, have two sets of objects, if you want to divide the children into smaller groups.

Use the Instruction Sheet for extra activities.

### THIS ACTIVITY CAN BE DONE WITH: BUILDING POTS

(Divide the team into two.)

N.B. The English Heritage Bits and Bodies video features lots of team games based on archaeology and history including Sorting Materials, Mending Objects, The Lost Luggage Game and The Skeleton.



## BUILDING POTS

### You need:

- Instruction Sheet
- Shallow sand trays – can use photographic developing trays or garden trays (without holes!)
- Child-safe sand
- Broken objects e.g. mugs, jugs, ornaments – buy cheap stuff & break them (You need 10 plus objects.)
- Rolls of masking tape

Make sure none of the broken pieces are sharp enough to cut fingers – ensure that the objects aren't too heavy (difficult for a child to hold together)

### Why are we doing this?

Pottery finds are very important to archaeologists: pottery often remains in the earth after other items (especially organic matter such as food, clothes, matting) have rotted away. Pottery can be dated – this helps the archaeologists date the site. They often find pieces of pottery (not a whole object). When they find the pieces, they mark where they found them and then carefully pack them away – they make a note of each set of pieces. Later the pieces of pottery are washed and then pieced together (using a special glue) so that the archaeologists can see what the original object looked like. This might provide more clues about the object itself and about its owners.

### What to do:

Put a layer of sand into each tray.

Put a set of broken pieces in each tray – spare sets can be placed on the table.

You can take one or two pieces away from a set, if you want – the objects don't need to be complete. For small people, use easier objects – plates, cups and saucers.

Each child has a set of pottery pieces which they should put together to make an object, using masking tape. They should stand their object in a sand tray for more stability. This is a learning exercise and their pots will be dismantled at the end of the activity, for the next group.

If they have time, they can try another object. Some children prefer to work in pairs so that one can hold the object while the other pieces it together.

### THIS ACTIVITY CAN BE DONE WITH: SORTING MATERIALS

(Divide the team into two.)



## THE LOST LUGGAGE GAME

### You need:

- Question Sheet (or list of questions for leader to use)
- Sports bag or suitcase
- Set of items (placed in the bag) that give clues about the owner
- Floor-mats (optional)

### Why are we doing this?

During an excavation, archaeologists build up a collection of finds (artefacts found in the ground). The finds will be treated in different ways, depending on what they are – they may be sorted, washed, mended, conserved. The archaeologists then look at the collection and build up a picture of life in the past.

This activity encourages the children to look closely at objects and, through observation, discussion and previous knowledge, create a story.

### What to do:

Explain how archaeologists need to be good detectives – creating a story around what they find.

The children are going to be tested to see if they would make good archaeologists. Give them the bag. Ask them to check its contents – they should examine each item carefully.

Give them a set of questions (or say you will ask them later). Let them have 5-10 minutes to look at and discuss the contents by themselves. Then check to see if they can answer all the questions.

With infants, you can help them as they investigate the contents of the bag. They could draw the owner of the bag.

### THIS ACTIVITY CAN BE DONE WITH: THE SKELETON

(Divide the team into two.)

If you don't want to use The Skeleton, then you could add more items to the Lost Luggage – make it a more complicated story with harder questions to solve - or have two different bags.



## THE SKELETON

### You need:

- A skeleton (plastic skeleton, chart or drawing)
- Artefacts of a particular date, placed around the skeleton

Modern objects can be aged (tear them, break them, make them dirty). Replica objects (particularly for favourite school topics, such as the Romans) are available from educational suppliers. Some historic sites sell e.g. replica coins.

### Why are we doing this?

During an excavation, archaeologists may come across a skeleton. They carefully scrape away the earth from around it – this could take days. Some archaeologists specialise in human remains. The area around the skeleton is checked very thoroughly. Shreds of clothing or artefacts will provide vital clues about the person. From the skeleton itself, and any artefacts left around it, the archaeologists try to build up a picture of the person's life.

