

## MESSAGES FROM THE PAST Grades 6-8

### OBJECTIVES:

- Identify artifacts from a contemporary setting.
- Describe the function of each artifact.
- Interpret associations among sample artifacts.

### FCAT STRANDS ADDRESSED:

**Reading Exam**      Comparisons and Cause/Effect  
Reference and Research

### MEETS THE FOLLOWING SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS:

#### ***SOCIAL STUDIES***

**Strand A:** *Time, Continuity, and Change (History) (Grades 6-8)*

**Standard 1:** *The student understands historical chronology and the historical perspective*

**Benchmark SS.A 1.3.2** The student knows the relative value of primary and secondary sources and uses this information to draw conclusions from historical sources such as data in charts, tables, graphs.

**Standard 3:** *The student understands Western and Eastern Civilization since the Renaissance*

**Benchmark SS.A. 3.3.1** The student understands ways in which cultural characteristics have been transmitted from one society to another (for example, through art, architecture, language, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors).

### Materials:

- Objects from around the classroom and other areas of campus, showing evidence of student activity on that area (dry trash and recycling bins are good sources)
- Plastic baggies
- “Messages from the Past” recording worksheet (attached)

### PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES:

1. When the students have gone home for the day, collect “artifacts” (i.e. pencils, student papers, food wrappers) that can tell the story about the site they were collected. Place each site’s “artifacts” in a separately numbered bag.

2. Ask students how they would know about the past if they have not read about it or had the chance to experience it. Discuss the work of an archaeologist - a scientist who uses physical evidence (artifacts) to learn about the past.
3. Tell the students that they will become archaeologists and interpret recently found artifacts. These pieces of physical evidence were found at a recent archaeological expedition at the school. They were picked since they are the foremost experts on this archaeological site.
4. Divide the class into groups of three to five students (depending on the number of bags you have put together). Give each group one of the numbered bags of artifacts. Have each member of the group look carefully at each artifact. Have them consider what the object was made of and how it may have been used. Have them record this information on the worksheet. After the students identify the objects in their bags, have them speculate where these objects may have been found.
5. Have a representative from each group explain their interpretations of the objects, providing explanations and their contexts. Archaeologists are often challenged when interpreting artifacts that they cannot identify or date.

### **AT THE HISTORY CENTER**

1. On their “Messages from the Past” recording worksheet, have students record artifacts they viewed and their functions.

### **POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES:**

1. Have students share the artifacts they viewed and record their findings on chart paper. Compare and contrast the artifacts found at the school to the artifacts in the History Center. What are the similarities? What are the differences? Can we find the artifacts made from the same materials at the History Center in the present day?
2. Discuss what materials the artifacts they saw were made of. Ask them what materials that we use today could be found 500 years later. Challenge students to create an “artifacts for the future” list. When found many years in the future, what would these objects say about our culture today?
3. Create an archaeological dig in your classroom, using sand, copier paper box tops, spoons, paint brushes, yarn to create grids and, assorted chosen artifacts.

### MESSAGES FROM THE PAST

Artifact	Materials made from	Function

Where were these objects found?

What clues helped you decide the context?