



An Archaeologist for the Day

You will need:

- Plastic trays
- Sand
- Selection of Mesolithic and Neolithic 'artefacts'
- Spoons
- Small paint brushes
- Rulers



You won't have a ready supply of real artefacts to excavate. But collecting Mesolithic and Neolithic objects is easier than you might think.

Find pieces of flint, stones and shells at a local beach.

Burn whole hazelnuts and seeds to look like they have been cooked in a fire.

Break an old flower pot and stain and sand it to make it look older.

Save and sterilise fish and chicken bones from your own cooking.

Directions:

Fill the trays with sand and bury the artefacts, separating them into Neolithic and Mesolithic finds (the Neolithic trays will be virtually the same as the Mesolithic but will also have pieces of pottery and wheat).

Divide the class into smaller groups of 4-6 pupils.

Ask each group to carefully excavate the trenches (trays), using their 'trowels' (spoons) and brushes to remove the dirt from the objects.

Ask each group to decide whether the trench they have excavated shows evidence of a Mesolithic or Neolithic settlement, based on the objects found.

Ask each pupil to measure and record an object from their trench using the worksheet overleaf:

Artefact Record Sheet

Name:

Measure your artefact:

How long?

How wide?

How thick?

What colour is your artefact?

Circle any words that help to describe your artefact:

shiny

glassy

dull

polished

sharp

blunt

smooth

rough

What do you think your artefact was used for?

Draw your artefact in the space below

