

**Lesson Plan Template for Elementary Field Experience**

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Grade Level: 4th   
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Date of Lesson Enactment: October 27, 2015

**Topic:** Digging the Past

**Essential Questions:** (What question(s) will students grapple with as they learn through this lesson?)

* Why is archaeology important?
* How can new findings change the understanding of history?

**Primary Content Objectives:**

Students will **know:** (facts/information)

* Archaeologists study all kinds of material evidence left by people from the past.
* Werowocomoco was a large Indian town used by Indian leaders for several hundred years before the English settlers came. It was the headquarters of the leader Powhatan in 1607.
* Jamestown became the first permanent English settlement in North America. Archaeologists have discovered the site of the original fort. The recovered artifacts give archaeologists clues about the interactions of the English, Africans, and Indians in early Virginia.
* The key terms (archaeology, archaeologist, artifact).

Students will **understand**: (big ideas)

* Archaeology is another way to help people understand the past.
* Recent archaeological digs have recovered new material evidence about Werowocomoco and historic Jamestown.

Students will be able to **do:** (skills and behaviors)

* Identify and interpret artifacts to understand events in history. (VS.1a)
* Draw conclusions and make generalizations. (VS.1d)
* Interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives. (VS.1g)

**Related state or national standards:** (Examples include State Standards of Learning, Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards or National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies)

VS.1a The student will demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis and responsible citizenship, including the ability to identify and interpret artifacts and primary and secondary source documents to understand events in history.

VS.2f The student will demonstrate knowledge of the physical geography and native peoples, past and present, of Virginia by describing how archaeologists have recovered new material evidence at sites including Werowocomoco and Jamestown.

**Assessment: (**How (and when) will students be assessed? What evidence will you collect to determine whether students have met the lesson objectives? Will the assessment(s) be a pre-assessment (diagnostic), formative (ongoing feedback) or summative?)

* **Pre-assessment:** In the beginning of the lesson, teacher will ask questions that would assess how familiar they are with the content. Watching for participation and paying attention to students’ responses, teacher is expected to figure out the appropriate and reasonable length of time to spend on the next questions.
* **Formative assessment:** Throughout the lesson, the teacher will be assessing students informally through observations. At the end of the lesson, archaeologist reflection (See appendix A) will be collected and used to assess their understanding of the content.

**Materials and Resources:**

* Chocolate chip cookie (one per student)
* Toothpicks (two per student)
* Paper towels
* Archaeologist reflection template (See Appendix A)
* Computers (Optional; for the students who prefer to type only)

**Key Vocabulary and Definitions:**

* **Archaeology**: the study of the material items that past peoples have left behind
* **Archaeologist:** the people who study all kinds of material evidence left from people of the past.
* **Artifacts:** historical objects such as arrowheads, tools, and pottery, made or used by humans

**Lesson Procedures:**

1. **Introduction and goal orientation:**

Say, “Today, we’ll be learning about how archaeology helps us. Before we even start, does anybody know what archaeology is?” Take responses from students. Some potential responses may be, “Studying about old cultures!” and “I don’t know.” Explain, “Archaeology is the study of the material items that past peoples have left behind. So, archeologists refer to the people who study material evidence.” [3 min]

1. **Connecting to prior knowledge and experiences: (Questions or activities that help students make links)**

Say, “So, I just said archaeologists study *material evidence.* What do you think I mean by that?Who knows the vocabulary word that means *material evidence*?Artifacts! Have you seen archaeologists excavating undiscovered sites to uncover artifacts?” Students may ask what excavate means so be ready to explain that it means digging or scooping out. Take responses from students and pay attention to how they respond to these questions. “Why do you think archaeologists dig grounds to uncover artifacts? How do artifacts help them and us?” Some potential responses may be, “Maybe they can learn how people lived in the past?” and “Maybe because they want to know more about the people in the past!” Take responses and explain, “Thank you all for your great responses! Archaeologists excavate sites to uncover artifacts because they give them many answers to questions about the past. Have you guys heard of Werowocomoco or Jamestown? Recent archaeological digs have recovered new material evidence about these two places. Werowocomoco was a large Indian town used by Indian leaders for several hundred years before the English settlers came. It was the headquarters of the leader Powhatan in 1607. Archaeological evidence indicates that the site had been used by Indians for at least 8,000 years, with a sizable community living there continuously from about the thirteenth century to the early seventeenth century. Archaeological excavations at the site of Werowocomoco, the principal residence of the Indian leader Powhatan, who dominated Virginia‘s coastal plain during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, have not only revealed that the site was a uniquely important place during Powhatan‘s time, but also that its role as a political, social, and spiritual center began before the Powhatan paramount chiefdom was created. Jamestown became the first permanent English settlement in North America. Archaeologists have discovered the site of the original fort. The recovered artifacts give archaeologists clues about the interactions of the English, Africans, and Indians in early Virginia.” [7 min]

1. **Tasks and activities: (What challenging tasks and activities will students engage in as they construct knowledge, learn new skills or behaviors and develop understandings?)**

