
Explore Your Own Site: Tennessee Archaeology

by
Alison Emery Todd

A thesis presented to the Honors College of Middle Tennessee State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from the University Honors College

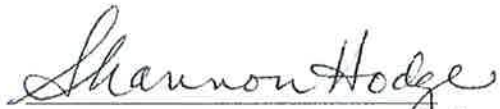
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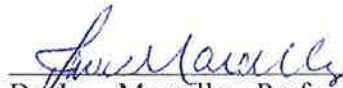
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Abstract

The Tennessee State Board of Education changed the standards for fourth graders to include Tennessee prehistory. The curriculum change includes the Paleo, Archaic, Woodland, Mississippian time periods, as well as, four specific sites: Coats-Hines site, Old Stone Fort, Pinson Mounds, and Chucalissa Indian Village. Textbooks and supplemental teaching tools do not sufficiently cover this subject, leaving teacher to have to do their own research. I have created a fun, informative “Choose Your Own Adventure” style book to fill this need. This style of book allows the reader to feel like an archaeologist and utilizes the rush of discovery to help them learn.

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Creative Project Introduction

In July of 2013, the Tennessee State Standards for Fourth grade Social Studies were revised to include Tennessee Prehistory. These standards require students to learn about “The Land and People before European Exploration” as part of “The History of America (to 1850)” course (Tennessee Department of Education 2013). The formal inclusion of 10,000 years of Tennessee Prehistory, including four archeological sites, has given a more complete perspective to this state’s history and is an exciting development. However, standard textbooks rarely or only superficially cover this subject. Without crucial information provided in the textbooks, teachers need reliable supplemental material to help fill in the gaps. This Honors Thesis creative project is to provide a fun, fact-based, set of “Choose Your Own Adventure” style stories featuring Tennessee Archaeology and the specific sites included in the Tennessee State Standards.

Reliable, supplemental archaeological resources have not been widely available to teachers covering Tennessee’s prehistory. The non-profit “Tennessee History for Kids” organization provides an interactive website, posters, and booklets (at a cost) for students and teachers. There is a booklet available for the fourth grade; however, Tennessee prehistory is covered in less than 14 pages (Tennessee History For Kids 2010). Thus, teachers either must compile their own research to condense this complex subject into a fourth grader’s language with a time-constrained lesson or barely skim the surface. There is a niche market available for fun, tangible material that can cover archeology from an archeologist’s point of view while involving young learners.

First, let me briefly review Tennessee's prehistory and the aspects involved in the new curriculum. The Tennessee State Standards include the Paleo, Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian time periods in the curriculum for fourth graders. The Paleo period is the first to contain evidence of early people in the New World. It dates from approximately 18,000 B.C.E. to the end of the Pleistocene Ice Age (Institute of Archaeology 2012). The Coats-Hines site, located in Cool Springs, directly relates to this time period because portions of three mastodon skeletons were found in association with human-made stone tools (Deter-Wolf et al. 2011). This site is currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Archaic period, around 8,000 B.C.E. to 2,000 B.C.E., is the longest and characterized by a warmer climate. Technology, such as the atlatl and spears, was utilized in the hunter-gatherer culture. There is not a specific site specified for this time period by the Tennessee State Standards. Late in the Archaic period, pottery started to appear (Franklin 2010). The Woodland period (2,000 B.C.E. to 1,000 C.E.) is categorized by the popular use of pottery and plant cultivation. The people are settling into villages and becoming less nomadic (West 2011).

Both Pinson Mounds and Old Stone Fort are Woodland Period Sites. Pinson Mounds, in Madison County, Tennessee, is a large complex consisting of seventeen mounds likely built for religious and habitation purposes (Mainfort 1998). Old Stone Fort was once thought to be a defensive structure, but, upon further excavation, it is more likely to have had a religious purpose (Ball 2002; Thruston 1896). These sites in Coffee county and Madison county are archaeological parks in Tennessee.

The Mississippian period is marked by more concentrated settlements and an agriculture-based community. Society is starting to become more complex with many burials and larger communities (Schroedl 2010). The Chucalissa Indian Village found in Memphis, Tennessee is a Mississippian site that has good evidence of corn agriculture dating to around 1,000 C.E. Archaeologists have found a central religious mound encircled by smaller mounds speculated to be for important leaders (West 2010).

This project is an effort of public anthropology to involve young minds to experience the excitement of prehistory. I determined that the best way to convey the feeling of discovery experienced by an archaeologist is through the writings of a “Choose Your Own Adventure-style” book featuring the four required archeological sites: Coats-Hines, Pinson Mounds, Old Stone Fort, and Chucalissa Indian Village. Readers are allowed choices to which they create their unique journey. This style of writing has “appeal for the reluctant reader due to its interactivity” (Choose Your Own Adventure 2015).

Readers will explore these sites during the excavation by making decisions along the way. It is as if they are the head archeologist on site. The decisions they make are the same to a real life excavation: where to dig, which artifacts about which to inquire more information, and how to interpret artifacts found in relation to past cultures. This is developing critical thinking skills and presents real world cause and effect situations. Readers run the risk of not finding an artifact because of the decisions they have made in the process of the story. This is not problematic to learning because even wrong decisions will be based on fact. It will teach fourth graders consequence and reasoning skills. Also,

with the target audience being children, I am confident they will explore many decisions within the book. Readers' willingness to explore is the key to gaining the most knowledge out of this book.