This is another activity that encourages the children to look closely at what is before them and, through observation, discussion and their own knowledge, create a story.

### What to do:

Get the children to sit on the benches beside the skeleton (or the skeleton can be laid on a table). Explain how archaeologists need to be good detectives – creating a story around what they find/what has been left behind. They must take great care not to destroy any evidence.

You are going to see if the children are good archaeologists. Tell them that, at first, they should not touch anything but observe. Then they can pick up the artefacts - but must replace them where they found them.

Give them the set of questions. Let them have 5-10 minutes to inspect the skeleton. Then check whether they can answer all the questions. Ask the reasons behind their decisions. If some disagree, that is fine – archaeologists sometimes disagree too. The important thing, for the children, is the thought process behind their decisions.

## THIS ACTIVITY CAN BE DONE WITH: THE LOST LUGGAGE GAME

(Divide the team into two.)

N.B. When a skeleton is discovered, the police are always called to check it. Once it has been cleared (i.e. it is not a recent crime) then the archaeologists will continue their work.



## Lost Luggage, Mending Pots, Sorting Materials and The Skeleton



## APPENDIX

**WORK OF AN ARCHAEOLOGIST – 4 stages**

**STUDYING OBJECTS**

**TIMELINE & STRATIGRAPHY**

**LIST OF REQUIREMENTS**

**INSTRUCTION SHEETS (for leaders/children)**





## THE WORK OF AN ARCHAEOLOGIST: FOUR STAGES OF WORK

### ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN:

#### DESK BASED RESEARCH

1. Looking at maps
2. Aerial photos
3. Historical records - written
4. Pictorial evidence
5. Talking to people

#### ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN:

Looking at maps and aerial photos of their area (juniors)

Looking at objects (infants) – archaeologists also learn about historical artefacts

#### FIELDWORK - EXCAVATION (On site)

1. Field walking – checking ploughed fields for artefacts
2. Field survey – finding, measuring, recording structures and remains
3. Geophysical survey – machine which creates pictures of what is beneath the soil
4. Excavation – the dig – looking for structures and artefacts
5. Excavation – recording the structure

#### ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN:

Mini excavation - learning techniques (infants & juniors)

#### POST EXCAVATION – FINDS PROCESSING

1. Writing report
2. Conserving the artefacts – sorting, mending, etc
3. Recording the artefacts – drawing, measuring, etc
4. Environmental recording

#### ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN:

Sorting materials, mending pots (infants and juniors)

#### POST EXCAVATION – INTERPRETATION

1. Building the story
2. Display – such as in a museum

#### ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN:

Building the story - The Lost Luggage Game (infants & juniors)

Building the story - The Skeleton (juniors)



## STUDYING OBJECTS

Here are some ideas for studying and recording objects (artefacts). An artefact is an object that has been made by people.

### BASIC RECORDING

1. What colour is your object?
2. Does it look like new (or are parts mended, broken or worn away?)
3. Measure your object.
4. Weigh it.

### HOW WAS IT MADE?

1. What is your object made of? (List the materials)
2. Is your object handmade or machine-made, do you think?
3. Would it be easy or difficult to make?
4. Do you think lots of them were made?

### WHAT WAS IT USED FOR?

1. Who do you think used your object?
2. Was it made specially for men, or women, or children?
3. Was your object used on its own or with something else?
4. Could it only be used for one job or several different jobs?

### IS IT WORTH ANYTHING?

1. Do you think the object was useful to its owner?
2. Do you think it cost the owner a lot of money?
3. Do you think the owner loved the object?
4. Would a museum value it?

### NOW AND THEN

1. Could your object still be useful today?
2. Would you like to have this object and use it?
3. Is there a modern design?
4. Now draw your object

### OTHER ACTIVITIES:

#### Compare and contrast

Collect together various artefacts. Put the pupils into teams and give them each a set of artefacts. Sort them into different categories – there are many you could choose e.g. materials, weight, usefulness, attractiveness. This encourages them to observe, consider and discuss.

