

Publications of the Tell Balata Archaeological Park Project

Eds Hamdan Taha and Gerrit van der Kooij

# TEACHERS HANDBOOK

FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE  
IN PALESTINE, TELL BALATA



Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities – Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage  
Ramallah, 2014

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## **PART A - Introduction**

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**Teachers Handbook for Archaeological Heritage in Palestine, Tell Balata**

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Main Address:  
P.O.Box: 870, Ramallah – Palestine  
Tel: +970 2 240 9891  
Fax: +970 2 240 9560

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The first English version of this Handbook formed the basis for the Arabic edition, which is a translation as well as an adaptation to the Palestinian school situation, and subsequently adapted also this final English version.

The Teachers Handbook is the result of a joint effort of the implementing parties of the project, supplemented by external people and institutions, added for this specific purpose. We are most grateful for the dedication shown by all of them.

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**Dr HamdanTaha and Dr Gerrit van der Kooij, directors of the Tell Balata Archaeological Park project**

# Contents

## **Handbook Part A - Introduction**

Chapter 1 About this book	1
Chapter 2 Why is heritage important?	4
Chapter 3 Timeline: the history of Palestine through its archaeology	6
Chapter 4 The history of Tell Balata	8
Chapter 5 Tell Balata and its cultural landscape: other sites	11
Chapter 6 The history of excavations at Tell Balata and their results.	13
Chapter 7 What do archaeologists do?	16
Chapter 8 Management of archaeological sites	20
Chapter 9 Nature at archaeological sites (particularly Tell Balata).	27

## **Handbook Part B – The Lessons: Text**

Theory behind the sample lessons	37
How to use the sample lessons	38
Sample lessons Age 6-9	42
Sample lessons Age 10-12	46

## **Handbook Part B – The Lessons: Sheets and cards**

Registration card	59
Activity sheets and copy masters: younger children 6-9 years	60
Activity sheets and copy masters: elder children 10-12 years	83
Instruction cards	123
Timelines and timeline cards	133-140

## Chapter 1. About this book<sup>1</sup>

This book is for primary school teachers in Palestine. It provides information on the value of the country's rich historic legacy and how this can be used and preserved.

The information is supplemented with educational material about one of the country's most interesting sites: Tell Balata/Shechem, near Nablus. This is an open invitation to teachers to pass the information on to their pupils.



Figure 1.1 Overview of tell Balata.

### Why is heritage important?

Through the remains of the past, the memory of mankind and the history of a country is passed on to future generations. This heritage gives present day people inspiration and enjoyment and may even contribute to their identity. It is therefore important to take good care of it.

But many remains are in danger of being destroyed. They are being damaged by the natural elements to which they are exposed daily, and by the unintentional or intentional actions of humans. The Palestinian authorities preserve this legacy as much as possible by protecting historic sites and by telling their stories.



<sup>1</sup> The idea for this book and part of the content are based on the Handbook for teachers developed by the Institute of Archaeology of University College London for the site of Ancient Merv in Turkmenistan (Corbishley, M. 2005. Ancient Cities of Merv. Handbook for teachers. Institute of Archaeology, University College London, Ancient Merv Project. London: Palladian Press).

Please see <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/merv> for more information.

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### Why is Tell Balata important?

At school pupils hear stories about the history of their country. The founders and inhabitants of ancient cities like Tell Balata played their part. Knowing about the site and its developments in the past can help inform that history and the remains at Tell Balata can shed some light on the way in which people used to live there.



It is important for today's pupils, tomorrow's adult citizens, in Palestine to learn about these remains, so they can enjoy them, learn from them and help preserve them; and so their children can do so too. It is for this reason the site has been turned into an archaeological park, and this book has been written.

Figure 1.3 Artist reconstruction of a Middle Bronze Age settlement.



Figure 1.4 Children enjoying education at the site.

### Using this book

This book aims to show how the information on Tell Balata can be included in the teaching and education of pupils of various age groups (6-9 and 10-12), and to encourage visits to the site and the visitor centre.



Figure 1.5 Older children (youth) in a classroom setting with Balata lessons.

The book starts with an introduction consisting of:

- An explanation of the value of heritage (chapter 2).
- A timeline showing important historical dates for the Palestine (chapter 3) and Tell Balata in particular (chapter 4).
- The habitation history of Tell Balata (chapter 4), with an explanation of all the historical periods from the Chalcolithic period (4000-3500 BC) to Tell Balata's final destruction around 100 BC; together with its relations - in time and space - with its cultural landscape (chapter 5).
- The history of archaeological research at Tell Balata (chapter 6).
- A section on the work of archaeologists and their techniques (chapter 7). Tell Balata has been studied by archaeologists since the beginning of the 20th century and what archaeologists do is explained in this section.
- The challenges that arise from the wish to preserve archaeological sites for future generations (chapter 8), and how these are handled. Information is included about the UNESCO World Heritage Programme, as Tell Balata (with other sites in the vicinity) is considered of potential universal value and may be inscribed on the list of World Heritage Sites.
- An introduction to the plants and animals that live on archaeological sites today, for example on Tell Balata (chapter 9).

The second part of the book consists of an introduction to the teaching techniques that are used for the lessons, followed by the teaching material. This provides sample lessons that can be used in the class room and in the field, as well as ideas to inspire the development of new lessons.

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## Chapter 2. Why is heritage important?

All people live among the remains of the past. Ruins, historic buildings and ancient landscapes have survived from distant times. But they are more than just material remains. They evidence works of art, mankind's discoveries and spiritual achievements; and also events that we may be less proud of.

This is our heritage. It is the physical record of what a country is and how it came to be. It is central to how people see themselves, to their identity as individuals, as communities and as a nation. It can give people a sense of place, a feeling of belonging, of pride; and it can contribute to the attractiveness of a place to live.

But the importance that we, as individuals, attach to our 'heritage' and what we do with it may differ. Some of us just enjoy its beauty or use it as inspiration; others may see it as scientific, educational and even economic capital. We may for instance invite others (tourists) to share it and simultaneously generate revenue.



**Figure 2.1** Tourists visiting the site.

In whatever way we use our heritage, however, it is important to realise that the legacy is not just ours. The remains have already survived thousands of years and we are only their temporary keepers; they are a non-renewable and often vulnerable resource. If we want future generations to enjoy this treasure too, we must cherish it and take good care of it. By passing it on we also add our message and legacy to the future citizens of the world.

This means that we have to think about the way we can preserve the remains of the past. In many parts of the country the preservation is done through the physical protection of sites; there is a combination of protecting it by law and of regulating its use.



**Figure 2.2** An example of protection at Hisham's palace, Jericho.

At Tell Balata the site has been turned into an archaeological park. In this way it can be both preserved and enjoyed. Improving access to its stories and providing facilities like information boards and signage encourage people to learn about and experience this valuable legacy.

Moreover, members of the local community are invited to participate in its management. Their interests are taken into account in the management policies; their stories about the site are told in the visitor centre; and they can benefit from tourists attracted to their town.

Figure 2.3 Interest in site map on family day.



Figure 2.4 Stories about tell Balata.

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### Chapter 3. Timeline: the history of Palestine through its archaeology

Palestine is part of the land “bridge” between Eurasia and Africa: a narrow stretch of fertile land between the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the desert to the east and south-east. In the remote past this bridge was used by many animals to migrate in both directions, and also by early man to move out of Africa into Asia and Europe. In later times it was a connecting, but also contested, region and a buffer zone between empires in Asia and Egypt (see table) – and again during the period of Western Colonialism. This complicated position is clearly reflected in the timeline.

In order to understand what people did in the past we should start with the geographical landscape of the region they lived in and used. Within Palestine not all the land is fertile, nor is there enough rainfall or available water everywhere for pasture and crops. There are also mountains or hills and low valleys with their varying soils. These differences within the region have inevitably led to migrations and conflicts.

Archaeological research has revealed something of how people lived in this area, how they built their homes, took care of their children, hunted and gathered food; and later how they produced food, made tools, and exchanged or traded their products, even over long distances; how they migrated seasonally with their flocks and herds, or settled to cultivate the land. Also how they managed to live together in small or large groups; but sometimes how there was conflict and even war. People have left not only archaeological remains, but also written records; historical research and archaeological evidence together provide a view of people in the past, what they thought, how they acted, and what they created: their ‘culture’.

The timeline of the history of Palestine, through its archaeology, is summarized in the table below. In this table the following 'rules' are used.

- **Earliest times in the timeline table appear at the bottom; as do the archaeological remains in a tell! The first column shows time in years BC and AD, and the second the archaeological or cultural ages. The earlier periods take their names from the materials developed at the time to make tools: at first stone (lithic material); then stone and copper (chalco-) together; then bronze; followed by iron. For later periods, from Hellenistic times onwards, the predominant cultural influence provides the names: such as ‘Roman’. Each period is generally divided into Early, Middle and Late sub-periods.**
- **The third column shows the developments in the case of Tell Balata.**
- **The fourth column gives an idea about the economy and crafts; what the local people did in the way of trading, as suggested by the archaeological evidence.**
- **The social culture column is also based mainly on archaeological finds, but associated written records can add to the picture of society as well.**
- **The last column shows the empires which ruled the region, and is almost entirely based on written records; however a ruling empire often influences cultural elements, such as housing and weapons, and this is reflected in archaeological remains. In this column appear the names of a ‘people’ mentioned in written records. However mostly such names do not appear, because they cannot be matched to the specific remains. This is especially true if the written record is not from that particular archaeological site, or if it concerns a legendary story. Furthermore the named people may be only a very small part of the population living in a region or town – and not typical of the anonymous mass. The ‘cultural heritage’ of the Iron Age at Tell Balata is almost entirely anonymous!**
- **Looking at the different periods in the rows of the table clear-cut time-limits are suggested, but in reality a society is continuously changing, slowly or quickly. Yet a pattern of change may be seen, for example in the social culture column. It appears that in one period society grows in complexity; then in the following period the greater ‘state’ gradually disappears, apparently because it is no longer needed. Later, complexity may increase again.**

History of Palestine through its archaeology					
Years	Age/period	Tell Balata	Economy, crafts	Social culture	Ruling 'empire'
2000 1900	Modern times	excavations	global market	local states towns + villages	
1500 1000	1516 Ottoman P. Mameluk Period Crusader Period	Balata village	local & tribute economy	villages + towns  villages + castles	Ottoman Turkish  Egyptian
500 AD 1	638 Omayyad P. 324 Byzantine P. Roman Period	farmland ruins	local & tribute economy	towns + villages cities: dense with estates/villas	Arab-Islamic Byzantine Roman
500 1000	Hellenistic P. 586 Iron Age III Iron Age II	town  town village	local & tribute economy	towns, villages  regional states towns	Greek /Persian Babylonian Assyrian
1500 2000	1200: Iron Age Late Bronze Age  Middle Bronze II	city city large walls growing city	iron work trade with Egypt local writing trade with N-Syria	villages/nomadism  city states	  Egyptian
2500 3000	Early Bronze III  Early Bronze II		  trade with Egypt bronze work	villages/nomadism city states?  towns-cities	
3500 4000	Early Bronze I  Chalcolithic Age	1 <sup>st</sup> habitation	  copper work	villages/nomadism  villages	
9000 BC	Neolithic Age		pottery planting/animal keeping flint tools	Jericho walled villages	
before	Palaeolithic Age		hunting, gathering	migrating small groups	

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## Chapter 4. The history of Tell Balata

### The site and its location

Tell Balata consists mainly of the remains of what people built in the past and which then collapsed, like houses (see Ch. 7). People lived there as families, in their houses and in common areas; many of them worked in agriculture and animal husbandry on the land near the village or town. For annual crops like wheat and barley the soil needs to be rather wet during the growing season, in winter. And that is, and was, generally the case. For other agricultural products more water is necessary; or water is needed in summer as well. In that case the fields have to be watered. Water is also essential for animals to drink and for people to drink and wash. Close to Balata were (and are) several springs at the foot of Mount Gerizim. Their water was often channelled into a cistern or trough, from where it could be taken for household, flock or land use. During the two main periods of archaeological excavation in the 20th century no study was made of the plant and animal remains usually found near or inside the remains of houses, so the diets and land-use of the inhabitants are not known in detail.

Tell Balata is also located at a spot from where its people could use and keep watch over a large fertile valley to the east (the Askar Valley – see the regional map of the 1940s, fig. 4-1). The position of the site is very favourable as well because the Askar Valley could only be reached from the west by passing through the narrow valley between Mount Gerizim to the south and Mount Ebal to the north, with Balata guarding its eastern end. Thus when people lived at Tell Balata they could control access to the valley, and through that also control access to the routes further north and east as far as the Jordan Valley, and further south towards Jerusalem. They had a view of the north-south routes through the hill country. It is not surprising therefore that the place became important during some periods; and, indeed, between roughly 1700 and 1200 BC grew into a city, the capital of a city-state; with the wish to expand further, as is known from written sources (the el-Amarna archive, see below).

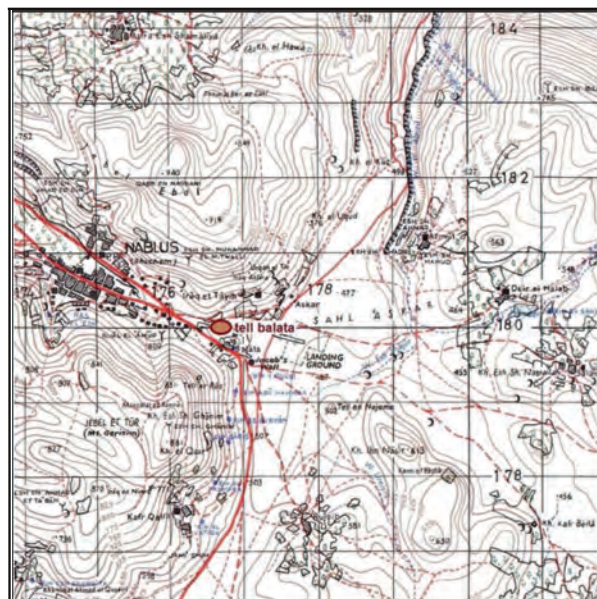


Figure 4.1 Regional map, ca 1940, with Tell Balata added.

### History of the site

The general history of the site shows a very dynamic character: there were periods of intensive habitation (the Middle Bronze Age, part of the Late Bronze Age, parts of the Iron Age and in Hellenistic times) alternated with small scale use when it was uninhabited, with probably only some grazing or other agricultural land use.

Starting with the oldest period the following historical picture appears. The earliest remains of habitation on the site date from around 3500-3000 BC; these clearly indicate village life with local agriculture, probably using additional water sources for the fields. Several flint and pottery tools of flint and pottery were in use, characteristic of the prehistoric Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze I periods.

The study of the archaeological evidence shows the strength of that Middle Bronze Age city, with magnificent buildings for defence and religion. The city shared the characteristic pottery and metal artefacts of the widespread culture of the period, as well as luxury objects of many kinds. These demonstrate the excellent craftsmanship available at the time, and indicate a network of exchange with other people in the Near East and eastern Mediterranean regions. Archaeological study does not (yet) tell us who the people were that brought this urban culture, but written sources suggest an answer. It may be that the Middle Bronze people were those the Egyptians called Hyksos (“rulers from a foreign land”), who became the rulers of northern Egypt, and had probably come from south-west Asia. However it is difficult to be certain of this.

The picture of an important city is repeated in the Late Bronze Age; although the archaeological remains are less impressive for that period, there are strong written sources. Chief among these are the 14th century BC Amarna letters which form part of an archive of the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaton, who lived in El-Amarna city. They include letters from local rulers in Palestine-Syria to their Egyptian overlord. These letters were written in Akkadian cuneiform script, because this was the international diplomatic language and script of the time. The rulers are mainly asking the Pharaoh for help in dealing with invaders. A particular enemy is mentioned: Labaya, king of "Sha-ak-mi"/ Shikmu, who is actively trying to form an alliance with other city states in order to rebel against Egyptian imperial rule. Sha-ak-mi is the same as the biblical Shechem, a town located where Tell Balata presently lies. For this reason the Tell Balata site is now generally identified with historical Shechem and a direct link can cautiously be assumed between the historical evidence of the letters and the archaeological remains of Late Bronze Age Balata; even though the letters were not actually discovered at Tell Balata. However, some clay tablets from about the same time, with the same form of writing, were found there; these deal with local issues. One letter is from a teacher to the father of some of his school children, complaining he has not yet paid him!

The excavated Iron Age remains tell their own story, particularly about the 8th and 7th centuries BC. They reveal a new defence system, but also some housing, with facilities and accommodation. They show tools and jewellery that were used. It is not possible to give the people living there a general group name, although this is often done based on biblical and historical narratives. These narratives however need to be historically understood first. Also found were some seals, originally used to make an imprint on a piece of clay (forming a bulla) to secure a letter. Some of the seals have a very specific Assyrian (Mesopotamian) or Persian figure carved on them, or even a name. The owners may indeed have had those 'population group' backgrounds, but the seals may also have been used by other local dignitaries – it is difficult to say.

Similarly, although a particular group of people used a certain house plan or other artefact, such as pottery, quite a different group may have produced them. An example of this is the pottery used during the period of the Persian Empire. Some pottery found in Tell Balata from that period was made in Greece, and brought to Palestine. A possible reason for this is that Greeks coming to the region as soldiers preferred their home type of pottery. However non-Greek people living there may have used it as well. Thus the discovery of Greek pottery does not necessarily mean that Greek people were using it!

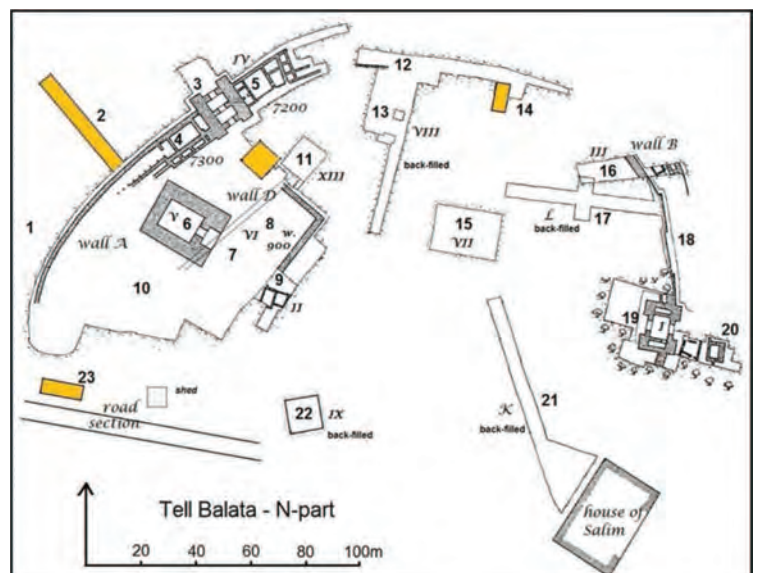


Figure 4.2 Tell Balata research areas (the 2011 trenches are filled yellow).

The following chronological table follows the same timeline as used in Ch. 3, but now discusses what happened on the site, with reference to the location where remains have been found and where they are visible today (see a plan of the site, fig. 4-2). Occasional reference is made to the American strata system used. Some of the remains are illustrated. The last column refers to events as well, but through the objects or artefacts that have been found. Some of these are illustrated or can be seen in the exhibition.

Chronological schema Tell Balata		
Period \Features	What happened? Where found: Area nr; still visible: <u>Area nr.</u>	Objects/artefacts found (Area nr); Visible in Museum ( <u>Area nr.</u> )
20 <sup>th</sup> cent	Glass factory (at NW-edge); garage to north. American excavations and dumps. German excavations and dumps.	Glass samples (2); garage waste (2).
c.1850 Ottoman Mameluk Umayyad	New village of Balata; agricultural use of site Cemetery (22)	Some Mameluk material.
<b>Roman/Byzantine</b> Post 100 BC	Some inhabitation at S-edge of site; graves	Lamps
<b>Hellenistic</b> Ptolemaic/Seleucid ca. 325 BC	Destroyed c. 100 BC. City: rebuilding of fortifications (16), with tower addition (20); housing (9, 15, 16, 23 reused)	Ptolemaic and Seleucid coins (15); lamp (23); column base (15); many tools in rooms (15); jars (9).
<b>Iron Age III</b> Str. V (Persian period) c.600 BC	Town, with housing (9, 23) ...	Attic pottery; handles with Judaic, Persian seal impressions, Persian bulla, Greek coin (15); bottle /lamp /handle with 3 indentations (2).
<b>Iron Age II</b> Str. VII Str. VIII Str. IX c. 950 BC	Revealed by German excavations (17, 18, 21). 8 <sup>th</sup> century 4-room house 1727, yard (15- <u>sect</u> ) (9). House with vat & platter installation (15). Buildings all over the site, casemate wall (4), granary (6), planned housing (terraces at 15, 22). Some housing, e.g. with bin & vat (15).	Many 7 <sup>th</sup> century BC objects. Assyrian palace ware; Hebrew seal (15); Assyrian seal (from 4-room house, 15); grinding tools; house 'altar' (17); Samaria-ware (6); stamp seal (11); flint sickles (11); fibula (23).
<b>Late Bronze Age</b> till c.1150 BC [connection with Amarna letters] c.1450 BC	Two fire destructions towards end of period. City with reuse of city walls and gates (3 and 19 with new tower) after rebuilding. Fortress temple rebuilt (smaller, 5 <sup>o</sup> turned), with altar, stele in forecourt; sanctuary in (22), stele. Levelling and new housing, with cellar (11), 14, 15, 16, 21; kiln (11) for bricks?	Str. XI pottery (11). Cylinder seal (Mid-Assyrian). Varied pottery (11+11; 14), bronze figure (15), cuneiform tablets (21, 11), clay weapon mould (21); <i>bullae</i> in kiln (11); bone point /stone hanger /hammer stone /drill stone (14).
<b>Middle Bronze IIC</b> c.1550 BC Str.XV c.1650 BC Str. XVI	Ending by massive general destruction (by Egyptians?), burnt (for example at 16). City with walls A (cyclopean, 1) and B (18, 16, 17, 21?); NW-gate (3) with to W (4) 1 <sup>st</sup> a plaza +altar, then 'rooms', and to E (5) rooms; E-gate (19); chalk rampart (2 SE-end); <i>fortress temple</i> with <i>stelae</i> (6); housing (11, 15, 22, 23?).	Near steps of E-gate (19) pottery, with human and animal bones on cobble floor. Cooking pot, and basalt tripod on floor (16); <i>chocolate-</i> <i>on-white</i> pottery. House (11) with bone inlay box, scarab-seals, dagger, and <i>astragali</i> (game pieces).
<b>Middle Bronze IIB</b> Str. XVII-XX c.1750 BC	City with wall C-rampart (4, 5, 6, 23?), temple on platform, holy enclosure (8) with <i>tannur</i> , street and walls D and 900; jar burials (8); housing (11, 22).	Bowls, store jars (8), beads (with jar burial); store jar with stamp impression (22).
<b>Middle Bronze IIA</b> c.1900 BC	Village to town with platform (6, 7, 8) and domestic housing (22).	Bronze weapons (21).
<b>Early Bronze II-III</b>	No inhabitation.	
<b>Early Br. I</b> Str.XXIV <b>Late Chalcolithic</b> 3500 BC	Village alongside the bottom of the valley, near the spring ' <i>ain balata</i> : areas 6, 8, 22, 23.	Flint adze (11), sickle blades, knives; pottery sherds (23).
<b>Bedrock</b>	Reached in areas 2 (NW-part), 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 22.	

## Chapter 5. Tell Balata and its cultural landscape: other sites

People living in a landscape leave traces of what they do there. Most of these traces wear away, or become covered and invisible; but many may remain visible. This is so in the landscape around Tell Balata where many traces of past human presence have remained visible. Some have been studied and are mentioned in the table.