Throughout the writing process, I have visited each site (excluding Coats-Hines Site due to its inaccessible location in a residential backyard). My visits helped me gain a first person perspective for a better description in my writing. This, in conjunction, with the detailed writings of the excavations has given me the resources to provide the most information to the readers. The end product is a book that contains multiple storylines that share the initial scenario within the first chapter. At the end of the first chapter, readers will choose between the four archaeological time periods and continue on to the different archaeological sites that correspond to the chosen time period. Within each site's storyline, there will be multiple tributaries that will concern the site's features and artifact discoveries that are researched the week before. There is not a shared conclusion. Each conclusion is unique to the story before it.

The "Choose Your Own Adventure" genre is a perfect tool to help Tennessee students learn about the deep history of the state. Normally used to extract multiple fictional storylines from a single book, this method also has the potential for the reader to extract the most out of a first person experience. A Choose Your Own Adventure book covering the four archeological sites would allow the reader to become the archeologist discovering the artifacts for the first time just as the student is learning about the subject, too. The choices offered would also allow the reader to practice real world reasoning skills such as which artifacts are important and should be further analyzed. A book that

would allow a student to make his or her own choices in a real life learning situation is the best way to convey archeology because it is such a reasoning and logic driven profession. There is a demand for a resource like this, which is exciting and informative. I am confident that this book will help enlighten young minds across Tennessee about the little-known subject of archeology and Tennessee's prehistory.

Archeology: Can you dig it?

Do you like to discover new things and learn about the past? If you like solving mysteries, then archeology is going to be your favorite! In archeology, we study how people lived in the past by looking at the evidence left in the ground. Some of these people lived in the prehistoric period, before people were able to write. So, there are no historic documents for us to learn about them. The job of an archeologist is to figure out what these ancient peoples' lives were like with only the clues they left. This evidence has to be able to survive in the earth for a long time. Items from the past, or artifacts, and changes in the dirt and landscape, called features, are the two types of evidence you could find on an archeological dig. When you find artifacts or features then you call the place you found them a site, and you know that's where people lived in the past.

Now, grab a trowel, which is a hand shovel, and get ready for some adventure! You never know what you're going to find when you're exploring the past. Get ready to decide where and when you want to use your new-found archeological skills. Dig up the past, by first picking a time period to visit.

Pleistocene period? Turn to page 7.

Archaic period? Turn to page 8.

Woodland period? Turn to page 9.

Mississippian period? Turn to page 10.

The Pleistocene period is the earliest period that we have found evidence of people living in America. The Pleistocene starts around 18,000 B.C. and goes until the end of the Ice Age around 8,000 B.C. The people who lived at this time are called Paleoindians. They are the ancestors of the modern Native American tribes we know about today. They didn't stay in one place for very long. Instead, they traveled around following animals that they hunted and gathering plants to eat too. Are you interested in visiting a real site that dates back to the Pleistocene?

Turn to page 11 to visit the Coats-Hines site.

If you're not a fan of exploring this era yet, then try another era on page 6.



The Archaic period dates from 8,000 B.C. to 2,000 B.C. and is between the Pleistocene period and the Woodland period. This is just after the Ice Age, when the climate became warmer than before. The people who lived during this time were Archaic Indians. They didn't live in one place but traveled around – this is called being a nomad. They would follow herds of animals like elk and buffalo to hunt them for food. They also moved from place to place and gathered plants to eat, like fruits, berries, and nuts. During this time, the people started making spears and invented the atlatl, a stick used to throw spears, to help them hunt.

Where can I find an Archaic site in Tennessee? Find out on page 45.

Don't feel like going to an Archaic site? That's okay. Let's try another time period on page 6.



The Woodland period dates back between 2,000 B.C. and 1,000 A.D. It started right after the Archaic period and ended before the Mississippian period. The people who lived during this time are called Woodland Indians. During this period, they went through a lot of changes in the way they lived their everyday lives. They stopped moving around and started to settle down and build villages. They started making pots and dishes from baked clay, which is called pottery. Since they stopped moving around, they could start growing their own plants, like sunflower seeds and squash. You can choose from two sites to visit for this time period.

To visit West Tennessee's Pinson Mounds site, turn to page 30.

To explore Old Stone Fort in Middle Tennessee, turn to page 17.

Is it not your time to explore this time period? Turn to page 6 to choose another era.



The Mississippian period lasted for 500 years from 1,000 to A.D. 1,500, when the Europeans first came to America. This period started right after the Woodland period ended. The Mississippian Indians, the people who lived here during this time, lived in villages and farmed. There were a lot more people living in the village than before. This caused living together and society to become more complicated than before. There's a great site from this era in West Tennessee called Chucalissa Indian Village.

Explore this site by turning to page 22.

Learn about another time period instead and turn to page 6.



Coats-Hines

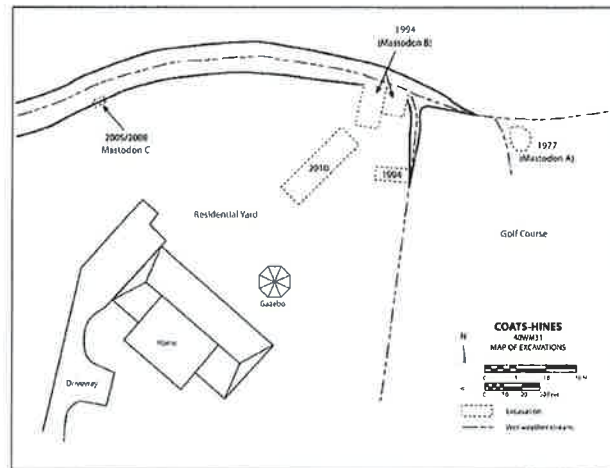


Figure 1. Map of Coats-Hines Excavations

Talk about archeology right in your backyard! The Coats-Hines site was found in a backyard near the Crockett Springs Golf Course in Williamson County, Tennessee. How exciting would it be to find evidence of prehistoric people living where you live? Since 1977, large bones have been found near the golf course. The backyard bones weren't buried by a dog, though! This site is about 13,000 years old and holds some amazing information about what was happening back then. The most recent dig in 2010 was done by a team of archeologists including Aaron Deter-Wolf, who is one of the Tennessee state archeologists.

