



Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center
1725 State Street
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601
Phone: 608-785-6473
Web site: <http://mvac.uwlax.edu/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UWLMVAC>



The following lessons were created by **Beth Rankin**, a teacher participating in the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for Teachers entitled Touch the Past: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Region.

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Exploring the Past- Introduction to Archaeology

Grade Level: Resource 6th grade.

Subjects: English/ Language Arts. Cross Curriculum: Social Studies.

Objectives:

Students will read high interest non-fiction. They will cite evidence directly from the text to support their answers to comprehension questions.

Standards: Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

L.6: Language Standards:

L.6.VAU: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Anchor: L.6.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

Standard: L.6.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

Standard: L.6.4.a: Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

[Activity Questions: 7]

Standard: L.6.4.c: Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

[Activity Questions: 3]

Anchor: L.6.5: Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Standard: L.6.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

[Activity Questions: 3, 7]

Standard: RI.6.2: Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments inferences drawn from the text.

Grade 6 Social Studies: 6.G.1 Understand geographic factors that influenced the emergence, expansion and decline of civilizations, societies and regions over time (i.e. Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas).

Duration: One and a half class periods/ 80 minute periods.

Materials/Supplies:

Paper, pencils, colored pencils and children's dictionaries for Frayer Vocabulary maps. sticky notes, Smartboard to display imagery for Bellringer activity, and the Video, *The Lost Tribe of the Sahara*, netbooks for students to read online article.

Vocabulary:

archaeologist (noun), artifact (noun), inter (verb), Paleontologist (noun), prehistoric (adjective), radiocarbon dating (noun), strenuous (adjective)

Background:

Summary from the article: *Earliest Peoples: Secrets of the Sahara Uncovered.*

In this lesson, students will read about the evidence archaeologists used to identify animal and human bones found in the Sahara.

Setting the Stage:

Students will look at the image of the three skeletons found in the Sahara desert in 300 CE. Students will respond to the image on a sticky note. Each student will write one or two questions about the image. Teacher will ask the students to share their questions with the group and we will put the sticky notes on the board (in order to refer to them later).

Students will watch the video linked to the article.

Procedure:

Day 1: 1. Word work- Teacher and students will examine unfamiliar vocabulary words. Break down the words into vowels and consonants - splitting them into sections in order to decode them.

2. Each student will choose three vocabulary words from our vocabulary list. Students will make Frayer model Vocabulary maps for words. Students will leave part of the mapping undone (use the word in a sentence, and illustrate the word.) until they have read the article and answered the questions.

Day 2: In this lesson, students will independently read about the evidence archaeologists used to identify animal and human bones found in the Sahara. They will complete the activity section, answering the comprehension questions with at least 75% accuracy.

Before starting to read, the teacher and class will review what we learned the day before. We will identify previously unknown vocabulary words. The students will be reminded to read slowly and to complete one question or summary section after each paragraph.

Extensions: Students will complete math extension problem: example-

In the Sahara Desert, scientists found graves from two different groups of people: Kiffians and Tenerians. The two groups lived 1,000 years apart from one another. One century is the same as 100 years. How many centuries apart did the two groups live?

Closure:

Completion of Frayer Vocabulary Models. Addition of new vocabulary words to word wall. Class discussion in response to the article they read. As a class, we will return to the sticky note questions and make sure that they have been answered.

Evaluation:

Completion of Frayer models, completion of lesson activity comprehension questions with 75% accuracy or higher. Continued interest/excitement in reading non-fiction and about early people and archaeology. "Sticky note" questions answered.

Links/Extension:

National Geographic Magazine: *The Green Sahara*, August 2014

Video: *Lost Tribes of the Green Sahara*, National Geographic magazine.

We will continue to study early people by reading both fiction and non-fiction. Reading fiction will include small group reading, as well as read-aloud books.

Examples of fiction could include: *The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich, *Sees Behind Trees* by Michael Dorris, *Thirteen Moons on Turtles Back*, *A Native American Year of Moons* by Joseph Bruchac and Johnathan Lands, and *The Education of Little Tree* by Forrest Carter

References:

<http://www.achieve3000.com/literacy-solutions/grades-2-12/middle-school-grades-6-8>

Discovering Archaeology, an Activity Guide for Educators by Shirley J. Schermer

Native Americans, A Visual Exploration by S.N. Paleja

Attachments:

Frayer Vocabulary Model

Dictionary Definition	Definition in your own words
Illustration	Use in a sentence.