



Archaeology Explorer Backpack: Making Archaeology Education in Museums Accessible and Portable

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Goal:

- "To preserve and share our community's rich history and culture in one of the finest regional history museums in the United States."

Exhibit Essentials:

- Expansive – 500 years of history and 12,000 years of habitation
- Relevant – Connect people to the history of Tampa Bay
- Interactive – "to transcend time"

Backpack Program Goals:

- Integrate children and families into new exhibits
- Encourage parent-child interaction

Theoretical Approach

Entertainment ↔ Authenticity

Visual/aesthetic Objects ↔ Context Stories

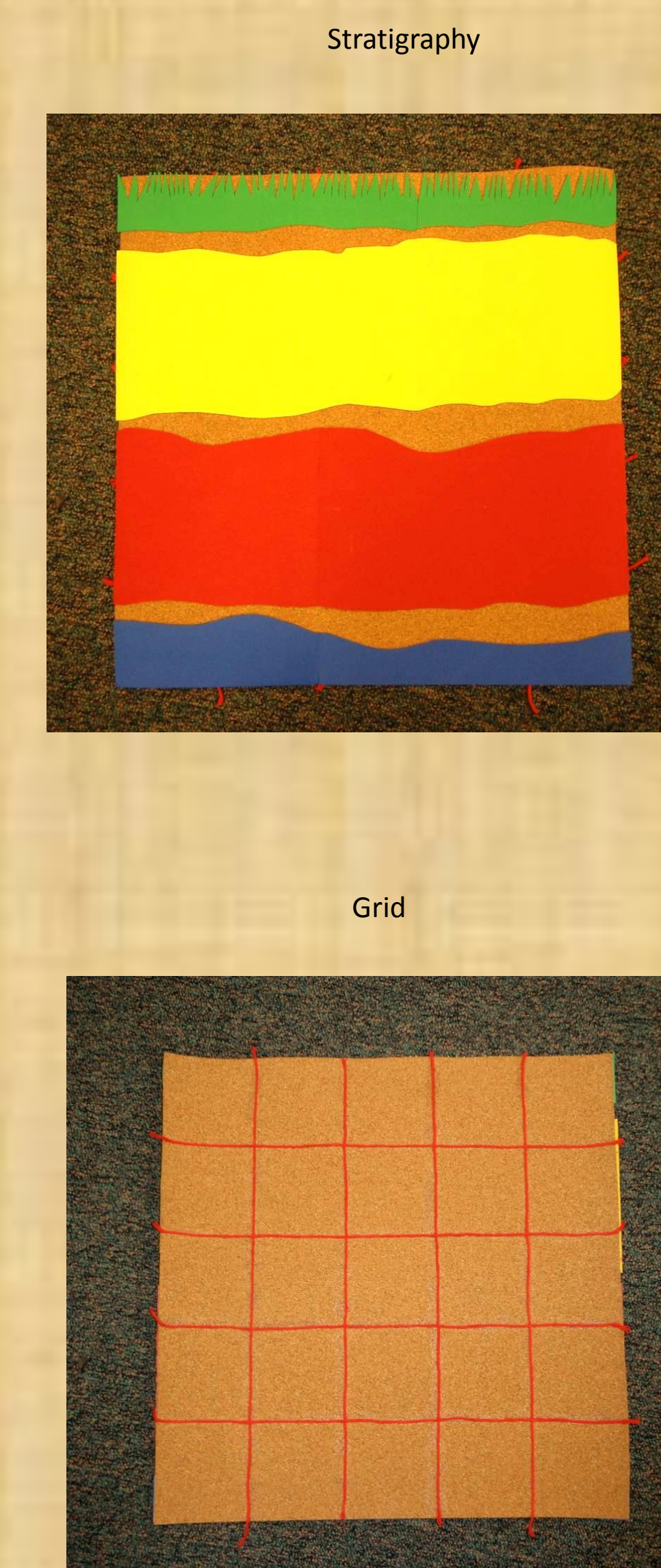
- The "postmodern museum"
 - Transparency (museum as an interpreter, not legislator)
 - Display of results as well processes
 - More participation and "life" to the museum

- Post-processualism in archaeology
 - There are multiple routes to a multivocal past
 - The past and power are contested
 - There is no true past (authenticity)
 - The past is constructed (authority)
 - Multiple interpretations
 - The audience is not a passive recipient (agency)
 - Identity is formed through the past
 - Self-reflection

The Backpack



The Mat



Archaeology Education in Museums: How and Why?

- Know the audience
- Understand public knowledge and perceptions
- Engage multiple audiences - Schoolchildren
- SSS
- Learning styles
- Challenge stereotypes
- De-mystify the archaeological process
- Emphasis on the everyday and ordinary
- Be interactive and hands-on

Background Research: Case Studies

- Backpack and hands-on museum education programs
- General museum education
- Archaeology and education
- Public and applied archaeology
- Activity guides for children
- Archaeology in the classroom
- Archaeology and outreach
- Evaluation of museum programs

The Creation Process: Where Do We Begin?

- Some challenges:
 - Explaining a whole discipline and process
 - Tie in to future exhibits
 - Stick to main objectives
 - Be portable and durable
 - Be sustainable and cost-effective
 - Be interesting, fun, friendly, and engaging
 - Be dynamic and time-conscious

Exploring the World of Archaeology

- What is archaeology?
- Who are archaeologists, and what do they do?
- Where do archaeologists work?
- Why does archaeology matter?

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Pilot Study