Do you want to follow the archeologists to see the site? Turn to page 16.

Turn to page 12 to learn about what the site looked like 13,000 years ago.



Today, the site is a grassy backyard next to a golf course, but that wasn't the case in the Pleistocene era. The area was a pond created by a stream near the site. The stream was probably blocked, whether from a beaver dam or something else, so it flooded and created a pond. The amount of water in the pond changed over time. Sometimes there would be more than usual and sometimes less. As time went on, the pond went away and the area was dry land again. The type of dirt that the archaeologists found tells us this information about how long the pond was there. In the 1900s, this area was farmland, and, in the late 1970s, people started building houses and neighborhoods. It is important that we know what the area looked like throughout the ages, so we can better understand what archeologists have found there. Where there is water, there are animals, and where there are animals, there are probably people.

There were animals back then? Find out what kinds on page 13.

So what do we know about the humans? Turn to page 14 and see.



This site has a lot of animal bones! In 1994, archaeologists dug down 7 feet and found many different animals such as a horse, deer, turtles, muskrats, and dogs. Since there used to be a pond in this area, a lot of animals would meet here to drink. The biggest animal found was the mastodon. It wasn't just one mastodon either. They found three! Mastodon A, Mastodon B, and Mastodon C, as they were so fondly named, were found at different times at this site. Mastodon A was an older female that was found in 1977. Only some of her bones were discovered. In 1994, Mastodon B, a young male, was found 60 feet away from the first mastodon was found. Like Mastodon A, they only found some of the bones. In 1995, large bones were found but no one officially said they belonged to another mastodon. It wasn't until they found more large bones near here that archaeologists officially said there was a third mastodon, Mastodon C. The bones were so broken that no one could tell whether they belonged to a female or a male. These animals were huge and it's so cool to think they were living where we are now.

Would you like to learn about the humans? Turn to page 14.

Want to take a closer look at the mastodon bones on page 15?



The people who first settled America are called Paleoindians. They lived a long time ago hunting animals, gathering plants, and moving around. They followed animals so they would have food to eat. They didn't live in just one place. The Coats-Hines site isn't a place where people would have lived for a long time, but there is evidence that people stayed for a while and butchered a mastodon that they had hunted. Archaeologists found pieces of human-made stone tools called lithics at this site. Right next to Mastodon B, a mammoth-like



Figure 2: View of faunal (or animal) remains next to a trowel at Coats-Hines

animal that was found along with many other animals, there were 10 stone tools and 24 broken tool pieces. These tools are sharp and were used to cut things. On one of the mastodon bones, you can see cut marks made by the stone tools. This would mean that this site was a place people would prepare their meat to eat. They would leave the bones here and take the meat with them.

It is time to time hop to another era! Turn to page 6 and decide on another time period.



Upon a closer look, you can see cut marks on the back bones of Mastodon B. The cuts look like straight lines in the shape of a “V”. This wasn’t caused by another animal chewing on the bone but from a human-made tool. There were many tools and pieces of broken tools, called lithics, found near these bones. These tools were very sharp and used for cutting. This site was used to prepare meat for the people to eat. The bones would be left here and the people would take the meat with them as they traveled. This was probably the purpose for all the animal bones found here. Below, is a drawing of how Mastodon B looked when the archaeologist found it. What a puzzle!

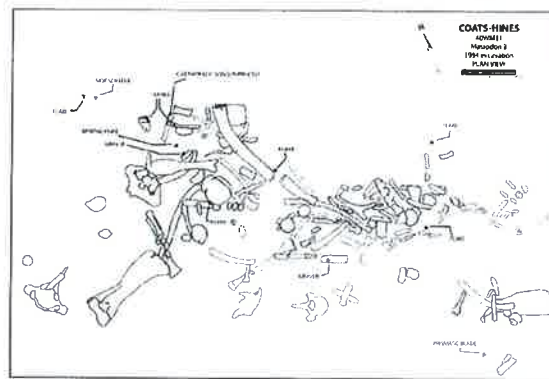


Figure 3: Diagram of Mastodon B skeletal remains at 1994 Excavation

It looks like it is time to travel to another era! Turn to page 6 to decide when to go next.



In 2010, a very important dig at the Coats-Hines site started in hopes of answering some questions about the people and what they ate. Archaeologists had been working at the site for over 30 years, and hoped they would find some more exciting things. The first thing they did was dig a long rectangular hole in the ground called a trench. The trench was 45 feet long and 13 feet wide. They saved some time and energy by using a machine to clear away dirt that didn't have anything related to archaeology in it. They knew where to dig because of the information they gathered over the years. After this, the team of archaeologists only had four days to dig with small shovels (or trowels) and find things from the Pleistocene era. They found thousands of animal bones and a lot of tools the Paleoindians made.



Figure 4: View of excavation trench in October 2010 facing south

Would you like to learn about the animals that they found? Turn to page 8.
So humans were here too? Read more on page 14.



