

Archeology

On-Site Summary

Second Grade



As was discovered in the *pre-visit* activity, there is a great deal of research that an archaeologist must go through before actually excavating an archaeological site. For the adventure at the Elm Fork Education Center, however, the site has already been researched and established. The quadrants will already be formed for the student archaeologists and their first steps will be the mapping of their individual quadrants and the excavation process itself.

Excavation is actually a technique that archaeologists use to uncover buried remains from the past. Though there are times when archaeologists actually find artifacts lying on the surface of the ground, more often the artifacts that are discovered are actually found buried beneath the surface. Often, these buried materials are better preserved and provide even more accurate information about the real meaning behind the artifact. Artifacts found on the surface of the ground may have been moved many times over and thus it is difficult to relate them to other things that may be discovered in the area. Artifacts that are uncovered beneath the surface often provide information about its possible relationship to other artifacts buried in the same dig site. The soils surrounding buried artifacts also provide important information about the artifact, and may provide insight into the age of the artifact.

Excavations are usually done either vertically or horizontally. Vertical excavations at a dig site are done in order to be able to understand the stratigraphy of the soil types located at a particular site. A horizontal excavation exposes large open areas of ground; this is the excavation site the students will be working on at the Elm Fork Education Center. The students will use trowels in order to move the loose soil and uncover artifacts. The Map Maker will then carefully record where the artifact was located and will draw the object on their quadrant sheet. The Excavator will assign the object a number, which the Map Maker will also record on the quadrant sheet. The artifacts are then placed in paper bags, which also have the corresponding number and location listed, as well as the names of the Excavator and the Map Maker.

TEKS CONNECTIONS:

Science TEKS - Second Grade:

- 2.1 (A) – Students will demonstrate safe practices during field investigations.
- 2.2 (A) – Students will ask questions about organisms, objects, and events.
- 2.2 (C) – Students will compare results of investigations with what students and scientists know about the world.
- 2.2 (D) – Students will gather information using simple equipment and tools to extend the senses
- 2.2 (E) – Students will construct reasonable explanations and draw conclusions using information and prior knowledge.
- 2.4 (A) – Students will collect information using tools including rulers and meter sticks.
- 2.4(B) – Students will measure and compare organisms and objects and parts of organisms and objects, using standard and non-standard units.

Fun Facts

- The Cartesian coordinate system is a two- or three- dimensional graph based on intersecting, perpendicular incremented lines or planes.
- During excavation, lateral exploration is just as important as downward excavation.