



# Archaeology

## Merit Badge Workbook



This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.  
This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor

**Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.**

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.  
You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in Scouts BSA Requirements (Pub. + 33216) and/or on Scouting.org.

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2021 • This workbook was updated in November 2023.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_ Date Started \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: [Workbooks@USScouts.Org](mailto:Workbooks@USScouts.Org)  
Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: [Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org](mailto:Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org)

- 
1. Tell what archaeology is and explain to your counselor how it differs or relates to other fields of study such as anthropology, geology, paleontology, and history.

Tell what archaeology is


How does it differ or relate to:

Anthropology:


Geology:


**Workbook © Copyright 2023 - U.S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. - All Rights Reserved**  
**Requirements © Copyright, Boy Scouts of America (Used with permission.)**

This workbook may be reproduced and used locally by Scouts and Scouters for purposes consistent with the programs of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) or other Scouting and Guiding Organizations. However it may NOT be used or reproduced for electronic redistribution or for commercial or other non-Scouting purposes without the express permission of the U. S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. (USSSP).

Paleontology:


History


Explain how archaeology is different than artifact collecting or treasure hunting


2. Describe each of the following steps of the archaeological process: site location, development of background research and a research design, site survey and fieldwork, artifact identification and examination, interpretation, preservation, and information sharing.

Site location:


Development of background research and a research design


Site survey and fieldwork


Artifact identification and examination:


Interpretation:


Preservation:


Information sharing:


3. Describe at least two ways in which archaeologists determine the age of sites, structures, or artifacts.

1.


2.


Explain what absolute dating and relative dating are.


4. Learn about a combined total of five archaeological sites located both within and outside the United States.:

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

a. For EACH site you research, point it out on a map and explain how it became known to archaeologists. Describe some of the information about the past that has been found at each site. Explain how the information gained from the study of these sites answers questions that archaeologists are asking and how the information may be important to modern people. Compare the relative ages of the sites you research.

*(Maps of the World and of the contiguous United States can be found at the end of the workbook)*

Site 1:

- Point it out on a map     Inside the USA     Outside the USA     Visited

Explain how it was discovered.


Describe some of the information from the past that has been found at the site.


Explain how the information gained from the study of this site answers questions that archaeologists are asking


Explain how the information may be important for modern people.


Site 2:

- Point it out on a map     Inside the USA     Outside the USA     Visited

Explain how it was discovered.


Describe some of the information from the past that has been found at the site.


Explain how the information gained from the study of this site answers questions that archaeologists are asking


Explain how the information may be important for modern people.


Site 3:

- Point it out on a map     Inside the USA     Outside the USA     Visited

Explain how it was discovered.


Describe some of the information from the past that has been found at the site.


Explain how the information gained from the study of this site answers questions that archaeologists are asking


Explain how the information may be important for modern people.


Site 4:

- Point it out on a map     Inside the USA     Outside the USA     Visited

Explain how it was discovered.


Describe some of the information from the past that has been found at the site.


Explain how the information gained from the study of this site answers questions that archaeologists are asking


Explain how the information may be important for modern people.




Site 5:

- Point it out on a map     Inside the USA     Outside the USA     Visited

Explain how it was discovered.


Describe some of the information from the past that has been found at the site.


Explain how the information gained from the study of this site answers questions that archaeologists are asking


Explain how the information may be important for modern people.


Compare the relative ages of the sites you researched.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

- b. Choose ONE of the sites you picked and give a short presentation about your findings to a Cub Scout pack, your Scout troop, your school class, or another group.


5. Do the following:

- a. Learn about the federal laws and international conventions that protect archaeological sites.


Find out if your state, county, or local government has regulations that apply to archaeological or historic sites.


- b. Identify a national, international, or local organization that helps to protect archaeological sites.


6. Do the following:

a. Explain why it is important to protect archaeological sites.


b. Explain what people should do if they think they have found an artifact.


c. Describe ways in which you can be a protector of the past.


7. Do ONE of the following and discuss your findings with your counselor:

a. Visit a museum to observe how artifacts aid in conveying history.

Where did you visit?


- b. Present to your counselor a significant family artifact/heirloom and discuss its history.

What was the heirloom?


- c. Make a list of the trash your family throws out during one week.


Discuss with your counselor what archaeologists might learn about you and your family if they found your trash a thousand years from now.


- 8.. Research a group of people who lived in your area more than 100 years ago.

What group?

--

Find out about their ways of life, including housing, clothing, arts and crafts, tools, trade and markets, rituals and religions, and diets, and their relationships with other groups of people in the area

Ways of life


Housing


Clothing


Arts and crafts


Tools


Trade and markets


Rituals and religions


Diets


Relationships with other groups




Training


Why this profession might interest you.


10. Do either A or B of the following:

- a. With your parent or guardian’s and counselor’s permission, assist a qualified archaeologist for at least eight hours with a project being worked on. Projects may include surveying, site monitoring, site stabilization, excavation, laboratory analysis, use of digital archaeological technology, or public outreach. Describe your involvement in the project, what you learned about archaeology, and the steps of archaeological inquiry.

*Note: Visiting an archaeological site will require advance planning. An archaeological site during study can be a dangerous place. While there, you will need to closely follow the archaeologist’s directions and comply with all the safety procedures. Be aware of the changing conditions at the site.*

- b. With your counselor’s approval, take part in a simulated archaeological project designed by a qualified archaeologist. The project must include the use of a simulated archaeological site including artifacts and features for the site. Using the steps of archaeological inquiry, analyze the “artifacts and features” and document the spatial relationships of the “artifacts and features” at the simulated site. Explain how the environment and time can affect the interpretation of an artifact and the overall archaeological site. Tell how you would share the results of your analysis with other researchers and the public

*Note: To find out how to make a simulated archaeological site, talk with a professional archaeologist, trained avocational archaeologist, museum school instructor, junior high or high school science teacher, advisor from a local archaeology society, or other qualified instructor.*

11. Under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist or instructor, do ONE of the following:

- a. Help prepare an archeological exhibit for display in a museum, visitor center, school, or other public area.
- b. Use the methods of experimental archaeology to re-create an item or to practice a skill from the past. Write a brief report explaining the experiment and its results.

**When working on merit badges, Scouts and Scouters should be aware of some vital information in the current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* (BSA publication 33088). Important excerpts from that publication can be downloaded from <http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf>. You can download a complete copy of the *Guide to Advancement* from <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>.**

