

Drawing Game (Context Activity)



While excavating a site, archaeologists spend a lot of time recording where each artifact was found (which layer of dirt, what other artifacts were around it, how much space was between each artifact, etc.). Looking at everything together, rather than one piece at a time, helps archaeologists to make guesses about the site as a whole. This drawing game will help explain the concept of context.

Kit Materials

- Pencil
- 6 small squares of paper (held together with paper clip)

Instructions

1. Choose a room in your house.
2. Draw one item that is found in that room on each square of paper.
3. When you are finished, you are going to have someone try to guess the room by showing them one image at a time, so try to draw things that won't immediately give it away.

For example, if you want to draw your living room, maybe you would first draw a book, a toy or a cup of water that might be found in the living room, but also in other places in the house. You would not want to start with the couch or the television, which may only be found in the living room.

4. When you are finished with your drawings, find another person to play the guessing game. Show them one image at a time and see how long it takes before they can say for certain which room you have drawn.

You should find that the more images they see, the more certain they are about the room. This is just like an archaeological investigation. If you only have one artifact, it is hard to make a lot of guesses about what the object is and how it was used. But, if you have many artifacts or pieces of a vessel, your guess will be much more accurate.