Have you ever wished you could get into a time machine and visit an ancient civilization? Well in a sense, you can. With archaeology!

Archaeology is the study of past human life and culture.

An archaeologist is a scientist that digs up and studies objects from the past that give us clues to how the people who made and used those items lived.

We call these objects artifacts.
Like any good scientist, an archaeologist will ask questions and find answers through research. Artifacts provide the necessary evidence for their research.

So, where and how do archaeologists find artifacts? They look for them in likely places where that culture would have lived.

A survey is a method of searching a site that could be on the ground, below the ground and even under water!

Surveys can be as simple as walking in an area looking for artifacts and features on the surface of the ground.

Or they can utilize technology that can take pictures to see through the ground or even, when searching from the air, through the trees.
Excavating

When a concentration of artifacts and features are found in a particular location, a team of archaeologists then gets permission to excavate the site. Excavations are scientific digs.

The archaeologists use string to make a grid of the site. Then they dig layer by layer into the soil to look for artifacts and features such as walls, floors or fire hearths.

When they find something, they note where on the grid they found it and what other artifacts or features were near it.

This method gives the artifact context on what it is or how it’s used. Also because of the principle of stratigraphy, or the study of the layers of the earth, we learn roughly how old the artifact is.
Artifacts and Ecofacts

One special type of artifact is a cut wood log. These artifacts can be used to date a site through tree-ring dating, a method called dendrochronology.

Lithics are artifacts made of stone, like projectile points (arrowheads) or polished stone beads.

Ceramics are artifacts made of baked clay, like pottery or sherds, pieces of broken pottery.

Sometimes archaeologists find natural materials that are not modified by humans but still associated with the life of the people.

These are called ecofacts and are often animal (food) remains, plant seeds or charcoal.

Archaeologists also collect soils from the site to look for tiny clues like pollen grains to learn about past environments.
Laboratory Analysis

These materials contain so much information that they require further study in a laboratory.

Microscopic or chemical analysis may be done to understand how things are made or how old they are.

Finally, all this information is summarized in reports or articles and shared with other scientists, the media or even visitors to museums!
## Archaeology Word Puzzle

*Match the term on the left with its definition on the right*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archaeology</td>
<td>the study of the strata, or layers, of the Earth; allows us to put deposition of soils or sediments in order from “youngest” to “oldest”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact</td>
<td>non-portable objects used, modified, or made by humans, such as ruins, walls, or floors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceramics</td>
<td>the things that surround artifacts and features that remain in their original location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>tree ring dating; measures time using the annual creation of tree rings; can match cross-sections of trees with established, dated tree rings to give an absolute date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dendrochronology</td>
<td>artifacts made of ground or flaked stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecofacts</td>
<td>a location and concentration of artifacts in situ, or in their original location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excavation</td>
<td>portable objects used, modified, or made by humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>the process of methodically and scientifically digging a site layer by layer (or level by level) to uncover artifacts and features; this usually requires the use of permits issued by state and federal governments to ensure that the excavation is done properly and ethically by qualified people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithics</td>
<td>artifacts made of clay, pottery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>the study of remains from people of the past, their activities and material goods, as well as the patterns these remains reveal to us about their daily lives and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratigraphy</td>
<td>the act of trained archaeologists searching for archaeological sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>artifacts made of plant (flora) or animal (fauna) remains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Archaeology Word Search

Find the terms below in this puzzle

Archaeology  Dendrochronology  Lithic
Artifact       Ecofact         Site
Ceramics     Excavation     Stratigraphy
Context      Feature        Survey
Resources:

Nat Geo Kids introduction to Archaeology
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMzpA5oCGNY

Piecing together a teapot
https://www.poplarforest.org/piecing-together-a-teapot/

The Art of Cross Mending and Interactive puzzle
https://ahs-inc.biz/legacy/Sprague/artcrossmending.html

Piecing it all Together- Making your own pot sherd puzzle with clay planters
https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology/piecing-it-all-together2

Archaeology games and interactives; Learn from scientists and read about artifacts
https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology

What is Archaeology - YouTube Scishow Kids
https://youtu.be/zOJICdMvWAI

NPS Archaeology program- learn about why we study older civilizations
https://www.nps.gov/archeology/Public/kids/index.htm

Introduction to archaeology with National Geographic
https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/archaeology/12th-grade/

KNME TV feature The Mysterious Folsom featuring UNM archaeologist, Dr. Bruce Huckell
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VV4fFAUUVQ

Archaeology activity for kids from Archaeology in the Community
http://www.archaeologyincommunity.com/new-design-kids/
Archaeology Pottery Puzzle

Often, when archaeologists find pottery on digs, they don’t find the whole thing. Because of this, they have to infer and reconstruct the artifact. The process the archaeologists use to place the pieces together again is called cross-mending.

*Try spotting the pattern and fill in what you think fills in the blank spaces.*
Put Together the Pot

Color the pottery and then cut along the gridlines. Scramble your pieces and reassemble them on the empty grid squares.

http://clipart-library.com/clipart/19-LiKroXB9T.htm
Paste and complete your puzzle here!
### Archaeology Word Puzzle

*Match the term on the left with its definition on the right*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1. Archaeology</td>
<td>11. Stratigraphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Artifact</td>
<td>8. Feature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ceramics</td>
<td>4. Context</td>
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<td>10. Site</td>
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<td>1. Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Site</td>
<td>6. Survey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12. Survey</td>
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</table>
Archaeology Word Search

Find the terms below in this puzzle

Archaeology  Dendrochronology  Lithic
Artifact  Ecofact  Site
Ceramics  Excavation  Stratigraphy
Context  Feature  Survey
Lulu with a collection of artifacts from the Maxwell Museum education collection