

Lesson 6: Site Preservation: Why the Archeological Record Needs to Be Protected

This lesson is divided into four sections: instructional goals, advance preparation, activity, and glossary.

Instructional Goals

Lesson Plan Overview

The student will learn about the ethical issues surrounding the protection of archeological resources. People often have differing opinions about the value of various resources and whether or not they should be protected. Those who do agree on the value of specific resources may disagree on how to protect them. Students will use role playing to explore these ethical issues.

Standards this lesson correlates to

Civics (2005 Standards for History and Government; Economics and Geography)

Grade 7 Benchmark 1, Indicator 3

Geography (2005 Standards for History and Government; Economics and Geography)

Grade 7 Benchmark 1, Indicator 3

Reading (2003 Standards for Reading and Writing)

Grades 6-8 Benchmark 4, Indicators 3, 4 and 5

Science (2005 Standards for Science Education)

Grades 5-7 Standard 7, Benchmark 1, Indicators 1

Objectives

- The student will define stewardship in terms of archeology.
- The student will identify two points of view relating to the science of archeology.
- The student will formulate arguments in support of, and in opposition to, archeological investigation.

Skills Taught

Problem solving, use of a graphic organizer, observation, analysis, reasoned persuasion, cause and effect, decision making, drawing conclusions, comprehension.

Student Prior Knowledge

The student should have an understanding that archeology is the study of past cultures achieved mainly through the study of artifacts and features left behind by these cultures such as traces of structures or fire pits found in the layers of soil. Archeologists use the information they learn to piece together a picture, or description, of the culture that produced the objects. (“Lesson 1: What is Archeology,” the first lesson in this manual, will provide students with this basic understanding of archeology.)



Advance Preparation

Prepare Yourself

- Pull items from the trunk that are needed (see “Lesson Materials From This Trunk” below).
- Read “Background for Teacher” provided below.
- Photocopy Worksheets 1, 13-17 as indicated here.
 - Worksheet 1: Myths & Misconceptions - one copy for your use
 - Worksheets 13, 14, and 15 - one copy for your use, enough copies for half of class
 - Worksheet 16: Position Analysis - one copy for your use and enough copies for three-quarters of your class
 - Worksheet 17: Judge’s Worksheet - one copy for your use and enough copies for one-quarter of class.

Use These Materials From This Trunk

Worksheets 1, 13-16

- 1: Myths & Misconceptions
- 13: The Landowner
- 14: The Archeologist
- 15: The Native American
- 16: Position Analysis
- 17: Judge’s Worksheet

Book

The Martindale Cabin: An 1857 Stone Structure in Greenwood County, Kansas (located in this manual.)

Background for Teacher

Why do archeologists want to protect sites? Archeologists want to protect sites because when a site is excavated, or dug into, the site is destroyed. Archeologists use the relationships among physical locations of objects and features at archeological sites to learn about the cultures they were part of. When a site is disturbed by someone not trained to do the type of systematic excavations that archeologists do, then information about the past is lost. Archeologists also want to protect sites because these sites are the culture and heritage of a people, of someone’s ancestors, and respect needs to be given to those people. Archeologists usually excavate sites that either are in danger of destruction or have a potential to answer an important question.

Why shouldn’t you dig a site if you do not have training in archeology? If you do not have training in archeology, you should not dig a site because you will destroy the context, that is, the physical relationships between objects, features, and the environment. These relationships are important clues in helping us understand past human lifeways. Without the type of information gained from a scientific investigation of a site, the amount of information that can be gained from a site is very limited.

Why must archeologists respect the traditions and beliefs of the Native Americans when working on a site? Archeologists respect the traditions and beliefs of all ethnic groups, including Native Americans, because it is their heritage that archeologists study when they investigate a site. Federal law requires that Native Americans be informed when sites are worked on if there are burials on the site. Kansas law, the Unmarked Burial Sites

Preservation Act, provides protection for unmarked burials, such as Native American burials sites and isolated pioneer graves.