#### Sequence

Collect together one or more sets of artefacts used during periods of history e.g. a smoothing iron, a gas iron, an electric iron; a quill, a nib pen, a ballpoint pen. Discuss them and put them into sequence. Consider who used them and which are easiest to use (weight, power source, etc.)












## TIME LINES & STRATIGRAPHY

The concept of time (and historical ages) can be difficult for younger pupils to understand. Make your own time line (local or national events, or characters from the past) along the school corridor. Or create a family tree – stand the children in a line – first choose one child (now) then two parents, then a set of grandparents, then a set of great grandparents, and so on. Work out how many years have gone by.

Here is a time line that can be used in the classroom. It connects to the stratigraphy diagram.

### T I M E ~ L I N E

End of the last Ice Age Wildlife colonises land Mesolithic hunting settlers		12,500	
		8500	Flint scatters Shell mounds, rock shelters
Neolithic farming settlers		4000	Chambered tombs and houses Cupmarked rocks
		3000	Stone circles, henges, Standing stones
Metal technology (gold, copper)		2000	Burial mounds and short cists Hut circles
Climate deteriorating Fortifications begin		1000	Burnt mounds Hillforts
Iron-working technology		500	Crannogs
		200	Duns, brochs, wheelhouses, Earth-houses
		BC ▲	
		▼ AD	
Roman army in Scotland		79	 Roman camps, forts and roads, Antonine Wall
Waning of Roman influence		200	
		400	Long cist graves
Introduction of Christianity Picts, Gaels, Britons and Anglians Start of the Viking Age		600	 Early Christian and Pictish carved stones, chapels
		800	Pagan Viking graves
Emergence of Scottish nation		1000	
		1100	Stone-built churches
First burghs		1200	 Mottes, abbeys, stone-built castles
		1500	
Reformation of the Church		1600	 Tower-houses
Agricultural improvements & Industrial Revolution		1800	Deserted villages and farms
		1900	Coal mines and heavy industries
Two World Wars		2000	 Gun batteries and airfields

### Stratigraphy

Stratified = horizontal layers (in archaeology, layers of earth that have built up over time, containing the detritus from past ages). Archaeologists scrape away the earth layer by layer to reveal features and/or artefacts.



20<sup>th</sup> Century

Victorians

Georgians

Stuarts

Wars of Independence

Vikings

Romans

Iron Age

Bronze Age

Stone Age

Illustration by Jane Gaze

## LIST OF REQUIREMENTS (ALL ACTIVITIES)

Large room/school hall (see plan below)

Pencils, paper, clipboards (if you want children to take notes)

### The Rubbish Bin

3 items of rubbish per member of the family

1 item of rubbish per pet

e.g.

grandpa: tobacco tin, slipper, false teeth powder, Saga magazine

dad: car magazine, razor, talc for men

mum: part of shopping list (torn), suntan lotion, pair of tights

teenage daughter: boy band CD, hair slide, part of letter to boyfriend (torn)

young son: football team poster, airfix plane, schoolbook

toddler: bag for toddler size nappies, duplo, Mr Men or Little Miss book

dog: old collar

cat: worming tablets carton

### Looking at Maps & Aerial Photographs

A3 or A4 extracts from local maps – showing same area, different dates

e.g. Ordnance Survey maps, 1st edition (1850s), 2nd edition (1890s), 3rd edition (1910s), modern map

Aerial photos of same area (optional)

Question sheets & pencils or Instructions for Leader (questions to ask children)

### Looking at Objects, Past & Present

Handling objects, from the past and present.