Old Stone Fort

In archaeology, you can always find some type of mystery and adventure! Old Stone Fort is a great example of how some questions can't always be perfectly explained



Figure 5: Entrance towards hiking trail at Old Stone Fort

by archaeology. Old Stone Fort finds itself in Coffee county near Manchester, Tennessee. It is between the east and west parts of Duck River. Not many artifacts have been found here, but the fort is made of walls, or stone mounds, from the middle of the Woodland period, around 2,000 years

ago. If you go to the archaeological park today, you can easily feel like you have traveled back in time 2,000 years. It is a quiet and natural place to explore.

To take a look at the wall, turn to page 18.

To learn about the artifacts found, turn to page 20.



50 acres of pure paradise is surrounded by this wall made by the native people. Archaeologists have been able to test different parts of the wall with radio carbon 14 dating. This is a great scientific method used to figure out how old something is and can be used quite often at an archeological site. In many different spots on the wall, it has dated back to around 30 A.D., 230 A.D., and 430 A.D. These three date gives us more information than you would think.



Figure 6: Landscape at the center of Old Stone Fort

We have learned that this spot has been used for at least 400 years and during that time the wall was built, changed, and fixed. Parts of the wall run into the cliff that meets the river. These people used their natural surroundings to their favor when constructing this place. Why do you think they built this wall and used this space?

Do you think it was to defend themselves from animals and other people? Turn to page 19.

Do you think it was used as some kind of ceremonial space and as a place to gather together? Turn to page 21.



When you think about walls, it is natural to think of them being used for protection. The walls of your house protect you from the weather outside. The walls of the fence on a playground keeps kids inside the play area. The wall here is meant as a boundary. It is marking a space used for ceremonies and showing everyone that once you are inside these walls that you are in a sacred, special place.

The entrance to the 50 acres the wall surrounds is pointed towards the direction the sun rises during the Summer Solstice. The fact that there were not many artifacts found leads us to think that this was not a place people lived but visited. Many people travel using the river during this time, too. With the Duck River being next to the site, it would have been an easy place to visit. These characteristics together help support that this area was used for ceremonies, rather than defense.

To learn more about the artifacts found, turn to page 20.

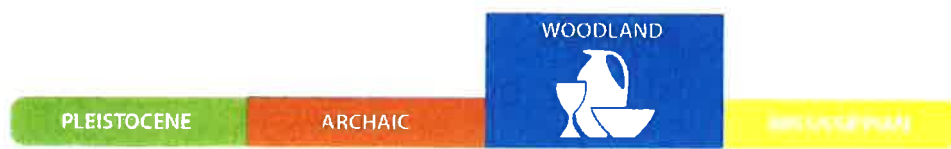
Are you ready to change what time period you're exploring? Back to page 6 for you.



Old Stone Fort is a site mainly featuring a wall and is not well known for a lot more. This archaeological site holds some very cool and interesting artifacts. One thing related to this site is a pipe that looks like a bald eagle. It was found in 1876 by Joseph Jones. If you want to see it today, then you will have to go to the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian in New York. A stone figure that looks like an insect at a young stage, called the pupa, was also found. Other artifacts that were found were earth pots and stone tools. These aren't the type of things you would expect to find where someone lives, so what was this site used for?

Do you think it was a fort? Turn to page 19.

Do you think it was a place that was visited for ceremonies? Turn to page 21.



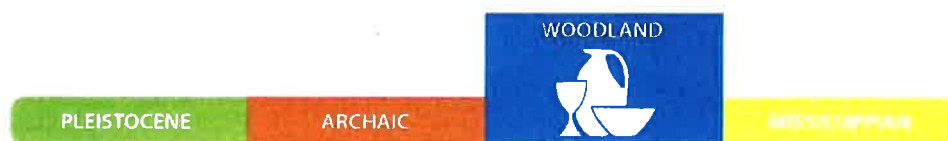
You are correct! This spot on the Duck River was used most likely to celebrate the Summer Solstice with a ceremony. The entrance to the 50 acres that the wall borders is pointed towards the direction the sun rises during the Summer Solstice. The wall that surrounds the area is more of a boundary than something that would be used as a fort. We know that the space inside the wall was sacred space to those who built the wall. This is why there were not many artifacts found here. There were never any permanent homes or people living here. This was definitely a place that was visited and it was easy to get to using the Duck River. All of this is strong evidence that points towards this space being used on occasion for ceremonies.



Figure 7:View of Duck River

If you haven't learned about the artifacts found, then turn to page 20.

Already know about the artifacts? You're ready for a new time period! Turn to page 6.



In West Tennessee, six miles south of downtown Memphis, is DeSoto State Park where you can discover Chucalissa Indian Village. This site was found in the 1930s when a crew from the Civilian Conservation Corps was beginning construction for their camp buildings. Some digging was done to explore what was there. Once they realized that this place was dated back to before written records and that there was enough evidence of this, many people in the area wanted it to be an archaeological park with a museum. Through the work of prisoners, the site was excavated and one prisoner even made better tools to do archeology that we use today! This site has many exciting parts to be explored. Where do you want to start?

“I want to read about the people who live there.” Page 23 is the page for you.

“What does the site look like?” Turn to page 26 to have some fun.



Since this place dates back before people could write information down, it is sometimes hard to know how the people lived from day to day. The people who lived here were part of the Mississippian culture. They shared many qualities and ideas with other groups along the Mississippi River. You would think that since the site is called Chucalissa Indian Village that this is the name of the people who lived there. The word actually comes from the Choctaw language, which is a modern Native American group, meaning “abandoned house.” The Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Quapaw are the descendants of these people and archeologists are able to figure out a lot about how the people from 1,000 years ago from how these modern groups live. Often, culture is passed down and stays mostly the same throughout time.

“So, what was it like at home?” Page 24 holds the answer.

“Did they have a religion?” Turn to page 29 for more.



