

Pre-Visit Teacher's Guide

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE NEAR EAST

Grade 6

A Program of the Education Department
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Grade 6

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LETTER TO TEACHER

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for choosing the Skirball Cultural Center and the *Archaeology of the Near East* program for your students.

This Pre-visit Teacher's Guide is designed to assist you in the classroom as you prepare your students for their museum visit. The activities in this guide will provide your students with appropriate background to make their visit to the Skirball a more rewarding and enriching experience. Careful attention has been given to create materials that are grade-appropriate and interactive, but you are welcome to revise these activities to adapt to the specific needs of your class.

Please complete these pre-visit activities with your students so that they are introduced to the major themes they will discuss at the museum.

Required before your visit:

In order to help the docents and staff on the day of your visit, please prepare the following:

- **Name badges:** Each student must have a large, clearly legible name tag. Use first names only please.
- If you have more than 30 students, please divide them into **two groups**.
- In addition, please create **5 smaller groups** for the Outdoor Dig.
- If you have received **photo release forms** from the Skirball, it means that we would like to take pictures during your tour. These forms require parental signatures, and we would appreciate it if you could distribute them ahead of time and have them ready on the day of your visit. Of course, parents can opt out of signing if they do not want their child to be photographed.

For logistical details and additional instructions, please consult your tour confirmation packet. Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

We look forward to welcoming you and your class to the Skirball!

Best regards,
Education Department
Skirball Cultural Center
(310) 440-4662
education@skirball.org

Archaeology of the Near East
CALIFORNIA STATE STANDARDS
GRADE 6

California State Standards—World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations

- 6.1 Students describe what is known through archaeological studies or the early physical and cultural development of humankind from the Paleolithic Era to the Agricultural Revolution.
2. Identify the locations of human communities that populated the major regions of the world and describe how humans adapted to a variety of environments.
- 6.2 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush.
1. Locate and describe the major river systems and discuss the physical settings that supported permanent settlement and early civilizations.
 2. Trace the development of agricultural techniques that permitted the production of economic surplus and the emergence of cities as centers of culture and power.
 3. Understand the relationship between religion and the social and political order in Mesopotamia and Egypt.
 6. Describe the role of Egyptian trade in the eastern Mediterranean and Nile Valley.
 9. Trace the evolution of language and its written forms.

Archaeology of the Near East

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

PRE-VISIT GOALS/OUTCOMES: The purpose of the pre-visit materials is to provide students with a brief interdisciplinary introduction to the study of Near Eastern Archaeology. Because the interactivity, experiential emphases, and teamwork focus are part of the tour itself, the pre-visit will serve to engage diverse learners and offer an entry point into thinking about Archaeology.

ACTIVITIES:

1. **Introduction:** Students will learn basic definitions of archaeological terms to provide a framework for subsequent activities and the Skirball visit.
2. **Artifact Interpretation:** Students will use one object to make broader observations surrounding culture and society.
3. **What Survives Over Time:** Students will observe materials in various climates in order to utilize scientific methods and see what might remain in the archaeological record.
4. **Creative Writing Based on Primary Sources:** Students will create their own stories related to the practice of Archaeology.
5. **Pottery Match Game:** Students will match types of pottery to their descriptions. Pottery is the most commonly found ancient artifact and is often indicative of trade, wealth, and prevailing styles. What is the function of this pottery?

POST-VISIT GOALS/OUTCOMES: Having visited the Skirball, students will synthesize their discoveries from the tour, share their experiences, and complete extension activities designed to connect tour content to their own lives and communities. Groups will be able to share their post-visit projects with other schools and compare and contrast findings.

ACTIVITIES:

- **“Publishing” Findings:** Students will create a cohesive group document consisting of drawings, reports, and photographs from their visit to put on the Skirball Cultural Center (SCC) website. The results will be culled from materials used during the tour.
- **Time Capsule:** Each class will create its own time capsule, adding objects that are meaningful to students’ lives right now as well as cultural and political “artifacts” from news and media sources. The class will document the creation of the time capsule and the motivations behind it, and post the finished product on the SCC website. Why did students choose the objects they did? If an archaeologist 3,000 years in the future were to discover the time capsule, what discoveries would they make about the class? What could they extrapolate about culture in the second decade of the 21st century?

INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

GOALS: Students will be introduced to the field of Archaeology and some of its terminology. They will learn how to define *Archaeology*, *archaeologist*, *artifact*, and *material culture*, as well as discuss the roles of climate, geography, and the passage of time on artifacts. By encouraging students to make connections to their own lives, the introduction will prepare them for their museum visit and provide context and relevance.

