

Try archaeology yourself!

Household Garbology

Try this activity with adult supervision. While most household garbage is not harmful, kitchen gloves and face masks are recommended.

Purpose of this activity: Human activity leaves traces in the archaeological record, however some materials disintegrate. The careful observation of waste products can provide information about the disposal of waste and consumption of food and everyday items.

1. Record the material remains from your household trashcan for seven days.
2. Organize your findings by type of material, and then describe it (e.g. six banana peels and four apple cores)
3. Based on the trash sample, what type of activities were carried out?
4. What conclusions can you make about the people who used the trash? Lifestyle, age, gender, or diet
5. What room did the trash come from?
6. Is there a pattern in the days with the material used (weekdays vs. weekends)
7. Try this activity with a friend and compare your findings!