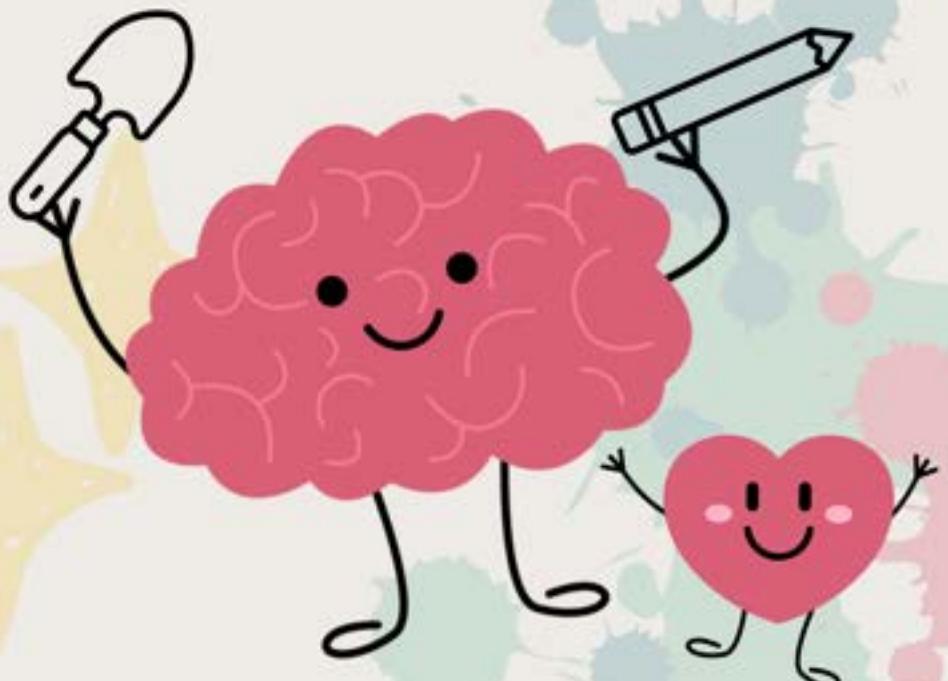




Archaeology and Wellbeing Resource Pack





Hi there!

Hello!

To celebrate the 2025 Festival of Archaeology, the Young Archaeologists' Club

(YAC) has created a bumper resource pack filled with inspiring activity ideas based on this year's theme: Archaeology and Wellbeing.

At its heart, archaeology is about people: how we explore and interpret the past through the lens of the present. It connects us to the stories, places, and communities that shape who we are. Archaeology also has a unique ability to bring people together, spark curiosity, and support our wellbeing by encouraging us to slow down, get creative, and explore the world around us.

This resource pack has been co-created by young people for young people. All of the resources have been created by the Council for British Archaeology's Youth Advisors and student placements. You can meet our contributors on the next page.

Together they have created an exciting set of activities aimed at anyone aged 8–16 which are free to access.





Hsiao Hsuan Chiang

Hsiao is currently studying for an MA in Cultural Heritage Management at the University of York. As part of her course she completed a placement with CBA where she created the *Stories and Patterns of the Austronesian in Taiwan* activity.

Samuel Lou

Sam is a Youth Advisor, Visitor Experience Officer at Maidstone Museum and a freelance illustrator. She has a background in photography history and is interested in different forms of art. As you might have guessed, Sam created the *Tiles Through Time* activity.



Anna Robson

Anna has a background in commercial archaeology and youth engagement. Combined with her current role as Assistant Curator of Biology at York Museums Trust, she is passionate about the public dissemination of the natural world and local heritage to audiences. Anna created the *Scrapbooking Your Heritage* activity.

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Samiha Hassan

Samiha read English at the University of Cambridge. She now works as a Gallery Education Assistant and is a member of the CBA's Youth Advisory Board. Samiha created *Crafting Traditions: Maasai Beadwork and Oral Storytelling: Mt. Karthala*.

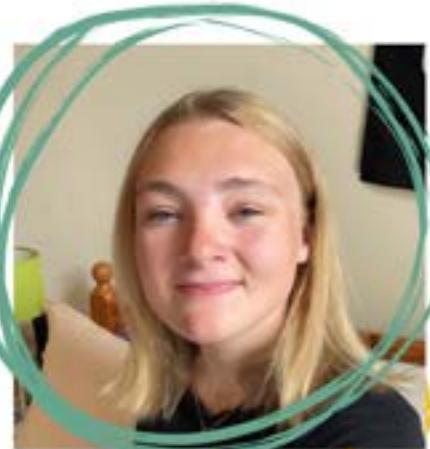


Ihini Aambreen

With a background in archaeological science, Ihini is interested in how human movement and animal domestication have shaped our experiences with diseases throughout history. She is passionate about sharing science with wider audiences, and is a member of the CBA's Youth Advisory Board. Ihini created the *Pause for Paws* activity.

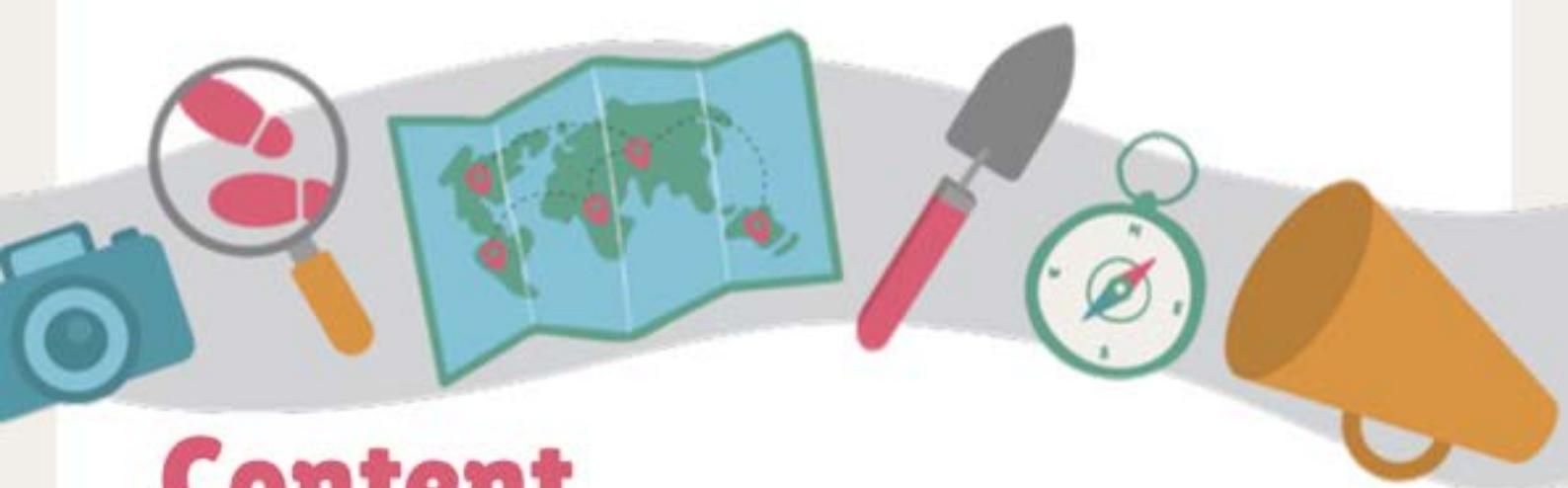
Eva Murray

Eva is a Learning Enabler at National Museums Scotland and a Youth Advisor with the CBA. She is a graduate archaeologist who is interested in bioarchaeology and youth engagement. Eva created the *Archaeology of Me* activity.



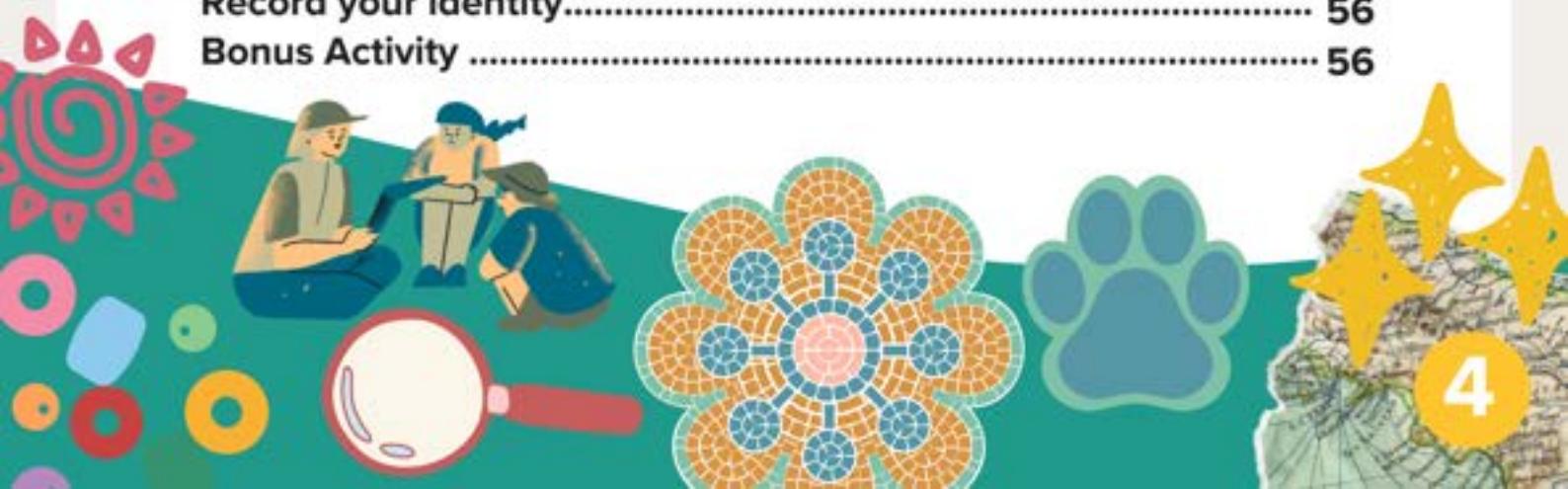
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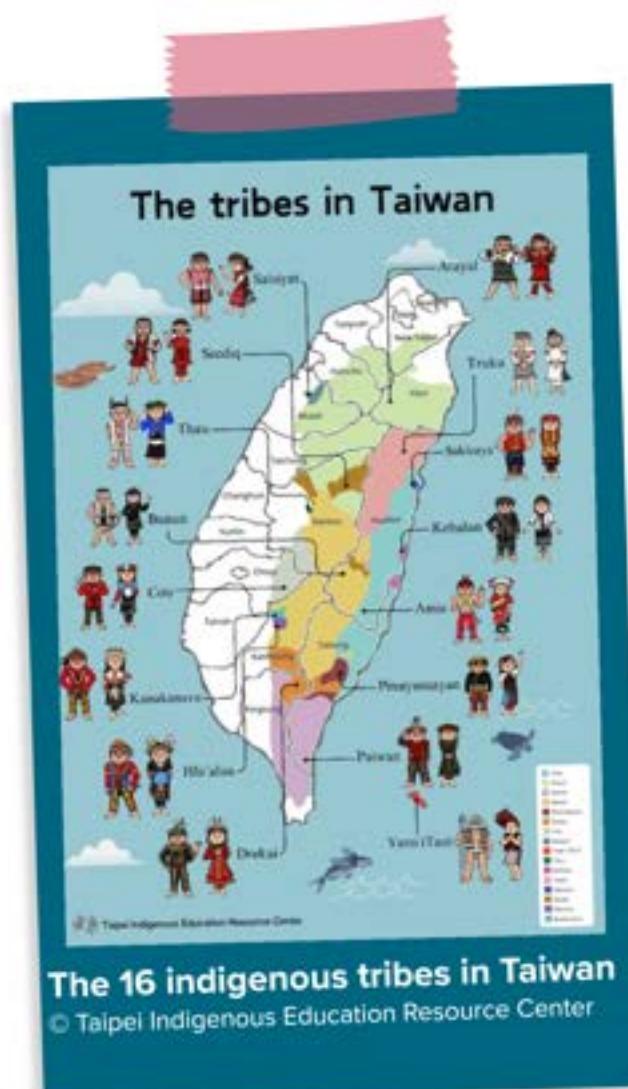
Stories and Patterns of the Austronesian in Taiwan

Background:

In this activity, you will discover some of the stories and traditions of the Austronesian people of Taiwan.

The Austronesian people include many different groups who live on islands across the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Taiwan is home to many Austronesian tribes and is also the northernmost island where they live.

