

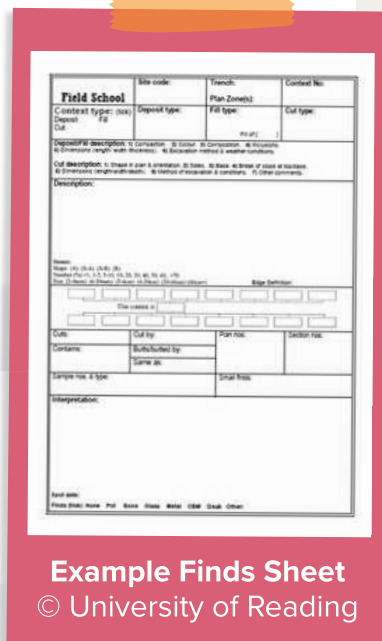


7 Archaeology of Me



Understanding who people were and how they lived is an important part of archaeology. It can also help us reflect on who we are, the people around us, and our environment. This all helps our wellbeing too, it strengthens our relationships, our health, our confidence and more.

In this activity, collect and record items from your life that archaeologists of the future might discover, which could help them learn about your identity, and who you were. Archaeologists must note their discoveries and their thoughts on what they find on a recording or finds sheet. Have a go at putting the information about your items (often called artefacts in archaeology) on a recording sheet!



Example Finds Sheet
© University of Reading

Background:

Within archaeology there are lots of ways that we can learn about how people identified. From famous hoards filled with treasured items like bowls, vessels, and jewellery through to rubbish piles, which show what waste people were throwing away. There is a lot of archaeological evidence that helps us understand everyday life in the past, such as what people ate and what people wore; these are all important things that make up people's lives. Things like books might not last long, but jewellery boxes, ceramic bowls and metal combs can last quite a while!



Archaeologists can recover this information using different techniques, such as excavation, bioarchaeological analysis of skeletons and more! We must look at individuals from all walks of life, not just the famous people we know from history books. Learning about how people lived their everyday lives is something archaeology is incredibly useful for.



Read on to find out some famous examples where archaeologists found out more about people's identities in the past, before having a go at recording your identity.

Traprain Treasure

The Traprain Treasure is a Roman hoard that was found in East Lothian in Scotland. A hoard might not tell us about one person specifically, but it can give us an idea of how a society might have used objects, in this case silver objects. This hoard was full of lots of different items, like bowls, coins, and jewellery. The archaeologists who worked on this were able to establish that some of these might have been used for fancy dining experiences, beauty routines or more personal uses like a belt fitting. Do you have anything at home like this that might last for hundreds of years?