When a settlement site is studied intensively, as Tell Balata has been, it is also necessary to study any remains of human activity in the surrounding area. In this way the settlement site can be seen in its economic and social context. The surrounding land was used for crops and herding; and often the settlement's cemeteries and some of the religious sites were nearby. Through such a study it is also possible to see the village, town or central city (Tell Balata was all these over its life-time) in the context of other villages, towns and cities, with their mutual relationships.

During the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze I periods all villages had similar status, and were generally self-sufficient; although some had a special role. When towns developed during the Early Bronze II and III periods, and again during the Middle Bronze Age, this changed, because in towns more people live together and need organisation and some social stratification. The townspeople have to be supplied with food by the surrounding villages; villagers have to produce a surplus above what they need themselves. A market or tax system develops. The organisation becomes more complex as the central town grows into a city, needing more territory to develop, and more people both to produce a surplus and to work for the central government. In turn the city may become a city state, in competition or cooperation with other city states.

The American archaeological expedition did a "survey" of the area around Tell Balata up to a distance of ca. 10 km, except to the north, where a distance of ca. 4 km was covered. The purpose of the survey was to describe tombs, fortresses, settlements and other sites, and date them (Campbell 1991). Others have provided additional information.

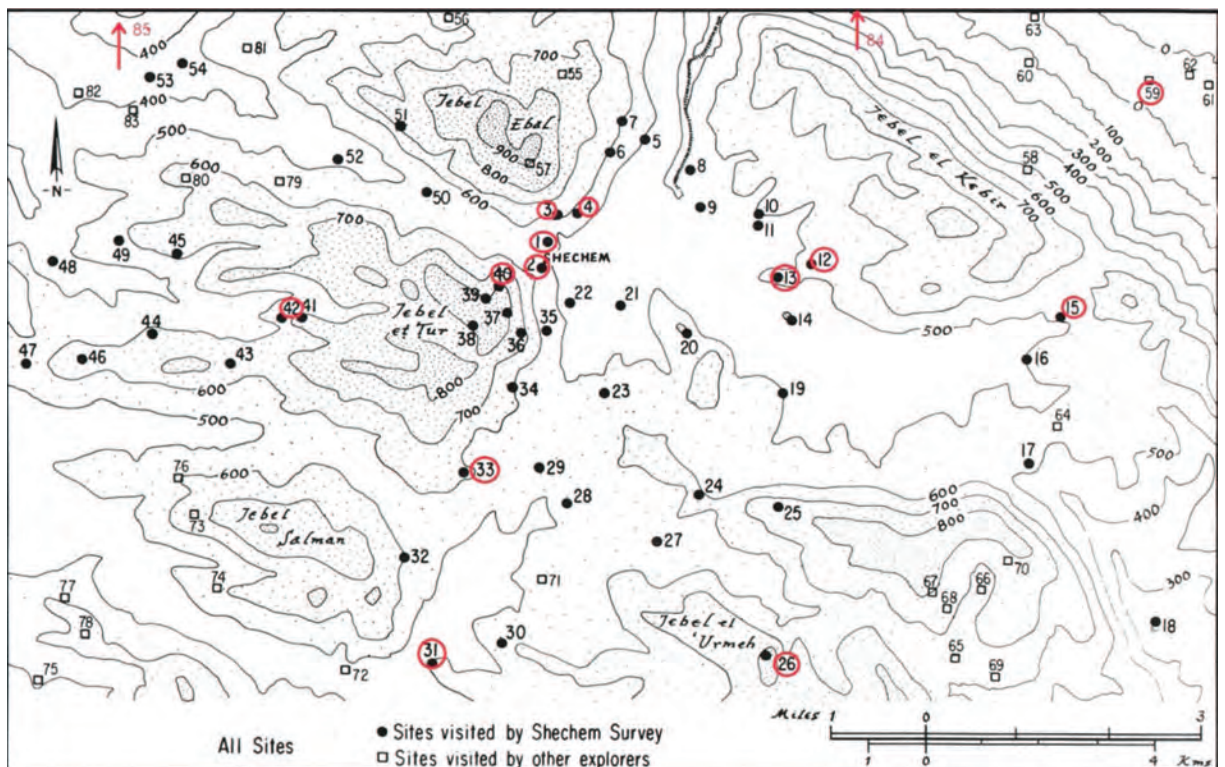


Figure 5-1 Map of surroundings of Tell Balata with encircled numbers of sites mentioned in the table.

In the table below some of the 'sites' (such as settlements, tombs etc.) found in the area around Tell Balata are ordered according to time periods and thus synchronised with the development of Balata itself. The table clearly shows, for example, that several other villages existed during the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze I times; that some Early Bronze III towns developed; but that in this early period Tell Balata did not urbanise. On the other hand it is apparent that other villages existed during the Middle and Late Bronze Age when Tell Balata was a city; and that there was another important town, Tell el-Farah, further away. The same applies to the Iron Age, when another town, Sebastiya-Samaria, was the capital of the region. In Roman times, however, when city life in general was booming, Tell Balata was not part of that.

It should also be noted that the lower slope at the foot of Mount Ebal has been attractive as a cemetery during many periods: the rock was suitable for this, but in addition the mountain may have had a special religious value in the minds of the people of the different periods.

Survey of 'sites' around Tell Balata (numbers on map)				
Years	Age/period	Tell Balata 1	Within 5 km distance	Up to c. 10 km
present 1900				
1500 1000	1516 Ottoman P. Mameluk Period Crusader Period	Balata village	Nablus' soap factories  Nablus; Jami el-Kebir Jacob's well church (restored)	
500 AD 1	638 Omayyad P.  324 Byzantine P. Roman period	farmland ruins	Tombs at foot of Ebal, Iraq et-Tayyih 3 Tell erRas Zeus temple40; Hyppodrome, Neapolis (72 AD); theatre; tombs	Sebastiya 85
500 BC 1000	Hellenistic P. 586 Iron Age III Iron Age II	town  town village	Gerizim Samaritan town 39; Ebal tombs Tombs at S-foot of Ebal; Askar 4  Tombs at foot of Ebal	Sebastiya 85 Tell el-Farah 84
1500 2000	1150: Iron Age Late Bronze Age  Middle Bronze II	city large walls growing city	Kh. Shuweihah 15 Kh. Sur 42 Cemetery at foot of Ebal ['rich' tombs] Kh. Shuweihah 15, Urmeh 26, Tananir 2	Tell Miskeh 59, Tell el-Farah 84
2500 3000	Early Bronze III  Early Bronze II		Kh. Sur 42 Kh. Makhneh el-Foqa 33 Salim 12	Tell el-Farah 84
3500 4000	Early Bronze I  Chalcolithic Age	1 <sup>st</sup> habitation	Tombs at foot of Ebal Tananir 2; Beit el-Khirbeh 31; Kh. el-Sheikh Nasrallah 13	
9000 BC	Neolithic Age			
before	Palaeolithic Age			

## Chapter 6. The history of excavations at Tell Balata and their results.

### Interest in Tell Balata

Research interest in Tell Balata started in 1903 with the proposal of the German scholar Thiersch to identify the ruins of the site with the remains of Shechem, a city known from biblical stories and thought up until then to be at Nablus. In fact, from the beginning of the 19th century it was an intensive scholarly task internationally to identify ruins and sites in Palestine with place names in historical sources. Such identifications had already been made in the early Christian periods so that pilgrims could visit holy sites, places where events had occurred of significance in their religion. The renewed study of identifications in the 19th and 20th century centred on historical sources. On the maps of Palestine historical identities were placed besides the current local name of a village, town or ruin.

### Archaeological excavation: Method 1, long trenches

Archaeologists also became active in Palestine in the late 19th century. They saw that identification might be tested by excavating long trenches through the site to see whether it had the same character, for example, a town as mentioned in historical and biblical texts, and of the same period. The German scholar Sellin was such an archaeologist and had confirmed the identification of Tell es-Sultan with Old Testament Jericho. He came to Tell Balata in 1913 and 1914 to expose more of the long curved city wall (Area 1) that had been described by Thiersch; to excavate parts of the discovered NW gate and some buildings nearby (between Areas 4 and 11); and to dig one of his long 5 m wide trenches (Area 13). He confirmed Thiersch's identification. The long narrow trench method allows a quick view of what the tell contains: does it have a town wall? small or large buildings? are these features at different depths, therefore from different periods? At the same time all kinds of objects, such as pottery and metal tools can be found. Added advantages are that only a narrow strip of land needs to be rented from the owner and many workers can be hired who do not need much supervision or staff.

### Archaeological excavation: Method 2, complete exposure of building remains

Sellin continued excavations in 1926, but now with the Dutch historian Böhl and later the German archaeologist Welter. He again used some long 5 m wide trenches, and again many important objects were found such as clay tablets with ancient writing on them, but also large quantities of pottery sherds. However, it became clear that the narrow trenching method also had its disadvantages. Using that method exposed only small parts of building remains and these were often not well recorded before removing them so as to dig down further. Objects discovered were removed from their context, making it unclear to what building or level they originally belonged. Architect-archaeologists were particularly critical of this and chose an architectural method which had already been practised by the American archaeologist Reisner at Sebastiya. This method involved enlarging a test trench (this was done in area 13) or starting with a large surface right away, and exposing the remains of buildings completely. These remains were also drawn in detail before being removed to enable excavation further down – if going deeper was actually necessary. In this way objects could be kept in context; so pottery found in a specific room was recorded as that. This method demanded more attention and precision while digging, so more staff were needed, with 100-150 workers loosening and removing soil and identifying objects.

### Archaeological excavation: Method 3, more stratigraphic information

The Joint American expedition, led by G. Ernest Wright, started in 1956 and 1957 with an advanced version of the architectural method, giving more attention to detail while digging and recording. The expedition was also more aware of the value of pottery (including odd sherds) as a means of dating, as demonstrated by the American scholar Albright. However the British archaeologist Wheeler had shown that the 'stratigraphic' method is much more reliable for dating materials and buildings. This method involves the careful recording of layers of soil and debris revealed with walls and pits, and in which objects are embedded (see Ch. 7). This method was used in Palestine by another British archaeologist Miss Kathleen Kenyon at Tell es-Sultan, Jericho, from 1952 to 1958, and was adapted for tell-excavation. It was largely used by the Joint American team in its work at Balata from 1960 to 1973, including making drawings of the sides of the pits dug through the layers of soil and debris to provide a vertical section.

A narrow “wall” (called a baulk) was left between adjacent pits, until the sections had been drawn (see chapter 7; for examples, see Fig. 6-1).

Of course this method demanded an even larger and more qualified staff, to ‘read’ and draw these sections in combination with detailed architectural plans. It also demanded rigorous recording of the objects in their context, i.e. the layer in which they were found. The reading of pottery sherds, attributing them to a certain cultural period, remained necessary to confirm the dating in the stratigraphic chronology.



**Figure 6-1 Area 15 (American trench VII) excavated in 1960, 1962 and 1964, with baulks partly still standing.**

### **History of Interpretation**

The excavation methods changed as a direct result of scholars studying the past asking new questions which demanded a more precise answer from excavating archaeologists; for example, about the time and context of a specific recorded object. The interpretation of the remains of what people made in the past, the ‘discoveries’, depended on those questions and their answers. The questions and answers were an integral part of the research framework, all directly related to the purpose of the research. Most of the changes in archaeological methods used in Palestine during a century of research can be seen at Tell Balata.

Where the primary questions involved the identification of a site with a biblical or historical place the framework was the study of theology, rather than that of past cultural systems. The excavation method was accordingly based upon a few criteria for identification (other than the history of the place name), such as site character (walled or not; was there a palace, etc.) and period. Other discoveries, such as objects and house remains, did not get enough attention to allow more than a very general interpretation, and were used mainly for chronological purposes.

Archaeologists, however, wanted to understand those discoveries better, focussing first on those involving architecture and the function of a building - an approach and framework already practised in the so-called classical archaeology of the Greek and Roman world and subsequently in Egypt.

Although this approach made the archaeologist potentially independent of historical sources and questions, the main framework and paradigm for interpretation remained the historical view of the past. This tension is tangible at Balata in the conflict between the theologian Sellin and the classical archaeologist Welter, who was considered to be a more objective archaeologist. The conflict concerned the interpretation of the “fortress temple” and the vertical stones in front of it as religious features or not. The ‘remains’ were described quite precisely, but the interpretation of what they were, why they were made, and their use, caused a great conflict.

Such conflicts among scholars occurred throughout the history of archaeology, even to this day. They are caused by two approaches of the archaeological past. One approach has its background in history writing, by which written sources were taken as primary ones and archaeological data had to fit the historical picture. The other approach came from geology and started archaeological work in Palestine in the mid-19th century. These archaeologists discovered remains from ancient men, such as hand axes, especially in caves, and wanted to know how these pre-historic people lived. Since no written sources existed, they needed other data to understand the remains they found. Thus this ‘pre-historic archaeology’ developed methods to interpret the remains, and find out how tools were made and used, what kind of economic and even social life the remains reflected, for example. For such interpretations more archaeological data are needed, which means more careful excavation methods. Also use is made of comparisons of human behaviour and culture from anthropological studies. In this way archaeology became able to ‘reconstruct’ human societies, independent from written records. This also occurred in Palestine.

During the 1950s archaeology in Palestine became potentially more scientific, using excavation methods and goals from European prehistory archaeology, where there are no written sources to be considered. The stratigraphic method of excavation and recording, as used in geology, gave the archaeologist an independent tool to fix relative chronology ('this is older than that'). For fixing points of absolute chronology ('so many years ago') the scientific device of carbon-14 analysis was soon added, enabling further 'independence'. It was not only architectural remains and all sorts of mobile artefacts that were collected; in addition evidence of people's diet, namely animal bones and (carbonized) plant remains, was identified and this made possible an interpretation of population's basic economy.

These methods were first used in Palestine by Kathleen Kenyon in her work at Tell es-Sultan in the 1950s, but it took another 20 years (and more) to make use of the new approach of anthropological archaeology; this ensured that all aspects of human life and culture, as known from anthropology, were considered in the collection and interpretation of remains. Thus the discipline of archaeology was able – to some extent – to put forward (re-) constructions of both the economic and social life of past societies.

At Tell Balata the American expedition gradually took on these changes and recognised archaeology's primary task to interpret discoveries objectively, independent of historical and biblical paradigms. For a scholar like Campbell a dialogue between archaeological views and historical views is therefore required – in Campbell's words: archaeological 'conversations with texts'.

In our current approach (cf. Ch. 4) to assessing the results of archaeological research at Tell Balata, and their presentation to the public, we give priority to archaeological interpretation, and are hesitant to have 'a conversation with' historical views and data, especially when these are difficult to assess as historical sources. At the same time we are aware it is impossible to be absolutely certain about the historical values in our 'constructions' of the past, given the influence of fashions and incompleteness in our view of past societies.

This relativism in our view of the past has an important effect on how we look at the archaeological data resources, the archaeological heritage from past societies. Since our answers and views on past societies are not the final ones, the archaeological remains should be protected against further deterioration. This recognition and our wish not to patronize the public with a particular view about the past underpin the 'heritage-site management plan' within the Tell Balata Archaeological Park Project. This should be evident in the Visitor's Centre where interpretations of the archaeological remains of the site are discussed.

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## Chapter 7. What do archaeologists do?

Archaeologists can be seen as people who excavate a site, make notes and drawings, find objects, take them away and study them; perhaps display them in a museum, or just store them somewhere for study purposes. The romantic view that archaeologists only find treasures belongs to the past.

What do archaeologists really do and why? We try to answer these questions now; first by discussing what archaeology is and why it is practised, then how it works, what archaeologists do – in the field and subsequently in the laboratory or at their desk.

### What is archaeology?

Historians study the past through contemporary written documents. Archaeologists also study past societies, but primarily through material remains.

Societies of the past, composed of people and groups, are like modern individuals and societies.

In modern society people live and think and do things – often resulting in something tangible or visible. For example a mother cooks a meal – she uses the knowledge in her mind to do this; she carries out the actions of making the food in the kitchen; the result is a visible meal for the family to eat. This process also applies to a potter making pots ('artefacts'= man-made) in his workshop; the pots are then sold to someone who uses them in a household: for storage, for cooling drinking water, for cooking, or for serving food at table. On the pots one may still see traces of how they were made; and after a period of use one may see signs of wear, showing how they were used.

The same applies to a house, which is also an 'artefact', with different spaces or rooms for different living purposes. It even applies to a street or a whole village. One can see how they are designed and constructed, and also often how the spaces are used. In a house or street, the wear on the walking surfaces, or the presence of objects and refuse material, indicate to some extent what people (and their animals!) have done there. From these things it is possible to recognise a room for storage, for cooking, for sleeping, or for keeping animals.

In past societies the same was done, but only remains are left. Thus archaeologists study past societies by studying the material remains that have been left. These remains are the end result, on the one hand, of human handling which is guided by thinking, and on the other hand of physical and biological processes affecting the materials. For example, the remains of a meal are rarely found but the ingredients and method of preparation may be determined. Pots can be analysed for signs of how they were made, and how they were used. If only sherds are found one has to start with reconstructing the original pot.

The same applies to houses and separate rooms, to a street, and in fact to a whole village or town with its distinct public and private buildings; and even to a piece of land which has been used for agriculture or for grazing herds!

### What are excavations?

Many remains from the past can still be seen on the surface of a landscape, like an old house, an irrigation canal, or objects that were used in a house for many generations. One may also find such remains in caves; sometimes visible lying or standing there, but sometimes covered with accumulated debris from the roof or from animal activity. However many remains are to a greater or lesser extent buried under their own debris or under the successive (ruined) buildings of later inhabitants. This is the case with tells. Consequently with tells, and also often with caves and collapsed buildings, archaeologists have to excavate to find the remains.

'Remains' are not just walls, floors and objects of various kinds. People have also left other evidence of their activities: the walls were made in a special way with specific materials; the rooms and floors were used for a specific purpose ('use of space'); objects were made and used in specific places, which is their context. An archaeologist must pay attention to contexts in order to understand what people did in a room or an outside space, and why an object was in a specific place (its functional one, or its refuse one!).

An archaeologist must also pay attention to such contexts as debris and wash layers, and pit-fill etc., for chronological reasons. Dating the remains is very important, because people of one society were active at a certain time. The remains of their activities should not be mixed with those of people who lived earlier or later, because they may have had a different lifestyle. Remains from the same time give a synchronic view, but remains from successive times give a diachronic view, showing changes over time. Excavations look for both synchronic coherence and diachronic coherence in the remains.

This means that excavations have to analyse the 'body of soil and debris' and differentiate between accumulations (called 'sediments' or 'deposits') of soil or stones. Excavations also have to identify where parts of layers of soil and debris have been disturbed, through being removed for levelling or pit-making, then being covered or filled again by new sediments. The best practical way of analysing such a body of soil for its accumulation units (walls, pit-fills, debris, etc.), is to mark out a grid of (e.g.) 5m x 5m squares over it and excavate these squares. However a partition 0.5 or 1 m wide (called a baulk) between the squares should not be excavated immediately, but left standing in order to study the resulting vertical sections through the soil layers and to record them.

The excavation should proceed in a controlled way. This means that excavating a square has to start with a test trench, in order to explore the layers there (stratigraphy), and identify and number them. This makes it possible to predict to some extent the other parts of that square so that the numbered layers may be excavated separately. And so forth.

In each square the four vertical sections through the deposits are the main stratigraphic evidence, but often secondary sections have to be added. All sections have to be drawn to scale (for example 1:25) for recording; as do plans of walls, pits, etc., and often also groups of objects on a floor. The documentation also includes descriptions of the layers and photographs; this forms the basis for further stratigraphic and chronological analysis and possible alternative conclusions. Such records are essential because the excavations had actually removed the original body of soil, destroying the original system of layers!

In this way successive synchronic views of 'use of space' can be constructed, together forming a diachronic (changing) picture.

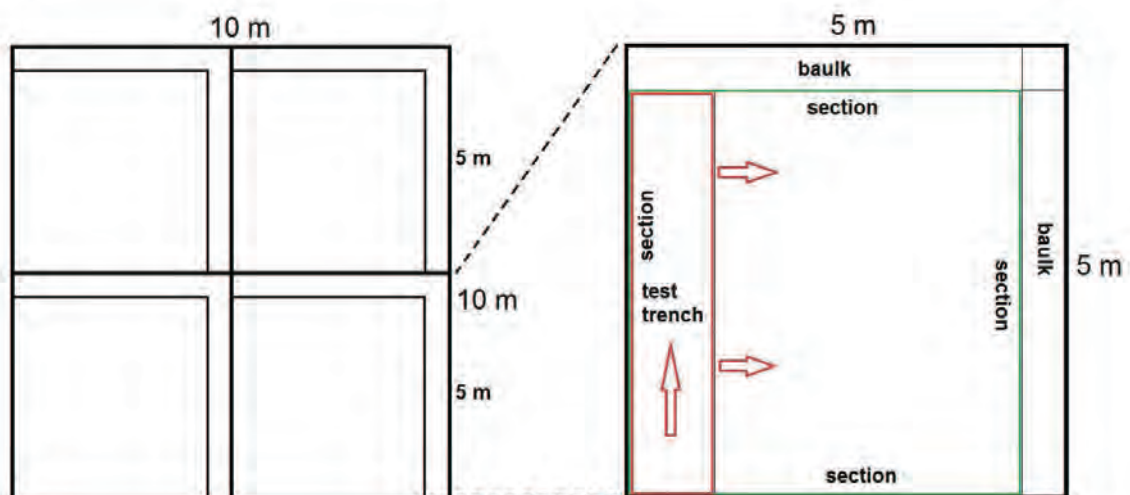


Figure 7.1 Laying out four squares of 5x5 m on a tell surface, and how to start work in one of them (enlarged).



Figure 7.2 Work in two squares of 5x5 m had started by excavating in a 4x4 m part, with a test trench in each square.



Figure 7.4 Some of the excavation tools.



Figure 7.3 Excavating in four squares, of with two are on a steep slope. Note the excavation tools, and also the original stone wall foundation in foreground and a baulk to its left. Note that shadow is provided by nets supported by poles.



Figure 7.6 Soil brought to a dump place.



Figure 7.5 Removing loosened soil and make notes of progress and stratigraphy.



Figure 7.7 Measuring levels inside a square.



Figure 7.9 A tagged bucket with pottery from one 'locus' or layer (in this case from Area 14, Square 1, Locus 7; this is the first bucket with sherds from that locus).



Figure 7.12 Excavated objects (many are of different kinds of stone) are registered and described, and put in plastic bags with tags.



Figure 7.8 Making an accurate plan drawing to a scale of 1:25 on mm-paper. Also the sides of a square, showing vertical sections through the layers of soil and stones, are projected on paper in this way.

Figure 7.10 Pottery from a bucket being washed with a brush and put in de net-bag to dry; for fast drying the sherds will be spread on a clean surface in 'camp'.



Figure 7.11 Pottery selection and 'reading', and filling in of pottery sheets.

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## Chapter 8. Management of archaeological sites

### Threats

Today, most archaeological sites consist of stone structures. They are the ruins of buildings that were once used by its inhabitants: houses, city gates, ceremonial sites etc. Often the upper parts of the walls were made of mud bricks so not much of these, nor of the roofs, is left.

It is hard to imagine that these stones and structures, that look so robust, are actually fragile. However, they are constantly exposed to sun, rain, wind, frost, animals, plant roots and people; all agents that may cause damage and erosion. As the process of erosion is gradual, it is not very apparent, but it is certainly destructive.



Figure 8.1 The main entrance gate with traces of mud bricks left on top of corners.

### Vegetation

Plants can harm the structures with their roots; these can grow through the buildings and the remains that are still buried. Plants can also keep the stones wet; in freezing conditions the moisture turns into ice and expands, worsening damage like cracks.



Figure 8.2a Plants covering the stones.

### Water

Little parts within the structures can be washed away and heavy rainfall can destroy them completely. Mud streams can undermine the foundations of walls so that they collapse.

### Wind

Wind can carry sand and dust; this blasts against the stones and abrades them. The wind can also blow rubbish like paper and plastic on to a site.



Figure 8.2b Almond tree in the wall.