Austronesian people in Taiwan are recognised as indigenous people, including sixteen different tribes. Each tribe has unique patterns, myths, and traditions that represent its identity, culture, and society. Some tribes live in the mountains and have stories about the animals they see there. Some tribes are located next to the sea or lake, so they have many stories about water. All the tribes have a strong connection with nature and place; interacting with animals and plants. Let's take a look at their patterns, stories, and traditions.



Taiwanese indigenous tribes' myths

In this activity, you will read some fantastic animal myths from indigenous tribes and make a story box to tell the myth by yourself!

Introduction:

A myth is a traditional story passed from older people through the generations. They can explain something about the world, like why animals look the way they do or where people come from. Myths often help explain how indigenous people live, including their beliefs about nature, animals, and how their traditions began. From the animal characters and background in the stories, we can tell that the indigenous people have a strong connection with nature and the place they live.

Formosan Black Bear and Leopard myth of the Rukai tribe

Long ago, the bear and the leopard had plain, white fur and were unhappy with their boring appearance. They agreed to help each other look better by painting each other's coats.

The bear went first, carefully decorating the leopard with beautiful cloud-like patterns on pale yellow fur. The leopard was happy with the result. When it was the bear's turn, he fell asleep from exhaustion, trusting the leopard to do the same for him. But the leopard, wanting to save time and to be the best looking in the forest, smeared black mud all over the bear's body, except for a white crescent on his chest. When the bear awoke and saw what had been done, he was furious and chased the leopard.

Finally, the leopard begged for mercy, promising to share his food from future hunts if the bear let him go. The bear accepted the deal. This is why clouded leopards are beautifully patterned and Formosan black bears are mostly black with a white chest mark.



The rooster and stag

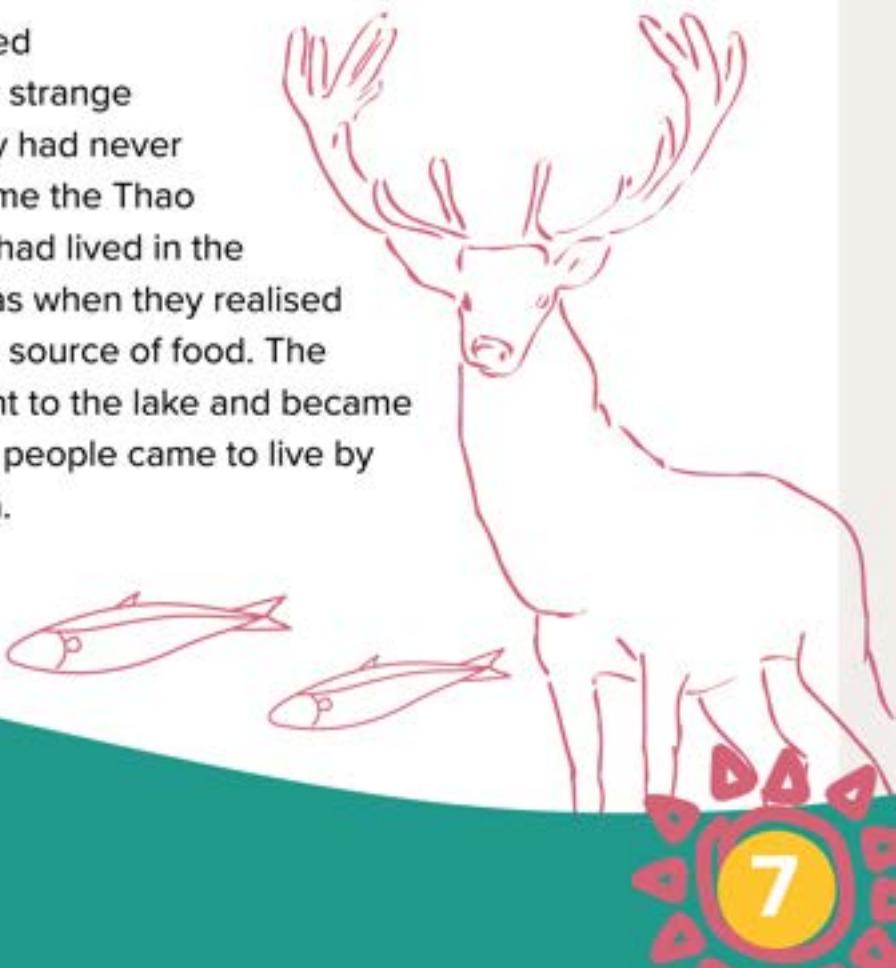
A long time ago, the sika deer (or Plum Blossom Deer with its spotted coat) originally had no antlers. The antlers belonged to the dog, who treasured them greatly. The deer, wanting to try them on, asked the rooster to help persuade the dog to lend them for just one night. After much convincing, the dog agreed. But the next morning, the deer ran off with the antlers into the forest and refused to return them to the dog.

The angry dog turned to the rooster, but the rooster could do nothing except call out loudly every morning, begging the deer to give the antlers back. Since then, the dog has become a skilled deer hunter, helping Taiwan's Indigenous people hunt deer. The rooster still crows each morning, calling for the deer to return the stolen antlers.

White Stag myth of the Thao tribe

A long time ago, the Thao chief and his skilled hunters set out into the highlands in search of game. After many days, they had caught nothing and began to grow desperate. One day, their hounds spotted a mysterious white stag, and the hunters started to chase it. The stag led them on a long journey across mountains and deep into unknown lands. Finally, the hunters cornered the stag by a lake, but it jumped into the water and disappeared.

When the exhausted and defeated hunters sat by the lake, they saw strange creatures in the water which they had never seen before. That was the first time the Thao people had seen fish since they had lived in the forest for their entire life. That was when they realised the white stag led them to a new source of food. The Thao later moved their settlement to the lake and became fishermen. This is how the Thao people came to live by Sun Moon Lake in central Taiwan.



Activity 1: Create a myth story box

Age: 8+
Time: 90
Mins

What you will need

- Printed animal character or your own character designs
- A4-sized paperboards
- Spare paper for background
- Scissors
- A box (smaller than A4)
- Glue
- Crayons, coloured pens



Method

1. Glue the outline to the paperboard
2. Cut the outline with scissors, and do not forget to save some space at the bottom of the character
3. Fold the bottom of the character to make it stand
4. Put your characters in the box and use them to tell the myth to your family or group!



Bonus Activity: Create your own animal myth & story box

Why not try to write your own animal myth and make a story box for it? Follow the instructions below to create your myth!



WHO?

Pick one or two animals as the characters in your story. Does this animal have any unique appearance or behaviour?

What colour is it? Are there any patterns?

WHERE?

What is the background of your story? Does it happen around a lake, ocean, river, mountain, or other natural environment?

HOW?

How does the myth relate to the animal? Does it explain the outline of the animal? Does it explain how the animal looks?

WHAT?

What happened in your story? What do the animals say to each other?

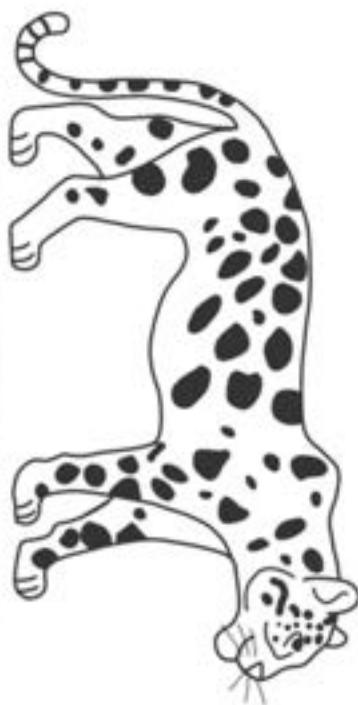
Further resources: If you want to know more about the mythologies of Taiwan, you can visit this website to learn more: <https://islandfolklore.com/category/mythology/>



Character outline

Formosan Black Bear and Leopard myth of the Rukai tribe

Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!

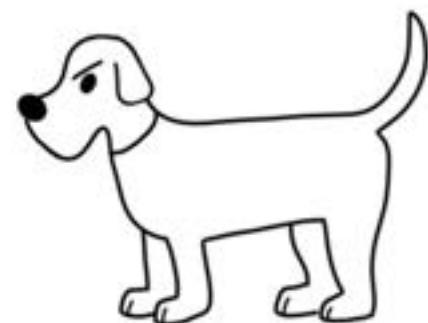


Character outline

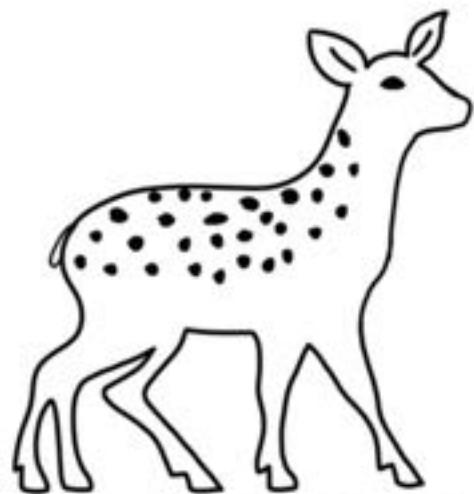
The rooster and stag



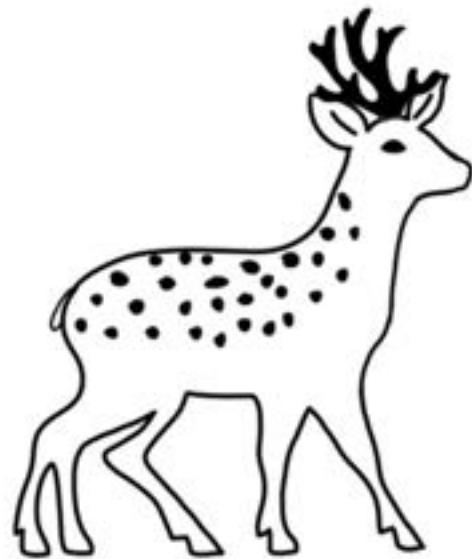
Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



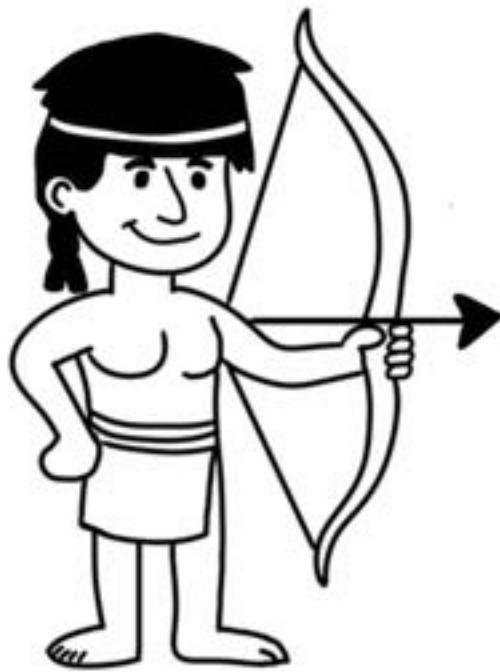


Character outline

White Stag myth of the Thao tribe



Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



Fold This Part!



Ancient Paiwan people's tattoo: identity, honour, bravery and class

In this activity, you will learn the meaning behind the Paiwan people's tattoo and try to design your own pattern!

Introduction

The tattoo for Paiwan people is an important representation of social status. Women have tattoos on their hands, and men have tattoos on their chests, backs, and shoulders. The tattoos show how the Paiwan people understand the world and what is important in their lives. It also tells stories about how people should care for each other, listen to elders, and share with others. The tattoo patterns have different meanings; some can only be used by the noble class, and each family has its own tattoo pattern.



