Get colouring! Eric is at an archaeological dig. Find his tools and colour him in!

- Spade
- Trowel
- Sieve
- Magnifying glass
- Tape measure
- Pen and paper

bbc.co.uk/history/handsonhistory
For Groups

HANDS ON HISTORY DIG!

bbcc.co.uk/history/handsonhistory

In association with

Young Archaeologists' Club™
This Hands on History activity pack will help you run archaeology themed activities as part of the BBC Learning project, Dig! Activities are suitable for mixed age groups and are ideal for families with children aged up to 12.

Inside you will find three detailed group activity plans, posters to promote your event and stickers for children. There is also a colouring-in sheet included on the back page.

Visit Hands on History online to find:

‘Day in the Life’ children’s animations – follow Eric the time traveller as he visits different eras, including the Normans, World War II and the Romans. Great for setting the scene at the beginning of a session.

Events and activities – details of archaeology events and activities taking place across the UK as part of the project.

Downloadable family activities – instructions for history activities families can try out back at home.

Schools resources – curriculum linked lesson plans for 7 to 11 year olds (KS2) including additional information for running Dig! activities in schools.

bbc.co.uk/history/handsonhistory
Activity 1 – Paper excavation
‘Excavate’ a Roman pot like a real archaeologist, putting the pot back together and recording what you have found out.

Activity 2 – Poos from the past
Excavate a ‘poo’ using archaeology skills to find out more about people from different periods in history.

Activity 3 – Cress cropmarks
Create your own cress cropmarks to understand how clues in the landscape help archaeologists uncover secrets hiding beneath the surface.

Activity 4 – Colouring-in sheet
Ideal for younger participants or as an introductory activity run before activities 1, 2 or 3. Identify archaeology tools and colour in Eric the archaeologist.

What is Archaeology?
Archaeology is a way of learning about people who lived in the past; where and how they lived, what they believed and the effects they had on the environment.

Archaeologists learn about the past by studying the physical remains that people have left behind. These can include artefacts (such as pottery or tools), human remains, buildings and changes to the landscape.
Activity 1

PAPER EXCAVATION

This activity will give participants the chance to take part in an excavation without getting their hands dirty! They will use all the skills important to a real archaeologist to DISCOVER an item, EXAMINE what they’ve found and RECORD their findings. The activity is worksheet based and ideal for groups looking for a quick and easy activity to prepare.

Facilitator instructions

- Hand out photocopies of the worksheets (1, 2 and 3) to all participants.
- Set the scene – Eric the archaeologist has found fragments of a Roman pot in his excavation pit. Help him discover, examine and record what he’s found.
- Ask each participant to come up and collect the tools they will need for their excavation (see left).
- Give the group around 30 mins to excavate their pot, put it back together and record their findings.
- If you have time at the end of the session, ask each participant to colour in their pot using the colours available in Roman times – ocre (an earthy yellow), blue, red and black. You can then create a display of all of the pots.

You will need (one per participant)

- Photocopies of Paper Excavation worksheets 1, 2 and 3
- Paper Excavation tools:
  - Scissors
  - Pencil
  - Ruler (or use the ruler included on the Artefact Recording worksheet)
  - Glue stick
  - Pens, coloured pencils or paint (optional)

TOP TIPS

You can create paper excavations of all sorts of artefacts. Localise this activity by finding an image (copyright free) of an artefact important in your area – a locally manufactured object, a local building or a real archaeological find discovered near you.

For an older group you can make this activity trickier by mixing up three objects in the ‘pit’ to put back together. Simply cut up three items of your choice and put them in a box for participants to find the pieces in. Photocopy extra Artefact Recording sheets for the participants to record all three items found.
Worksheet 1 – Roman Pot

Eric the archaeologist has found fragments of a Roman pot in his excavation pit, help him discover, examine and record what he’s found.

- Look at the dig below and find all the pieces of the pot.
- Remove the pieces by cutting them out carefully with a pair of scissors.
- Put the pieces on the Finds Tray sheet and put the pot back together (a bit like a jigsaw!) – one piece has been laid out to get you started.
- If any fragments are missing, draw what you imagine may have been in the gaps to complete the pot.
- Complete the Artefact Recording Sheet with all the details about your artefact, just like a real archaeologist.
Worksheet 2 – Roman Pot

Archaeologist's name:
Artefact name:
Artefact size:
Date of discovery:
Artefact Recording Sheet

Archaeologist’s name:

The Artefact:

Date of discovery:

What is your artefact made from?

How old do you think your artefact is? Look at the decoration for clues.

Is your artefact complete?

How tall is your artefact?

How wide is your artefact?

What do you think your artefact is/was used for?

Any other observations?
Activity 2

POOS FROM THE PAST

Archaeologists use a number of methods to help DISCOVER, EXAMINE and RECORD the secrets of the past. A great way to understand more about humans from history is to learn what they ate. One fun (and mucky!) way to do this is to dissect a fake human poo.

This activity will give participants a chance to gain hands on excavation experience and uncover evidence about the eating and living habits of humans through the ages.

