

Discovering Archaeology

Grades Fifth through Eighth

Max 60 Students; 3 Hours



Archaeologists, like historians, interpret the past. Information gained from archaeology and historical records are clues to the puzzle of the past. This puzzle is large and has many pieces missing. Because of this, no two scientists put the puzzle of the past together in exactly the same way. “Discovering Archaeology” will guide your class through this discovery and interpretive process.

Experience how archaeology helps unravel the mysteries of the past in this interactive learning program. Students will visit a mock archeological dig site to discover artifacts, visit a recreated Indian Village, and learn what they can tell us about Maryland’s early inhabitants!

Discovering Archaeology at JPPM:

- **Mock Archaeological Site:**

At this site, students will learn with the basic methods and tools of archaeology, the concept of feature versus artifact, and they will learn the significance of site stratigraphy and context. Students will help the archaeologists at JPPM map cultural features and artifacts already excavated, and screen soil removed from each excavation unit

- **American Indian Village:**

At this site, students will focus on cultural clues to help understand the ways in which Maryland’s Native American groups once lived. This section will promote an understanding of differential preservation of archaeological material, an understanding how archaeologists interpret the known from the unknown, the role of experimental archaeology in interpretation, and to make connections between past and present cultures.

- **Lab Artifact Identification and Interpretation:**

Students will work in the outdoor archaeology lab to carefully examine artifacts uncovered at the mock archaeological site. After identifying the objects, students will research the common uses of the artifacts and when they were made or used. Students will then work together to analyze the data collected from the field and the lab to decide what type of site was excavated, and what activities people were doing at that site.

- **Experimental Archaeology:**

In this section, students are allowed the opportunity to learn more about experimental archaeology through different activities, including cat tail mat weaving and spear and atlatl throwing. Watch park staff demonstrate these tasks and participate! This section will reinforce the concept of culture and illustrate that past people had the skills and materials to establish a way of life and create their own culture just as we do today.

For more information on this program and fees, contact the Education Coordinator at (410) 586-8504, or julie.hall@maryland.gov.