**Heat and cold**

The sun warms the stones by day; the cold at night cools them down. These large differences in temperature can cause stones to crack and crumble.



**Figure 8.3 Collapsed retaining wall from the 1960s.**

**Animals**

There is often an abundance of wild fauna (birds, reptiles, insects, etc.) on archaeological sites. Like the plants, these animals are part of the environment that has to be respected. But their presence must be monitored, because animals can dig holes and tunnels in the earth under the stones of walls; eventually the stone structures may collapse if the tunnels are too many or too large.



**Figure 8.4 Animal hole in the site.**

**Human forces**

The largest threat to a site, however, is human behaviour. First of all, excavations expose the buried remains of stone, clay and soil, making them vulnerable to damage. Sites then often suffer from both neglect and over- use. If many people walk on the same pathways, they can leave deep tracks.



**Figure 8.5a Graffiti.**

In the case of Tell Balata, a fence was constructed in 1996 to protect it. The people living near the site looked after it as well as they could, but eventually needed help from the authorities and conservation experts to prevent further deterioration: stones had been damaged by fires and graffiti and some parts of the site even turned into a rubbish dump.



**Figure 8.5b Fire damage.**

Still larger threats were building and industrial activities. These had gradually surrounded the Tell, encroached on the site and were threatening to take it over.

## Preserving Tell Balata

To enjoy Tell Balata now and to preserve it for future generations, it had to be protected from further damage. Various measures were needed to ensure this.

### Protection

A first step was recognition of the site as a valuable place: a monument deserving special (legal) status. The authorities (Ministry) award such status which protects the site from building activities.

In some cases, such as Tell Balata, this status involves turning the site into an archaeological park.

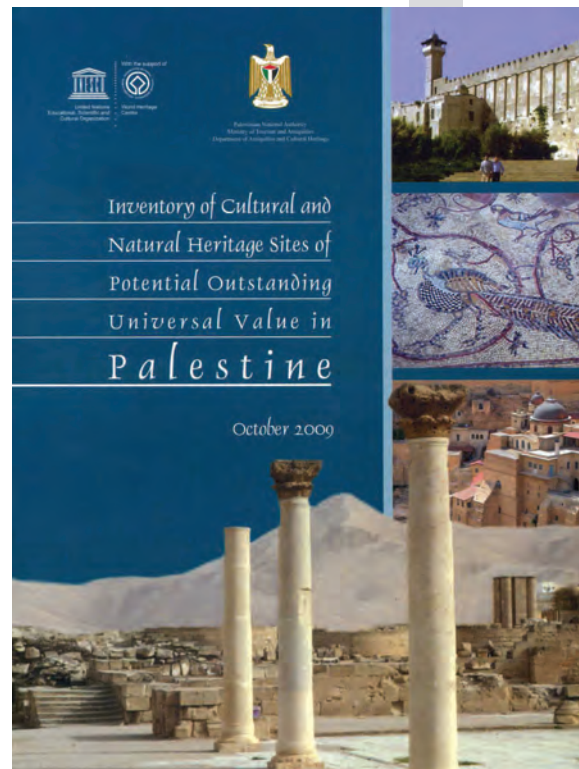


Figure 8.6 The 'Inventory', see p. 26.



Figure 8.7 The visitors centre after its inauguration 24 June 2013.



Figure 8.8 School children helping with clearing the east gate.

**Conservation**

A second step was to stop the physical decay of the ruins. Some of the work done so far includes:

**- clearing plants from the site.**

In spring fresh plant growth was removed and burned. Some school children even helped with this! It instantly made the ancient structures easier to see.

**- clearing waste from the site.**

In 2010 a major cleaning operation took place. Car wrecks, tyres, televisions, and other rubbish were removed.

**- repairing collapsed walls.**

Retaining walls provide support for the structures above them. They also help limit the damage from water erosion, as they redirect rain water away from fragile areas. In 2010 a retaining wall was damaged by heavy rainfall and had to be repaired.

In the future additional conservation measures may be needed, such as backfilling old excavation trenches, building more retaining walls and channelling water and drainage.



Figure 8.9 Volunteers helping with cleaning.



Figure 8.10 Rebuilding of the retaining wall.

**Monitoring and management**

Although the site is now a park and some repairs have been done, the threats are not completely gone. Plants keep growing, rain keeps falling and animals keep living there. Even the people who visit the monument may unintentionally cause damage. They may walk over or sit on vulnerable parts of the monuments. And many people taking the same path can cause erosion too.

Therefore, the archaeological site needs to be monitored, the structures need to be maintained, the visitors need to be guided. Everything needs to be managed. This is a constant process, for which expertise, human labour and finances are needed. The entrance fee that visitors pay and the work of volunteers contribute.



Figure 8.11 A group of tourists on the site.

Managing a site like Tell Balata can be a difficult and complex task. There are never enough resources to solve all the problems and there may be conflicting interests. It is, for instance, important that the people living in the neighbourhood can stay involved with their site. It has a meaning and value for them and they want to be included in its preservation and development, as became clear in the 'oral history' interviews.



Figure 8.12 Maintenance of a fence.

Hopefully the ideal approach will be found in the right combination of conservation techniques and maintenance strategies.



Figure 8.13 The oral history booklet.

**Archaeological trenches**

The archaeological excavations from the 20th century have left open trenches. As they are big and deep, water runs off into them. This attracts vegetation and animals to live there. And people like to throw waste in them. The sides of the trenches are crumbling, exposing and washing down new archaeological material and covering the old material at the bottom. To try to stop this process, some trenches may have to be filled with soil again.



Figure 8.14 An eroded excavation trench of the 1960s.

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## World Heritage

The ultimate step in acknowledging the importance of a site and preserving it, is to gain World Heritage Site status. Such status means that the site is considered of outstanding universal value and that it should be protected as such.

This status can be granted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). In 1972 it adopted the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. With this convention UNESCO aimed to identify and protect cultural and natural places of outstanding value to humanity. The idea of World Heritage is that these are unique places that are not just of national importance but have a universal value. According to UNESCO "They belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located".

### The World Heritage List

The countries which are party to UNESCO and which have signed the 1972 Convention can nominate sites for inclusion in the World Heritage List. They then commit themselves to safeguarding those sites according to international standards. These State Parties are expected to develop management plans, to report on the state of conservation, to promote public awareness for conservation issues and to encourage the participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage. UNESCO provides support for these activities, sometimes through donations from the World Heritage Fund and other organisations.

As Palestine was accepted as a full member of UNESCO on 31 October 2011, it is possible to nominate sites here as World Heritage Sites by placing them on a tentative list.

See Fig. 8.6, and see also <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/state=ps>.

Each nomination is evaluated by an international expert committee before the World Heritage Committee decides on acceptance. Places can only be added to the World Heritage List once a year.

Arabic version of information package:

<http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-567-4.pdf>

English version:

<http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-567-1.pdf>

Literature:

H. Taha (ed.), 2009, Inventory of Cultural and Natural Heritage sites of Potential Outstanding Universal Value in Palestine. Ramallah: Palestinian Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage.



## Chapter 9. Nature at archaeological sites (particularly Tell Balata)

A tell, such as Tell Balata, is a small microcosm of nature. If the site is quiet and not (or hardly) inhabited or cultivated it can provide a home for many species of wild plants and animals, which visitors may come across. Visitors to an ancient site can find the nature of extra interest knowing that people living there in the past saw more or less the same animals and plants.

The species or varieties of plants and animals in a place are mainly determined by the general conditions of soil and climate. So let us consider these general conditions in Palestine first, and then take the case of Tell Balata in its specific 'bioclimatic' zone.

We are now talking biogeography!

The map (fig. 9-1) roughly shows the four bioclimatic zones of Palestine:

**Mediterranean zone**

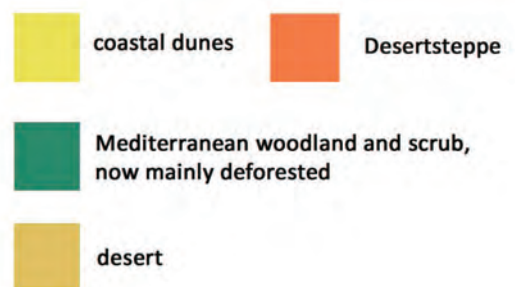
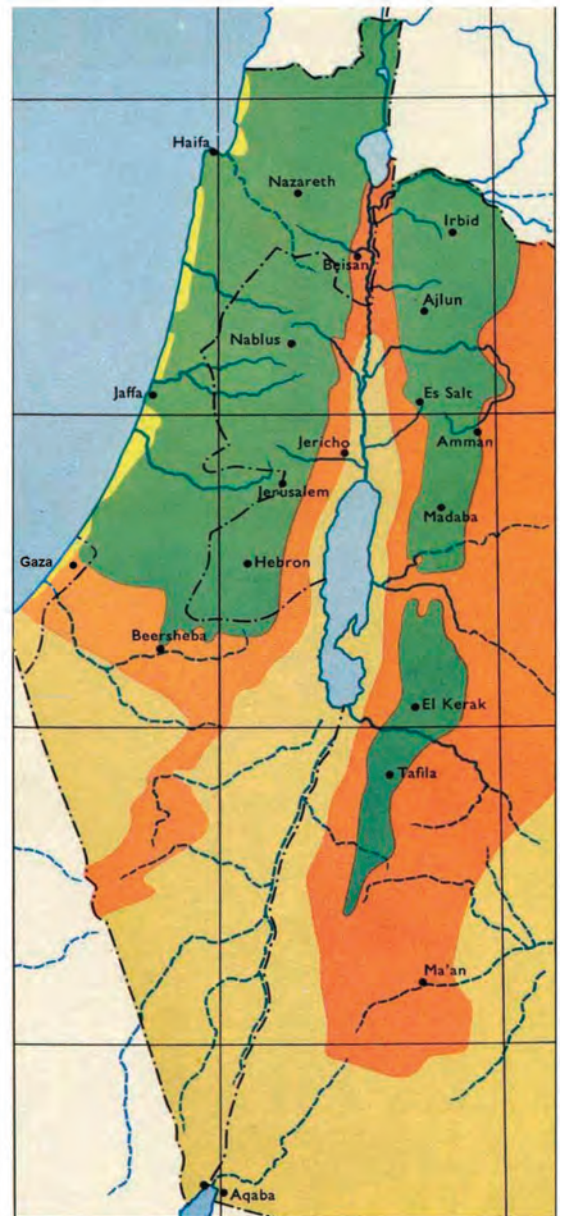
**Steppe zone (Irano-Turanian)**

**Desert zone (Saharo-Arabian)**

**Tropical zone (Sudanian)**

Tell Balata lies at the eastern end of a narrow valley in the mountains, facing a large plain to the east. This region has a Mediterranean bio-climate and (originally!) there was good red soil in the area. The site itself also has some particular mineral content from the clays brought to the site for buildings, from burnt remains and waste material from the past; these may enable some specific plants to grow there. As to the general climatic situation: the site lies at 500 m above sea level, not very far from the Mediterranean Sea, just east of the watershed and close to the rain shadow further east.

Thus on the site some of the wild flora are typically 'Mediterranean', although associated bushes and trees are missing. The few small almond trees, spread by nature over the archaeological site, have been removed for site protection reasons. However the privately owned parts of the site have orchards, mainly of olive trees, but also of fig trees and cactus; or are used as agricultural land to grow cereal crops. Following the first rains of winter, from February to April the site is carpeted with flowers. But soon, in May, this green and vibrant colour-scheme turns predominantly brown and yellow, with only a few colourful plants blooming, such as the Persian cyclamen (pink: *Cyclamen persicum* [qarn al-ghazal]), red corn poppy (red: *Papaver umbonatum* [khishkhash]), large flowered sage (blue: *Salvia indica*), the common or viscous globe thistle



(purple: *Echinops adenocaulos/ viscosus* [qarqafan, qutat, mar'awilah], fig. 9-2 ), spotted golden thistle (yellow: *Scolymus maculatus* [shawkat al-far], fig. 9-3) and especially the wild carrot (white: *Daucus carota* [jazar] fig. 9-4 and 9-5; ancestor of the edible carrot), the scallop leaved mullein (yellow: *Verbascum sinuatum*), the spiky Syrian eryngo (blue-purple, also the leaves en stems: *Eryngium creticum* [shawk al-'arqabani], fig. 9-6) and the caper shrub (white with violet: *Capparis spinosa* [al-aşaf], fig. 9-7). Conspicuous is also the red fruit of the regional 'lords-and-ladies' (*Arum palaestinum* [luf], fig. 9-8).



Figure 9.2 Common or viscous globe thistle.



Figure 9.3 Spotted golden thistle.

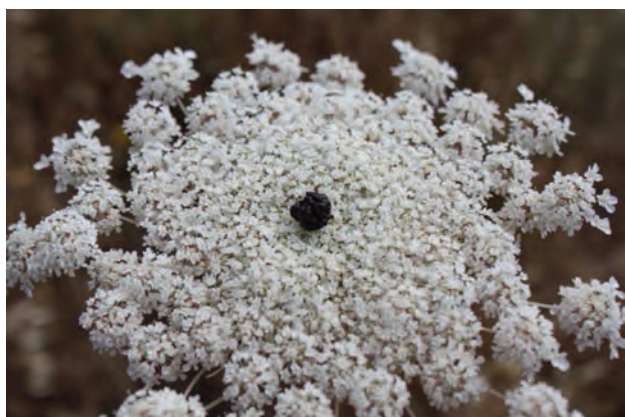


Figure 9.4 Wild carrot.

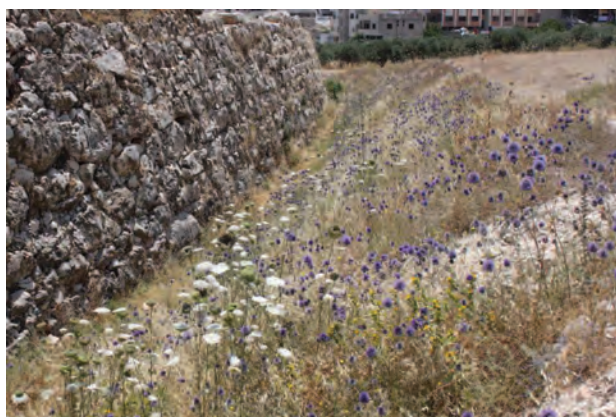


Figure 9.5 Wild carrots and globe thistles.



Figure 9.6 Spiky Syrian eryngo.



Figure 9.7 Caper shrub.



Figure 9.8 *Arum palaestinum*.

The seasons also have their effect on animal life, especially on breeding cycles and feeding opportunities. However quite a variety of animals may be seen at any time. Some are mentioned below, using a simple classification:

*Insects, spiders, millipedes, and other arthropods.*

Many species of these will be visible, although some stay hidden in the soil and rubble. The oriental hornet (*Vespa orientalis*, fig. 9-9), notorious among the bees and wasps with its very poisonous sting may be found nesting on the site! Ants (fig. 9-10) are evident with their tracks and waste areas around their nest-holes (fig.9-11). Several kinds of bees may be spotted on the flowers, and many colourful butterflies will be found as well, such as the blue (*Celastrina argiolus*, fig. 9-12) and the brownish female blue (possibly *Lysandra bellargus*, fig. 9-13). Among the beetles the fast running black pitted beetle (*Adesmia cancellata*, fig. 9-14) is often seen. One may prefer to be careful with the camel spider (fig. 9-15), but it is certainly necessary to be cautious with the scorpion (fig. 9-16).



Figure 9.9 Oriental hornet with chamaeleon.



Figure 9.11 Ants nest.



Figure 9.10 Ants.



Figure 9.12 *Celastrina argiolus*.



Figure 9.13 Blue female.

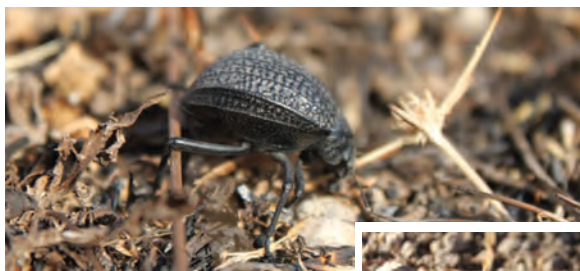


Figure 9.14 Black pitted beetle.



Figure 9.15 Camel Spider.



Figure 9.16 Scorpion.

*Amphibians and reptiles.*

Amphibians (frogs, toads, salamanders) are rarely seen, but some reptiles are regularly seen in daylight, such as the Greek tortoise (*Testudo graeca*, fig. 9-17), the rougtail rock agama (*Laudakia stellio*), the common chameleon (*Chamaeleon chamaeleon*, cf. fig. 9-9), some skinks such as the eyed skink (*Chalcides ocellatus*), and a lizard, the snake-eyed lizard (*Ophisops elegans*). Other reptiles (geckos and snakes) are more active at night, and hide during the day, though some may be seen, such as the Turkish gecko (*Hemidactylus turcicus*, fig. 9-18 – also active in houses), and some non-venomous snakes, such as the Ghamchen snake (*Coluber rubriceps* - also climbs on shrubs and trees!), and the large black fire racer (*Coluber jugularis*, with brown eyes). When digging, the subterranean Eurasian worm-snake (*Typhlops vermicularis*, fig. 9-19), pink and very thin, may be seen. The venomous snakes in Palestine are all vipers, with one cobra, the black desert cobra (*Walterinnesia aegyptia*, with black eyes) in the Jordan Valley. Most vipers live in the steppe and desert zones, but the very poisonous Palestinian viper (*Vipera palaestinae*, with a blocked brown zigzag line on its back) occurs in the Mediterranean zone, even in village areas, looking for mice, rats and birds.



Figure 9.17 Greek tortoise.



Figure 9.18 Turkish gecko.



Figure 9.19 Eurasian worm-snake.

*Birds*

Birds are often more easily heard than seen, but one can expect to spot several common species, including those in villages, like the house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), the spectacled bulbul (*Pycnonotus xanthopygos*, with yellow undertail), and Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), feeding on thistle seeds. The hoopoe (*Upupa epops*, fig. 9-20) is also regularly seen on the site, as is the collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*). The common myna (*Acridotheres tristis*, fig. 9-21 – from India/Iran) nests in a building at the western edge of the site and has become a local resident. Among the many other birds that may be seen on the site is the little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) flying individually or in small groups passing over in an E-W direction, apparently on the way to wet feeding areas and back again.



Figure 9.20 Hoopoe.



Figure 9.21 Common myna.

*Mammals*

Apart from some dogs (fig. 9-22) from the village, which have their dens in holes on the site (fig. 9-23), one may see a few other mammals such as the insect eating Eastern European hedgehog (*Erinaceus concolor*, fig. 9-24), and the mouse-like sharp-nosed Lesser white-toothed shrew, feeding on insects. A rodent, the Egyptian spiny mouse, may also be seen in the stony parts, or the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*).



Figure 9.22 Dog.



Figure 9.24 Hedgehog.



Figure 9.23 Dog's hole.

Publications of the Tell Balata Archaeological Park Project

Eds Hamdan Taha and Gerrit van der Kooij

# TEACHERS

# HANDBOOK

FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE  
IN PALESTINE, TELL BALATA



**PART B - The lessons: Text**

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities – Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage

Ramallah, 2014

## Teachers Handbook: Part B

### Contents

Contents	35
Foreword	36
<b>Theory behind the sample lessons</b>	<b>37</b>
Old Confucian Proverb	37
Theory of Multiple Intelligences	37
<b>How to use the sample lessons</b>	<b>38</b>
Role of the teacher	38
Role of the pupil	38
The sample lessons	38
Plan	38
Age groups	38
Equipment and material resources	39
Visiting Tell Balata Archaeological Park	39
Dealing with differences	39
Aims of the sample lessons	39
Literature	40
<b>Sample lessons</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Sample lessons Age 6-9</b>	<b>42</b>
At school	42
Lesson: Historical context and the Flora and Fauna of Tell Balata	42
In the field	44
Lesson: Archaeology	44
<b>Sample lessons Age 10-12</b>	<b>46</b>
At school	46
Lesson 1: Short visit to the site*	46
Lesson 2: Task rotation lesson on Historical Context	48
Lesson 3: Flora & Fauna	51
In the field	53
Lesson 4: Visiting the site – archaeological context	53
At school	54
Lesson 5: Showing what has been learned	54



## Foreword

In Part A of this Teachers Handbook readers (primarily teachers) learned more about archaeology, heritage, the history and habitation of Palestine and the management of archaeological sites; also about one particular place: 'Tell Balata Archaeological Park'. Part B of this Teachers Handbook aims to help the teachers pass most of this information on to the pupils: the children. This part of the handbook contains:

- The theory behind the sample lessons.
- Explanations on how the sample lessons can be used.
- Sample lessons.
- Instruction cards.
- Activity sheet master copies and answers.

It is important to emphasise that the prepared sample lessons in this book are not fixed lessons which primary school teachers have to use. The book and the sample lessons may be used as given but can also be adapted to the needs of the teacher.



## Theory behind the sample lessons

Preparing lessons for children involves, intentionally or not, an idea or theory about how the minds of children work and how they learn best. This idea or theory is woven into the lessons. Because the prepared sample lessons in this book may be used as given but can also be adapted to the needs of the teacher and the pupils, it is important to have a clear idea of the theoretical basis of these sample lessons; any changes can then be made accordingly.

### Old Chinese Proverb

The involvement of the children is the most important aim. Involvement leads to understanding and remembering. That is why the following old Confucian proverb is central to the sample lessons:

Tell me and I will forget,  
show me and I may remember,  
involve me and I will understand.



The involvement of the children allows them to identify with the topic they are learning about. There are several ways this involvement can be encouraged: for example by letting the children ask questions and by letting them investigate for themselves. The children take on more responsibility, with the teacher as their mentor.

In addition, involvement is encouraged by variety in activity and approach. This principle is also basic to the sample lessons and comes from the following theory.

### Theory of Multiple Intelligences

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences, integral to the sample lessons, was proposed by Howard Gardner in 1983. He is an American developmental psychologist and professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard Graduate School of Education. The theory differentiates between intelligences and identifies at least eight: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Gardner emphasises that every individual has a different brain and records information differently. Some people use linguistic information best; others are brilliant with numbers; others move very well. That is why, in education, it is important to appeal to all the different intelligences. The more this understanding is incorporated into lessons, the more the children will be able to record information and the better they will be involved.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences is most apparent in the lessons for the younger children where the instruction cards suggest activities which address the different intelligences.



## How to use the sample lessons

### Role of the teacher

The teacher can use the prepared sample lessons at will. They may be used as given, but can also easily be adapted to the needs of the teacher and the pupils.

If the teacher does use the lessons unchanged, the role of the teacher is one of a mentor, simply helping and guiding the children. In this way the children have more responsibility and feel more involved. That is why in most of the sample lessons the teacher only gives a short introduction; the rest of the time the children work and investigate by themselves. This does not mean that the teacher can sit back; good preparation and a wide knowledge of the topics are very important.

An essential element of the lessons is the summarising that the teacher does with the children at the end of the session. The pupils recall what they have discovered on the topic; this reinforces learning and remembering.

### Role of the pupil

In the sample lessons the role of the pupils is demanding. The focus is on the responsibility and creativity of the children. The children work in groups and individually, with the teacher as their mentor.

### The sample lessons

#### Plan

Each lesson plan includes the following elements:

- Preparation
- Introduction
- Core
- Ending
- Aims/learning objectives

The time allowed for the lesson is also shown, divided into introduction, core and ending times.

#### Age groups

The sample lessons are designed for different age groups, namely 6-9 (1st Grade) and 10-12 (2nd Grade) year olds. These age limits are set on purpose: younger children are less aware than older children of time and space, particularly history and differing cultures. For a better understanding and wider involvement it is therefore necessary to have different lessons for different age groups. Of course there are always exceptions: some children are already aware of the concept of history by the age of eight, while some ten year olds still have difficulties appreciating time.



## Equipment and material resources

Resources means:

- Hi-tech equipment like computers, projectors, etc.
- Specific resources for a particular lesson.
- General materials.

