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It seems that many teachers will agree that teaching fractions can be complex and confusing, but that understanding fractions is a necessary skill for students to have as they get older. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution addresses how math is being taught in a recent article titled, "Are we forcing too many students to take high-level math they'll never use?" The author, Maureen Downey, notes that as a nation, we keep raising the bar for our students' math performance, and observes that despite these high-level courses, many students are struggling with the complex teachings. Some teachers argue that schools may be advancing students too quickly, and they aren't truly mastering basic skills like fractions. While some higher-level math courses are only crucial for certain industries, basic mathematical skills like understanding fractions, are crucial for everyone to master. From cooking and carpentry to sports and sewing, we can't escape fractions in our daily lives. This isn't a new topic of discussion. In fact, in 2013, an article in the Wall Street Journal talked about what parents and teachers already know when it comes to math—fractions are hard for many students to learn. In fact, the article cites statistics that half of eighth graders can't put three fractions in order of size. As many students struggle to learn fractions, which usually are taught in third or fourth grade, the government is actually funding research into how to help kids learn fractions. Instead of using rote methods to teach fractions or relying on old techniques such as pie charts, the newer methods of teaching fractions use techniques to help kids really understand what fractions mean through number lines or models. For example, the educational company, Brain Pop, offers animated lessons and homework help to aid kids in understanding concepts in math and in other subjects. Their Battleship Numberline allows kids to bomb a battleship using fractions between 0 and 1, and after students play this game, their teachers have found that the students' intuitive knowledge of fractions increases. Other techniques to teach fractions include cutting paper into thirds or sevenths to see which fraction is bigger and what denominators mean. Other approaches include using new terms for words such as "denominator" such as "the name of the fraction," so students understand why they can't add or subtract fractions with different denominators. Using number lines helps kids compare different fractions—something that is hard for them to do with traditional pie charts, in which a pie divided into sixths can look a lot like a pie divided into sevenths. In addition, the newer approaches emphasize understanding how to compare fractions before students go on to learn procedures such as adding, subtracting, dividing, and multiplying fractions. In fact, according to the Wall Street Journal article, placing fractions on a number line in the correct order in third grade is a more important predictor of fourth-grade math performance than calculation skills or even the ability to pay attention. In addition, studies show that a student's ability to understand fractions in fifth grade is also a predictor of long-term math achievement in high school, even after controlling for IQ, reading ability, and other variables. In fact, some experts regard the understanding of fractions as the door to later math learning, and as the foundation of more advanced math and science classes such as algebra, geometry, statistics, chemistry, and physics. Math concepts such as fractions that students do not master in the early grades can go on to confuse them later on and to cause them a great deal of math anxiety. The new research shows that students need to intuitively understand concepts rather than just to memorize language or symbols, as such rote memorization does not lead to long-term understanding. Many math teachers do not realize that the language of math can be confusing to students and that students must understand the concepts behind the language. Students who attend public schools now must learn to divide and multiply fractions by fifth grade, according to federal guidelines known as the Common Core Standards that are followed in most states. Studies have shown that public schools outperform private schools in math, partly because public school math teachers are more likely to know and follow the latest research related to teaching math. Even though most private school students do not need to demonstrate mastery of Common Core Standards, private school math teachers can also use new techniques to teach students fractions, thereby opening the door to later math learning. Archaeology is the study of the past through the things that people made, used, and left behind. Not ready to purchase a subscription? Click to download the free sample version Download sample Archaeology is the study of the past through the things that people made, used, and left behind. The purpose of archaeology is to understand how people from the past lived and what they were like. See the fact file below for more information on the archaeology or alternatively, you can download our 25-page Archaeology worksheet pack to utilise within the classroom or home environment. Key Facts & Information INTRODUCTION Archaeology enables us to understand not only where and when people lived on the earth, but also how and why they lived. Archaeology is a subfield of anthropology, which is the study of human cultures. The other subfields are cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, and linguistics. Archaeological investigations are a major source of knowledge of prehistoric, ancient, and extinct cultures. People who study archaeology are called archaeologists. Archaeologists use remains, such as old coins, tools, buildings, and garbage, to understand how people lived. These remains are called artifacts. Much of what we see around us, such as computers, clothing, food, books, and buildings, are artifacts. Natural objects, like a stick of wood or a piece of bone, are considered artifacts if humans have used them for some purpose. From these artifacts, archaeologists build a model of what culture was like. Archaeology comes from the Greek words "archaios", meaning "ancient things", and "logos", meaning "theory" or "science". HISTORY There is no doubt that there have always been people who were interested in the material remains of the past. However, as a discipline, archaeology has its earliest roots in 15th and 16th-century Europe, back in the time when the Renaissance Humanists looked back upon the glories of Greece and Rome. In the 16th century, popes, cardinals, and noblemen in Italy began to collect antiquities and to sponsor excavations to find more works of ancient art. These collectors were followed by others in northern Europe who were similarly interested in antique culture. However, all this activity was still not archaeology in the strict sense. It was more likely what we would call art collecting today. MAIN TYPES OF ARCHAEOLOGY There are several different kinds of archaeology, but there are two main types – prehistoric and historic archaeology. Prehistoric archaeology refers to the study of human prehistory, or the period of human history before written records existed. This includes most of our human past. The family of humans can be traced back at least five million years. The earliest modern humans appeared around fifty thousand years ago. Humans did not start writing things down until 5,200 years ago. That gives many thousands of years of human experience that was not recorded. Historical archaeology refers to the studies of that portion of the human past that has written records. While it uses many of the techniques used in prehistoric archaeology, written records give historic archaeology an advantage in its research. METHODS An archaeological investigation normally involves several distinct phases, each of which employs its own variety of methods. Remote sensing. Before truly starting to dig in a location, remote sensing might be used to look at what sites are located within a large area or to provide more information about sites or regions. There are two types of remote sensing instruments being used – the passive instruments, which sense only radiation emitted by the object being viewed or reflected by the object from a source other than the instrument, and the active instruments, which emit energy and records what is reflected. Field survey. The common basic place archaeologists study is called the site. It is any location where there is evidence of human activity. From remote sensing, the archaeological project then continues (or alternatively, begins) with a field survey. This is when archaeologists (often landscape archaeologists) search for archaeological sites and collect information about the location, distribution, and organization of past human cultures across a large area. Excavation is the controlled exploration of what lies below the surface. It is usually carried out systematically in gridded trenches with shovels and trowels. Excavation is often slow and wearisome work that involves digging down a centimeter at a time, can also be backbreaking, difficult toil, shoveling through meters of densely packed soil. However, the purpose is the same in either case, which is to reveal the types of human activities that took place at a site over time. The Analysis is the process of examination, description, classification, and identification of the material remains, including the consideration of its broader meaning. Data analysis is an important part of fieldwork and a necessary preparatory step to making interpretations regarding past human activities. PUBLIC ROLE IN ARCHAEOLOGY Lot of archaeological sites are discovered by members of the general public, such as farmers, construction workers, or hikers. Numerous archaeology programs have public outreach programs for those who are interested in their work. It is important to remember that, if you discover an artifact, you should leave it where it is and reach out to an archaeologist from the state office or a local university. The artifact will be much more useful if it can be examined in the context it was left and should only be submitted to avoid imminent destruction. Archaeology Worksheets This is a fantastic bundle which includes everything you need to know about the archaeology across 25 in-depth pages. These are ready-to-use Archaeology worksheets that are perfect for teaching students about the archaeology which is the study of the past through the things that people made, used, and left behind. The purpose of archaeology is to understand how people from the past lived and what they were like. 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