Table and chairs, or floor-mats

Some objects that can be compared/illustrate lifestyle:

Clothing e.g. modern tee-shirt and old lace blouse; tissue & hanky; stiff collar

Cookware e.g. iron pot & modern saucepan; iron girdle & modern frying pan

Eating utensils e.g. wooden bowl & dishwasher-safe bowl; horn spoon & stainless steel spoon

Washing items e.g. washboard; washing dolly; wood tub (what do we use now?); flat iron and electric iron

Writing materials e.g. quill (feather), ink, sand; nib pen, ink, blotting paper; ballpoint pen

Lighting e.g. cruise; rushlight (soft rush); candle; torch



## Excavation

2 portable sandpit containers with covers (or an outdoors sandpit)

Child-safe sand

Large thick polythene sheet to cover area of floor

Trowels – 4-inch preferable, can use 6-inch (or you can use spoons)

Small paintbrushes/toothbrushes

Small hand shovels (e.g. coal shovels)

Plastic trays (or sheets of paper/card) – to place found objects

Plastic buckets – for sand

Simple diagram showing layers of earth with artefacts in each layer (going further back in time with each deeper layer e.g. 1900s, 1800s 1600s)

### Artefacts

Examples of artefacts (or parts of):

**Building** e.g. slates, tiles, door handles, keys, nails

**Personal effects** e.g. buttons, buckles, rings, other jewellery, old spectacle frames, coins

**Food** e.g. shells, animal bones, bits of pottery, old bottles (if safe)

**Modern** e.g. crisp packets, plastic items, coins

## Sorting Materials

Instruction Sheet

Labels – one for each material (e.g. metal, shells, pottery, plastic)

Lots of objects of different materials

e.g. stone, china, clay, plastic, metal, shells, organic materials (leather, bone, wood)

## Building Pots

Instruction Sheet

Shallow sand trays – can use photographic developing trays or garden trays (without holes!)

Child-safe sand

Broken objects e.g. mugs, jugs, ornaments – buy cheap stuff & break them (you need 10 plus objects)

Rolls of masking tape

## The Lost Luggage Game

Question Sheet (or list of questions for leader to use)

Sports bag or suitcase

Set of items (placed in the bag) that give clues about the owner

[We used items owned by an archaeologist: sports bag, steel capped boot, hard hat, cagoule, map with some ancient sites ringed, camera film, midge repellent, notebook, history novel, long johns, toothbrush, trowel.]

## The Skeleton

Question sheet (or list of questions for leader to use)

Skeleton (plastic skeleton, chart or drawing)

Artefacts of a particular date, placed around the skeleton

Use a plastic teaching skeleton or a chart – or draw a simple skeleton on a large piece of paper (could be parts of one). Or wrap someone in a sheet (this ancient body was found in a peat bog...). For artefacts, we used an old ring placed on the wedding finger, a brooch, a bit of lace, buttons, buckles, a coin, part of an arrow. You could add something to indicate the person's occupation.



## INSTRUCTION SHEETS (FOR LEADERS/CHILDREN)

- **Sample question sheet for Looking at Maps**
- **Sorting Materials**
- **Mending Pots**
- **The Lost Luggage Game**
- **The Skeleton**



## WOULD YOU MAKE A GOOD ARCHAEOLOGIST?

### SAMPLE QUESTION SHEET

## DESK BASED WORK (RESEARCH)

### Bridge of Balgie: Looking at Maps

- As time goes by, more buildings are built. Some old buildings disappear. Look at the maps. There is one modern map and one dated 1867.

Find:	Map – 1876 (tick)	Map – modern (tick)
School		
Manse and Church		
Cornmill		
War Memorial		
Kerrowmore		

- Find the sheepfold near the Manse – has it moved since 1867?
- Is the post office marked on both maps?