Replica of a Vae from The Traprain Hoard
© National Museums Scotland



The Traprain Hoard
© National Museums Scotland

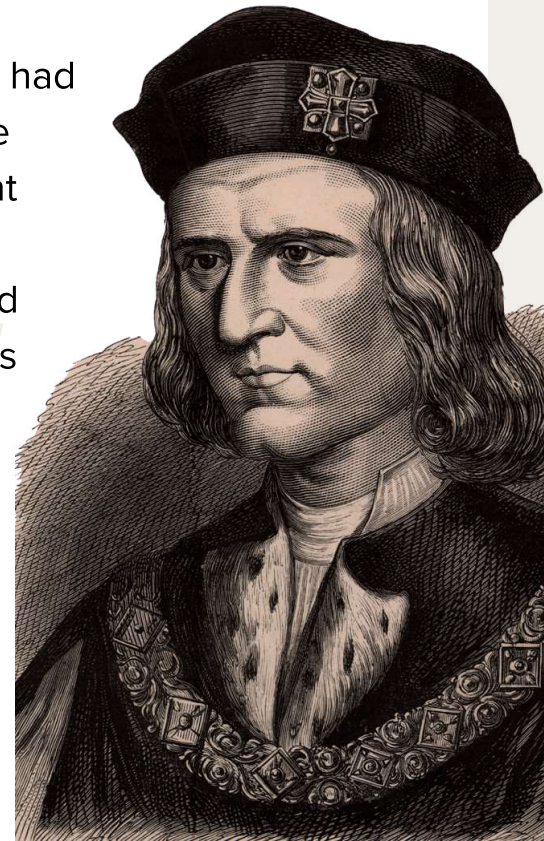


The Traprain Hoard
© National Museums Scotland



King Richard III

The recovery of the remains of King Richard III is a famous excavation in which archaeologists went searching to see if they could find where he had been buried. They had historical records which said he had died in battle, and where he had been buried afterwards but that graveyard had since been lost. The team got to work in what was then a carpark and found a skeleton that had the potential to be that of King Richard III. Once the skeleton had been unearthed, archaeologists spent months building a bioarchaeological profile to discover if the remains were his. This work included finding out the sex, age and physical characteristics of the buried individual. The archaeologists were able to match the historical descriptions of him with the remains. For example, we know he was quite small and so was the skeleton. He also had injuries that indicated that he died a violent death, possibly in battle. This is a really cool example of how archaeologists can find missing people from the past and learn more about them!



The Excavation in the Car Park
© University of Leicester



Professor Turi King Preparing to work in the DNA Lab
© University of Leicester

Activity: Record your identity

Age 8+
Time: 20
minutes

What objects could a future archaeologists find in your home that will help them understand who you were? Have a look around at home and draw the items on the record sheet. Make sure that they will last in the archaeological record!

Method

1. Print the Recording Sheet below

2. Go around your room/home and find some objects that an archaeologist might find in the future. Do you have a bookshelf that could tell someone you loved to read? Or maybe you have a bunk bed that you share with a sibling; this might show someone that more than one person lived in your room.

3. Have a go at drawing these objects on your Recording Sheet. Add some colours too so you have the full picture.

4. Have a go at analysing them and seeing what someone else might think about your objects! What could a future archaeologist find out about you? A lot of materials wouldn't last very long in the environment, so have a think about how long your object would last.

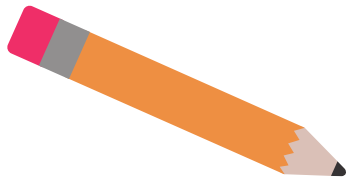
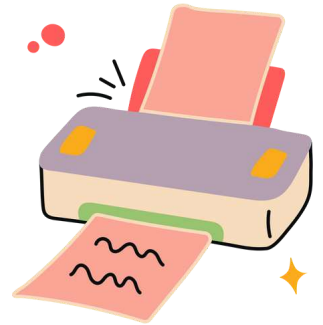
Bonus Activity

1. Ask someone else in your house if you can try completing a record sheet for them. See if you can work out their favourite objects, and what that says about them.

2. Once you've completed their sheet, share your hard work with them and see if they would have said anything different. Ask them what their favourite things are, and if they think there are any objects that would represent this in the future archaeological record.