A CD with presentations and other visual information is included at the inside of the back cover of the handbook. It is desirable that the school has a computer and a projector available as the visual information on the CD will add a lot to the lessons: most children learn better when presented with visual as well as linguistic information.

For some lessons specific resources are needed. The instruction cards, the activity sheet master copies and the timelines are at the back of the book. Other resources like pottery, tape-measures, clipboards, 'Uhu' glue, pencils, crayons, erasers, rulers, etc. should be taken care of by the school.

## Visiting Tell Balata Archaeological Park

For most school classes it will be difficult to visit 'Tell Balata Archaeological Park' more than once; the time it takes, the cost of travel and parking may make repeat visits difficult. For that reason it is assumed that only the archaeological lessons will be done in the field. However, it is recommended that schools sufficiently near the site visit the archaeological park at the beginning of all the lessons (see Sample lessons age 10-12, Lesson 1: Asking Questions).

## Dealing with differences

Every child is different; the lessons take this into account, appealing to most of the eight intelligences described by Gardner. But some children still have more difficulties than others with some subjects and exercises. The lessons are designed in such a way that every child of that age group will be able to make the most of them at his or her own level. Only children with reading difficulties will need extra help.

## Aims of the sample lessons

The specific objectives of each lesson are shown in the lesson plans.

The general aims are:

The children learn about the value of their heritage and surroundings.

The children develop an awareness that people and their ways of thinking change over time and space.

The children develop an awareness of historical issues that are still important like economic relations, warfare, etc.

The children understand more about the society they live in through knowing about its past.

The children learn new ways of gaining information.

The children learn about archaeological techniques.



## Literature

- Bastmeijer, M., *Geschiedenis anders; Prehistorie*, Doetinchem  
Eikeren, M. van, *Pedagogisch-didactisch begeleiden*, Baarn 2008  
Feldman, R.S., *Ontwikkelingspsychologie*, Amsterdam 2008  
Gardner, H., *Frames of mind: the theory of multiple intelligences*, 1983

# Sample lessons





## Sample lessons Age 6-9

### At school

#### Lesson: Historical context and the Flora and Fauna of Tell Balata

This lesson can be presented in different ways; it can easily be adapted for particular teachers and pupils. The different ways are explained in the 'Core' of this lesson.

#### *Preparation*

- Instruction cards. These are cards with the instructions for an assignment. The assignments can be done individually or in small groups. Each assignment addresses one or more of the intelligences differentiated by Howard Gardner.
- CD for the introduction.
- Resources and tools – those needed are listed on the instruction cards.
- Registration card for recording which instruction card has been chosen (see activity sheets and copy masters 6-9 (p.59)).

#### *Introduction (10 min)*

The introduction is twofold:

- Firstly, a short introduction about Tell Balata: a presentation (CD) shows images of Tell Balata.
- Secondly, the teacher explains what is expected from the children, depending on the core being used.

Introduction about Tell Balata:

'Tell Balata Archaeological Park' includes an ancient site first excavated 100 years ago by the Germans; other excavations by the Americans followed and in 2011 Palestinian and Dutch archaeologists undertook further excavations.

The archaeologists found the ruins of old buildings beneath the surface. Settlement started about 6000 years ago and ceased about 4000 years later. It started as a hamlet; in time it developed into a very important town; in the end (2000 years ago) it became an abandoned village.

The site is best known as Tell Balata, but in the past, when it was a thriving city, it was called Shechem, Sichern and Shikmu.

Explanation of the lesson:

The explanation of the rest of the lesson(s) depends on which core the teacher chooses.

*Core (the amount of time it takes depends on the choice made)*

The core of the lesson can be done in three ways:

1) The teacher gives a short introduction to the assignments on all, or a few, of the instruction cards (although showing the children all the cards at the same time could be a bit overwhelming). The children then choose for themselves which instruction card and assignment they want to do. The children also decide if they want to work on the



assignment individually or as a group. The extent to which the teacher guides the 'voluntary choices' of the children depends on the child and the teacher's expectations.

2) The teacher chooses to do the assignment from one instruction card with the whole class.

3) A task rotation lesson is set up with 4 or 5 instruction cards (see, for example, 'Task rotation lesson on Historical Context' for age 10-12, p.48): the class is divided into 4 or 5 groups; each group starts with the assignment from a different instruction card; after a certain amount of time (for example 15 minutes), the children turn to the next assignment. By the end, all the groups will have done the same four or five assignments. Of course for this task rotation lesson it is important to use only the instruction cards with assignments that take about the same amount of time, around 15 minutes.

It is important that the children do most or all of the assignments on the instruction cards. To achieve this the children must be able to work on the assignments more than once; for example, one hour every week, for a month. The registration card, filled in by the teacher or children, keeps track of which instruction cards have been done.

#### *Ending*

When all the children have done most or all of the assignments on the instruction cards, the pupils and the teacher should evaluate what everyone has done and learned. The children display the work they have done on the assignments. In this way the children show their competence and feel recognised; some may be encouraged to do more by seeing the work of others.

#### *Aims*

The aims depend on the core, but in general the aims are:

- The children learn how to work both in groups and individually.
- The children learn how to work with instruction cards.
- The children learn from the instruction cards:
  - About the history of Tell Balata (over its diverse periods). For instance:
    - That there were pots in all eras.
    - That Palestine was part of the Egyptian empire.
    - That the Greeks were in Palestine and started to use coins, instead of exchanging goods.
    - That the Canaanites lived there and made small figurines.
    - That some people living in Tell Balata used to write on clay tablets with cuneiform writing.
  - How to reconstruct a pot from pottery sherds; through this they also learn to look carefully at break lines and decoration.
  - How to write a story with a given theme.
  - How to create a coin for their area.
  - How to work with clay.



- What a mascot is and how to make one.
- How writing can change over time; specifically cuneiform.
- How people can make musical instruments from simple materials.
- How a city can change over time.
- How a map works.
- About the nutrition of the fauna on Tell Balata.

## **In the field**

### **Lesson: Archaeology**

The children have to do various exercises during a visit to the site; the primary aim is to learn about its archaeology.

#### *Preparation*

- Organise enough people to accompany the groups of children.
- Arrange a bus or other means of transport.
- Inform the parents about the school trip and ask them for enough food and drinks for the children.
- Ensure sufficient 1st Grade 'The Young Archaeologist' Activity Sheets, p.67-73.
- Provide 1st Grade 'The Young Archaeologist' maps (p.81, with numbers to questions).
- Supply pencils, crayons, erasers and clipboards.
- Supply enough measuring tapes.
- Take a bell or a whistle, to let the children know when they have to change exercise.
- Make up enough 1st Grade diplomas (p.80) with names and a signature.
- At the site: Discuss with the guard of the Park that the children sometimes need to cross the fence, for the exercises. This is only allowed when the children are with their supervisor and are very careful.

#### *Introduction (10 min)*

First the teacher gives a short introduction on the historical context of the site (see what the children have learned in the Lesson: Historical context); pointing out to the children that most of the ruins they will see are from the Middle Bronze Age (4000-3500 years ago).

After this short introduction the children hear what they will do next. In small groups (no more than 5 children to a group) they will visit different parts of the site. There they will have to answer questions from the activity sheets (so each group needs at least one activity sheet). These exercises are on archaeology and architecture. Each group starts at a different part of the site, and takes a different question. After 10/15 minutes (when the bell or whistle sounds) each group moves on to a new exercise. Preferably each group should be guided by an adult.

The groups find their way to a location using the map of the site. Each location has a number and this number on the map corresponds to the number on the activity sheet.

#### *Core (150 min)*

While the children do the exercises the teacher walks around, answering any questions that there may be. During the visit, after approximately three or four exercises, there will be a break of around 15 minutes for drinks and snacks.



The last, separate, exercise is to draw Tell Balata in olden times when it was an important city. This exercise can be done in the field with Tell Balata in the background, or at school as an ending to the project.

*Ending (including the aims of the lesson) (10-15 min)*

At the end of the project there will be a discussion about the results of the exercises; the extent to which the children have achieved the learning objectives can be evaluated:

- They have learned to read the excavations map.
- They have learned to look carefully at the natural environment.
- They have learned to interpret architectural objects and to think about the functions of a building.
- They have learned to draw what they see.
- They have learned to see the properties of mud bricks.
- They have learned how archaeological excavations are done.
- They have learned to measure architectural objects.
- They have learned to compare different architectural objects.



## Sample lessons Age 10-12

### At school

#### Lesson 1: Short visit to the site\*

\*This lesson is only for schools close to 'Tell Balata Archaeological Park'. As an alternative to visiting the site a presentation from the CD, with pictures, can be shown to give an impression. The children can ask questions.

##### *Preparation*

- Paper with clipboard.
- Pencils and erasers.
- Maps of Tell Balata (one for each pupil or for each pair of pupils, p.83).
- Objects: pp. 91 and 93.

##### *Introduction (10 min)*

As an introduction the teacher tells the children about the site and explains the assignment:

- About the site: The pupils should be given only a little information about Tell Balata; then they can remain more open-minded. The only thing the children need to know is that the name of the site is Tell Balata, that it is a very old place, and that most of the stones they will see are from ruins.
- Assignment: the children will be given a piece of paper on a clipboard, a pencil, an eraser and a map of the site. They should walk around and look at the features of the site. Whenever they have a question about what they see, they should write it down, give the question a number and mark the same number on the right spot on the map. The children should do this individually or in pairs to encourage better observation. Before they start it might be necessary to explain how the map works. That can be done by walking around the site with the children and letting them follow the route on the map.

##### *Core (30 min)*

The children walk around, write down their questions on the piece of paper and mark the question number on the map near the feature they have a question about.

Questions that might occur to the children are:

- What kind of building is that?
- What was the purpose of that building?
- Who lived there?
- How did the people live?
- How important was this settlement?
- Which animals live here?



*Ending (5 min)*

The papers with their questions are collected. By the end of the series of lessons, the questions will have been answered. The answers will mostly be supplied by the children (as a group) themselves, because they will have learned a lot during the lessons. Questions that are harder may have to be answered by a specialist, for example at the Visitors Centre.

*Aims*

- The children become enthusiastic about the site and about what they are going to learn; letting the children ask questions themselves about the site encourages them to become more involved.
- The children learn to look at things critically.
- The children learn to ask relevant questions.
- The children learn to read a map.



## Lesson 2: Task rotation lesson on Historical Context

### Preparation

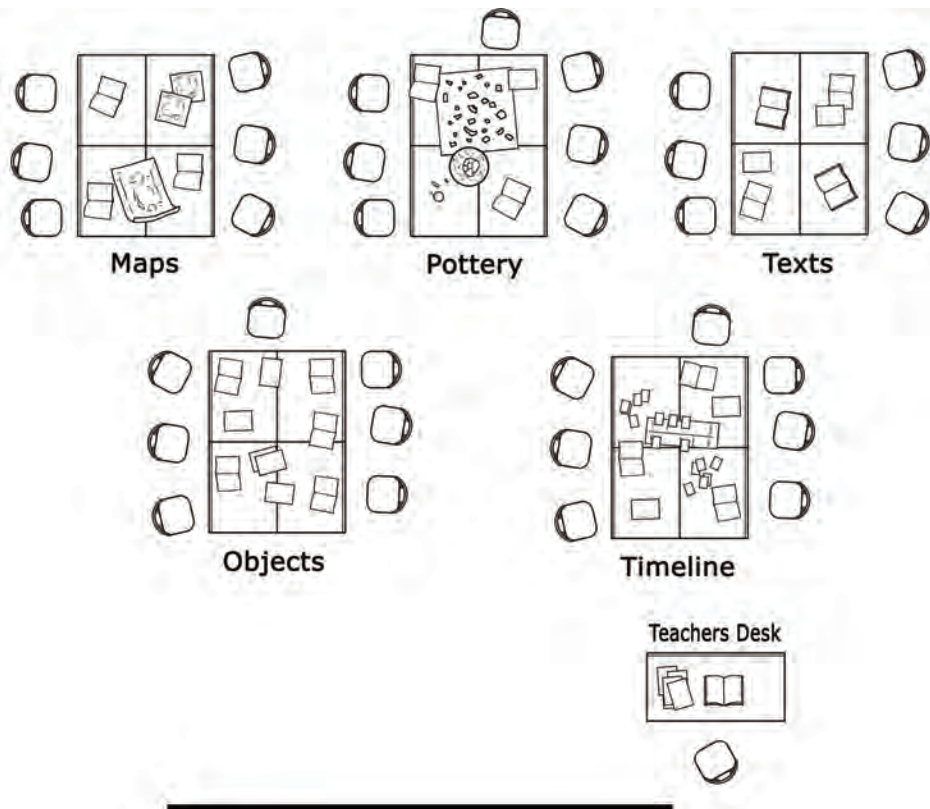
#### Supplies:

- Enough activity sheets for the different exercises (one of each for every child):
  - Maps (p.83).
  - Texts (p.95).
  - Objects (p.91).
  - Timeline (p.97).
- Timeline puzzle.
- Maps of Nablus (p.86-90).
- CD with presentation, introducing Tell Balata and explaining the Task Rotation Lesson.
- Practical tools: pencils, erasers, 'Uhu' glue, adhesive tape.
- 5 pots, broken.

Arrange table groups (see below) before the lesson starts. Set up the 5 exercises, with the corresponding activity sheets and relevant tools and resources, in separate places in the classroom.

#### Plan:

This lesson is a task rotation lesson. It requires 5 table groups. The layout of the class should be something like the following:





### Lesson 3: Flora & Fauna

In this lesson the children learn about the other living creatures in the Tell Balata Archaeological Park: the flora and fauna. This lesson could be done while visiting the site (see Lesson 4), but that might be too much for the children as Lesson 4 requires about 3 hours in itself. Therefore this lesson is adapted to be done in a natural environment near the school.

#### *Preparation*

- Organise enough people to accompany the groups of children.
- Arrange a bus or other means of transport to get to the natural environment.
- Provide Flora and Fauna maps of the Tell Balata Archaeological Park.
- Ensure sufficient activity sheets:
  - Flora and Fauna Tally – one for each pair of pupils (p.100).
  - Making a bar chart – one for each pair of pupils (p.102).
- Supply pencils, erasers and clipboards.

#### *Introduction (10 min)*

This introduction should be done in the classroom, before going to the field close to school.

The teacher tells the pupils that not only people used to live at what we now call Tell Balata; animals and plants also sought shelter there. Since it was abandoned even more plants and animals have made Tell Balata their home.

The teacher and the children look carefully at the Flora and Fauna map of Tell Balata to see what kind of creatures live in the archaeological park.

Next an explanation is given about what the children will be doing:

- They will go to a natural environment to look for flora and fauna.
- They will form into pairs.
- Each pair will take a Flora and Fauna map of Tell Balata and a Flora and Fauna Tally activity sheet.

On the activity sheet the children will write down the names of the plants and animals they see and which are shown on the Flora and Fauna map of Tell Balata. They will keep a tally of how often they see these plants and animals.

- They will also indicate on the activity sheet whether they think the plants and animals are dangerous or poisonous.
- Back at school the children will make a bar chart from the information they have collected.
- They will check whether their judgement about dangerous flora and fauna was right.

#### *Core (30-45 min)*

The children walk (accompanied by adults) around the natural environment and keep count on the activity sheet Flora and Fauna Tally. They also indicate which animals and plants they think are dangerous.

***Warning: be careful and do not try to catch animals, because you may get hurt.***



*Ending (15-20 min)*

Back at school the children make a bar chart using the information they have collected. They also check with the answer paper to see if they were right about dangerous flora and fauna.

*Aims*

- The children learn about the flora and fauna on Tell Balata and its environment.
- The children learn to look for flora and fauna in their own environment.
- The children learn about which animals and plants are dangerous and which are not.
- The children learn how to tally.
- The children learn how to make a bar chart.



## **In the field**

### **Lesson 4: Visiting the site – archaeological context:**

As in the task rotation lesson described above, the children have to do a variety of exercises in turn during a visit to the Park. The prime aim is to learn about the archaeological context.

#### *Preparation*

- Organise enough people to accompany the groups of children.
- Arrange a bus or other means of transport.
- Inform the parents about the school trip and ask them for enough food and drink for the children.
- Ensure sufficient 2nd Grade 'The young archaeologist' Activity Sheets (p.103-111).
- Provide 2nd Grade 'The young archaeologist' maps (p.121, with numbers to the questions).
- Take a bell or a whistle, to let the children know when they have to change exercise.
- Supply pencils, crayons, erasers and clipboards.
- Supply enough measuring tapes.
- Make up enough 2nd Grade diplomas with names and a signature (p.122).
- Bring the children's questions, written down at the beginning of the series of lessons.
- At the site: Discuss with the guard of the Park that the children sometimes need to cross the fence, for the exercises. This is only allowed when the children are with their supervisor and are very careful.

#### *Introduction (10 min)*

First the teacher gives a short introduction, making a connection between the historical context (see what the children learned in the Lesson: Historical context) and the site itself, and informing the children that most of the ruins they will see are from the Middle Bronze Age.

After this short introduction the children hear what they will do next. In small groups (of no more than 5 children per group) they will visit different parts of the site. There they will have to answer questions on the activity sheets (each group needs at least one activity sheet). These exercises are about archaeology and architecture. Each group starts in a different part of the site with a different exercise. After 15 minutes (when the bell or whistle sounds) they go on to a new exercise. Preferably each group will be guided by an adult.

The groups find their way to a location using a map of the site. Each location has a number and the number on the map corresponds to the number on the activity sheet.

#### *Core (150 min)*

The children do the exercises. The teacher walks around to answer any questions that the children may have. During the visit, after approximately six exercises, there will be a break of around 15 minutes with drinks and snacks.



*Ending (which includes the aims of the lesson) (10-15 min)*

At the end there will be a discussion about the results of the exercises. The extent to which the children have achieved the learning objectives can be evaluated:

- They have learned to read the excavation map.
- They have learned to look carefully at the environment.
- They have learned to interpret architectural objects and to think about the functions of a building.
- They have learned to draw what they see.
- They have learned to see the properties of mud bricks.
- They have learned how archaeological excavations are done.
- They have learned to measure architectural objects.
- They have learned to compare different architectural objects.

The children's questions, written down at the beginning of the series of lessons, will be brought out. The answers will mostly be supplied by the children themselves, because they will have learned a lot during the lessons. Questions that are harder may have to be answered by a specialist (archaeologist) by e-mail or letter (see: Contact information).

## **At school**

### **Lesson 5: Showing what has been learned**

To reinforce their learning and to provide a good conclusion it is important the children make use of their findings in creating something they can show to their peers.

A few possibilities might be:

- Make a class book or poster about their discoveries.
- Make a timeline of Tell Balata in the classroom using their own words and drawings.
- Write an essay (individually or in groups).

Publications of the Tell Balata Archaeological Park Project

Eds Hamdan Taha and Gerrit van der Kooij

# TEACHERS HANDBOOK

FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE  
IN PALESTINE, TELL BALATA



## **PART B - The lessons: sheets and cards**

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities – Department of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage

Ramallah, 2014

# Activity Sheets and Copy Masters

## Activity sheets and copy masters: younger children 6-9 years

Registration card .....	59
Writing a story .....	60
Writing in cuneiform 1 and 2 .....	61
Tell Balata on the map .....	63
Map: Tell Balata on the map .....	64
What do these animals eat? .....	65
What do these animals eat? – answers .....	66
The Young Archaeologist .....	67
The Young Archaeologist – answers .....	74
Diploma 1st grade .....	80
Map: The Young Archaeologist 1st grade .....	81

## Activity sheets and copy masters: elder children 10-12 years

Map of Tell Balata .....	83
Maps .....	84
Maps – answers .....	85
Maps of Nablus 1-5 .....	86
Objects 1 and 2 .....	91
Objects 1 and 2 – answers .....	93
Texts .....	95
Texts – answers .....	96
Timeline .....	97
Timeline – answers .....	98
Flora and fauna map .....	99
Flora and fauna tally .....	100
Flora and fauna tally – answers .....	101
Making a bar chart .....	102
The Young Archaeologist .....	103
The Young Archaeologist – answers .....	112
Map: The Young Archaeologist 2nd grade .....	121
Diploma 2nd grade .....	122

## **Instruction Cards**

Making pots from pottery sherds .....	123
Writing a story .....	124
Making a coin of your environment .....	125
Making a mascot .....	126
Writing in cuneiform .....	127
Making music .....	128
Timeline of Old Balata .....	129
Timeline of Old Balata – answers .....	130
Tell Balata on the map .....	131
What do these animals eat? .....	132

## **Timelines and Timeline Cards**

Timeline for 6-9 years old (to be copied at A3 size, cut and glued in one line, as on card 130).....	133
Timeline cards 1-4 (to be copied A4 size, and cards cut) .....	134
Timeline cards 5-8 (to be copied A4 size, and cards cut) .....	135
Timeline for 10-12 years old (to be copied at A3 size, cut and glued in one line, as on card 98).....	136
Timeline cards, general 1-4 (to be copied A4 size, and cards cut) .....	137
Timeline cards, general 5-8 (to be copied A4 size, and cards cut) .....	138
Timeline cards, Tell Balata 1-4 (to be copied A4 size, and cards cut) .....	139
Timeline cards, Tell Balata 5-8 (to be copied A4 size, and cards cut) .....	140

# Registration Card

Which 'instruction card' have I chosen?

	Making pots from Sherds	Writing a Story	Making a Coin	Making a Mascot	Writing in Cuneiform	Making Music	Timeline of Old Balata	Tell Balata on the Map	What do these animals eat?
 <p>Names:</p>									
1.									
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
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28.									
29.									
30.									



## Writing a story

The king of Megiddo, Biridya, wrote the following letter to the pharaoh of Egypt 3400 years ago. At that time the pharaoh was also the supreme ruler of Palestine.



Dear Pharaoh,

Labaya, King of Shakmu, has made war on me. He is trying to take Megiddo. Because of that we are unable to get out of the city.

Please Pharaoh, help the city Megiddo by sending an army of 100 men to save the city before Labaya seizes it.

Yours sincerely,

Biridya, king of Megiddo, the loyal servant of the Pharaoh.

Write a story based on this event. It does not necessarily need to involve the kings. You can also write about a child of your age living in Megiddo or Shakmu. It is important that you think about your central character and the plot first, before writing the whole story.

### Central character

What is the name of your central character?.....

Describe what he/she looks like:.....

What is he/she like (stubborn, curious, sweet-natured, generous, etc.)?

Where does your central character live?.....

Is his/her family poor or rich?.....

### Plot of the story

How will the story end?.....

What happens before that end (make it something exciting or perhaps unexpected)?

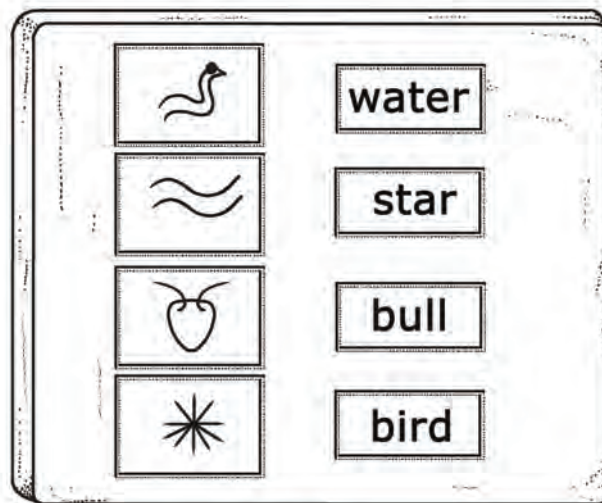
**Now you can start writing the story!**



## Writing in cuneiform 1

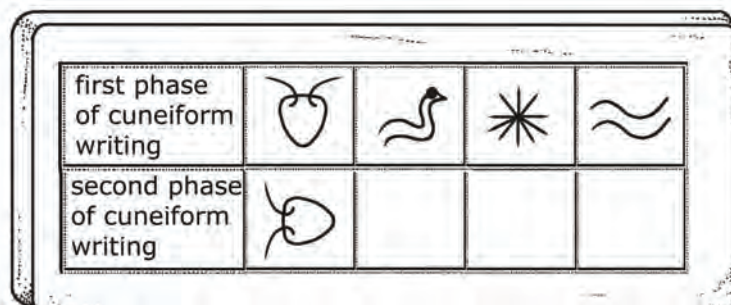
About 5000 years ago cuneiform writing was developed. In the first period cuneiform writing was like little drawings: characters. These characters represented a whole word, or a part of a word: a sound group.

