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Session 20: Show and Tell

How to write the perfect news story
about your test pit excavation



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Key questions

By VICTORIA FEAR
Call: 01553 817321
Email: victoria.fear@jpress.co.uk

Evidence of ancient saunas have been uncovered by a community archaeological dig over the weekend.

A chunk of burnt flint has given members of the West Norfolk Archaeological Society a glimpse into the lives of the Nomadic people who grazed cattle along the banks of the River Ouse.

Some 30 went along to take part in the event held at Lynnsport and Queen Elizabeth Avenue Playing Field on Saturday and Sunday.

The archaeological society is running a summer programme of community digs around Gaywood Valley.

Society chairman Dr Clive Bond said: "We have people coming and depositing lots of flint and burning it, putting a tent up and even having a sauna. Meetings were ritual things for these communities.

"I think they liked to par-



Project advisor Dr Alex Pryor, from Cambridge Community Heritage, and Dr Clive Bond with the flint

ty. We have people coming together having fun and eating a massive feast.

"It is an exciting find. In an urban setting it is difficult to get to that depth and find these things."

The flint, which dates between the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age, was discovered within a test pit on the

site. The flint was found by a local resident who was showing the river has changed course over the years.

Dr Bond said the society is hoping to go back and do further investigation in the area following the discovery of the flint, which could eventually go on show in True's Yard.

The society will be hold-

ing a finds processing day at True's Yard on Saturday, June 1, from 11am to 4pm.

Visitors are welcome to come and watch. The next archaeological weekend will be held at Grimston on Saturday and Sunday, June 15 and 16. For more information on the project contact Dr Bond by emailing: clivejbond@aol.com

• What makes a good news story

• The secrets of writing a good news story

• Getting your story out



Your archaeology in the news - The tensions

Dumbing down?

“Science values detail, precision, the impersonal, the technical, the lasting, facts, numbers and being right. Journalism values brevity, approximation, the personal, the colloquial, the immediate, stories, words and being right now. There are going to be tensions.”

-Quentin Cooper, BBC Radio 4 presenter of The Material World

By writing your own press stories, you retain more control



Disaster recovery: new archaeological evidence for the long-term impact of the 'calamitous' fourteenth century

Carenza Lewis*



The Black Death swept across Europe and Asia in the fourteenth century, killing millions and devastating communities. Recent re-evaluations of source data, the discovery of new plague cemeteries and advances in genotyping have caused scholars to reconsider the extent of the devastation and to revise estimated mortality rates upwards. But what was the true impact of this catastrophic episode? Systematic test-pitting can reveal changes in medieval demography that can be both quantified and mapped at a range of scales. Comparing the relative amounts of high medieval (copious) to late medieval (much scarcer) pottery suggests that the pottery-using population across eastern

England was around 45% lower in the centuries after the Black Death than before, and such comparison identifies exactly where this contraction was the most and least severely felt.

Keywords: England, medieval, pottery, Black Death, plague, test-pit, depopulation

Introduction

The fourteenth century was a watershed in the history of Europe, during which centuries of demographic growth were thrown into reverse by successive environmental, economic and epidemiological vicissitudes, a 'calamitous' century indeed (Tuchman 1978). The most iconic of these calamities was the Black Death of AD 1346–1351: an epidemic vividly recorded by agonised contemporary eyewitnesses as it swept across Europe and Asia; its causes and effects have long been hotly debated. For much of the later twentieth century the impact of the Black Death was downplayed. Archaeologists found few proven fourteenth-century catastrophe cemeteries, and they demonstrated that many deserted medieval villages (DMVs)—sites abandoned following medieval occupation—were not depopulated until

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lincoln.ac.uk/news/2016/05/1233.asp

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23rd May 2016, 4:51pm

New research maps in unique detail the devastation of the Black Death on medieval England

An innovative new archaeological study has revealed in detail for the first time how individual towns, villages and hamlets across swathes of medieval England were decimated by the Black Death.

The research, led by [Professor Carenza Lewis](#) from the University of Lincoln, UK, drew together data on finds from thousands of test pits excavated in rural locations across the East of England over the past decade.

Using pottery sherds as a proxy for the presence of human populations, Professor Lewis calculated the drop-off in finds after England was struck by the plague epidemic which killed millions of people across Europe and Asia between 1346 and 1351.

The stark results, published in the journal *Antiquity*, indicate ‘eye-watering’ falls in population within rural communities which are still inhabited today and generally regarded as ‘survivors’ of the Black Death. The new data reveal which places were most severely hit by plague, from the level of individual plots and parishes up to whole towns and counties.

In some locations – such as [Rinham in Norfolk](#), [Cottingham in Cambridgeshire](#), [Shillington in Bedfordshire](#), and [Great Amwell](#)



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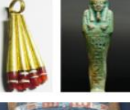
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Did the Black Death wipe out whole villages? Pottery reveals the ruin wrought by the plague in medieval Britain

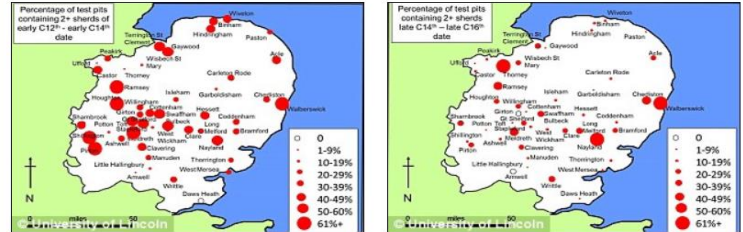
- Pottery was used as a proxy for the presence of human populations
- Research used data from 2,000 excavation sites across the east of England
- There was a 45 per cent in pottery following the plague in 1346-1353
- Entire villages may have been wiped out by the terrible disease

By SHIVALI BEST FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 15:04, 25 May 2016 | UPDATED: 15:21, 25 May 2016

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The Black Death was one of the most destructive epidemics in history, estimated to have claimed the lives of up to 200 million people across Europe between 1346 and 1353. But exactly how the plague decimated individual towns and villages has been relatively poorly understood.

