



Yale-New Haven
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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2011 Volume II: What History Teaches

HOT on Artifacts

Guide for Curriculum Unit 11.02.02
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Making students into time-travel archeologists will spark inquiry and interest about the past, present, and future. This unit builds higher-order thinking (HOT) skills through the examination of artifacts. History and social studies curricula that require memorizing lists of dates and events may create yawns in the classroom and send the message that studying the past is boring. This unit puts the students in the role of archeologists, discovering artifacts along with their adventures exploring the past, present, and future. Students will develop their critical and creative thinking skills by imagining themselves in the different time periods in which an artifact exists. They will use higher-order questioning strategies to hypothesize, make inferences, draw conclusions, and evaluate different artifacts. Although this unit was created with fourth-graders in mind, it can easily be adapted to any grade from kindergarten through grade eight.

(Recommended for Social Studies, grades 4-6)

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