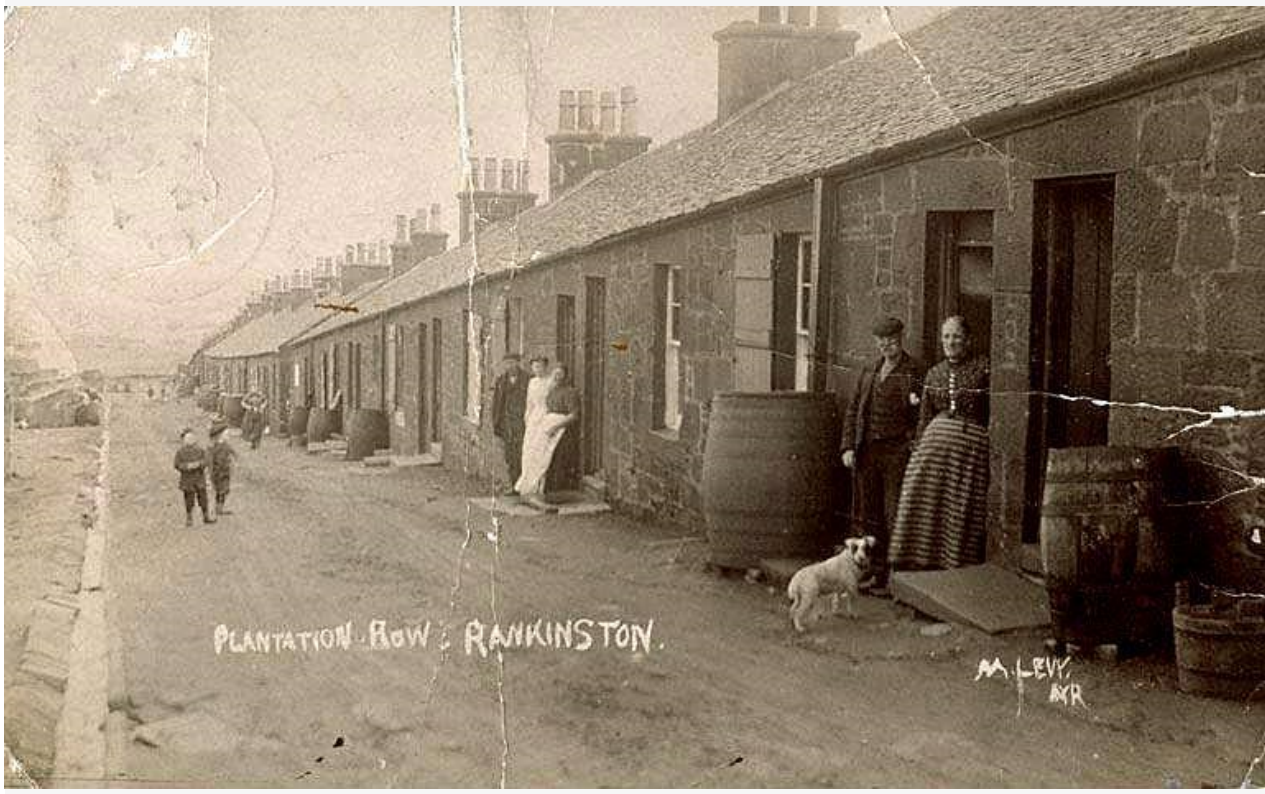
ATTAINMENT THROUGH ARCHAEOLOGY

OCTOBER 2023

LITTLEMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL TASTER SESSION



BECCA BARCLAY, HERITAGE TRAINING OFFICER,
ARCHAEOLOGY SCOTLAND

HERITAGE FUND

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

COALFIELD
Communities Landscape Partnership

LITTLEMILL PRIMARY ATA WORKSHOP

On the 3rd of October 2023, 14 P5-7 pupils from Littlemill Primary School in Rankinston participated in a 1-day Attainment through Archaeology taster workshop based at the school.

The workshops was designed to raise pupils' awareness of Rankinston's heritage, and the skills used by archaeologists to investigate and record historic sites. The session included the following activities:



Introduction to archaeology and artefacts

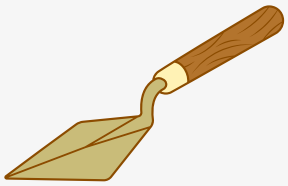


Desk Based Assessment



Exploring historic games and artefact illustration

The session supported research and exploratory work already undertaken by the class and their teacher, as they work towards a Heritage Hero Award. Their Heritage Hero Award project focusses more broadly on the history of the village, and prior to the session pupils had been on exploratory walks, and had a classroom visit by a local historian.



INTRODUCTION TO ARCHAEOLOGY

Introduction

The session began with an introduction to the Archaeology Scotland team and discussion on their current archaeological knowledge. Most pupils (83%) knew nothing about archaeology at the start of the session.