Say, “Now that we learned about how archaeologist excavates archaeological sites to uncover artifacts, we’re going to act as archaeologists and excavate a chocolate chip cookie! The cookie represents an archaeological site and the chocolate chips are the artifacts. Your task is to remove as many undamaged chocolate chips as possible. Scrap away at the cookie to delicately remove the chips. Remember, you cannot pick up your cookie while you are excavating because archaeologists can’t pick up archaeological sites, either. This activity is for you to get a taste of the archaeologist’s arduous task of digging. What questions do you have for me?” After taking questions, if any, present each student with a toothpick and a chocolate chip cookie.” Give them about 10 minutes to excavate. Gather students’ attention and ask, “How did you feel when you were excavating your cookie? Did you think it was easy or hard?” Some potential responses may be, “It was easy!” and “I think it was hard because chocolate chips kept breaking.” Explain, “I know some of you thought it was easy, but excavating archaeological sites is so much harder than just excavating a chocolate chip cookie. They must be *extremely* cautious. Why do you think they need be careful?”Take responses from students. Some potential responses may be, “Because they don’t want to break the artifacts.” and “Because if the artifacts break, then they might not be able to use them.” Say, “Archaeologists must be careful because archaeological sites are fragile, non-renewable resources. Do you remember what non-renewable resources were?” Pick on a student to answer the question. Say, “Once a site is excavated, it is gone forever. The artifacts and soil cannot be put back in place and the site reconstructed.” Now, I want you to reflection on your excavating experience you’ve just had. Include your thoughts about the experience and how you think it would compare to that of a real archaeologist. I want you to really think about these questions. Here are the questions.” Read the questions out loud. Elaborate, if any necessary, but don’t give specific examples that may hinder their creativity. Say, “Compare your experience with the chocolate chip cookie to what it would be like to dig for Native American artifacts. What kind of tools do you think archeologists uses to “dig” into the past? Why? What are some character traits an archeologist would need to have to be successful digging up artifacts that have been buried for a long time? Do you think it is difficult to uncover artifacts from long ago? Why or why not?” Break students into the pre-determined pairs and observe their discussions. If time allows, have whole group discussions about their reflections. [35 min]

1. **Closure: (How will you wrap up the lesson and reinforce key ideas? Closure may include some form of assessment or exit slip)**

Conclude the lesson with a brief discussion about what artifacts tell us about the people. Teacher will then collect students’ reflections for evaluation. [4 min]

**Differentiation:** How will you modify the content (what is learned), the process (how the content is mastered) or product (how the learning is observed and evaluated) to support diverse learners? Describe additional supports that can be used for re-teaching if needed, and a challenging extension for students for demonstrate mastery quickly or show evidence of a lot of prior knowledge.

* Provide one-on-one assistance to struggling students. This may include rephrasing the questions and presenting examples.
* For the students who prefer to type than handwrite, have computers ready. This will keep them motivated and engaged.

Appendix A- Archaeologist Reflection Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Be an archaeologist!**

Now that you have had the opportunity to be an archeologist, write about your experience. Write a paragraph. Think about the questions below to help you with your paragraph.

1. **Compare your experience with the chocolate chip cookie to what it would be like to dig for Native American artifacts.**
2. **What kind of tools do you think archeologists uses to “dig” into the past? Why?**
3. **What are some character traits an archeologist would need to have to be successful digging up artifacts that have been buried for a long time?**
4. **Do you think it is difficult to uncover artifacts from long ago? Why or why not?**

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I want to see by a show of hands, who knows what archaeology is. \_\_\_\_\_, can you tell me what it is? -Archaeology is the study of human activity in the past, primarily through the recovery and analysis of the material evidence and environmental data that have been left behind by past people. Who knows what you the *people*  who study material evidence and collect data of the past people? -Archaeologist!

So, I just used the word material evidence, what do you think I mean by that? -Artifacts!

Why do you think archaeologists dig grounds to uncover artifacts? -Archaeologists excavate sites to uncover artifacts because they give them many answers to questions about the past. Have you guys heard of Werowocomoco? Recent archaeological digs have recovered artifacts about this place. Now, let’s watch a short video.

VIDEO

So, Werowocomoco was a large Indian town used by Indian leaders for several hundred years before the English settlers came. It was the headquarters of the leader Powhatan in 1607. How do we know this? Artifacts!

Activity

Now that we learned how archaeologists excavate sites to uncover artifacts, we’re going to act as archaeologists and excavate a chocolate chip cookie! The cookie represents an archaeological site and the chocolate chips are the artifacts. Your task is to remove as many undamaged chocolate chips as possible. Remember, you cannot pick up your cookie while excavating because archaeologists cannot pick up archaeological sites! What questions do you have for me?

After the activity

How do you feel when you were excavating your cookie? Did you think it was easy or hard? -I know some of you thought it was easy, but excavating archaeological sites is so much harder than just excavating a chocolate chip cookie. They must be extremely cautious. Why do you think they need to be careful? –Archaeologists must be careful because archaeological sites are fragile, non-renewable resources. Do you remember what a non-renewable resource was? –It’s a resource that cannot renew itself. Once a site is excavated, it is gone forever. The artifacts and soil cannot be put back in place. Now, I want you to reflect on your excavating experience you’ve just had. Include your thoughts about the experience and how you think it would compare to that of a real archaeologist. I want you to really think about these questions. What questions do you have for me?