

Archaeology Activity Flintknapping

Goal: Make a stone tool.

Important! - Be sure to listen to the instructor and follow their directions closely.
Some objects may be sharp – take care when handling them.
Try not to hit your fingers with the rocks – using the white cloth pad on your leg helps!

What you will need

This flintknapping kit.

Definitions

Hammerstone – the round rock you hit the core with to drive off flakes.

Core – the large piece of rock you are hitting with the hammerstone to drive off a flake.

Flake – a sharp piece of rock you drive off the core. This can be used as a cutting tool.

Directions

1) Take the plastic sheet out of the kit and spread it on the ground. Place the kit on the tarp and sit around it.



This kit contains enough materials to have two different students flintknapping at the same time. If you are one of these two students, watch the others doing the activity to get an idea of how it's done and wait for your turn.

2) If it is your turn, while kneeling, put on a pair of safety goggles and take a white cloth, fold it in half, and place it on your thigh.

3) Select a hammerstone (the smaller, round rocks) that fits comfortably in your hand. Notice where it has been hit at the ends, this is where you will be using it to strike the core.

4) Select a core (the larger pieces of grey rock) and hold it against your thigh that has the cloth on it. You will want to hold it with your hand as far away from where you will be hitting it with the hammerstone.

5) Strike the core with the hammerstone along an edge close to your leg. You want to hit as close to the edge of the core as you can – without hitting your leg. Striking the core with the hammerstone in this way will transfer energy you generate in your downward swing to the core and break off smaller, sharp pieces.

6) After you have driven off a sharp flake or two, give the materials to someone else to try.

Remember to pay attention during the activity. If you injure yourself be sure to immediately tell your instructor. Thank you for doing the activity – hope you had fun!