



Below you will find the mystery artifacts that will be presented and discussed with your students. The objects we use in our class will be from our teaching collection and, therefore, may appear slightly different to your students when we connect with you. We want to make sure you know exactly what you will be learning about so, please take a minute to familiarize yourself with each artifact. Enjoy!

First Peoples



Object Name: Atlatl Hook

Object Use: This tool was vital to the survival of the earliest inhabitants of Tennessee, the Archaic Indians (4,000BCE-2,000BCE). During a hunt, the atlatl (or “spear-thrower”) was used to propel spears faster and further. It has a handle on one end and a hook on the other; a hole at the end of the spear would be placed onto the hook of the atlatl and the thrower would hurl their arm overhead, launching the spear toward its target.

Object Year: 4,000BCE-2,000BCE



Object Name: Axe Head

Object Use: The smooth stone, which is quite heavy and comes in many different sizes, is an axe head from the Archaic and Woodland Indians (ranging from 8,000BCE-1000BCE). It had many uses in everyday life; however, this would have likely been used for cutting wood and quarrying stone. The chosen stone, (granite or slate, for example) was shaped by striking it repeatedly with a “hammer stone” and then smoothing the surface with an abrasive object. The dug out portion of the axe head is where a handle, or piece of wood, would be placed and wrapped with rope to make wielding the tool easier.

Object Year: 8,000BCE-1000BCE



Object Name: Nut Cracker

Object Use: This is called a nut cracker, or “nutting stone,” and was a common tool used by the Archaic Indians (8,000BCE-1,000CE). If you needed to remove the shell from a nut (i.e. walnuts or hickory nuts), you would simply place it in one of the grooved cups on the large stone and crack the shell with a second stone or wooden hammer.

Object Year: 8,000BCE-1,000BCE



Mystery Artifact Questionnaire

This sheet will act as a space to keep your thoughts organized as you study the artifacts in front of you. As you view the objects, go through the questions and answer as many questions as you can. Have fun!

1. Is the object complete? Answer **yes** or **no** for each object.

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3:

If not, what may be missing for each one?

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2. Of what material(s) are the objects made? There can be more than one material!

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3:

How can you tell?

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3. Are the materials natural or manufactured?

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3:

4. Were these objects assembled by hand or machine?

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3:

Why do you think that?

5. Who do you think would have used these objects?

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3:

6. When do you think the objects were made? What decade or century?

Years:

Why do you think that?

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7. How much value do you think was placed on these objects by the people who used them?

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3:

8. Can you use the object(s) for anything today? If yes, what?

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3:

9. What information do you wish you had about these objects?

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We think the object is -

Object 1:
Object 2:
Object 3: