

1 How does radiocarbon dating work? What are the advantages and limitations of this technique?

Answer:

2 What is remote sensing and what is its relevance to archaeology?

Answer:

Feedback: Remote sensing refers to technologies used to detect archaeological deposits. These methods include aerial photography and satellite imagery, and geophysical methods such as magnetometry and ground-penetrating radar. They play a critical role both in discovering sites and in orienting exploration.

3 _____ comparisons examine differences between two or more sites.

- (A) Synchronic
- (B) Intersite
- (C) Diachronic
- (D) Intrasite

Answer: (B) Intersite

4 Which of the following statements characterizes relative dating techniques?

- (A) They allow archaeologists to assign a range of calendar years to artifacts and deposits.
- (B) They can be expressed on a number of different time scales.
- (C) They include dendrochronology.
- (D) They include seriation.

Answer: (D) They include seriation.

5 Which of the following is an absolute dating method?

- (A) relative chronology
- (B) seriation
- (C) radiocarbon
- (D) regional chronology

Answer: (C) radiocarbon

6 What is a list of artifact types for a particular archaeological context called?

- (A) typology
- (B) chronology
- (C) taphonomy
- (D) attribute

Answer: (A) typology

7 In zooarchaeology, MNI estimates are calculated by _____.

- (A) counting the most numerous unique skeletal element of each species
- (B) counting the number of identifiable specimens
- (C) estimating the number of bones per excavation unit

- (D) taking the total number of bones and dividing by the number of different species

Answer: (A) counting the most numerous unique skeletal element of each species

8 Which of the following is a method of quantifying animal bone from an archaeological site?

- (A) counting the number of identifiable specimens (NISP)
- (B) calculating the maximum number of species present (MNS)
- (C) determining the season of occupation based on geographic index of seasonality (GIS)
- (D) estimating the age at death for each animal body recovered (AD)

Answer: (A) counting the number of identifiable specimens (NISP)

9 What is the study of the processes that affect organic remains after death?

- (A) paleoecology
- (B) zooarchaeology
- (C) necromodification
- (D) taphonomy

Answer: (D) taphonomy

10 Lithic analysis is the study of _____.

- (A) lithium artifacts
- (B) stone tools
- (C) ceramic dishes
- (D) metal weapons

Answer: (B) stone tools

11 _____ are natural objects that provide information about the environmental context of past human activity.

- (A) Artifacts
- (B) Ecofacts
- (C) Features
- (D) Fossils

Answer: (B) Ecofacts

12 How are geographic information systems (GIS) used in archaeology?

Answer:

Feedback: When GIS were first introduced, they were used largely within an ecological framework, looking at relationships between site locations and availability of natural resources. Other applications were developed to model migration routes and to predict where sites would likely be found. In recent years, a number of archaeologists have begun to use GIS as a means of exploring the way people in the past would have experienced the environment.

13 Explain the difference between and the purpose of horizontal and vertical excavation.

Answer:

Feedback: Horizontal excavations expose a broad area of a site, allowing the archaeologist to

examine the relationships between artifacts at a single period in time. Vertical excavation is undertaken when the archaeologist is interested in studying long-term processes of culture change through time. This technique of digging down exposes the record of a sequence of occupation.

14 What are some methods that archaeologists employ in a stratigraphic analysis?

Answer:

Feedback: Soil micromorphology is used to characterize the accumulation of sediments at a microscopic scale. The Harris matrix is a method for placing depositional units in stratigraphic order. Post depositional-process analysis examines the natural and cultural processes that have affected the formation of archaeological sites.

15 Discuss the application of ethnoarchaeology to archaeological interpretation. What areas of past human behavior can it help the archaeologist understand? What are the limitations of ethnoarchaeology?

Answer:

16 A human body is buried in a peat bog one thousand years ago. Discuss the taphonomic processes that might have occurred and how they might affect the interpretation of the burial.

Answer:

17 You have discovered a 1,000-year-old site that was occupied for only a year before being covered by a mudslide. What techniques will you employ to excavate the site? How will you record the data you collect?

Answer:

18 What are the eight principles of archaeological ethics set out by the Society for American Archaeology? What is their purpose?

Answer:

19 Describe two "living archaeology" techniques used by archaeologists to help interpret archaeological remains.

Answer:

Feedback: Ethnoarchaeology has to do with research carried out by archaeologists living with and observing communities in order to make a contribution to archaeology. Experimental archaeology involves attempts to replicate archaeological features or objects.

20 How can seriation be used to develop a relative chronology of an artifact type?

Answer:

Feedback: The assumption behind seriation is that the frequency of an artifact form will increase over time and then decline gradually after reaching a peak. This was graphically demonstrated by Deetz's study of gravestones that showed that the popularity of different motifs (death's head, cherub, urn, and willow) changed over time as each style displaced the one that preceded it in popularity.

21 How are typologies used in archaeology?

Answer:

Feedback: Archaeologists use typologies to draw up an inventory of the artifacts they have found. Once a typology is developed, the number of objects belonging to each type can be counted to create a quantitative inventory of artifacts found in a particular context. The purpose is to register nuances of style that reflect when and where an artifact was manufactured.

