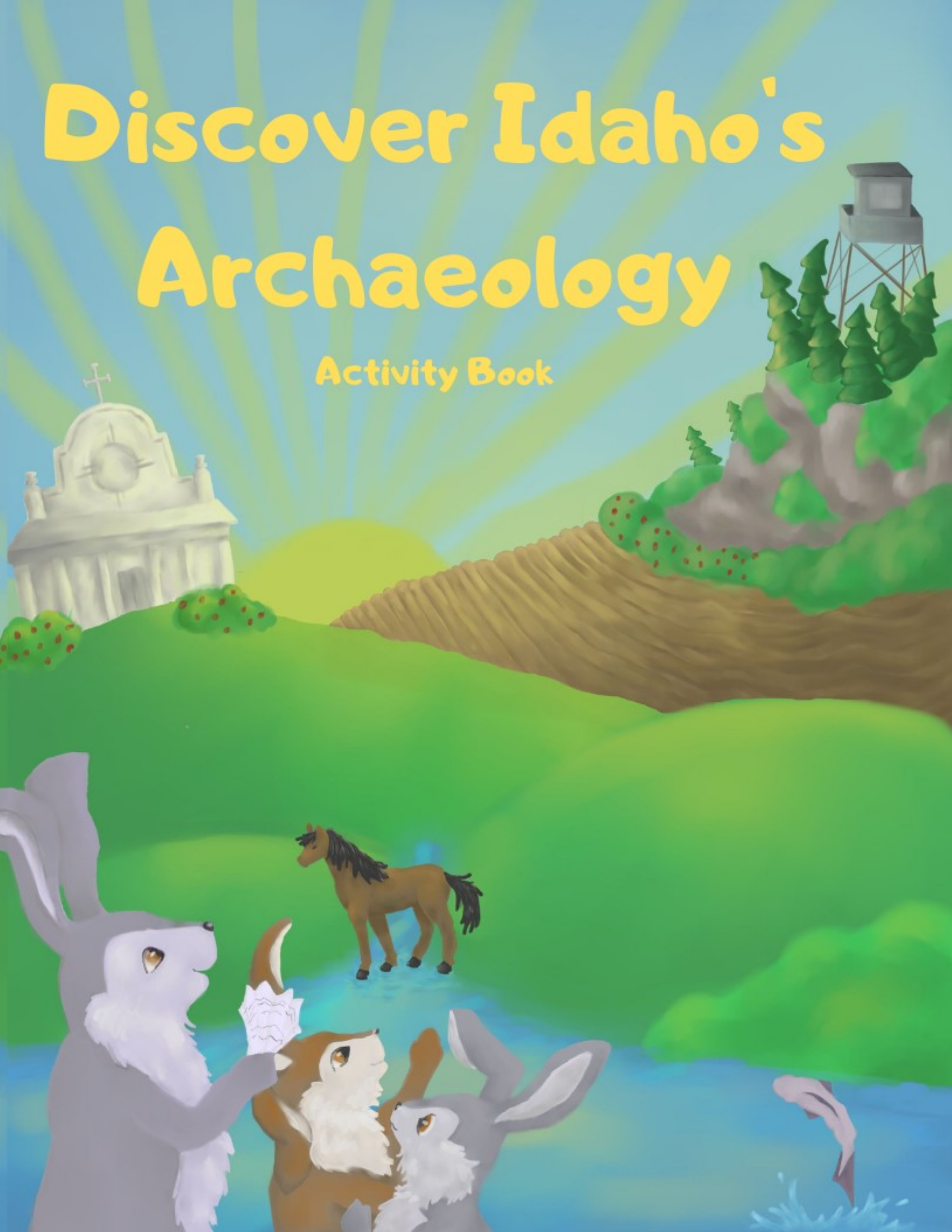
Discover Idaho's Archaeology

Activity Book

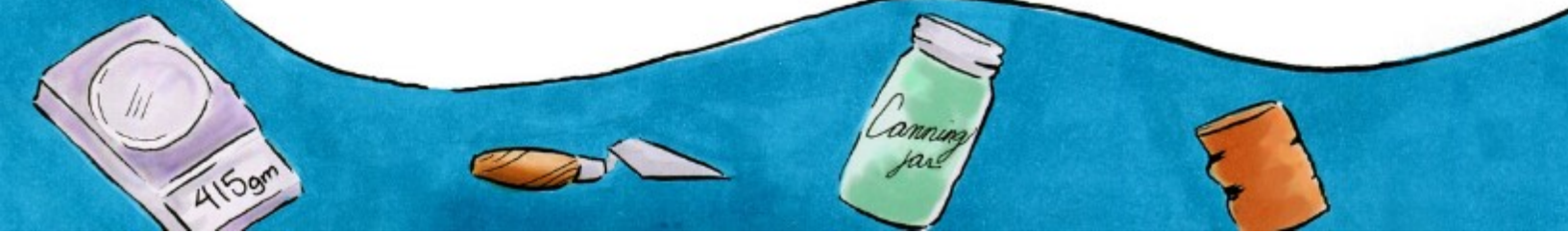


What is Archaeology?

