

Saskatchewan Heritage Online

Excavation Quiz

1. Is there any evidence of human activity at Level 1?
 Yes No
2. Are the materials you see at Level 1 associated with the materials you saw on the ground surface (in other words, are they approximately the same time period)?
 Yes No
3. Where did the activities that resulted in the material from Level 1 being deposited take place?
 inside a structure outside a structure
4. From the artifacts and their distributions, what activity most likely took place during the time period represented by Level 1?
 pottery making stone tool making butchering
5. What other activity is there evidence for in Level 1?
 fire making hide scraping agriculture
6. What other activity is there evidence for in Level 1?
 beadwork fishing cooking
7. During approximately what time period did the activities represented in Level 1 take place?
 500 B.P. 3000 B.P. 8000 B.P.
8. Is there any evidence of human activity at Level 2?
 Yes No
9. Relative to the artifacts in Level 1, how old are the artifacts in Level 2?
 more recent similar in age many years older
10. Are the activities represented by the artifacts in Level 2 similar to those represented in Level 1?
 Yes No
11. The patch of reddened sand at the bottom of Level 2 was most likely caused by
 spilt blood spilt paint heat from a fire
12. Are the bones found in the NE, SE, and SW units associated (i.e. from the same time period) as the other artifacts in Level 2?
 Yes No
13. The sand at the bottom of Level 2 is golden instead of black because, during the time the golden sand was on the ground surface at the site, there were/was
 more trees more grass no vegetation

14. Is there any evidence of human activity in Level 3?
 Yes No
15. The soil at the bottom of Level 3 is dark grey instead of golden because, during the time the dark grey soil was on the ground surface at the site, there were/was
 more trees more grass no vegetation
16. Relative to Level 2, when were the materials in Level 3 deposited at the site?
 earlier the same age later
17. Is there any evidence of human activity in Level 4?
 Yes No
18. For which of the following activities is there evidence in Level 4?
 bison cooking bison huntin pottery making
19. Which other activity is represented in Level 4?
 butchering agriculture fishing
20. What is the minimum number of individual bison represented by the bones discovered during the excavation of Level 4?
 one two three or more
21. Did the activities take place inside or outside a dwelling?
 inside outside
22. During approximately what time period did the activities represented in Level 4 take place?
 500 B.P. 3000 B.P. 8000 B.P.

ANSWERS

1. Yes. The unnatural arrangement of stones and the ashy stain in the centre of the circle, as well as the artifacts present, all indicate that people were active there.
2. Yes. The stone of the circle were visible on the surface and they are lying at the same level as the ash and artifacts, and therefore were placed at the site during the same time period.
3. Inside a structure. The stones in the circle once held down the hide cover of a tent and the artifacts are all found within the circle.
4. Stone tool making. The presence of flakes of stone as well as the broken projectile point are indications of stone tool manufacture.
5. Fire making. The circular ash concentration indicates a fire made by people.
6. Cooking. The broken pottery pieces had black residue on the inside surfaces—evidence that they were used for cooking food.
7. 500 B.P. The projectile point is small with a square base and side notches. Its size indicates it was used on an arrow (which were only used during the last 2000 years in Saskatchewan) and its shape indicates that it is Plains Side-notched style, which dates from approximately 550 B.P. to 170 B.P.
8. Yes. The upper part of the level contains artifacts and therefore evidence of human activity, although the lower part of the level is “sterile” (shows no evidence of human activity).
9. Similar in age. Both levels contain similar kinds of artifacts and they are found in the same black loam soil.
10. Yes. The kinds of artifacts found in each level are pretty much the same.
11. Heat from the ashy fire above. The reddened soil is directly below the ash stain from a fire. High temperatures from a fire over many hours can cause the ground beneath it to turn red.
12. No. Only the tops of these large bones can be seen at the bottom of this level. Most of each bone remains buried, and the smaller artifacts associated with them will be lying closer to the bottoms of the bones.
13. No vegetation. Black soil is black because it contains lots of organic matter, and is evidence that vegetation thrived during the time the soil developed. Golden sand contains no organic matter, like the sand on a beach, and is evidence that vegetation was not established on the ground surface at that time.
14. No. Although there are a number of bones visible at the bottom of the level, no bones were excavated in Level 3. The bones, which may be evidence of human activity (it isn't clear yet), lie within Level 4.
15. More vegetation. Dark grey or black soil contains more organic materials because there was more vegetation on the ground surface at the time the soil developed.
16. Earlier. Through time, sediments are deposited at a site layer by layer. As you dig down, therefore, you uncover earlier and earlier layers.

17. Yes. Although the bottom of the level is sterile, indicating no human activity at the earliest time period studied at the site, the upper part contained bison bones. Although the bones could be from a natural carcass, the stone knife and projectile point associated with them indicate the presence of humans. On close inspection after the bones have been washed in the lab, it will probably be possible to see scratch marks made by the knife on some of the bones.
18. Bison hunting. The presence of an unbroken projectile point associated with many mostly unbroken bones indicates hunting.
19. Butchering. The knife associated with bones suggests butchering. Also, the fact that no leg bones are present suggests that the legs (a source of large amounts of meat, marrow, and fat) were removed and carried back to a camp, along with other body portions.
20. Two. The two scapulas (shoulder blades) are both from the right side. Each bison only has one right scapula (just like each person does), and therefore there must have been at least two bison killed. There were also 2 clavicles found and, like humans, bison only have one breast bone.
21. Outside. The evidence that bison were killed and butchered at this site indicates that the activities were outside any dwelling. These activities are not associated with the stone circle visible on the ground surface—they are from a different time period.
22. The size of the projectile point indicates it tipped a light-weight spear called a dart (thrown with the aid of an “atlatl” or spear thrower); these were commonly used between 8,000 and 2,000 years ago. The shape of the projectile point is characteristic of the Oxbow Complex which dates in Saskatchewan from 4700 to 3800 B.P.