



CD-404033

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY BOOK

Mysteries

GRADES
4-6+

A Journey Around the World

Ancient
Monuments

Bermuda Triangle

Rosetta Stone

King Arthur

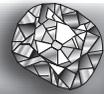
Ghost Towns

By Teddy Meister

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Introduction



We live in an age of monumental amounts of continuously expanding human knowledge. Technological advances have provided answers to many of yesterday's questions and greater understandings of the world around us. However, mysteries abound that modern science has yet to definitively solve. Conjecture and theory still reign, a most humbling realization. As man continually reaches into greater explorations of space, there are still many places on Earth that need further exploration and understanding.

Mysteries: A Journey Around the World is a collection of some of the strangest enigmas that exist on our planet. They have challenged man's imagination throughout the ages. Many defy explanation. Some, existing for centuries, have yet to be explained. There is evidence to examine, but the why and the how remain elusive.

Mysteries: A Journey Around the World will challenge students to investigate as topics unfold. Each can become a "springboard" to stimulate exploration and research. Students' awareness will be enhanced as they embark on a journey through some of the most incredible things they will ever encounter!

How to Use This Book

Each mystery is self-contained and "ready to go." Flexible for use, they are suitable for group or independent study, library research, curriculum enhancement, or homework enrichment assignments. The multi-disciplinary topics can be used in any order. Students can be given choices according to their interests. As single sheets, they can each be mounted on cards, laminated, and set up in a "Mystery" box for handy year-round use.

Each page is set up according to the following format:

1. **The Mystery** – The subject is briefly summarized and can serve as a motivational introduction to spark student interest.
2. **Musings** – From one to three activities will challenge students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the topic and will require some research.
3. **Mental Mixtures** – This activity is designed to develop higher cognitive processes.
4. **Moving Beyond** – A list of related topics is provided to extend students' interest and expand their knowledge of the mystery.

The mysteries used in this book are all authentic and come from all over the globe. The last page, "Summarizing," will establish a broad look at relationships among many of the mysteries. Students will have an opportunity to reflect and gain a sense of some of the strangest things in our world!



Ale Stones



Atop a 100-foot-high cliff that overlooks the Baltic Sea near Ystad, Sweden, stands Ales Stenar (Ale Stones). It has been called the “Swedish Stonehenge.” This oval, ship-like formation dates back to the late Stone Age, 3000–1500 B.C., about 3,500 to 5,000 years ago. It measures 200 feet in length and 60 feet at its widest section. The 58 upright stones have been estimated to weigh about five tons each and were probably brought from places almost 15 miles away. Thought to have been built during the age of the Vikings, stones in this type of formation were used to honor the memory of dead kings. Scientists studying the site made precise measurements and concluded that the ship’s bow (front) is aligned exactly to the setting summer solstice sun. The stern (rear) is aligned to the rising sun of the winter solstice. The entire structure could have been an early type of calendar.

MUSINGS

1. How does the Ale Stones formation compare with Stonehenge? Set up a two-column sheet of paper. Head one column “Similarities” and the other “Differences.” How many of each can be found?
2. Examine a picture of a Viking ship and notice its outline as if you were looking down on it from above. This will provide an idea of what the Ale Stones site looks like. Construct a diagram of what the interior of a Viking ship might look like.

MENTAL MIXTURES

Solstices seem to have been important times of the year for many ancient people. Write a short paragraph explaining your views and the reasons for your opinions.

MOVING BEYOND

Archaeo-astronomy

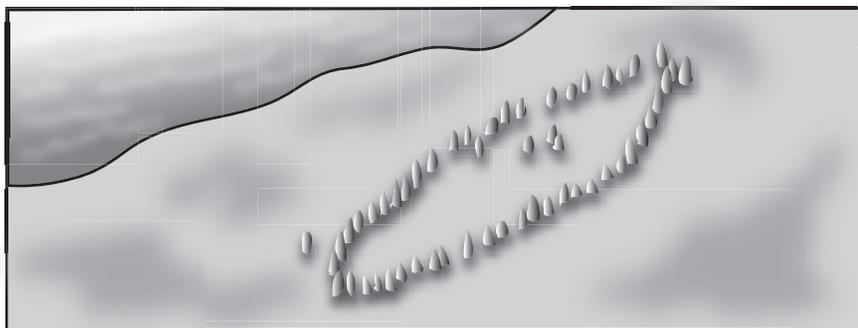
Bronze Age

Kivik Tomb

Megalithic Period

Stone Age

Vikings



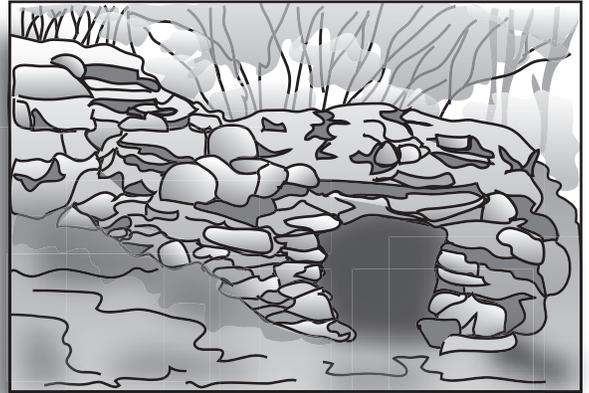


America's Stonehenge



An intricate maze-like chamber structure over 4,000 years old is located near Salem, New Hampshire. It is called America's Stonehenge and is probably one of the oldest man-made structures in the United States.

