

# Decomposing Culture, continued

## Objective

Students will practice close looking and check their hypothesis by observing the changes in their organic and inorganic items and recording detailed observations.

## Introduction (15 mins)

Mini-lesson

Present an ordinary object and ask students to write a description. After 2 minutes of writing, ask them to look at their description and introduce a new rule: they are not allowed to use the name of the object. (Example: for a blueberry muffin, they are not allowed to use the words “blueberry” or “muffin”). After 2 more minutes of writing, ask students to trade descriptions with a partner to check that “taboo” words have not been used. Have them work together to improve each other’s writing so that if the object were to disappear, the description is clear enough for the reader to picture the object. Ask students to think about size, texture, color, and comparisons to other objects.

Share descriptions. Relate the exercise to the way that scientists need to be very detailed in their descriptions to provide the most accurate information possible.

## Vocabulary Extension

Physical change = a change that alters an object’s physical appearance, such as its shape (example: glass breaking)

Chemical change = a change that alters an object’s chemical composition to create a new or different substance (example: rust on a nail)

## Class Activity (30 mins)

Lab

Redistribute Lab Worksheets to students and inform them that it is time to observe what has happened to the items they left a few days ago. Carefully uncover items that were left in the dirt and retrieve objects from outside and display them for students to view.

In their lab teams, students record detailed observations and identify the physical and/or chemical changes that occurred to their organic and inorganic items.

Teams present their findings to the class to be recorded in a class data table (such as the one below) to indicate the object, where it was stored during the experiment, whether it underwent a physical and/or chemical change, and additional notes.

Discuss: How might you expect the Terracotta Warriors to have changed?

Object	Location	Physical change?	Chemical change?	Notes

**Individual Activity** (10 mins)

K-W-L Chart

Based on the previous days' activities, have students predict what they may see while touring *China's Terracotta Warriors: The First Emperor's Legacy* completing the K and W columns in the K-W-L chart (see Appendix IX).

In the K column, students should write things that they know or remember from the past couple days about archaeology, Emperor Qin, and/or the Terracotta Army.

In the W column, students should write things that they *want to know* – questions that they hope will be answered when they visit the exhibit.

The L column will be completed in the museum.