

Capsule of the South Carolina

Adapted from a lesson plan from Classroom Archaeology: An Archaeology Activity Guide for Teachers. Third edition by Nancy Hawkins of the Louisiana State Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

Time: 45-90 minutes

SC Education Standards:

- Social Studies: 2-1.2-4; 3-1-5; 8-1-7

Note: Modifications to this lesson to fit a relevant time period/culture can be used to address most SC Social Studies Standards

Materials Needed:

- Pencils
- Paper
- (Optional) Objects that describe South Carolina or relevant time period/culture

This activity will help students understand what an artifact is and think about South Carolina (or relevant time period/culture) through artifacts.

Introduction:

An artifact is any object made, modified, or used by people. It can be something as small and simple as a button, or large and complex like a computer or game system. Artifacts are usually influenced by the culture, technology, and needs of the people who made/modified them. Archaeologists use artifacts to help them learn about the people who created them.

Activity Steps:

1. Tell students they have been chosen to select objects to send to a distant time or place where nothing is known about South Carolina. The class as a whole will come up with a list of 20 artifacts that describes life in South Carolina.
2. Discuss the meaning of the word "artifact" and what artifacts can show about the people who use them. For example, a wall charger for a cell phone can tell an archaeologist that we have access to electricity, objects that can be recharged, use plastic, etc.
3. Divide the class into small groups. Have each group list 5 artifacts and how they represent life in South Carolina.
4. Come back together as a class and have each group present their list of artifacts. Record the items on the board and add tally marks each time an artifact is mentioned by another group.
5. As a class, come up with a final list of 20 items, giving priority to items that were listed more than once. Final decisions can be made through a class vote.

Lead a class discussion about the final list. What is the picture of South Carolina life based on these artifacts? Are 20 artifacts enough to tell everything about our culture? What is missing or could be misinterpreted?

*Note: This activity can be easily modified to fit a specific time period or culture currently being studied. For example, have students come up with a list of 20 artifacts that would represent the Civil War, African American culture, the Industrial Revolution, or modern America. *