Archaeology is the study of humans through the objects they interact with, make, or otherwise use. These objects are called artifacts or ecofacts. What does this mean? Archaeologists can study just about everything!

Artifacts are objects made or modified by humans. Artifacts include the clothes you wear, food you eat, and even the sticks and stones we make into tools or toys.

Ecofacts are objects that occur in nature, but were NOT modified by humans. Ecofacts are the turkey bones you throw out after Thanksgiving dinner or the egg shells and coffee grounds you put in the compost. Other naturally occurring things that are connected to, but probably not modified by human behavior, include pollen, seeds, charcoal, insect remains, and so much more!



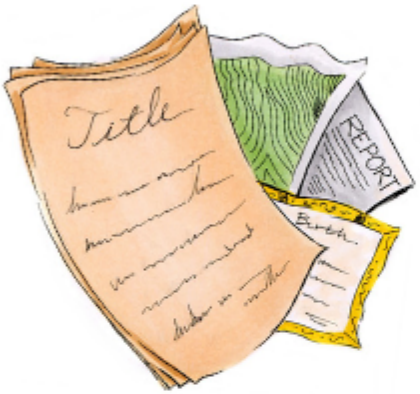
What do Archaeologists Study?

Some archaeologists study materials left by past cultures. Most often, Pre-Contact (or Prehistoric) archaeologists study people who lived hundreds and sometimes thousands of years ago! Historic archaeologists use written records to study cultures of the recent past.

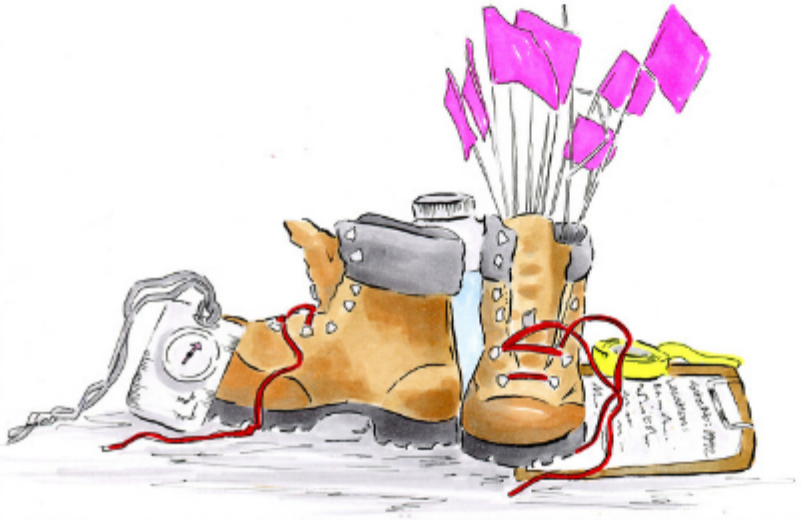
ALL archaeologists use artifacts and ecofacts to understand how humans behaved, but they also need other scientists. Archaeologists work with biologists to identify animals or geologists to learn about soil, stones, or the earth. Other scientists explain the climate, or how old samples are, or what residues were left behind.

Archaeology needs a lot of humans to understand humans!

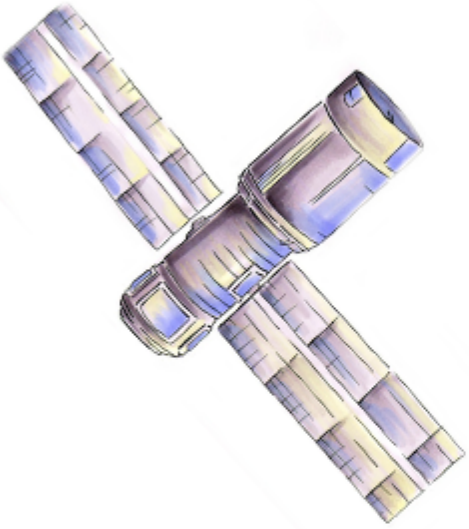
How do Archaeologists Find Sites?



Pretty much all archaeology starts with documents. Finding the location of known sites helps provide protection and help predict where others could be.



The only real way to find a site is to walk over the ground and search for artifacts or ecofacts left by people.



Archaeologists can use aerial photography or satellite imagery to see the ground. In dense forests, satellites can see through heavy forests to find places where humans disturbed the surface. Satellites can reveal ancient water ways, settlements, roads, and much more!

Archaeologists can even use radar to look below the ground's surface to find human activities!

