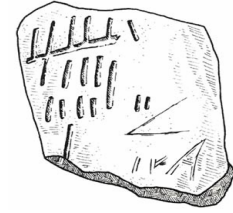


The Archaeology Laboratory

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Age: age 5 and up

Objectives: Provides an introduction to methods of measuring and weighing artifacts used in an artifact processing laboratory.



Materials: A variety of artifacts including potsherds and stone tools; calipers; metric rulers; balance scale; #2 pencils; colored pencils; Laboratory Record Forms; a table; chairs

Preparation: Photocopy a sufficient quantity of the Laboratory Record Forms. Copy a couple of the Laboratory Record Form Examples for placement on the table as examples of the activity.

Number of volunteers: 1 volunteer to every 4–6 children



Procedure: Visitors to this station participate in identifying artifacts by broad artifact type (potsherds or stone tools) then go on to measure, weigh and draw the artifact. Each person is given a Laboratory Record Form and a pencil. Visitors are given or select an artifact that they would like to process.

They begin by filling in the information on the top of the form. Using a caliper or a ruler, visitors take three measurements representing the length, width, and thickness of the artifact. If a scale is available, the artifact can then be weighed.



The final step in the lab process is to draw the artifact. Visitors may make a black and white rendering or reproduce the color of the artifact, if colored pencils are available. To draw the artifact, the item should be placed in the center of the blank square of the Laboratory Record and the perimeter should be traced. Once traced, the artifact should be moved just off to the side. Any details such as drawings or lines on potsherds, or flake scars on lithic artifacts can be then drawn inside the outline.

What they take away: Each person takes the Laboratory Record Form with them.

Preservation message: Illustrates the laboratory processing aspect of an archaeological project and provides information about artifacts and how to report a discovery.

Laboratory Record Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

Artifact type: (Select one)

Potsherd

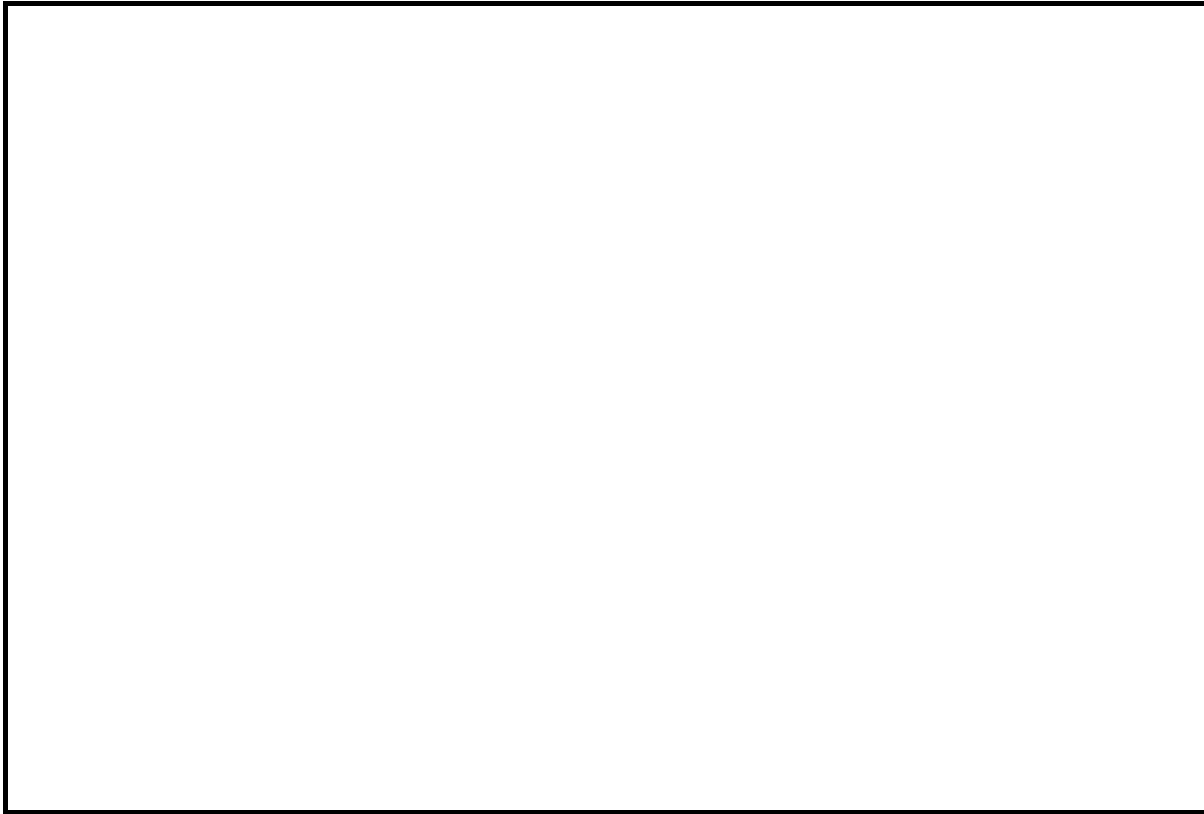
Stone Tool

Size: _____ cm long X _____ cm wide X _____ cm thick

Weight: _____ grams

Colors: _____

Full size illustration of an artifact



What is an artifact?