What you will need

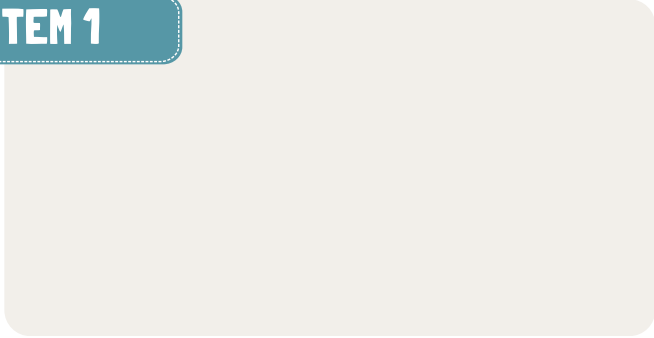
- A printer
- A pen or pencil



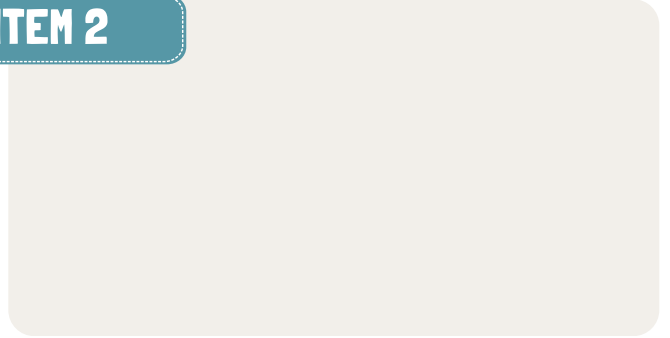
Recording Sheet: Archaeology of Me

Site Name _____ Location _____ Date _____

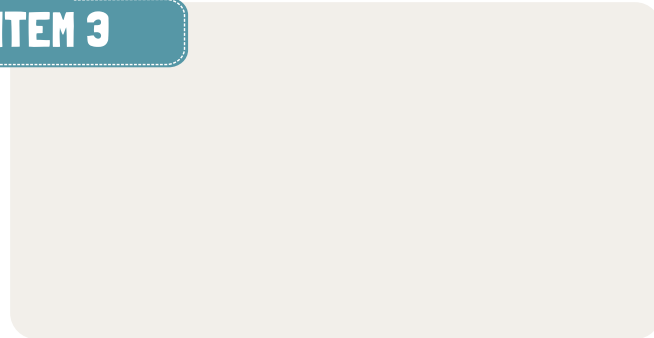
ITEM 1



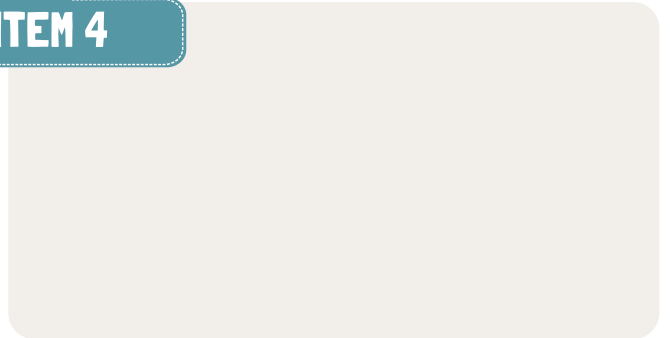
ITEM 2



ITEM 3



ITEM 4



WHAT?

What are these objects? What are they made from?

WHO?

Who do you think that these objects were used by?

WHAT?

What can we tell about the person who owned these objects?

AGE?

How old are these objects? What would they look like in 100 years?

Wellbeing Connections

This activity shows how archaeology can help us understand not only other people, but also ourselves! Here are some more examples of ways archaeology supports our wellbeing:

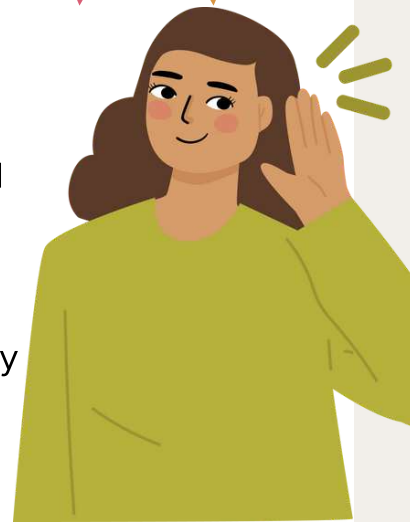
1. Archaeology helps connect us with other people. This activity helps us find out what objects other people feel attached to. This shows how they identify and the things they like.

2. By walking around your environment and looking at what you can see, it helps us both be physically active and understand the space we live in. In archaeology we do this a lot for environments from the past. Looking around places people used to use helps us understand how people of the past interacted with their space.

3. Learning new skills is both important and exciting. Skills from this activity like recording, analysis and having conversations all help make us feel good about ourselves and helps develop our interests.

4. It is important to give time to each other. By learning about others, it can help us feel closer to our friends and family.

5. Understanding ourselves and what things make us who we are, is really important. Looking around at how you live and what you like helps us appreciate the present moment, and how cool we are as individuals. Archaeology can help us think about what we leave behind too, and what objects will last after we are gone.



FURTHER INFORMATION

- [More information on Traprain Treasure](#)
- [The identification of Richard III](#)
- [Archaeological Context Sheets](#)

