Archaeology Alive!
Digging Down: A Virtual Archaeological Excavation

Here’s your chance to participate in the archaeological process! Follow along as “Alex the Archaeologist” conducts his virtual demonstration “excavation,” and use this sheet to take notes and answer questions about the artifacts he uncovers.

1. What is stratigraphy? ____________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________

2. What differences do archaeologists find between the layers of dirt in an excavation?
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________

3. Why is it so helpful to archaeologists when they find artifacts with dates on them?
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   Do you think it happens very often? ________________________________________________

4. What was chain mail used for? ____________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   What time in history does the piece of chain mail most likely come from?
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________

5. Why might an archaeologist find two objects from very different dates, one much older and one much newer, in the same layer?
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________________

6. Alex says, “In archaeology, we always look towards the ______________________ to identify how old the layer is.”
7. Archaeologists uncover several objects together in a single layer, but these objects were made by cultures from very distant places. It may be a sign that these cultures ________________________________.

8. A very thick layer of dirt between buried artifacts can be an indication of ________________________________.

9. How could the stone tools found in the lowest layer be used? What is the evidence for your conclusion? ________________________________

10. When an archaeologist comes to the “sterile layer” in an excavation, this means ________________________________.

Alex says: “Just remember, the past is all around you, just waiting to be studied!”

Vocabulary:

- antiquity
- armor
- ceramic
- chain mail
- coin
- cuneiform
- cylinder seal
- Medieval
- Mesopotamia
- Paleolithic
- sterile layer
- wall relief
- Neolithic

This worksheet based on a version created by Eileen Horak of the Johanna Perrin Middle School, Fairport NY.