TIME: 20 minutes
Introductory discussion

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

?? = a sample question or prompt

→ = a basic answer

Let students know they are beginning a unit on *Archaeology* that will consist of some class work, a special museum visit, and opportunities to continue the work back in the classroom. Briefly state why you have chosen to have them participate in this unit.

In this unit we will learn how archaeologists try to identify objects/*artifacts* or *material culture* created by humans long ago.

Begin to explain the subject matter by writing some of the vocabulary words on the board.

?? Have you ever heard the word “Archaeology?” Where have you heard it? What does it make you think of?

?? What do you think the word means?

→ “Arch” = ancient or old + “ology” = “study of”

?? What do we call the person who works in the field of Archaeology?

→ An archaeologist

?? What does an archaeologist do?

→ Identifies, interprets, and classifies artifacts—material remains—left behind by ancient humans. Although archaeologists are scientists and use very precise methods to answer questions, they are also like detectives solving mysteries of the past and use culture, politics, geography, and geography to help them.

?? Why is it important to study Archaeology? How can it help us learn about ourselves?

→ Archaeology helps us to learn about our common human history, but also it shows us that we are no smarter than our ancestors. We have benefitted from their discoveries and are constantly building upon their knowledge. People have always required food,

clothing, shelter, and communication, and the field of Archaeology is still relevant in that it helps us make discoveries about who we are and where we come from.

?? Imagine if an archaeologist were to discover your room in a thousand years. What would they find? What wouldn't they find? Why?

Have students make a list of objects found in their rooms. In pairs, have students compare these lists with a partner. Ask a few students to share examples.

→ They would find *inorganic* materials; that is, they would discover only artifacts that would not decay due to decomposition such as metal, plastic, glass, and pottery.

Organic materials such as paper, wood, vegetation, and flesh would disintegrate.

Weather would also affect how artifacts would be preserved. Natural disasters, climate, and general passage of time affect the condition of artifacts.

?? What would he/she learn about you and your culture?

Ask students to go back to their lists and discuss the answer with their partner before discussing as a group.

→ Since archaeologists are scientists, they are trained to look for clues about who lived in the place they are excavating. Whether you are a boy or girl, what you are interested in, and who you live with could probably be determined by your stuff, your “material culture.”

Summarize for your students: An archaeologist looks for artifacts and uses them as clues to understand the culture or society that made and used them. In this way, an archaeologist is like a detective and can help us learn about people who came before us. Now we will look at *how* an archaeologist goes about his/her work.

?? How do archaeologists know where to dig?

→ They dig where it is known that people lived for long periods of time, near sites of famous ancient buildings such as the pyramids in Egypt or the Parthenon in Greece, in old burial grounds or in places where it is known that certain events occurred, such as Pompeii in Italy. Sometimes written sources are helpful too. But oftentimes civilizations were built on top of each other, creating a very interesting man-made mountain called a *tel*. A *tel* is a mound or hill which consists of many layers of the remains of human habitation from different time periods.

?? Where would the oldest layers most likely be?

→ At the bottom, with newer eras on top, like a layer cake. Each layer is called a *stratum*. You will be seeing *tels* and other archaeological sites when we visit the museum. We will be thinking about how they are similar to and different from each other.

Alternate ways of accomplishing the objectives of the Introductory Discussion include:

1. Cover the definitions and information in a pre-test which students can retake after the museum visit.
2. Use photographs of contemporary interiors and excavation sites to help students visualize the concepts.
3. Have students write a travel guide or brochure for an ancient civilization, asking them to think about what inorganic materials might remain.

ARTIFACT INTERPRETATION

GOALS: Students will learn that a surprising amount of information about people and culture can be gleaned from a single artifact through a simple exercise. They will use critical thinking, teamwork, brainstorming, and educated guesses to evaluate the characteristics of a society.

MATERIALS:

- One or two pennies per group
- Paper
- Pencils/pens

TIME:

5 minutes: Introduction, breaking class into groups

20 minutes: Small group work analyzing pennies

15 minutes: Presenting findings

5 minutes: Conclusion/Wrap-up

BACKGROUND:

Among the many artifacts an archaeologist finds at a site, sometimes one single object will tell a great amount of detail about a society. A coin is a great example because it has the potential to reveal information about leaders, values, technological accomplishments, political structure, economy, and language. Studying a United States penny, students can infer certain attributes of American society such as:

1. Americans have access to minerals, presumably through mining or trade.
2. Men have worn facial hair.
3. Americans believe in a deity.
4. They construct open-air and monumental architecture.
5. They have knowledge of the Latin language.
6. They have a numerical system.
7. They are organized into a system of affiliated states.

