

Welcome to the Teachers' Instructions area for this student activity. Here you'll find directions and suggestions for using this activity along with the materials you need to evaluate your students' work.

Title: Who is Buried in the Lead Coffin? Part One

Audience: Middle

Duration: 45 Minutes

Subject Area(s):

Language Arts - Reading

Grade Level(s): 4,5,6,7,8

Teacher Directions:

This activity is designed to be used in conjunction with a second activity, Who is Buried in the Lead Coffin? Part Two. In this activity, students will participate in an archaeological dig to learn about the process of a dig. They will use their critical thinking skills as they make predictions during the dig.

This activity can be completed using a variety of technology configurations. If a computer lab is available, students can access the activity, worksheets and web pages through Thinkport.

Another option would be to display the activity and Web page on a classroom computer with a projection device. In this case, students will need a copy of each worksheet.

Introductory Activity

1. Tell students that in 1990, archaeologists found something under the abandoned chapel at St. Mary's City. Ask students to guess what they found under the chapel. If students don't know, or can't guess, what was discovered under the chapel, tell them that they found three lead coffins. Tell students that they are going to join the archaeological dig of the coffins and discover what archaeologist and other team members do in excavations like this.

Focus for Media Interaction

The focus for viewing the Solve the Mystery of the Lead Coffins Web site is to describe the importance and process of an archaeological dig.

Viewing Activity

Tell students to open the Solve the Mystery of the Lead Coffins interactive under The Colony Grows section of the Exploring Maryland's Roots Web site. This link may be found at this location: http://mdroots.thinkport.org/default_flash.asp. Explain to students that they are going to describe the steps in the excavation process, make personal predictions about the dig, and answer questions in their Archaeology Log Part One as they make their way through the site. Ask them to open up the Archaeology Log 1 handout (or pass out copies of this handout to the students) and have them start digging. **IMPORTANT--** Tell students to stop on page 26 of the interactive after

they read the results of the tests from the air in the coffins. Tell them not to go any further in the interactive.

Postviewing Activity

After students have read the results of the tests from the air in the coffins, have the students stop and discuss what they have learned to this point. Students may use the information in their Archaeology Log to answer these questions as a class:

What was the most interesting thing you have learned on the dig at this point?

(Accept any reasonable answer.)

What process did they go through on the dig?

Set up the grid, brushed away the dirt and recorded what they found and where they found it, developed a plan for how to proceed, brought in other experts, developed the Air Extraction System, used the gamma ray machine and film to see what was inside the coffins, lifted the coffins out, used the Air Extraction System to get air out of the coffins.

What experts did they bring in for the project?

Archaeologists, forensic scientists, environmental scientists, historians, the Army, the Navy

Do you think it was worth waiting almost two years to open the coffins? Explain.

Do you think archaeology digs are important? Explain.

Student Directions:

Why did it take almost two years to open up what archaeologists discovered under the chapel? This unique Web site allows you to go in person on an archaeological dig.

Reading (6-8)	Maryland Content Standards Students examine, construct and extend the meaning of a variety of self-selected and assigned text (traditional and electronic) by applying a range of reading strategies and analytic techniques.	Maryland State Indicators 1.8.5.2 draw inferences, conclusions or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and experience (MLO.R. 2.2.2., MLO.R. 3.2.2.)
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The Students will:

be able to discuss the story of the Three Lead Coffins.

The Students will:

be able to describe the process of an archaeological dig and discuss its importance.

Directions: Today you will go on an archaeological dig to find out who was buried in the three lead coffins. Along the way you will collect information about archaeology, make predictions concerning the dig, and record facts about the Three Lead Coffins dig. You will be responsible for explaining the steps of a dig. You will record your information in your Archaeology Log. In some instances you will be asked to make a prediction before you turn the page in the story. Pay close attention to your Archeology Log as you proceed through the site.

Solve the Mystery of the Three Lead Coffins

Go along on an archaeological dig to solve this mystery from the 1600's.

http://mdroots.thinkport.org/default_flash.asp

How can we find out who was buried in the coffins when so much time has past?

Use this log to describe the process of an archaeological dig, answer questions and make predictions.

Archaeology Log 1 ([View](#))

Teacher Key for Archaeology Log 1 ([View](#))

Activity Signature

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