Name

Archaeology

Archaeology for Kids

Finding a Site

How do archaeologists find sites to explore?

Some artefacts from ancient times have been found by accident, by builders and farmers. But most finds are the result of a great deal of work and planning.

How does an archaeologist find a site to explore to hunt for artefacts?

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Fossils & Artefacts

An archaeologist must know the different between an artefact and a fossil. This is very important because archaeologists do not look for fossils. That's a different science. Archaeologists looks for artefacts!

- **Fossils** are the remains of living things (plants, animals, people), *not* of things that were made.
- **Artefacts** are the remains of things that were made, *not* the remains of living things.
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What is the difference between a fossil and an artefact?

Archaeology for Kids
what is a site?

A "site" is any place an archaeologist wishes to look for remains of a civilization that is buried. Archaeologists actually dig up the earth. That's why a site is also called a "dig".

What is a dig?

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Permission to Dig

Archaeologists may suspect an area may be rich with discoveries, but they cannot simply start digging. An archaeologist cannot dig anywhere he or she wants. They need permission from the owner of the land. Sometimes, they need permission from the government of a country.

Why does an archaeologist need permission to work on a dig?

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Tools of the Trade

Digging a site takes a great deal of care. Archaeologists must move slowly, to make sure nothing is damaged and nothing is missed. Remember - archaeologists are not looking for fossils, which might have harden or captured in rock. Archaeologists are looking for artefacts, or things that are man-made! Many artefacts are very delicate. For example, they might find a piece of pottery, but not the whole object. So much care must be taken.

The tools they use are varied. Some tools are very specialized. Others look like the archaeologist has been gardening. Some of their tools are wheelbarrows, little trowels, brushes, spoons, dust pans, even dental picks.

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What kind of tools would you find at a dig?

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Grids and Labelling

Archaeologists must be very careful when they start working on a "dig". It's important to know where an object was found and what was found near it. This helps archaeologists date an object.

The first thing that is done is to prepare a grid. A grid is a design that breaks a section of ground into small squares. These squares are marked usually with rope and string.

Each little square in the grid has to be carefully searched and measured. If something is found, archaeologists note how deep in the earth it was. It is most important to carefully label each item by assigning it a number in the grid. Archaeologists want to be as accurate as possible.

How do archaeologists record what they find?

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Archaeology for Kids
Pottery and China

A long time ago, many different civilizations at many different times and in many different places invented pottery. They needed something to hold and store food and water. They discovered that clay could be made into shapes and then dried in the sun. People learned that clay was stronger if it was baked in a fire. In time, people learned how to make glazes to waterproof their pottery. China was first made by the ancient Chinese, which is now it got its name. China is a special type of pottery that allows some light to show through it.

The earliest pottery was made by hand. At first, people only wanted their pottery to be useful. But as time went on, pottery began to be decorated. Some civilizations invented a potter's wheel, which they used to make pottery into interesting shapes. Some painted pottery. Others created coloured glazes to decorate it. Others used tools to mark designs into the wet clay. Many vases and pieces of pottery were decorated with scenes of daily life, of war and triumph, of gods and goddesses.

Pieces of pottery have been found in just about all the ruins of ancient homes and villages and towns, all over the world. Most of the pottery is broken, but it can still tell archaeologists a great deal about the people who made it and used it. That's why the discovery of pieces of pottery at a "dig" are so exciting to archaeologists.

Why is pottery important to an archaeologist?

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What does an archaeologist do with artefacts?

How does an archaeologist preserve what they find?

Is being an archaeologist a dangerous job?

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Who was Howard Carter?

To an archaeologist, what does the three-age system refer to?

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