The temptation may exist for students to make inferences based on actual or modern knowledge—for example that Americans know how to mine or that they construct buildings from stone. Both facts are indeed true, but the information on a penny does not necessarily prove them.

Archaeologists are often faced with similar dilemmas, when a recovered object suggests that something may have occurred or existed, but further evidence is needed. Based on these needs, they might implement new hypotheses and questions to help them along in their research. While they hope new proof will emerge, sometimes conclusions must be framed vaguely: something “may have” or “probably” occurred.

Adapted from www.saa.org

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

Divide students into 3 or 4 small groups. Distribute one or two pennies per group, and tell the groups to select one member of the group to be responsible for recording the findings on paper.

Ask students to imagine that they are going to be examining a single artifact from an unknown society. Their task is to determine as much about the lives of the people who made the object without making any unfounded assumptions.

When the time has elapsed, ask each group to present their conclusions and describe how they reached them.

For a more difficult activity, you can use old or foreign coins.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

?? What do we know about the people who made this coin?

?? Were any of your conclusions based on information that you know about how our lives now rather than what was on the coin?

?? How did you determine what the people of this society were like?

?? What is challenging about thinking like an archaeologist?

?? How could you apply this same kind of archaeological thinking if you found a piece of pottery? A weapon? A grave marker?

*Adapted from Teaching Archaeology:
A Sampler for Grades 3 to 12*

WHAT SURVIVES OVER TIME

GOALS: Utilizing scientific methods just as the archaeologist does in the field, students will learn why some materials survive over time and some do not due to the changes in the environment. Some archaeological sites are found in hot, dry deserts, some in wet lands, some in frozen tundra, some in caves or tombs, etc.

TIME:

Allow at least one month, including 15 minutes per week for the students to fill out observation worksheets.

VOCABULARY NEEDED:

component: parts or elements used in an experiment

constant: a factor in an experiment that is not manipulated, it stays the same in each experiment

decompose: to rot or break down

inorganic: materials that have never been alive; their chemical structure does not contain carbon

organic: materials that are or were once alive; their chemical structure contains carbon

oxidation: the combining of a substance with oxygen

variable: a factor in an experiment that is manipulated, it is different in each experiment

MATERIALS:

- 30 clear plastic cups (8 oz.)
- 30 pieces of fresh fruit (for example: berries, plums, bananas, etc.)
- A freezer or refrigerator
- 6 different colored markers (to color-code the groups)
- Masking tape
- Lamp
- Pea gravel (7½ cups)
- Plastic wrap
- Pottery clay (enough to wrap 6 individual pieces of fruit)
- Rubber bands
- Water
- Worksheets: 5 per student

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

- Divide the class into 6 groups or teams, and assign each group a different colored marker with which to label their cups.
- Set up 5 work stations needed to simulate the following site conditions:

Environment or Biome	Result
1. Dry —desert cave site with very little moisture present	Fruit shrivels up
2. Frozen —Arctic site	Fruit remains the same
3. Humid —typical Northwest Coast site, or anyplace with a lot of moisture	Fruit rots (smells!)
4. Under Water —a site submerged in water	Fruit rots
5. Wet Clay —a site that has been covered with mud remains wet	Fruit remains almost the same

Each group will prepare and label 5 different cups as follows:

Condition #1: Label “Dry.” Pour 4 cm of gravel into the bottom of the cup and place fruit carefully on top of the gravel. Place in a hot and dry location (under a lamp).

Condition #2: Label “Frozen.” Put the fruit in the cup surrounded by gravel (but so the fruit can still be seen through the clear sides of the cup). Fill the cup with water and place in a freezer.

Condition #3: Label “Humid.” Pour 4 cm of gravel into the bottom of the cup and place fruit carefully on top of the gravel. Slowly pour in water until it barely touches the fruit. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and secure with rubber bands. Place cup in room temperature locale.

Condition #4: Label “Under Water.” Same as cup #2, but stored in a cool place (not a freezer).

Condition #5: Label “Wet Clay.” Wrap damp clay around the piece of fruit. Cover completely with plastic wrap so as to be airtight. Pour about 3 cm of gravel into the cup and fill with water just to the top of the gravel. Place the clay ball on top of the gravel. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and secure with rubber bands. Place in a refrigerator.

OBSERVING, RECORDING, and CONCLUDING:

In preparation for the next part of the experiment ask the following questions:

?? What does the term “experiment” mean?

→ Testing to find out information or results.

?? What are some different types of experiments?

?? What are all of the different components or ingredients that were used in our particular experiment?

→ The fruit, gravel, cup, water, freezer, clay, time span, etc.

