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The following lessons were created by **Douglas Gouff**, 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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Context Tells the Story

Grade Level	7/8
Subjects	Science and Social Studies
Objective	Demonstrate the importance of artifacts in context for learning about past people.
Standards	WI State Standards for Science: C-Inquiry, E-Earth's History, F-Life and Environmental, and G-Science Application.
Duration	One 45 min. class period plus one two hour evening program.
Materials/Supplies	<u>Intrigue of the Past</u> activity book, an unfamiliar object, local topographic/aerial maps on corkboard along with pins (plus plenty of counter and classroom space.
Vocabulary	Archaeologist, context, artifact, topographic map, clustering, preservation.
Background	None
Setting the Stage	Discuss the objective and introduce the vocabulary. (Send out invitations for the artifact sharing night prior to unit.)

Procedure Day 1 A) Using Activity #4 (p. 19) in Intrigue of the Past as a resource, work through Setting the Stage steps 1-3 with the entire class as a whole (15 min.).

B) Bring out an unfamiliar object for the students to examine and to make inferences as to possible uses for the object. After a few minutes present other objects related to the first piece and continue the discussion about possible uses (now that the piece has been put into context with another object). Finally, talk about the actual purpose of the object. (10 min.)

C) Perform *The Game of Context* activity found on p. 20 under Procedure with the class. Emphasize that this demonstrates "that removing artifacts from a site removes them from their context and makes it very difficult to get a complete understanding of past people" upon conclusion of the activity. (20 min.)

Closure Day 1 Read aloud to the class the Background information found on p. 19. To conclude, emphasize the last paragraph of the reading (when context is lost, information is lost).

Procedure Day 2 (evening program) Prior to beginning this unit a note would be sent home inviting families that are in possession of, have knowledge of, or are simply interested in, locally found artifacts to join us for a night of sharing (artifacts and/or stories). Family and community members will be encouraged to bring artifact collections to show and talk about. (Make special arrangements to keep displays protected from any damage while on school property.)

After a period of sharing/presenting their artifacts, contributors would then be asked to mark the locations of their finds, with a pin, on the large aerial maps. (During this time it would not be a bad idea to serve some type of refreshment.)

Closure Day 2 (evening program) Discuss any patterns that may appear on the aerial maps (such as clustering of artifacts) and what possible significance this might have. This could then lead into a

discussion of the preservation of possible archaeological sites and archaeological artifacts.

Evaluation Hand out p. 21 from Intrigue of the Past to be completed at home.

Links/Extension Link evening program and classroom activity.

References Intrigue of the Past and Bonnie Jancik, NEH Summer Institute.