

# Back To The Past

## *After Your Visit - Activity 2*

### Cultural Clues — Buried Treasure?

#### Activity Procedure

1. Begin this activity by asking the students "How do we know the Hohokam lived in Sabino Canyon so long ago?" Use this question to lead into a discussion of "cultural clues" of the past such as trash middens, pottery shards, metates, shelter ruins, etc. Inform them that each of these clues gives us a piece of a picture of how the Hohokam and other ancient people lived.
2. Next ask the students questions about what would be left behind if *our culture* vanished. The following questions can be used as guidelines:

*What would be left behind?*

*What would the people of the future think about these remains?*

*How would they view our culture?*

*What would our "trash middens" (landfills) reveal?*

*What do you want future civilizations to think of us?*

3. Have the students brainstorm a list of things they think would be most indicative/representative of our culture. If they were to bury a few specific items in a "time capsule", what would they choose to include to tell future civilizations something about the way we live today? Would the class like to bury a time capsule for people of the future?
4. If the class decides to bury a "time capsule," have volunteers bring in selected items from the list. Consider what the items will be buried in — is it big enough and will it last in the ground for many years? Remind students that the items they bring will be buried and will not be given back to them. A picture may be drawn or cut from a magazine to represent the object if it is too large or too valuable to put in the time capsule.

#### Objectives

#### Students will

- \* list ways (clues) demonstrating their understanding that cultures existed before us.
- \* describe how certain items can explain how a past culture lived.
- \* predict what future civilizations would think of present day culture given certain clues.

5. To emphasize the importance of preserving cultural sites, ask the students to consider how they would feel if someone dug up their time capsule and stole the contents. Share these feelings and ideas with the class. Does this happen today? How? What can we do about it?
6. Bury the time capsule on school grounds. Dedicate the buried treasure for a particular class a few years into the future (maybe the class ten years from now). As a class, write a letter of dedication explaining the reason for planting your time capsule, and a detailed map of where it can be found, and of course, include the date of the burial. Check with the school office to find out if the letter can be kept on file for the future class.