



Solve the Mystery of the Three Lead Coffins Vocabulary List

Acre – a piece of land 43,560 square feet large. An acre is a little smaller than a football field.

Air Extraction System — machine created by Army and NASA scientists to remove air from inside the lead coffins without letting outside air get in to the coffin

Archaeologist – scientists who explore for clues about how people lived in the past. In order to find out more about the past, archaeologists study objects that people made or used.

Archaeology – science of learning about the past by studying artifacts, such as tools, pottery, and remains.

Argon – special type of gas.

Artifact – something created or used by humans that was left behind. Artifacts could be pottery, metal nails, coffins, parts of buildings, garbage, or much more.

Baffled – confused and uncertain

Bomb cart – a lifting and carrying device used by the Navy to carry bombs from storage to the planes.

Breakthrough – a surprising advance in knowledge. Breakthroughs can be inventions, like the light bulb, or discoveries, like a new fact in science.

Brushite (BRUSH-ite) – a clear or cloudy mineral. Brushite is formed when certain chemicals combine with the mineral calcium in bones.

Chapel – a small building used for prayer and worship

Coffin – a box or chest for burying a person. Coffins can be made of wood, metal, or even a wood box inside a metal box.

Contaminate – to pollute by touching or mixing with. Air inside the lead coffins was contaminated by outside air when the outside air mixed with the inside air.

Crystal – a hardened mineral that is clear or slightly cloudy. Crystals can form when certain chemicals are combined.

Curious – to be interested and have lots of questions.

Embalm – to treat a dead body to prepare it for burial

Environmental Scientist – researcher interested in the earth's environment, including air, ground, and water quality.

Excavation – a dig done by archaeologists.

Facial reconstruction – artist's recreation of a face using a plaster skull cast. Facial reconstructions use clues from bits of hair, clothing, and facts about all humans to create a sculpture. Some details, like eye and skin color, must be guessed.

Forensic Scientists and Archaeologists – researchers who are experts in learning from human remains.

Gamma ray – the highest, most powerful form of light radiation.

Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) – special type of machine that allows archaeologists to locate objects underground. Ground Penetrating Radar uses waves of energy to map the rough size and depth of objects.

Historians – people who research or study events and people from the past. Historians use primary sources, like letters and court records, to discover how life used to be.

Laboratories – places where scientists do tests and experiments.

NASA – the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. NASA is the part of the government that does research on air and space travel.

Philip Calvert (1626-1682) – youngest son of the first Lord Baltimore. Philip was an advisor, judge, and even governor of Maryland. He owned the largest mansion in 17th-century Maryland. He was married to Anne Wolsey until she died in 1680 or 1681. He then married a woman named Jane Sewall.

Pollen – dust-like grains that plants produce for reproduction. Pollen can't be seen without a microscope. Each plant produces its own type of pollen, and different plants produce pollen at different times of the year.

Preserved – to keep safe from injury, harm, or destruction. The lead coffins preserved the remains inside from decay.

Project Lead Coffins – name created by the historians, archaeologists, and researchers for the digging, removal, and research of the three lead coffins found in what was once a church at St. Mary's City.

Remains – parts of a body that remain after someone dies, such as a skeleton.

Researcher – person who studies one or more subjects very carefully. Researchers try to become an expert on their subjects.

Ruins – the remains of a building that has fallen down or been destroyed

Sealed – to close something tightly so that nothing can get in or out of it

Vandals – person who damages or destroys property without reason

Whisk – a quick, light brushing motion