As the site was first explored, archaeologists were intrigued to find a wide assortment of artifacts—stone tools, pottery, stone alignments that seem to be placed in positions to track astronomical movements, and a type of calendar based on certain lunar and solar events during the course of a year. More currently, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century housewares and manacles have also been found on the site. (These are thought to have been used by escaped slaves who stayed there as a refuge during their journey on the Underground Railroad.)



Was this intriguing group of stone structures built by an ancient Native American civilization or a migrant group of people from an area outside this country? Perhaps one day there will be answers rather than questions.

MUSINGS

1. The Underground Railroad was used as an escape route for slaves during the Civil War. Write a brief report about Harriet Tubman and her efforts in aiding slaves to escape from the South.
2. Many ancient cultures were involved in tracking the sun, moon, and stars and creating calendars. Set up a chart showing the ancient groups, i.e., Mayas, Egyptians, Greeks, etc., and the structures that remain that show these ancient calendars. Explain why you think this was important to their cultures.

MENTAL MIXTURES

There are over 350 megalithic sites just in New England. Explore the meaning of this word and identify some of the areas on a map. Is there a pattern? Are they clustered in some way? Be an anthro-archaeologist and present your findings.

MOVING BEYOND

Archaeo-astronomy
Epigraphy

Carbon-14 Dating
Solstices

Eclipses
Telescopes



The Anasazi



Anasazi, the Navajo word for “ancient ones,” refers to a prehistoric tribe of Indians who lived in the region known as the “Four Corners.” The borders of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona meet at this site. The Anasazi flourished there for hundreds of years. However, more than 2,000 years ago, they disappeared.

Archaeological investigations have shown that they hunted and grew crops. Their homes had brush roofs and were shallow pits dug into the ground. Permanent *pueblos*, or homes, were also built into large openings on the cliff sides, offering natural protection from enemies and from the weather. Many of

these were large and several stories high and could hold hundreds of people. Larger areas, or *kivas*, were built for religious ceremonies and communal gatherings.

In recent times, archaeologists observed that in the largest kiva, the sun’s rays penetrate a window-like opening and enter niches or shelves around the wall of the main room. During the summer solstice, all 28 niches are aglow with the sunlight at the same time!

The Chaco Canyon dwellings, built around 920 A.D., are the best known. One dwelling that is three stories tall contains 100 rooms. Eleven dwellings that are built in the canyon have a total of 3,000 rooms that held an estimated population of 5,000. The Anasazi also constructed irrigation canals. Over 70 other communities were connected with over 500 miles of roads.

The Anasazi constructions are amazing. Some pueblos using over 30 million stones and more than 100,000 heavy timbers have been explored. Beautiful pottery petroglyphs (markings) and wall paintings are still visible. The Pueblo Indians are present-day descendants of the Anasazi.

MUSINGS

1. Suppose you were assigned the task of leading an archaeological expedition to the Chaco Canyon site. What might be needed for equipment, living facilities, water, and food supplies? What special scientists might also accompany you? Construct an expedition plan.
2. Construct a scale model of a kiva. Find pictures of one of these structures and use natural materials such as twigs, stones, and leaves. Display the finished product in the library or somewhere the whole school can enjoy it.

MENTAL MIXTURES

Some archaeologists have theorized that this ancient society might have brought about its own disappearance. By leveling their forests, using up entire plant and animal species, and exhausting available farmland, the result might have been their extinction. Write a brief paragraph to explain the interdependence of man with the environment.

MOVING BEYOND

E. Guerrero
Painted Desert

Legends
Paleontology

Georgia O’Keeffe
Pueblo Indians

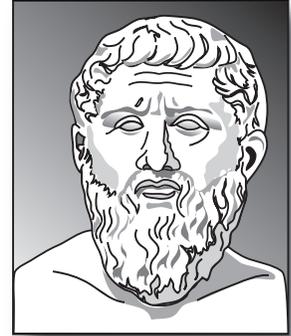


Atlantis—The Lost Continent



Plato first described the lost continent of Atlantis 2,500 years ago. According to him, Atlantis existed 12,000–9,000 B.C. He based this on records kept by Egyptian priests and paintings on temple columns. These columns told a story of Atlantis disappearing as the result of cataclysmic earthquakes and floods. In a single day and night, the entire continent allegedly sank into the ocean without a trace.

Plato wrote detailed descriptions of buildings and technology and the customs and laws of what might have been a very advanced civilization of about 20 million people. Theories have been written about what might have happened. What do you think?



MUSINGS

1. If the Atlanteans had achieved such remarkable technical and scientific skills, it seems plausible that their population may have been warned to leave before the destruction. If you were an Atlantean during this time and had to leave, what items would be important to take for survival? Make a list and provide an explanation of why each item should be taken.
2. “Once upon a time there was beyond the strait you call, ‘The Pillars of Hercules,’ an island larger than Asia Minor and Libya together ... On this island of Atlantis, there existed a great and admirable kingdom.”— Plato in his dialogue *Timaeus*, 350 B.C. Draw a map showing the possible boundaries of Atlantis. Name the geographical borders.

MENTAL MIXTURES

You have been put in charge of an expedition to locate the lost continent of Atlantis. It will be a long and arduous experience. People with special knowledge and skills are to be appointed to join the mission. What types of scientists will be needed? What special equipment is needed for the task? What supplies are necessary? Prepare an “Atlantis Expedition Plan” to present to those financing the journey.

MOVING BEYOND

Ancient Temples
Early Civilizations

Archaeology/Archaeologists
The Pillars of Hercules

Artifacts
Plato