

Piecing together the past



One of the best ways of learning about how people lived in the past is by finding the things that they made. Thousands of years ago people would have used clay pottery in the same way that we use plates, bowls and jars and for decorative objects. They would have used their pots to cook in, to store food in, and eat out of. Also, when people died they often had pottery put in their graves, sometimes with cremated people in them.

Archaeologists often dig up pieces of very old pottery from the ground. These pieces then need to be stuck back together, like a jigsaw, so that we can see what the pot would have looked like when it was first made.

Looking at old pottery can tell us how it was made and what materials people used to decorate it. We can also find out where pottery was made by looking at the clay very closely and looking for the type of crushed rock found in the clay. Different types of pots were used for various different things like burials, cooking or for storage.

We can see that people took good care of their pottery and that they liked to decorate it with attractive patterns. This shows us that pottery was very important to people thousands of years ago and that they used it to show they were members of a particular tribe.



An archaeologist uses a brush to gently brush the dirt away from the surface of a pot before it is removed from the ground



This is just one of the pots that were recovered at Lanton Quarry. The pieces were carefully taken out of the ground and glued back together.

In the finds tray there are the broken up pieces of 3 different pots. Carefully cut out the pieces and put them together to see what the pots would have looked like.