An artifact is an object that has been made or used by a human being. The pencil you draw with is an artifact. If you used a rock as a hammer, the rock would become a tool. You made it an artifact by using it. Old artifacts from Native American sites are very important pieces of information. If you find one, leave it where it is. Take a photo of it or draw a picture of it and report it to an archaeologist.

Where would you find an archaeologist?

Archaeologists work for government agencies, museums and private companies. You can find an archaeologist by performing a search on the Internet, or by looking under “archaeology” or “environmental consultants” in the Yellow Pages. Or contact your State Historic Preservation Office!

Laboratory Record Form (EXAMPLE)

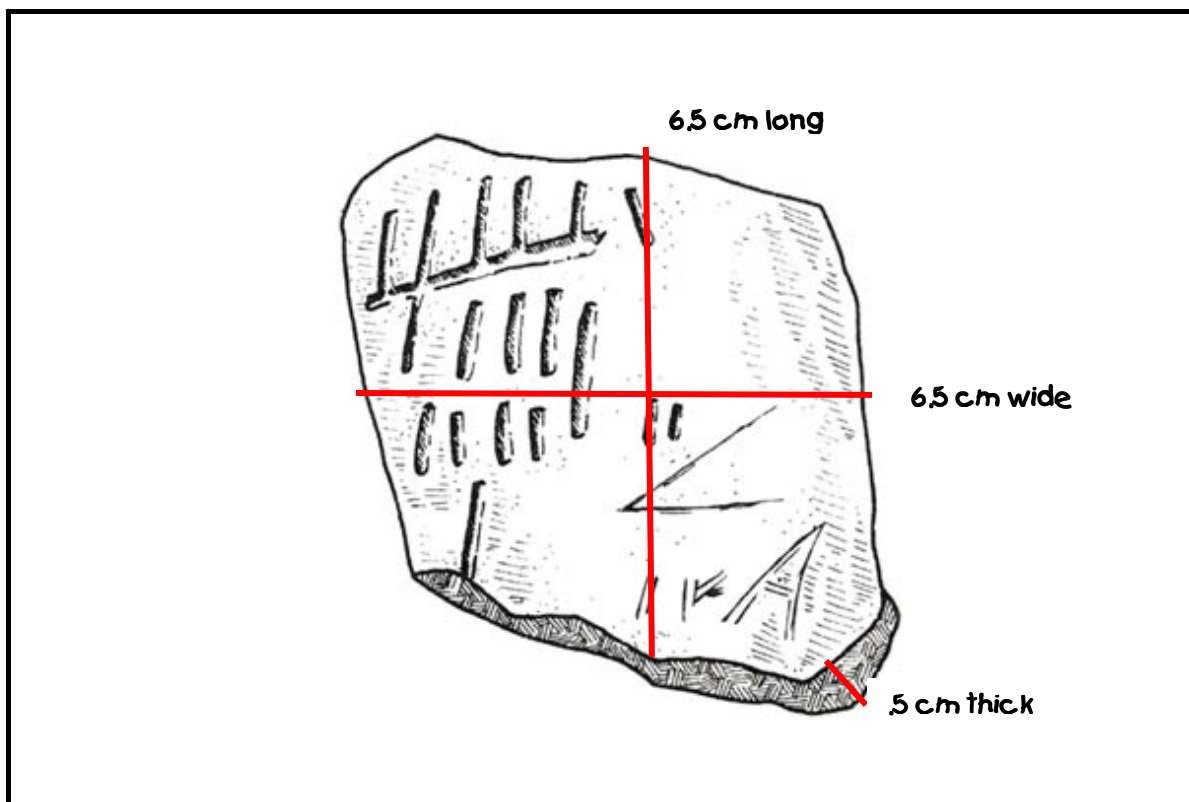
Name: Sarah Smith Date: March 23, 2005

Artifact type: (Select one) Potsherd Stone Tool

Size: 6.5 cm long X 6.5 cm wide X 0.5 cm thick Weight: _____ grams

Colors: orange-brown

Full size illustration of an artifact



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