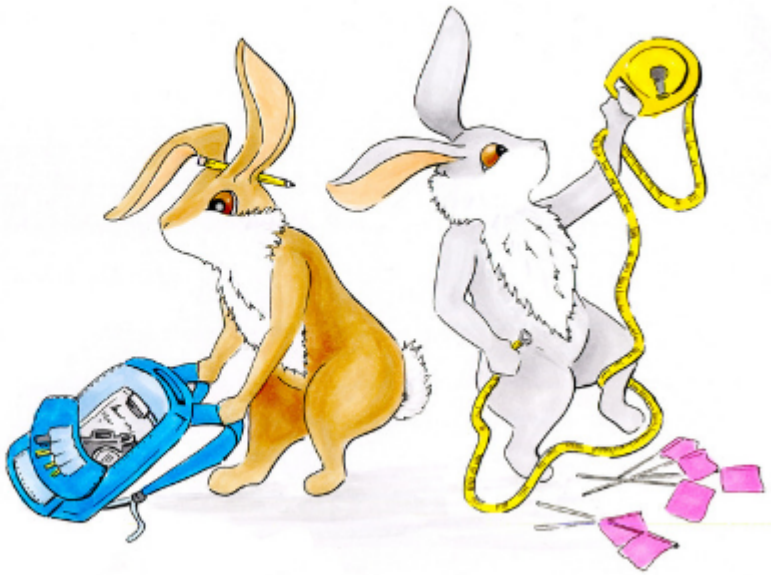
What do Archaeologists do When They Find a Site?

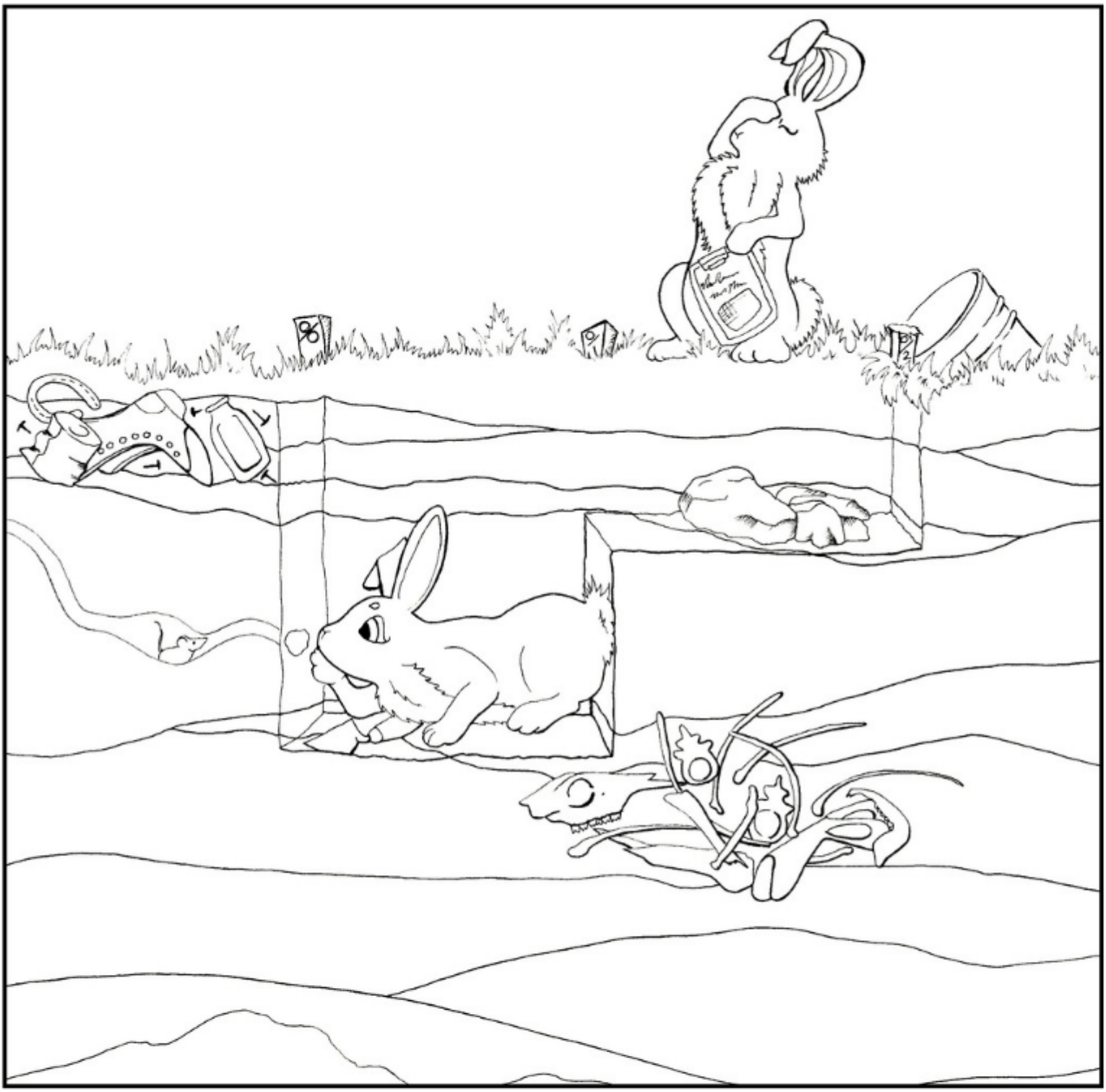
Documenting a site is a time consuming job. In some cases, a site might be visited one time before it is destroyed by construction, vandals, or even a natural disaster.

