

Chipped Stone Bear



Each month The California Museum will introduce a new artifact with accompanying information and questions, which will consist of three different difficulty levels to choose from. To be used as a sponge or opening activity, you can use the artifact of the month for your students to study, question and form ideas. You can also print the image and place it on each student's desk, have them work in teams or project the image for a class activity.

Use the provided questions to help your students learn more about the artifact and its importance to California -- or make up your own questions. Most importantly, have fun!

Be sure to check out our web site, CaliforniaMuseum.org, for other interesting and unique activities for your students.

Chipped Stone Bear



California, once nicknamed the Bear Flag Republic and now the Bear Flag State, adopted this bear-shaped object as the State Prehistoric Artifact in 1991. Chipped from meta-volcanic rock by California Indians 7,000 to 8,000 years ago, this artifact resembles a short-faced bear. Archeologists speculate that it is made by the same chipping process used to fashion arrowheads and spear points and that its unique shape suggests it was probably connected to religious practices. Since its 1985 discovery by a Cypress College student working on an archeology dig in Southern California, it has been called the Chipped Stone Bear. It is considered one of the earliest pieces of art known in the Western United States.

The idea to have this bear adopted as the state's official prehistoric artifact came from another student working on the dig. His father worked for the state legislature and apparently convinced state Senator Ralph Dills to introduce a bill in 1991. Governor Pete Wilson signed it into law later that year. Currently, the Chipped Stone Bear can be seen in the Origins Gallery of the exhibit *California Indians: Making a Difference*.

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Elementary

- 1) When and where was the Chipped Stone Bear found?
- 2) When did it become the official State Prehistoric Artifact?

Middle

- 1) What do archeologists do?
- 2) What are some possible religious practices that would use this object?

High School

- 1) Why is it logical that this object was adopted as the official Prehistoric Artifact?
- 2) Name and describe three possible careers for a person with a degree in archeology

Word Search!

V T C A F I T R A Q S M A J X
L E F Y W P Y Z F N H R Z N R
W Q Q C Q K S K A G C B W Z U
Y S P G I A K I K H J B D R E
B F R R Y N D T E O M I O K M
W P E O K N A O G I A G E E X
T K H K I P L C V A L D L V I
U S I H H O D C L H K W W T A
A O S R G D I M M O C M B S N
Z J T Y Q E G J T J V Z W D X
O R O E P P F T B B T O O Q R
H G R F D P S T O N E O P S E
W Q I A E I S A J Y C A E L K
S C C K Y H H N L M S G R H V
J R G N U C D B Z A N U M U V

ARCHEOLOGY

ARTIFACT

BEAR

CHIPPED

DIG

INDIANS

PREHISTORIC

STONE

VOLCANIC