?? Which elements of the experiment were variables? Which were constants?

→ The variables were the temperature, clay, amount of water, and amount of gravel.

→ The constants were the fruit, time span, and container.

?? What can we hypothesize about the final results of the experiment?

→ Remind the students that they will be using scientific processes, and that making a hypothesis is a very important steps. The steps are hypothesis, observation, recording, testing/analysis, and drawing conclusions. Over the next 4–5 weeks students will observe and record any changes in their fruit, and at no time can they open any of the cups or alter the cup’s environment until the end of the experiment. They can maybe hypothesize that the fruit will rot in a warmer and more humid climate and stay fresher in the freezer.

Every 7 days each group will observe its fruit and record any changes on the worksheets. Groups should not communicate what they find with the rest of the class until the month is over. At the end of the observation period, they will find out whether or not their hypotheses were correct, and you can arrange a class discussion about the results of the experiment.

What Survives Over Time

Observation Worksheet

Name: _____

Biome: (Circle one) Dry – Humid – Frozen – Under Water – Wet Clay

Hypothesis:

Description of the Organic Material:

First
Week

Second
Week

Third
Week

Fourth
Week

Size:

Shape:

Color:

Other observations

Conclusions:

CREATIVE WRITING BASED ON PRIMARY SOURCES

GOAL: Students will explore Near Eastern Archaeology through primary source writings and will have the opportunity to write based on the firsthand experiences of others. Through a creative writing activity, students will engage with the discipline of Archaeology in a personal and innovative way that encourages them to imagine what life was like on an early excavation.

MATERIALS:

- Paper
- Pens, Pencils, any desired visual aids
- Primary sources

TIME: 5 minutes: Introduction to assignment

5 minutes: Reading primary sources

15 minutes: Writing time

15 minutes: Sharing writing and wrap-up

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

Introduce the creative writing assignment:

?? How do we know what the field of Near Eastern Archaeology was like when it started in the 19th century?

→ People who were there wrote letters, kept diaries, and held onto mementos. These sources of information are called *primary sources* because they have been provided by people who experienced something first-hand. Primary sources are very important for people who study the past because it gives those of us in the present—and even the future—a unique and vivid way of understanding something that happened long ago.

?? How can creative writing help us learn about Archaeology?

→ Through reading primary sources, we can learn about details, prevalent views, relationship dynamics, and much else in between. We will be reading primary source material from people who were alive when the field of Near Eastern Archaeology was just beginning, when people did not know all of the techniques for digging and recording used today and had no idea what they would find. We will immerse ourselves in the fascinating lives of two very prominent women: the writer Dame Agatha Christie and the lesser-known aristocrat Lady Hester Stanhope. By writing creatively based on their work, we will connect with the details of life at an excavation and the personal accounts of the women who wrote these works.

?? Who are Agatha Christie and Lady Hester Stanhope?

→ **Agatha Christie** (1890–1976) is one of the best-selling writers of all time. She is best known for her mystery novels but also wrote short stories and plays. In 1930, she married the archaeologist Max Mallowan and followed him on many of his excavations in the Middle East, such as those at Ur and Nineveh. The excerpt we will read comes from her autobiography and discusses her life married to a working archaeologist and her observations.

→ **Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope** (1776–1839) was the eccentric daughter of a prominent Earl and the favorite niece of William Pitt the Younger. She traveled extensively throughout much of Greece, Turkey, and the Middle East at a time when women did not commonly do so. She notoriously only wore Turkish men's clothing, believed she had psychic powers, and inserted herself into many excavations, most famously at Ascalan (modern Ashkelon). Her letters to her friend, the physician Dr. Charles Meyron, are collected in many volumes including *Travels of Lady Hester Stanhope Forming the Completion of her Memoirs Volume III* (1846) and focus on her journeys in the Middle East.

Explain activity to your students: Invite the students to continue the story from one of the following excerpts. They can take the story in any direction they think it should go. You can have them read the entire excerpt or any part of it. You may choose to have everyone write from the same excerpt or give students the option to choose which excerpt resonates more with them:

From **Agatha Christie: *An Autobiography*** (Bantam Books, NY, 1977), pages 441–442:

The point of coming to Nineveh, for Max, was to dig down a deep pit through the mound of Nineveh. C.T. [a friend] was not nearly so enthusiastic, but they had agreed beforehand that Max should have a shot at this. In archaeology, prehistory had suddenly become the fashion. Nearly all excavations up to then had been of a historical nature, but now everyone was passionately interested in prehistoric civilization, about which as yet so little was known.