A new study, however, has used the shards of medieval pottery to reveal the terrible toll the disease took in rural locations in England.



Archaeologists used pottery dug up from 55 rural settlements to estimate the impact of the Black Death on villages in the east of England. Some communities almost completely disappeared. Overall pottery declined by 45 per cent in pottery between the early medieval (pictured left) and the late medieval (right) period

The research by archaeologists at the University of Lincoln, used broken pottery as a proxy for the presence of human populations.

They discovered 'eye-watering' declines in population within rural communities, with pottery in some areas disappearing altogether.

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Broken pottery reveals the sheer devastation caused by the Black Death



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Lewis, an archaeologist and professor at the University of Lincoln, is looking for bits of

What makes a good news story?



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lived in southern Africa for 20,000 to 40,000 years, yet they remain politically and economically marginalized in relation to other social groups.

JOURNAL *Journal of Anthropological Research*

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The earliest cat on the Northern Silk Road

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News Release 14-Jul-2020

1

The plight of the Kalahari San

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS JOURNALS

San (Bushmen) communities in southern Africa continue to call upon their governments and international organizations to recognize their human rights and protect their welfare. They have lived in southern Africa for 20,000 to 40,000 years, yet they remain politically and economically marginalized in relation to other social groups.

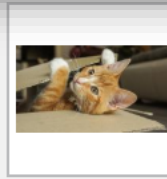
JOURNAL *Journal of Anthropological Research*

News Release 9-Jul-2020

2

Care for cats? So did people along the Silk Road more than 1,000 years ago

MARTIN-LUTHER-UNIVERSITÄT HALLE-WITTENBERG



Common domestic cats, as we know them today, might have accompanied Kazakh pastoralists as pets more than 1,000 years ago. This is indicated by new analyses done on an almost complete cat skeleton found during an excavation along the former Silk Road in southern Kazakhstan. An international research team has reconstructed the cat's life, revealing astonishing insights into the relationship between humans and pets at the time. The study will appear in 'Scientific Reports'.

JOURNAL *Scientific Reports*

News Release 8-Jul-2020

3

Naturally perforated shells one of the earliest adornments in the Middle Paleolithic

PLOS



Ancient humans deliberately collected perforated shells in order to string them together as beads, according to a study published July 8, 2020 in the open-access journal PLOS ONE by Daniella Bar-Yosef Mayer (Tel Aviv University, Israel), Iris Groman-Yaroslavski (University of Haifa, Israel), and colleagues.

JOURNAL *PLOS ONE*

News Release 14-Jul-2020

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Dr. Irina Arzhantseva and Professor Heinrich Haerke from the Centre for Classical and Oriental Archaeology (IKVIA, Faculty of Humanities, HSE University) have been involved in the discovery of the earliest domestic cat yet found in northern Eurasia.

JOURNAL *Scientific Reports*

News Release 9-Jul-2020

5

New method solves old mystery: Hafnium isotopes clinch origin of high-quality Roman glass

AARHUS UNIVERSITY



Archaeological glass contains information about the movement of goods and ancient economies, yet the understanding of critical aspects of the ancient glass industry is fragmentary. Until now, it has been challenging to scientifically determine the origin of the colourless and clear glass, which was particularly favoured by the Romans. The Romans distinguished between two types of clear glass: Alexandrian and Levantine. Now researchers have found a way to localize the furnaces of the two types.

JOURNAL *Scientific Reports*

News Release 10-Jul-2020

6

Alaskan volcano linked to mysterious period with extreme climate in ancient Rome

UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

The cold, famine and unrest in ancient Rome and Egypt after the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE has long been shrouded in mystery. Now, an international team, including researchers from the University of Copenhagen, has found evidence suggesting that the megaeruption of an Alaskan volcano may be to blame.

JOURNAL *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*

What makes a good news story?

Newness	Something new has been done or discovered
Surprise	It is unexpected or overturns existing ideas
Accessibility	The story can be understood
Relevance	The reader is interested in the subject

News Release 14-Jul-2020

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JOURNAL *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*

Newness and surprise - What makes the news?

“Man bites dog”

Something new, unexpected or contrary to what was previously thought - research often does this!

Focus on the aspects that are new and exciting like discoveries.



Accessibility and relevance - Presenting the story

Find the right **news angle** – what is the most noteworthy aspect of the story?

- Use the “Next Door Neighbour” test – how would you explain the story to a non-expert if they said 'I don't understand - please explain it to me'? **Accessibility**
- Use the "So What?" test – what would you say if someone asked ‘why should I care’? Try and relate it to something they will know about or be interested in. **Relevance**

Often it's about providing the necessary context - explaining the problem or question the discovery helps to solve or illuminate.



“You do not really understand something unless you can explain it to your grandmother.”

- Albert Einstein.



What's the Story?
Summarise in 1 sentence.

Rate it /5 for

- Newness,
- Surprise
- Accessibility,
- Relevance
- INTEREST



Pupils dig deep to find ancient pottery

George Ryan

george.ryan@archant.co.uk

Pottery dating back three thousand years was among the finds by schoolchildren on an archaeological field trip.

The project run by Cambridge University saw schoolchildren from across Norfolk investigate a test pit in Brundall under the supervision of archaeologists from the university.

