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Integrating Archaeology into K-12 Education
Lesson Plan

Course: Comprehensive Health

Unit: Nutrition

Lesson Title: Faunal Analysis

Grade: 10th

Class duration: 45 minutes

Indicators:

Students will:

1. use archaeological data to analyze nutritional information about a group of people
2. demonstrate the ability to gather information, think critically, and make educated predictions based on available archaeological evidence.
3. analyze and compare the faunal record and general diet with the eating habits of people today.

Materials needed: Charts of faunal remains from the tenant house and iron masters house (BCPS- Center for Archaeology)
Questions for students to answer and discuss

Content Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Analyze archaeological remains by comparing and contrasting data.
2. Compare the dietary habits of selected groups of people.
3. Form generalizations based on archaeological data.
4. Compare diets of this time period with diets of today.

Background:

Faunal: animal remains

Floral: plant remains

Trash scatter: trash that is widely distributed on a site

Trash deposit: trash that is concentrated in one area of a site

ABC: Actual Bone Count- the exact number of bones recovered

MNS: Minimum Number of Species- based on ABC

Content:

Teacher will discuss the vocabulary terms, explaining how floral remains biodegrade rapidly. Consequently, they are not easy to identify in the archaeological record. Faunal remains, bones, shells, antlers, horns, etc, are often preserved enough to give some information about the local food intake and diet analysis. Analyzing human teeth can

also give us some indication of when humans changed from a protein diet to one full of carbohydrates.

Students will analyze the charts in small groups and answer the question sheet. Groups will share their answers with the class. This will generate class discussion and lead to a comparison of our current dietary habits. This would be an excellent opening lesson for the nutrition unit in our health class, allowing students to look at diet in a historical perspective and think of current trends, also making predictions about the future. The class would begin with a warm-up having students predict what they believe a diet would consist of in the 1800's and what information archaeological findings can give us. The charts and questions would be handed out and students assigned to small groups to analyze, discuss and answer these. The extension questions would allow students to begin thinking about their own nutrition, things they ingest and possible consequences to their bodies.

Assessment:

Participation in class discussion
Completion of answer sheet

Closure and extension:

Review diet analysis
Make predictions about other food intake
Compare faunal record to our eating habits today
Follow-up could include a dig site or making a chart of their own household trash that would remain 100 years from now. What would students in the future say about our diet?

Extension

Compare the faunal record and general diet from these sites with your family eating habits today.

Make a list of what you eat over a 24 hour period. Record everything. Is this typical of your diet? If not, what foods are missing that you typically eat?

In your opinion, is your diet a healthy one for your body and overall health? Does it provide you with the essential components, nutrients, etc? Is it balanced? How could you improve upon it?

What would archaeologists 100 years in the future say about our current diet?