Look at these characters. What do they mean?  
Match the drawing to its meaning with a line.



In the second phase of cuneiform writing, the characters were turned sideways. This made them easier to draw and writing could be done more quickly.

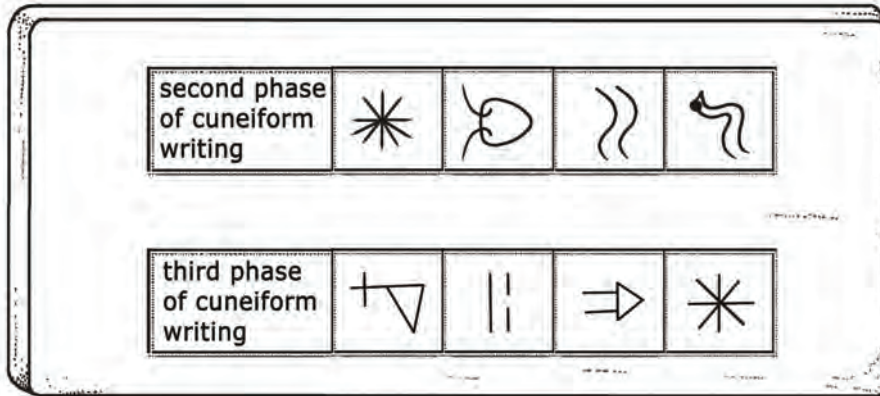
Can you draw the other characters in this way?





## Writing in cuneiform 2

In the third phase the characters were made even simpler. Can you match the characters of the second phase with their more simplified characters of the third phase?



A few hundred years later, the scribes started to use a special writing tool: a stylus. The stylus gave the lines a wedge shape (see instruction card). You can see this shape in phases 4 and 5.

Look carefully at the different phases for the cuneiform characters: bird, bull, star and water. Now imagine characters for flower and moon and work out the different phases in the following table.

	Bird	Bull	Star	Water	Flower	Moon
Phase 1						
Phase 2						
Phase 3						
Phase 4						
Phase 5						



## Tell Balata on the map

The people working on Tell Balata made a map of the area. Only they forgot to make a legend for the map. A legend shows what the colours and symbols on the map mean. Can you make the legend?

**Legend:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Excavation trenches
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruin	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	.....



What is the meaning of the compass arrow?

.....  
.....

The map is a representation of the real area: the real distance is larger than that shown on the map. The scale shows what real distance is represented by 1 cm on the map.

What is the real distance for 1 cm?

.....

You want to walk from point A to point B. How far is that in cms on the map?

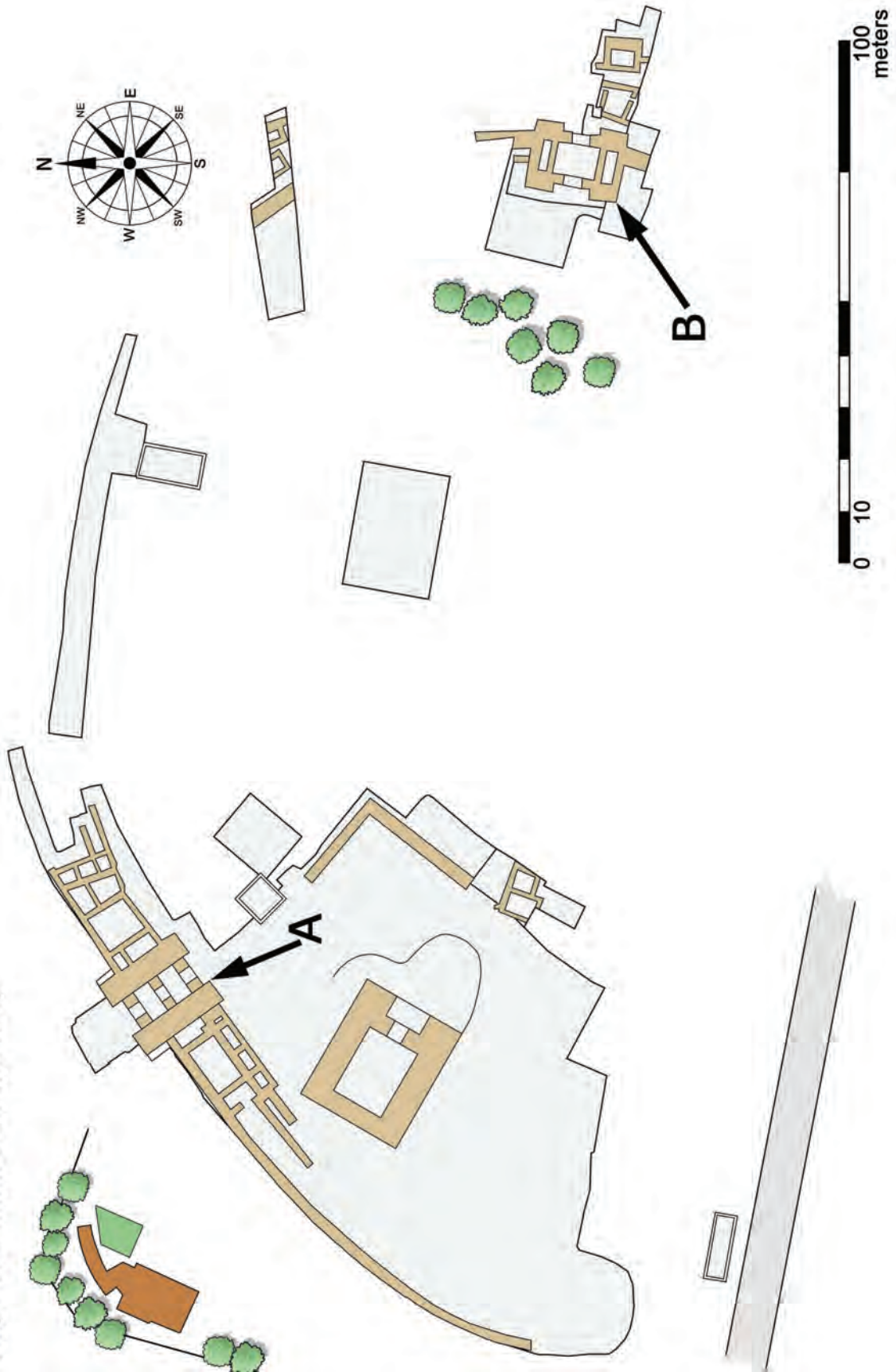
.....

How far is it in reality?

.....



Map: Tell Balata on the map



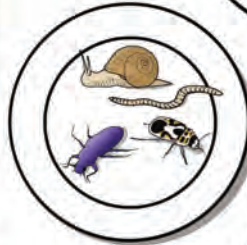


## What do these animals eat?

Tell Balata was not only inhabited by people. Particularly after Old Balata was deserted by man, many animals and plants made their home there.



But what do the animals living on Tell Balata eat?



Match the animal with his food by colouring the border.





ANSWERS

# What do these animals eat?

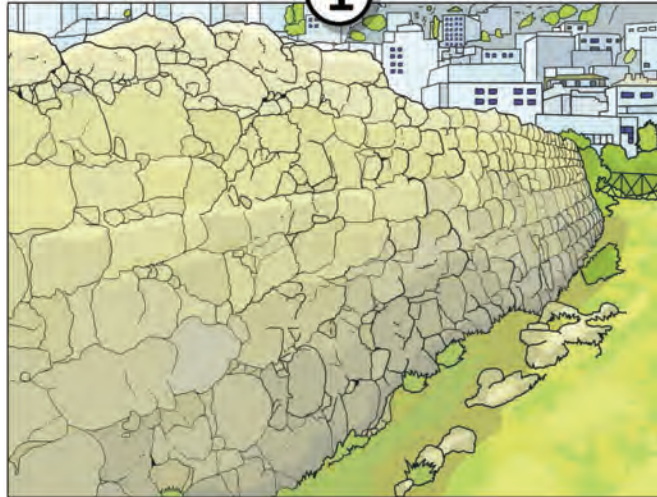
Tell Balata was not only inhabited by people. Particularly after Old Balata was deserted by man, many animals and plants made their home there.





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

1



This big pile of stones was a city wall. About 3600 years ago people built this huge city wall around Old Balata (Shakmu). What do you think the purpose of this wall was?

.....  
.....

Was the city wall strong enough to do this?  
Why do you think so?

.....  
.....

How high do you estimate this wall is?

.....  
.....





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

2



Here you see the remains of an old temple, built around the same time as the city wall: 3600 years ago. A temple is a religious building.

Do you know any other sorts of religious building from different religions? Name at least 2 kinds of religious building.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

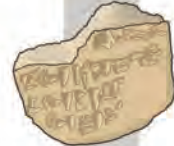


Measure the thickness of one of the walls. How thick is it?

.....

Some archaeologists think that this religious building also had a defensive function. Why do they think that?

.....  
.....





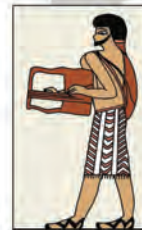
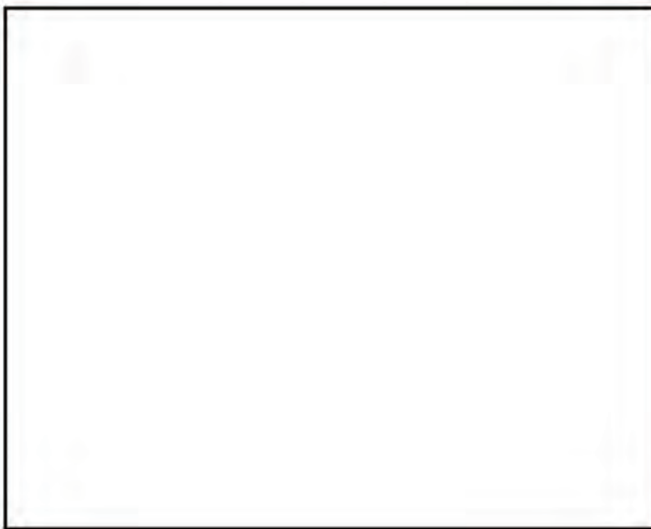
# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

3



This is a ruined gate from the same time as the city wall and the temple. You can still see the base of the gate. What do you think this gate looked like before it was damaged?

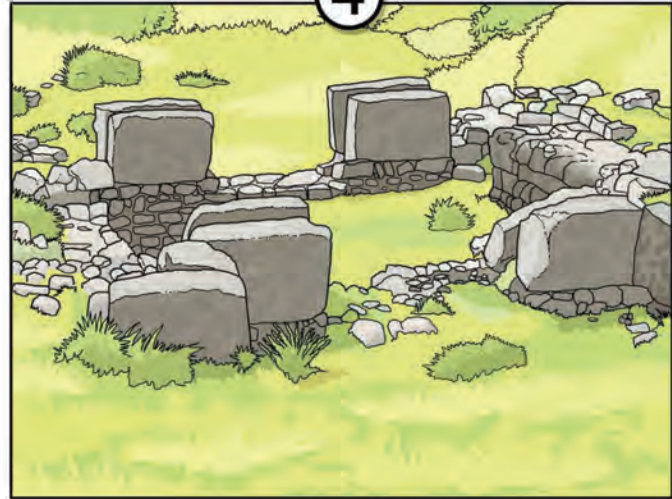
Try to make a drawing of the undamaged gate.





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

4



The ruined gate you just saw (No. 3) was the north-west gate of Tell Balata. No. 4 is the remains of the east gate. A part of this gate was built later than the north-west gate.

Compare the two gates:



East gate



North-west gate

What are the similarities between the two gates?

.....  
.....  
.....

What are the differences between them?

.....  
.....  
.....





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

5

This object looks like a very big stone, but is actually packed mud brick.

A mud brick is a brick made of clay, mud, sand and water mixed with straw. A lot of houses used to be built of this kind of brick, and sometimes people still use it because of its good properties.



This boy is making mudbricks and then letting them dry.

Look carefully at the two pictures (below) of the same mud brick house in the Jordan Valley. The house has been uninhabited since 1970. The first picture was taken in 1991, the second in 2005. You can see how the house has changed in those 14 years.



1991



2005

Compare the two pictures of the house. How has the house changed?

.....  
.....

So what is the disadvantage of using mud bricks for houses?

.....  
.....

What materials are used to build houses now?

.....  
.....





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

6



Archaeologists do not excavate arbitrarily. They often divide a site into a grid, excavating each square, as you can see in the picture below. The 'walls' left between the squares also give a lot of information about previous habitation.



On the Tell Balata site, where they have used this archaeological technique, how many squares can you count?

.....

Why are the 'walls' between the squares at Tell Balata not as neat as the 'walls' you can see in the picture?

.....

.....





## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

Last exercise:

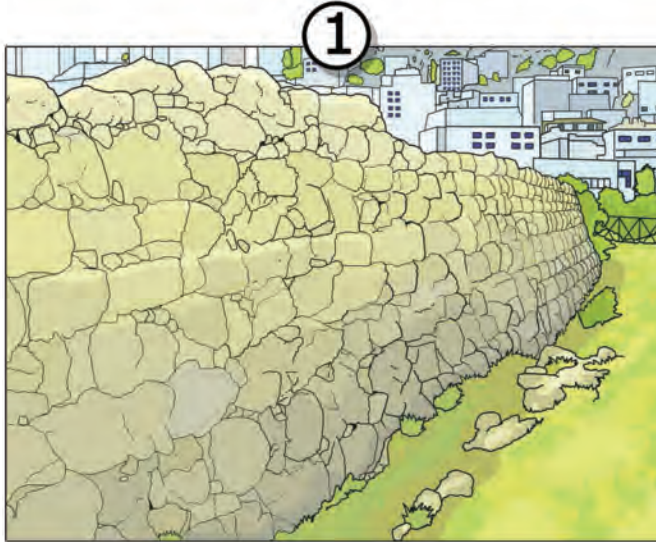
Make a drawing of Old Balata at the time when it was a great and important city. Include people and animals as well as the buildings. Try to fit in everything you have learned about Tell Balata at school and in the field.





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

## ANSWERS



This big pile of stones was a city wall. About 3600 years ago people built this huge city wall around Old Balata (Shakmu). What do you think the purpose of this wall was?

A wall for protection.

Was the city wall strong enough to do this?  
Why do you think so?

The wall is thick and high, so it protected the city very well for a long time.

How high do you estimate this wall is?

The maximum height is 10 metres.





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

## ANSWERS

2



Here you see the remains of an old temple, built around the same time as the city wall: 3600 years ago. A temple is a religious building.

Do you know any other sorts of religious building from different religions? Name at least 2 kinds of religious building.

For example: mosque, church, Buddhist temple, synagogue, Hindu temple.



Measure the thickness of one of the walls. How thick is it?

Some of the walls are 5 metres thick.

Some archaeologists think that this religious building also had a defensive function. Why do they think that?

Because the walls are very thick!

You do not need walls this thick just for a religious building.





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

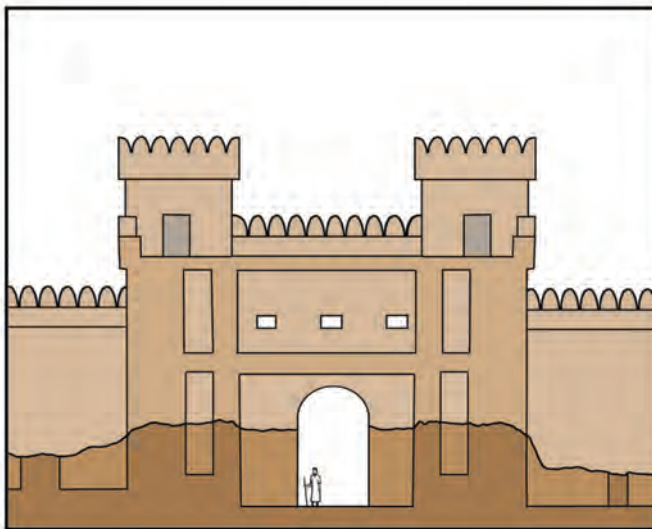
## ANSWERS

3



This is a ruined gate from the same time as the city wall and the temple. You can still see the base of the gate. What do you think this gate looked like before it was damaged?

Try to make a drawing of the undamaged gate.

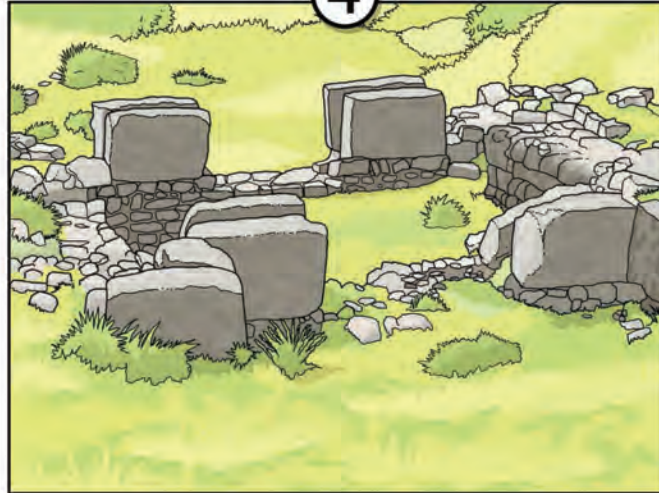




## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

4



The ruined gate you just saw (No. 3) was the north-west gate of Tell Balata. No. 4 is the remains of the east gate. A part of this gate was built later than the north-west gate.

Compare the two gates:



East gate



North-west gate

What are the similarities between the two gates?

For example:

- The use of very large rectangular stones as well as small stones.
- The large rectangular stones are set in pairs.
- Similar space between the pairs of stones.
- Presence of a sill.

What are the differences between them?

For example:

- The floor plan is different.
- The east gate is better preserved.
- The east gate is in a lower position.
- The north-west gate has a floor.
- The east gate has internal stairs.





## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

This object looks like a very big stone, but is actually packed mud brick.

A mud brick is a brick made of clay, mud, sand and water mixed with straw. A lot of houses used to be built of this kind of brick, and sometimes people still use it because of its good properties.



This boy is making mudbricks and then letting them dry.

Look carefully at the two pictures (below) of the same mud brick house in the Jordan Valley. The house has been uninhabited since 1970. The first picture was taken in 1991, the second in 2005. You can see how the house has changed in those 14 years.



1991



2005

Compare the two pictures of the house. How has the house changed?

The house is already starting to fall apart a bit in 1991. 14 years later that is worse: the roof has come down, the walls are more broken, etc.

So what is the disadvantage of using mud bricks for houses?

Mud bricks are not very strong. Rain and wind can easily cause them to break up.

What materials are used to build houses now?

Mortar, concrete, limestone.





## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

6



Archaeologists do not excavate arbitrarily. They often divide a site into a grid, excavating each square, as you can see in the picture below. The 'walls' left between the squares also give a lot of information about previous habitation.



On the Tell Balata site, where they have used this archaeological technique, how many squares can you count?

Only 5 squares are visible, but probably there were more.

Why are the 'walls' between the squares at Tell Balata not as neat as the 'walls' you can see in the picture?

Because of the wind and rain.