Laure Bonner, administrator at Access Cambridge Archaeology, said: "The most interesting find was a sherd of Anglo Saxon pottery which is only the second piece of this kind which we have found."

A fragment of what is believed to be Bronze Age pottery was also dug up by schoolchildren, which could date back 3,000 years.

"This kind of Bronze Age sherd normally does not survive as they are so fragile," Ms Bonner said.

"The pupils were mixed up with people they didn't know at other schools and they all worked really well together," she added.

Pupils from Aylsham, Broadland and Taverham High Schools were among those taking part in the project run by Cambridge University.

It is the third year that Year 9 pupils at Taverham High School have taken part in the project.

Maryanne Richardson, head of history at Taverham High, said: "The



pupils are actually digging stuff which is being used as research material for academics at Cambridge University and have been given a great opportunity to see a different side to history."

As part of the Higher Education Field Academy, organised by Cambridge University, they were shown around one of the colleges by a student there.

"It has been great not only to teach

children about archaeology, but also to spark their interest about going into higher education," Ms Bonner said.

The schoolchildren spent two days on the dig at Brundall and then a day



■ Left, Carenza Lewis and pupils Daniel Youngs, from Jane Austin College, and Chloe Newman, from Taverham High School. Top, Carenza Lewis works with Jack Wicks, from Aylsham High School. Above, Charlotte Drewell, from Aylsham High School, with an early Anglo Saxon stamped pottery piece.

Pictures: SIMON FINLAY

at Cambridge University where they sat in on an archaeology lecture.

■ Do you have a story about archaeology? Email george.ryan@archant.co.uk



What's the Story? Summarise in 1 sentence.

Rate it /5 for

- Newness,
- Surprise
- Accessibility,
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- INTEREST



Revealed: The steamy past of our ancestors

By VICTORIA FEAR

Call: 01553 817321

Email: victoria.fear@jpress.co.uk

Evidence of ancient saunas have been uncovered during a community archaeological dig over the weekend.

A chunk of burnt flint has given members of Lynn and West Norfolk Archaeological Society a glimpse into the lives of the Nomadic people who grazed cattle along the banks of the River Ouse.

Some 30 went along to take part in the event held at Lynnsport and Queen Elizabeth Avenue Playing Field on Saturday and Sunday.

The archaeological society is running a summer programme of community digs around Gaywood Valley.

Society chairman Dr Clive Bond said: "We have people coming and depositing lots of flint and burning it, putting a tent up and even having a sauna. Meetings were ritual things for these communities.

"I think they liked to par-



Project advisor Dr Alex Pryor, from Cambridge Community Heritage, and Dr Clive Bond with the flint

ty. We have people coming together, having a fire and having a massive feast.

"It is an exciting find. In an urban setting it is difficult to get to that depth and find these things."

The flint, which dates between the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age, was discovered within a test pit on the

playing field under a layer of "blue sticky" silt and clay, showing the river has changed course over the years.

Dr Bond said the society is hoping to go back and do further investigation in the area following the discovery of the flint, which could eventually go on show in True's Yard.

The society will be hold-

ing a finds processing day at True's Yard on Saturday, June 1, from 11am to 4pm.

Visitors are welcome to come and watch. The next archaeological weekend will be held at Grimston on Saturday and Sunday, June 15 and 16. For more information on the project contact Dr Bond by emailing: clivejbond@aol.com

Fire-cracked flint, with the surface cracked and discoloured by thermal shock, from being used in cooking, brewing or possibly saunas! Likely to be later prehistoric – 4000 BC- 43AD

H.



Exploring-Artefacts-T2

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Tricks of the Trade...

List and explain the 5 key points



1. Work out what your pitch is

- Is it of local interest (eg *“School pupils excavating a metre square test pit revealed pottery which is the earliest ever found in this village and shows people were living here more than 1000 years ago, centuries before the earliest of today’s buildings appeared”*)?
- Is it of national interest (eg *“Test pit excavations in villages along the East Anglian coast have revealed pottery which suggest almost none survived for long after the end of Roman rule in Britain”*)?
- Is it of international interest (eg *“Pottery sherds from hundreds of test pit excavations show the medieval Black Death pandemic wiped out half the population of Europe”*)
- What might seem earth-shattering to you may be of minor concern to anyone you don’t know – and it works the other way round. Something you think of as routine may be big news to someone else.



2. Put the key information into the first, short paragraph – what the discovery/breakthrough is, quickly followed by where, when, how and who?

- What YOU might want to do is write as if you were talking to someone you know well - naming everyone who helped with your project, saying how you felt about it, and telling a funny story about something that happened.
- But that's not what other people want to know. They want to know the story: what is it that makes you think they might want to read what you have to say.
- Put the other stuff in later, and when you do so try to slip it in rather than make a point of it (eg *"I thought they were bits of old dog biscuit and nearly threw them away," said Sam Brown from Mycollege School, who found the pottery, "I couldn't believe it could have been a pot dropped by people who fought the Romans."*)



3. Write clearly and simply, don't waffle, get all the key facts in and get them right, and spell everyone's name correctly(!)

- Key facts include location, date (of what you are writing about), and a bit of wider context (Isn't there any other evidence for people living here at the time of King Alfred? No)
- Check your facts are right and your interpretations are supported by evidence.
- Avoid jargon as much as possible, but if you have to use it, explain it.
- Think who your audience are. Don't be too informal unless you are writing for people who know you or with whom you have been working (eg for a school newsletter).
- Assume your readers know absolutely nothing about anything you are talking about. If you want your readers to appreciate what's important about your discovery, you have to explain it to them. This gives you a great advantage – use it!



