

Up Close with a Zapotec Urn

Topic: Anthropology

Subtopic: Archaeology

Type: Article

Level: for grades 3 and up

Time: Less than 1 period

Origin: OLogy

Keywords:

Archaeology--Field work • Art restorers • Aztecs • Excavations (Archaeology) • Museum exhibits • Oaxaca (Mexico: State)--Antiquities • Urns • Zapotec Indians

MORE ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This article is part of OLogy, where kids can collect virtual trading cards and create projects with them. Here, they learn more about the Zapotec people of ancient Mexico.

Lead Questions: What is the purpose of a Zapotec Urn? Why was it found in a tomb? Why was it found in a tomb?

- The article begins with Lucy, a student visitor to the AMNH who has come to interview a Zapotec urn in the museum's collection.
- In Background Check, Lucy asks the urn about its purpose, why it was found in a tomb, who the Zapotecs were, and when they used this urn.
- In The Discovery, Lucy's interview reveals details about where and when the urn was discovered, along with a brief profile of Dr. Marshall Saville, an important figure in archaeology who led the dig.
- The interview questions focus on the urn's size and elaborate carvings in From Head to Toe.
- The urn discusses the repair process, which took many months and several experts, in Getting in Shape.
- In the final section, Life in the Museum, Lucy's interview focuses on the urn's touring schedule and its "life purpose."

TEACHER TIPS

Supplement a study of archaeology or ancient civilizations with a classroom activity drawn from this kid-friendly article about the Zapotecs of ancient Mexico.

1. Send students to this interactive article, or print copies of its information sections for them to read.
2. Divide the class into small groups, and have each group select an artifact (either Zapotec or from another civilization you are studying).
3. After the groups have researched their artifacts, have them create a Q&A interview that showcases what they have learned about the artifact's history, purpose, and cultural importance.

STANDARDS

National Science Education Standards

Grades K-4:

- Science as Inquiry CONTENT STANDARD A:
- Earth and Space Science CONTENT STANDARD D:
- Science and Technology CONTENT STANDARD E:

Grades 5-8:

- Science as Inquiry CONTENT STANDARD A:
- Science and Technology CONTENT STANDARD E:

Grades 9-12:

- Science as Inquiry CONTENT STANDARD A:
- Science and Technology CONTENT STANDARD E:

Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

Grades K-4:

Culture

- Time, continuity and change
- Individual Development and Identity

- Power, Authority, and Governance

Grades 5-8:

Culture

- Time, continuity and change
- Individual Development and Identity
- Power, Authority, and Governance

Grades 9-12:

Culture

- Individual Development and Identity
- Power, Authority, and Governance

Michigan Framework for Social Studies Education

Strand 5 – Inquiry

- ***Standard 5.2 – (Conducting Investigations)*** – Students will conduct investigations by formulating a clear statement of a question, gathering and organizing information from a variety of sources, analyzing and interpreting information, formulating and testing hypotheses, reporting results both orally and in writing, and making use of appropriate technology.
 - ***Benchmark 5.2.2 – (Early Elementary)*** – Gather and analyze information in order to answer the question posed.
 - ***Benchmark 5.2.6 – (Later Elementary)*** – Gather and analyze information, using appropriate information technologies to answer the question posed.
 - ***Benchmark 5.2.10 – (Middle School)*** – Gather and analyze information using appropriate information technologies to answer the question posed.
 - ***Benchmark 5.2.12 – (Middle School)*** – Report the results of their investigation including procedures followed and possible alternative conclusions.