Archaeologists need to be careful!

Archaeologists have to record everything they can know about a site while disturbing the ground as little as possible. An important part of the process is documenting how big the site is and making detailed maps of the surface.

It is important to record information about the plants, animals, and many cultures who might have lived at the site in the past.

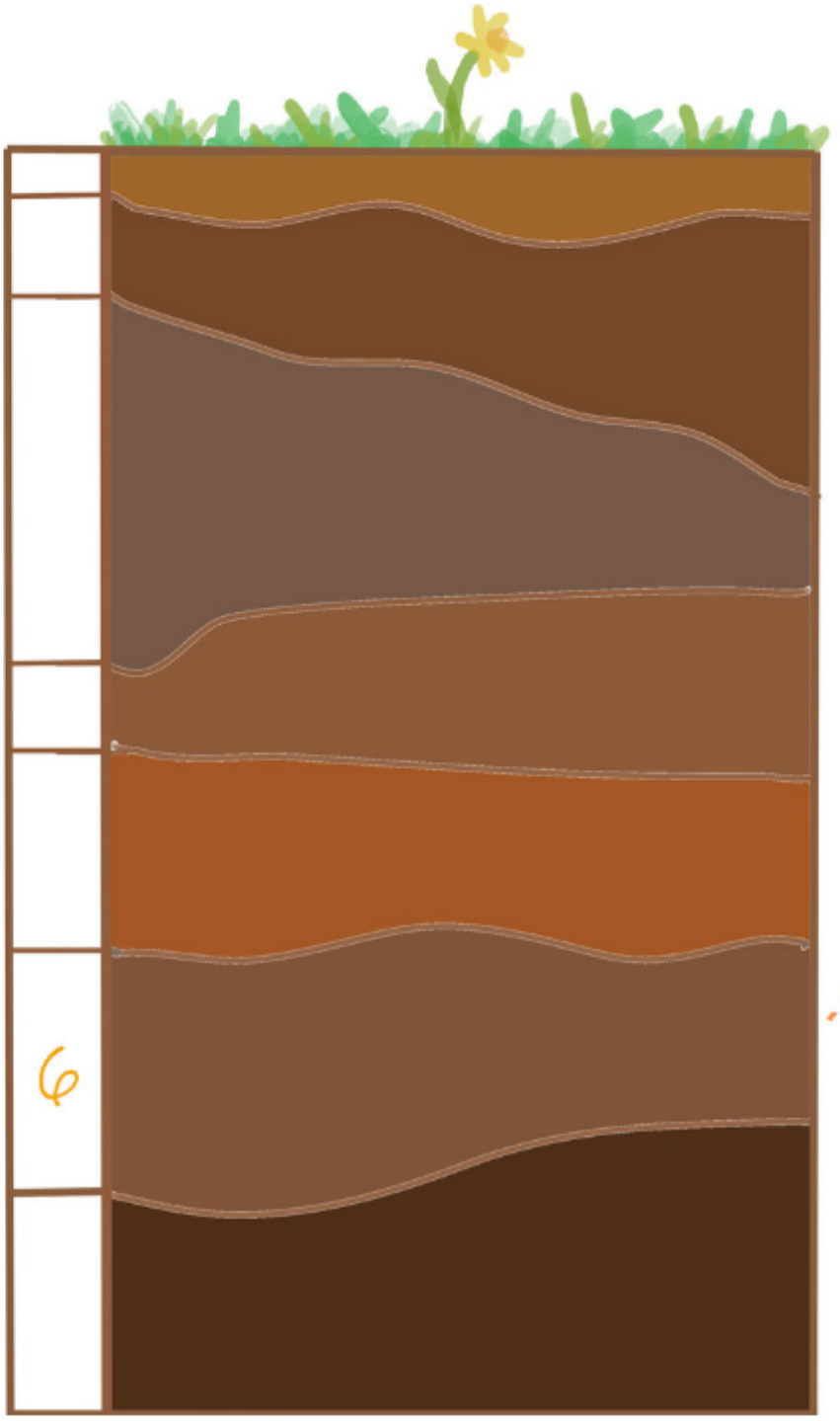


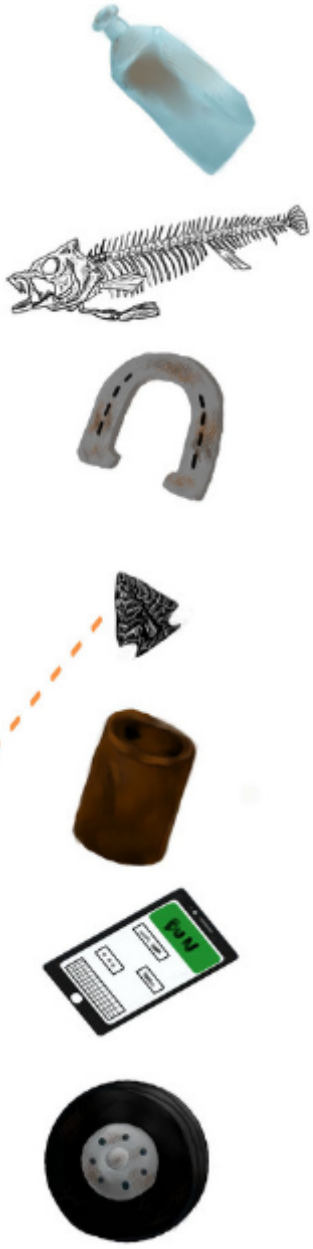


Color page!

