

A Digging We Will Go On-Site Summary

Kindergarten



Paleontological and archeological sites and artifacts bring us messages from the past! There are times when fossils or artifacts are simply found on top of the ground or lying beneath the earth. Other times, however, only the impressions, traces, or remains of artifacts or dead plants and animals preserved in rock or stone are found. In either case, scientists study these remains and work on solving the problems of interpreting their origins. They try to answer such questions as: What did the living animal or plant look like? What did it eat? How did it move? Why did it die? What was the artifact used for? How was it created? What was it made of? Answering these questions provides insights into our past and possibly into our future.

In this activity, students will become paleontologists and uncover the “bones” of an ancient Columbian mammoth. Once all of the pieces are unearthed, it will then be the task of the group to connect the pieces of the “bones” together in order to form a complete mammoth. Once this task is complete, the student paleontologists then work on answering the very same questions that their fellow adult paleontologists struggle with: How do we know what the Columbian mammoth really looked like? What did it eat? When was it here? Why did it die?

TEKS CONNECTIONS:

Science TEKS - Kindergarten:

K.1 (A) – Students will demonstrate safe practices during field investigations.

K.2 (A) – Students will ask questions about organisms, objects, and events.

K.4 (B) – Students will make observations using tools including hand lenses, balances, cups, bowls, and computers.

K.5 (A) – Students will describe properties of objects and characteristics of organisms.

K.6 (C) – Students will record observations about parts of animals including wings, feet, heads, and tails.

K.9 (A) – Students will identify basic needs of living organisms.

Fun Facts

- Mammoths, as well as Mastodons, Camels, and Alligators, are all native to the North Texas area.
- Mammoths grazed on grasses, herbs, shrubs, and trees, and consumed about 380–440 pounds of food and more than 40 gallons of water a day.
- Mammoths had to forage for 14-18 hours each day in order to meet their dietary needs.
- Mammoths were large mammals with trunks that closely resembled elephants.
- A Columbian mammoth would have stood nearly 14 feet tall at the shoulder and weighed 10 tons.
- Unlike the Woolly mammoth, the Columbian mammoth was believed to have had very little hair.