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Prepared for 4th–8th grade Social
Studies teachers and their students by



The University of Texas
INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES
at San Antonio

Crossroads of Culture

www.texancultures.utsa.edu/crossroads 

CELEBRATING OUR NEW **CREATION AND COSMOS** EXHIBIT!

How do ancient people speak for themselves?

by Shirley Boteler Mock, Ph.D © Institute of Texan Cultures 2003

From the Editor:

We can hardly wait for you to see our new exhibit *Creation and Cosmos: American Indian Spirituality*, opening this fall.

In fact, we *can't* wait! We're preparing related materials you can use now.

Creation and Cosmos considers Native American spirituality by viewing the artistry and decorative motifs found in pottery and other artifacts. It is through the study of ancient peoples' material culture, recovered in archaeological digs, that we learn about their societies.

Read the lead article by our researcher and exhibit curator Shirley Boteler Mock and learn why native sites must be cherished.

Review the vocabulary of archaeology and follow our Web links to useful Web sites packed with ideas for you and activities for your students.

Use the lesson plans for "An Archaeologist in Your Room" to help students understand how archaeologists study the material culture of our ancestors to learn about their daily lives.

Let students practice grid and map direction skills to solve the Animal Effigy Pots puzzle. Then visit ITC's archaeology exhibit to view and experience grids and stratification up close!

Discover reliable Native American sites on the Internet and invite native storytellers from our list or from your community into your classroom to tell stories about the indigenous Americans of the past and to discuss today's Indian issues such as sports mascot names.

And as always, along with the FACTS, we give you the TEKS.

Use our ideas as you find them or take them beyond, then e-mail and tell me what you did and what you'd like to do more of in the future!

—Mary Grace

Mary Grace Ketner, Editor
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We can read about the Alamo in history books because Travis and Santa Anna and others kept diaries, journals, and records of their military activities; they

itemized supplies, recorded soldiers' assignments, created maps and plans for themselves and made estimates about the strength of their enemy based on what they could see and count; survivors inside and outside the Alamo walls told newspaper reporters what they saw and knew of the battle. Some relayed stories or information to friends and family, who later recorded such conversations. History books can even include conflicting information, for people's memories and choices about what to tell others differ.

We can read in history books about Columbus, because we have written records: baptismal and burial records in churches, royal accounting books, captains' logs, maritime maps, architectural drawings of ships, journals and diaries created by those who traveled with him or met him at a particular place and time, even memories which were later written down and preserved.

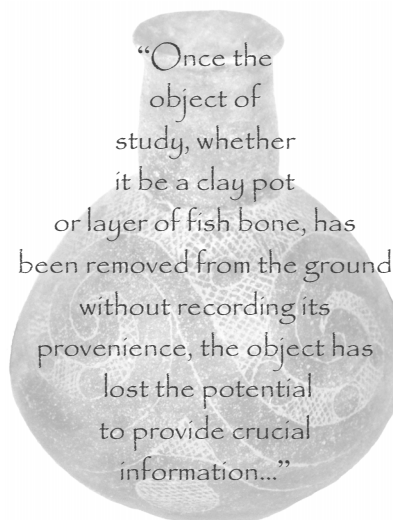
But how can we know about events and people who did not create such written records of their lives and circumstances? How can we know about ancient peoples

who used little or no written language? How can we know of their supernatural beliefs, their technology, how they saw their cosmos, and what their concept of family was? Were they peaceful or warlike?

Archaeologists attempt to recover the lives of ancient people from the bits and pieces they left behind—a broken plate discarded in a household deposit (a midden) or an ancestor reverently placed in a shallow grave. Like a book with missing or waterlogged pages, the potential interpretations are further biased by human actions and the vagaries of environmental processes causing decay and decomposition.

So how can we know anything about these ancient people? One option is to study the remains they *did* leave.

