



# Animation Script

**futurum**  
Inspiring the next generation

**Combining scientific and traditional knowledge at Tse'k'wa**  
Tse'k'wa Heritage Society (THS) with Dr Jon Driver and Alyssa Currie

**To make the most out of this script, you could:**

- Stick it in your book as a record of watching the THS' animation
- Pause the animation and make notes as you go
- Add your own illustrations to the sheet
- Create your own animation to accompany it
- Add notes from classroom discussions
- Make notes of areas you will investigate further
- Make notes of key words and definitions
- Add questions you would like answered – you can message the THS, Jon or Alyssa through the comments box at the bottom of their article: [futurumcareers.com/combining-scientific-and-traditional-knowledge-at-Tsekwa](http://futurumcareers.com/combining-scientific-and-traditional-knowledge-at-Tsekwa)

## SCRIPT:

Tse'k'wa, meaning 'Rock House' in the language of the Dane-zaa people, is a cave in British Columbia, and is one of the oldest archaeological sites in Canada.

Excavations at the entrance to the cave in 1983, 1990 and 1991, unearthed a large collection of artefacts and animal bones which were taken away and stored at Simon Fraser University. Now, decades later, these artefacts have finally returned home to Tse'k'wa.

Dr Jon Driver, an archaeologist at Simon Fraser University who helped excavate the site, is working alongside the Tse'k'wa Heritage Society and their Executive Director, Alyssa Currie, to enrich our understanding of the site with traditional Dane-zaa knowledge.

When Dane-zaa ancestors visited Tse'k'wa some 12,000 years ago, giant animals roamed the land, and people hunted, fished and gathered plants from the area to survive.

During the excavations, archaeologists found stone artefacts at the site which came from hundreds of miles away, proving that Dane-zaa ancestors traded and interacted with other groups. As well as trading goods, the Dane-zaa have a long history of sharing stories from generation to generation.

For example, the Dane-zaa creation story talks of a time when there was only water. Archaeological evidence suggests that Dane-zaa ancestors arrived at a time when glaciers were melting and new land was emerging from receding glacial lakes, adding weight to the validity of the Dane-zaa's oral history.

On the other hand, traditional knowledge holders can provide context for materials that archaeologists may not be able to identify based on science alone. For example, Dane-zaa knowledge helped to explain why sucker fish bones were found at Tse'k'wa. While suckers are ignored by non-indigenous fishermen, they are an important food source for the Dane-zaa.

In 2024, at the request of Tse'k'wa Heritage Society, all of the artefacts excavated from the site were returned from Simon Fraser University to Tse'k'wa. Community gatherings have always been an important part of Dane-zaa culture, so, to celebrate, they hosted a special repatriation event a Tse'k'wa that included dancing, traditional drumming, and a shared meal.

When working on Indigenous lands, archaeologists must respect the customs and traditions of Indigenous communities and embrace the culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Modern excavations at Tse'k'wa have been planned which will use both state-of-the-art archaeological methods and Indigenous cultural knowledge.

What can you achieve as an archaeologist?