As soil is formed, it builds a layer called a strata. Like a cake, the layer on the bottom needs to be settled before anything can rest on top. So the stuff on top is newer. Natural activities like rodent burrows (called krotovina) can displace soil and even introduce soil from a new strata into an old layer!

Oh no! Someone dug up all of these artifacts but didn't record where they came from. Draw lines to connect the artifacts to the right strata.



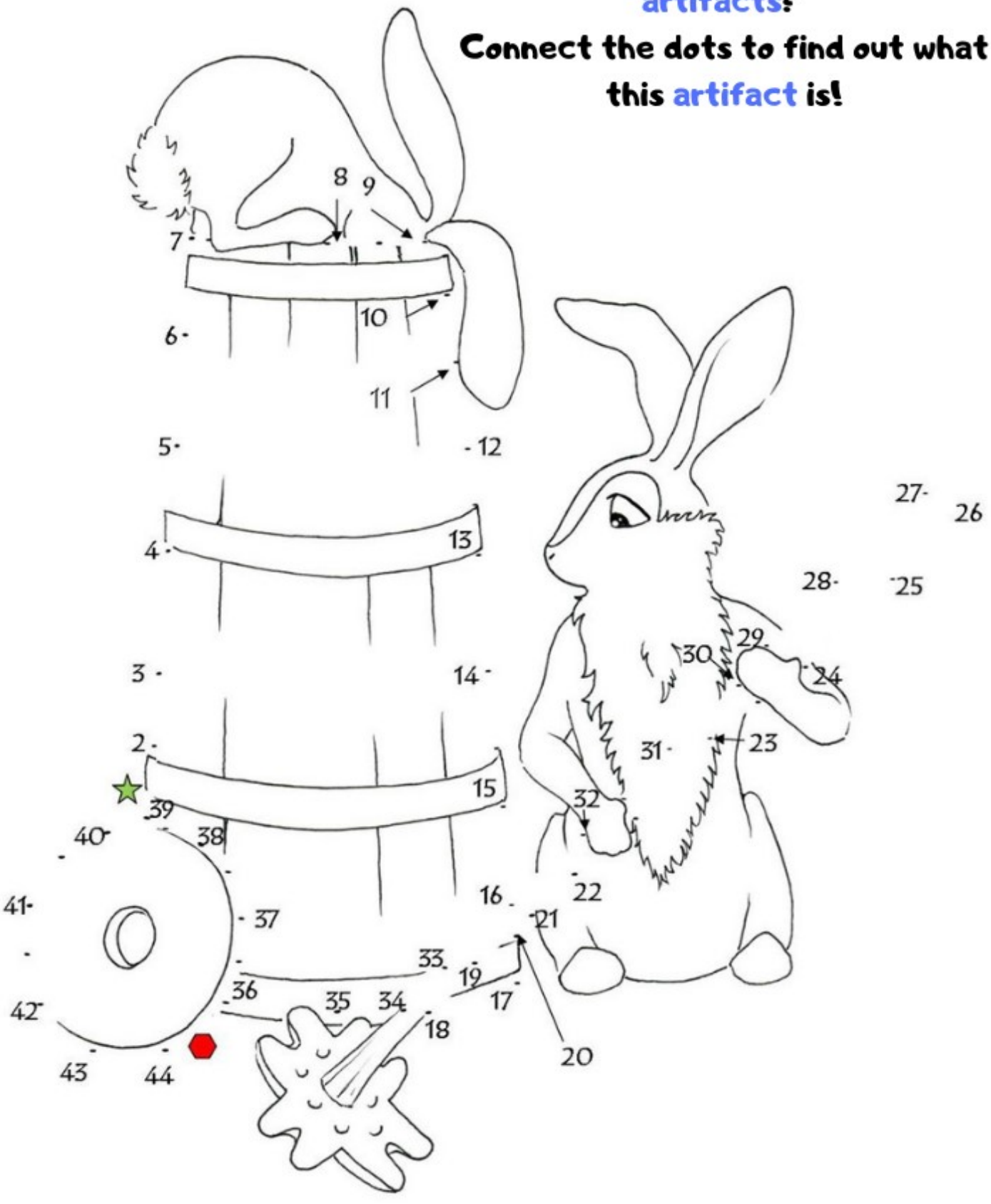


Label the boxes 1-7 in order of youngest to oldest. 1 should be the newest level and 7 the oldest.