**THE YOUNG  
ARCHAEOLOGIST**

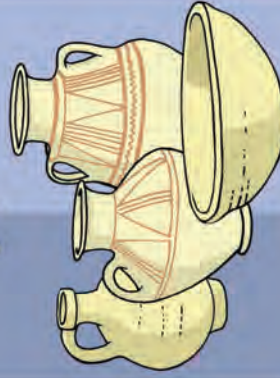
# Diploma

**1st Grade**

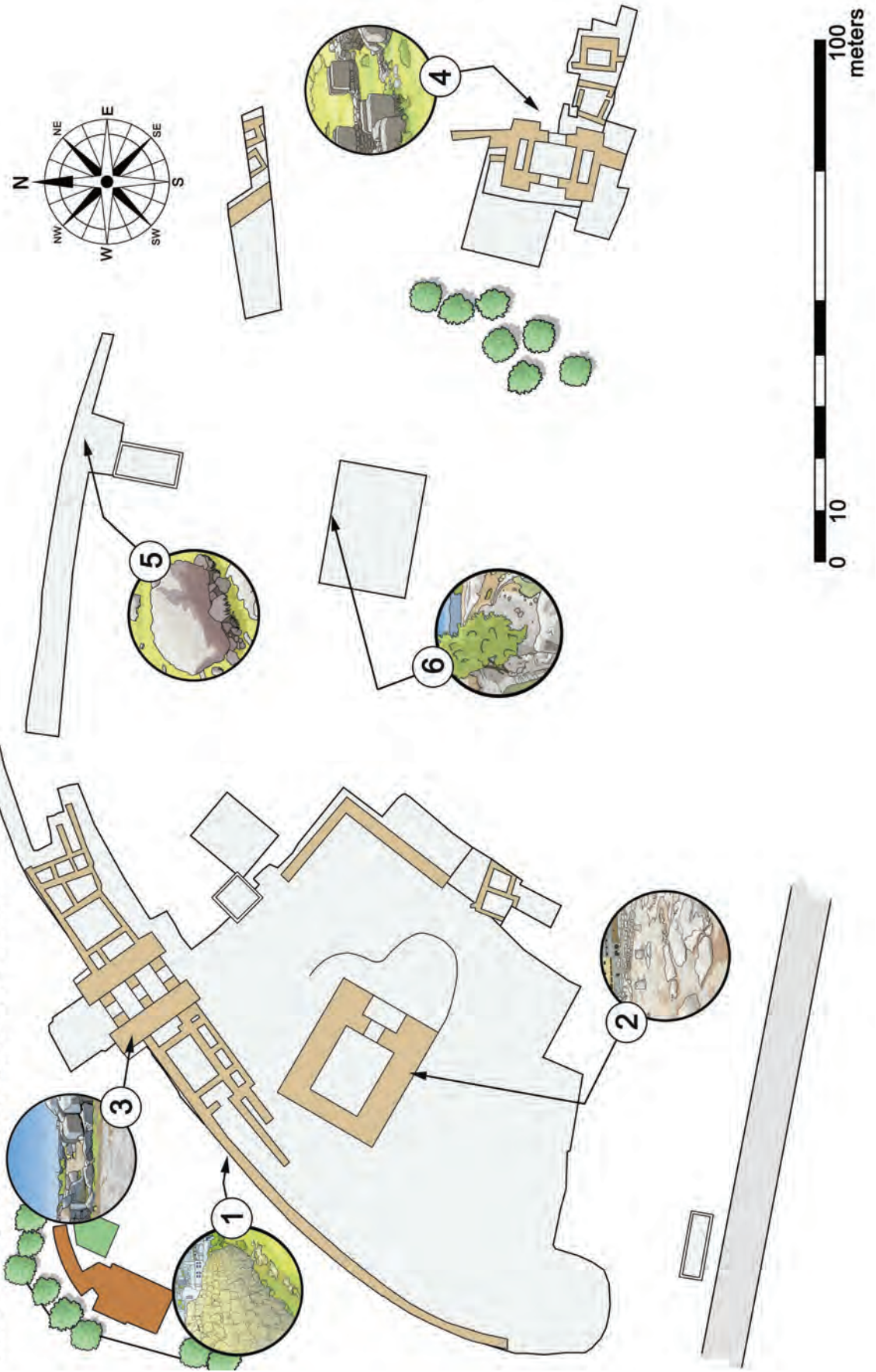


name \_\_\_\_\_

signature \_\_\_\_\_

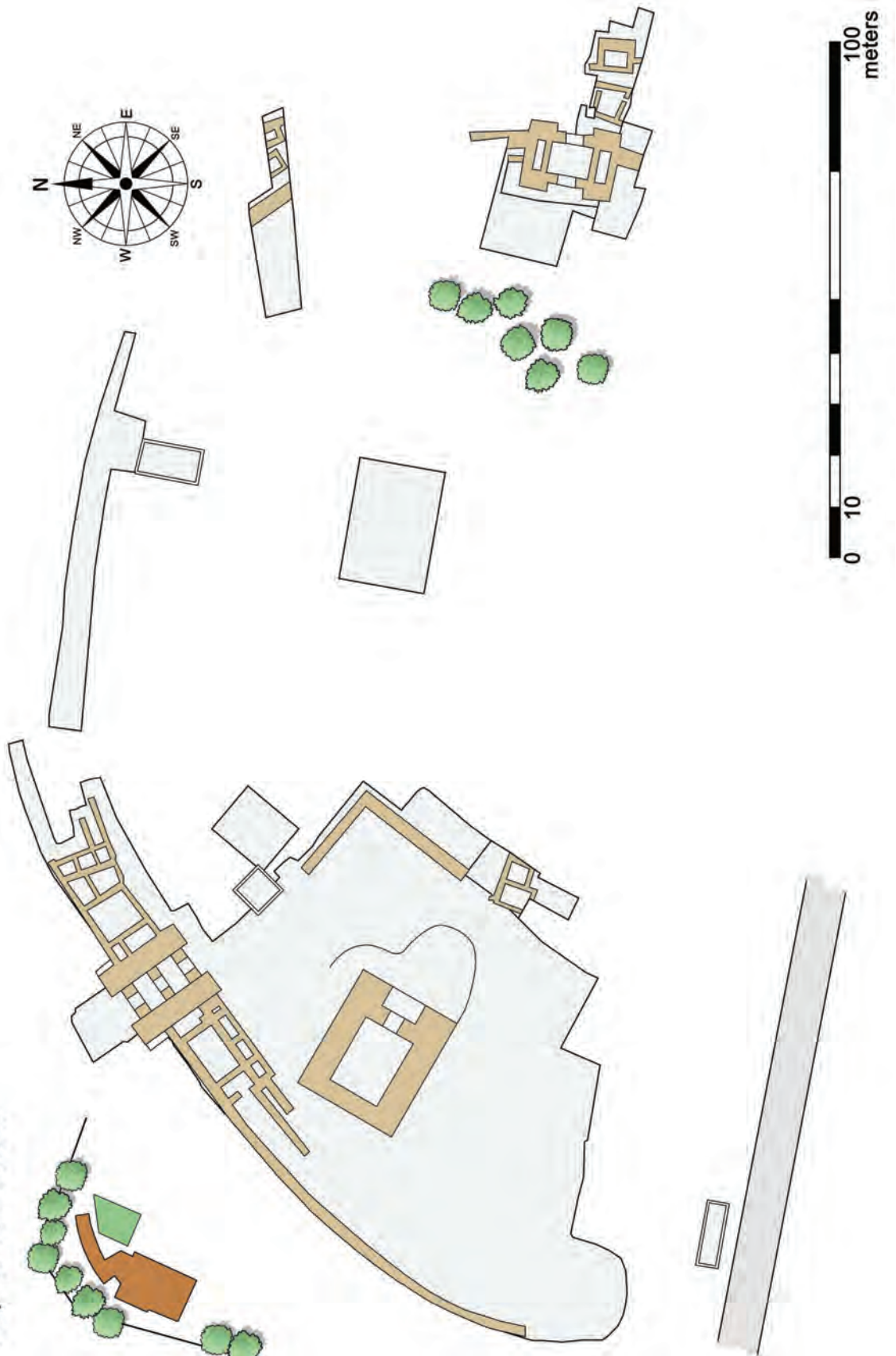


# The Young Archaeologist 1st Grade





Map of Tell Balata





# Maps

In this exercise you are going to look carefully at some maps of Nablus and Balata. These maps are not nearly as old as Tell Balata itself, but you can learn about the development of cities in general: in ancient and in modern times.

Look at the First Map - a British map of Palestine (1885). The city of Nablus (Shechem on the map) is coloured pink. Near Nablus, in the valley where the city is, you can see a thin blue line.

What does the blue line mean?

.....

Do you think it is important to have such a feature near a village or city? Why do you think so (give at least two reasons)?

.....  
.....  
.....

The city of Nablus is situated between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. There was an important reason for building the town in the valley. To understand this reason you need to look at the Second Map: Historical map showing old roads. There you can see an old road going through the valley of Nablus (Shechem).

Why did this old road go through the valley and not over the tops of the high mountains?

.....  
.....

These old roads were the trade routes; cities on the trade routes grew in importance. Nablus became a major city!

One of the things that happens to a major city is illustrated by Map 3 (1940), Map 4 (Arabic map, 1950) and Map 5 (1964). These maps show the city of Nablus and the village of Balata.

Compare the three maps. How did the city of Nablus and the village of Balata change over 24 years?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....





## Maps

## ANSWERS

In this exercise you are going to look carefully at some maps of Nablus and Balata. These maps are not nearly as old as Tell Balata itself, but you can learn about the development of cities in general: in ancient and in modern times.

Look at the First Map - a British map of Palestine (1885). The city of Nablus (Shechem on the map) is coloured pink. Near Nablus, in the valley where the city is, you can see a thin blue line.

What does this blue line mean?

**Water. There is a source of water near Nablus.**

Do you think it is important to have such a feature near a village or city? Why do you think so (give at least two reasons)?

**It is important for drinking water and also for cultivating crops.**

The city of Nablus is situated between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. There was an important reason for building the town in the valley. To understand this reason you need to look at the Second Map: Historical map showing old roads. There you can see an old road going through the valley of Nablus (Shechem).

Why did this old road go through the valley and not over the tops of the high mountains?

**It is much easier and quicker to travel through a valley than over mountain tops.**

These old roads were the trade routes; cities on the trade routes grew in importance. Nablus became a major city!

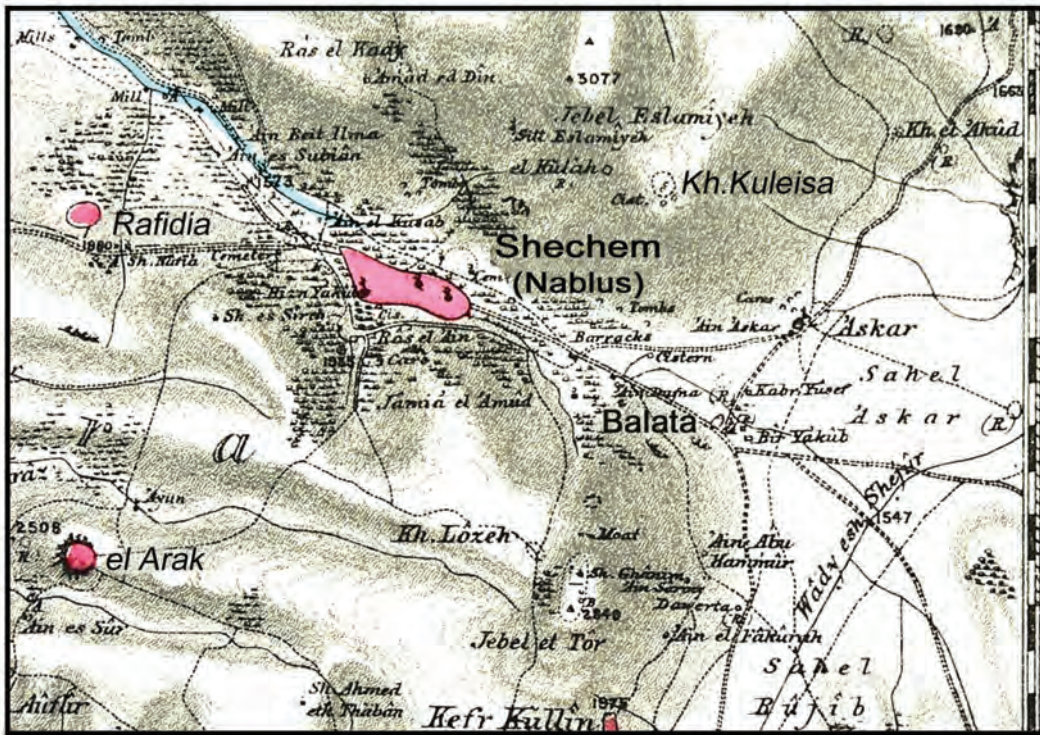
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Compare the three maps. How did the city of Nablus and the village of Balata change over 24 years?

**- The city became bigger. More inhabitants and houses.**

**Camp Balata appeared on the map as the site of an archaeological excavation.**

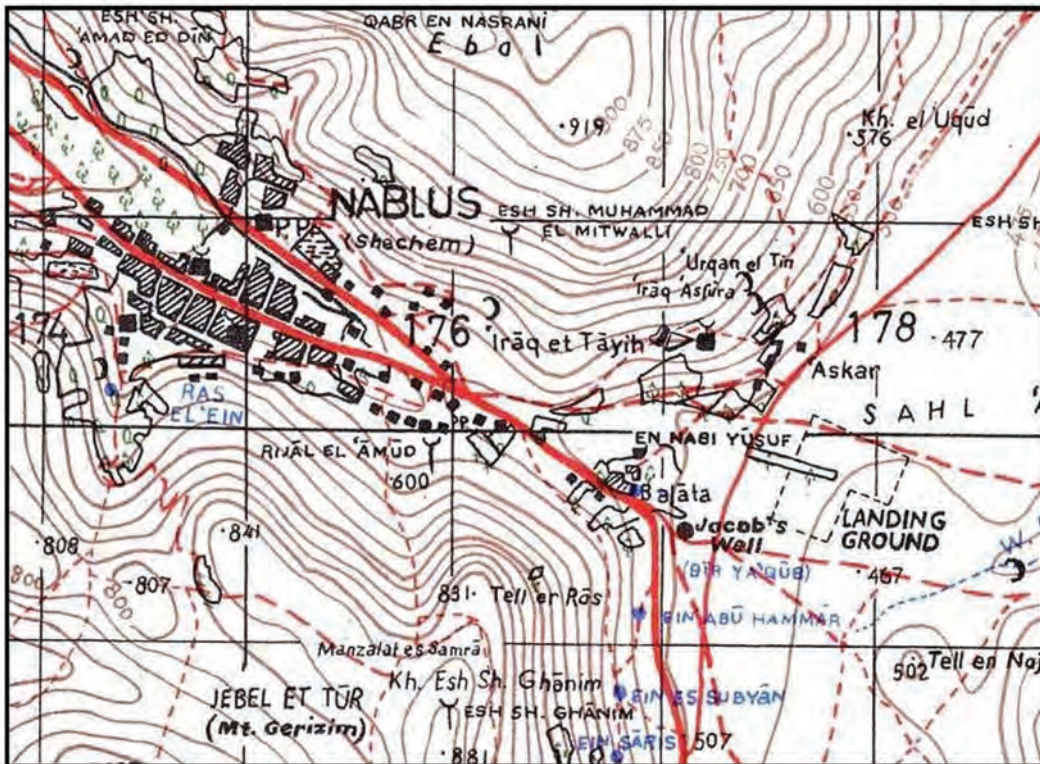




British map of Palestine, 1885



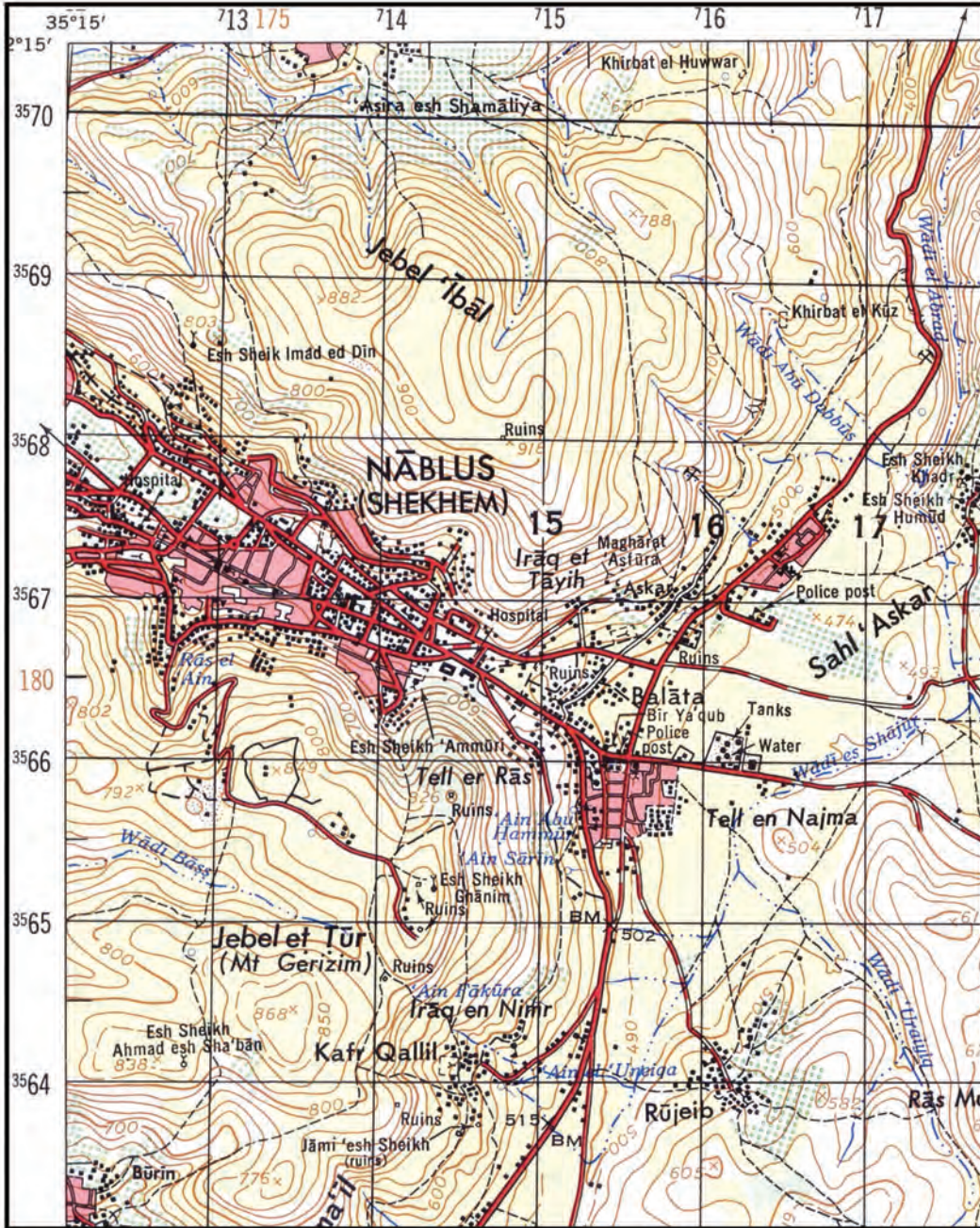
Historical map with old travel routes



Map of 1940



Arabic map of 1955



Map of 1964



## Objects 1

### objects

### What is it?

### Story of the objects



A figurine of a Canaanite god from around 1400 B.C.

This object looks like a hook, but was actually a sword. The outside of the curve was the cutting edge.

It was found on the site in 1908 by an inhabitant of Balata.



A sickle sword from around 1700 B.C.

This object shows that, by this time, trade was not only done by exchanging goods.

If you had a lot of these objects, you were rich!



A silver coin from around 200 B.C.

On the site are the remains of a temple. At that time people believed in more than one god. They made little carved figures of the many gods they believed in, so they could carry them around for good luck.



An Assyrian seal from around 700 B.C.

This was used to press olives and grapes. This is the base of the press where the liquid drained off into a basin.



An olive and wine press, from around 200 A.D.

An official (such as a lawyer) used this object to impress a figure in a clay tablet thus making it an official document.



# Objects 1

## objects

## What is it?

## Story of the objects



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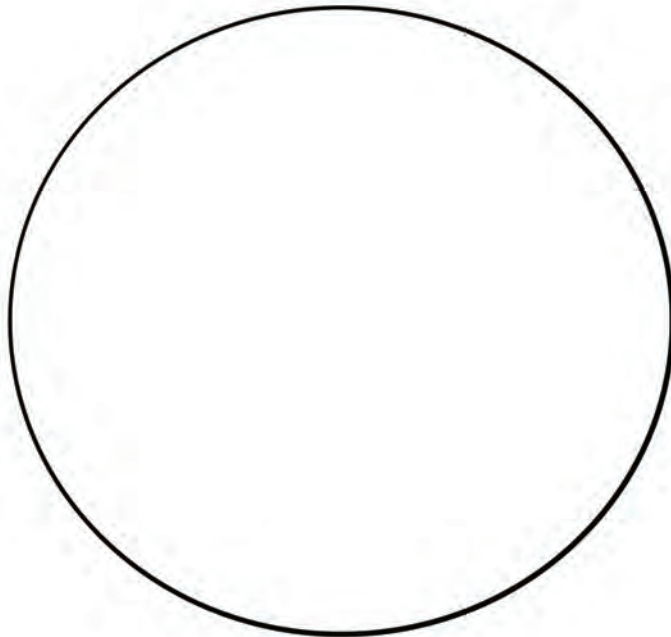
An olive and wine press, from around 200 A.D.

An official (such as a lawyer) used this object to impress a figure in a clay tablet thus making it an official document.



## Objects 2

A coin was found depicting Mount Gerizim. A Roman temple can be seen on top of the mountain. Try and draw this coin.





## Objects 2

ANSWERS

A coin was found depicting Mount Gerizim. A Roman temple can be seen on top of the mountain. Try and draw this coin.





## Texts

3500 years ago Palestine was divided into city-states (a city with lots of land and villages around). Each city-state was ruled by a different king. None of these kings, however, was the supreme ruler of Palestine: that was the pharaoh of Egypt. Palestine was part of the Egyptian empire.

The city-state of Old Balata (Shakmu) was ruled by king Labaya. He quarreled seriously with the king of the city-state of Megiddo: Biridya. Biridya wrote to the pharaoh about the dispute on a big clay tablet:



**To the pharaoh,  
Message from Biridya, loyal servant of the pharaoh.  
The pharaoh is my lord and my sun, 7 days a week.**

**Is the pharaoh aware that Labaya is waging war against me? Because of this war we are unable to harvest our crops; we are unable to get out of the city gate. Labaya is also determined to take Megiddo. Will the pharaoh save his city of Megiddo by providing a garrison of 100 men to defend it? Labaya's sole aim is to seize Megiddo.**

1) Biridya addresses the pharaoh as his lord and his sun, 7 days a week. Do you think calling him the sun is a compliment? Why?

.....  
.....  
.....

2) This message is intended for the pharaoh but Biridya writes to him as him and not as you. Why do you think he does that?

.....  
.....

3) What do you think will happen if the citizens of Megiddo can not get out of the city?

.....  
.....

4) What does Biridya want of the pharaoh?

.....  
.....

5) Do you think the pharaoh will help Biridya?

.....  
.....



## Texts

ANSWERS



To the pharaoh,  
Message from Biridya, loyal servant of the pharaoh.  
The pharaoh is my lord and my sun, 7 days a week.

Is the pharaoh aware that Labaya is waging war against me?  
Because of this war we are unable to harvest our crops; we  
are unable to get out of the city gate. Labaya is also  
determined to take Megiddo. Will the pharaoh save his city  
of Megiddo by providing a garrison of 100 men to defend it?  
Labaya's sole aim is to seize Megiddo.

1) Biridya addresses the pharaoh as his lord and his sun, 7 days a week.  
Do you think calling him the sun is a compliment? Why?

**It is a compliment. The sun gives light; it helps the crops grow (together with water). And in Egypt the god of the sun was an important god!**

2) This message is intended for the pharaoh but Biridya writes to him as him and not as you. Why do you think he does that?

**The pharaoh was so important he should not be spoken or written to directly. Perhaps the message was not read by the pharaoh himself but by an assistant.**

3) What do you think will happen if the citizens of Megiddo can not get out of the city?

**Some examples are:**

- People will feel isolated; feel as if they are prisoners.
- They will have problems getting the basic needs of life (like food).
- They cannot visit friends or family living in another village or city.

4) What does Biridya want of the pharaoh?

**He asks the pharaoh to provide a garrison of 100 men to defend the city of Megiddo and prevent Labaya seizing it.**

5) Do you think the pharaoh will help Biridya?

**The pharaoh does indeed help him, although not immediately. After the pharaoh has received more of these messages from other kings, he decides to imprison Labaya.**



# Timeline

This is a kind of puzzle made up of three elements:

1. Timeline: the timeline, the base for this exercise. All the cards should be put next to the timeline in their right place.
2. General cards: cards with texts and pictures about the general history of Palestine.
3. Specific cards: cards that give information about events specific and important to Tell Balata through time.

Look at the General cards. Place these cards on the timeline in their right position.

From what time onwards was Palestine part of a bigger empire?

.....

Now look now at the Specific cards. Place these cards on the timeline in their right position. Look carefully to see they fit in with the general history.

How often was Old Balata deserted and destroyed?

.....

When you have finished, make sure that everything is back as it was when you started; so the next group can do the puzzle too.

**General Card:**

The place was newly inhabited. A city was founded, so many things changed:

- A fortification wall was built for keeping the inhabitants safe
- A palace became part of Balata
- A religious centre was built
- Good agriculture and trade made the population prosperous and the city important

Old Balata became a city-state. This city-state was now called Shiknu or Shechem.

**Specific Card:**

**Middle Bronze Age (2000-1550) B.C.**

In the Middle Bronze Age Palestine was divided into city-states (a city with walls of sand and a temple around). Every city-state was ruled by a different king. The cities were surrounded at that time. They traded with many states around them, such as Egypt, Canaan and Syria.

**Timeline Segments:**

- 2000: Yellow pot
- 1550: Green arrow, broom
- 1100: Green arrow, yellow pot
- Bottom: Green arrow, silver coin

# Time line



From what time onwards was Palestine part of a bigger empire?

## Late Bronze Age

Now look at the Specific cards. Place these cards on the timeline in their right position. Look carefully to see they fit in with the general history.

How often was Old Balata deserted and destroyed?

Three times:

- At the end of the Early Bronze Age.
- At the end of the Late Bronze Age.
- During the Roman Period.

