

Where Texas History Began – The Virtual Exhibit

Key Terms

Archaeology

Archaeology – The study of human history and prehistory through the digging up of places and analysis of artifacts and human remains.

Archaeologist – A person who studies human history and prehistory by digging up sites and artifacts for analysis.

Excavate – To make a hole by digging up ground.

Artifact – An item made by a human being that was left behind.

Preserve – To maintain or keep intact.

Stratigraphy – Layering that occurs in the soil over time.

Strata – Layers of archaeological material.

Awl – All-purpose pointed tool usually made of a long bone splinter mainly used for punching holes through animal hide.

Hearth – Stone area in front of a fireplace.

Hunter-gatherers – Ancient people who moved around constantly hunting animals and gathering plants as food sources.

Situ – The place where artifacts are found and recorded before being moved to the lab.

Indigenous People

Atlatl – Stick used by Native American tribes in North America to throw a spear or dart.

Lithic – Something related to stone.

Paleolithic Era – Era before 10,000 BC when people were hunters and gatherers who followed food sources from place to place.

Neolithic Era – Era around 10,000 BC where people began to practice agriculture and have more permanent homes. Also called the Stone Age.

Paleoindian Period – Period from 16,000BC to 8,000 BC when people hunted large animals with large stone tools.

Early Archaic Period – Period from 8,800 BC to 6,000 BC. People began to have more complex societies and migrated for trade.

Middle Archaic Period – Period from 6,000 BC to 4,000 BC. People living along the coast and using more food sources from rivers and oceans.

Middens – Large piles of shells left from survival activities.

Late Archaic Period – Period from 4,000 BC to 1,200 BC where people lived closer to the Coastal region of Texas and established permanent communities.

Late Prehistoric Period – Period from 1,200BC to 450 BC. The Coastal region of Texas was inhabited by people such as the Karankawa, Aranama, and Tamique.

Fossil – The remains or impression of a prehistoric organism preserved in petrified rock.

Nomadic – Moving from place to place to search for food or other resources.

Asphaltum – Protective substance used on surfaces that do not need to be etched.

Karankawa – Ancient nomadic indigenous tribe who live in the Coastal region of Texas.

Mammoth – Extinct species of ancient elephant.

French Contact

Petard - Small bomb made out of metal or wood filled with powder used to blast open doors.

Privateers - Privately owned ship commissioned by a country used to capture enemy ships.

Dehydration - Loss of water in the body.

Concretion - Hard compact mass of matter formed by mineral cement.

Forensic Sculpting - Using forensic techniques to reconstruct the image of a person using remains.

3D Printing - Process of printing a physical object using a three-dimensional digital model.

La Belle – Smallest of the sailing vessels from La Salle’s expedition that sank in storm.

L’Aimable – Main supply vessel for the La Salle expedition that sank while trying to enter Matagorda Bay.

Le Joly – Warship escort vessel for the La Salle expedition.

Le Saint-Francois – Ketch sailboat that was lost to Spanish privateers before the La Salle expedition made it to Texas.

Spanish Influence

Expedition - Journey or voyage taken by a group of people for the purpose of exploration.

Presidio - Military settlement.

Jacales - Adobe-style housing structure.

Mano Fica – Amulet used to ward off evil spirits.

Peineta - Large decorative comb usually made from tortoise shell.

Hobnail Safe - Safes covered with iron sheets and hidden locks for protection.

Columbian Exchange

Columbian Exchange - Transfer of animals, plants, culture, technologies, diseases, people, and ideas between the New World and the Old World after Christopher Columbus' arrival.

Chocolatera - Metal vessel used for making hot chocolate.

Hawk Bells – Small bells made out of sheet brass or copper used for falconry in Europe and as trade items in the New World.

Glass Beads - Beaded necklaces made from glass or ceramic used as trade items with Native Americans.

Ranching

Vaqueros - Later known as “cowboy” was a horse-mounted cattle herder made popular by Spanish settlers.

Spur - Metal device with a small spike or wheel worn on the heel of a boot used to urge a horse forward.

Branding Iron - Metal shaped instrument that is heated and used to brand cattle.

Anvil - Heavy steel or iron block with a flat top used to hammer and shape metal objects during black smithing.