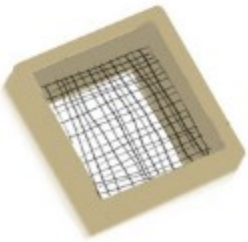
Answer Key: 1. Phone, 2. Tire, 3. Can, 4. Horseshoe, 5. Bottle, 6. Projectile Point, 7. Fish

Did you know "antiques" are historic artifacts?

Connect the dots to find out what this artifact is!



Unscramble the words. Solve the bonus word by using the numbered letters to fill in the blanks.



NRESCE

SOCSAPM

WELTOR

YISTHOR

SGLAF

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

3					6

7						1

2	9				8

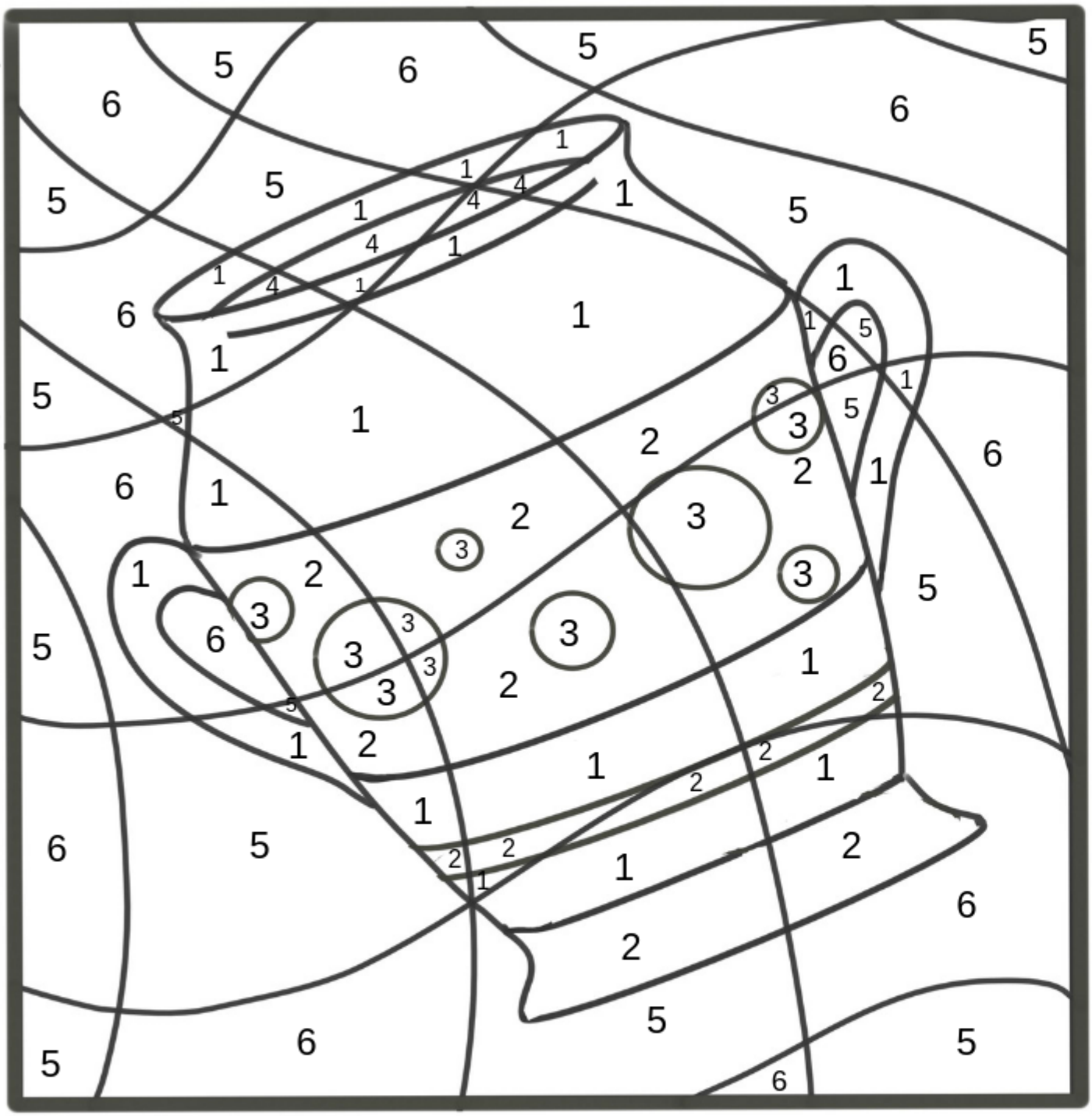
						11

				5	10


N
W
E
S

Use this page to make your own map!