<p>3500</p> <p>In this first period the village was small. Just a few families lived in Old Balata. At the end of this period there was a possible event left the site. During a period of 150 years Old Balata was uninhabited.</p>		<p>Early Bronze Age 3500-2000 B.C.</p> <p>The Early Bronze Age is the beginning of a long bronze age period. From this time onwards people started to use bronze for some things. It is believed that this was the result of the discovery of copper. Before this time, tools were made of stone and wood. They were heavy and were not always as sharp as bronze. The first bronze tools were made in the Middle East. Before this period people only lived in villages.</p>
<p>2000</p> <p>The place was newly inhabited. A city was founded, so many things changed. A fortification wall was built for keeping the inhabitants safe. A palace became part of Balata. A religious centre was built. Good agriculture and trade made the population prosper and the city important. Old Balata became a city-state. This city-state was now called Shechem or Shalem.</p>		<p>Middle Bronze Age 2000-1550 B.C.</p> <p>In the Middle Bronze Age Palestine was divided into city-states. In city with much of land and villages around. Every city-state was ruled by a different king. The cities were prosperous at that time. They traded with many other ancient lands, such as Egypt, Cyprus and Syria.</p>
<p>1550</p> <p>In this period Lulabye was king of Shechem (Shalem). He wanted to make a large state to oppose the pharaoh, the leader of the Egyptian Empire. He failed. Unfortunately at the end of this period Shechem was destroyed. By whom this destruction was inflicted is uncertain.</p>		<p>Late Bronze Age 1550-1200 B.C.</p> <p>Palestine was part of the Egyptian kingdom. The pharaoh was now the king. Some city-states tried to become independent. The four people of Palestine and Lebanon were called the Canaanites. They were again prosperous. After some time cities came all again. Some of them changed their land and made them a city. However, sometimes large neighbouring states like Egypt came to conquer this land, but the failed. But the Assyrians from Iraq and Northern Syria managed to make Palestine part of their empire. The Assyrians were succeeded by the empires of the Babylonians and the Persians.</p>
<p>1100</p> <p>Shechem or Shalem became a city again. Some moment the Assyrians conquered the city.</p>		<p>Iron Age 1200-530 B.C.</p> <p>This period is called the Iron Age because now people made their tools and weapons from iron. In the beginning people lived in small villages, but they were organized much better and made them a city. However, sometimes large neighbouring states like Egypt came to conquer this land, but the failed. But the Assyrians from Iraq and Northern Syria managed to make Palestine part of their empire. The Assyrians were succeeded by the empires of the Babylonians and the Persians.</p>
<p>330</p> <p>The city Shechem became more important, so it was decided that the city was better protected. The gates of the city changed. A tower was added. There were more changes in buildings such as well structures and the use of pillars. Furthermore money became a method for exchange.</p>		<p>Hellenistic Period 330 - 60 B.C.</p> <p>The Hellenistic Empire was created by the Greeks (Alexander the Great and his successors). Through this Greek empire and Greek culture came to the region. This can be seen in their houses and buildings.</p>
<p>60</p> <p>The city became small. Especially after the Roman Emperor founded a new city further west (Napoli) in 72 A.D.</p>		<p>The Roman Period 60 B.C. - 324 A.D.</p> <p>The Romans took over this part of the Greek empire around 60 B.C. People from Rome to this country and founded new cities. They also brought new architecture.</p>
<p>324</p> <p>In about 1800 Balata village was founded on and around Tel Balata, near the water source.</p>		<p>Period between 324 and 1900</p> <p>Many empires govern this region. From 1517 it became part of the Ottoman Empire from Istanbul.</p>
<p>1900</p> <p>In 1933 a German archaeologist discovered that Tel Balata is the same as old Shechem (Shalem). A few years later (1934) the Germans started to excavate. The excavation was continued in 1956 by the Americans.</p>		<p>The last 100 years</p> <p>The Ottoman Empire ended by the First World War, after that Palestine was placed under British Mandate, and this was followed by the Hashemite.</p>





**Plants and trees**

1. Olive tree
2. Fig tree
3. Ball thistle
4. Yellow thistle
5. White thistle
6. Wild carrot
7. Opuntia ficus
8. Caper bush
9. Arum

**Reptiles**

10. Greek tortoise
11. Viper
12. Libanon lizard
13. Long nosed worm snake
14. Mediterranean gecko
15. Rocktail rock agama

**Birds**

16. Goldcrest
17. Bulbul
18. Palestine sunbird
19. Hoopoe

**Insects and other arthropodals**

20. Scorpion
21. Spider
22. Karner blue butterfly
23. Red ant

**Mammals**

24. Palestinian house mouse
25. Hedgehog
26. Dog







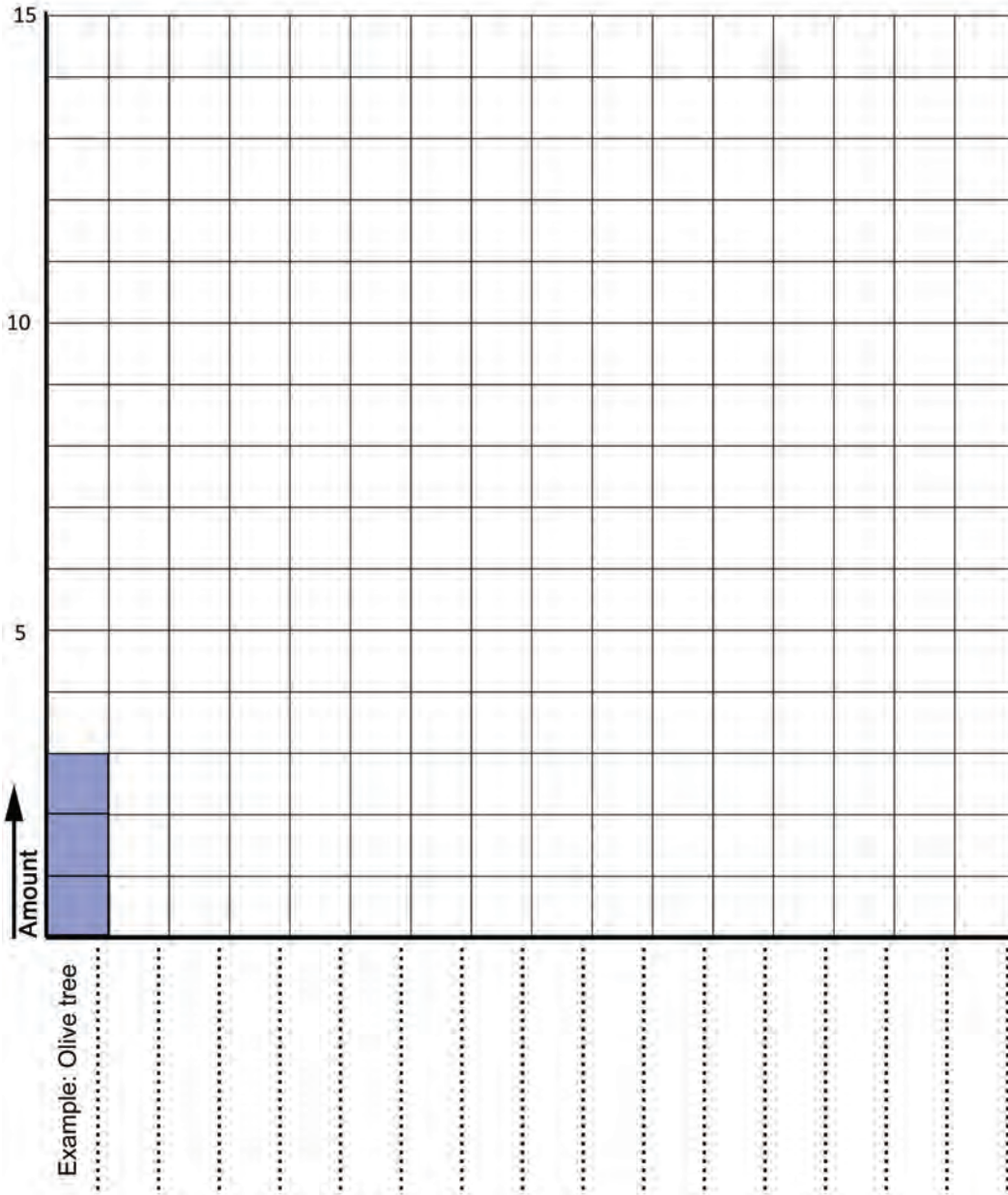
# Flora and Fauna Tally

ANSWERS

Name of plant or animal	Is it dangerous?
<b>Plants</b>	
Olive tree	No
Fig tree	No
Ball thistle	No
Yellow thistle	No
White thistle	No
Wild carrot	No
Opuntia ficus	No
Caper bush	No
Arum	This plant is poisonous
<b>Reptiles</b>	
Greek tortoise	No
Black viper	Yes
Lebanon lizard	No
Long nosed worm snake	No
Mediterraenean gecko	No
Roughtail rock agama	No
<b>Birds</b>	
Goldcrest	No
Bulbul	No
Palestine sunbird	No
Hoopoe	No
<b>Insects and other arthropodals</b>	
Scorpion	Yes
Spider	Some yes
Karner blue butterfly	No
Red ant	No, but its bite hurts
<b>Mammals</b>	
Palestinian house mouse	No
Hedgehog	No
Dog	No



# Flora and Fauna: Making a bar chart



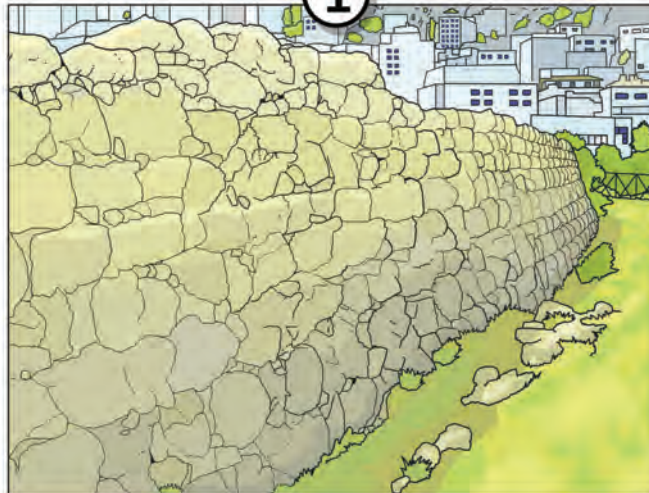
Plants and animals →





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

1



a) Here you can see a lot of stones. They were neatly piled up by humans in the Middle Bronze Age. What kind of architectural object is this?

b) What was this architectural object used for?

c) How can you tell what its function was?

d) These remains are marked on the map close to No. 1. Colour them green on the map. The wall probably used to be a lot longer. Another part of the wall has also been excavated and is marked on the map. Can you see where it is? Colour that bit red.





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

2



a) At No. 2 you can see the remains of an old temple from the Middle Bronze Age. A temple is a religious building; as is a mosque. The mihrab in a mosque points towards Mecca. This temple has no mihrab but the entrance points in a certain direction, which must have held a meaning for the people of the time. What direction is that (look at the compass on the map)?

b) Measure the thickness of the walls. Measure one of the walls. How thick is it?

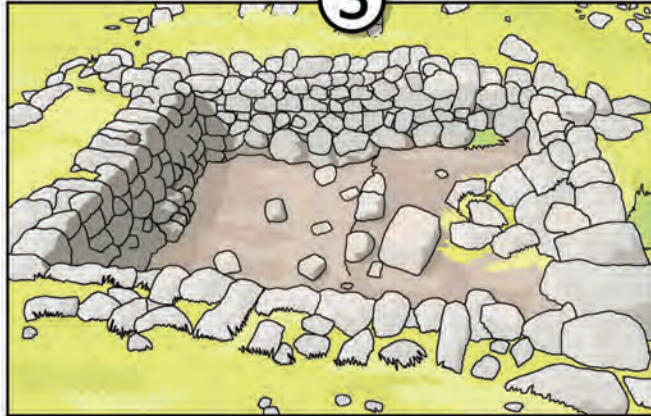
c) The thickness of the temple walls appears out of proportion. Can you think why the walls are so thick?



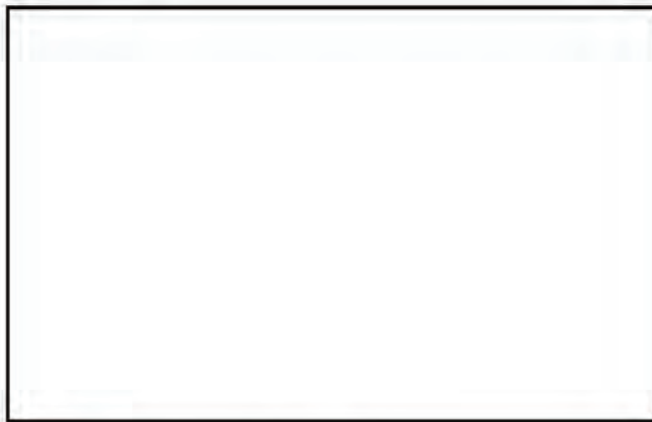


## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

3



- a) This is the ruin of a building from the Hellenistic period. The stones in the walls of this house were not mortared, so you might think they would fall down easily. The people from the Hellenistic period had a solution to this problem. To discover their solution you have to look carefully at the different size stones and at how they have been placed in the wall.  
Can you draw/sketch it?



- b) Why do you think this solution works?

.....  
.....  
.....

- c) There is no hole in the wall for a door. How do you think people came in and out of the building?

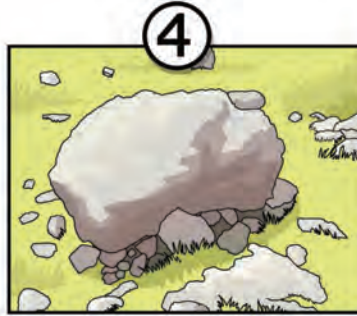
.....  
.....





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

This looks like a very big stone, but actually consists of mud brick debris. A lot of houses used to be built of this kind of brick, and sometimes people still use it because of its good properties.



This boy is making mud bricks and letting them dry.

Look carefully at the two pictures (below) of the same mud brick house in the Jordan Valley. The house has been uninhabited since 1970. The first picture was taken in 1991, the second in 2005. You can see how the house has changed in those 14 years.



1991



2005

a) Compare the two pictures of the house. How has the house changed?

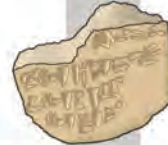
.....  
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b) What is the disadvantage of using mud bricks for houses?

.....  
.....

c) What materials are used to build houses now?

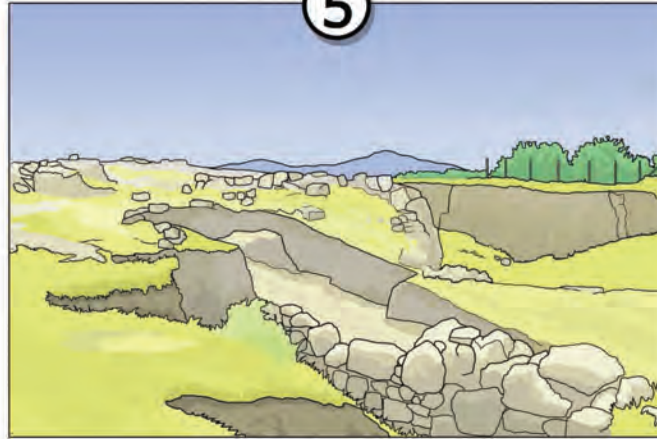
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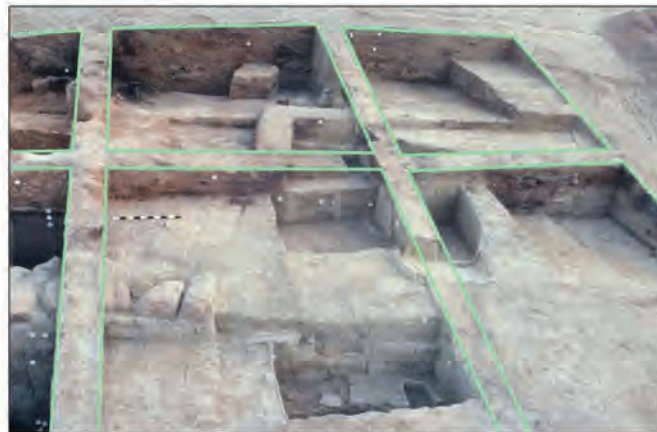


# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

5



An archaeological excavation is not done arbitrarily. The method often used involves dividing the site into squares. The squares are then excavated as you can see below. The 'walls' between the squares also provide a lot of information in the different layers of soil and stones.



a) The squares almost always have the same measurements. What is the size of these squares?

.....

b) It is easy to draw squares on a flat piece of paper. But how do archaeologists make sure they excavate in perfect squares in the field?

.....

.....

c) How do archaeologists decide where to excavate in squares?

.....

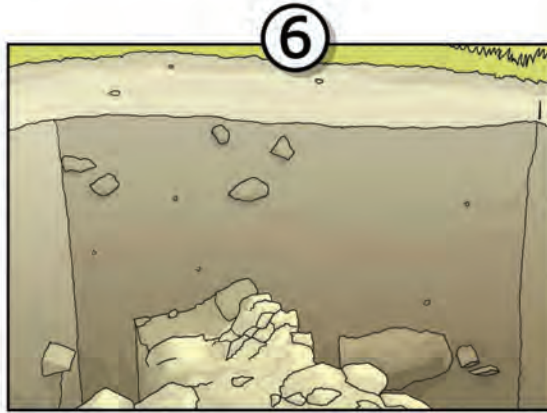
.....





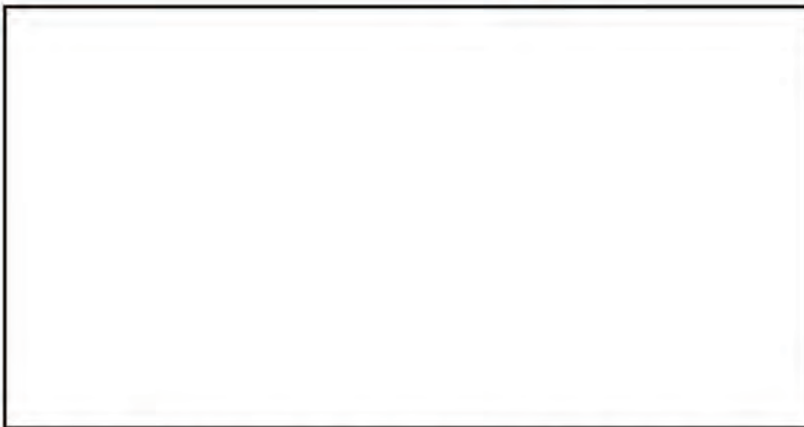
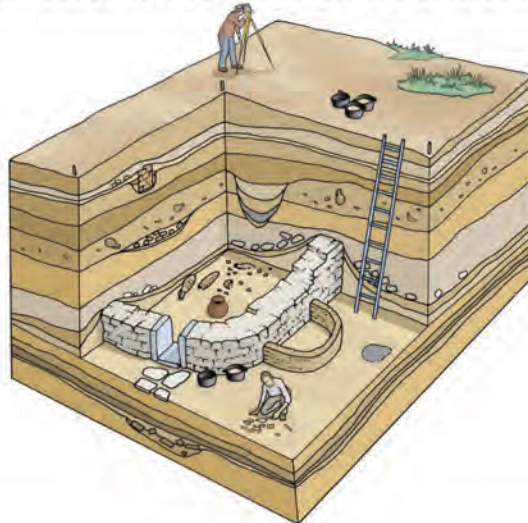
## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

As you have seen, excavating in squares is useful. The 'walls' between the squares provide a lot of information in the different layers of soil and stones. These different layers show what life was like in previous times. If there was a fire, you would see a layer of black soil in the 'wall'; you can also see bricks. Studying the different layers is called stratigraphy.



a) Archaeologists make drawings of the layers in the 'walls'. You are going to help the archaeologists by making a drawing for them. You are going to draw the layers in the wall on the east side of this square.

Before you start, think about how you will show the difference between the layers.



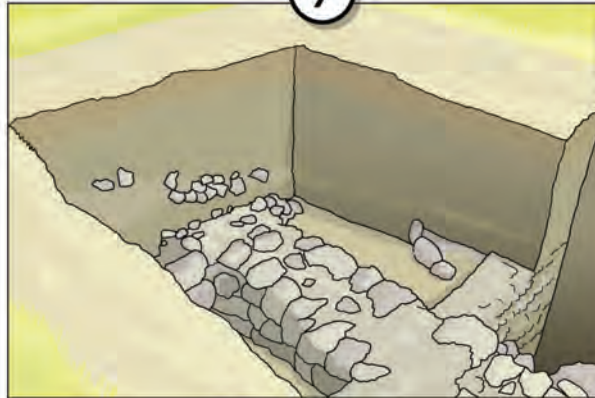
b) What is the oldest layer on your drawing? Point it out with an arrow.





## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

7



To your left is an excavation square of 3 x 3 metres. In this square you can see a Late Iron Age wall. You are going to be a real archaeologist now, and make a scale drawing of this wall!

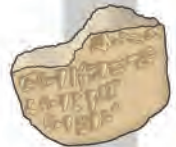
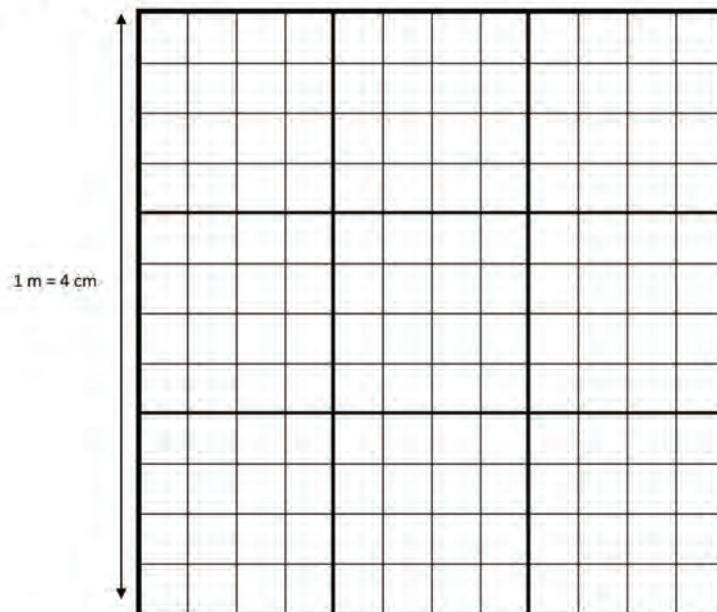
- a) But first you need to work out the scale for the centimetre squared paper. If 4 cm is 1 m, what is 1 cm? So what is the scale?

.....

- b) What if the wall is 1,25 m thick. How many centimetres will that be on the drawing?

.....

- c) Draw the map of the walls on the centimetre squared paper below. Do not forget to use the right scale!





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

8



No.8 marks the remains of a gate from the Middle Bronze Age. You can see the base of the gate. What do you think this gate looked like before it was damaged?

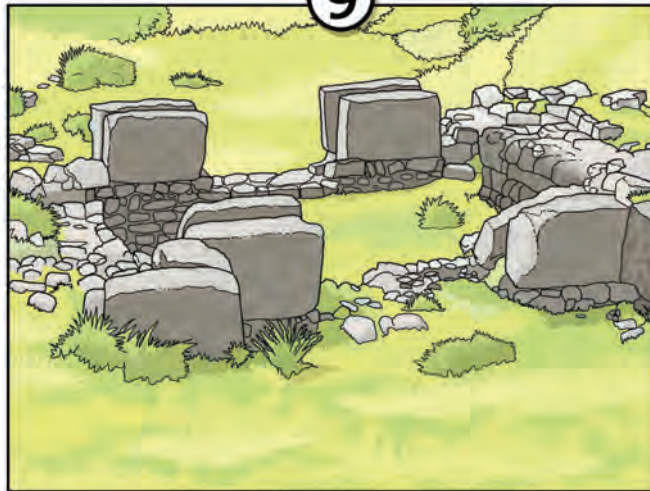
a) Try to make a drawing of the undamaged gate.





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

9



At No. 8 you saw the remains of the north-west gate of Tell Balata. Now you are near the remains of the east gate. This gate was built later than the north-west gate: at the end of the Middle Bronze Age. The two gates look similar: people used large standing stones for both of them.

a) How many of these stones can you see at the east gate?

.....

b) What do you think the purpose of these stones was?

.....

.....

You are now at the end of the assignment. Well done! You have learned a lot during your visit to Tell Balata, including the basic elements of field archaeology. Perhaps some of the questions were very difficult, like making the drawing of the north-west gate.

These questions are not only difficult for you, but also for archaeologists. Very often they do not know the answers themselves. That does not mean you should not try to think of possible solutions. But be careful... make sure you keep an open mind for new solutions.

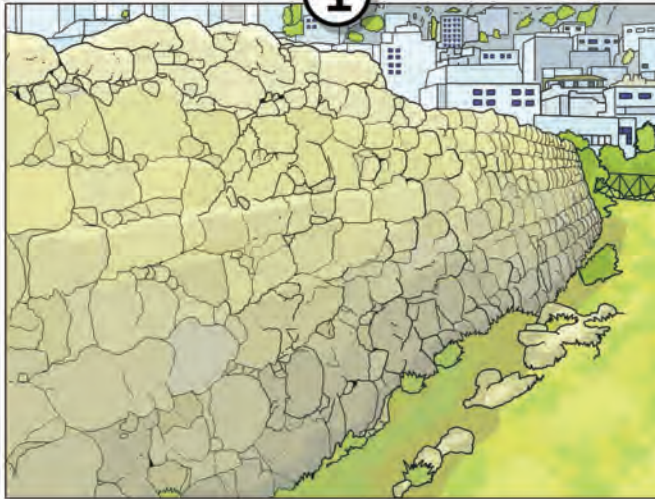




## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

1



a) Here you can see a lot of stones. They were neatly piled up by humans in the Middle Bronze Age. What kind of architectural object is this?

