



Piece It Together

You will need

- Safety Goggles & Protective Gloves
- 2 x Ceramic items (plate, mug etc.) (breakable)
- Materials to construct grid
- Hammer (if necessary)
- Record Sheets

This activity counts towards

Explorers Derbyshire Archaeology Badge Requirement 3

Activity Details

Time: 1 hour

\$ ££

Indoors & Outdoors

Teams

Explorers

Before you begin

- This activity is looking at how artefacts are dispersed around sites. This dispersal could occur when the item is originally broken. It could also be due to formation processes moving the pieces around in the ground.
- The group needs to be split into two teams.

Activity

1. Make a 5x5 grid on the floor
 - a. Each square measuring 50cm x 50cm
 - i. This could be done numerous ways; by laying out a large sheet of paper, using chalk to draw out the grid or outlining the grid with rope
2. The second team then need to go somewhere where they cannot see the grid
3. The first team should then put on the safety goggles and protective gloves
4. The first team needs to drop their ceramic item onto the grid, which will then smash and disperse onto the grid
 - a. If the ceramic doesn't break, the hammer can be used to break up the ceramic, the team would then need to place the ceramic pieces onto the grid
5. The first team need to record where the ceramic dispersed on their grid (see the Record Sheet at the end)
6. The first team needs to clear the ceramic pieces from the grid leaving no evidence
7. The first and second team then swap over and the second team carry out steps 3-5

Both teams should now have a record sheet outlining where their ceramic item dispersed

8. The two teams can now re-group
9. Each team takes turns at choosing a grid square trying to identify pieces of the other team's ceramic, either finding a piece or not
10. The first team to find all the pieces of the other team's ceramic wins





Reflection

How far were your ceramic pieces spread out? How long did it take to find all the pieces? Were you able to piece the ceramic back together? Not all evidence survives in one piece, it is likely to be broken due to degradation and formation processes. This can lead to an artefact being spread across a whole archaeological site. Most times archaeologists can't find all the pieces. Therefore, they must interpret the item without all the components, which can lead to an incorrect conclusion.

Safety

The person leading the activity should highlight the importance of:

- carefully following directions
- wearing eye protection
- wearing gloves
- wearing protective clothing or something with long sleeves

If it is too dangerous for the ceramic to be broken in an open area, a box or protected area could be used. The pieces could then be laid out onto the grid.

Change the level of challenge

Once you have completed the activity, the Explorers could have a go at piecing the ceramic back together

Make it accessible

If it is not feasible to smash a ceramic object, the teams could use paper plates, which are cut up and then dispersed onto the grids.

If you don't have the time or resources, this activity could be carried out on the record sheets, with the explorers deciding where to put their ceramic pieces and then guessing where the other teams' ceramic pieces are.





Piece It Together Record Sheet

Ceramic Dispersal – Where did your ceramic disperse. Put an X in each box which contains a piece of ceramic

	A	B	C	D	E
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

Guesses: Where do you think the other team's ceramic landed?

	A	B	C	D	E
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