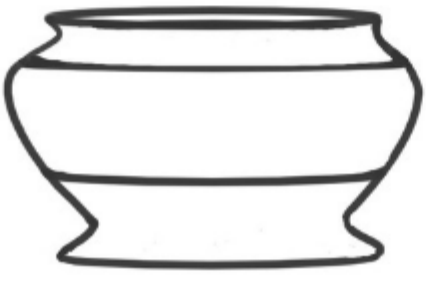
Color by Number



Fill in each number with the right color

1 – Orange
2 – Purple
3 – Yellow
4 – Dark Blue
5 – Light Blue
6 – Green

Design your own ceramic bowl!



Can You Draw an Animal Native to Idaho?*

*Famous native species include Deer, Elk, Salmon, Grouse, Wolves, and even Rabbits!

Color in the pictures. Write in the name of the object.
Use the letters shown below to solve the puzzle at the bottom.

_ _ o _

b _ _ _ _

f _ _ _

_ _ _ e _ _ _ _

_ _ _

k _ _

_ o _ _ _ _

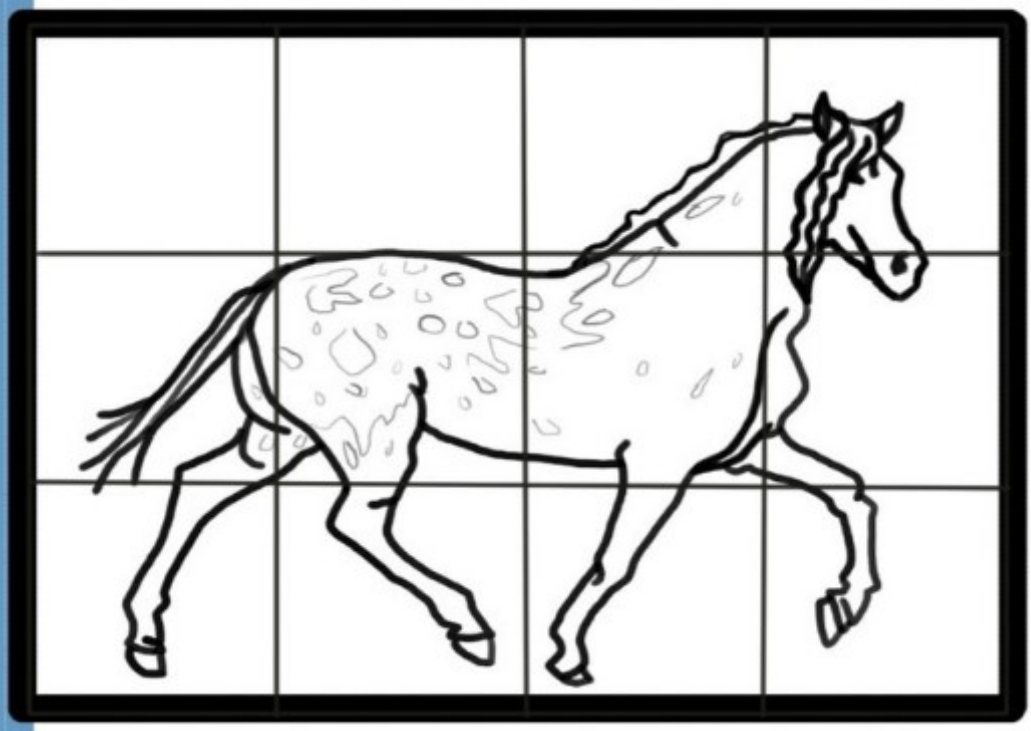
_ _ _ o _

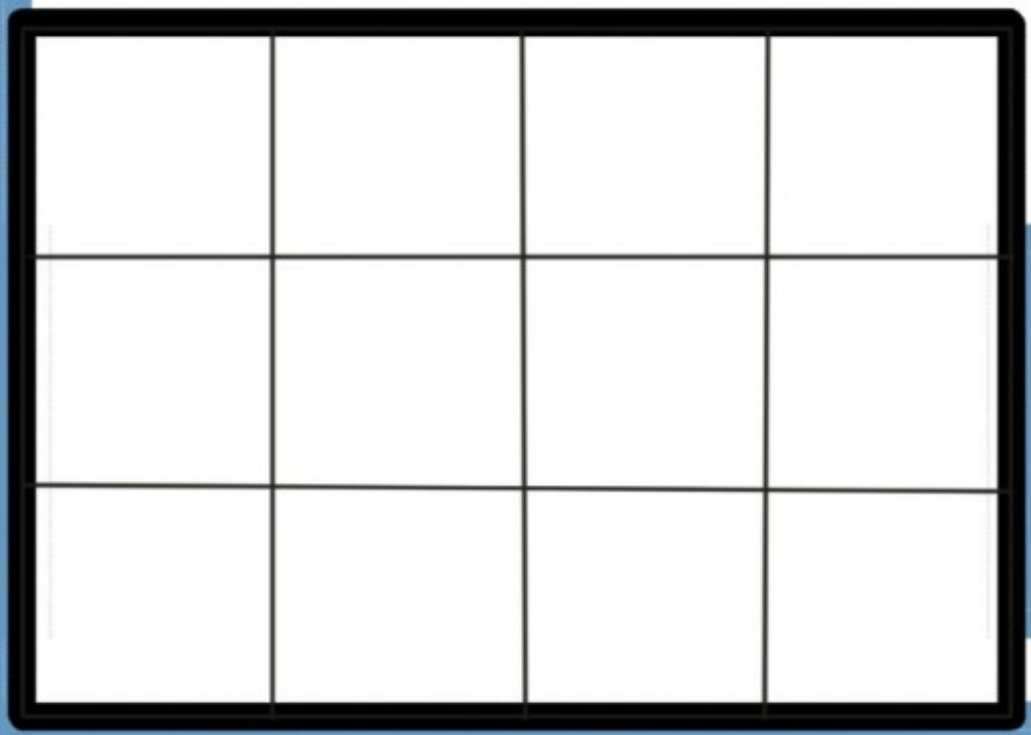
_ _ _ _ _ e

_ i _ l d n _ t _ _ _ _

Did you know horses aren't native to Idaho?
Horses arrived in the early 1700s!

Use the grid to draw your own Appaloosa horse.
Once you're done, color it in!





Oh no! The bunnies lost their lunch inside a tree!

Can you help them find it?

Do you know what color Arrowleaf Balsamroot flowers are? *

What color will you paint yours?

***Hint: they look a bit like sunflowers!**

Make Your Own Field Notebook!

Supplies:

- 4x6" cardboard (2 pieces)
- brown paper lunch sacks
- markers
- whole punch
- ruler
- ring binders (at least 2)
- decorating supplies

*How many lunch bags? Up to you! How many can your ring bionders hold? You can make more notebooks to preserve your adventures or even make separate books for different types of specimen. Enjoy!

Directions:

1. Label lunch bags as shown in Figure 1.*
2. Fold bags to match the size of the covers.
3. Punch holes in the cardboard and bags.
4. Decorate the front and back covers!
5. Assemble!

Figure 1. A good field notebook will record all the details of a great excursion! Make sure to note the type of specimen, place collected, date, and thoughts about the item. How does it relate to everything you collected on your field trip? What does the object say about the world around you?

