

Mini Archaeological Dig

For a mini dig you will need:

- a disposable, foil lasagna pan
- a small bag of play sand
- six pencils or dowel rods about 10" long
- twine and duct tape
- small plastic sealable baggies
- a plastic spoon and a small paint brush for digging
- an assortment of "artifacts"

The artifacts can be dollhouse or other small toys you may have around the house that resemble household items like a bowl or a spoon, a basket, perhaps some food, like a tiny ear of corn, or a bone.

First, layer sand into the pan, as you go, concealing scattered "artifacts" and covering them up. Set up a grid across the dig site taping pencils or dowels to the sides of the pan (two evenly spaced on each of the long sides and one in the middle at either end) and connecting with the twine so as to create six equal squares.

Next, have your students started excavating with their spoons, brushing away sand as needed with the paint brush. As artifacts are discovered, chart, bag and label the finds, completing the artifact log sheet (at the end).



Discovering the first artifact, carefully chart (which quadrant), bag and label it.



Mark the second find on the dig artifact log diagram.



Continue the excavation, moving to another quadrant.



You may be disappointed not to find anything new in some quadrants. Archaeologists often dig for days or weeks before making even one small discovery.



Some students enjoy brushing away sand from the artifacts...even more than digging!



Make sure to find all the artifacts. After careful examination and a little creative thinking, decide what you think they are... are you correct?



Even pint-sized archaeologists keep meticulous records. Record each artifact's quadrant number, description and predicted use, and draw a picture of each item.

Archaeological Dig Artifact Log

Draw an X where each artifact is found on the grid diagram below. Place each artifact in a small plastic bag. Label each bag with the correct quadrant number, example – A2

How many did you find?

When you have finished excavating, record more information about each artifact on an Artifact Log Sheet. First, write the quadrant number where the artifact was found. Next, describe the artifact. What color is it? What shape is it? How does it feel? Then, predict what it is or how it was used. Finally, draw a picture of the artifact.

	A	B	C
1			
2			

Artifact Log Sheet

Quadrant: _____

Description:

Prediction:

Drawing: