

Archaeology Jigsaw

You will need

- Jigsaw (s)
- Boxes/Trays e.g., a sand tray/table, a shallow cardboard box from the greengrocer, or a shallow drawer from an old chest of drawers
- Filler material (sand, soil, compost etc.)

This activity counts towards

Beavers - Requirement 3, Cubs - Requirement 1

Activity Details

Time: 30 minutes

£ £

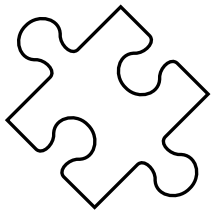
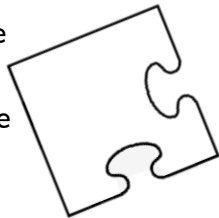
Indoors & Outdoors

Individuals & Teams

B / C

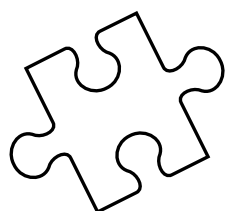
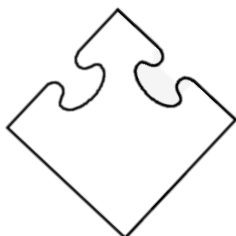
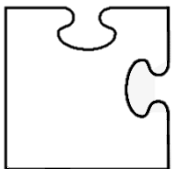
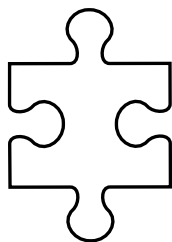
Before you begin

- Before carrying out this activity, it could be helpful to carry out Requirement 1 of the Beavers/Cubs Derbyshire Archaeology Badge so that the young people have been introduced to the concept of archaeology.
- The person leading the activity should prepare the box(es) in advance, either one box for the whole colony/pack or one for each lodge/six.
 - First, fill each box with sand/similar material.
 - Then place the jigsaw pieces into the boxes and mix it up so you can't see the jigsaw pieces.
 - Important: Leave a piece or two out from each jigsaw. Discuss how in archaeology you can't always find every piece and must use your imagination to finish the jigsaw.



Activity

1. Discuss with the young people how archaeologists excavate to help tell them about the past. It is just like a jigsaw and archaeologists must piece the jigsaw together to find out as much as they can. However, archaeologists will not always have all the pieces of the jigsaw and need to fill in the gaps using their imagination.
2. Explain that they are going to have a go at excavating (digging) to find jigsaw pieces and try to fit them all together.
3. Hand out the box(es) to the young people. Explain that they need to excavate carefully so not to miss any of the pieces or damage them.
4. The young people then excavate and try to find all the jigsaw pieces.
5. Once they have found as many pieces as they can, they start to assemble the jigsaw.
6. Once the incomplete jigsaw is finished, discuss what they think the missing pieces may have looked like and what they think the completed jigsaw would look like.





Reflection

Have the young people ever before experienced completing a jigsaw but not had all the pieces? What did they do then? Did they think that jigsaw was useless?

In archaeology, any bit of evidence is helpful, so whether there are twenty pieces of evidence or just one, each piece is as important as the others.

Safety

Outdoor activities: Always check the weather forecast and inform parents and carers of any change in venue.

Filler material: The young people may need to wash their hands after the activity. It may also be worth putting down some material so the filler material doesn't cause a mess.

Change the level of challenge

For the budding problem solvers, a cut up paper plate could be used instead of a jigsaw, it could have a written message or symbol on it.

For the budding artists, they could have a go at drawing the missing pieces, rather than just discussing what they think it may have looked like (see step 6).

To help anyone struggling, a simpler jigsaw could be used, or they could be shown part of the final jigsaw picture to help them envisage how the pieces fit together.

Make it accessible

If anyone struggles with fine motor skills, larger jigsaw pieces could be used.

Anyone who doesn't want to touch the filler material can direct another person on the team, or you could offer them gloves.

Youth Shaped guidance

Allow the young people to use their own imagination to complete the jigsaw. Encourage them to think of multiple options. As there is no certain answer in archaeology, we must come up with lots of different ideas before trying to find the one which fits best.