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| **Session Plan: Introduction to Archaeology through Equipment** |
| **Overview:** | Learn about archaeology and what an archaeologist does through their kit bag. Work together to figure out the purpose of different equipment and how it helps an archaeologist with their role.  |
| **Learning objectives:** | Students will learn how to:* Explain what archaeology means and what an archaeologist does.
* Interpret how various archaeological equipment is used.
* Compare the equipment an archaeologist uses while digging, recording findings, after digging or to protecting themselves.
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| **Skills Builder** | Students will use the Essential Skill of Listening, Speaking, Problem Solving and Teamwork. |
| **Timings** | 45-50 minutes. |
| **Resources** | * Table showing equipment item, grouping and its purpose on pages 4-5.
* Archaeology FAQs on page 6.
* Images of archaeological equipment in PowerPoint image pack.
* Introduction to Archaeology video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2H-3C51jMA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2H-3C51jMA)
* Further information: [www.yac-uk.org](http://www.yac-uk.org) and [Festival of Archaeology Council for British Archaeology (archaeologyuk.org)](https://www.archaeologyuk.org/festival.html)
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| **Materials** | Printed images of equipment or if available use real items: trowel, shovel, mattock, paint brushes, spoons, tape measures, camera, scale bar, 6B pencils, clipboard, goggles, gloves, hardhat, hi-vi clothing, steel toe-capped boots, buckets, sieve, grip seal bags, toothbrush and ink. |
| **Glossary** | **Archaeology:** the study of human history through material remains**Artefact:** an object made by a human with historical interest.**Archaeological feature:** non-moveable element of an archaeological site, i.e., a wall or the footprint of an Iron Age roundhouse.**Excavation:** to make a hole by digging away earth.**Excavating tool:** a tool used to remove earth from a hole.**Recording equipment:** devices used to create detailed records of archaeological features and artefacts. |
| **Glossary****continued** | **Personal protective equipment (PPE):** clothing and equipment that protects users from hazards.**Post-excavation analysis:** processes that are used to study archaeology after excavation. |
| **Delivery** |
| **Intro****5 mins** | **Key questions**Ask the class:* What do you know about archaeology?
* Does anyone know what an archaeologist does?
* Why do archaeologists dig? What are they looking for?
* Archaeologists might find artefacts or features in the ground. What do you think these are?
* What equipment do archaeologist use and why?
* Why do you think archaeology is important?

Group leaders: use the Archaeology FAQs on page 6 and watch the Introduction to Archaeology video ahead of the session to learn more about archaeology. |
| **Activity****20-25 mins** | **Explore equipment items.**Place all the equipment items or images around the room in random groupings. There are 20 items in total. Spilt the class into small teams. * Suggested set-up for a **group of 30**: divide the equipment into 5 groups of 4 items. Split the class into 5 groups of 6 students.
* Suggested set-up for a **group of 20**: divide the equipment into 5 groups of 4 items. Split the class into 5 groups of 4 students.

Give each group a few minutes to look at their items. Then rotate the groups around the room until everyone has seen all the items.While looking at the items encourage students to consider:* What does the item do? Does it have a purpose?
* How would the item be used?
* Why would it be useful for an archaeologist?
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| **Activity****continued** | Come back together as one group to discuss the items and the responses to the above questions. Place all items in front of the group. Look for themes. Ask students if they would group any of the items together and why. As a class, try grouping the items into one of four themes:* Excavating tool
* Recording equipment
* PPE
* Post-excavation analysis

Use the glossary on page 1 and the equipment table on pages 4-5 for information on terminology and the individual items. |
| **Activity****15 mins** | **Video and discussion.**Play the Introduction to Archaeology video.<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2H-3C51jMA>Every time you see one of the items you’ve looked at in the last activity pause the video and discuss the following as a class.* How is the item being used?
* What does the item do?
* Why do you think the item is important?
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| **Plenary****5 mins** | **Recap some key questions.*** What do you now know about archaeology/archaeologists that you did not at the start of the lesson?
* What is an artefact? What is an archaeological feature?
* What equipment do archaeologist use and why?
* Why do you think archaeology is important?
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Equipment table:

| **Equipment** | **Grouping** | **Purpose** |
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| Trowel | Excavating tool | To carefully scrape away earth layer by layer. |
| Shovels & scoops | Excavating tool | To dig away large sections of earth. |
| Mattock | Excavating tool | To break up hard ground to make it easier to dig. |
| Paint brushes | Excavating tool | To brush away earth from archaeological features. |
| Spoons | Excavating tool | To excavate small features that cannot be reached by a trowel. |
| Tape measure | Recording equipment | To measure features, so that they can be recorded accurately. |
| Camera | Recording equipment | To take photos of excavations and features to create a record of the archaeology. |
| Scale bar | Recording equipment | Used in photographs so the viewer can get a sense of the size of features or artefacts. |
| 6B pencils | Recording equipment | For drawing features onto waterproof recording sheets while on site. The pencil must be hard to mark the sheets made of drafting film. |
| Clipboards | Recording equipment | To rest recording sheets or other documents on while taking notes on site. |
| Goggles | PPE | To protect eyes from dirt and other objects while excavating. |
| Gloves | PPE | To protect hands from sharp objects while excavating. |
| Hardhat | PPE | To protect a person’s head from hitting features or from falling debris while working on site. |
| Hi-vi clothing | PPE | To protect the body during excavations and so archaeologists can be seen easily. There could be large machinery on archaeology sites. The clothing also keeps archaeologists warm and dry (if waterproof). |
| Steel toe-capped boots | PPE | To protect feet from equipment and falling objects or debris while excavating.  |
| Buckets | Post-excavation analysis | To collect, transfer and store soil samples. |
| Sieve | Post-excavation analysis | To process environmental soil samples into small and larger material. Small material is looked at under a microscope by an environmental archaeologist. |
| Grip seal bags | Post-excavation analysis | To contain artefacts from site so that they can be transferred for processing. |
| Toothbrush | Post-excavation analysis | To gently clean dirt away from artefacts using a toothbrush and water. |
| Ink | Post-excavation analysis | To mark artefacts with a unique number so that they can always be traced back to where they were found. |

Archaeology FAQs:

**What is archaeology?**

Archaeology is the study of human history through excavation and the analysis of artefacts and other physical remains including buildings and documents.

Archaeologists do not look for dinosaurs. Palaeontology is the study of life before humans, including dinosaurs and the study of fossils.

**What does an archaeologist do?**

Archaeology is not just simply digging in a trench. Wessex Archaeology carries out building surveys, underwater archaeology, coastal studies, human remains analysis, heritage management, illustration and 3D computer modelling, finds analysis, environmental work, report writing, video development and community engagement.

**What happens to artefacts?**

The artefacts, also known as ‘finds’, are taken from the excavation site to Wessex Archaeology’s headquarters. They are recorded (measured, weighed and marked with an identification code) washed, analysed and prepared for storage. The artefacts are offered to local museums where they can be used for further research or displayed in exhibitions.

**How do you become an archaeologist?**

Many people want to be archaeologists and it can be very rewarding career. Archaeologists have many specialisms including excavation, buildings, maritime, geophysics, computing, illustration, archiving or environmental analysis to name but a few.

To continue your archaeological journey, consider joining your local [Young Archaeologists’ Club](https://www.yac-uk.org/), visiting local heritage sites or attending an event during the annual [Festival of Archaeology](https://www.archaeologyuk.org/festival.html).