Paiwan people's tattoo on hands
© Taiwan Cultural Memory Bank

Activity 2: Create your own Paiwan tattoo design

What you will need:

- Printed hand outline (next page)
- Example sheet of Paiwan tattoos
- Pen or coloured pen

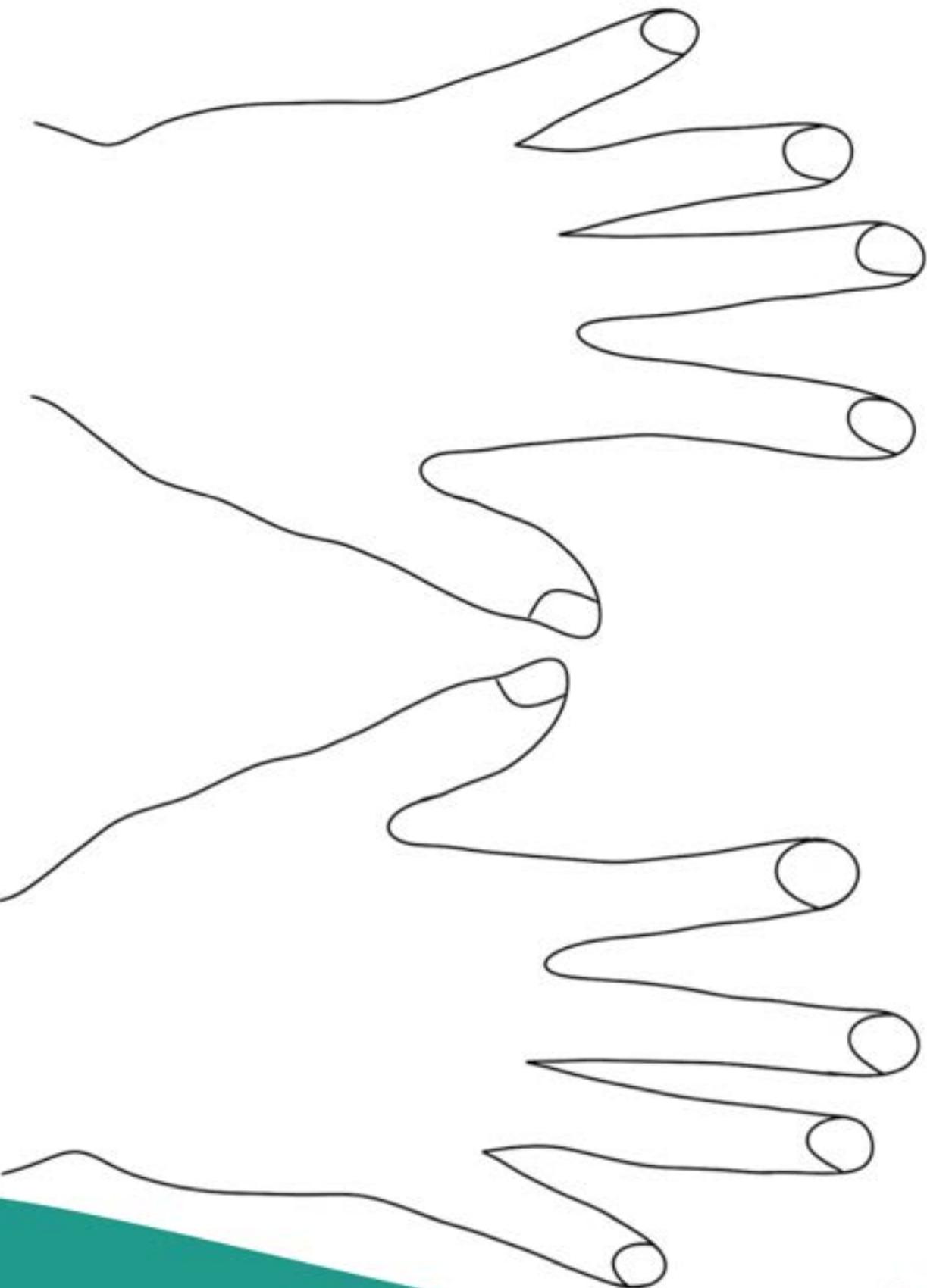
Method:

- Choose the tattoo patterns from the sheet below
- You are also welcome to create your own family tattoo pattern!
- Show your tattoo design to your family
- If you are in a group, take turns sharing your chosen patterns & explaining the idea





Use this page to draw your tattoo!



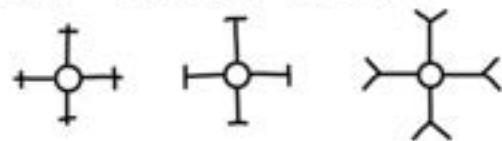


The patterns of Paiwan people's tattoos and their meaning

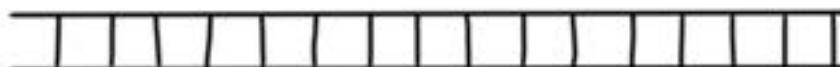
People - Leadership of the tribe



Sun - Child of the sun



Land/Tooth - land, mountains, rivers, and villages



Wave - side view of snake, lake, swimming fish



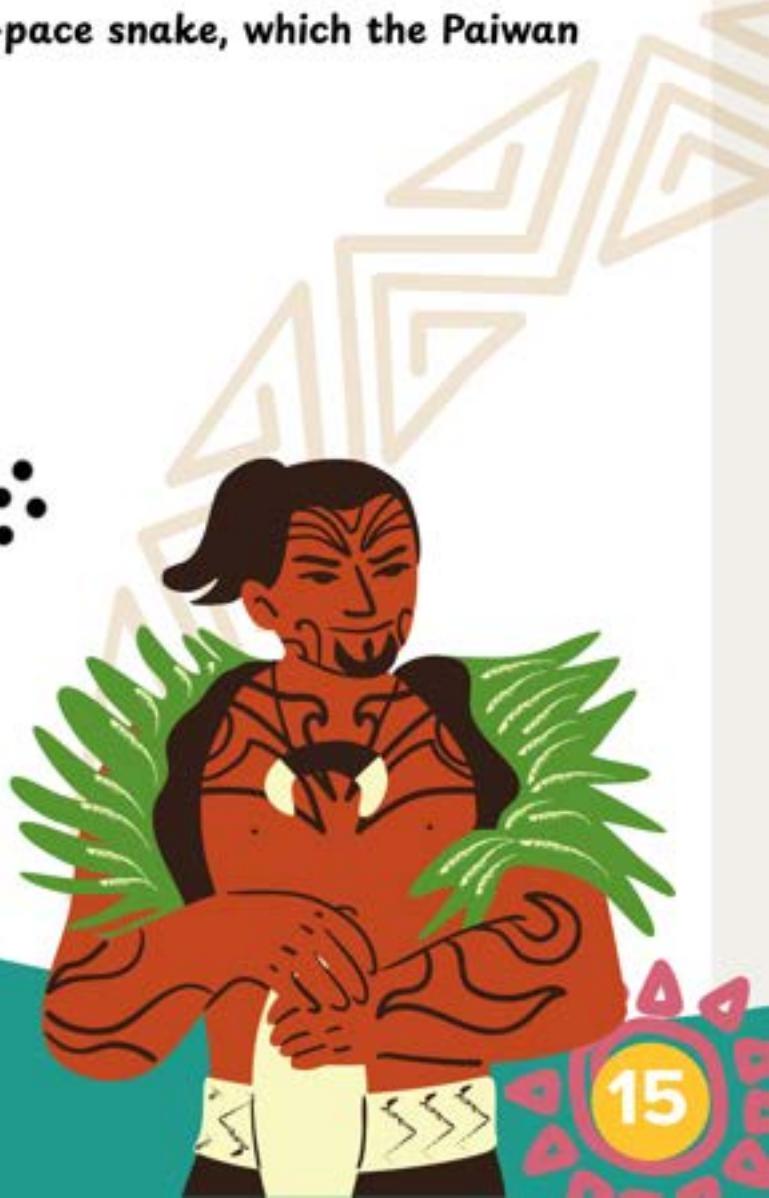
Snake - the pattern of a hundred-pace snake, which the Paiwan people believe is their ancestor.



Common pattern



Hook - The owner of the hunting territory.



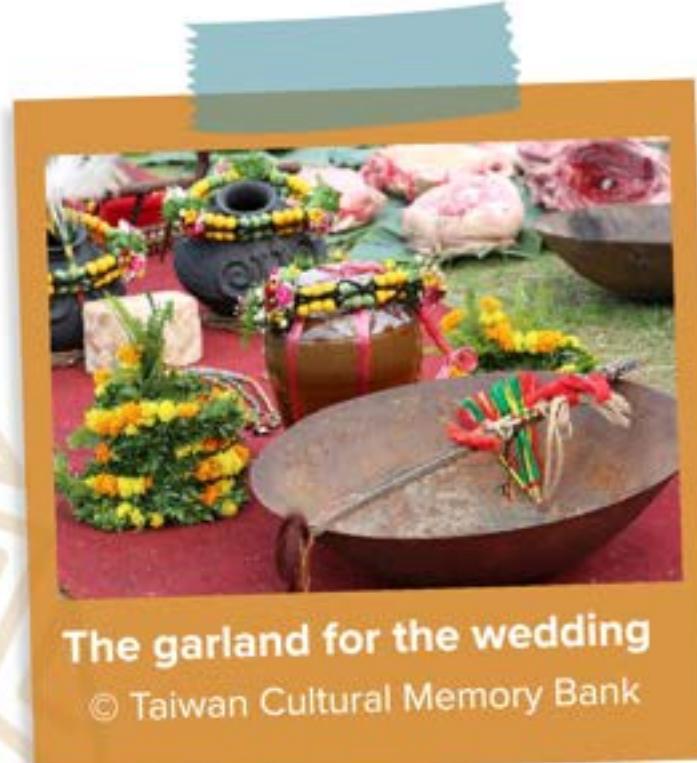
Create a garland for a traditional festival

In this activity, you will step outside, collect ingredients for making a garland, and wear it while walking around!

Introduction

Most of the items used by ancient indigenous people were made by hand, including clothes, pots, and bags. Today, while weaving clothes or making pots has become rare, there is one thing they still make often—garlands!

The garland is an important decoration for indigenous people in Taiwan during festivals. People make garlands for their family and guests to show welcome. The style and ingredients of the garlands can show the class of the family. The fancier and more complicated garlands are only for the noble class, while others can use simple garlands made from fern. They will wear the garland while they dance, sing, and eat during the festival. These festivals usually celebrate the year's harvest or someone's wedding.



Activity 3: Making your own traditional garland

What you will need:

- 15-20 long, flexible leaves or leaves with stems (like willow or yarrow, the plants with feathery, fern-like leaves)
- Optional: flowers with stems
- Rubber bands or string



Method:

1. Collect long leaves or plant stems from outside. You can also pick some flowers if you'd like to decorate your garland.
2. Take three leaves and tie them together at the top with a rubber band or string
3. Start braiding them using a three-strand braid, like a hair braid
4. If your strands get too short, add a new one and keep braiding until your garland is long enough to go around your head
5. Finish your garland by tucking the end into the rubber band to make it a circle.
6. Put it on and show off your garland to your friends or family!



TOP TIP

- Always go with an adult when collecting plants
- Only collect plants from a permitted place, like a school garden or your own garden
- Ask an adult or look it up online to make sure the plant is safe and not toxic.

Bonus Activity: Making a paper garland

Sometimes it's really difficult to go outside and collect the ingredients, so let's make a paper garland at home!

What you will need:

- Printed leaves outline
- Scissors
- Coloured paper
- Pencil, coloured pen or crayon
- Needle and string



REMEMBER

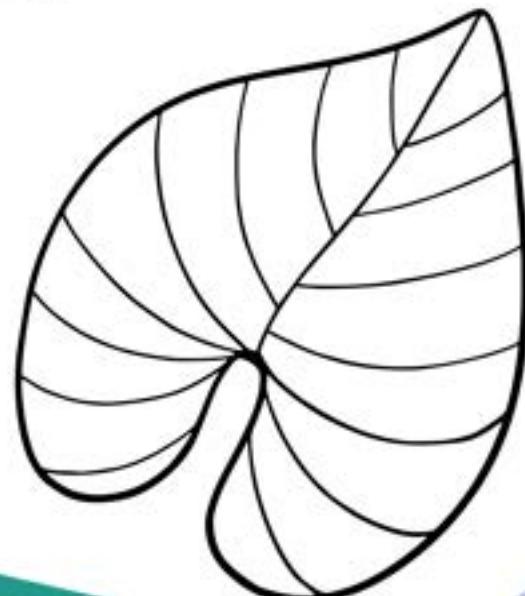
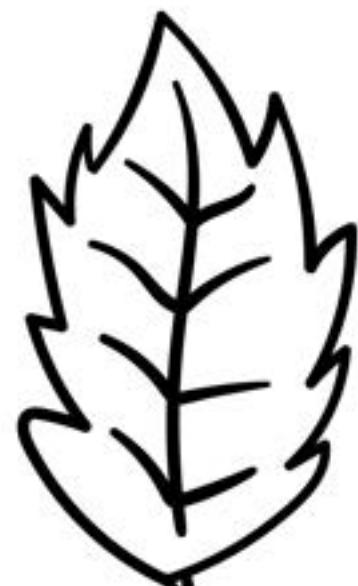
Be careful when using the scissors and the needle or ask an adult to help

Method:

1. Cut out the leaf outline from the printed sheet (next page). You can choose one of the leaves or use all of them
2. Fold your coloured paper until it's just big enough to fit one leaf.
3. Place the leaf on the folded paper and trace around it. You are also welcome to draw your own shape!
4. Cut out the leaf shape. The more you make at Step 3, the more leaves you will get in one cut. Repeat until you have enough paper leaves.
5. Use a needle and string to thread the leaves together.
6. Tie the string at the end to make a circle.
7. Put it on and show off your garland to your friends or family!