4. Relate your find to something people can identify with in their own lives.

- People will be more interested if your discovery relates to something they know about – a place they know, people they know, life experiences they are familiar with, an anniversary or a recent event, something they've learned at school etc
- Don't push it too far. Readers may not believe a story if it's making a connection that seems forced. You don't need to put the word Stonehenge in everything that has anything to do with prehistoric archaeology. Now is not really the time to write about a find with a highly tenuous link to an ancient plague.
- On the other hand, if the find really can throw light on a modern situation, it may be exactly the time!



5. Make it come alive.

- If you're part of the discovery (eg you found the pottery), you could actually make a story out of that, though that would not make it a news piece unless you are an unlikely sort of person to make such a discovery (eg a school pupil).
- Use quotes from people involved, in their own words, rather than summarise them in yours.
- If you have space (word length) you can include a bit of atmospheric scene setting (*"Overnight rain had soaked the dig site and dark clouds promising another soaking were being chased in by winds which almost drowned out the mud-caked archaeologist asking if Sam had found anything, 'Nothing, just these bits of old dog biscuit' she replied through chattering teeth...."*) - but don't overdo it!



Summary

1. What's the story? - Local/national/international
2. Key information first
3. Write clearly and simply
4. Make it relatable
5. Make it come alive.



Session 20: Show and Tell

End of part one



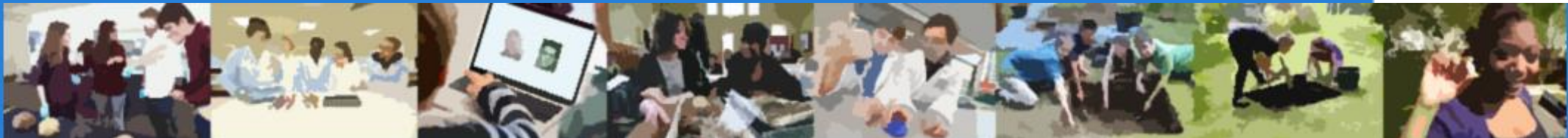
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Session 20: Show and Tell

Part two

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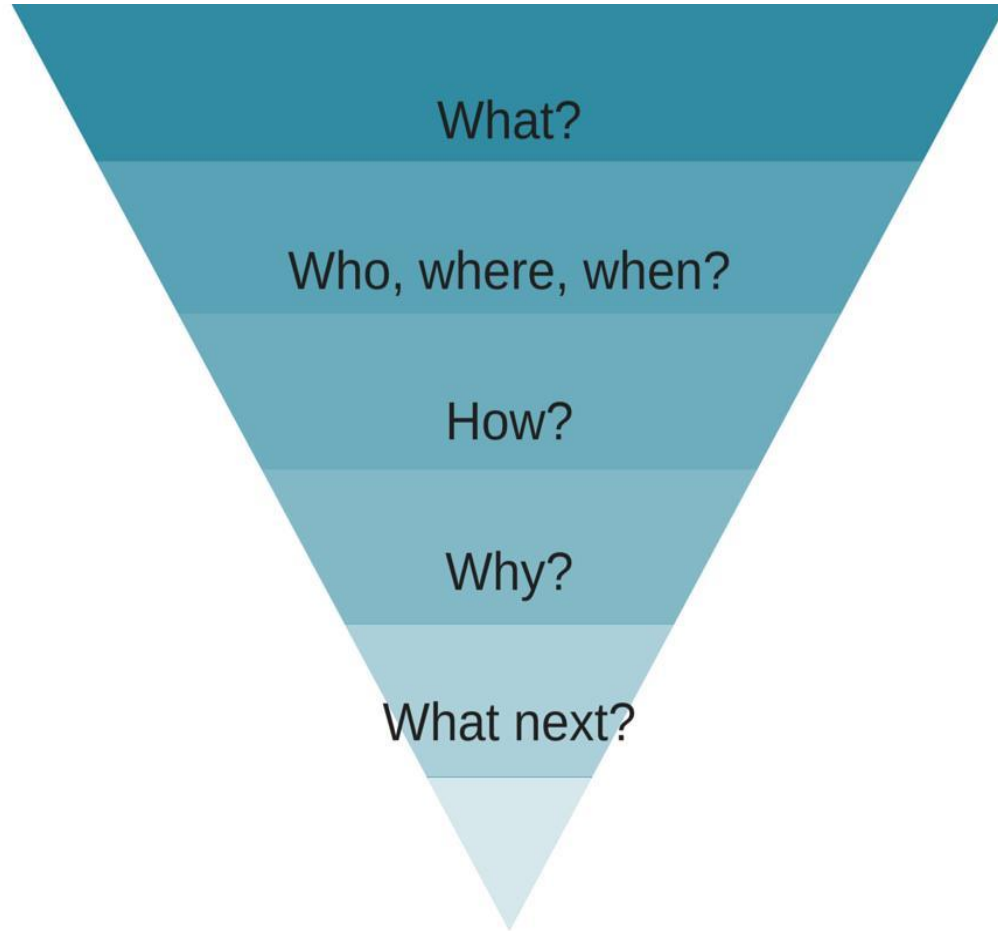
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The inverted pyramid



A formula for writing almost any story in a 'news' style that grabs attention from the first line. A staple of journalism school for decades.

Put the most important information at the top, and then tier the details in layers below, starting out with the most general and noteworthy (what happened) and getting more specific as you go down (when did it happen, where did it happen, etc?).

Reader should be able to stop reading after a few lines and still understand the 'gist' of the story.



How did the sauna story followed inverted pyramid principles? Write down your answers

What?

Who, where, when?

How?

Why?

What next?

