

Fieldnotes of an Archaeologist

Today you are an **archaeologist**. Examine the artifacts at the museum as clues to learn about Native American Indian cultures that have lived in the Illinois River Valley. Each question section relates to an exhibit area with the same title.

3rd FLOOR

OBSERVATION DECK (weather permitting)

1. A natural resource is anything from the environment that can contribute toward human survival. Plants and other gifts from the earth were important natural resources for food, tools, clothing, etc. List three resources that Indians in the Illinois River Valley would have used.

2nd FLOOR

HUNTING AND GATHERING

2. Find the two stones on the side of the Hunting and Gathering case. Feel the indentations. These stones give a clue to the early Illinois diet, what were they and how were they used? (Hint: lift the panel for answers)

GARDENING

3. Find the plants in the Gardening case. The Woodland Indians gardened these plants that we consider weeds today for their nutritious seeds. What are the plants?

4. Look through the magnifying glass at the pottery sherds with food residue.
 - A. What happened to help preserve the plant materials?

- B. How do you think the pottery was used?

5. Look through the magnifying glass at the 1,500 year old fabric fragment. It is made out of woven plant fibers and might have been worn as clothing. Sketch this weaving design that you see known as "spaced twining."

6. Find the stone pipes on the far side of the Gardening case. Why were tobacco and other dried plants smoked?

CONFLICT AND CHANGE

7. Find the hoe on the side of the Conflict and Change case. Traditionally, hoes were made out of stone and animal bone. After trading with the French, what new materials did the Indians begin to use for making farming tools?

LIFEWAYS (look for the Mississippian farming village to the left in the next room)

8. Look at the Mississippian hut and what is in it.

A. List three plant foods that you see:

B. List five objects made from plant resources:

9. How might a deer jaw have been used to help prepare food for eating?

COSMOLOGY WALL (in front of the trees)

10. Many of the women's activities in the farming culture dealt with growth. Find the pictures of women on the wall and read the labels to list their roles:

EARTH (to the right, behind the trees)

11. Find the rotating statue of the woman killing the snake creature with her gardening hoe. What is going to happen to the snake?

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Today you are an **archaeologist**. Examine the artifacts at the museum as clues to learn about Native American Indian cultures that have lived in the Illinois River Valley. Each question section relates to an exhibit area with the same title.

3rd FLOOR

OBSERVATION DECK (weather permitting)

1. A natural resource is anything from the environment that can contribute toward human survival. Plants and other gifts from the earth were important natural resources for food, tools, clothing, etc. List three resources that Indians in the Illinois River Valley would have used.

Answer: trees, soil, crops, grass, stones, river, etc.

2nd FLOOR

HUNTING AND GATHERING

2. Find the two stones on the side of the Hunting and Gathering case. Feel the indentations. These stones give a clue to the early Illinois diet, what were they and how were they used? (Hint: lift the panel for answers)

Answer: Grinding and nutting stones. Using grinding stones, women ground seeds and nuts into coarse meal to add to porridge-like soups and stews. Nutting stones held nuts in position to be cracked with a single blow from another stone.

GARDENING

3. Find the plants in the Gardening case. The Woodland Indians gardened these plants that we consider weeds today for their nutritious seeds. What are the plants?

Answer: Marshelder and Lambsquarters.

4. Look through the magnifying glass at the pottery sherds with food residue.

A. What happened to help preserve the plant materials?

Answer: Charring or burning.

B. How do you think the pottery was used?

Answer: The pottery was probably charred because it was used for cooking. It might have also been used for storage.

5. Look through the magnifying glass at the 1,500 year old fabric fragment. It is made out of woven plant fibers and might have been worn as clothing. Sketch this weaving design that you see known as "spaced twining."



(over)

6. Find the stone pipes on the far side of the Gardening case. Why were tobacco and other dried plants smoked?

Answer: *Tobacco and other dried plants were smoked to make offerings, treat disease, purify, seal agreements, and in rituals of peace and war. Shamans (holy men) smoked to achieve trance-like states to communicate with the spirit world.*

CONFLICT AND CHANGE

7. Find the hoe on the side of the Conflict and Change case. Traditionally, hoes were made out of stone and animal bone. After trading with the French, what new materials did the Indians begin to use for making farming tools?

Answer: *Iron and other metals.*

LIFEWAYS (look for the Mississippian farming village to the left in the next room)

8. Look at the Mississippian hut and what is in it.

A. List three plant foods that you see:

Answer: *Corn, nuts, sunflowers, dried plants (sumac), and squash.*

B. List five objects made from plant resources:

Answer: *Roof, walls, woven mats, fiber string, wooden handles for tools, fire logs, gourd ladle, arrow shafts, bow, gourd rattle, and stretching frame for tanning hides.*

9. How might a deer jaw have been used to help prepare food for eating?

Answer: *To strip corn from the cobs.*

COSMOLOGY WALL (in front of the trees)

10. Many of the women's activities in the farming culture dealt with growth. Find the pictures of women on the wall and read the labels. List their roles:

Answer: *Women collected wild plants, planted and tended crops, prepared food, cared for children, and danced in the Green Corn Ceremony.*

EARTH (to the right, behind the trees)

11. Find the rotating statue of the woman killing the snake creature with her gardening hoe. What is going to happen to the snake when it is killed?

Answer: *The snake is transformed into a gourd-bearing vine.*