Before you run this activity, you will need to make your fake poo to act as evidence. Using the following recipe will give you a material with the ideal consistency. However, if you are unable to create this yourself, soft modelling dough would also be suitable.

Facilitator instructions:

- In the measuring jug, mix 1 cup / 8 fl oz of hot water with either 10 stock cubes or enough paint or food colouring to make a good poo colour.
- Place the flour, salt, bicarbonate of soda and vegetable oil in a large mixing bowl.
- Add your coloured liquid slowly to the ingredients, mixing until you have a firm but flexible dough. To make it darker add more colouring directly, but be careful not to end up with runny poo!
- Using the recipes below, create poos from each of the three eras by placing the evidence inside your poo.
- If you have a group who likes to get mucky, add cooked spaghetti to the poos to give the look of internal parasites such as tapeworms.

You will need: (This recipe will make approximately 20 fake poos)

- 2 cups / 300g plain flour
- 1 cup / 300g of salt
- 2 tablespoons of bicarbonate of soda
- 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
- 1 cup / 8 fl oz of hot water
- 10 stock cubes OR brown poster paint OR brown food colouring
- Mixing bowl
- Measuring jug
- Evidence (if making all three types of poo) – fish bones, bread grains, lentils, apple pips, peas, melon seeds, olive stones, orange/lemon pips, cherry stones, small stones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROMAN</th>
<th>VIKING</th>
<th>TUDOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melon seeds</td>
<td>Lots</td>
<td>Fish bones*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive stone</td>
<td>2 or 3</td>
<td>Bread grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread grains</td>
<td>Lots</td>
<td>Peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small stones</td>
<td>About 5</td>
<td>Apple pips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange/lemon pips</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Small stones</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cherry stones</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Boil and clean fish bones carefully to ensure you remove all flesh and the spinal cord.
Facilitator Instructions

- Divide the group into pairs or small groups.
- Hand each group a poo on a paper plate (you may need to give them some time to have a giggle!) and a copy of worksheets 1 and 2.
- Set the scene – Our history time traveller, Eric, has travelled back in time and shared his meals with the Tudors, Romans and the Vikings. You have found a poo from one of these eras. You will need to carefully dissect the poo to find evidence of which historic period Eric has visited. Use the Clue Cards to help you identify what you find and the Organic Remains Recording sheet to record your discoveries.
- Ask the groups to come and pick up their organic remains tools.
- Give the group around 30mins to carefully dissect their poo, putting everything they find onto their Finds Tray plate.
- At the end of the time, ask each group to present their findings to the rest of the room and to explain which era their poo is from and how they have found this out.

You will need (one per pair/group)

- Your pre-prepared poos from different periods
- Photocopies for each group of worksheets 1 and 2 included in this pack

Organic remains tools:

- Wooden scrapers e.g. wooden coffee stirrers or cocktail sticks with the points cut off
- Paper plates
- Plastic sheeting to cover the table/floor
- Rulers and pencils
- Vinyl gloves (Optional. Note, participants with wheat allergy should wear gloves)
Clue Card 1 – Eric the Roman (In Britain 43 – 446 AD)

- In this period Eric had the luxury of exciting new food brought to Britain by the Romans. These included garlic, leeks, cabbages, peas, thyme, rosemary and pheasants.
- He would also have tried foods traded from other countries such as olive oil and exotic fruits, as well as spices such as pepper, cinnamon and ginger.
- Some of the food Eric ate as a Roman would turn the stomach of many people today – stuffed dormice, snails fattened in milk and even peacocks were all served at rich feasts.
- A favourite sauce, called liquamen or garum, was made from rotted fish guts.
- For a Roman poo look out for – bread grains, melon seeds, olive stones, orange or lemon pips, and small stones from bread made by grinding grains with stones (called quern stones). The stones would have been eaten unknowingly.

Clue Card 2 – Eric the Viking (In Britain 787 – 1066 AD)

- Poor Viking people would add pine-tree bark to their meals to add bulk and provide a source of vitamin C (not that they knew this!)
- Viking Eric didn’t have a fork to use in this period – only knives and spoons or he would have used his fingers – yurgh!
- Fish and meat were often salted, dried in the wind or smoked over the fire to help preserve food stocks over the winter.
- As a Viking, Eric ate a variety of different fruits like cherries and apples.
- Food was often cooked in a cauldron over the fire, either hung from a chain or supported on a tripod. A ‘cauldron snake’ was the Viking name for a spiced sausage cooked in this way.
- As a Viking, Eric saw bread being made using a quern stone to grind the wheat, and he would sometimes eat small bits of stone without knowing.
- For a Viking poo look out for – fish bones, bread grains, apple pips, peas, cherry stones and small stones.