Print this page to make a garland!



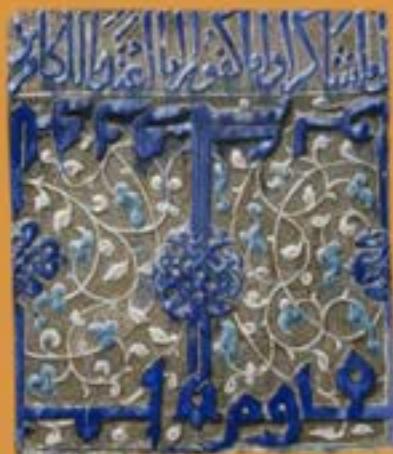
2

Tiles Through Time: design your own and practice mindfulness

Background:

Tiles have been a key building element for over 25,000 years! In this activity, you will learn more about the history of these ceramic pieces while taking a moment to practice mindfulness. Relax and focus on colouring the 'tiles'. You can also get active — have a little stroll and get some pattern inspiration from your surroundings!

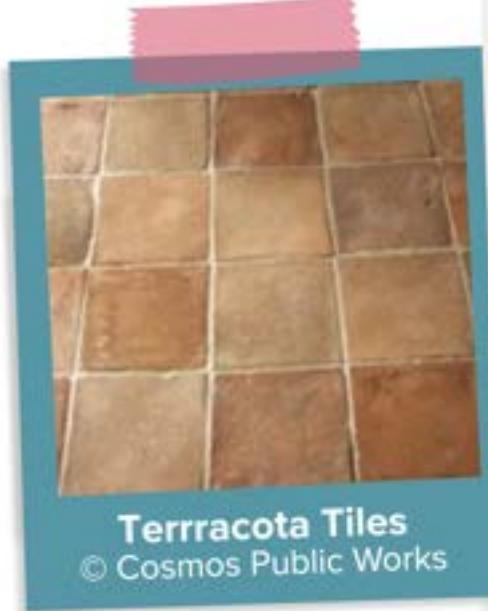
Tile, from the Latin word *tegula*, is a ceramic building material. It can be found in different shapes, colours, textures, and parts of a building. The big tile family includes bricks, terracotta, faience, and mosaic.



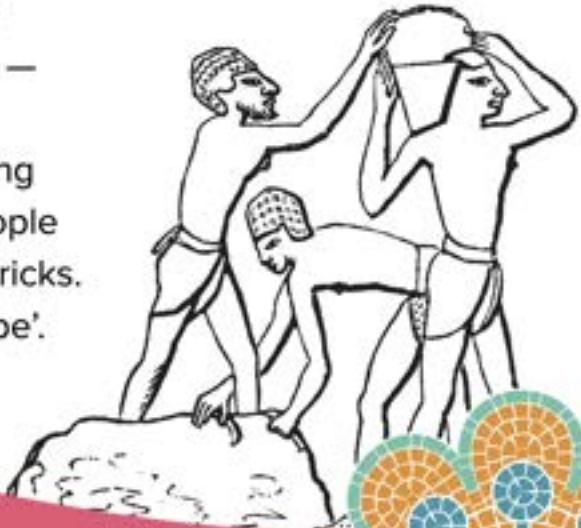
Moulded Fritware Tile
c. 1250-1350

© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The making of tiles started when Nomadic people settled along rivers in the Middle East, Egypt and Mesopotamia. Seeking to settle down, they sought a more long-lasting building material. By mixing the surrounding resources — water, sand, clay and mashed reed, and letting them dry, Nomadic people developed sun-dried bricks. They were called 'Adobe'.



Terracotta Tiles
© Cosmos Public Works



Each kind of tile is named according to its placement in a building, crafting process and cultural context. Here are some examples:



Corinthian Greek roof tile



Lakonian Greek roof tile



Roman Tubili, a hollow tile for distributing hot air in villas and bathhouses

A tile is a storybook crafted on a building. The choice of colour and pattern design often reflects the society's culture, religious beliefs, geographic location and history. Here are some examples:

Figures and Scenes

Tiles on Pharaoh Ramses III's tomb depict a battle scene so detailed that you can see the tattoos of Libyan soldiers. Other glazed tiles found at Nimrud show figures of Neo-Assyrian Kings — Ashurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III being attended by servants.



Illustration of tiles found at Nimrud show figures of Neo-Assyrian Kings - Ashurnasirpal II

Techniques in pigment extraction

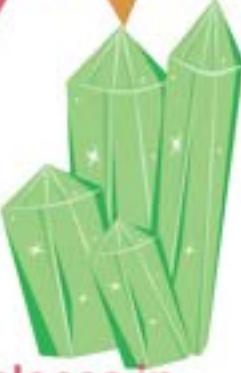
In Aztec ceramics, there is an almost set colour palette of blue, ochre, red, white and black. These are all mineral-based colours — the colouring pigments are made from minerals. The absence of other colours like green

(a common colour in Xaltocan, Mexico) could be for two reasons: (a) Aztec people couldn't extract green from minerals, (b) because of the symbolic association green had, they were not allowed to use it commonly.



Symbolic meanings of colours

Among the indigenous people in Xaltocan, Mexico, green is associated with Xiuhtecuhtli, the god of fire. It is also the 'limited colour' for elites. The shiny finish is associated with jade, emeralds, chalchihuitls and other precious stones.



Glazed Earthenware Tile
c. 1450-1500

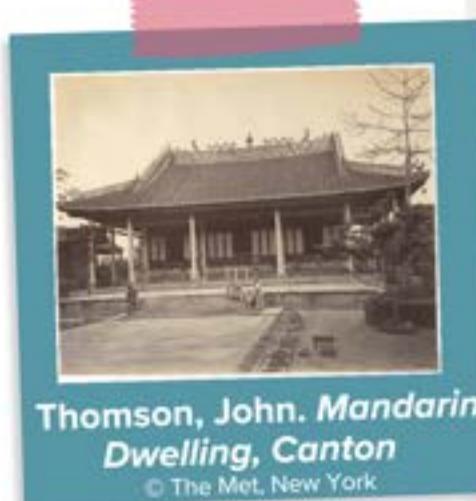
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Lack of characters on religious places in Islamic culture

Tiles in Islamic shrines, mosques and other religious buildings are mostly floral motifs. This is because of Islamic beliefs forbidding the depiction of God's creation in religious places, and also the inspiration from Chinese porcelains.

Pottery figures on rooftops as a symbol of luck and protection

Tiles with drawn-on or built-on guardian figures are seen as a form of protection and a wish for good luck in Chinese and Korean culture. Dragons and other figures are commonly found on the roof ridges of traditional Chinese and Korean buildings as a way to ward off evil spirits.



Thomson, John. *Mandarin Dwelling, Canton*
© The Met, New York

Glossary

Glaze: A glossy coating on ceramics

Kiln: A larger oven, used for firing clay to make different ceramics goods



Terracotta: A fired red earthy clay with more a rough appearance



Faience: Glazed on these tiles added tin oxide, giving a shiny effect

Mosaic: Putting a collection of small coloured glass, stone or ceramic pieces together



Activity 1: Colour your own tiles!

What you will need

- Colouring pencil or your favourite colouring medium
- Printed sheets from this pack



Method

1. Take a deep breath, put on some relaxing music
2. Fill your design with the colour of your choice
3. Display your finished design!



Age: 8+
Time: 60 minutes

Bonus Activity: Create your own design!

REMEMBER

Be careful when using scissors to cut out the characters, or ask an adult to help

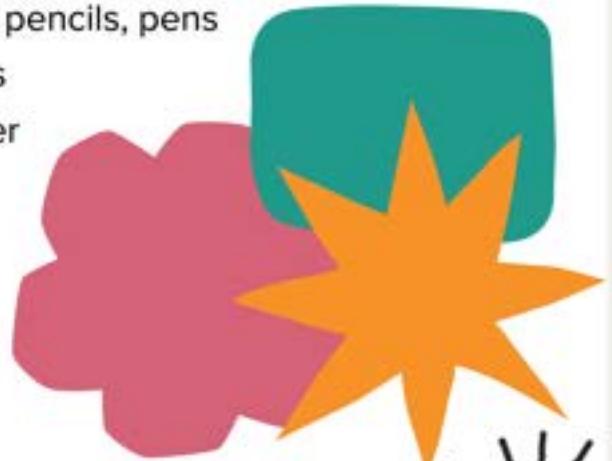


Method

1. Grab a square piece of paper or cut out a shape that you like.
2. Then draw the outline of your pattern / mythical creature / flowers.
3. Colour in!

What you will need

- Colouring pencils, pens or crayons
- Plain paper
- Scissors



You can also buy a piece of prepared square clay from craft shops and draw your design on the tile!



Activity 2: Make your own clay tile!

What you will need

- Air-dry clay
- Pottery-specific paint or markers
- Transparent glaze (optional for shine)
- Paintbrush
- Flat surface for drying



Method

1. Shape the air-dry clay into your desired tile shape — square, rectangular, or even a star.



2. Let the clay dry completely on a flat surface.
3. Decorate your tile using pottery paint or markers. If adding multiple coats, let each layer dry before applying the next.
4. (Optional) For a shiny finish, gently brush on a layer of transparent glaze once the paint is dry.
5. Allow the tile to fully dry



TOP TIP:

When looking at colours on tiles or buildings:

- Colours can mean different things in different cultures.
- Sometimes it's hard to tell if something is green or blue!
- One colour might have more than one name — like in Japanese or Chinese '青', means blue and/ or green depending on the phrase or sentence.



Field-trip or day-trip idea: 'Art makes art.'

Visit your local museum/gallery/heritage site for inspiration! Pick out elements you like from the collection then make this into a pattern or illustration of your tile. You can take photos or create sketches to help you. Add some of your own sprinkle of magic into your design.



Have a little stroll around your local area! Visit a park nearby or country trails and spot for leaves, flowers, fruits, birds and other little animals. Floral and natural elements are also popular themes for tiles!



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

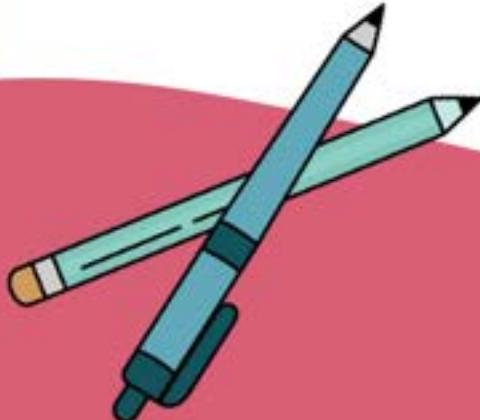
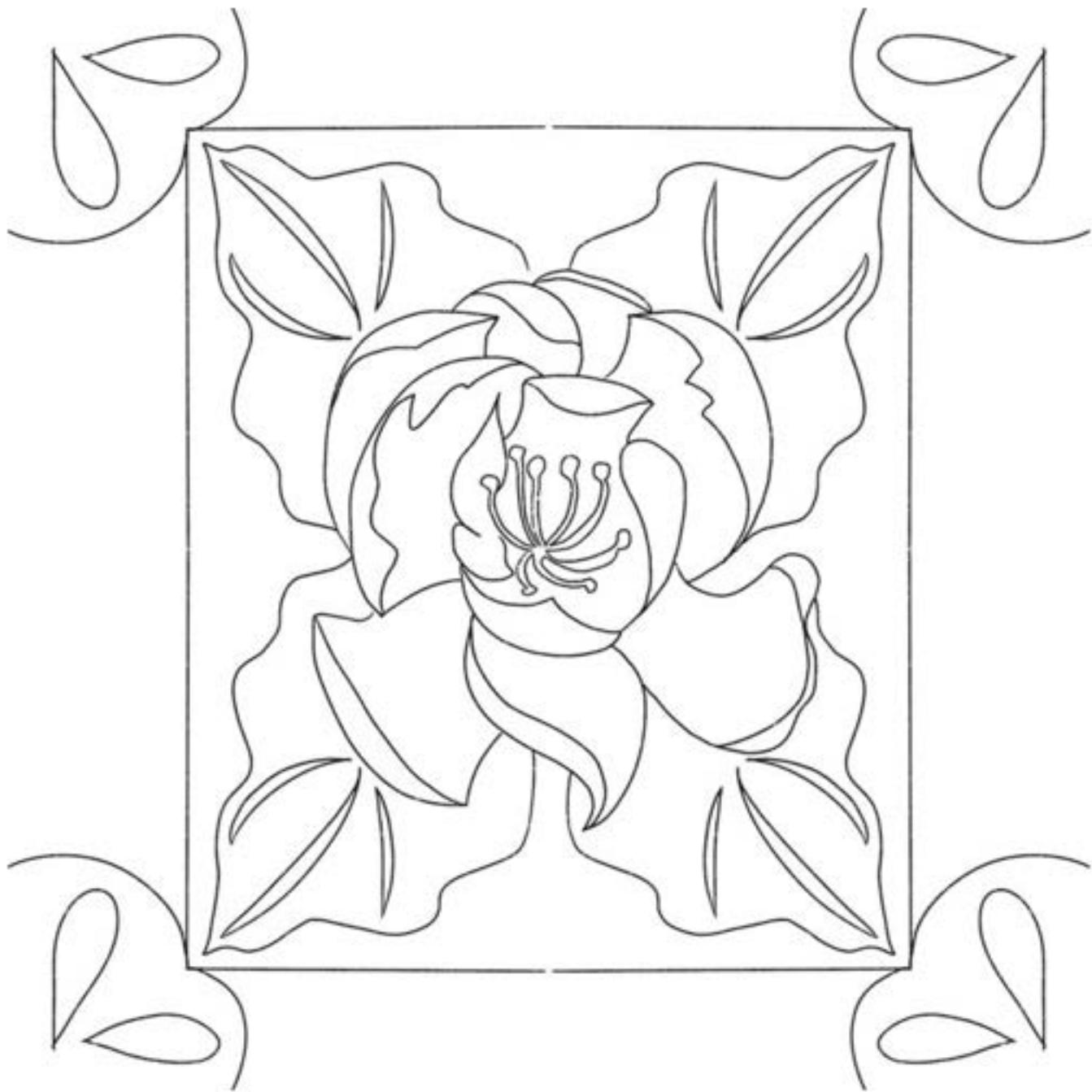
- *5000 Years of Tiles* by Hans van Lemmen
- *The Archaeology and History of Colonial Mexico* by Enrique Rodriguez-Alegria
- *Talavera Ceramics: At the Intersection of Art, History, and Law in Mexico* by Heather Casey