For example, people such as hunters and gatherers had a very simple material culture inventory with few possessions. Archaeologists can study their pictographs, or engravings on stone



walls, the kind of stone, bone, or shell tools they fabricated, and perhaps the animals they chose to hunt and eat. In farming cultures, in addition to technologies such as stone tool making or metalworking, there are clay vessels found in graves and caches or sherds broken in use that show war, sacrifice, rituals, supernatural beliefs, evidence of trade, and influx of new people. These cultural objects include skillfully manufactured artifacts of stone, bone, or shell that led to increased specialization and trade.

In some cultures, the presence of elaborate architecture, monumental art, elaborate adornments, and complex iconography, or glyphs, must be interpreted by specialized archaeologists. How do they do it? Their most important tool in archaeology is analogy. The specialists compare the evidence to that of cultures presently living in the area of study (direct historical method), or look at other cultures (ethnoarchaeological) for similarities. Another approach is to use modern-day examples of human behavior in a search for patterns. How, for example, do people discard their garbage?

Crucial to the objective of understanding the past is the context of the items archaeologists excavate. Once the object of study, whether it be a clay pot or a layer of fish bone, has been removed from the ground without recording its provenience, the object has lost the potential to provide crucial information about how people lived. That is why archaeologists stress the scientific, meticulous nature of fieldwork and discourage the destruction of cultural resources by looting and digging indiscriminately for treasure. By taking material items from a culture, we are robbing them of their cultural identity.

Shirley Mock is an anthropologist-archaeologist at the Institute of Texan Cultures. Her area of specialization is cultures of Mesoamerica. Look for her upcoming book, Running to Freedom.

Using Social Studies Terms Correctly

These archaeological terms are grouped for easier learning.

Archaeology: (May be spelled with or without the second “a”) The systematic recovery and examination of material evidence, such as graves, buildings, tools, and pottery, remaining from past human life and culture.

Archaeological dig: An archaeological site currently being studied by excavation.

Archaeological site: A place where human activity resulted in features, or deposits of artifacts, such as hunting camps, villages, burial sites, battlefields, mills, farmsteads, buildings.

Midden: Any place where people heaped trash, food remains, or other discarded items.

Artifact: Any movable item made, modified, or used by humans.

Features: Material evidence that cannot be transported, such as wall foundations or fire pits.

Associations: Two or more artifacts or features that occur together; for example, pottery sherds found together or flint chips found in a midden.

Material culture: The buildings, tools, decorative items, clothing, and other artifacts of a society.

Projectile point: The term used to include arrowheads, dart points, and spear points.

Sherd (shard): A broken piece of pottery.

Excavation: The uncovering of artifacts, features, and associations by slow and careful digging.

Grid: A set of evenly spaced north-south string lines that cross a set of evenly spaced east-west string lines.

Stratigraphy: The layers, or levels, of soil and discarded material built up over time.

Unless the site has been disturbed, the lower layers contain the oldest artifacts. The layers are numbered from top to bottom; the higher the number, the deeper the level.

Provenience: (Also provenance.) The location of an artifact identifying the grid position and strata in which it was found.

Looter: One who steals from an archaeological site for personal gain.

These two scientific disciplines are closely associated with archaeology:

Anthropology: The scientific study of the origin and the physical, social, and cultural development and behavior of humans. Much anthropological information is learned from archaeological studies.

Paleontology: The study of animals through fossilized remains such as bones and shells. Paleontologists work in much the same way as archaeologists, but their subject of study is animals, not humans.


Crossroads of Culture is distributed three times each school year (fall, winter, and spring) by the Institute of Texan Cultures.

The Institute of Texan Cultures, one of the three campuses of the University of Texas at San Antonio, is an educational center focusing on the history and diverse cultures of Texas. Located at the corner of Bowie and Durango in HemisFair Park in downtown San Antonio, the Institute has easy access from I-10, I-281, and I-35. Hours of operation: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday noon-5 p.m. Closed Monday, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the week of Texas Folklife Festival except during Festival hours.

Two school tours are available and may be scheduled for the same trip or separately:

- (1) A docent-led tour of our Exhibit Floor and the Dome Show, *Faces and Places of Texas*, and
- (2) Back 40 tours demonstrating pioneer life in replicated 19th century structures. Tours beginning at 9:00, 10:45, or 12:45 are \$1.50 per student, one adult free per every 10 students. Call Blanca Valdez at (210) 458-2291 to reserve a tour or to answer other questions about tour scheduling. Our patio and covered verandas may be reserved at no cost for group lunch areas.

