National Themes Adopted for Kansas Curriculum

by Virginia A. Wulfkuhle (Kansas)

When the themes of shelter, subsistence, and migration were identified for the new national Project Archaeology curriculum in 2002, it was immediately evident that they were a perfect fit for cultural resources in Kansas. In 2006 the Kansas Historic Preservation Office set aside funds for development of Kansas-specific materials. The Kansas Historical Society (KSHS) contracted with proven Project Archaeology curriculum writer Cali Letts and consulted with national Project Archaeology staff, Kansas Historical Society Education/Outreach Division personnel, Kansas Department of Education representatives, and a teacher advisory group. Extensive and repeated editing was accomplished by KSHS Cultural Resources and Education/Outreach staff, a curriculum standards advisor, national Project Archaeology curriculum director, Joelle Clark, Kansas State University archaeology and education faculty and others. The pieces were designed in-house. Although the process has taken much longer than anticipated, the fifth and seventh grade units are now being distributed, and the fourth grade unit is in the design phase.

The three Project Archaeology in Kansas units are Archaeology of Wichita Indian Shelter in Kansas for fourth grade, The Archaeology of Early Agriculture in Kansas for fifth grade, and Migration of the Pueblo People to El Cuartejelo for seventh grade. While the units are correlated with the Kansas Department of Education curriculum standards for these particular grade levels, the materials can be used with students of other ages and abilities and by gifted teachers and informal educators of all kinds.

Each unit consists of three pieces: a durable and colorful student magazine is the text and is to be used multiple times; a consumable student journal provides students with their own workbooks; and the teacher guide CD provides step-by-step instructions and answers. Samples from the student magazines and journals and the teacher guides in their entirety are posted on the KSHS web site at http://www.kshs.org/p/project-archaeology-in-kansas/15251.

The units are integrated reading units that support educators in teaching the content areas of social
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studies and science. By practicing critical reading skills, students become better able to make informed decisions and choices about the world in which they live. As with Project Archaeology: Investigating Shelter, each Kansas unit highlights connections with living American Indians and real archaeologists and emphasizes a stewardship message.

These free materials can be obtained in two ways. The KSHS makes them available to Kansas educators who first review the materials in their entirety and complete a pre-assessment form of the perceived value of the program. Once this has been submitted, the educator is eligible to receive classroom sets by paying only shipping and handling costs. For teachers who can participate, a workshop is being offered August 3-5, 2011, at ESSDACK (Educational Services and Staff Development Association of Central Kansas) in Hutchinson, Kansas, at no cost for registration or materials. The teacher/facilitator workshop will include teaching instruction for Project Archaeology: Investigating Shelter, The Archaeology of Early Agriculture in Kansas, and Migration of the Pueblo People to El Cuartelejo. Facilitators for this workshop will be KSHS Public Archaeologist Virginia Wulfkuhle and Nathan McAlister, 2010 Gilder-Lehrman National History Teacher. Guest presenter Brenda Cubertson will speak on Pawnee archaeoastronomy. For more information, visit the KSHS website at http://www.kshs.org/p/project-archaeology-summer-teacher-workshop/16527 or contact Virginia Wulfkuhle at vvwulfkuhle@kshs.org.

I Want To Go On a Dig!  By Gail Lundeen (Missouri)

“I want to go on a dig!” We often heard this from teachers after they completed the two day Project Archaeology: Investigating Shelter workshop. They were so excited to learn about archaeology and they wanted to experience it first hand. In the summer of 2010, John Peterson, the Jackson County Parks and Recreation archaeologist, and I decided to offer an optional two day excavation experience.

Our workshops are held annually at the Fort Osage National Historic Landmark. John picked five spots which had yielded surface artifacts or objects found during coring, so we were relatively sure they would be interesting for the teachers to excavate. Two professional archaeologists and four experienced avocational archaeologists assisted with supervision of the 11 teachers. After instruction about the proper techniques for excavating and record keeping, the teachers dug into their squares. Immediately they began to find artifacts and their excitement level rose!

In the afternoons, we had laboratory activities set up. One group washed artifacts while another group tried their hand at cataloging, then switched jobs. Although this didn’t provide the excitement of discovery, the teachers found it very interesting to wash things others had found and see a large variety of artifacts.

At the end of the second day of the field and lab work, the teachers were brimming with excitement about the experience. They mentioned that they could now better explain the process to their students. Several joined the local archaeological society and asked to be notified of upcoming excavations. Research shows that learning by doing is more effective than just reading about the subject. Because of the positive feedback we will offer a workshop on July 19-20, 2011 and excavation classes on July 21-22, 2011. It was a great experience for everyone involved! For more information contact Gail at gail@lundeenweb.com.

Erin Pouppirt
Fourth Grade Teacher
Hello Everyone,

Great news! Project Archaeology materials have been adopted by three school districts: The Bozeman School District (Montana), the North Slope Burrow School District (Alaska), and the Boulder Valley School District (Colorado). The North Slope District is currently developing a shelter investigation for their region. At the national office, we are developing new marketing materials to entice other school districts across the country to adopt our curricula. If you are interested in approaching a local school district, let us know and we can help you out.

