

Digging Into Words

Use context clues to understand academic and archaeology vocabulary.

5.RV.1.A "Develop general academic language and content specific vocabulary by listening to, reading, and discussing a variety of grade-five texts and topics."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four academic words about thinking or explaining, circle four archaeology words, and number one sentence that gives a word's meaning.

Clues Beneath the Ground

- ① Scientists study the layers of sediment at a dig site to learn about the past. Sediment is soil, sand, and tiny rock pieces that settle over time. In each layer, researchers may find an artifact, an object made or used by people. The deeper layers are usually older, so their artifacts can provide evidence about earlier communities.
- ② To analyze a site, archaeologists record where each artifact was found before removing it. This careful process helps them compare objects from different layers. For example, a broken clay pot found beside fish bones might suggest that people prepared food there. A single object cannot prove an idea, but several related findings can support a stronger conclusion.
- ③ Archaeologists also consider context, the setting in which an object is found. A bead in a home, a workshop, or a burial place may have had different purposes. By examining the location, materials, and nearby items, researchers interpret how people lived. Their explanations may change when new evidence is discovered, because history is built from clues, not guesses.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What does evidence mean in paragraph 1? Explain using the passage.

2 Which sentence gives the direct definition of artifact?

3 How are analyze and interpret different in the passage?

4 Why can a bead's context change what archaeologists think it was used for?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Imagine you are writing a field note about an object found at a dig site. Write 45 to 60 words using at least two vocabulary words from the passage, and include a context clue that explains one of the words.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline four academic words about thinking or explaining, circle four archaeology words, and number one sentence that gives a word's meaning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does evidence mean in paragraph 1? Explain using the passage.	Evidence is information or clues that support an idea about earlier communities.
2	Which sentence gives the direct definition of artifact?	"In each layer, researchers may find an artifact, an object made or used by people."
3	How are analyze and interpret different in the passage?	Analyze means to examine, record, and compare findings. Interpret means to explain what the findings show about how people lived.
4	Why can a bead's context change what archaeologists think it was used for?	Its setting, such as a home, workshop, or burial place, can suggest different purposes.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During our excavation, we found a shell artifact in a layer of sediment. Sediment, the soil and small rocks that settle over time, covered the shell. The artifact and nearby cooking stones are evidence that people prepared food here. These findings support our conclusion that this spot was a campsite.

Accept reasonable academic words such as analyze, evidence, conclusion, context, and interpret, along with archaeology words such as sediment, artifact, and archaeologists. For the open response, check that vocabulary is used accurately, one word has a clear context clue, and the response contains 45 to 60 words.