What to Collect?

Because archaeology is the study of human behavior and the ways we interact with the world, you can collect absolutely anything!

Archaeologists learn the most from artifacts,* ecofacts,* and other things found in nature that can teach us about climate or other environmental conditions.

*Artifacts and ecofacts are explained on page 4.

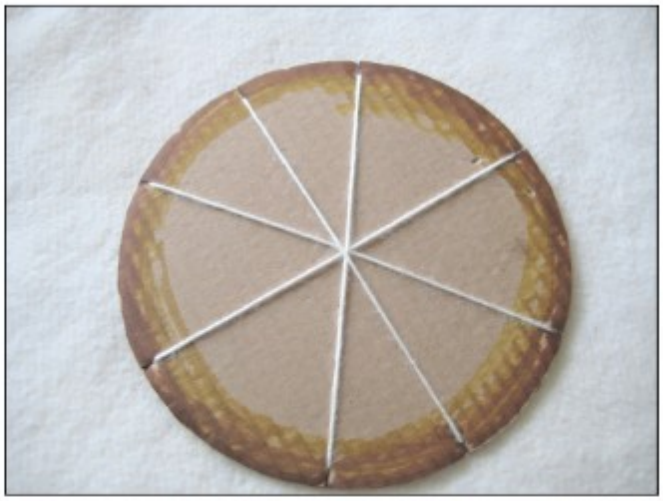
Do it at Home Dendrochronology

(Make your own tree rings!)

Supplies:

- Scrap yarn. Two colors
- Cardboard
- Markers
- Scissors
- Tape

Figure 1. Dendrochronology is the study of tree rings. The size, shape, and number of rings, can tell us how old a tree is and what the climate was like when the tree was growing. Wet and dry seasons produce thick or thin rings and can tell us which season the ring was made. Certain species like oak and pine trees make more reliable rings than others like a willow.



Directions:

1. Cut a 6" circle out of cardboard.
2. Color the outside edge to look like bark.
3. Using safety scissors, make notches around the outside edge to receive the yarn.
4. Tape yarn to the back of the cardboard and string across the front to make a web. Tape down all loose ends.
5. On the front, tape down the yarn and begin to weave in the first ring.
6. Alternating colors, continue to weave to the outer edge. Make sure to vary the growth rings!

Interested and want to learn more? Try out these websites that explore the science of dendrochronology and how it is REALLY done! There is a lot more too it than just counting rings!

https://ltrr.arizona.edu/about/treerings
https://sciedu.ucar.edu/tree-rings
https://www.environmentalscience.org/dendrochronology-tree-rings-tell-us

Congratulations!

You are now a junior archaeologist!

_____

(Your name here)

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