They examined small, obscure mounds all over the country [now Iraq], picked up fragments of painted pottery wherever they went, labeling them, typing them up in bags, and examining the patterns—it was endlessly interesting. Although it was so old—it was *new*!

Since writing had not been invented when this pottery was made the dating of it was exceptionally difficult. It was hard to tell whether one type of pottery preceded or followed another. Woolley [another archaeologist], at Ur, had dug down to the flood levels and below, and the exciting painted pottery of Tell 'Ubaid was causing enormous speculation. Max was bitten with the bug as badly as anyone—and indeed the results of our deep pit in Nineveh *were* very exciting, because it soon became apparent that the enormous mound, ninety feet high, was three-quarters prehistoric, which had never been suspected before. Only the top levels were Assyrian.

The deep pit became rather frightening after a while, because they had to dig down ninety feet to virgin soil. It was just completed by the end of the season. C.T., who was a brave man, always made a point of going down himself with the workmen once a day. He hadn't a good head for heights, and it was agony to him. Max had no trouble about heights, and was quite happy going up and down. The workmen, like all Arabs, were oblivious to any kind of vertigo. They rushed up and down the narrow spiral causeway, wet and slippery in the morning; throwing baskets to each other, carrying up the dirt, making playful pushes and passes at each other, about an inch from the edge."

From ***Travels of the Lady Hester Stanhope; Forming the Completion of her Memoirs, Volume III*** (Elibron Classics Replica Editions, 2005), pages 161–162:

Dr. Meryon writes

"On the 4th day the work was continued nearly in the same direction. At three in the afternoon, the workmen struck upon a mutilated statue. I was immediately called, and felt exultation at the sight of a relic of antiquity, which I thought might give celebrity to our labours. The soil around it being removed, it was drawn up by ropes, without damage. There were at the same spot some imperfect remains of the pedestal on which it had stood the depth of the mold and rubbish which lay over the statue was six or eight feet.

On examination, it proved to be a marble statue of colossal dimensions and of good execution. It was headless, it had lost an arm and a leg; but was not otherwise disfigured. It seemed to have represented a deified king: for the shoulders were ornamented with the insignia of the thunderbolt, with the Medusa's head. There was every reason to believe that, in the changes of masters which Ascalon had undergone, the place in which we were now digging had originally been a heathen temple, afterwards a church, and then a mosque. The statue probably belonged to the age of the successors of Alexander, or it might be that of Herod himself. At the depth where the statue lay was a marble pavement and also a tympanum of a porch of the Corinthian order. To the East, close to the South wall, was found the trunk of another statue as the mould was cleared away, a modius [an ancient form of measurement] was discovered, which probably had surmounted the head of one of the two statues. It was chipped off at the top, and evidently, at the bottom, had been forcibly separated from the head to which it had belonged: it was nine and a half inches long. The statue, from the chromium to the heel was six feet nine inches."

POTTERY MATCH GAME

GOAL: Students will identify different styles of pottery, analyze their distinct functions, and synthesize how these functions relate back to life in ancient times. Through a matching activity and teamwork, students will learn about some of the different forms of pottery found in Near Eastern Archaeology.

MATERIALS:

- Pottery cards with matching descriptions

TIME:

2 minutes: Introduction to pottery in Archaeology

10 minutes: Playing game

3 minutes: Conclusion/Wrap-up

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

Archaeologists find a lot of pottery when excavating sites in the Near East. Pottery is so common because it is durable and was incredibly functional and easy to trade for diverse peoples. Broken pottery, *sherds* or *shards* are also extremely common. We can learn about what people traded, what they ate, what they made, and what they believed all based on pottery remains.

Students will match images of pottery to their descriptions. You can have them play individually or in groups.

?? What type of pottery did you notice in the game?

?? How do shape, size, and thickness contribute to the pottery's function?

?? What might we be able to learn about people's lives and customs based on pottery?

