



Exploring Maryland's Roots



Go on an Archeological Dig Artifact Overview

Please note: Students may not find all items. You might consider having them take notes and compare their findings with others in the class.

DIG IN: 8 items

	Image/Artifact	Multiple Choice Question	Responses
1.	Quartz triangular projectile point	You've got sharp eyes! What do you think it is? A. An arrowhead B. A shark's tooth C. A bear's tooth	The correct answer is A. The Yaocomaco Indians made sharp points like this to tip arrows. They used the arrows to hunt deer and other wildlife. The bow and arrow was introduced in this area about 800 A.D.
2.	Yaocomaco Pottery, finely crushed oyster shell tempered	You found something! But what is it? A. Just a rock. B. A piece of pottery. C. An arrowhead.	The correct answer is B. It might look like an ordinary rock, but it's actually a piece of Yaocomaco pottery that's anywhere from 300 to 1000 years old! Can you find any more pieces of pottery like this?
3.	Yaocomaco Pottery Shards	You think this might be a piece of pottery, but what are those tiny specks? A. Flakes of coconut. B. Oyster shells. C. Bits of deer bones.	The correct answer is B. The Yaocomaco Indians added crushed oyster shells to clay to make their pots stronger. Archaeologists can tell the difference between the inside and outside of an artifact by its shape and texture. Inside surfaces usually curve inward and are scraped smooth. Outside surfaces usually curve outward and have paddle marks or decorations. Sometimes the wooden paddles used to shape the clay were wrapped with cords, nets, or fabrics that left impressions on the clay. Click on the artifact again to take a closer look. Do you see any decoration on this piece of pottery?
4.	Deer bone fragment	You found a piece of deer bone. What do you think it was used for? A. A slingshot B. Making needles and fish hooks. C. It was probably tossed out right after lunch.	The correct answer is C. Yaocomaco Indians used almost every part of the animals they hunted. A deer bone like this could have been used to carve sewing needles or fish hooks. But this one was probably thrown away after they used the meat and skins for food and clothing.
5.	Deer antler fragment	A piece of deer antler! What do you think it was used for? A. Plowing fields. B. Carving sewing needles. C. Part of a midden.	The correct answer is C. This artifact wasn't used for anything special. In fact it was probably added to a midden or trash pile filled with bones, shells, and other garbage. Native Americans did sometimes use deer antlers as tools for plowing fields and would split and carve them into needles for sewing.
6.	Deer teeth	What nice teeth you have, my deer! What were they used for? A. Jewelry B. Money C. Nothing special.	The correct answer is C. This particular artifact probably wasn't used for anything. But we know from other archaeological finds and historical records that the Yaocomaco sometimes made jewelry and decorations out of animal teeth.
7.	Cast iron toy car	What a cool toy. Do you think it belonged to a Yaocomaco Indian child? A. Yes. A lucky one. B. No. C. Maybe.	The correct answer is B. Even though this toy car is old, it's not that old. There is no way it could have belonged to a Yaocomaco child. The best clue is that cars weren't even invented until 1769. The Yaocomaco people lived during the Late Woodland period from 900-1650 A.D. A toy like this probably belonged to someone in the early to mid 1900s.
8.	Blue and white striped glass trade beads	This looks like a glass bead. Did the Native Americans make beads like this? A. Yes. B. No.	The correct answer is B. Native Americans made beads out of shells. This one is made of glass. It was probably made in Italy or Holland, brought to the area by the English, and then traded to the Indians in exchange for furs or other things.



Exploring Maryland's Roots



Go on an Archeological Dig Artifact Overview

Please note: Students may not find all items. You might consider having them take notes and compare their findings with others in the class.