When the site was first explored, it was obvious that there were layers, also called strata, that helped paint a picture of what the houses looked like. The oldest houses had four walls in the shape of a square, but the roof was rounded like half a circle. The houses looked different over time. They kept their square walls, but the roof looked like a pyramid, like the house in the picture. The people lived just outside from the mounds and



Figure 8: Recreation of a typical house at Chucalissa Indian Village

plaza, an open space, they made. Whenever they cooked, they would do this outdoors. A lot of evidence of fire was found in the dirt next to the houses.

These Mississippians would grow corn, squash, and beans together. These foods grow very well together and they make the dirt healthy too. They would hunt animals who lived near them like deer, fish, turkey, and raccoons. Archaeologists have found seeds and hickory nut shells from this time. Living so close to the Mississippi River was a big reason they had so many different foods for themselves. Animals need to be near water and the dirt near the river is great for farming!

Want to hear about a ceremony they had that was all about corn? I promise it's not too corny. Turn to page 29.

Turn to page 25 to learn how everyone was a part of the community.



Everyone in the village had a job. Men would usually farm and hunt and women would make pottery and clothing. There would also be a chief and his family along with other jobs, like warriors and priests. Every job was important but some jobs were more popular than others. If you were the chief or a priest, then you were very important. You got to live next to the plaza and were considered to be in the highest, most important class of people. The lower class of people would be farmers and people with various jobs. These people lived behind the mounds. If you were a lower class person but wanted to be in the upper class, don't worry! People in the upper class were only allowed to marry others from a lower class. Those in the lower class could marry whomever they wished, though. The family of the chief would have to marry into the lowest class, so even if you were born into a certain class there was a big chance you would move up a class eventually.

Explore the mounds nearby by turning to page 27.

Explore the burials near the house on page 28.





Figure 9: View of the plaza at Chucalissa Indian Village

Chucalissa Indian Village is made up of two man-made hills, called mounds, a place for activities, called a plaza, and the village itself where all the houses belong. The two mounds overlooked the plaza like a front yard. People would play games here and dance. Archaeologists can

tell this area was a plaza because there wasn't a lot to find here, and it was dug out in a square shape that wasn't natural. The plaza is a perfect place for ceremonies and festivals. This whole site can be dated back to as early as 800 A.D. just from a piece of char from a fire! People probably stopped living there around 1590 A.D. There were people living here for over 600 years before Europeans found this place.

Explore the mounds nearby by turning to page 27.

Explore the burials near the homes on page 28.



When you walk through the museum and onto the site, you clearly see the two mounds. One is a mound where a temple would be on top and the other is a burial mound.

The temple mound was very important to the people in the village. Only the chief, the priests, and the chief's sisters go into the temple. The sisters were allowed because the people knew who was part of their family through the women. It would be like taking your mom's last name instead of your dad's, today. When a group of people relate to each

other through women it is called matrilineal descent. Every time the temple needed to be repaired, they would tear it down, put more dirt on the mound, and rebuild the temple. The mound grew with each rebuild.



Figure 10: View of the temple mound at Chucalissa Indian Village

If you would like to know more about the society, then turn to page 23.

Ready to pick another time period? Turn to page 6.



Beside the houses are graves that hold a lot of information about the people who lived there. Since, 1955, 75 burials have been discovered. These burials used to be part of the museum but were removed out of respect for the Native American groups who are related to them. From the skeletons, archeologists know that the men were often about 5 feet and 6 inches tall and the women were about 5 feet. People would live to be around 35 to 40 years old. They could tell what the people were getting sick from before the Europeans came here. The people of Chucalissa also liked having tattoos. They would draw the sun and snakes on their skin as well as their pottery.

If you would like to know more about the society, then turn to page 23.

If you've learned about the people but not their religion, then page 29 is the page for you.

There are always other time periods waiting for you on page 6.



Archeologists know about the religion of the Mississippian people from the artifacts of the temple on the mound and from studying Native American groups like the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Quapaw, who are related to these people. Inside the temple, there would be a fire that would never go out. People were assigned to care for it and make sure it kept going. They praised the sun and other gods.

One ceremony took place every year in September called the Busk Ceremony. It celebrated the new corn crop. Special corn was grown and cared for only by the warriors. Everyone would gather in the plaza to receive some of this corn. They would cook and eat the new corn until it was almost gone. Then, they would dance throughout the night. When the sun came up in the morning, they would eat the rest of the corn then finally sleep.

There are mounds to be explored on page 27.

Explore the burials by turning to page 28.

Whenever you feel like it, turn to page 6 to go to whenever you'd like. A different time awaits!



Pinson Mounds

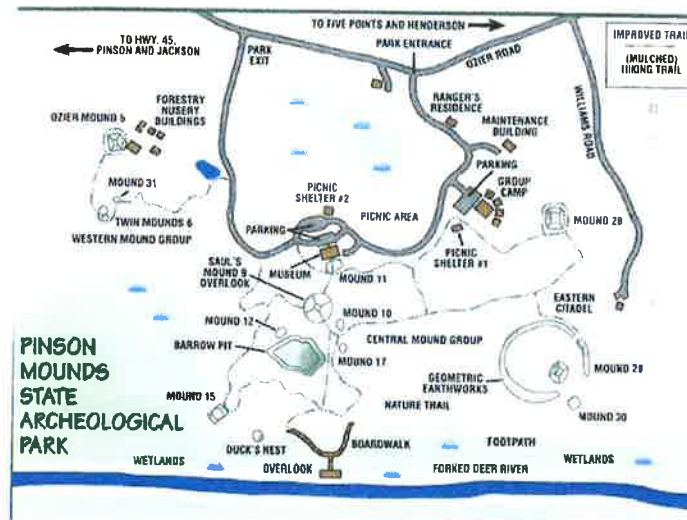


Figure 11: Map of Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park

If you find yourself near Jackson, Tennessee in Pinson, stop by Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park! It's a place to explore nature and use your imagination to look into the past. This park has everything including huge man-made hills, called mounds, wetlands near Forked Deer River, and a tree nursery. Most importantly, though, it has over 852 acres of archaeology. That's a lot of prehistory to discover! You can use the map to plan your own journey to Pinson Mounds and pick what you want to explore.

