WSC International Archaeology Day 2020@ HOME
Cookie Excavation

Gathering Supplies:
Archaeologist’s Journal Printable
Chocolate Chip Cookie
Pencil
Toothpicks
If you don’t have a printer just use a regular piece of paper for this activity.

Did You Know?

Excavation is a very important part of archaeology. To excavate means to recover pieces of the past through digging. When done correctly, excavations can shed light on the past. This is why scientific excavation standards have been created in the field of archaeology.

The science of archaeology has advanced with the use of remote ground penetrating radar and satellite imagery. These tools can help us learn about a site without digging below the surface. Still there are a some basic tools that archaeologists use while doing field work. Tools like shovels, trowels, picks, and brushes are used to uncover artifacts and clean the dirt off them. Measuring tapes, levels, notebooks, and cameras are used to measure and record the artifacts as they’re found. Tools like foam and archival boxes help protect artifacts during transport, and keep them safe and secure at a museum for study.

Just as important as the tools archaeologists use, are their methods. Excavators carefully and methodically record every aspect of their dig as it progresses, so that nothing gets missed or forgotten. You only ever get one shot to excavate a site in its original condition!

Topographic maps and compasses for recording location.
Shovel, trowel and hand brush for uncovering artifacts.
Screen for sifting through dirt to find small artifacts and a field notebook for lots of note taking and mapping.
Try This! Cookie Excavation.

Archaeologists find artifacts in all kinds of places...buried under dirt and sand, hidden in caves, sometimes even at the bottom of the sea! And since they’re very old, artifacts are often very fragile, too. There are a lot of tools archaeologists use to safely excavate artifacts.

For this activity you’re the archaeologist and your site is a chocolate chip cookie and the chocolate chips are the artifacts. Your trowel is a toothpick!

Start by mapping the artifacts (chips) that you can see on the surface of your site (cookie). You can record your site map in your Archaeologist’s Journal Printable or in your own notebook. Then start carefully excavating. Remember you have to be careful to not damage the artifacts as you are removing them! When you are done, how many artifacts (chips) did you find at your site?