Friday 24th May 2013

LYNN NEWS

99

Revealed: The steamy past of our ancestors

BY VICTORIA FEAR

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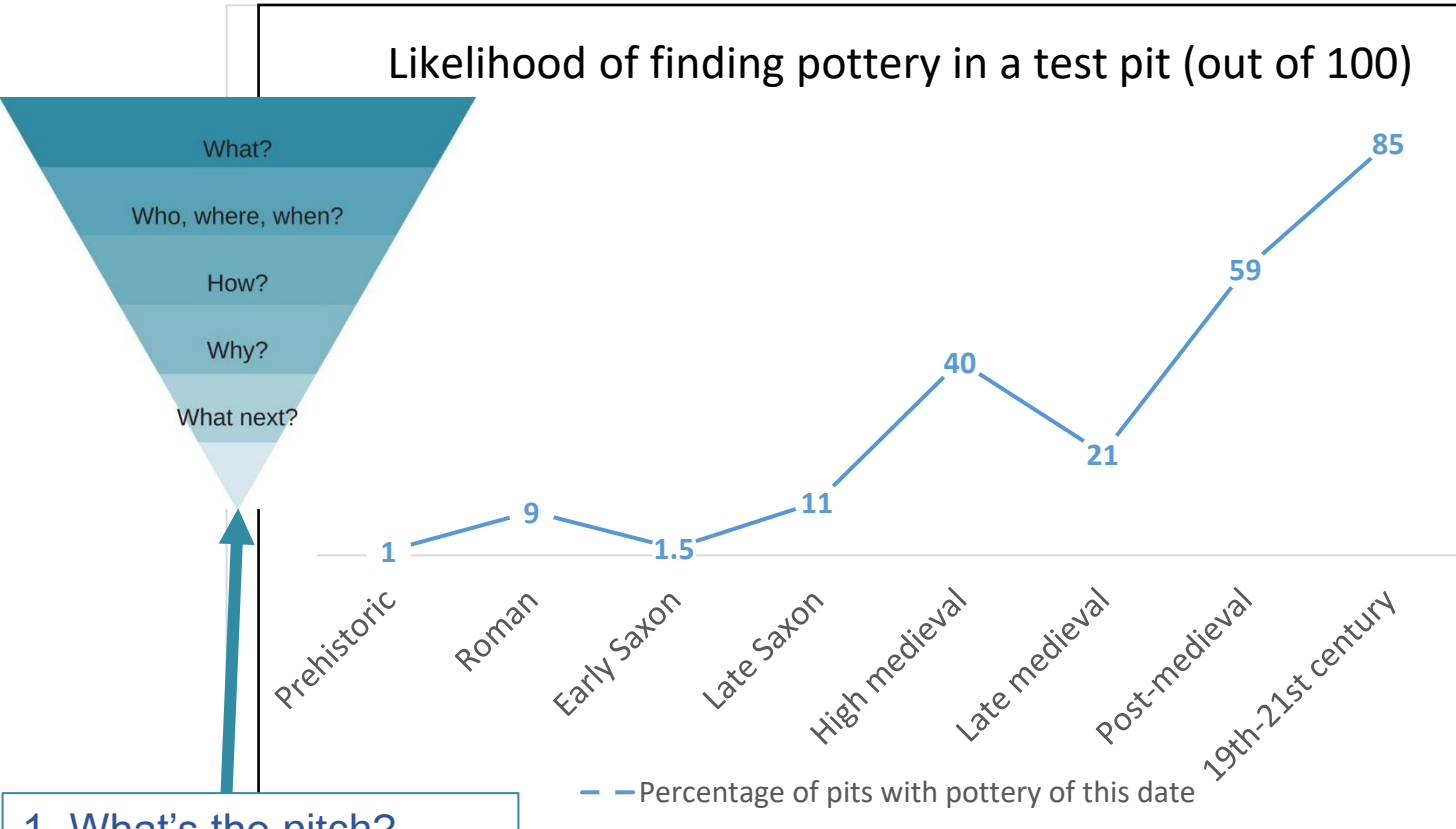
ing a finds processing day at True's Yard on Saturday, June 1, from 11am to 4pm.

Visitors are welcome to come and watch. The next archaeological weekend will be held at Grimston on Saturday and Sunday, June 15 and 16. For more information on the project contact Dr Bond by emailing: clivejbond@aol.com



Now you have a go...

Write a news story of 300-500 words about a test pit excavation, either one you've completed, or for a site where you'd like to dig using finds from 'Digging with Dice', in which case assume there is no previous known archaeology from this place and the only pre-19th century building is a 13th century church about 100m from the dig site. You can (re-)check significance of your finds in the reference sheet for Dig School 16 ('What's the Story?')