Turn to page 31 to explore Twin Mounds 6

Turn to page 36 to jump investigate Ozier Mound 5

Turn to page 39 to stick near the museum and find out about Mound 12

Turn to page 42 to excavate the geometric earthworks.

Turn to page 46 to climb the highest mound.



Mound 6 – Twin Mound Sector



Figure 12: View of the Twin Mound Sector

You've happened upon a unique mound! This site has characteristics of an upper and lower parts because of the layered surface caused by loose soil. You're not the first person there though. Two other archaeologists named Dan Morse and James Polhemus got there way before you in 1963. They did a lot of the hard work for you. They dug 8 test units, which are neat square shaped holes, to try and see where they could find features and artifacts. Which excavation do you want to join?

"I want to see what was on the upper part." Turn to page 32.

"I bet the lower part has cool stuff." Turn to page 33.



The upper part is filled with some features! You found places where posts would be in an odd shaped half-circle that is evidence of a circle or oval shaped house. Where there is a house, there is usually a fire. That's exactly what you find: a hearth (place for a fire) filled with fire-cracked sandstone (a type of rock) and another hearth shaped like a bowl into the earth. Although there weren't many artifacts here, these features are pretty cool! 11 years later, in 1974, they would return to this mound to try and answer the question: do artifacts and features increase or decrease the farther we dig from the mound?

Explore Lower part instead on page 33.

Time travel into 1974 to dig by turning to page 34.

There's so much to see! Let's go to another part of Pinson on page 30.



The lower part was definitely a great choice! This part contains more features and artifacts than the upper part of the mounds. In the test units, the neat, square-shaped holes you dug, you found animal bones from the middle of the Woodland period that look pretty good for how old they are. The animals most commonly found in this area would be deer, beaver, raccoon, ducks, fish, and (if it was winter time) geese. 11 years later, in 1974, they would return to this mound to try and answer the question: do artifacts and features increase or decrease the farther we dig from the mound?

Explore the Upper part on page 32.

Time travel into 1974 to dig on page 34.

There's so much to see! Let's go to another part of Pinson on page 30.



In 1974, 3 six-feet by six-feet squares were dug on the Twin Mound site. While the first two test units didn't have much to tell you about this prehistoric period, the third unit you look at holds a bunch of information. The soil color was different in this unit from the first two. Instead of the usual reddish brown clay you've been seeing, this unit has soil that is greyish brown. You start to find charcoal (evidence of fire), pottery (baked clay pots), and flakes from where rocks were turned into tools. Through all the excitement of discovery, you have to make a choice. Should you bag up everything you find and send it to the lab or expand the unit and keep digging?

"Bag up and record the findings! Let's explore a different part of Pinson." Go to page 30.

"I want to keep digging! There could be more!" Turn to page 35.



You expand the test unit to where the unit is now 18 feet long by 12 feet wide. This area will give you the best chance at finding other postmolds (holes for a post to be placed) and features. You definitely find features too. You can now see 10 features! These features are things like crematory basins (These are places in the earth to burn things. Some of these had bones in them.), hearths (places for fire), earth ovens (a hole in the earth to cook food), and a pit for storage. You find projectile points (sharp pieces of rock that are meant to be used as an arrow tip), flakes (pieces of broken rock), some pieces of human bone, charcoal (evidence of fire), and ash. You've found a lot of items that can give you more information, like dates and activities, related to this site. It's safe to move on to another part of the Pinson Mounds Park to find out more about the people who used to live here.

Return to dig at another mound on page 30.

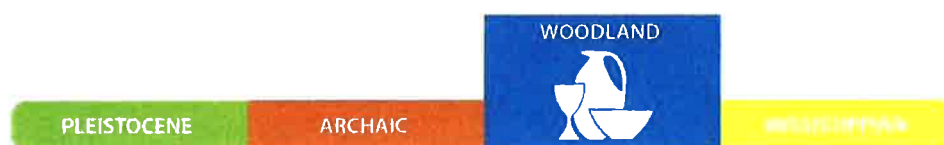




Figure 13: Panoramic Photo of Hozier Sector

Mound 5 -- Hozier Sector

When the park was first purchased, the state wanted to build a museum/visitors' center in this area. They needed to make sure that the construction wouldn't damage any prehistoric information. Your fellow archaeologists and you dig 3 6 feet by 6 feet test units (neat, square-shaped holes) to reveal evidence from a modern farm and, also, small amounts of prehistoric pottery (baked clay pots) and lithics (pieces of stone tools). You only find artifacts; there were not any features to be explored. Do you think this area is safe to build the museum on or should you test where the parking lot would be also?

"It looks fine to build on to me. Bulldozers, start your engines!" Turn to page 37.

"Just to be safe, we should explore more." Turn to page 38.



Woah, there! Your fellow archaeologists are on the fence about continuing with the construction. Everyone wants to be completely sure before building the museum so that nothing stops construction or more prehistoric information is lost. Yes, most of the artifacts that were found were from present day times, but ceramics haven't been near here before. If there are some prehistoric artifacts here, then there could be more close by where the parking lot would be built. We don't want to lose all that information about the past! Your fellow archaeologists and other worker involved with the construction will thank you for being so thorough.

