

## YAC Attack!: Chocolate Finds

In this issue we've explored how archaeological artefacts survive, and how they are looked after once they have been excavated. The correct packaging of artefacts is very important to make sure that they are not damaged.

This activity will help you think about ways finds might be packaged – and the best bit is you get to eat chocolate too!



Young Archaeologists' Club®

### You will need:

- Chocolate
- Wooden spoon
- Glass bowl
- Microwave
- Greaseproof paper
- Spoon or piping bag
- Pen
- Stamps
- Envelopes: padded and normal
- Packaging materials, eg:
  - Cotton wool
  - Foam
  - Bubble wrap
  - Plastic containers
  - Tissue paper
  - Plastic bags
  - Polystyrene beads
  - Material

### Method

1. Melt some chocolate. The easiest way to do this is in a bowl in a microwave, but you could heat a saucepan of water and melt the chocolate over it. Stir the melting chocolate regularly. It will get hot so be careful and ask an adult to help.
2. Use your melted chocolate to make some shapes on a piece of greaseproof paper. We made simple 'blobs' using a spoon, but you could use a piping bag and make swirls or spirals – or even your initials!
3. Wait for your chocolate shapes to cool down and harden.
4. It's now time to package your chocolate shapes! Think about what type of materials will keep your shapes safe from damage; what won't work as well?
5. We packaged one shape in a plastic bag and put it in a normal envelope.

6. We carefully wrapped another shape in bubble wrap and put it inside a sealed plastic container
7. You now need to address enough envelopes to yourself for each of your packages. We sent our chocolate finds to Norman at YAC HQ! Remember that you might need 'large letter' stamps for bigger parcels. If you aren't sure, take your packages to a Post Office and get them weighed and measured.
8. Post your packages and sit back to wait for them to arrive. Ours reached Norman a couple of days later, having been through the postal system!
9. Open your envelopes to see which methods of packaging worked best. We discovered that the chocolate shape that was wrapped in bubble wrap and placed into the plastic container with the padded envelope survived the journey, whereas the chocolate shape in the plastic bag and normal envelope was broken into four pieces!
10. If your chocolate is edible after its journey, then you can now eat it!

**Extra ideas:**

You can try lots of different types of packaging materials for this experiment. If you have some foam, you could ask an adult to help you cut out a hole the right size for your chocolate shapes.

- What happens if you put a shape in a box without any other packaging material?
- Does cotton wool work? Or does it leave bits of white wool stuck to the chocolate?
- Which combination of packaging did you find the most successful at protecting your shapes?