Clue Card 3 – Eric the Tudor (1485 – 1603 AD)

- As a Tudor, Eric enjoyed newly discovered food like lentils, tomatoes, peppers, maize and turkey that all came from voyages to the new world. Only the rich folk around him could afford to enjoy potatoes which were also introduced at this time.
- Fruit and vegetables grown in England (such as apples and peas) were also eaten.
- Eric the Tudor ate a lot of bread. It was eaten with every meal and even used as a plate in a thick slice called a trencher with food served on top.
- Poor people ate little meat, although would have eaten some fish. Their staple food was ‘pottage’ a thick form of soup containing anything they could get their hands on!
- Ale and wine were drunk instead of water which was often unsafe to drink.
- For a Tudor poo look out for – fish bones, bread grains, apple pips, peas and lentils.
Organic Remains Recording Sheet

Archaeologist’s name:

Description of organic remains (poo!)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of poo in cm:</th>
<th>Width of poo in cm:</th>
<th>Height of poo in cm:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

Contents of the poo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What type of evidence have you found?</th>
<th>How many of these things have you found?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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So who did the poo?!

Roman 🔴 Viking 🔴 Tudor 🔴
There are many clues that can indicate what and where archaeological features are in a landscape. These features can indicate what is above ground, and also give clues to what might be hiding below the surface. This evidence comes in a number of forms and whilst they are often visible from ground level, seeing a site from above gives the archaeologist a huge advantage.

Cropmarks – useful information

As crops begin to grow in a field, the evidence of past settlements such as ditches and buried walls affects crop growth. This affects the rate at which the crops change colour, the speed that they develop, the height to which they grow and how thick the crop becomes.

By looking at these four clues – colour, speed, height and thickness – archaeologists can see where ditches or walls from the past are hidden beneath the crops.

One of the most fascinating ways of detecting archaeological features is through recognising cropmarks. Cropmarks occur when there are ditches or features buried underneath an area used for growing crops. This affects the way that the crops or grasses grow.

This activity gives participants the opportunity to create their own mini crop marks to gain an understanding of why crop marks occur and how they can be important clues for archaeologists.

Crops above a ditch
Crops growing over a buried ditch will result in taller plants that are more dense (lots growing close together). This is because the ditch will have collected more moisture and nutritious organic matter than the ordinary soil around it.

Crops above a wall
The opposite happens when crops grow above a buried old wall. The buried remains get in the way of moisture gathering at the plant roots that are trying to grow. This means that the growing conditions are not good and crops will be smaller and of poor quality.
Preparing the crops

You will need (1 per participant/group)
- Photocopies of the worksheets 1 and 2
- A seed tray or plastic/polystyrene food tray
- Packet of cress seeds
- Small stones/gravel
- Compost/soil
- Sticky label
- Water spray
- Cling film
- Pen

Facilitator instructions:
- In advance of this activity you may want to prepare a cropmark tray of your own to demonstrate what effects the participants will be looking for once they get their tray home.
- Introduce cropmarks to the group using the background information included in this pack.
- Explain that today the group will be recreating their own cropmarks to find out how the markings are made, and what the clues mean for archaeologists.
- Ask each participant/group to collect their tools (listed above) including their copies of worksheets 1 and 2.
- Allow the group around 30 mins to complete the task.
- Once the group is finished, explain that they will now need to take their crop home and leave it in a warm area for a week or so, checking regularly. They will need to take home both worksheets to remind them how to look after the crop and record what they find out.

- If you are working with a group you meet regularly, you may want to ask participants to bring in their own seed/food tray or other elements from the tools required.
- You could also set a date for one or two week’s time for participants to bring back their crops to compare what they have found out or create a display.
Plant your crops

• Build a wall down the middle of the tray using small stones. Fill any gaps with smaller bits of gravel. This is your wall from the past – it may be the remains from the wall of a Norman castle, or a Roman settlement from over a thousand years ago.
• Fill the space around the wall with a thick layer of compost. Sprinkle just a little compost over the top of your wall in a thin layer.
• Scatter cress seeds evenly over the whole tray and spray with water to stick the seeds to the compost.
• Write the date on a label and stick it on the tray to record the date of planting. Complete the first section on your Observation Sheet for Day 1 (the day of planting) including sketching your crops from above.
• Cover the tray with cling film.

Back at home

• Place your tray in a warm area (about 25°C), which allows a small amount of light to reach your tray.
• Check after two days and you will see your seeds begin to sprout.
• Uncover and leave your cress in good but not bright light. Water occasionally.
• On day 3, 7 and 14 after you plant your seeds note down any observations you make and draw a sketch of your tray from above, marking out where the cress is growing well and where it isn’t growing so well.

What’s happened?

Over the next week or so you should notice that there will be very little growth above your wall where the cress has had little soil to grow in – you’ve made your very own cropmark! This mark is just like the clues archaeologists look out for in crops to find evidence of buildings and settlements from the past.
### Cropmark Observation Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archaeologist’s name:</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day 1 (day of planting)</td>
<td>Notes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing from above:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 3</td>
<td>Notes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing from above:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 7 (One week)</td>
<td>Notes:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Drawing from above:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After day 14 (Two weeks)</td>
<td>Notes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing from above:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other observations?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>