Rubbish Game

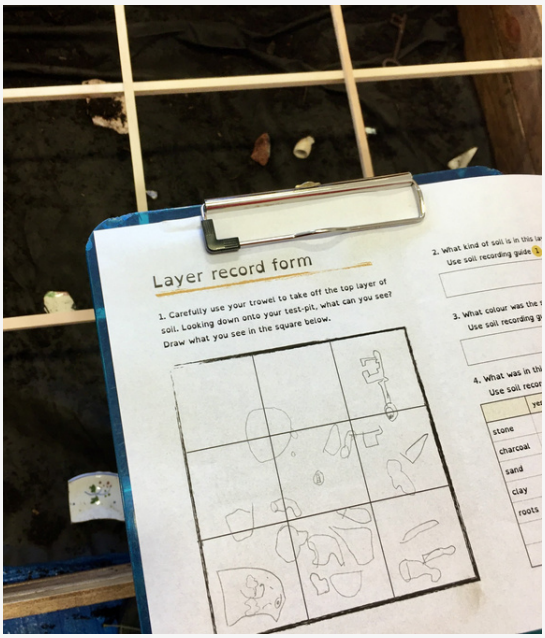
The pupils were then provided with a selection of modern rubbish, each selection from one household, and were asked to derive as much as they could about the household based on their rubbish. It was explained that these detective skills are the same as those used by archaeologists when interpreting artefacts. We discussed how the rubbish would decay and what clues would be left for future archaeologists.

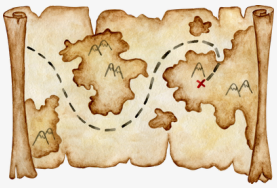
Artefacts

Pupils were then given artefacts from different archaeological periods to handle and interpret - a highlight for many. We discussed Roman artefacts and remains that had been found nearby - including a coin and the remnants of a Roman road. The pupils were delighted to hear about Rankinston's Roman history.

Mock Excavation

Due to poor weather conditions 3 mock excavations were set up indoors for the pupils to dig. Each dig pit replicated finds from previous excavations in miners rows similar to those in Rankinston. The pupils were introduced to an archaeologists key tools and how to use them, before beginning their excavations. Pupils were taught how and why archaeologists record soils and how we record finds.





DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

Desk Based Assessment

Pupils were introduced to desk based assessments (DBA) - how archaeologists research a site prior to an excavation. We then explored some of the methods used during DBA's.

Map Regression

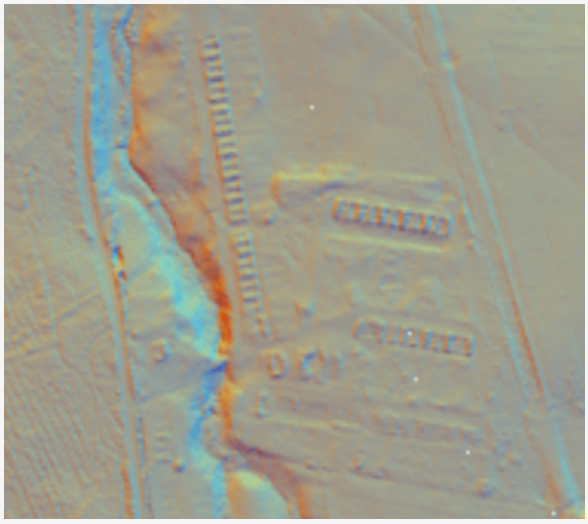
Pupils looked at historic maps of Rankinston, including the 1859, 1897, 1949 and 1957 OS maps and an extract from Roys Map from 1755. By comparing these maps pupils were able to see how Rankinston has changed through time. From a farming area, to a busy mining town with multiple churches, schools and railways, before reducing in size again to the small village it is today.

Historic Photographs

Examining historic photographs from Rankinston showed pupils more about how people lived in the past and the types of buildings that would have been in the village.

Aerial Photography and Lidar

Pupils explored how sites look from above using aerial photographs and Lidar images. We compared how the same features appear on maps, Lidar images, aerial photos and on the ground, noting how Lidar helps uncover features that are otherwise invisible. Exploring the Lidar images from the Miners row in Rankinson, pupils were able to see how archaeologists utilise Lidar to help pinpoint sites for excavation.