DIG DEEPER: 9 items

	Image/Artifact	Multiple Choice Question	Responses
1.	Quartz triangular projectile point	Another arrowhead! Can you take this one home? A. Sure! Why not? B. No way.	The correct answer is B. Archeologists never pocket their findings. Every single artifact is carefully labeled and stored for further research. Archaeological records include precise details about each artifact's location, size, age, and possible purpose.
2.	Oyster shell	Oyster shells are so common in this area. Why is this one an important archaeological find? A. It's old. B. It tells us something about what the Yaocomaco ate. C. Every artifact in an archaeological dig is a important clue to the past.	The correct answer is A, B, and C. All three answers are correct! Based on where it was found in the dig, archaeologists can tell that this shell is anywhere from 350 to 1100 years old. Oysters, clams, and other shellfish were an important source of food for the Yaocomaco Indians who lived then. Finding a large pile of discarded shells might give us clues about American Indian feasts. What else might we learn by examining what people throw away?
3.	Clay tobacco pipe	This has a picture on it. Can you guess what the artifact might be? A. A bead. B. A pipe. C. A whistle.	The correct answer is B. It's a clay tobacco pipe. American Indians grew tobacco, among other crops, and smoked it during special ceremonies. Pipes were often decorated with patterns or animals. This one is decorated with what archaeologists call the running deer motif.
4.	Lithic debitage, or the by-product flakes and chips from stone tool production	What do all of these rock pieces have in common? A. They are flakes leftover from making stone tools. B. They were put inside gourds to make music. C. They were used as currency or wampum.	The correct answer is A. All of these rock pieces are leftover bits of stone from making tools. Stone flakes are often found scattered throughout the layers of an archaeological dig. Any of these flakes could range in age from hundreds to thousands of years old so its difficult to link them directly to the Yaocomaco. But we do know the Yaocomaco people made tools by chipping pieces off of hard stones.
5.	Shell bead	A pretty shell bead! Did the Yaocomaco make beads like this? A. Yes. B. No.	The correct answer is A. Native Americans along the coast made beads like this out of purple and white shells to trade with neighboring tribes. The beads were used just like money or "wampum." They were also used for jewelry and to decorate clothing. Tribes further inland made copper jewelry to trade for shell beads.
6.	Fire cracked rock	What do you think these rocks can tell us? A. That this location had a fire pit or hearth. B. Not much. They're just rocks C. That Native Americans liked to collect rocks.	The correct answer is A. The special way these rocks are cracked tells us that they came from a hearth pit. Archaeologists look for a reddish color that forms when fire reacts with the iron in the stones. The hearth was probably the place where food was prepared and cooked.
7.	Stone scraper	What kind of stone tool is this? A. A scraper. B. A grinder. C. An ax blade	The correct answer is A. The American Indians chipped sharp edges around hard rock to make scrapers like this. They used the scrapers to take the fur off animal skins.
8.	Ax blade	What kind of stone tool is this? A. A scraper. B. A grinder. C. An ax blade	The correct answer is C. An ax blade like this would have been attached to a wooden handle using strings made from deer hide.
9.	Bone fish hook	A rare find! What is it? A. An earring B. A sewing tool. C. A fish hook.	The correct answer is C. To make a fish hook like this, a Native American might have split the toe bone of a deer and carved the hook using a stone tool. Their fishing line was made from animal tendons. They also caught fish using traps and spears.



Go on an Archeological Dig Artifact Overview

Please note: Students may not find all items. You might consider having them take notes and compare their findings with others in the class.

UNCOVER THE PUZZLE: 18 pieces of a pot

Students can find 18 shards of an ancient pot. They can drag the pieces onto a puzzle in order to reassemble it. The pot the students will find was an actual one discovered and reassembled by archaeologists.

When students complete this part of the activity, they will read this:

- Wow! All of those broken pieces of pottery are part of this Yaocomaco pottery vessel.
- (A vessel is just a fancy word that archaeologists use for any kind of pot). Because this
- pot is made from a mixture of clay and oyster shells, you can easily link it to the
- Yaocomaco Indians living in the Late Woodland period (900-1650 AD). Pottery during
- this time period was thinner and fired at hotter temperatures, which made it stronger
- than earlier pots. Many pots of this time period were decorated.

- You can get a more accurate age for this pot using stratigraphic (STRAT-ah-GRAF-ick)
- sequencing. Stratigraphic sequencing is simply noting what layer of dirt an artifact came
- from and what other artifacts were found in or near the same layer. Sometimes
- archaeologists can associate a date range with an artifact based on the dates of other
- artifacts found near it. Finding a European glass bead near this pot is a good clue that it
- might have been in use when Europeans arrived in the early 1600s, give or take a hundred
- years! So you're pretty sure its date is from 1500-1700 AD.

- More About This Pot**
- You solved the puzzle, but what other clues are hidden in this pot? Here's what the
- archaeologists who found this pot can tell us:
 - How big is it?** This reconstructed pot measures approximately 8.75 inches tall and
 - 7.75 inches wide at its mouth.
 - What was it used for?** This vessel is a jar. It was probably used for cooking and
 - storing food.
 - What is it made of?** It was made from clay which had ground-up oyster shell
 - added to it as a tempering agent. The shell allowed water in the clay to be released
 - without exploding while the pot was being fired.
 - How was it made?** The person (probably a woman) who made the vessel took balls
 - of clay and formed flat strips from them. The strips--or coils--were stacked on one
 - another to form the pot. A paddle was used to smooth the coils together. On this
 - vessel, fabric was pressed into the surface of the pot while it was still wet in order
 - to leave an impression. However, most of the fabric impressions were then smoothed
 - over. Impressions (made from fabric, nets, cords, etc.) on the surface of a pot may
 - have improved its heating characteristics or made it less slippery to carry. After the pot
 - was formed, it was fired in a pit filled with hot charcoal to harden it.
 - Were early pots like this strong?** Yes. In fact European settlers often used them.
 - But they did break, which is why we find so many sherds on archaeological sites.
 - Sometimes, people repaired a small break by drilling holes through the cracked
 - pieces and stitching them together.