

Archaeology Alive!

Vermont's History from the Ground Up

A History Kit for Students and their Teachers

Teacher's Guide

A joint project of The Vermont Historical Society
and the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

by

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Note:

The items in this kit are a combination of artifacts and reproductions, designed to give students a better understanding of Vermont history. They have little monetary value, but many are irreplaceable. Please handle them with care.



Table of Contents

Using this Kit	page
1. Introduction	5
2. Standards	6
3. Planning Your Unit	7
4. Archaeology 101	9
5. Responsible Archaeology	13
6. Kit Inventory	14
Introductory Activities	
1. History Under Their Feet	15
2. Listening Guide - "Rich and Ancient Heritage" Video	23
Principles of Archaeology	
1. If Pennies Could Talk (artifact analysis)	29
2. Rot or Not? (organic and inorganic materials)	35
3. First In, Last Out (stratigraphy)	43
4. Big Square, Little Square (gridding)	51
What Is a Tool? (artifact activity)	57
Cultural History Mystery (artifact activity)	69
Excavating Vermont Game (artifact activity)	81



Additional Activities

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Squares Everywhere | 97 |
| 2. Shrink the Axe | 103 |
| 3. Body Ritual of the Nacirema | 109 |
| 4. Discussion Questions for supplemental books | 115 |
| 5. Crossword Puzzle | 117 |

Reference

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Glossary of Terms | 119 |
| 2. Resource Information | 125 |
| a. Vermont Archaeology Organizations | |
| b. General Web Sites - Students | |
| c. General Web Sites - Teachers | |
| d. Museums | |
| 3. Field Report Template | 130 |



Introduction


Vermont has a rich cultural heritage that has spanned the past 12,000 years. Teaching about Vermont and local history is a wonderful way to engage children and address curriculum standards. This kit is designed to facilitate the teaching of Vermont's prehistoric and historic past.

The original kit, *12,000 Years of Vermont's Past*, focused on Vermont's Native American heritage. Over the past 20 years, many teachers have used the kit's activities and artifacts to educate students about the people who lived here long before Vermont became a state.

This revised version of the kit is based on the original but incorporates several changes. The most significant change is an expansion of focus to include both prehistoric and historic Vermont. The artifacts that support the activities range from Archaic stone tools to 1890s iron tools to modern plastic tools. The revised Excavation Strategy game includes more levels of history to tell a more complete story. All of the revised and new activities are aligned with Vermont's Framework of Standards.

Archaeology is an exciting field. The prospect of discovering the unknown appeals to the imagination of both children and adults. But archaeology is more than digging. It is the systematic, scientific process that studies past human cultures by examining the material evidence left behind. These things, or artifacts, help bring the past alive for students. It's exciting to hold a stone tool that was crafted over 3000 years ago! Archaeology is also a great framework for the interdisciplinary study of history, math, science, English and art.

Take time to explore this kit and design a unit that matches the needs of your students. Spend a week doing some of the activities or three weeks doing all of them. Encourage the students to learn from the artifacts in the kit and from the artifacts in the world around them. Build on their natural curiosity and the appeal of archaeology to help them learn about the exciting history of Vermont!



Archaeology Alive!

and

Vermont's Framework of Standards

The objective of this kit is for students to use the principles of archaeology and artifact interpretation to gain and demonstrate a better understanding of historical eras in Vermont.

The lessons in the kit address **3 core standards**:

Standard 2.2 **Problem Solving Process** - Studying the past requires research and reasoning. Students are presented with artifacts and must use reason and prior knowledge to learn about the function and cultural context of the artifacts.

Standard 6.4 **Historical Connections** - The lessons and activities in *Archaeology Alive!* address Vermont's history, from 12,000 years ago through today.

Standard 6.6 **Being a Historian** - This kit emphasizes the use of artifacts as historical evidence. Through these lessons, students examine artifacts for cultural clues and explore archaeological principles while "excavating" a fictional site in Vermont.

The individual lesson address additional standards including:

- 1.9 Narratives
- 3.10 Teamwork
- 4.5 Continuity and Change
- 7.2 Investigation
- 7.7 Geometric and Measurement Concepts

Archaeology is a wonderful framework to use for an interdisciplinary unit exploring math, science, reading and writing, in addition to social studies. The *Additional Activities* section of this teacher's guide contains lesson plans to help you expand your unit in math, science and art.



Planning Your Unit

Archaeology Alive! is designed to facilitate the teaching of Vermont history through archaeology. A secondary goal is to help teachers learn to teach with artifacts and help students learn to read artifacts. The framework of archaeology and artifact reading are concepts that can easily be transferred to different situations and historical eras.

The lesson plans are carefully organized to introduce the science of archaeology, teach the principles of archaeology, create opportunities to practice artifact reading, and complete the unit with a simulated archaeological dig. In addition to the lesson plans, this teacher's guide contains supplemental activities and resources, and suggestions for enrichment.

Each lesson plan begins with a short overview. Take time to familiarize yourself with the content and goals of the lessons. The time required and appropriate grade level are just guidelines. Adjustments may be necessary depending on the abilities and reading levels of your students.

This kit is available for three-week periods. Completing all of the lesson plans will take 15 class periods (45 minutes to 1 hour) or the entire rental period.

If you have less time, it may be necessary to select some lessons and eliminate others. Some suggestions for abbreviated units are listed below. The final plan for the unit should be based on the age and ability of your students, their level of knowledge about Vermont history, and your curriculum goals.


If you have one week... focus on the interpretation of artifacts in archaeology. Recommended as a supplement for a unit on Vermont history or for students with a good understanding of Vermont history.

Day 1: "History Under Their Feet" or "Rich & Ancient Heritage Video"

Day 2: "If Pennies Could Talk"

Day 3 and Day 4 (first half): "Cultural History Mystery"

Day 4 (second half) and Day 5: "Excavating Vermont Game"



If you have two weeks... focus on the basic principles of archaeology and the interpretation of artifacts. Recommended for students who have some knowledge of Vermont history.

Day 1: "History Under Their Feet" or "Rich & Ancient Heritage Video"

Day 2: "If Pennies Could Talk"

Day 3: "Rot or Not"

Day 4: "First In, Last Out"

Days 5 & 6: "What Is a Tool?"

Days 7 & 8: "Cultural History Mystery"

Days 9 & 10: "Excavating Vermont Game"

If you have three weeks... complete all the activities in the main section of the teacher's guide. This is recommended if the kit is being used as an introduction to Vermont history.

Day 1: "History Under Their Feet"

Day 2: "Rich & Ancient Heritage"

Day 3: "If Pennies Could Talk"

Day 4: "Rot or Not"

Day 5: "First In, Last Out"

Day 6: "Big Square, Little Square"

Days 7 & 8: "What Is a Tool?"

Days 9, 10 & 11: "Cultural History Mystery"

Days 12, 13, 14 & 15: "Excavating Vermont Game" with field report

If you are teaching this as an interdisciplinary unit... use some of the activities during science, math, art or reading class periods. Several of the following lesson plans are located in the "Additional Activities" section of the teacher's guide.

Science: "Rot or Not," "First In, Last Out," "What Ought to Rot?"

Math: "Big Square, Little Square," "Squares Everywhere"

Art: "Shrink the Axe"

Reading: "History Under Their Feet," "Body Ritual of the Nacirema"

If you plan to pre-teach skills before starting the unit... make sure your students understand how to read timelines. This kit assumes that students can use timelines and understand the concept of change over time and different eras in Vermont history.