

Uncovering the Past**Lesson 1****MAIN IDEAS**

1. History is the study of the past.
2. We can improve our understanding of people's actions and beliefs through the study of history.
3. Historians use clues from various sources to learn about the past.

Key Terms and People

history the study of the past

culture the knowledge, beliefs, customs, and values of a group of people

archaeology the study of the past based on what people left behind

fossil a part or imprint of something that was once alive

artifacts objects created by and used by humans

primary source an account of an event created by someone who took part in or witnessed the event

secondary source information gathered by someone who did not take part in or witness an event

Lesson Summary**THE STUDY OF THE PAST**

History is the study of the past. Historians are people who study history. Historians want to know how people lived and why they did the things they did. They try to learn about the problems people faced and how they found solutions. They are interested in how people lived their daily lives. They study the past to understand people's culture. **Culture** is the knowledge, beliefs, customs, and values of a group of people.

The study of the past based on what people left behind is called **archaeology** (ahr-kee-ah-luh-jee). Archaeologists explore places where people once lived, worked, or fought. They examine the things that people left in these places to learn about how these people lived.

What do we call people who study how people lived in the past?

Underline the sentence that tells why archaeologists examine the things that people left behind.

Lesson 1, *continued***UNDERSTANDING THROUGH HISTORY**

Understanding the past helps you understand the world today. History can even teach you about yourself. What if you did not know about your own past? You would not know what makes you proud about yourself. You would not know what mistakes you should not repeat.

History is just as important for groups. What would happen if countries had no record of their past? People would not remember their nation's great triumphs or tragedies. History shapes our identity and teaches us the values that we share.

History also teaches about cultures that are unlike your own. Learning other people's stories can help you respect and understand different opinions. You also learn to understand how today's events are shaped by events of the past. History encourages you to ask important questions.

USING CLUES

We learn about history from a variety of sources. **Fossils**, such as bones or footprints preserved in rock, give us clues to life very long ago. **Artifacts**, such as tools, coins, or pottery, also give us information. People invented writing about 5,000 years ago. Since then, laws, poems, speeches, letters, and other things have been written. People have learned from these written sources. Writing can be a **primary source**, which was written by someone who took part in or witnessed an event. Writing can also be a **secondary source**, which is information gathered by someone who did not take part in or witness an event.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Make Inferences Imagine a tribe or group of people that might have lived a long time ago. Write a short essay about its culture.

How can studying history teach you about yourself?

Underline the sentence that explains why history helps you relate more easily to people of different backgrounds.

What sources give us clues to life very long ago?

Lesson 1, *continued*

archaeology	artifacts	culture	fossil
history	primary source	secondary source	

DIRECTIONS Use the seven vocabulary terms from the lesson to write a summary of what you learned in the lesson.

DIRECTIONS On the line provided before each statement, write **T** if a statement is true and **F** if a statement is false. If the statement is false, write the correct term on the line after each sentence that makes the sentence a true statement.

- _____ 1. A fossil is a part or imprint of something that was once alive.

- _____ 2. A primary source is information gathered by someone who did not take part in or witness an event.

- _____ 3. Artifacts are objects that were created and used by humans.

- _____ 4. A secondary source is an account of an event created by someone who took part in or witnessed the event.

- _____ 5. The study of the past is called history.

- _____ 6. The study of the past based on what people left behind is called history.