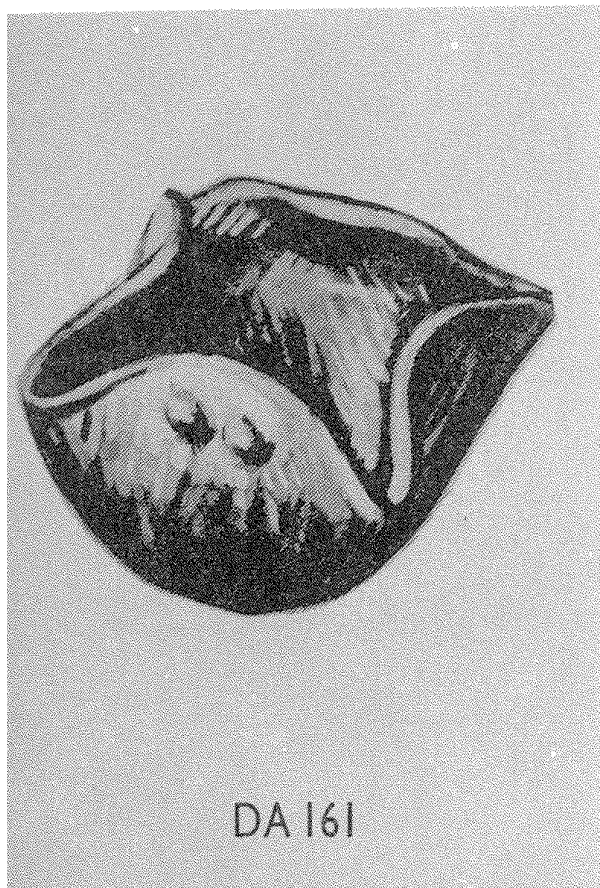
ANSWERS (corresponding to pottery cards on next page):

Top row left to right: DA 161; tall narrow bottle; DA137.

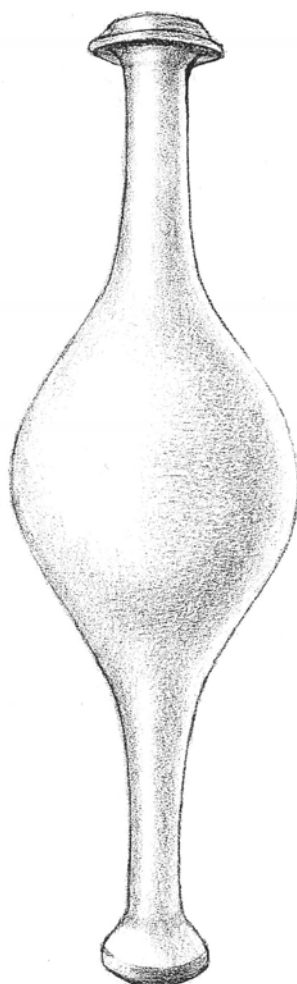
Bottom row left to right: DA162; chalice/goblet; DA134

The letter-number combinations refer to the catalog number the museum uses to keep a record of all of the objects.

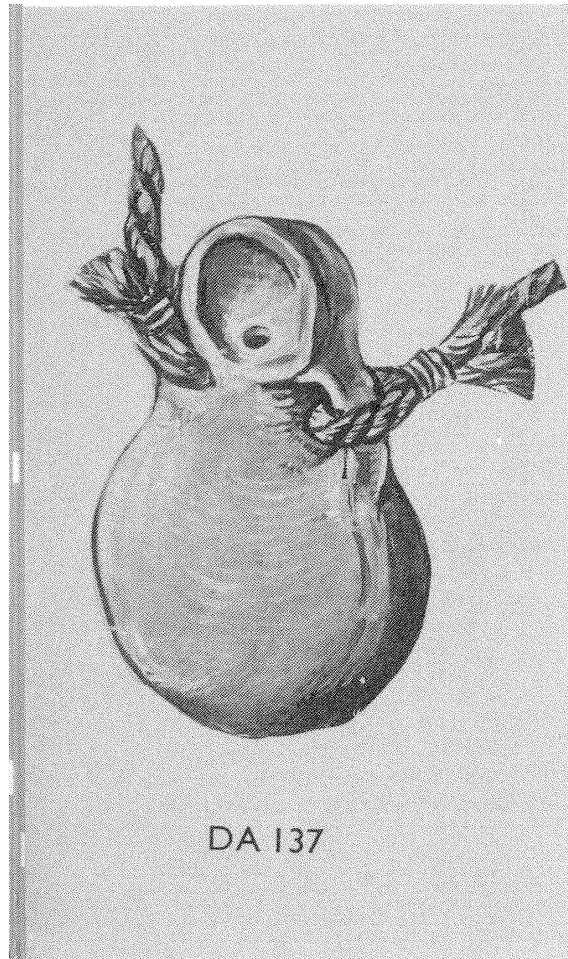
<p>What was I used for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am handmade • I am very plain and have no decoration because the people who made me wandered a lot • I can be found in rock-cut tombs • I help to find the way • I'm from the Middle Canaanite Bronze period (2,200-1,500 BCE) 	<p>What was I used for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm very narrow with a solid foot in order to stand up • I hold perfumes and scented oils • I am usually found at burial sites, but I am very common • My neck is narrow so the fragrant smells do not escape as fast • I'm from the 1st Century CE 	<p>What was I used for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I go where you go so that you can drink • I can't stand up • I can be tied around your waist with a rope or scarf • I'm from the Iron Age (1,200-1,000 BCE)
<p>What was I used for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a pinched mouth and rounded base • I provide light from fish oil • I am very commonly found in houses, religious sites, and industrial areas • I'm from the Iron Age (1,200-1,000 BCE) 	<p>What was I used for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a high foot; I'm very tall • I am commonly found throughout the region • I am mainly used for religious or cultic purposes • You can drink out of me • I'm from the Iron Age (1,200-1,000 BCE) 	<p>What was I used for?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can hold all liquids such as wine, water, and beer • I have a round body and small neck and handle • I am found in vast quantities • I'm from the Iron Age (1,000-587 BCE)



