

## Dig Sites

### FASCINATING FLORIDA LESSON 1

Did you know that Florida is home to some of the oldest archaeological discoveries in North America?

Windover Bog, located near Titusville, was discovered in 1982 by a construction worker who came across a human skull. At first glance, he thought he had uncovered evidence from a crime scene. The skull, however, is actually a part of a burial site that is more than 7,000 years old. That's older than the Egyptian pyramids! Between 1984 and 1986, archaeologists uncovered at least 168 burials in half of the bog. The other half of the bog has remained untouched.

An  
archaeologist  
is someone who  
studies how people in the  
past lived by looking at, or  
digging up (excavating),  
artifacts and remains.



In addition to bones, archaeologists also found tools and fabric – the oldest woven fabric discovered on the continent – at the burial site. These artifacts are *primary sources* that historians and archaeologists use to learn about the people who used to live here. Primary sources are objects that were created during the time period we are learning about.

When we visit a museum, sometimes we're able to touch *secondary sources* but only look at a primary source that may be behind a glass case. *Secondary sources* provide more information about artifacts. They can be replicas – or copies – of artifacts, like 3D printed models of tools found in the Windover Bog. Other sources, like your history book or even this lesson, are secondary sources, too, and provide more information about artifacts and a specific time period.

Archaeologists can use written records to help them locate historic sites or understand the physical materials they've excavated. This is called *historic archaeology*. Not all historic archaeological sites in Florida are thousands of years old. We can still learn from sites that are only a few hundred years old, like the Kingsley Plantation in Jacksonville.

At Kingsley, we can also learn about the early history of slavery in Florida. While we can find records from the perspective of the plantation owners during this time, it can be harder to learn about the lives of those who were enslaved. Artifacts found at the plantation provide clues about the daily lives of the people who lived there.



# History AT HOME

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State Archives of Florida

One of the most mysterious archaeological sites in Florida is called Old Fort Ruins. Right across from the city hall in New Smyrna Beach are the remains of a building made from coquina rock, much like the Spanish fort in St. Augustine. These ruins are not found in any maps relating to the colony of New Smyrna. So, archaeologists and historians must find primary sources in order to learn more about the site.

Do you think you have what it takes to be an archaeologist?





# Archaeological Dig

## FASCINATING FLORIDA ACTIVITY

Let's make our own archaeological site. Grab some supplies and get digging!

### What you'll need:

- a shallow pan (you can also do this outside in your yard)
- dirt (dried rice or beans can be used instead of dirt)
- small "artifacts" to search for - small toys like Legos or trinkets
- measuring tape
- notepad
- pen or pencil
- paintbrush
- small shovel or a large spoon (to dig up dirt from your yard)



# Archaeological Dig

## FASCINATING FLORIDA ACTIVITY



### What to do:

1. If you don't have access to a yard, prepare your pan dig-site with dried rice or beans instead of dirt. Fill your pan with dirt. Place your small trinkets or toys into the dirt and mix it up. To make it a challenge, close your eyes and mix it up so you don't know where the "artifacts" are.
2. Use your paintbrush to slowly dust off the top layer of dirt in sections. Don't uncover your site all at once. Often, archaeologists work in one 1-foot by 1-foot area at a time, so they don't miss anything during the dig. Think of excavating as draining a fish tank! You want to carefully scrape away dirt in even layers because each of these layers represent a certain period in time.
3. Once you find your artifact, take some notes. Measure your artifact. What is it made from? Who do you think made it? Who would have used it? What other artifacts did you find around it? Write these down in your field notes.

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Linked below are some videos on these archaeological sites. What primary sources do you see mentioned in the videos? Can you spot the secondary sources?

## Resources

Videos to link:

<https://myfloridahistory.org/frontiers/television/episode/4>

<https://myfloridahistory.org/frontiers/television/episode/24>

<https://myfloridahistory.org/frontiers/television/episode/32>

## Other:

[https://www.nps.gov/timu/learn/historyculture/kp\\_archaeology.htm](https://www.nps.gov/timu/learn/historyculture/kp_archaeology.htm)

[https://www.nps.gov/timu/learn/historyculture/kp\\_archaeology\\_fieldschool.htm](https://www.nps.gov/timu/learn/historyculture/kp_archaeology_fieldschool.htm)

<https://myfloridahistory.org/frontiers/article/134>

Charlie Carlson, *Weird Florida: Your Travel Guide to Florida's Local Legends and Best Kept Secrets* (2009)

[http://www.weirdus.com/states/florida/ancient\\_mysteries/new\\_smyrna\\_ruins/index.php](http://www.weirdus.com/states/florida/ancient_mysteries/new_smyrna_ruins/index.php)

**This lesson helps reinforce these Florida State Standards for K-5th grade:**

- SS.K.A.2.4 Listen to and retell stories about people in the past who have shown character ideals and principles including honesty, courage, and responsibility.
- SS.1.A.2.1 Understand history tells the story of people and events of other times and places.
- SS.4.A.8.3 Describe the effect of the United States space program on Florida's economy and growth.
- SS.5.A.1.1 Use primary and secondary sources to understand history.
- PE.3.C.2.1 Identify the importance of purposeful movement and its impact on quality of performance.
- PE. K.M.1.10 Perform a creative-movement sequence with a clear beginning balance, at least one movement and a clear ending shape.
- PE.1.C.2.3 Identify technology that can be utilized to enhance physical activity.