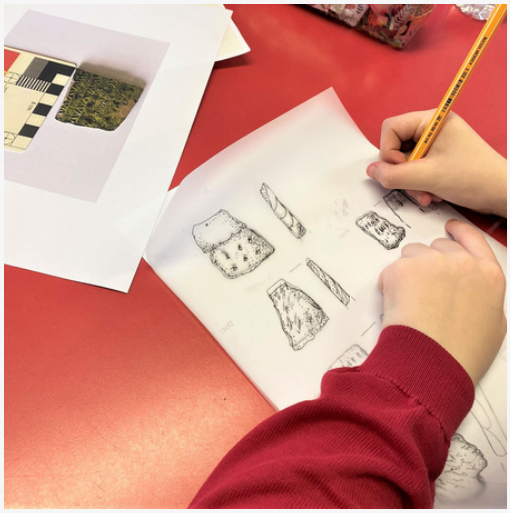


Lidar image of Rankinstons former miners rows. Copyright National Library Scotland 2023

EXPLORING HISTORIC GAMES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ILLUSTRATION

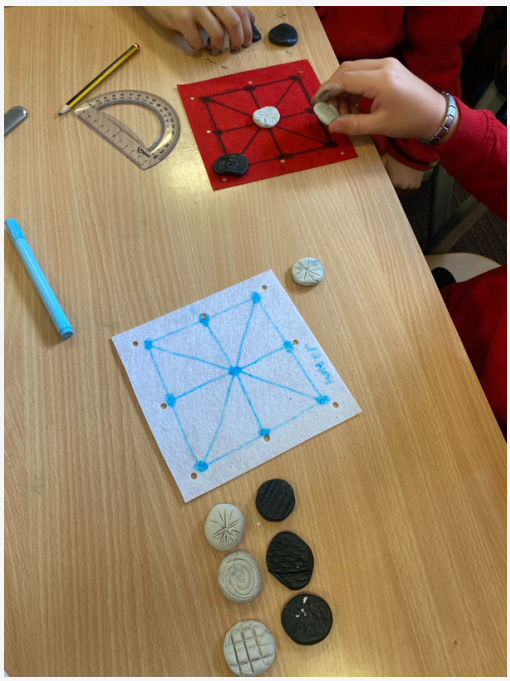
Archaeological Illustration

Pupils expressed an interest in seeing more artefacts in the afternoon. We explored some pottery fragments and had a go at illustrating them using the 'stippling' technique employed by professional archaeological illustrators. Pupils were interested to hear about this role in archaeology and the range of careers that are possible within the discipline.



Historic Games

Pupils had the opportunity to handle historic gaming pieces, and see photos of Roman games that had been found near Ayrshire. This lead us on to a discussion on games and how gaming has changed through time. Pupils were introduced to the game 3 Mens Morris, a game which had been popular throughout time. We made our own game sets and held tournaments to finish the day.



EVALUATION

Outcomes

Pupils will have:

- a better understanding of archaeology and what archaeologists do
- a greater awareness of their local heritage
- increased knowledge of their local heritage
- developed archaeological research and recording skills

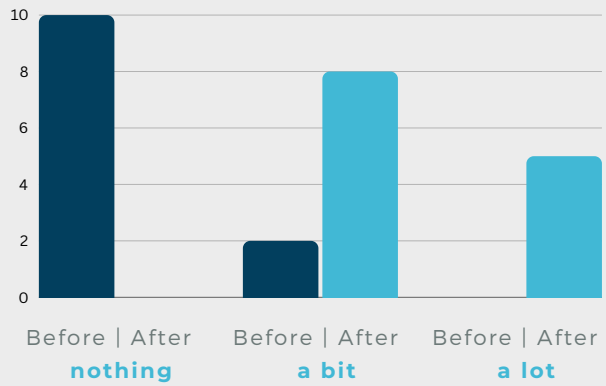
Evaluation results

13 of the 14 pupils who participated, completed evaluation activities before and after the workshop. Pupils were asked the following questions:

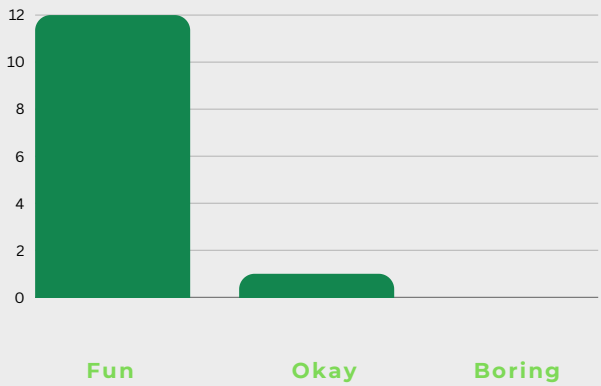
- **How much do you know about archaeology?**
- **I thought the session was...**

Answer options were: **nothing**; **a bit**; **a lot; Fun, Okay, Boring**

Scores can be seen in the graph below.



How much do you know about Archaeology?



This session was...

QUOTES

From teaching staff

'A session would be more than welcomed. We are a very small rural school that doesn't get much!'

'these wee people get very little and, coming from such a small village, no one really knows it exists.'

ARCHAEOLOGY SCOTLAND LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT LITTLEMILL PRIMARY

Thanks to Littlemill Primary School staff and pupils for a fantastic session. Coalfields Communities Landscape Partnership, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic Environment Scotland for project funding.

COALFIELD
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HERITAGE FUND

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