Archeology Month Activities

What is archeology?

It is the study of the way people lived in the past. Archeologists learn about the past by studying the things people leave behind, like buildings, pottery, tools and graves.

Archeologists work all around the world in all kinds of places. What tools or equipment do you think an archeologist would use to work in the following areas and what would they find?

- In the mountains
- Under the sea
- In the desert
- In your city or town

In the future do you think that archeologists will work in outer space and on other planets? If so, what tools and equipment might they use and what might they find?

Go to www.nps.gov and pick three (3) of the parks listed below that have used archeology to learn more about their site. What did scientists and historians learn about the site and the activities that went on there? What kinds of artifacts were found? From what time period do the artifacts date? Now go to www.nps.gov/inde/Franklin_Court/Pages/archaeology.html and compare what archeologists from Independence National Historical Park learned from artifacts they found with what was discovered at the other National Parks.

- Dinosaur National Monument
- Fort Clatsop National Monument
- Fort Necessity National Battlefield
- Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- Yellowstone National Park
- Big Bend National Park
- Mammoth Cave National Park
- Wind Cave National Park
- Biscayne National Park
- Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

Imagine you are one of the archeologists working on a dig at Independence National Historical Park. You have been working at a site that was once a well but now contains many artifacts like broken dishes, toys, and tools. Below is one object that you found. Cut out the pieces and try to put them together to figure out what the object was and then make some educated guesses as to who may have used it and what they might have used it for. Some of the pieces may be missing.

A Note to Parents and Teachers: This sheet is designed to teach children about archeology. Feel free to make as many copies as you need. You can also download this as a PDF from the education page at www.nps.gov/inde. As you teach your children about archeology, keep in mind that archeological sites are fragile and easily damaged. Proper study of sites requires painstaking work by carefully trained personnel. Careless excavation can destroy our heritage and may, in some cases, be illegal.
This picture was taken of an excavation unit (pit) at the Dexter site. Look at the picture. Can you recognize what any of the fragments are? The archeologists have to separate all of the artifacts from the soil. To do this they first record where the artifacts were found and then collect everything in a bucket. The bucket is then dumped onto a screen where the soil can go through the holes, but the artifacts are filtered out. The artifacts are then cleaned and labeled so that they can be carefully analyzed after the dig is completed. The archeologist must be very careful not to break any of the artifacts into smaller pieces or to miss any small artifacts that could prove to be very valuable clues.

This is part of a tea cup that was uncovered in a privy (outhouse) pit. It was imported from China and was more expensive than most cups made in America.

Do you recognize this? What was it a part of? Do you use something like this in your house? What do you use it for?

The dig is just one step of the archeological process. Can you help the archeologists get their work done in the correct order? Look at the steps below and see if you can figure out which order the steps should be performed. Write the correct number (1-9) on the line in front of each step.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Find a site</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Write a report</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Clean the artifacts</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Draw the features</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>Analyze the findings</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Plan a dig</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>Catalog artifacts</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Lay out a grid</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Excavate by stratigraphy (layers)</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>Share your findings with the public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Answer Key: A, F, H, I, D, C, G, E, B, J

The IPI offers hands-on interactive education programs for school groups, and for learners of all ages. Contact us for more information about program offerings, or to reserve a program for your group.

Phone: (215) 597-2760
www.independenceparkinstitute.com
www.nps.gov/inde