START		Grass		Grass	
1 Clear glass marble with coloured eye	2 Plastic carrier bag	3 Plastic electrical cable	4 Go back 2 spaces	5 Green wine bottle glass	6 Plastic action figure toy
7 Aluminium drink tin	8 Go back 3 spaces	9 Plastic container fragments x2	10 Plastic food packaging	11 Sawn cow rib	12 Slate pencil
13 Porcelain doll's face	14 Iron nail (round in section)	15 Go forward 3 spaces	16 Go forward 1 space	17 Blue & white printed glazed pottery x3	18 White glazed pottery x3
19 Go back 2 spaces	20 Tobacco pipe stem narrow bore x2	21 Gunflint	22 Glazed red earthenware pottery x3	23 Sheep scapula	24 Go back two spaces
25 Split cow femur	26 Harlow slipware pottery	27 Tobacco pipe stem wide bore	28 English Stoneware pottery x 2	29 Tin-glazed earthenware pottery	30 Delft ware pottery
31 Tudor Green pottery	32 Cistercian ware pottery	33 Split cow femur	34 Late medieval oxidised pottery	35 Midland purple ware pottery	36 Late medieval horse shoe
37 Sheep tooth	38 Go forward 5 spaces	39 Bourne D ware pottery	40 Go back 3 spaces	41 Sheep femur	42 Horse tooth
43 Medieval buckle	44 Flat black window glass with red pattern	45 Medieval shelly ware pottery x 3	46 Medieval sandy ware pottery x 4	47 Go back 1 space	48 Go back 2 spaces
49 Grimston Ware pottery x2	50 Go forward 2 spaces	51 Fragment of pig scapula	52 Stamford ware pottery	53 Split pig femur	54 Go forward 2 spaces
55 St Neots Ware pottery	56 Thetford ware pottery x3	57 Go back 4 spaces	58 Sheep femur	59 Iron knife blade	60 Go back 4 spaces
61 Fragment of split cow femur	62 Ipswich ware pottery	63 Go forward 5 spaces	64 Go forward 1 space	65 Pig tooth	66
67 Go forward 4 spaces	68 Sheep femur	69 Go back 1 space	70 Maxey ware pottery	71 Split cow tibia	72 Go forward 4 spaces
73	74 Early Saxon stamped pottery	75 Go forward 4 spaces	76 Sheep tooth	77 Burnt stone	78 Go forward 5 spaces
79	80 Early Saxon hand tempered pottery	81 Roman greyware pottery x4	82 Go back 1 space	83 Roman colour-coated pottery	84 Go forward 2 spaces
85 Sheep tooth	86 Mortaria fragment	87 Roman Samian ware	88 Hand-made ceramic roof tile	89 Go forward 2 spaces	90 Cow scapula fragment
91 Flint scraper	92 Flint arrowhead	93 Go forward 3 spaces	94 Bronze Age flint-tempered pottery	95 Go forward 2 spaces	96 Flint flake
97	98 Fire-cracked flint	99 Go back 1 space	100 Flint blade	FINISH	

1. What's the pitch?
2. Key information first
3. Write clearly & simply
4. Make it relatable
5. Make it come alive.

Above the pyramid

Now summarise your story in no more than **30 words** (an introductory sentence to a news article)?

What?

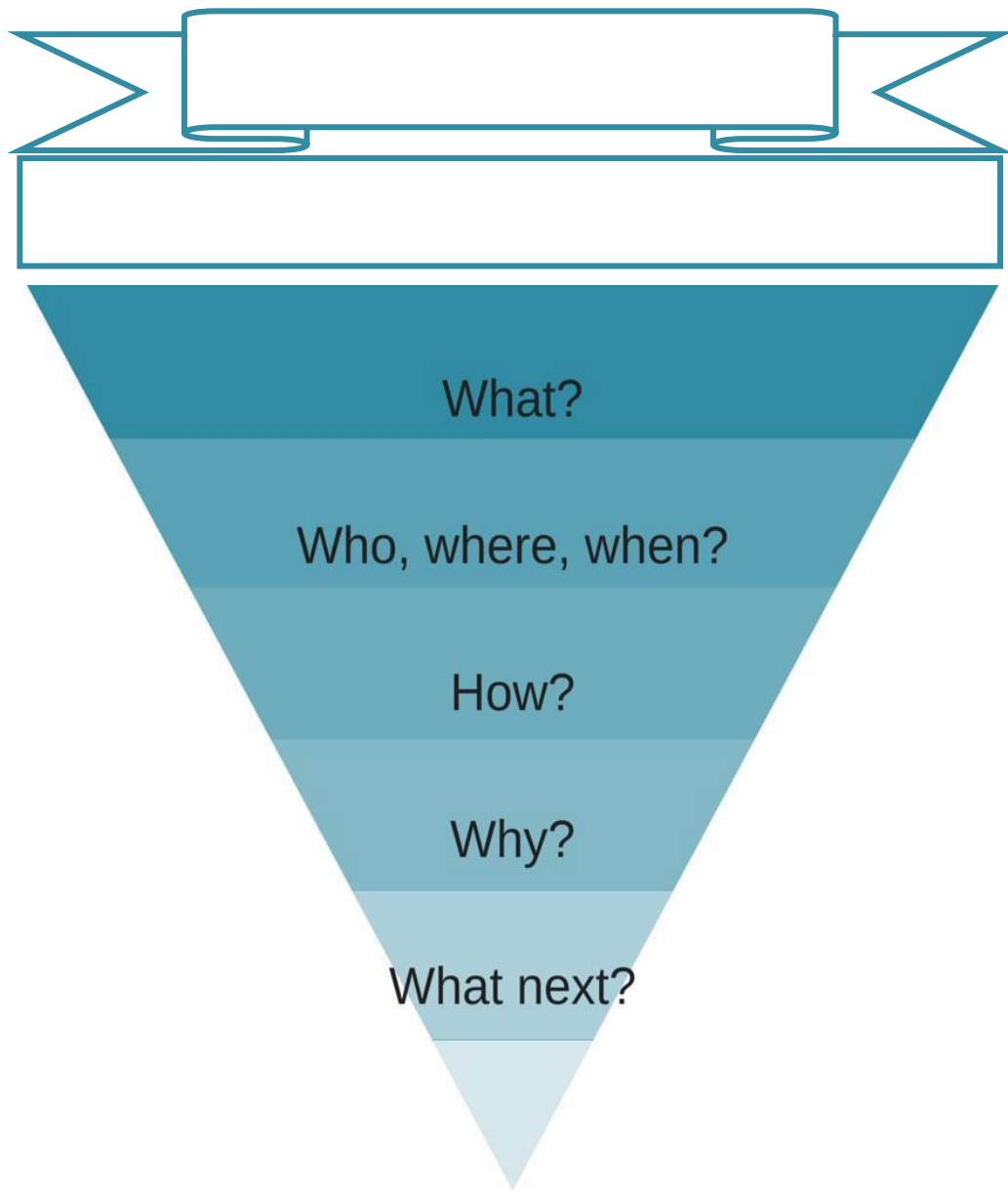
Who, where, when?

