



Archaeology

with Dr Meaghan Peuramaki-Brown and Matthew Longstaffe

Talking points

Knowledge

1. When was the Ancestral Maya town of Alabama occupied?
2. What is a boomtown?
3. What evidence suggests that Alabama was a boomtown?

Comprehension

4. Why might Alabama have developed as a boomtown?
5. What sort of information can the team learn from analysing pottery artefacts?

Analysis

6. Why is it important that local Mayas are involved in the SCRAP excavations and research?
7. What similarities and differences do you think would exist between an archaeological excavation of an Ancestral Maya town in Central America and an ancient Roman town in Europe? Consider the use of excavation techniques, the research topics to be investigated and the involvement of local communities.
8. Boomtowns have appeared throughout the world at many different times, such as during the Californian Gold Rush of 1848-1855. What opportunities and challenges do you think were associated with living in a boomtown?

Evaluation

9. What do you think you would find most rewarding and challenging about a career in archaeology, and why?

Creativity

10. What do you imagine daily life was like for residents of Alabama in 700 CE?

Activity

Follow an archaeological dig

The Archaeological Institute of America runs a series of interactive digs, where members of the public can follow the fieldwork and research conducted by archaeologists at sites around the world:

www.interactivedigs.com

Choose one of the interactive digs and explore all the available information. This might include maps of the site, photos of excavated structures and artefacts, fieldwork diaries and opportunities to ask questions to the archaeologists.

Create a short presentation to introduce the site to your classmates. Your presentation should include where the site is, what condition it is currently in, what archaeological work is being carried out, what questions the archaeologists are hoping to answer, and what the lives of the people who once occupied the site might have been like.

More resources

- National Geographic has a wealth of information about the Ancestral Maya, including articles (www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/history-and-civilisation/2022/09/who-were-the-maya-decoding-the-ancient-civilisations-secrets) and videos (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6eBJdca14)
- This article from English Heritage highlights the work of some famous women archaeologists: www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/histories/women-in-history/six-groundbreaking-female-archaeologists
- Discover what a day in the life of an archaeology team involves: www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5ORk9tLf20