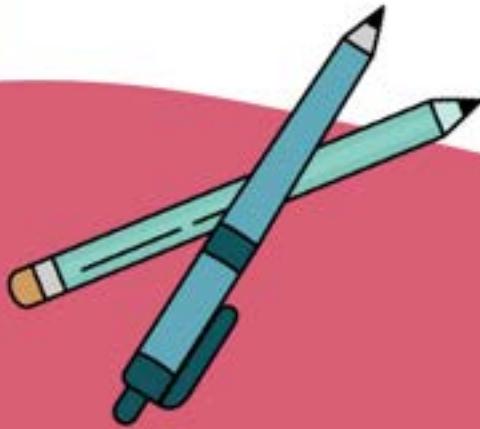


Tile Designs: Easy to Complex

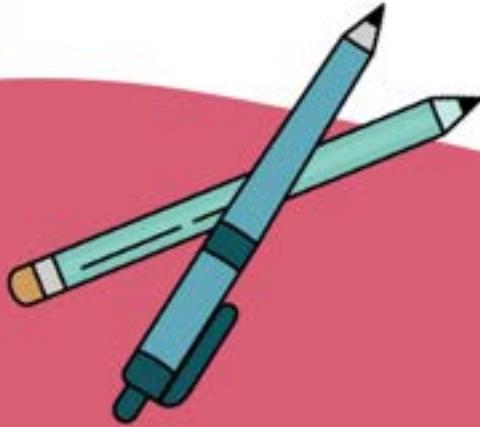
Victorian period inspired floral design



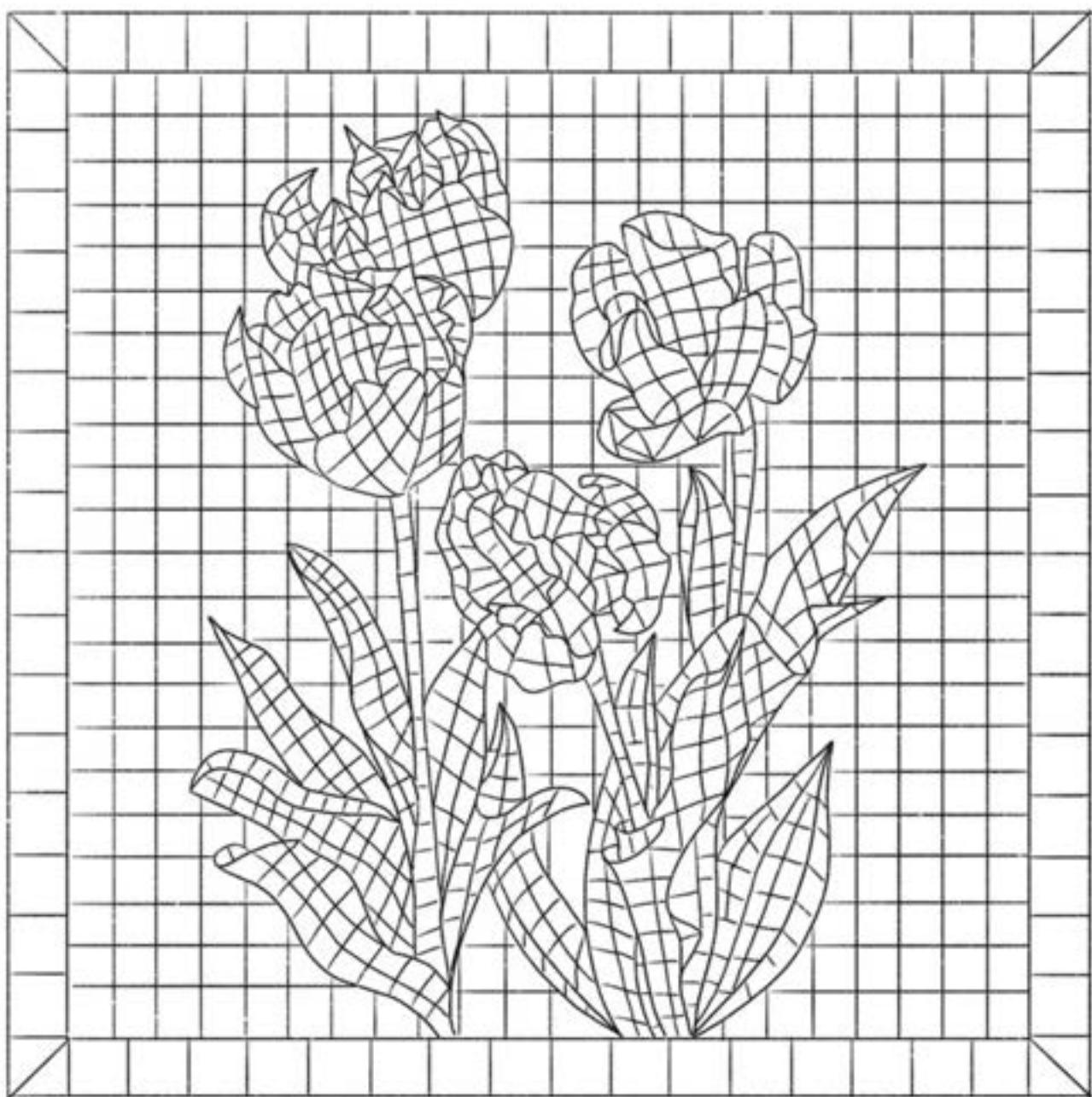
Dragon and cloud, a popular element in Chinese decorative art



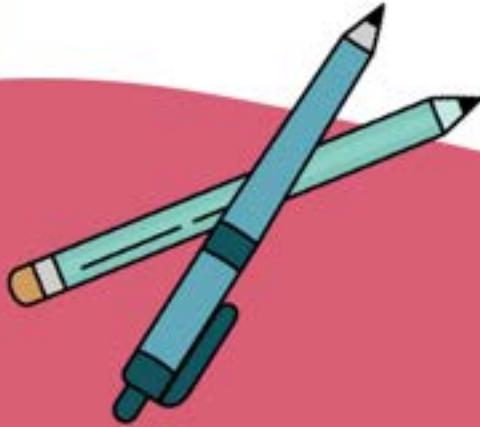
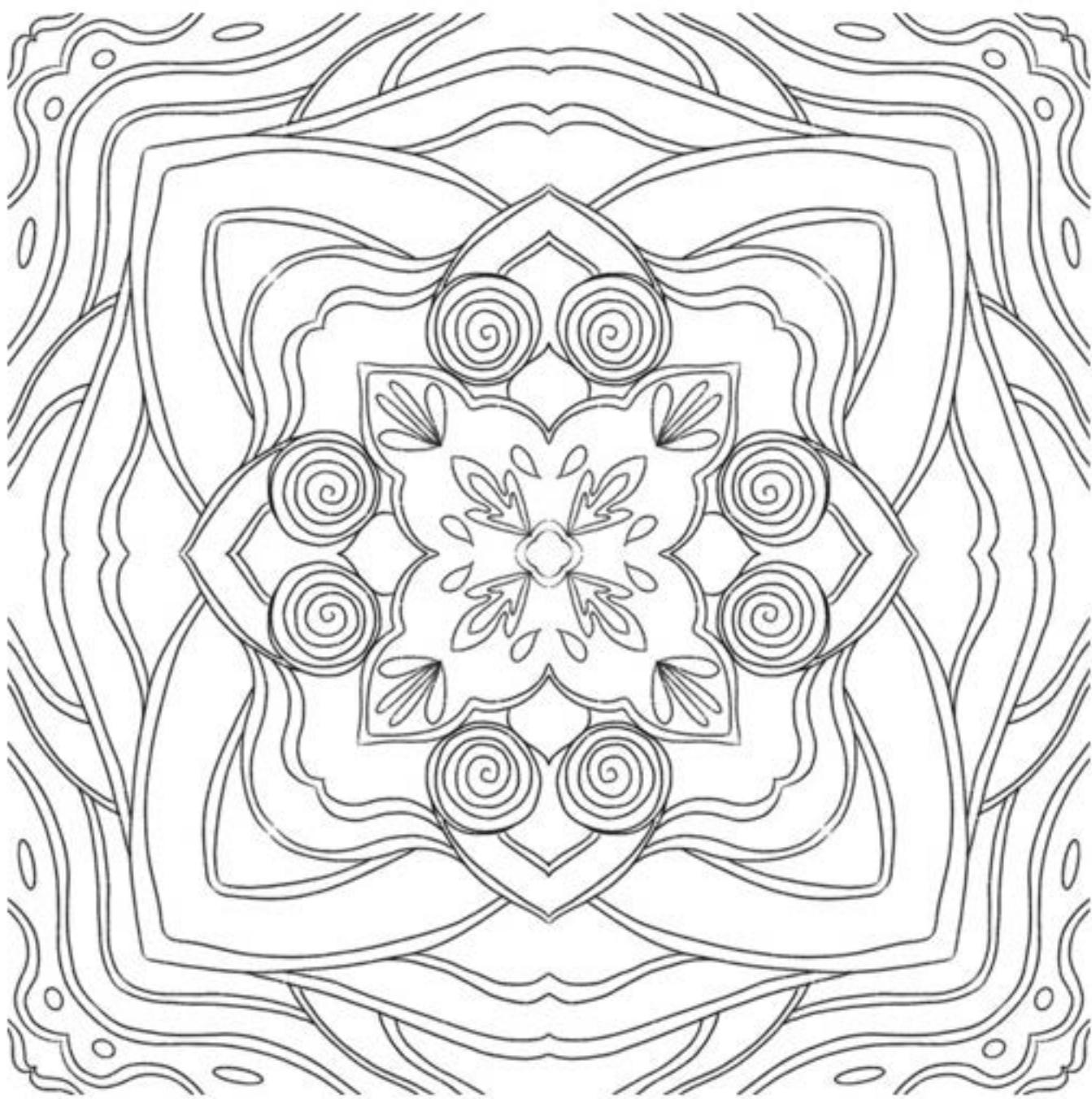
Inspired by the stone lion commonly found at Chinese architecture



