

## Make an Archeologist's Field Journal

**Topic:** Anthropology  
**Subtopic:** Tools and Methods  
**Type:** Activity  
**Level:** for grades 3 and up  
**Time:** Approximately 1 period  
**Origin:** OLogy

**Keywords:**

Antiquities--Collection and preservation •  
Archaeologists • Archaeology--Field work • Observation  
(Scientific method) • Science--Methodology • field  
journals • Elson, Christina

### MORE ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This OLogy activity introduces kids to the investigative nature of archaeology and the breadth of information archaeologists record in their field journals.

- AMNH archaeologist Christina Elson begins the activity with an overview of her work, saying that it is "a lot like being a detective."
- Lost in the Ruins briefly explains that not all objects can last for centuries.
- Kids are then given step-by-step directions for creating a field journal. They begin by closely examining and describing an everyday object.
- The activity includes two printable PDFs—a two-page blank field journal worksheet and an example of the same worksheet completed by Elson.

### TEACHER TIPS

Supplement a study of anthropology with a classroom project drawn from this kid-friendly activity.

1. Ask students: What is an artifact? Is there anything in this room that fits the description?
2. Hand out two copies of the blank field journal worksheet to each student.
3. Select an artifact from the objects in the classroom. Walk through the field journal worksheet as a class, discussing appropriate answers and observations.
4. Have each student select an object that represents his/her interests or personality and record details about it on the field journal worksheet. You may want to assign this as homework.
5. Divide the class into pairs. Have students swap field journals and see if they can correctly identify each other's objects.

### STANDARDS

#### National Science Education Standards

**Grades K-4:**

*Science as Inquiry CONTENT STANDARD A:*

- abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
- understanding about scientific inquiry

*Physical Science CONTENT STANDARD B:*

- properties of objects and materials

*Science in Personal and Social Perspectives CONTENT STANDARD F:*

- characteristics and changes in populations
- types of resources
- changes in environments

*History and Nature of Science CONTENT STANDARD G:*

- science as a human endeavor

**Grades 5-8:**

*Science as Inquiry CONTENT STANDARD A:*

- abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
- understanding about scientific inquiry

*Science in Personal and Social Perspectives CONTENT STANDARD F:*

- populations, resources, and environments

*History and Nature of Science CONTENT STANDARD G:*

- science as a human endeavor
- nature of science

**Grades 9-12:***Science as Inquiry CONTENT STANDARD A:*

- abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
- understanding about scientific inquiry

*Science in Personal and Social Perspectives CONTENT STANDARD F:*

- natural resources
- environmental quality

*History and Nature of Science CONTENT STANDARD G:*

- science as a human endeavor
- nature of scientific knowledge

**Curriculum Standards for Social Studies****Grades K-4:***Culture*

- explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns.
- describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.
- compare ways in which people from different cultures think about and deal with their physical environment and social conditions.

*People, places and environment*

- construct and use mental maps of locales, regions, and the world that demonstrate understanding of relative location, direction, size, and shape.
- estimate distance and calculate scale.
- describe and speculate about physical system changes, such as seasons, climate and weather, and the water cycle.
- describe how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and wants and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like.
- observe and speculate about social and economic effects of environmental changes and crises resulting from phenomena such as floods, storms, and drought.

**Grades 5-8:***Culture*

- compare similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures meet human needs and concerns.
- explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.
- explain why individuals and groups respond differently to their physical and social environments and or changes to them on the basis of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs.

*People, places and environment*

- elaborate mental maps of locales, regions, and the world that demonstrate understanding of relative location, direction, size, and shape.
- estimate distance, calculate scale, and distinguish other geographic relationships such as population density and spatial distribution patterns.
- locate and describe varying landforms and geographic features, such as mountains, plateaus, islands, rain forests, deserts, and oceans, and explain their relationships within the ecosystem.
- describe physical system changes such as seasons, climate and weather, and the water cycle and identify geographic patterns associated with them.
- observe and speculate about social and economic effects of environmental changes and crises resulting from phenomena such as floods, storms, and drought.

**Grades 9-12:***Culture*

- analyze and explain the ways groups, societies, and cultures address human needs and concerns.
- apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.
- interpret patterns of behavior reflecting values and attitudes that contribute or pose obstacles to cross-cultural understanding.

*People, places and environment*

- refine mental maps of locales, regions, and the world that demonstrate understanding of relative location, direction, size, and shape.
- calculate distance, scales, area, and density, and distinguish spatial distribution patterns.
- describe compare how people create places that reflect culture, human needs, government policy, and current values and ideals as they design and build specialized buildings, neighborhoods, shopping centers, urban centers, industrial parks, and the like.
- examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Michigan Framework for Social Studies Education

**Strand 2 – Geographic Perspective**

- **Standard 2.1 – (People, Places and Cultures)** – Students will describe, compare, and explain the locations and characteristics of places, cultures, and settlements.
  - **Benchmark 2.1.1 – (Early Elementary)** – Describe the human characteristics of places and explain some basic causes for those characteristics.
  - **Benchmark 2.1.5 – (Later Elementary)** – Locate and describe the major places, cultures, and communities of the nation, and compare their characteristics.
  - **Benchmark 2.1.6 – (Middle School)** – Locate and describe the diverse places, cultures, and communities of major world regions.
  - **Benchmark 2.1.8 – (Middle School)** – Explain why people live and work as they do in different regions.