22 How can an archaeologist get an accurate quantitative picture of the relative frequency of different animals in the faunal assemblage?

Answer:

Feedback: Simply counting the number of identifiable specimens (NISP) may introduce bias due to such factors as differential preservation of bone. By calculating the minimum numbers of individuals (MNI) represented by the most frequent unique element, the archaeologist is able to get a more accurate picture of the proportions of different animals at the site.

23 What are the major areas of biological analysis and what do they describe?

Answer:

Feedback: Faunal Analysis is the study of animal bones recovered on archaeological sites. Paleoethnobotany is the study of archaeological plant remains, such as charred seeds and pollen. Human osteoarchaeology is the study of the biological characteristics of human skeletal material recovered on archaeological excavations.

24 What is the goal of archaeological recording and what are some of the recording methods employed by archaeologists?

Answer:

Feedback: The goal of recording is to allow archaeologists to go back and reconstruct that context on paper after excavation. The basic recording unit is the depositional unit. Each unit has its own recording sheet, which includes plan maps at various stages of excavation, stratigraphic sections showing the relation of the depositional unit to other depositional units, and a description of the contents of the depositional unit. A careful description of soil color and texture is often included.

25 Any object that shows traces of human manufacture is referred to as a/n _____.

- (A) ecofact
- (B) artifact
- (C) site
- (D) feature

Answer: (B) artifact

26 To recover the charred botanical remains (wood and seeds), it is often necessary to employ a method known as _____.

- (A) filtration
- (B) flotation
- (C) dry screening
- (D) piece plotting

Answer: (B) flotation

27 Typology is the study of the layers of the earth.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

28 Sampling is used to select a representative collection of a large group of artifacts for study.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (A) True

29 Frost heave is an example of a climate-related post-depositional process that affects the archaeological record.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (A) True

30 Ecofacts are objects that show traces of human manufacture.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

31 Wet screening is used to recover items from submerged sites.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

32 To understand how a feature such as a burial pit relates to the surrounding strata, it is necessary to determine the surface of origin for the pit.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (A) True

33 The Harris matrix is a method for quantifying artifacts from depositional units.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

34 Anthropogenic deposits are the result of insect disturbances on an archaeological site.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

35 The law of superposition states that each layer is younger than the layer beneath it.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (A) True

36 The goal of horizontal excavation is to expose large areas of a site to reconstruct a single

point in time.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (A) True

37 Radiocarbon dating can only be used on organic materials, such as charcoal and bone.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (A) True

38 Experimental archaeology uses scientific techniques, such as DNA analysis, to interpret the past.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

39 Floral analysis is the study of animal bones from archaeological sites.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

40 The _____ is used as a reference for all vertical measurements on an archaeological site.

- (A) datum point
- (B) ground surface
- (C) keystone
- (D) stadia rod

Answer: (A) datum point

41 The sequence of depositional units at a site is referred to as the site's _____.

- (A) archaeology
- (B) geology
- (C) occupation
- (D) stratigraphy

Answer: (D) stratigraphy

42 Geological strata can be classified by _____.

- (A) the type of rock they consist of
- (B) the diversity of fossils found within them
- (C) the length of time it took to dig through the layer
- (D) the moistness of the soil

Answer: (A) the type of rock they consist of

43 Which of these statements best describes the law of superposition?

- (A) Sediments will be deposited in horizontal layers.
- (B) In any undisturbed sedimentary deposits, each layer is younger than the layer beneath it.
- (C) In any undisturbed sedimentary deposits, each layer is older than the layer beneath it.
- (D) The uppermost sediments are the most important for archaeological analysis.

Answer: (B) In any undisturbed sedimentary deposits, each layer is younger than the layer beneath it.

44 The goal of vertical excavation is to _____.

- (A) collect as many artifacts as possible
- (B) dig as deeply as possible
- (C) expose a sequence of occupation at a site
- (D) obey the law of superposition

Answer: (C) expose a sequence of occupation at a site

45 _____ refer to software applications that allow spatial data to be brought together and consolidated.

- (A) U.S. Geodetic Surveys (USGS)
- (B) Geographics Positioning Systems (GPS)
- (C) Universal Transverse Mercators (UTM)
- (D) Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Answer: (D) Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

46 Artifacts that are found in the place where they were originally deposited are said to be _____.

- (A) in situ
- (B) commonplace
- (C) ex post facto
- (D) geologically stable

Answer: (A) in situ

47 An archaeological survey maps the distribution of _____.

- (A) the oldest stones in the region
- (B) only sites over 100 years old
- (C) the physical remains of human activity
- (D) only those sites deemed to be "significant"

Answer: (C) the physical remains of human activity

48 The goal of archaeology is to _____.

- (A) find treasure

- (B) dig square holes
- (C) understand past human lives by studying the objects they left behind
- (D) more fully understand dinosaurs

Answer: (C) understand past human lives by studying the objects they left behind

49 The half-life of the carbon-12 atom is 5,730 years.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False

50 The most important archaeological sites are found within a foot of the ground surface.

- (A) True
- (B) False

Answer: (B) False