



# LHS GEMS

## Investigating Artifacts

**Provided by:**

Iowa State University Extension  
and Outreach, Scott County  
875 Tanglefoot Lane  
Bettendorf, Iowa 52722  
563-359-7577  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/scott](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/scott)

Information	Program Description
Kindergarten-5th Grade	LHS GEMS "Investigating Artifacts" is a curriculum that introduces students to early Native Americans, their culture, and customs.
Curriculum Format	<p>Each lesson can be presented in 45-60 minutes.</p> <p>Teaching Guide with complete instructions is provided.</p> <p>Teaching Kit with materials needed to present lessons is provided. User may need to provide standard classroom supplies (pencils, scissors, glue). If a lesson requires perishable items (e.g. milk), user is responsible for these purchases.</p>

Lesson	Overview
One: Natural Collecting and Sorting	In this session, students will walk throughout the neighborhood around their school, collecting natural objects. After the students have collected a number of objects, they will sort the objects in different ways, drawing conclusions about their neighborhood.
Two: Making Masks and Inferences	Students will begin by discussing why Native Americans may have created masks or painted their faces to look like masks. Students will then have the opportunity to use the objects they collected on their walk to create their own masks, and then use their masks to draw conclusions about what the masks may be used to simulate what anthropologists do when studying ancient Native American cultures.
Three: Creating Myths	In this session, students will discuss what myths are and aren't, and listen to several Native American myths. In pairs, students will then be asked to create their own myths after choosing one of five different pictures to help them brainstorm. The partners will then create their own myth by drawing a picture that will help them share their myth with others.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries, go to [www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext).*

Lesson	Overview
Four: Sharing Myths	In this session, students will share the myths they created in Session 3 using their masks for dramatic effect and the pictures they created. They will then hear the story, “How the Stars Came to Be,” and discuss the ways in which anthropologists form ideas about the past from Native American’s myths, and what future anthropologists would conclude about the myths the students had created.
Five: Uncovering the Past or What’s Hidden in the Midden	In this session, students will do the work of archaeologists investigating artifacts from the past. Students will “excavate” the artifacts, investigate their meaning, and then give them to a museum to be preserved. Simulated digging sites (middens) are provided with real artifacts.
Six: Putting Together Clues from the Past	Students look at the various “artifacts” they collected in the previous session and brainstorm ways that the objects may have been used by the people who lived at the site hundreds or thousands of years ago.

---

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries, go to [www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext).*