How?

Why?

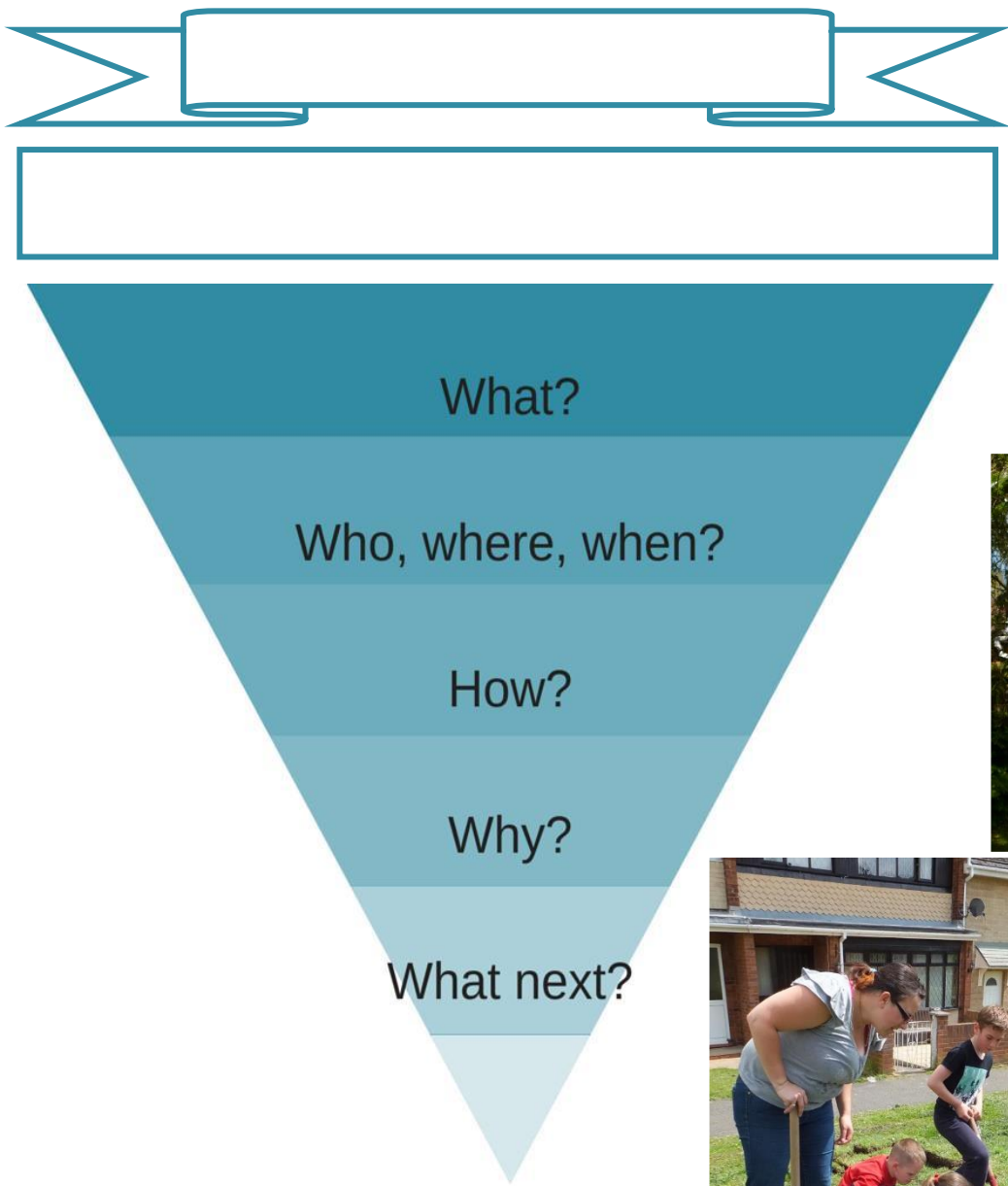
What next?





NOW summarise your story in no more than **8 words** (a title to your news story)?





And now add some pictures...

You'll need one to go with the
30 word summary and 5-10 to
go with the story



Getting the word out



Social media – eg Twitter

The image shows two overlapping screenshots of the Twitter website. The background screenshot displays the profile of Prof Carenza Lewis (@CarenzaLewis), a Lincoln University staff member. Her profile includes a bio, location (Lincoln, England), and a pinned tweet about the #DigSchool initiative. The foreground screenshot shows a tweet thread by Prof Susan Oosthuizen (@DrSueOosthuizen) dated July 10. The thread discusses the origins of English villages and includes a photo of a village church and the cover of the book 'The Making of the English Landscape' by W.G. Hoskins.

Twitter Profile: Prof Carenza Lewis
5,270 Tweets
Home, Explore, Notifications, Messages, Bookmarks, Lists, Profile, More
Pinned Tweet: Prof Carenza Lewis @CarenzaLewis · Apr 23
Starting on 24th April, #DigSchool offers pupils aged develop new skills, knowledge and interests through curricular online enquiries throughout the summer term. #twitterhistorians #lockdown #onlinelearning

Twitter Thread: Prof Susan Oosthuizen @DrSueOosthuizen · Jul 10
THREAD. The origins of English villages like Spaldwick, Hunts., so typical of the rural landscape, is a question that's puzzled historians and archaeologists for generations. (Photo from Christopher Taylor's masterfully annotated 1988 re-edition of Hoskins' classic book.)
The Making of THE ENGLISH LANDSCAPE
14 replies, 96 retweets, 267 likes



Social media – eg Twitter

Post through your school/class/group/carers Twitter (or other social media) profiles, not your own

Write your tweets (up to 280 characters each) – more than one tweet can be linked in a thread. The ideal tweet is just 100 characters long. If planning a thread, write the tweets in advance.