Return to do more test excavation near the pond on page 38.



The two test squares your team dug north of the pond was a better place to dig. The first test unit did have any artifacts or features but the second made up for that. The second test unit is so full of information it is expanded to a 15 feet long by 12 feet wide block that has both artifacts and 4 features! Since this land used to be a farm, plowing took a toll on the dirt and the items in it. All but the bottom of the features, was destroyed. You can still tell that you discovered an area of a prehistoric fire, an earth oven, the base of a hearth, and some kind of oval structure. You saved this site from being destroyed! The state has made plans to move the museum to another part of the park.

Explore more of Pinson Mounds! Return to page 30.

Is it time for a change? Go back to page 6 to learn about a different time period.





Figure 14: Photo of Mound 12 area

Mound 12

This mound is a part of the farm land that used to be in this area. You and your team want to create a large testing area northeast of the mound about 24 feet long and 45 feet wide. Since you know that the top 5 to 8 inches are destroyed by plowing, you consider using a bulldozer

to skim off the first few layers.

“It should be ok, right? This land was plowed a lot so the bulldozer would save us time.”

Turn to page 40.

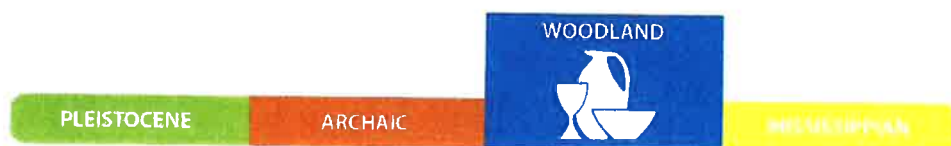
“Better play it safe. We’re not entirely sure if we would destroy any prehistoric evidence.” Turn to page 41.



By using the bulldozer, you and your team saved a whole bunch of time and effort! The bulldozer didn't dig up a mountain of dirt, but, instead, it took off a little dirt at a time by just barely getting dirt off the surface each time. You carefully monitored the process so as to not dig too deep. Once the plow zone, the part of the site destroyed by farming, seemed to be gone, you were left with only a little bit of a layer to dig by hand. You and your team discovered 11 features including two probable houses! Other features you found are hearths, evidence of a temporary shelter, postmolds, and a crematory basin. All the features have scars left by plowing. You didn't find any artifacts (they were probably destroyed by the past plowing).

Explore more of Pinson Mounds on page 30.

Go back to page 6 to study another time period.



You start to dig by hand using shovels. You and your team are working hard and long; however, you don't find anything until about 5 to 8 inches deep. Turns out that the plowing really did destroy everything on the top layer of the site. Once the plow zone, the part of the layer destroyed by farming, seemed to be gone, you were left with only a little bit of the layer to dig by hand. You and your team discovered 11 features including two probable houses! Other features you found are hearths, evidence of a temporary shelter, postmolds, and a crematory basin. All the features have scars left by plowing. You didn't find any artifacts (they were probably destroyed by the past plowing).

Explore more of Pinson Mounds on page 30.

Head back to page 6 to switch to a different time period.



In 1975, a large, semi-circle hill, called an earthwork, was found southwest of Mound 9. This is a unique looking structure and it's begging for attention from you and your team. The question is: is this a naturally occurring work of nature or did man make it? The only way to find out is to dig! You create a 60-foot-long trench along the edge of the mound and discover 6 strata, or layers of soil. What are you looking for in the strata?

“Artifacts! They’ll tell me the most about this structure.” Find out on page 43.

“Features! They’ll help me answer if this is natural or man-made.” Find out on page 44.



If you are focused on artifacts, Stratum 1 contained a few lithics, pieces of stone tool, but not many artifacts. In Stratum 2, you found ceramics, or pottery, that could only be from the middle of the Woodland period. This proves the area is from this time. Stratum 3 didn't contain many artifacts but Stratum 4 contained a projectile point (sharp rock made for arrows), sherds (broken pieces of pottery), a projectile point from the Archaic period, 8 freshwater pearls, shells, and seeds. In this case, there are not a lot of artifacts, but the ones you found are helpful in learning more about this structure.

Turn back and explore more of Pinson Mounds on page 30.

Find out if there were any features on page 44.



So you want to see how this structure came to be? You look at the strata, or layers of dirt, and see that Strata 2, 3, and 4 contain many features. In stratum 2, there are many different colored soils layered on top of each other in the shape of upside down “half moons”. Each half moon is a different basket full to build up the mound. There was a natural rise before the earthwork was made by man.

Turn back and explore more of Pinson Mounds on page 30.

What to learn about another site? Go back to page 6 and pick another time period.



One can definitely find an archaeological site dating back to the Archaic period in Tennessee. There are 40 sites recorded in 17 different counties! Some, however, have been destroyed somehow, or they are back underground or under the water. There are some that are state parks, though! You can visit Moccasin Bend State Park in Hamilton county, Dunbar Cave in Montgomery county, and Castalian Springs in Sumner county. If you want to learn more about this time period or if this site is near you, you should look it up. Use the detective skills you have learned from this book to impress a park ranger and I bet you will understand a lot more if you go and visit one of these sites.

Turn to page back to page 6 and pick another time period to learn about.



