

**A**rchaeology is the study of the culture and behaviour of humans from the past. Archaeologists learn about past humans by finding and examining the remains of societies. Remains can be **artifacts**, such as pottery, jewellery, and tools. Remains can also be the remnants of buildings or other structures. They can even be human fossils, such as pieces of tooth or bone. Remains provide archaeologists with clues as to how people once lived. For example, ancient tools can provide clues about how people hunted or grew food.

Archaeological digs, or **excavations**, are **meticulously** planned and documented. The place where archaeologists dig is called a site. Archaeologists keep a detailed record of everything they find at a site. They try not to disturb the site more than necessary.

Conducting an excavation requires using a variety of tools. Archaeologists use picks and shovels to remove dirt. As they get closer to the remains, their tools get more precise. They use **trowels** to dig around small pieces of material. They use sifting screens, picks, and brushes to uncover the smallest and most delicate finds.

Archaeologists today have even more advanced ways of finding and studying sites. For example, they can use radar to look underground for potential sites without digging. Through these and other methods, archaeologists are continuing to discover more about humanity's past.



## Digging into the Past

### Comprehension Questions

60B

1. What do archaeologists do?
  - a. They collect artifacts from the past.
  - b. They study the past by examining remains.
  - c. They try to predict the future based on information from the past.
2. Why do you think archaeologists' tools get more precise the closer they get to the remains?
  - a. They don't want to damage the remains.
  - b. They can't find the remains without precise tools.
  - c. They like to clean the remains until they are spotless.
3. **Meticulously** means
  - a. quickly.
  - b. frequently.
  - c. carefully.
4. What kinds of tools do archaeologists use last when uncovering remains?
  - a. trowels
  - b. sifting screens, picks, and brushes
  - c. picks and shovels
5. Archaeologists probably try not to disturb a site more than necessary because
  - a. they want to preserve the site.
  - b. they are afraid of what they might unearth.
  - c. they don't want to upset the people who live on the site.