Recreating mosaic effect



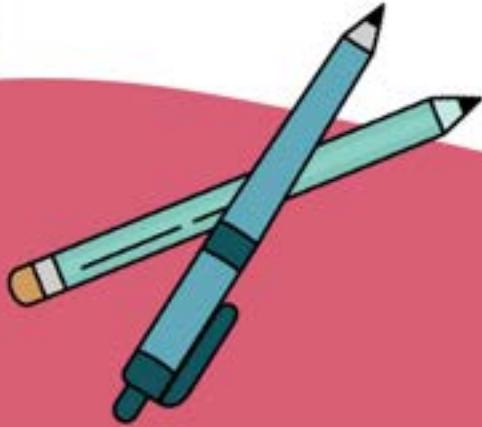
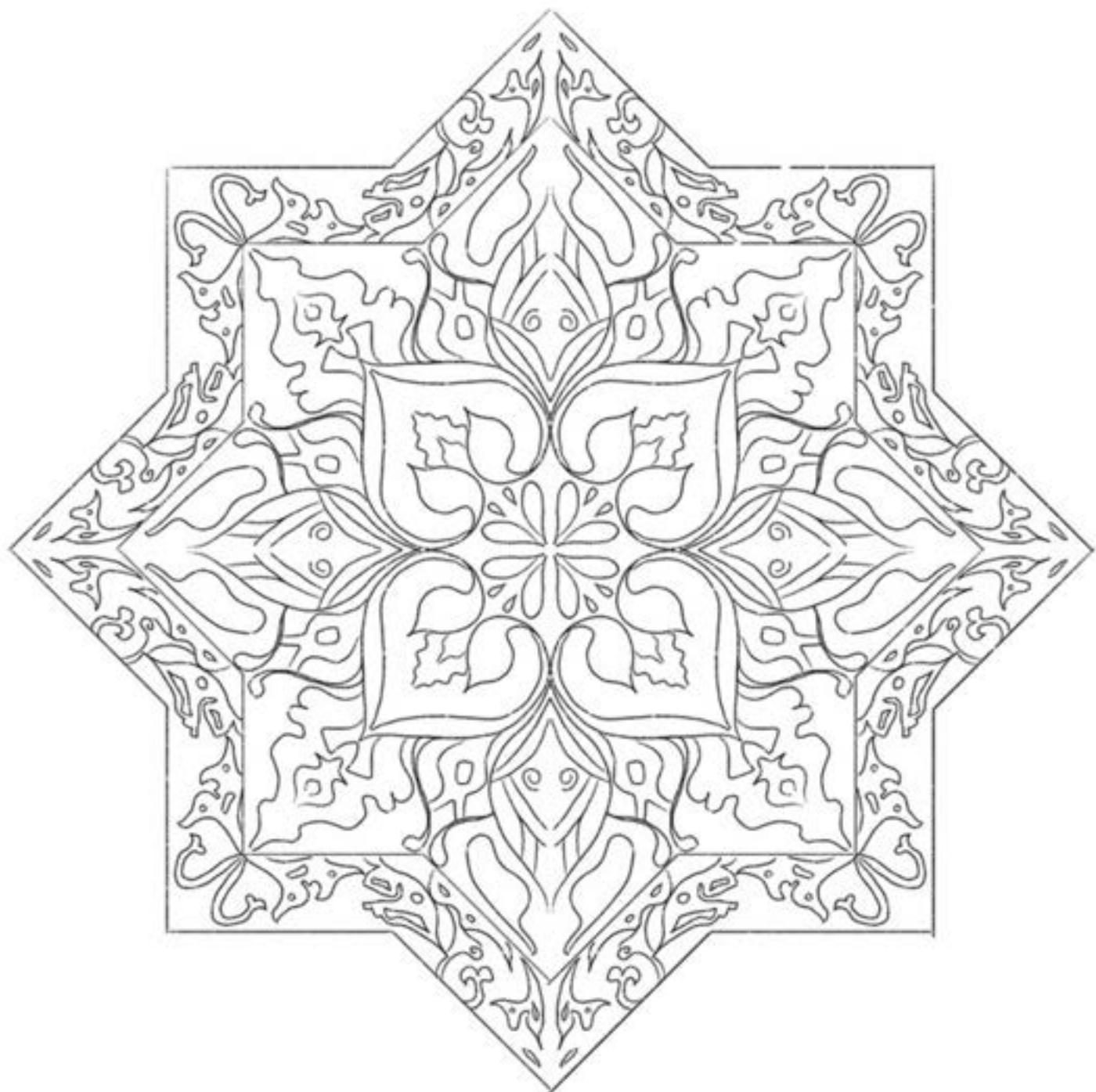
Inspired by the beams of Gyeongbokgung, former royal palace in Seoul, South Korea



Inspired by a tile panel made in Iznik, Turkey

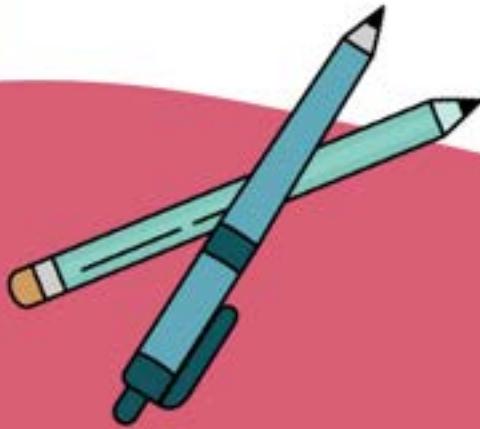


Inspired by a tile made in Iran





Elements chosen from painting frame corners



3

Scrapbooking Your Heritage

Background:

Contemporary archaeology uses key archaeological methods to examine our contemporary society.

In this activity, you will create a scrapbook or collage which represents your favourite historic place, heritage destination or archaeological site.

Through creating this scrapbook, you are freezing in time that historic site and examining what impact that place has on you and the society you live in. Crafts and being creative is an important form of wellbeing for many people, and so too is archaeology and being out in nature.



Activity 1: Create your own scrapbook or collage

Create your own scrapbooking page or collage inspired by your favourite heritage place or historic site.

Age: 8+
Time: 60-90 minutes

What you will need

- Paper/card/canvas
- Scissors
- Glue
- Pens and pencils
- Crafting paper, stickers, newspaper/magazine cut outs
- Photographs (optional)

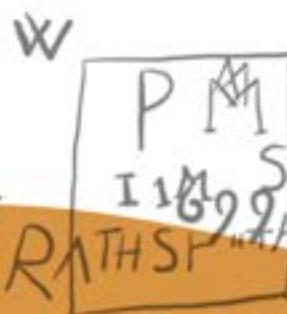
REMEMBER

Be careful when using scissors to cut out the characters, or ask an adult to help



Method

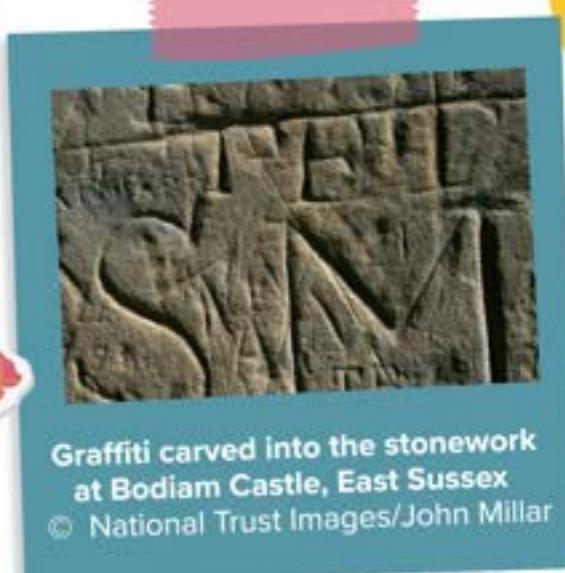
1. Design and create a scrapbook page inspired by your walk around your favourite heritage location.
2. If you are able to visit it in person, you can take photos or collect items like fallen leaves or petals, to add into your collage.
3. Take time to reflect: what emotions do you feel when you think about or visit your favourite heritage place? Does it remind you of your childhood or hold a special memory?



Bonus Activity: Historical Graffiti

What you will need

- Paper/card/canvas
- Pens and pencils
- These instructions!



Age: 10+
Time: 60-minutes



Method

You may have noticed illustrations of historic graffiti on these instructions. For a bonus activity, research more examples of historic graffiti. How would you express yourself in the same style of graffiti?

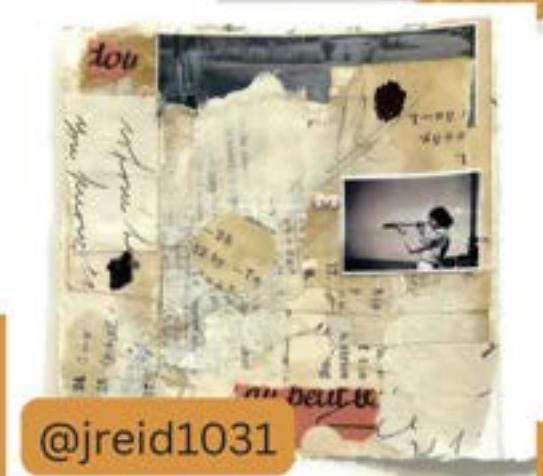
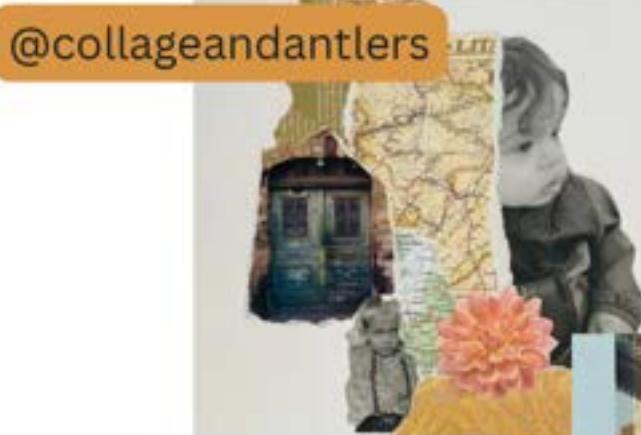
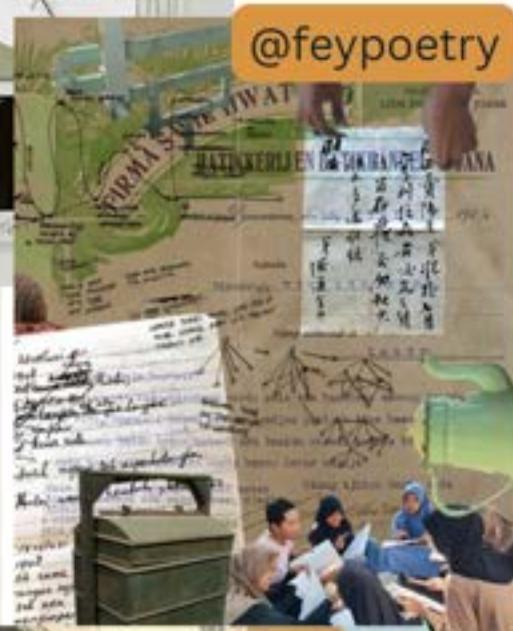
SHARE YOUR SCRAPBOOK!

Upload your creation on social media, don't forget to use the hashtag **#FestivalofArchaeology** and tag **@archaeologyuk** or **@YAC_CBA**, or ask a trusted adult to do it for you.



Inspiration

Here are some inspiration photographs for your scrapbook.



4

Oral Storytelling: Mount Karthala

Background:

In East Africa, oral literature is not just a means of recounting legends and myths or reminding us of the sanctity of the environment: storytelling is another way to socialise and connect communities.

This is practiced across various countries including the Comoros archipelago (four green volcanic islands off the coast of East Africa). Comorian folklore presents a unique blend of Bantu and Islamic oral traditions interwoven into the history and landscape of the islands

Here's one interesting story about the creation of Grande Comore (Ngazidja), the largest of the islands:

What is Mount Karthala?
Mount Karthala is an active volcano on Grande Comore with eruptions happening roughly every 11 years.



Mount Karthala
© alKomor.com

Long, long ago King Solomon fell in love with the Queen of Sheba and wanted to gift her a ring. He sent a *jinni* (genie or spirit) to deliver the jewel for the ring, but suddenly, it was dropped in the Indian Ocean.

- When it reached the depths of the ocean, a formidable volcanic eruption occurred! Once the eruption ceased and the smoke had cleared, all that remained was Karthala and the new green island formed around it. King Solomon, in his anger, proclaimed that there will always be eruptions from Karthala until the end of time...

Fun Fact!

The Karthala white-eye (science name: *zosterops mouroniensis*) is a small bird that lives on this volcanic mountain.

Activity 1 : Let's Explore!

Landscape myths can help us to feel more connected to places that are important to us. Think of a place of nature that is special to you. It could be your garden, the park or even a botanical garden. Do you ever wonder how this place might have come to be?