Check it out:	
Sheepfold	
Post Office	





## Things to do

- Count the buildings in the village - on each map


- Make a key for a map to show: houses, rivers, roads, tracks, trees

Key to map	
	houses
	rivers
	roads
	tracks
	trees

- Draw a simple plan and show where your home is



## WOULD YOU MAKE A GOOD ARCHAEOLOGIST?

### SORTING MATERIALS

- Look at these items
- Some are broken pieces from larger objects
- Some are natural objects
- Handle them all carefully
- They are made of different materials
- Can you sort them into their materials?
- Place them in these groups:

Stone

China

Clay

Wood

Bone

Plastic

Iron

Other metals

- Are there any other materials?
- Now try placing the objects into the following groups:
  1. Natural or Artefacts (made by people)
  2. Used in/for the house or Used in/for work or Other
  3. Make up another set of groups

#### Fact File:

When archaeologists excavate a site, they look for artefacts (something made by humans). They may find a mixture of artefacts and natural objects (stones, wood). They need to check each object carefully. The artefacts (bits of pottery, china shells, metal, etc.) are then divided into their different materials. They are put into bags and carefully labelled with the description, date, excavation code and exact location.



## WOULD YOU MAKE A GOOD ARCHAEOLOGIST?

### BUILDING POTS

- Mend a broken pot or another item
- You may need to sort out the broken pieces first
- Stick the pieces together with masking tape
- Placing the sherds in the sand tray should help them stand up
- Are there any pieces missing?

Once your item has been put together again:

- Can you describe your item?
- What was it used for?

#### Fact File:

Pottery finds are very important to archaeologists: pottery often remains in the earth after other items (especially organic matter such as food, clothes, matting) have rotted away. Pottery can be dated – this helps the archaeologists date the site. They often find pieces of pottery (not a whole object).

When they find the pieces, they mark where they found them and then carefully pack them away – they make a note of each set of pieces. Later the pieces of pottery are washed and then glued together so that the archaeologists can see what the original object looked like. This might provide more clues about the object itself and about its owners.



## WOULD YOU MAKE A GOOD ARCHAEOLOGIST?

### LOST LUGGAGE GAME

- **Someone has lost their bag!**  
Who can it be?
- **Open the case and take out the contents**
- **Make a list of the contents**
- **Decide the following:**

Is the owner male or female?	
Is the owner adult or child?	
Is the owner rich or poor (or can't you tell)?	
What do you think is this person's work?	
What evidence do you have for this?	
Is there anything here which is of value – or do you think the person will miss a lot?	

### DRAW THE PERSON!

#### Fact File:

During an excavation, archaeologists build up a collection of finds (artefacts found in the ground). The finds will be treated in different ways, depending on what they are – they may be sorted, washed, mended, conserved. The archaeologists then look at the collection and build up a picture of life in the past. Artefacts are objects made by people.



## WOULD YOU MAKE A GOOD ARCHAEOLOGIST?

### THE SKELETON

- **A skeleton has been found!**  
Who can it be?
- **There appears to be some remains of clothing and artefacts left in the grave...**  
Does this provide clues about the person?
- **Don't touch – look at the clues.**
- **Now you may pick up the artefacts very carefully – but you must put them back in the same place**
- **Can you tell if the person was:**

Male or female?	
Rich or poor?	
A child or an adult?	
Old or young?	
Healthy or diseased?	
Married?	

- **When might this person have lived?**

#### Fact File:

During an excavation, archaeologists may come across a skeleton. They carefully scrape away the earth from around it – this could take days. Some archaeologists specialise in human remains. The area around the skeleton is checked very thoroughly. Shreds of clothing or artefacts will provide vital clues about the person. From the skeleton itself, and any artefacts left around it, the archaeologists try to build up a picture of the person's life.



## CONTACT

### Get in touch

The National Trust for Scotland  
Area Office,  
Greenbank House, Flenders Road,  
Clarkston, Glasgow  
G76 8RB

Email: [learning@nts.org.uk](mailto:learning@nts.org.uk) or [archaeology@nts.org.uk](mailto:archaeology@nts.org.uk)

The Archaeology for Schools web pages were written by Debbie Jackson, Learning Services, and Derek Alexander, Archaeology, NTS.

