



Investigating Artifacts

Making Masks, Creating Myths, Exploring Middens

For Grades K-6

Session 1

What You Need

For the class:

- a few samples of natural and not-natural objects gathered from the nearby environment
- a large brown paper grocery bag
- two yarn loops at least 15" in diameter
- a large class litter bag

For each group of four students:

- a large brown paper grocery bag
- two or three lengths of different colored yarn, to make loops at least 15" in diameter
- three index cards or sentence strips
- pencils
- newspaper or newsprint for covering tables

Session 2

What You Need

For each group of 4 students:

- 4 cardboard or card stock squares (approximately 8" by 8") or 4 paper plates (8" in diameter)
- 4 bottles of white glue (4 oz. size)
- 4 pairs of scissors
- bag of objects from Session 3
- newspaper for covering tables
- pencils

For the class:

- adhesive note paper ("post-its") or scrap paper (optional)

Session 3

What You Need

For the Class:

- The 5 full-page pictures of the stars, moon, sun, rainbow, and butterfly, provided at the end of this guide (or any additional pictures you may wish to use, see "Getting Ready.")
- 1 to 5 pieces colored construction paper (11" x 19") to use as backing for the full-page pictures
- 1 wide-tipped felt marking pen to write captions (optional)
- 1 roll masking tape
- chalkboard or large paper to record ideas

For Each Pair of Students:

- 1 or 2 sheets of large drawing or newsprint paper, 19" x 11" (large construction paper size)
- 1 sheet of lined writing paper (optional)
- 2 pencils
- 1 set of crayons or colored felt pens

Session 4

What You Need

- the pictures (sun, moon, rainbow, etc.) from the previous session
- student drawings (and written stories, if any) from the previous session
- 1 roll of masking tape

Session 5

What You Need

For each group of 3 students:

- 1 shoe box midden (see "Making the Middens", and "Getting Ready," page 50.)
- tray or box for sifting or spooning soil into
- 1 stiff-bristle inexpensive paint brush or toothbrush (to remove soil above an artifact and to clean artifacts)
- 3 plastic spoons
- 1-2 plastic strawberry baskets to use as sifters
- 1 egg carton with the lid removed
- 1 ruler (optional)*
- 1 student sheet: "Archaeologist Checklist Task Cards" (master included, page 110)
- 3 pieces of 8-1/2 " x 14" white paper for mapping midden
- 1 piece of lined paper for making a key
- 3 pencils
- newspapers to cover table
- string about 18" long for making a grid (optional)*
- scissors to cut the string (optional)*
- tape to attach the string grids to the shoeboxes (optional)*

For the Teacher/Class Demonstration (Stepping Back in Time)

- 1 shoe box lid to use as a tray
- 1 cup of soil
- 1 cup of leaves
- 1 object that represents something 2000 years old, such as a simulated arrowhead or piece of burnt wood
- 1 object from 10-50 years ago such as a horseshoe, coin, or old sterling spoon
- 1 modern bottle cap (or other modern item)
- chalkboard
- a timeline chart showing the present and going back 2000 years (optional)
- clothing/props for the volunteer actors (optional)
- large drawing of the midden site (see page 108)

Making the Middens

- 1 spray bottle containing water for misting soil when making middens
- several large buckets or plastic trash bags for dumping the soil that students remove from their middens during excavation

For each shoe box midden:

- 1 adult-sized shoe box (about 6" wide x 12" long)
- 6–10 cups of potting soil (**without** styrofoam beads or vermiculite)
- leaves to cover the surface of the soil
- 4 cups of sand (optional)*
- 9–10 different kinds of objects hidden in the midden (2–3 of each per box):
 - shells with holes (as from a necklace)
 - shells without holes (as for food, e.g., oyster and clam)
 - broken pieces of earth-colored clay pots (unglazed)
 - chicken bones
 - popping corn
 - dried beans
 - small pieces of obsidian rock to indicate tools (Be careful not to include sharp pieces.)
 - wood, small burned and unburned pieces
 - suede leather or rawhide (natural colors)
 - small pieces of woven grass mat or hemp string (natural colors)
 - feathers (not artificially colored)

Session 6

What You Need

For the class:

- large map of the midden site showing hill, stream, trees (optional)
- chalkboard or large paper for recording ideas
- marker to write names of artifacts on the cards
- pocket chart for organizing the objects into categories (optional)
- about 30 blank cards that fit into the pocket chart (optional)
- masking tape (optional)

For each group of 3 students:

- maps of midden artifacts made in Session 5
- 1 egg carton containing the team's artifacts
- 3 pieces of 8 1/2" x 11" paper for describing an artifact
- 3 pencils
- 1 ruler