In this activity, I invite you to go outside and create your own exciting story of how your special place came to be. This is a good way to connect yourself to your community and nature as well as create a time and space to relax and have fun.

What you will need

- A location
- Friends and/or family

Method

1. Pick an outdoor location to explore with your friends and family.
2. Begin to imagine what this place could have looked like before.
3. How do you think the place has transformed? Go outside with your friends and family and begin to interact with your environment. Here are a few prompts to get you thinking about your location



Suitable for all ages
Time: 15-30 minutes



NOTE

The activity is best undertaken with others so that they can share the story or create one together.

PROMPTS

What can you see?
What sounds can you hear?
Is there a specific smell in the air?
How do the different natural materials feel?
How does this place make you feel?

4. Now come up with your own story of how this place came to be. Your story could focus on the entire location or maybe you would like to focus on something specific that you have noticed...

USEFUL PHRASES

Long, long ago...
Once upon a time...
Not so long ago...
One fine day...
Suddenly...
Eventually...
At last...



Bonus Activity

Why not write the story or record yourself retelling the story?



Activity 2: Make Your Own Island

In this activity, I invite you to create your very own island! This is a chance for you to use your imagination to create a unique and exciting environment. This activity not only encourages relaxation but also encourages social connections through play.

Suitable for
all ages
Time: 60
minutes



REMINDER

Please get an adult's
help or supervision
when handling
scissors.



You can also invent your own creatures or imagine nature to form in a unique way (maybe the trees are purple!) For example, some other mythological creatures in Comorian mythology include *nzi* (mermaids), giant fish and sea serpents.

What you will need

- One medium sized cardboard box
- Paint
- Paintbrush
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Small natural materials e.g. pinecones, pebbles, fallen petals, fallen leaves or twigs
- Toys (optional)



Method

1. Go outside (with a guardian) and hunt for small natural materials that you can use for your island. Take your time exploring these objects

2. Turn the cardboard box on its side and remove one of the large central flaps of the cardboard. Ensure that the second flap is lying against the floor. Save the cardboard piece that you have cut.





3. Paint your sky on the base of the box. You can use a pencil to first outline what you want in the sky. Is it daytime or nighttime? Are there any stars or clouds? Are there animals in the sky like birds or a mythical creature?

4. On the second flap, paint your land. Is it a sandy island or grassy? How much water is surrounding your island?



5. Next use the cut cardboard piece to create any key features of your island. Is there a volcano? Trees? Or maybe even a treasure chest? What mythological creatures live there?

6. Paint your natural materials to make them suitable for your island.

7. Once everything is dried you can start to add the pieces to the cardboard.

8. Add any natural materials that you have collected.

TIP

Glue your features in place or simply lean them against the backdrop so that you can adjust the position each time you play with the island

Bonus

1. Add any toys you would like to as your first island inhabitants!

2. Does your island have an interesting story?

3. Does your island have a name? Is there a story behind the name?



5

Crafting Traditions: Maasai Beadwork

Background:

The Maasai are a Nilotc ethnic group that live in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. They are pastoralists who live a nomadic lifestyle that has been upheld for many centuries. One practice is the Maasai beadworks, which expresses their identity and values.

Maasai traditionally work with materials that are locally sourced including colourful glass beads, seeds, shells, and natural elements like bone and clay. Not only is crafting a good way to relax but as a gift, these beadworks can create feelings of happiness and strengthen social bonds.

FUN FACT

Did you know that archaeologists have dated Maasai bead-making as part of Maasai culture from at least the 7th century?!



Activity: Design a Necklace!

Here's a picture of Samiha's (the activity creator) own Maasai jewellery that she was gifted by a relative.

This necklace is made using seed beads, leather, small silver discs, cowrie shells, wire, string, and recycled grain bags for binding the elements together.

Age: 8+
Time: 30 minutes





The colours and patterns in Maasai beadworks have different meanings. For example, the use of black and white is inspired by the proverb: *Maasai bila utamaduni nii sawasawa na punda milia bila mstari* (The Maasai without culture is the same as a zebra without stripes).

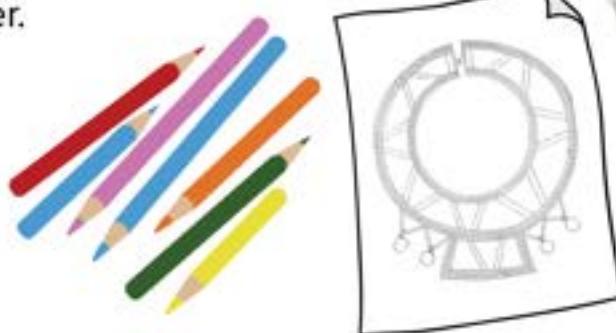
Here is a list of the different meanings behind the colours:

- **Red** signifies bravery, strength, and unity.
- **Blue** represents the sky, water, and divine blessings.
- **White** beads symbolise purity, peace, and health.
- **Yellow** and **orange** stand as signs of hospitality, warmth, and friendliness.
- **Black** represents the people.
- **Green** represents the earth symbolising growth, fertility, and a connection to nature

Using the template below of a Maasai necklace, why not design your own Maasai jewellery imbued with different wishes that you have for a friend or family member.

What you will need

- The template
- Coloured pencils / crayons



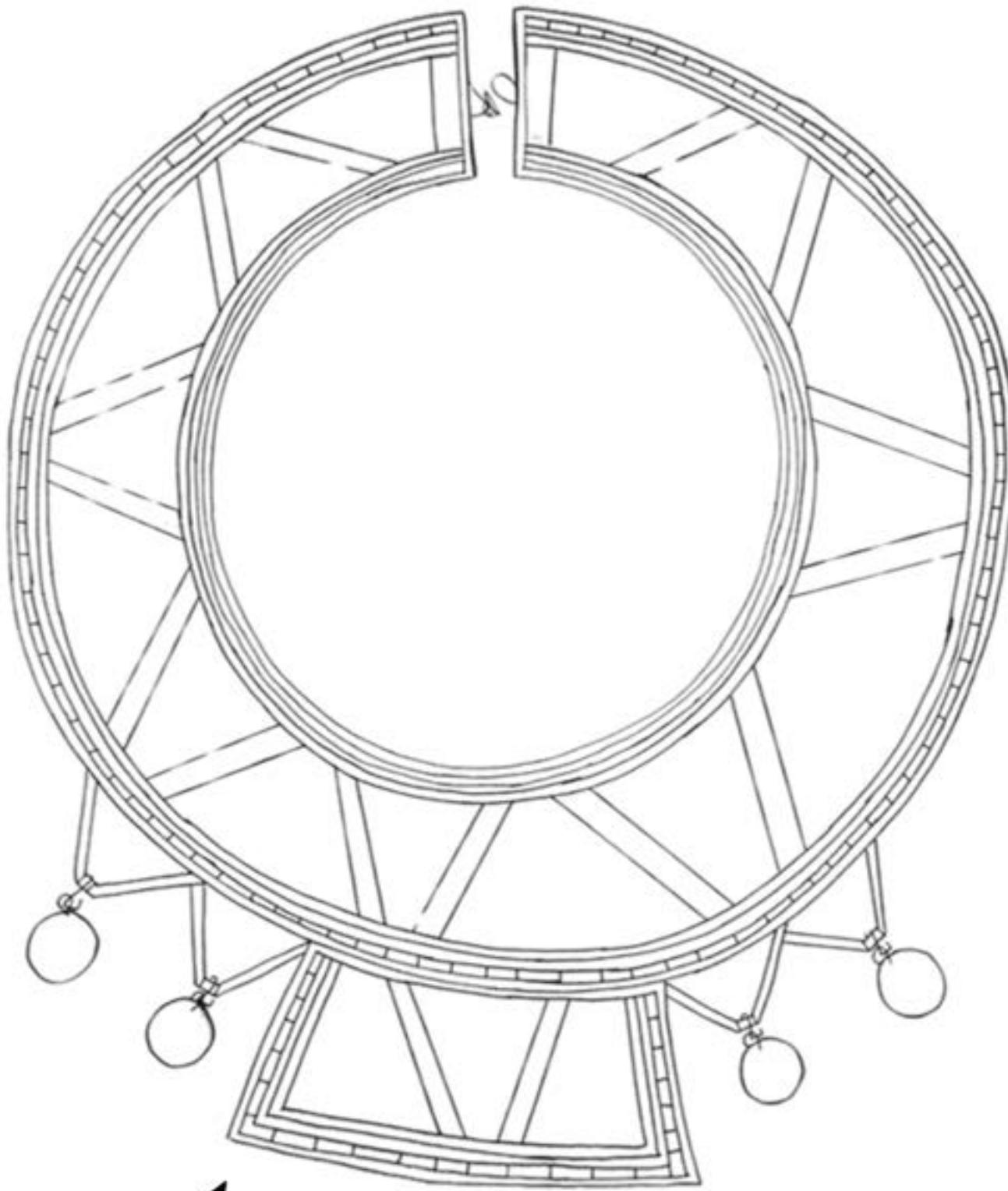
Method

You can colour the drawing as you see fit and make little notes on what they wish for that person. For example, if you have coloured something in orange, the wish written could be 'I hope we meet again soon' or using a red and black pattern could mean 'I hope your test goes well'.

Bonus Activity

Upon completion, you can then gift this drawing to the person you were thinking of.





6

Pause for Paws : The Story of Pets and Us

In this activity, we will discover how archaeology shows us that humans and their pets have shared friendship and comfort for thousands of years.

Background:



We humans have been interacting with the world around us for hundreds of thousands of years, often depending on other living things for survival. Humans began taming wild plants and animals to gain more control over resources like food, clothing, and farming help. But with some animals, like dogs and cats, the relationship began to evolve in a unique way, one that went beyond usefulness alone.

What makes a domesticated animal a pet?

Thousands of years ago, certain animals began to help humans with daily tasks – dogs helped early humans hunt, cats were great at keeping mice away from food stores, and cows not only provided meat, milk and leather but also helped plough fields. Over time, these animals became part of everyday life. But while many domesticated animals are mainly kept as livestock (though some people love them like pets!), others such as dogs and cats began to offer something different. Their size, behaviour, and ability to live closely with humans allowed them to form emotional bonds with us as companions.



How pets help us feel better

Not only do pets keep us company, but they can also help our minds and bodies feel better. Scientists have found that when we cuddle, stroke, or even make eye contact with our pets, both our brains and



theirs release chemicals that help us both feel more relaxed, connected, and happy! Pets also help us stay active – dogs love walks and even playing with a cat can get us moving.

Specially trained dogs can help people in many ways, like offering emotional support, guiding those who are blind or have low vision, or giving warning about health problems.

Even in ancient times, it appears that people felt this way. Archaeologists have found dogs and cats buried carefully alongside humans, showing that these animals were loved, not just used for work. From the past to today, pets have been more than animals – they became companions, friends, and even part of the family!



DID YOU KNOW?

The word domesticated comes from the Latin *domesticus*, meaning “belonging to the home.”



Tile with dog's paw print from Chedworth Roman Villa
© National Trust / Simon Harris



Activity 1: Adopt a Pet from the Past

Let us look at real archaeological examples of past pets, learn about their lives, and imagine forming a bond with them – just like people did long ago!

Age 8+
Time: 30 minutes

What you will need

- Coloured pencils, crayons, or markers
- Scissors
- Pencil or pen



Method

1. Read the Pet Profiles of three ancient animals that were cared for and loved by their human companions. Each profile will tell you a little bit about the animal and how archaeologists know these animals had a special bond with their humans!
2. Think about the animal you want to adopt from among these three as a pet and then answer some questions about them on the Adoption Scroll.
3. To complete the Adoption Scroll, print out Page 50 and carefully cut out the Adoption Scroll using a pair of scissors. You could also fill this out online. This document is very important!
4. Draw an image of your newly adopted furry friend in the given space on the Adoption Scroll for identification, just like photographs on passports!
5. Decorate the Adoption Scroll as you like! Perhaps, you can draw things your adopted pet would like to eat or play with!



BONN-ÖBERKASSEL DOG

Age: about 7 months

When did it live? About 14,000 years ago

Where did it live? On the banks of the Rhine River in Germany



Pet-hood clues from Zooarchaeologists: The puppy had weak bones, sore gums, and was missing some teeth. These signs show that it had been very unwell for quite a long time. Even though it was sick, this little dog lived longer than it could have on its own. That means someone must have looked after it – feeding it, keeping it safe, and caring for it like family.