Activity

Opening Activity

1. Introduce the idea that people do not always agree with each other and that the people on each side of a discussion of these issues may very well be convinced that their position is the right one. Ask the class for examples.

Examples may vary. Possible topics might include school uniforms, tobacco used in public places, or parent-imposed curfews. The point is only for the students to recognize that there is more than one side to many arguments or discussions. Not every issue is clearly black and white.

2. Share with the class that archeology is one field for which these same types of differences of opinion are not unusual.

Activate the students' **prior knowledge**. Ask students what they know about archeology. Use [Worksheet 1: Myths & Misconceptions](#) to help clarify what archeology is.

Their answers need to include the following points:

- **archeologists study the human cultures from the past through the objects or site features left behind by these cultures**
 - **one type of research tool used by archeologists is the excavation of sites (places where objects or site features from past human cultures are located)**
3. Have the class imagine that in Kansas a site has been located that archeologists think contains a great deal of evidence about a little-known Native American group who once lived there. Ask the class to predict who, or what groups of people, might have feelings about this site being excavated.

People or groups for them to consider are landowners if the site is on private land, the government if it is on public land, the descendants of those whose belongings would be excavated (Native Americans, in this case), and professional and amateur archeologists who want to expand our understanding of who we are by learning about past human cultures.

There are no right or wrong (black and white) answers to this. The point is only to have the class see the similar differing views in regard to archeology as to other topics, such as school uniforms, smoking in public places, and parent-imposed curfews.



Learning Activity

1. Introduce the class to the role-playing activity. Tell them to once again imagine that a new archeological site has been discovered. The site contains Native American artifacts, and it is currently on private land. Archeologists think that this site is important enough to excavate. The pieces found on the surface of this site appear to belong to a Native American culture about which little is known at this time. The three interested parties (landowner, archeologist, and Native American) have agreed to meet with an impartial judge to discuss their thoughts about this site. Students will be role playing the landowner, archeologist, Native American, and judge.
2. Divide the class in to groups of four. One member of each group will represent a private landowner, archeologist, or Native American, or act as judge. Pass out worksheets as follows:
 - **Landowner.** Give these students Worksheets 13 and 16.
 - **Archeologist.** Give these students Worksheets 14 and 16.
 - **Native American** tribe. Give these students Worksheets 15 and 16.
 - **Judge.** Give these students Worksheet 13, 14, 15, and 17.

Landowners, archeologists, and Native Americans have 10 minutes to read the introduction and position information on Worksheets 13, 14, or 15, complete Worksheet 16, and formulate their opinions and assess their concerns as they prepare to present their arguments to the judge.

The **judges** have 10 minutes to read the introduction and position information on Worksheets 13, 14, and 15, complete the first half of worksheet 17, and prepare for the presentations.

Questions such as these may help to direct the groups.

Archeologist - An archeologist is interested in learning about past human cultures. What would an archeologist want to do? What could be learned from this site?

Private Landowner - If the site is located in the farmer's wheat field, how might the farmer feel about an excavation? Why?

Native American - The site represents a Native American culture. How might Native Americans feel about the homes and belongings of their ancestors being disturbed? Is science the only way to know about the past?

3. At the end of the allotted preparation time focus the groups for the next portion of the activity.
 - Read to the class the introduction from Worksheet 13, 14, or 15 about how the site was discovered.
 - Provide instructions on how the groups will proceed:
 - judges are in charge of their hearings
 - judges have one minute per side to hear arguments and one minute per side to ask additional questions
 - judges will then allow each side one minute to respond to arguments or comments made by another side



- the judge will make a decision about the future of this site and prepare to the reason for this decision. The second half of Worksheet 17 is available for this purpose.