Unscheduled school groups admitted space permitting; no tour guide provided.

Bus parking available on-site. For driving directions, programs, Texas Folklife Festival information, teacher resources, student activities, and regular admission rates, go to texancultures.utsa.edu. 

An Archaeologist in Your Room

A class activity to be done in parts on two consecutive days
(20 minutes first day; one hour second day)



Day 1

Class Discussion (20 minutes)

Teacher: Set up the following scenario:

It is A.D. 4000. The world has been covered by a vast layer of volcanic ash. All the written records have disintegrated, and a horrible virus has destroyed all electronic files.

Dr. Adriana Hall has found a strange metal object sticking out of a hole in the earth, which she suspects is an archeological site, a midden of the mysterious Tsumi tribe. She prepares and presents a research proposal which succeeds in earning a grant to conduct an archaeological investigation. She selects colleagues with various specialties to work on her team. What Dr. Hall has found is actually the remains of your room. What do you think Dr. Hall's team of scientists might conjecture about these items (write on board or bring in a similar assortment)?

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1. TV set |  | 6. A dozen CDs |
| 2. One gym shoe |  | 7. A cell phone |
| 3. 7 nickles, 2 dimes | | 8. 2 toothpaste tubes—one full, one squeezed |
| 4. A piggy bank | | 9. 14 plastic Dr. Pepper bottles |
| 5. A basketball | | 10. A stone arrowhead |

(Generally, let students follow their own ideas, but here are some back-up questions.)

What, if anything, might they learn about the “Tsumi” from reading the label of the CD. If they had the equipment to play it, would they learn more?

Assuming the TV set no longer worked (and there were no broadcast stations anyway), what might the team guess about it? Could it be a “Tsumi” altar? Could it be used to cook food?

What could they learn from the basketball? Would they be able to connect it to the gym shoe, or might they think it had some mysterious connection to other plastic items such as the Dr. Pepper bottles?

What might they think of the word “Adidas” written on the one shoe?

What does the total collection, all the contents of the midden found together, tell us about its owner?

What misinformation might it give?

(For example, the stone arrowhead, found apart from its natural surroundings)

What can you say about learning from artifacts?

Announce individual homework assignments (students should allow 15 minutes):

Find a “midden,”—in a drawer, box, or surface in your room—and list at least ten assorted items from it. Bring the list to class with you tomorrow.

Do you know about NAGPRA?

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 protects Native American burial sites and returns certain kinds of religious materials removed from Indian land. Most Indian people view this statute as an important initial step in reversing the transgressions against Native Americans which have taken place since the arrival of Europeans. In considering how ancient people tell us about themselves, students should understand the importance of caring about the living people as well as of scientific learning about the ancients.

Day 2

Class Activities (One hour)

Reorganization (5 minutes)

Teacher: Take up the lists and give credit to students who completed the assignment.

Use a papercutter to dramatically cut the names off the headings of all the papers, leaving just the lists. Ask students to choose a partner (or use your own formula for pairing) as you quickly select enough good lists to go around. (Discard incomplete or illegible lists or lists with distracting items on them, e.g., a condom.)

Paired-Student Assignment (20 minutes)

Teacher directions: *“Imagine that you are an archaeologist in A.D. 4000 like Dr. Adriana Hall . Written records have been destroyed, a terrible virus has eaten all electronic files, and the world has been covered by a layer of ash. You and your partner have come across a midden, a cache of strange items—the ones on this list—but you don’t know the proper name or function of the items.”*

With your partner discuss what you have found: possible uses of each item, who the owner might have been—age, gender, etc. Take about 15 minutes to do this.

Two-minute oral reports (15 minutes)

Teacher: Have various pairs report their findings. There will not be time for everyone to make a report; choose volunteers and use your best judgment based on what you observed monitoring student conversations.

