



YAC Activity Template

Branch Name: Belfast

Leader Name: Naomi Carver

Brief Activity Description: Macro-fossils: Learn about common grains and seeds found on archaeological sites

Materials Needed:

- Sand
- Sieves
- Tweezers
- Mixed bird seed
- Microscopes
- Pestle and mortars
- Quern stone or flat stones
- Coprolites (optional!)

Step by step guide to the activity:

1. Give a brief outline of macro-fossils in archaeology e.g. date wheat first found/used, how processed, what used for etc
2. Set up mini excavations with sand and bird seed mixed in. Allow children to sieve out a selection of grain/seeds
3. Look at grain/seeds under a microscope and try to identify; use common seeds e/g/ sunflower seeds
4. Allow children to have a go at grinding using pestle and mortar and quern stones

Extension

You could also prepare a worksheet, perhaps with a sample collection of seeds and ask what plants were used for e.g. medicines, dyes

Safety Points:

Use a well ventilated room as dust from grinding and/or wear dust masks
Demonstrate use of pestle and mortars and quern stones

If people have queries can they contact you about this activity? Yes / No

Contact details e.g. telephone number/e-mail address: