

How is This Used?

Overview

By observing the form and shapes of tools from the past, students make predictions about tool functions based on contemporary examples.

Objectives/Skills

Students will

- Demonstrate an awareness of how function and material influence the structure, shape, and appearance of a tool
- Observe, examine, draw, hypothesize, draw parallels, make comparisons, write paragraphs

Age Level

Grades 5-8

Materials

- Images of artifacts from NYC Archaeological Repository Database. Suggest the following search terms: tools, brushes, chamber pots, pencils.
- Tools and utensils from home or school
- Drawing or grid paper
- Pencils

Procedure

1. Ask students to select an artifact to redraw. Encourage them to use a grid system so the proportions will be correct.
2. Ask students to consider the purpose for which the tool may have been used based upon its shape, structure, size, and the material of which it is made.
3. All students to select and draw a contemporary tool that is used in the same way.
4. Lead the students in a discussion about the similarities and differences among artifacts in the illustrations and present-day tools.

This lesson has been adapted from Clues from the Past published in cooperation with the Texas Archaeological Society by Hendrick-Long Publishing Co and is posted by the Society for American Archaeology: http://www.saa.org/publicftp/PUBLIC/resources/PubEdu/vol5no2-article6_000.pdf