Use time between reports to reinforce good examples of how students learned from found artifacts and how students and scientists sometimes guess wrong and “learn” things which are not, in fact, true. Reinforce the point that the objects were found together and therefore probably belonged to the same person or family. An item found in isolation would tell us much less about its owner.

Closure (10 minutes)

Teacher: Thank the students who presented their cases. Invite comments from others who were not able to present—unusual things on their lists that they might like to comment upon, for example. Can the students imagine how much information might be added if a photograph, drawing, or even a diary in a known language were found with the objects. If such an object *was* on a group’s list, remind students how it added to the understanding.

Closing question (if time allows): Assume that everything on the lists was brought to school on the day of the great calamity, and 2,000 years later the objects were found together. In that case, what might a future archaeologist be able to tell about our class in Texas in the early 21st century? (Age, interests, popular culture items, clothing styles, etc.)

Remind students that any ancient artifacts they find, such as arrow points, woven sandals or mats, pottery sherds, skeletal remains, or grinding stones should be left where they were found. Such information may be helpful and could lead to further discoveries in the area. The find may be reported to the Center for Archaeological Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio Department of Anthropology, the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin, the Southern Texas Archaeological Association, or a responsible agency or individual such as the National Park Service or the students’ social studies teacher.

Follow-up: As you read about ancient people in your history text, view information in videos, or visit a museum on a field trip, remind students of this activity. There is much ancient people can tell us about themselves; it is up to us to use our best thinking skills to glean accurate information from what they left. ✎

Important information about “An Archaeologist in Your Room” Activity:

Goal: *Students will learn about contemporary people from objects, using familiar information in order to understand how archaeologists learn about ancient people from artifacts.*

TEKS objectives: *Students will*

- 1. organize and interpret information from a list;*
- 2. use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution;*
- 3. Use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify*

Native American Storytellers in Texas

Native Americans today are still the best “informants” about American Indian culture and spirituality. You may know of someone in your own community who can be a resource for your students. If not, help is on the way!

At the Institute of Texan Cultures, we often receive calls requesting contact information for Native American storytellers. Here are some experienced Texas storytellers with cultural connections to Texas Indians and other American Indian groups.

Storyteller rates and schedules vary; contact the storyteller directly for more information.

Eldrena Douma
(Laguna, Tewa, Hopi; Canyon, Texas)
Phone: (806) 499-3757
E-mail: bluecorn_teller@hotmail.com

Gregg Howard
(Cherokee; Richardson, Texas)
Web site: nativelanguages.com
Phone: (800) 776-0842 or (972) 671-3525
E-mail: vipublish@aol.com

Emma Ortega
(Lipan Apache; San Antonio)
Phone: (210) 534-5673










Gayle Ross
(Cherokee; Fredericksburg)
Web site: thegrand.com/details/gayle_ross.htm
Phone: (830) 997-3661
E-mail: gayleross81@hotmail.com or grrh@fbg.net

Tim Tingle
(Choctaw; Canyon Lake)
Web site: choctawstoryteller.com
Phone: (830) 899-5678
E-mail: timtingle@hotmail.com



Crossroads on the Net:

texancultures.utsa.edu/crossroads

-  **Crossroads of Culture.** E-mail a printable copy of this newsletter to friends.
-  **A Webliography of Archaeological Sites for Middle Grade Students.** Activities, games, and good resource materials.
-  **A Native American Webliography.** Useful sites on the Internet prepared by American Indians and Indian tribal or special interest groups.
-  **My Black Seminole Ancestors: Running to Freedom.** This text, suitable for ages 12-15, is based on the narrative of Alice Fay Lozano, who listened to her grandmother's stories of the Seminoles in Florida, Texas, and Mexico; recorded by Shirley Mock.
-  **Links to ITC's education pages** including Native American content and education sites.
-  **Student word search activity to print.** Native American people had a special relationship with the animal life around them.
-  Read about an exciting archaeology project at **Redland Oaks Elementary School**, NEISD, San Antonio.
-  **TEKS applications for each grade, 4-8.** Click on your grade level to see how this issue may be used to build or reinforce Social Studies skills.
-  **Archived issues** of “Haunting Legends and Cucuis” and “Images of South Texas” (O. Henry and I.N. Hall), and “Texans and Czechs,” each with related lesson plans, resources, and TEKS applications. ✍

October is coming!