Several research projects involving Project Archaeology materials and new initiatives are nearing completion. For example, the Archaeological Science for All project, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), employed Delphi survey methods to identify knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for archaeology literacy. In Montana, a collaborative inquiry process was used to plan, develop and test curricular materials about the archaeology of the Absaroka Agency, the second Crow Agency. Helen Kere- medjiev, graduate student at the University of Montana, and I organized a research symposium at the SAA conference. Project Archaeology materials and research were featured in four of the seven papers. We are planning to add a research section to the new web site to help distribute our results.

In 2010, we received a small grant from the Archaeological Institute of America to finish the draft of Project Archaeology: Investigating Food and Culture. The latest draft was piloted with approximately 110 sixth graders in Bozeman, Montana over the last academic year. Results were very positive and we are ready to revise the draft and test it again next year before moving on to broader dissemination through online courses.

Best regards,

Jeanne Moe
Jeanne Moe
BLM Project Archaeology Lead

Project Archaeology Coordinators and Master Teachers at the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) Annual Project Archaeology meeting.
The Project Archaeology Chesapeake Regional program held a professional development workshop for teachers June 28-30, 2010 at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. Fourteen teachers from elementary schools in Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Maryland attended. The three-day workshop included two days of museum/classroom instruction on Investigating Shelter and featured the Poplar Forest Slave Cabin investigation. Chesapeake Regional Coordinator Maureen Malloy taught the course with local elementary teacher Jackie Moore. Ann Kaupp participated as a workshop organizer. The workshop included a presentation by local archaeologist, Kirsti Uunila. Kirsti works closely with African American community members and site descendants in nearby Calvert County, MD, and spoke about African American archaeology in the Chesapeake region.

The last day of the workshop was a field day at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, State Museum of Archaeology. The park is home to more than 70 identified archaeological sites that represent 9,000 years of human occupation. Park archaeologists are currently investigating areas of an 18th century tobacco plantation where Maryland colonist Richard Smith, Jr. built a home in the early part of the 18th century. Fascinating historical documents related to the property include a plat of the plantation drawn up for a 1770's court case that shows the location of a number of buildings on the property, deposition taken in court during the trial, and detailed probate inventories. In an on-site introduction, Director of Research Ed Chaney showed teachers a reproduction of the plat, which shows the plantation owner’s house, his storehouse and a shelter. Having completed Investigating Shelter, the teachers easily understood how the historical information about the site is informing the archaeological investigations, as well as why the artifacts and architecture associated with each structure differ. Although the slave quarter at the Smith’s St. Leonard site differs in a number of ways from the Poplar Forest slave cabin, the teachers were well prepared for their day screening for artifacts from this slave quarter. Taking part in the excavation was a highlight of the workshop for many participants.

After lunch the teachers toured the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory located on Park property, which curates more than 8 million artifacts. As a final activity, we invited teachers to apply their new inquiry skills in the Park’s interactive exhibit “FAQ Archaeology,” which focuses on answering common questions that archaeologists receive.

The workshop evaluations were unanimous in expressing very positive responses to the workshop curriculum, organization, and expectations. “This is by far the best workshop I have attended in a very long time. Not only did I learn new lessons to teach, but I am so excited that I can integrate them right into reading, writing, and math.”

Teachers screening for artifacts at the Smith’s St. Leonard Site.
Project Archaeology is an educational organization dedicated to teaching scientific and historical inquiry, cultural understanding, and the importance of protecting our nation’s rich cultural resources. We are a national network of archaeologists, educators, and concerned citizens working to make archaeology education accessible to students and teachers nationwide through high-quality educational materials and professional development. Project Archaeology is a joint program of Montana State University and the Bureau of Land Management.

PA Leadership Academy 2011 by Kathy Francisco (National)

Project Archaeology will conduct its second Leadership Academy June 20-24, 2011 for social studies and science teachers from throughout the United States to learn about cultural resources on public lands and the importance of protecting these lands for their scientific and heritage values. The Academy will focus on the curriculum, Project Archaeology: Investigating Shelter, an inquiry-based social studies and science curriculum, which guides students through a complete archaeological investigation of shelter. Teachers who attend the academy at Montana State University will learn to use the curriculum and will learn about archaeological inquiry. Upon completion of the three-day academy, teachers will return to their home states and teach the curriculum to their peers through workshops, online courses, institutes, or job-embedded mentoring.

Participants selected for the 2011 Leadership Academy hale from ten different states; the 2010 group represented 12 states. Combined, the Leadership Academy has served 18 different states in our endeavor to establish a network of master teachers to deliver Project Archaeology materials and professional development materials. The 2011 Leadership Academy is once again set up for participants to experience rich discussions, field trips, guest speakers, hands-on activities, and demonstrations as they learn the Project Archaeology curriculum. Project Archaeology received funding from the Bureau of Land Management Challenge Cost Share program to conduct the Leadership Academy. There are plans to offer the Academy again in 2012.

Do you know of a teacher who would be interested in the Academy? Please contact Kathy Francisco at kfrancisco@montana.edu for more information.