Closing Activity

1. Compare the experiences and verdicts of each group. Have each judge share with the class the decision made in his/her group and the reasons why this decision was reached. Have the interested parties (landowners, archeologists, and Native Americans) share some of the arguments they used in support of their views.
 - Did each group arrive at the same conclusion?
 - Did each group base their decision on the same arguments?
 - Did similar arguments hold the same weight, or influence, in each group?
2. Ask the students for their thoughts on the activity.
 - Was it difficult or easy to see all three sides of this issue?
 - Which side's position was the most difficult to understand: the landowner, archeologist, or Native American? What made it more difficult to understand?
 - After hearing all three sides state their positions, is there a consensus within the class about whether the site should be excavated?
 - Would the class's decision about an excavation change if :
 - the site were about to be destroyed?
 - it was not located in a farmer's field?
 - it was located in the exact spot where a new freeway or reservoir were to be built?
 - the site was in a state park? (State parks are public property.) Should archeologists be allowed to excavate land owned by the state? (In Kansas a permit is required from the Kansas Antiquities Commission.)
3. Explain to the class that many of the thoughts and issues discussed in this activity are constantly debated within the archeological community. There are also state and federal laws dealing specifically with archeological issues. (Information on some laws pertaining to archeological research are available in the appendix of this manual.)
 - A. The National Historic Preservation Act (1966) mandated that federal agencies have to consider the impact of federally funded programs and initiatives on historic resources of national significance and must assume responsibility for the preservation of those resources that they own or control.
 - B. The Kansas Antiquities Commission Act (1967) regulates archeological activities on state, county, and municipal lands in Kansas.
 - C. The Archeological Resource Protection Act (1979) protects archeological sites and imposes fines and jail time for the destruction of sites on federal property.
 - D. The Kansas Unmarked Burial Sites Protection Act (1989) protects unmarked burial sites in Kansas and provides guidance when they are unexpectedly found.
 - E. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990) (a federal law) protects burials and grave or ceremonial artifacts associated with burials.
4. The importance of what archeologists do, and the importance of what we learn from archeology, is evident in the examples of people and groups working together to make archeological



research happen and to preserve the past through archeological research. Two examples are provided here.

The site of a former Pawnee Indian village in Republic County was in danger of being destroyed until being purchased by a concerned citizen and donated to the state. Over the years archeologists from a number of institutions excavated there. The Kansas State Historical Society cooperated with the Pawnee on site interpretation. A Pawnee family donated a sacred bundle for display at the site. Recently a Native American garden was planted at the site. (Information about Pawnee Indian Village State Historic Site is located in the appendix of this manual. Also look at www.kshs.org.)

The book *The Martindale Cabin: An 1857 Stone Structure in Greenwood County, Kansas* is an example of published research completed by archeologists in Kansas. Explain that even after a site is excavated the resulting notes, maps, photos, and artifacts are carefully stored and preserved for future research. Researchers publish their results. Only by preserving what past human cultures have left behind can they hope to learn about those cultures.

5. Share with the class that Kansas is one of the few states to have an active and ongoing training program for “lay” archeologists, the Kansas Archeology Training Program (KATP). This volunteer program provides people from 10 years old to adult with field and laboratory activities, formal classes, and hands-on experience, supervised by professional archeologists. The KATP is run by the Kansas State Historical Society and the Kansas Anthropological Association. (*Information about the KATP is located in the appendix of this trunk. Graphics 7 and 8 are photos taken at a KATP excavation and graphic 9 is an example of work done by one of the teenage “lay” archeologists.*)

Glossary for Lesson 6

Context: The relationship between an element and its setting; for example, grass (the element) in relationship to the prairie (setting); a dam in relationship to the river; and a chimney in relationship to the house it is part of.

Feature: Nonportable archeological remains that provide evidence of use or alteration by humans and is worth noting within an archeological site, such as a hearth, posthole, or cluster of artifacts.

Salvors: People who salvage shipwrecks.

Stewardship: Preserving our heritage. Being a caretaker of our resources.