Choose your photos, GIFs, or videos – each tweet can have 4 photos or 1 GIF/video.

Use hashtags/handles to connect with wider themes (eg #TestPit #DigSchool @ArchaeologyUK) and ensure specific others (eg local press) see your tweets

Don't say anything offensive and don't include confidential information (eg the precise address of the excavation). Remember that ANYONE might see your tweets.



Social media – eg Twitter

Write 4 or more tweets to be posted together as a thread to tell people about your test pit excavation



Social media – eg Twitter

When your tweets are written...

Make sure all your spelling and punctuation are correct.

Double-check what you have written (there is no 'edit' button on Twitter...). Check what you've written AGAIN.

Check AGAIN that there aren't any mistakes

Tell the person managing the Twitter profile that your tweets are ready to be posted – once they've checked them



Summary - secrets of a good press release

- Headline is your hook
- The first sentence must sum up the news angle
- Emphasise what is new and noteworthy
- Provide context
- Avoid jargon and define technical terms
- Include a quote
- Get the timing right
- Target the right audience
- Pictures can tell a story



Key questions

By VICTORIA FEAR
Call: 01553 817321
Email: victoria.fear@jpress.co.uk

Evidence of ancient saunas have been uncovered by a community archaeological dig over the weekend.

A chunk of burnt flint has given members of the West Norfolk Archaeological Society a glimpse into the lives of the Nomadic people who grazed cattle along the banks of the River Ouse.

Some 30 went along to take part in the event held at Lynnsport and Queen Elizabeth Avenue Playing Field on Saturday and Sunday.

The archaeological society is running a summer programme of community digs around Gaywood Valley.

Society chairman Dr Clive Bond said: "We have people coming and depositing lots of flint and burning it, putting a tent up and even having a sauna. Meetings were ritual things for these communities."

"I think they liked to par-



Project advisor Dr Alex Pryor, from Cambridge Community Heritage, and Dr Clive Bond with the flint

ty. We have people coming together having fun and eating a massive feast.

"It is an exciting find. In an urban setting it is difficult to get to that depth and find these things."

The flint, which dates between the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age, was discovered within a test pit on the

site. The flint was found by a local resident who was showing the river has changed course over the years.

Dr Bond said the society is hoping to go back and do further investigation in the area following the discovery of the flint, which could eventually go on show in True's Yard.

The society will be hold-

ing a finds processing day at True's Yard on Saturday, June 1, from 11am to 4pm.

Visitors are welcome to come and watch. The next archaeological weekend will be held at Grimston on Saturday and Sunday, June 15 and 16. For more information on the project contact Dr Bond by emailing: clivejbond@aol.com

• What makes a good news story

• The secrets of writing a good news story

• Getting your story out





Session 20: Show and Tell

How to write the perfect news story about your test pit excavation



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Historic England





1	History CSI' - Investigating a violent death through clues from an ancient skeleton.
2	'Changing Rooms' - Exploring how easily familiar places become unrecognisable over time.
3	'Location Location Location' – Thinking about the importance of physical places to settlers, colonisers and continuing inhabitants
4	'Dumpster Dig' - Analysing what the stuff people throw away preserves tells about their lives, and how to interpret these clues
5	'Magic Carpet – Exploring what things we find people buried with tell us about them – and the society they lived in.
6	'Call my Bluff' – Exploring the complex ways in which objects are used - including a challenge to spot true uses from false explanations
7	'A Thorney problem' – A 'Medicine through time' challenge exploring why some unusual human bones were buried in a rural garden.
8	'Animal Farm' – Exploring how people used animals in the past, and learning to identify and interpret bones from excavations
9	'Tracing Places' – Exploring what test pit excavations can reveal about places like your town or village.
10	'Birds Eye View' – learning what place names, old maps and lasered aerial photos can reveal about the past of your town or village I.
11	'Down to Earth' – Exploring what fieldwalking, Heritage Gateway, PAS can reveal about the place your school/home is in.
12	'X-Ray Vision' - Learning how to recognise and interpret traces from the past identifiable from aerial photos and geophysical surveys.
13	'DIY Dig' - Tutorial on how to do your own mini-dig in your school grounds or garden at home.
14	'Safe and Sound' - How to stay safe while digging a test pit in your school or garden at home - including a 'Spot-the-hazard' challenge.
Dig week - Carrying out all stages of an excavation, including thorough finds washing and drying. Developing experience in data-collection, project management, team working, health and safety..	
15	'Exploring Artefacts' – Identifying test pit excavation finds, and collecting a virtual assemblage by 'Digging with Dice'.
16	'What's the story? – Exploring the significance of your finds (dug or diced) through a unique game of 'Test Pit Top Trumps'.
17	'Pits in Place' - Learning how to make the most of test pit finds by connecting them with the place they in which they were found.
18	'Picturing the past' – Harnessing creativity to make new images of pottery, flint and other finds which will help others appreciate them.
19	'Report Writing' - A step-by-step guide to writing a 'proper' report on your test pit excavation.
20	'Show and Tell' – Showcasing excavation discoveries to the press and online.



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Feedback please!
At www.DigSchool.org.uk

DigSchool.org.uk | Engaging cross-curricular learning-enrichment workshops themed around archaeology





END

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