BERENIKE CAT

Age: Unknown, but young

When did it live? About 1900-2000 years ago

Where did it live? A port by the Red Sea in Egypt



Pet-hood clues from Zooarchaeologists: This cat had broken or deformed leg bones that were healing when it died. That means someone must have cared for the cat while it recovered, as it would not have been able to walk. The cat was buried with an iron collar and pretty beads, suggesting the owners felt a special bond with their cat. Scientists also found lots of fish remains in the cat's stomach, proving it was fed well and likely lived closely with humans who cared for it.



DZHANKENT CAT

Age: older than 1 year

When did it live? About 1085-1250 years ago

Where did it live? Kazakhstan, along the Silk Road



Pet-hood clues from Zooarchaeologists: This cat lived in a busy city along an ancient trade route called the Silk Road. He had a tough life: he broke his leg, had sore joints, and lost many teeth but surprisingly lived with these problems for quite a while, which tells us someone cared for him. He was probably fed soft, high-protein food and looked after while his bones healed. This discovery is really special because cat burials from this time and place are rare!



TOP TIP When filling in your Adoption Scroll, carefully consider the health and potential likings of the pet you are adopting. A dog with a broken leg will need rest, and perhaps a cat liked playing with strings of beads so much that it was buried with beads!





ADOPTION SCROLL

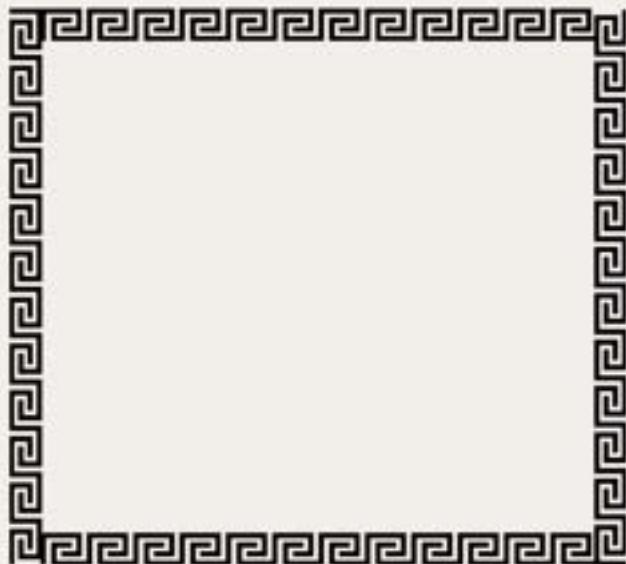
GIVE YOUR ADOPTED PET A NAME: _____

WHAT GAMES WILL YOU PLAY TOGETHER?

WHAT WILL YOU FEED THEM?

WHY WOULD THEY BE SPECIAL TO YOU?

DRAW AND COLOUR AN IMAGE OF YOUR
NEWLY ADOPTED FRIEND HERE!



Activity 2: How does your pet make you feel?

Let us take a look at some short messages called epitaphs.

These were written in Latin about 2,000 years ago, during the time of the Roman Empire, on stones or tablets near where people buried their dogs. They show how much

people loved and missed their pets. Even though these messages are often sad because they remember pets who have died, they remind us how special pets are and how they make us feel happy and comforted when they are with us.



Method



What you will need

- Pencil or pen
- Spare paper

1. Read the examples on the next page of Roman epitaphs for dogs carefully. The inscriptions on the stone background are in their original language, Latin, and the text in the turquoise box has been translated into English.
2. Now it is your turn! Think about your own pet or the ancient pet you chose in Activity 1, and answer these questions on your spare paper:

a. Interaction with animals can provide comfort or happiness to people.

How does your pet make you feel? Try thinking this way:

My pet helps me feel _____ when _____.

You can write about as many feelings as you want!



b. If you were unwell or sad, how do you think your pet would feel?

If your pet could talk, what do you think it would say to you?

3. Finally, write a short message for your pet like we see below in the epitaphs

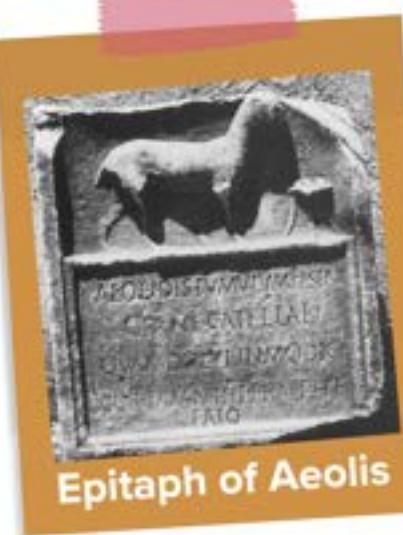
It can be about a real pet you have or had, or about the ancient pet you

adopted! You can write about how they make you feel, a fun memory, or something you love about them.



HAC IN SEDE IACET POST REDDITA
FATA CATELLUS, CORPUS ET
EIUSDEM DULCIA MELLA TEGUNT.
NOMINE FUSCUS ERAT, TER SENOS
APSTULIT ANNOS. MEMBRAQUE
VIX POTERAT IAM SUA FERRE
SENEX.

In this place lies a little dog after an accomplished life, and sweet honey covers his body. His name was Fucus, and he was eighteen years old. Barely could he move his limbs in his old age



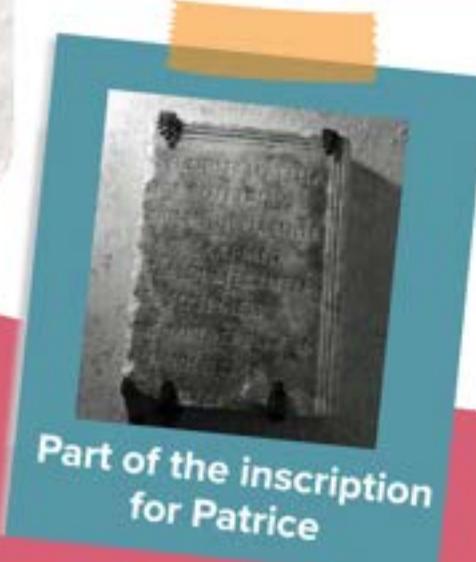
Epitaph of Aeolis

Behold the tomb of Aeolis, the cheerful little dog, whose loss to fleeting fate pained me beyond measure.

AEOLIDIS TUMULUM
FESTIVAE CERNE
CATELLAE, QUAM
DOLUI INMODICE
RAPTAM MIHI
PRAEPETE FATO.

ERGO MIHI, PATRICE, IAM
NON DABIS OSCULLA
MILLE NEC POTERIS
COLLO GRATA CUBARE
MEO... TU DULCIS,
PATRICE, NOSTRAS
ATTINGERE MENSAS
CONSUERAS, GREMIO
POSCERE BLANDA CIBO...

So now, Patrice, you will no longer give me a thousand kisses, nor will you be able to lie affectionately round my neck... Sweet Patrice, you used to join us at the table, climbing into our laps to gently ask for food ...



Part of the inscription for Patrice



Glossary

Domesticated: An animal or plant that has been tamed and changed over time to live closely with humans.



Zooarchaeologist: An archaeologist who studies animal bones from the past to learn how humans and animals lived together.

Epitaph: A short message written to remember a human or a pet that is no longer with us, often carved into stone.



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

If you want to learn more about our special bonds with pets throughout history, then take a look at some of these links below:

- Remember the cat in Activity 1 from Berenike? Read about their neighbour here: [**Monkeys Found Buried in 2,000-Year-Old Egyptian Pet Cemetery**](#)
- This pet fox ate the same plants and meats as their human: [**Did Ancient South Americans Keep Foxes as Pets?**](#)
- While dogs differ a lot from ancestral wolves, cats have not evolved much biologically through domestication: [**Cats domesticated themselves, ancient DNA shows**](#)
- Learn more about the history of the most common pet fish here: [**The epic history of goldfish—pet and pest**](#)
- Here is why we are biologically inclined to protect and care for dogs as we do for children: [**Do you call your dog your 'furbaby'? It's not an obsession—it's science**](#)
- How bricks and tiles reveal what animals lived around us in Roman Britain: [**Footprints on Roman brick and tile - Silchester Archaeology**](#)
- This article takes us on a trip around the world, looking at modern memorials for beloved pets: [**Why the World's First Pet Cemetery Was Revolutionary**](#)



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!

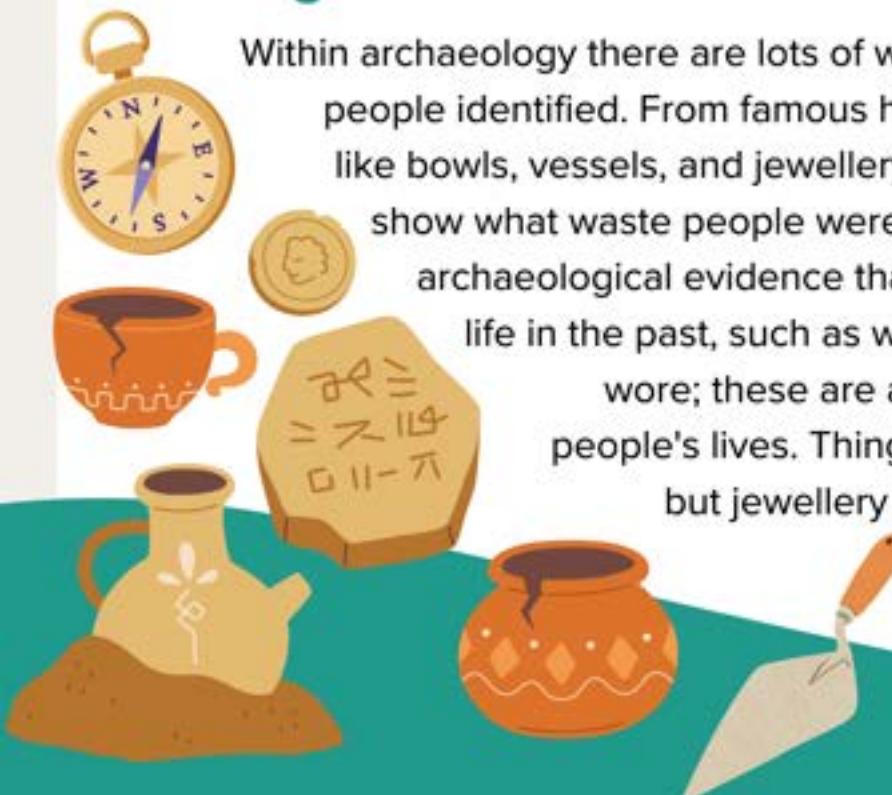


Field School	Date	Name	Address	Postcode	County
Archaeologist	Qualifications	Experience	Skills	Interests	Other
Description of finds (maximum 100 words)					
Notes (maximum 100 words)					
Signature					

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 Vase from The Traprain Hoard
© National Museums Scotland



The Traprain Hoard
© National Museums Scotland

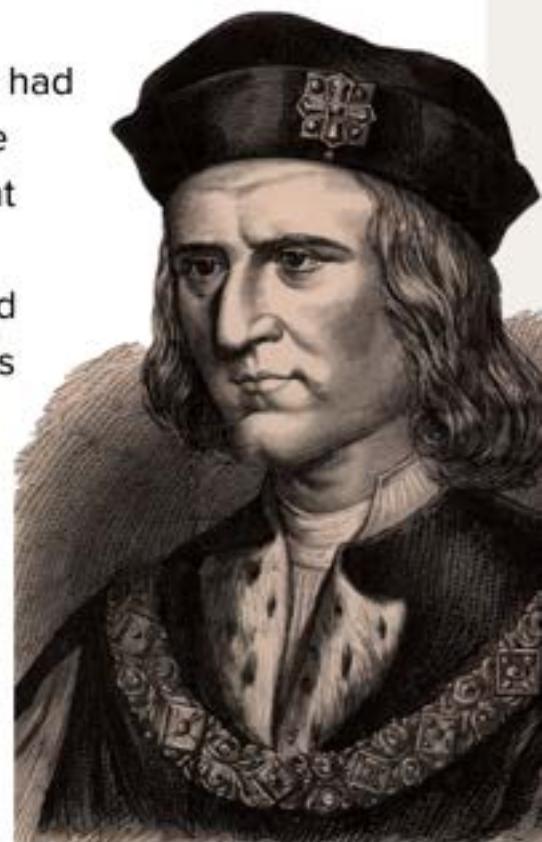


The Traprain Hoard
© National Museums Scotland



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



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

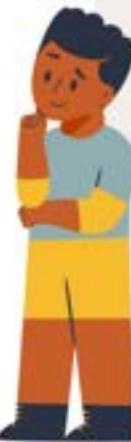


What you will need

- A printer
- A pen or pencil



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.



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 too. 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](#)