Get ready for the scary story season by reviewing our fall 2002 issue

Haunting Legends and Cucuis

Stories, lesson plans, activities, and TEKS
texancultures.utsa.edu/crossroads

What Should I do if I find a projectile point, pottery sherds, skeletal remains...?

Students who discover likely artifacts should report them to a teacher, a local museum, the National Park Service, or any of the following agencies:

Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin, (512) 471-5960 or e-mail dcreel@mail.utexas.edu

Southern Texas Archaeological Association by e-mail from their Web site, stxaa.org

Center for Archaeological Research, UTSA Department of Anthropology, (210) 458-4375



Institute of Texan Cultures

Selected Events for Fall 2003 and Winter 2004

Through Oct 27. Special Exhibit. **A Tejano Son of Texas.** Tejano Area. Sponsored by the City of San Antonio Office of Cultural Affairs and created and sponsored by TexasTejano.com, the life of a surveyor, scout, Indian fighter, ranchman, justice of the peace, and Texas Ranger are reflected in this exhibit about Jose Policarpo "Polly" Rodriguez. Watch historical re-enactments and listen to the creator's commentary live in the exhibit area; for specific times, call (210) 458-2262. Included with admission.

Through Nov. 9. Special Exhibit. **Videotopia.** ITC Dome. Discover the impact of videogames on our culture while learning about basic electronics, the nature of interactivity, and the links between science, technology, and society. **Videotopia** gives the history of video games through informational kiosks and displays and features more than 50 restored and new arcade video games. Included with admission.

Oct. 12-Nov. 23. Special Exhibit. **El Día de los Muertos Altar.** Lower Gallery. Every year ITC creates an altar in honor of the Day of the Dead. This year the altar will be dedicated to the Battered Women's Shelter of San Antonio. Throughout the duration of the altar exhibit, visitors will learn the importance and tradition of El Día de los Muertos through the exhibit, video, and interpretations by ITC docents. Included with admission.

Oct. 18, 25, and Nov. 1, 8, and 15, Saturdays, 9 a.m.-noon. Special Program. **ITC Patch for Girl Scouts.** Earn a badge by learning what different Texan cultures used for clothing in the past. Get some hands-on weaving practice with a loom. **Note:** This activity requires completion of Girl Scout Activities #4 and #5 (Knots) in the Junior Girl Scout Badgebook. Charge is \$5 per girl, limited to a troop of 15 junior girls, and must be booked in advance at (210) 458-2291.

Nov. 6. Exhibit. **Creation and Cosmos: American Indian Spirituality.** Experience the cosmology and spirituality of the Indians of the Americas in a new exhibit on the Exhibit Floor. Students will enjoy our interactive "Rock Art Symbolism" activity. Included with admission.

Nov. 8, 10 a.m.-2 p.m **Barbara Jordan Historical Essay Competition Orientation and Training.** Connally Conference Center. For students and teachers of grades 9-12 who are interested in entering this college scholarship contest in the spring of 2004. Competition information: www.utexas.edu/world/barbarajordan/ No fee.

Nov. 28-Dec. 28. Special Event. **Winter Wonderland.** Celebrate the season at our holiday light extravaganza on the ITC grounds! Delight in a wonderland of snow, trees, and décor. Included with admission.

Jan. 6-Mar. 21, 2004. Special Exhibit. **Here Be Dragons.** Exhibit Floor. Discover the lore of dragons in various societies around the world. Included with admission.

Jan. 24, 2004, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Special Event. **Asian New Year Festival.** ITC Building and Grounds. Celebrate the Year of the Monkey with the Asian community of South Texas with martial arts demonstrations, ethnic dance presentations, mouth-watering food, and more. Included with admission.

For up-to-date information any time, see the events calendar at texancultures.utsa.edu.



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