



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

The following lessons were created by **Linda Wohlman**, a teacher participating in a 2010 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for Teachers entitled, "Exploring the Past: Archaeology in the Upper Mississippi River Valley."

## **Archaeology: Are You Diggin' Me?**

**Grade:** My lessons were designed for 6<sup>th</sup> grade ancient world history students.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will understand how archaeologists learn about the past and the methods they use by watching an iMovie. Students will be able to define key terms important in archaeology by taking notes on a PowerPoint presentation. Students will practice thinking like an archaeologist by completing "The Year 5,000" worksheet activity.

**Input:** First, I will show students a PowerPoint I created called "Archaeology: the study of the past" to give them a background about archaeology and archeologists. By listening and taking notes, my students will become knowledgeable about some of the key methods and vocabulary used by archaeologists. I also created an approximately 6 minute iMovie for students entitled "Archaeology: Are You Diggin' Me?" It uses pictures I took during our excavation field day and our technology day in the lab. I tried to incorporate many pictures of myself as an archaeologist to personalize my connection to archaeology. Finally, I designed an activity/handout entitled "The Year 5,000" in which students participate in a fictional futuristic scenario in archaeology. They will look around our classroom and write down things that could be used as artifacts to help interpret how students lived and learned in the year 2010.

**Think Like an Archaeologist: An Excavation in the Year 5,000 A.D.**

In the year 5,000 A.D. archaeologists discovered a site covered by a huge volcanic eruption that took place on Signal Hill in September 2010 A.D. This eruption covered the entire city of Long Beach, California and people were covered in volcanic ash during their last moments on Earth.

Archaeologists began excavating a site they uncovered called “Bancroft Middle School.” They were interested in learning more about what type of site it was and how the people there lived. Based on the initial excavation they found hundreds of mummified individuals all dressed in red and black clothing near the body of a gigantic bear. Their first hypothesis led them to believe that this was a religious center with a cult group that dressed alike and worshipped the bear as its most important idol. Then, they noticed that there were other features called “classrooms” with “books” that included writing. They could not read this writing, but decided they might be able to excavate additional artifacts and features to determine how this site was used. They decided to look for artifacts in an area labeled “Room 115” to help expand on their hypothesis about the site known as “Bancroft Middle School.”

Directions: Think like an archeologist by helping them expand upon their hypothesis about Bancroft Middle School. Look around the classroom and list some artifacts you see that might help them draw more conclusions about the site and how it was used.

<b>Artifact</b>	<b>Conclusion about how this artifact might have been used</b>