Saul's Mound- Mound 9

This is the tallest, largest mound on this site. It is the second highest mound in the United States at 72 feet high. If you want to climb the mound, it would be like climbing the stairs of a building with 7 floors. That's really high up! You can see so much from on top of this mound. The top is a looks like a square with the four



Figure 15: Photo of Mound 9 -- Saul's Mound



Figure 16: Photo of the Park Museum from on top of Mound 9 – Saul's Mound

corners pointing to the north, south, east, and west. This mound was built by the Mississippian Indians by bringing piles of dirt to the site one basket at a time. Archaeologists think this mound was used as part of a ceremony or to look out over the other mounds. No one lived at Pinson mounds. It was a place for people to visit.

Go back and explore the rest of Pinson on page 30.

It's time for a change. Choose a different time period on page 6.



Note from the Author

I created this book so that the fourth grade students of Tennessee could have a better understanding of the four archaeological sites the state of Tennessee has included in their curriculum. I, myself, was not familiar with prehistory, archeology, or studying other cultures when I was in fourth grade. I am pleased to see the diversity in what students are learning today. For this project, I visited each archaeological state park for three of the sites. No one is able to visit Coats-Hines due to it being in a residential backyard. Seeing and hiking these areas of prehistory was the most enjoyable and educational part for me. It made me motivated to make this book an adventure for those who read it, so that they might want to visit these state parks as well. These visits also gave me a better understanding of each site and a better ability to describe the prehistoric place. The photos used for this book were taken by me (with the exception of Coats-Hine, in which case, I received permission from the Tennessee Division of Archaeology in Nashville).

Determined to make this a book that readers would not want to put down, the “Choose your own adventure” style of writing ensured that readers would be captivated by the material and feel like a real archaeologist when making decisions. My decisions on how the story progressed was made according to what each site was known for in terms of artifacts and information. I decided not to pick a specific site for the Archaic era because there was not one included in the curriculum. Instead of leaving a huge gap of information, I offered some suggestions of sites to read or visit at the students’ leisure. This way the teaching tool does not have to be restricted by teachers with only enough

time to teach the curriculum and the students are still exposed to this portion of prehistory.

I found that the main challenge during this project was writing on a fourth grader's comprehension level. In public anthropology, it seems to be more difficult to get adults excited about archaeology than it is to convey it to them in an understandable way. It seemed to be the opposite for children during this process. The material the book presents is interesting and children are fascinated by it; however, it is a challenge to find the right vocabulary to explain these new concepts. Luckily, my advisor, Dr. Shannon Hodge, was helpful navigating this using her experience of teaching and being a parent. Another remedy to combat misunderstanding is having a glossary for the reader to utilize when coming across jargon. This is not to replace explanations within the text, but it should help readers worry less about comprehending the material and enjoy the experience more.

This creative project was eye opening and educational for me. I have great hopes that it will help make Tennessee's prehistory common knowledge among fourth graders. In the future, I plan to create a series of these type of books for children on other topics in anthropology. No child is too young to learn about other cultures, prehistory, and evolution, especially in today's globalized world.

Glossary

A.D.: This is the part of the time line that starts at zero and increases. A.D. is shortened from the Latin phrase Anno Domini. For example, we are currently in the year 2016 A.D. It is also commonly known as C.E., which stands for common era.

Archaeology: The study of people through physical evidence and clues left in the ground.

Archaic period: This era is after the Pleistocene era and before the Woodland period. It dates from 8,000 B.C. to 2,000 B.C.

Artifacts: An object that was left or changed by humans. You can carry these things.

Atlatl: This is a stick used to help through spears.

B.C.: This part of the time line starts at larger numbers and counts down towards A.D. It stands for Before Christ. It is also commonly known as B.C.E., which stands for before common era.

Ceramics: Baked clay in the shape of bowls, also known as pottery.

Charcoal: This is what happens when wood or bone are heated in a fire.

Crematory basins: A hole in the earth where you can burn things.

Documents: Written word of an event or idea.

Earth ovens: A hole in the earth made by humans that cooks food.

Earthwork: A big hill of soil made by humans.

Features: Where it can be seen in the dirt that people were there. It cannot be moved like an artifact.

Flakes: A flat, thin piece of stone that broke off of a bigger piece usually when making a tool.

Hearth: The place for a fire

Historic: The time when people wrote things done about their life and the things around them.

Ice Age: A time during prehistory after the Pleistocene where the earth was covered in mostly ice.

Lithics: Stone tools

Mastodon: A mammoth-like animal.

Mississippian period: This time period lasted from 1,000 A.D. to 1,500 A.D. and followed the Woodland period.

Mounds: A man-made round hill

Nomad: People who move from place to place and do not stay in one place for very long.

Pleistocene period: This is the old time period where people are present. It dates from 18,000 B.C. to 8,000 B.C.

Plow zone: The layer of earth that had been changed because of a farming tool.

Postmold: Evidence in the earth that a post used to be there.

Pottery: Clay that was baked and shaped into a pot form.

Prehistoric: This describes a place or people that existed before written records of events and dates.

Projectile points: A sharp stone made to put on arrows, spears, and sometimes knives.

Site: An area where there is archaeology.

Sherds: Pieces of broken pottery

Storage pits: Places underground used to put things.

Stratigraphy: This is what it is called when the dirt looks like it is layered like a cake.

The top layer is the youngest and they grow older from there. Each layer is called a stratum.

Stratum (or strata): Is a layer of dirt in the ground.

Test unit: A neat, square dug out of the ground by archaeologist

Trench: A long, narrow channel through the earth.

Trowel: A small, hand shovel used to dig carefully.

Village: A group of houses that are near each other and the owners of the house know each other.

Woodland period: The era before the Mississippian period and after the Archaic period. It dates from 2,000 B.C. to 1,000 A.D.

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