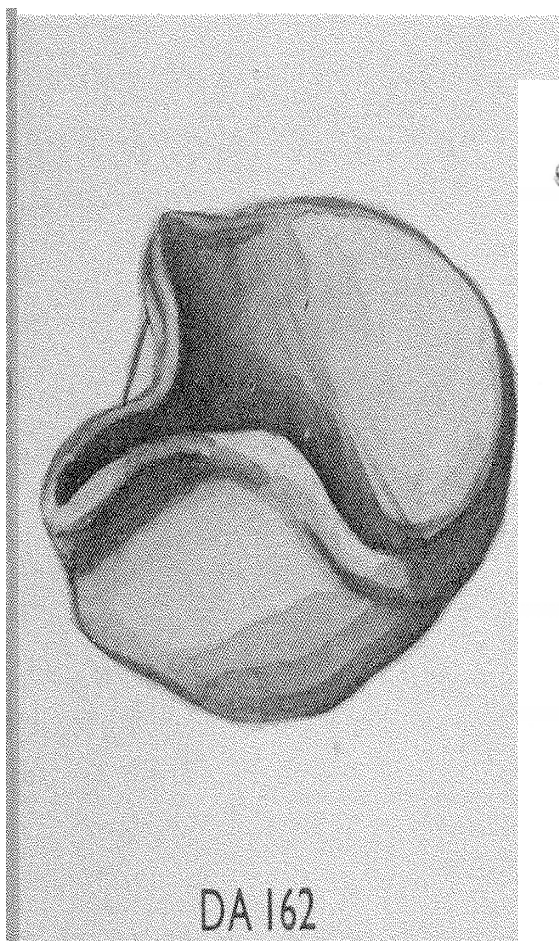
DA 161



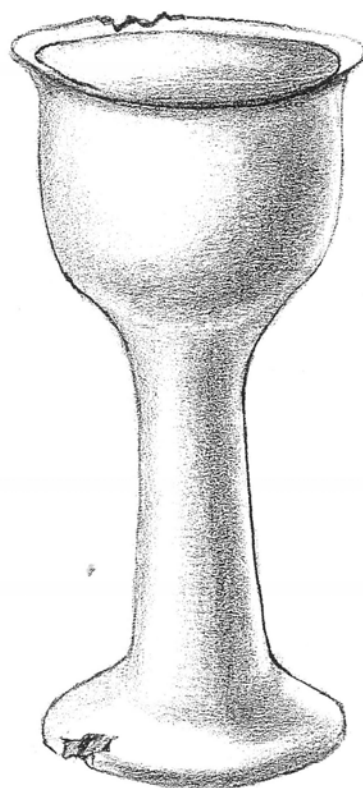
DA 137



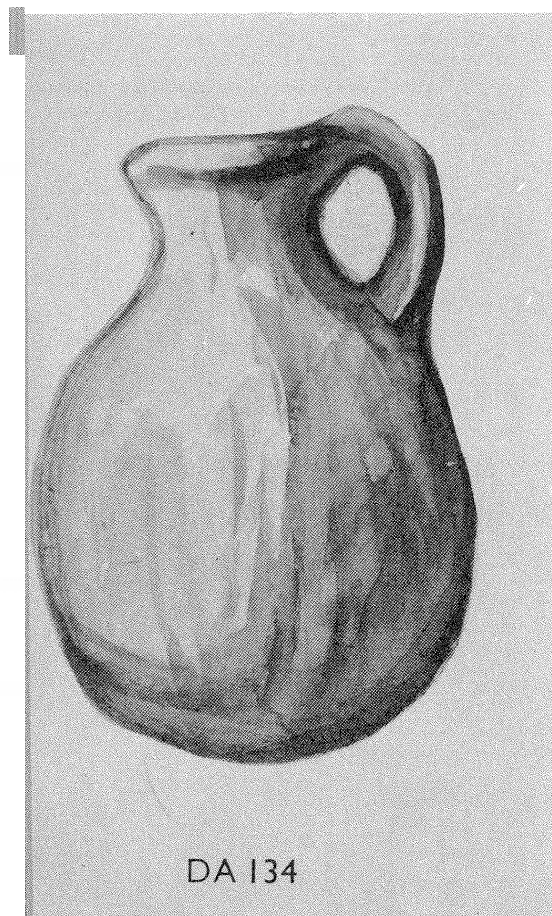
DA 134



DA 162



DA 137



POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

GOAL: Students will broaden and expand upon the work they completed in the pre-visit and museum experience. They will have an opportunity to share back their findings with a larger community and connect what they have learned about the past to how they view the future. The two post-visit activities offer students a chance to take the concepts presented in the pre-visit and tour and apply them to their daily life in the classroom.

“Publishing” Findings

Students will create a cohesive group document consisting of drawings, reports, and photographs from their visit to put on the SCC website. The results will be culled from materials from the dossiers used during the tour.

MATERIALS:

- Paperwork from tour
- Paper, pens, pencils, markers
- Scanner, computer with Internet access

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

Have the students finish up any of the worksheets they did not get to complete during their visit, reviewing the directions to the assignments. You can have your students create a large diorama or poster explaining their findings at Kiryat Ha Malachim, the dig site, or a catalog of their discoveries at the tomb. Since an archaeologist's last step in any excavation is to publish his or her findings, students will “publish” to the Skirball's website. You can also have your students compare their conclusions to those of other classes.

Time Capsule

Each class will create its own time capsule, adding objects that are meaningful to students' lives right now as well as cultural and political "artifacts" from news and media sources. The class will document the creation of the time capsule and the motivations behind it, and have the opportunity to post the finished product on the SCC website.

MATERIALS:

- Large box or container
- "Artifacts" chosen by students
- Scanner, computer with Internet access

STEP-BY-STEP PROCEDURE:

Students will each bring in an object, article, or other media that reminds them of their lives right now. They could bring in a newspaper, something with their school's name on it, a picture of a family member etc. Place all of the objects in a sturdy container along with a list of the objects and whose they are. Speak with your maintenance staff about possibly burying the container, or store it away for the rest of the year or more. You may lead a discussion or begin a writing assignment based on the following questions:

?? Why did you choose the object you did?

?? What does this object say about who you are? What can we gather about life in your city in the second decade of the 21st century based on this object?

?? If an archaeologist 3,000 years in the future were to discover your class's time capsule, what conclusions could they draw about it? Draw from your experiences at the Skirball Cultural Center.

?? What could archaeologists extrapolate about culture in the second decade of the 21st century based on the objects you chose?

?? What are some similarities and differences between what archaeologists 3,000 years in the future would find and what you found on the dig?

Archaeology of the Near East

SUGGESTED READING LIST FOR TEACHERS

Please note: All of these titles are available in Audrey's Museum Store at the Skirball.

Ancient Israelites and their Neighbors

ISBN 9781556524578

Each chapter in this informative book focuses on a different civilization and gives brief information on and activities related to its history, geography, architecture, clothing, writing, work, food, and religious beliefs. There are instructions for making models, costumes, and jewelry as well as recipes and writing and math activities. An outstanding time line that compares all four groups provides a visual understanding of the relationships and differences among the cultures.

Eyewitness Bible Lands

ISBN 9780789457707

A great visual tour of places familiar from the Bible. With wonderful pictures, maps, and diagrams, this book provides students with an accessible depiction of the geography and history of this part of the world as well as compelling explanations of how people lived. Learn how the Phoenicians dyed their clothes, how the people of Abraham lived, what people ate in ancient biblical times, the story of Jericho, and how Canaanite women put on their makeup. Discover who the Israelites were, how the people of the Holy Land defended their cities, how bread and wine were made, how the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, and much, much more.

Old Testament Days

ISBN 9781556523540

Combines stories from biblical times with activities to enhance children's understanding of life thousands of years ago. Projects mostly involve familiar or household items that are easy to prepare for and to facilitate. My skew younger than sixth grade, but the projects may give you ideas for adapting for your class.

Outrageous Women of Ancient Times

ISBN 978-0471170068

Astonishing tales of some of the most interesting women in Ancient Times. No Paris and Britney here; these girls win chariot races, advise Emperors, serve as Pharaohs, and lead armies. This book is filled with great stories, clever writing, and wonderful illustrations.

Your Travel Guide to Ancient Israel

ISBN 9780822530725

This book is a good reference for information about Ancient Israel and the peoples of the Middle East. With wonderful photographs and a true travel guide's tone, this book will appeal to students doing research or just interested in the people and the times.