**A wall**

b) What was this architectural object used for?

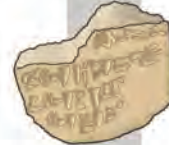
**To keep the inhabitants of old Balata safe. For fortification.**

c) How can you tell what its function was?

**The wall is thick and very strong. If someone wanted to seize the city it would be difficult to capture because of the wall.**

d) These remains are marked on the map close to No. 1.  
Colour them **green** on the map.

The wall probably used to be a lot longer. Another part of the wall has also been excavated and is marked on the map. Can you see where it is?  
Colour that bit **red**.





## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

2



- a) At No. 2 you can see the remains of an old temple from the Middle Bronze Age. A temple is a religious building; as is a mosque. The mihrab in a mosque points towards Mecca. This temple has no mihrab but the entrance points in a certain direction, which must have held a meaning for the people of the time. What direction is that (look at the compass on the map)?

**South-east.**

- b) Measure the thickness of the walls. Measure one of the walls. How thick is it?

**Some of the walls are 5 metres thick.**

- c) The thickness of the temple walls appears out of proportion. Can you think why the walls are so thick?

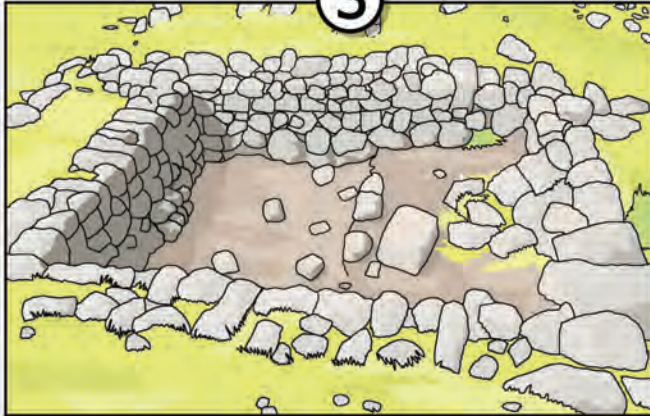
**Nobody really knows the reason. In Egypt the temples also had thick walls. Perhaps the people in Old Balata wanted to copy these temples? Another theory is that the temple was also used as a safe place, as a fortification.**



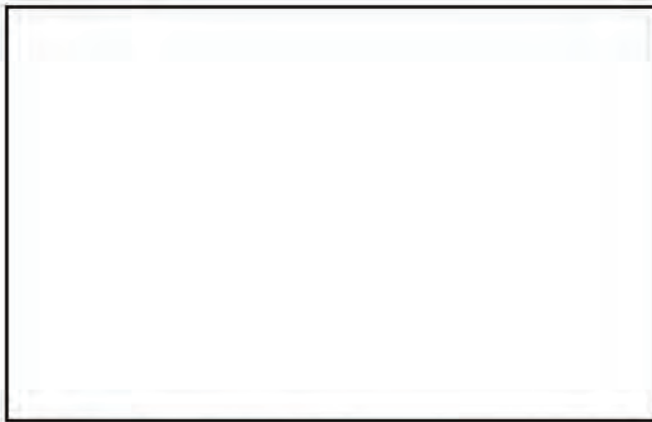


## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

3



- a) This is the ruin of a building from the Hellenistic period. The stones in the walls of this house were not mortared, so you might think they would fall down easily. The people from the Hellenistic period had a solution to this problem. To discover their solution you have to look carefully at the different size stones and at how they have been placed in the wall.  
Can you draw/sketch it?



- b) Why do you think this solution works?

**Obviously it works: the ruins are well preserved!**

- c) There is no hole in the wall for a door. How do you think people came in and out of the building?

**The children need to use their imagination. Different answers are possible: for example, a door via the roof.**

### ANSWERS





# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

## ANSWERS

This looks like a very big stone, but actually consists of mud brick debris. A lot of houses used to be built of this kind of brick, and sometimes people still use it because of its good properties.



This boy is making mud bricks and letting them dry.

Look carefully at the two pictures (below) of the same mud brick house in the Jordan Valley. The house has been uninhabited since 1970. The first picture was taken in 1991, the second in 2005. You can see how the house has changed in those 14 years.



1991



2005

a) Compare the two pictures of the house. How has the house changed?

The house is already starting to fall apart a bit in 1991. 14 years later that is worse: the roof has come down, the walls are more broken, etc.

b) What is the disadvantage of using mud bricks for houses?

Mud bricks are not very strong. Rain and wind can easily cause them to break up.

c) What materials are used to build houses now?

Mortar, concrete, limestone.

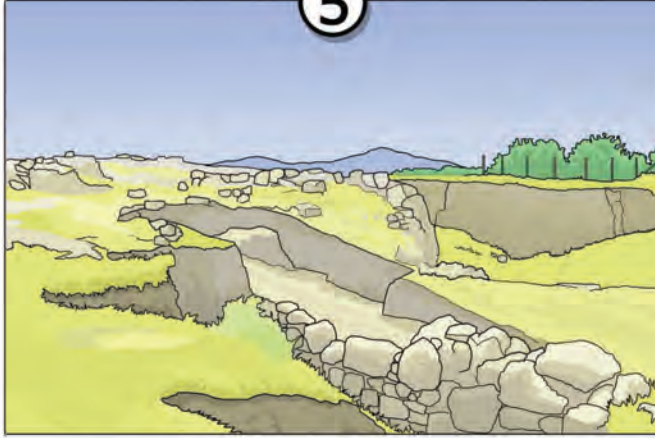




## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

5



An archaeological excavation is not done arbitrarily. The method often used involves dividing the site into squares. The squares are then excavated as you can see below. The 'walls' between the squares also provide a lot of information in the different layers of soil and stones.



a) The squares almost always have the same measurements. What is the size of these squares?

**5 by 5 metres**

b) It is easy to draw squares on a flat piece of paper. But how do archaeologists make sure they excavate in perfect squares in the field?

**They use string to make straight lines; then they excavate along these lines.**

c) How do archaeologists decide where to excavate in squares?

**They know or expect, because of previous research, that there is probably something in the soil relevant to what they want to learn from the site.**

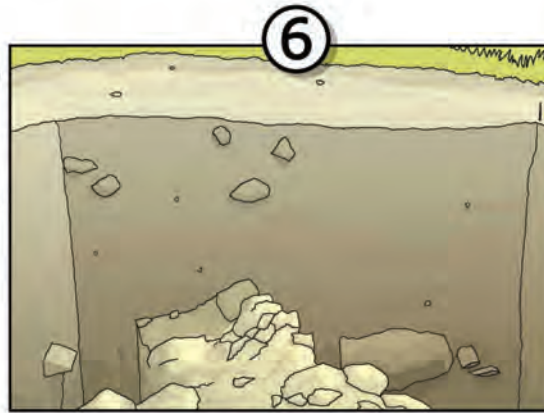




## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

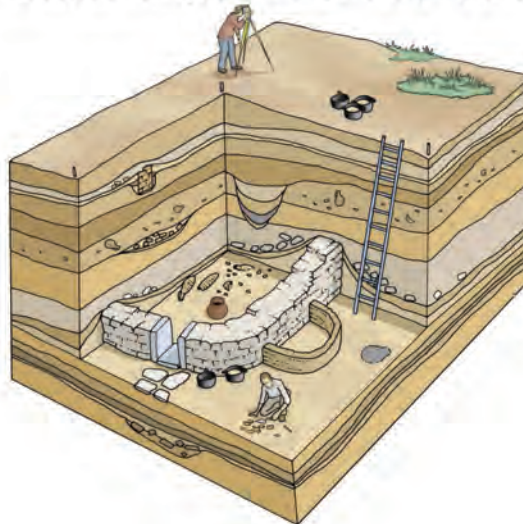
### ANSWERS

As you have seen, excavating in squares is useful. The 'walls' between the squares provide a lot of information in the different layers of soil and stones. These different layers show what life was like in previous times. If there was a fire, you would see a layer of black soil in the 'wall'; you can also see bricks. Studying the different layers is called stratigraphy.



- a) Archaeologists make drawings of the layers in the 'walls'. You are going to help the archaeologists by making a drawing for them. You are going to draw the layers in the wall on the east side of this square.

Before you start, think about how you will show the difference between the layers.



- b) What is the oldest layer on your drawing? Point it out with an arrow.

The arrow should be pointing to the bottom of the drawing.





## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

7



To your left is an excavation square of 3 x 3 metres. In this square you can see a Late Iron Age wall. You are going to be a real archaeologist now, and make a scale drawing of this wall!

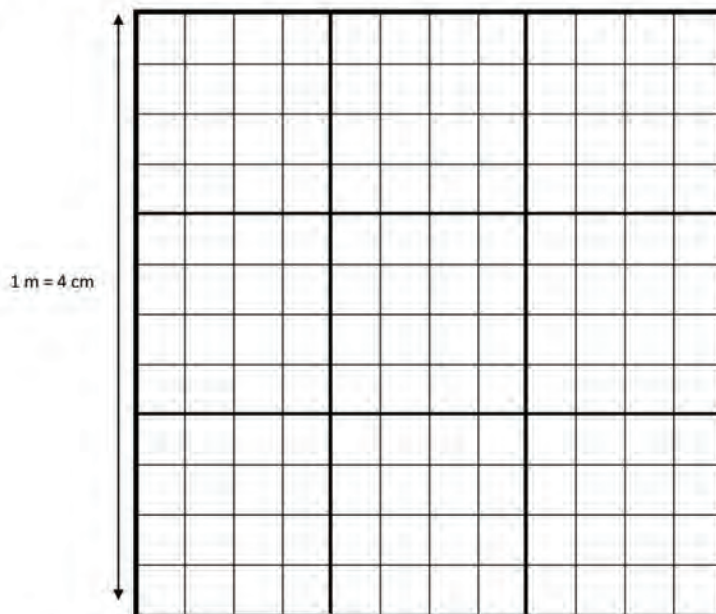
- a) But first you need to work out the scale for the centimetre squared paper. If 4 cm is 1 m, what is 1 cm? So what is the scale?

1 cm = 0.25 m, so the scale is 1:25

- b) What if the wall is 1,25 m thick. How many centimetres will that be on the drawing?

5 centimetres

- c) Draw the map of the walls on the centimete squared paper below. Do not forget to use the right scale!

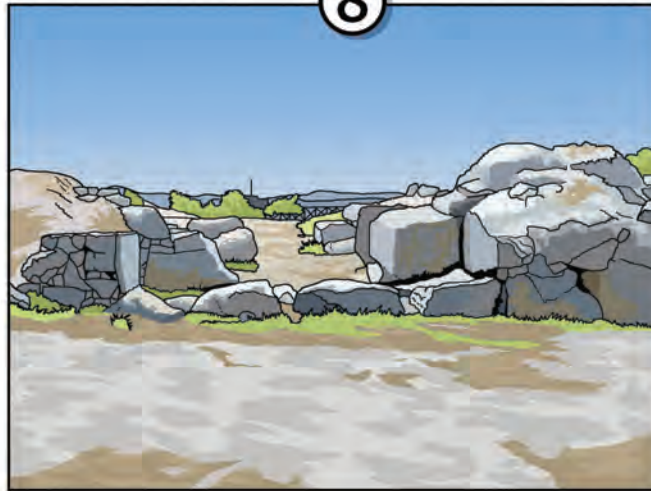




# THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

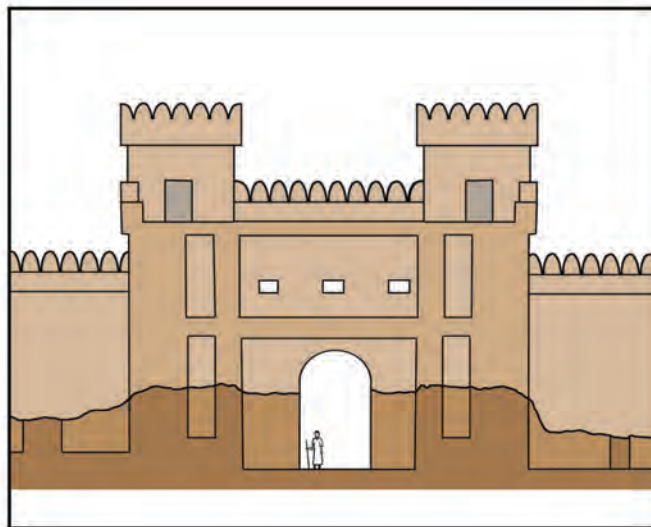
## ANSWERS

8



No.8 marks the remains of a gate from the Middle Bronze Age. You can see the base of the gate. What do you think this gate looked like before it was damaged?

a) Try to make a drawing of the undamaged gate.

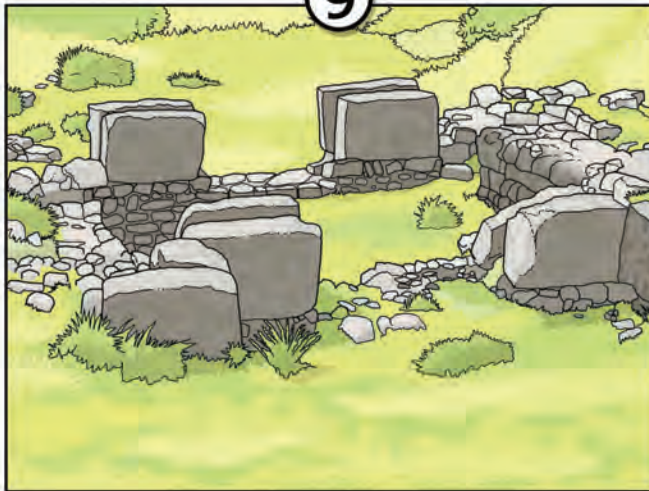




## THE YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGIST

### ANSWERS

9



At No. 8 you saw the remains of the north-west gate of Tell Balata. Now you are near the remains of the east gate. This gate was built later than the north-west gate: at the end of the Middle Bronze Age. The two gates look similar: people used large standing stones for both of them.

a) How many of these stones can you see at the east gate?

Eight

b) What do you think the purpose of these stones was?

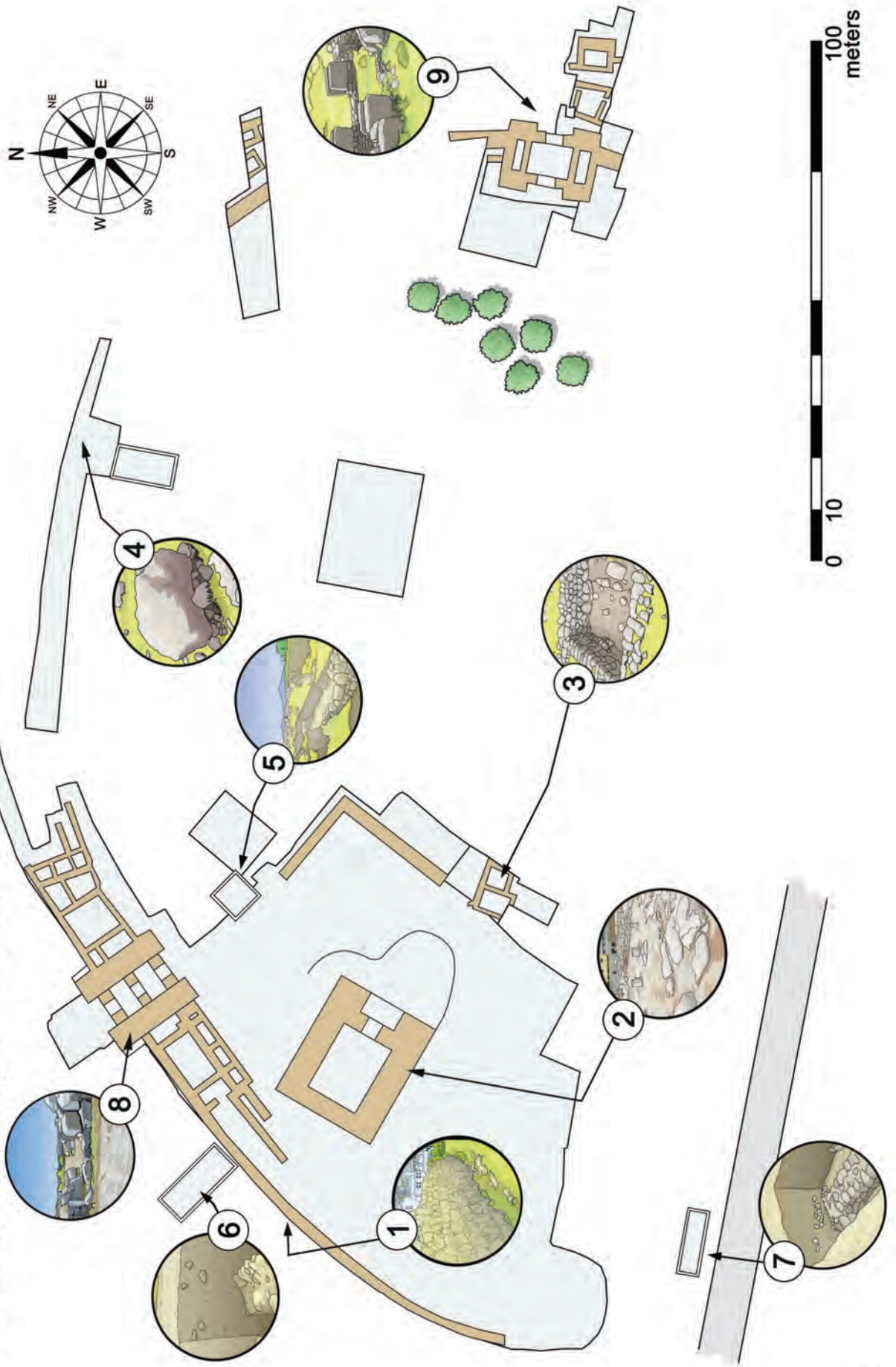
Archaeologists are not very certain about this. Perhaps they provide a solid base to the upper part of the gate; they give an impression of strength to the visitor and show the power and importance of the city.

You are now at the end of the assignment. Well done! You have learned a lot during your visit to Tell Balata, including the basic elements of field archaeology. Perhaps some of the questions were very difficult, like making the drawing of the north-west gate.

These questions are not only difficult for you, but also for archaeologists. Very often they do not know the answers themselves. That does not mean you should not try to think of possible solutions. But be careful... make sure you keep an open mind for new solutions.



# The Young Archaeologist 2nd Grade



**THE YOUNG  
ARCHAEOLOGIST**

# Diploma

2nd Grade

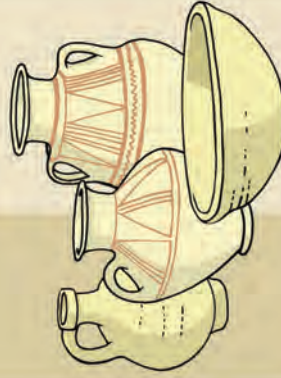
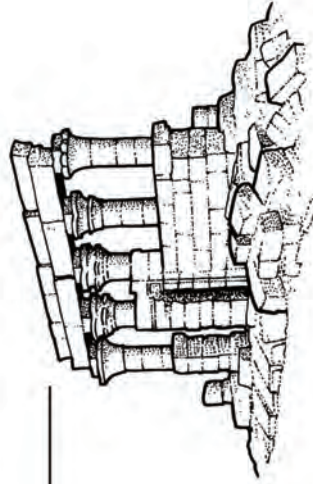


name

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signature

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## Making pots from pottery sherds



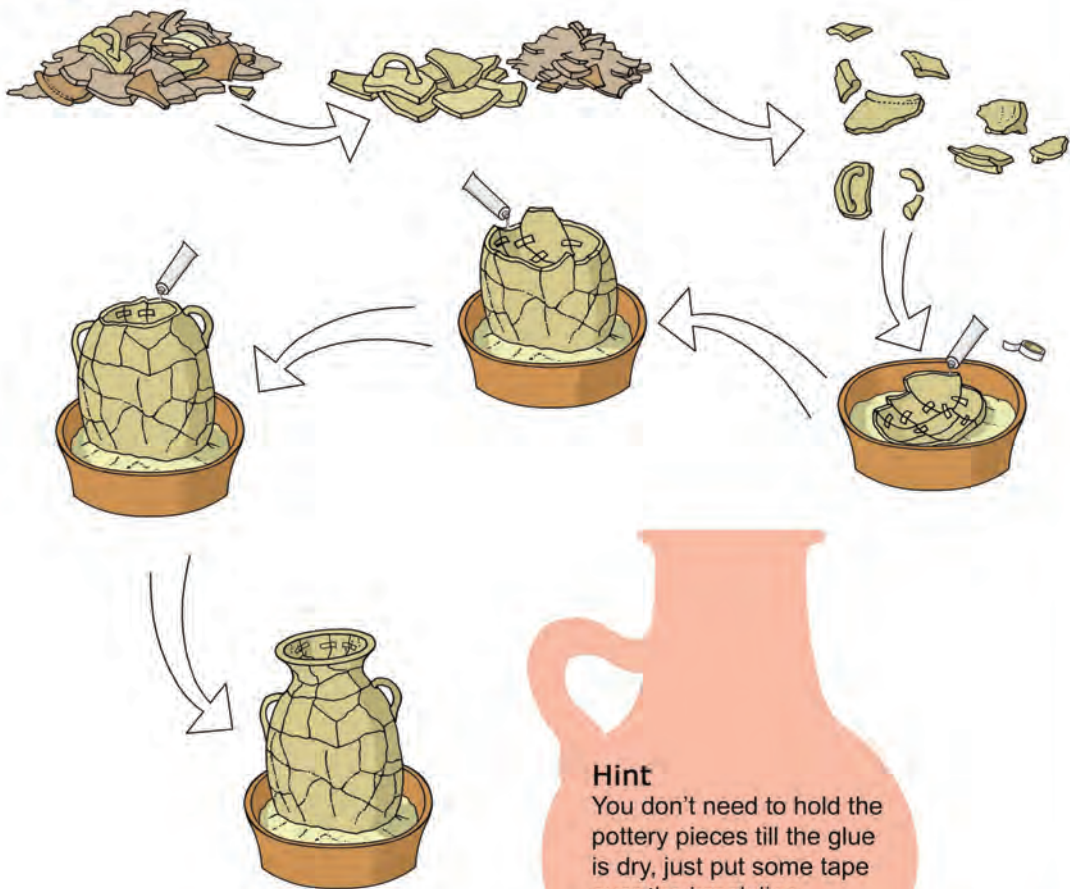
Try to fit the pottery sherds together. When they fit, glue them with a bit of glue. In the end you may get a whole pot!

### Information

Pottery has been made for many centuries. The first pottery in Palestine was made 7000 years ago. The shapes, decoration and even the way of making the pottery changed overtime. That is why pottery can help with dating ruins during archaeological excavations. After the archaeologist has found (almost) all the sherds of a pottery pot, the pieces can be glued together.

### Preparation

- Pottery sherds
- Glue
- Adhesive tape



### Hint

You don't need to hold the pottery pieces till the glue is dry, just put some tape over the break line.

## Writing a story



Write a story about the time when Palestine was part of the Egyptian empire, based on a letter from 3400 years ago.

**Information**  
3400 years ago Palestine was part of the Egyptian empire. At that time the most important cities of Palestine had kings (subordinate to the pharaoh of Egypt). For example Megiddo had a king called Biridya and Shakmu's king was called Labaya. These kings quarreled...

### Preparation

- Activity sheet:
- Writing a story
- Lined paper
- Pencil
- Eraser



### Hint

Instead of making up a story, you can also write a play with your classmates.

## Making a coin for your area

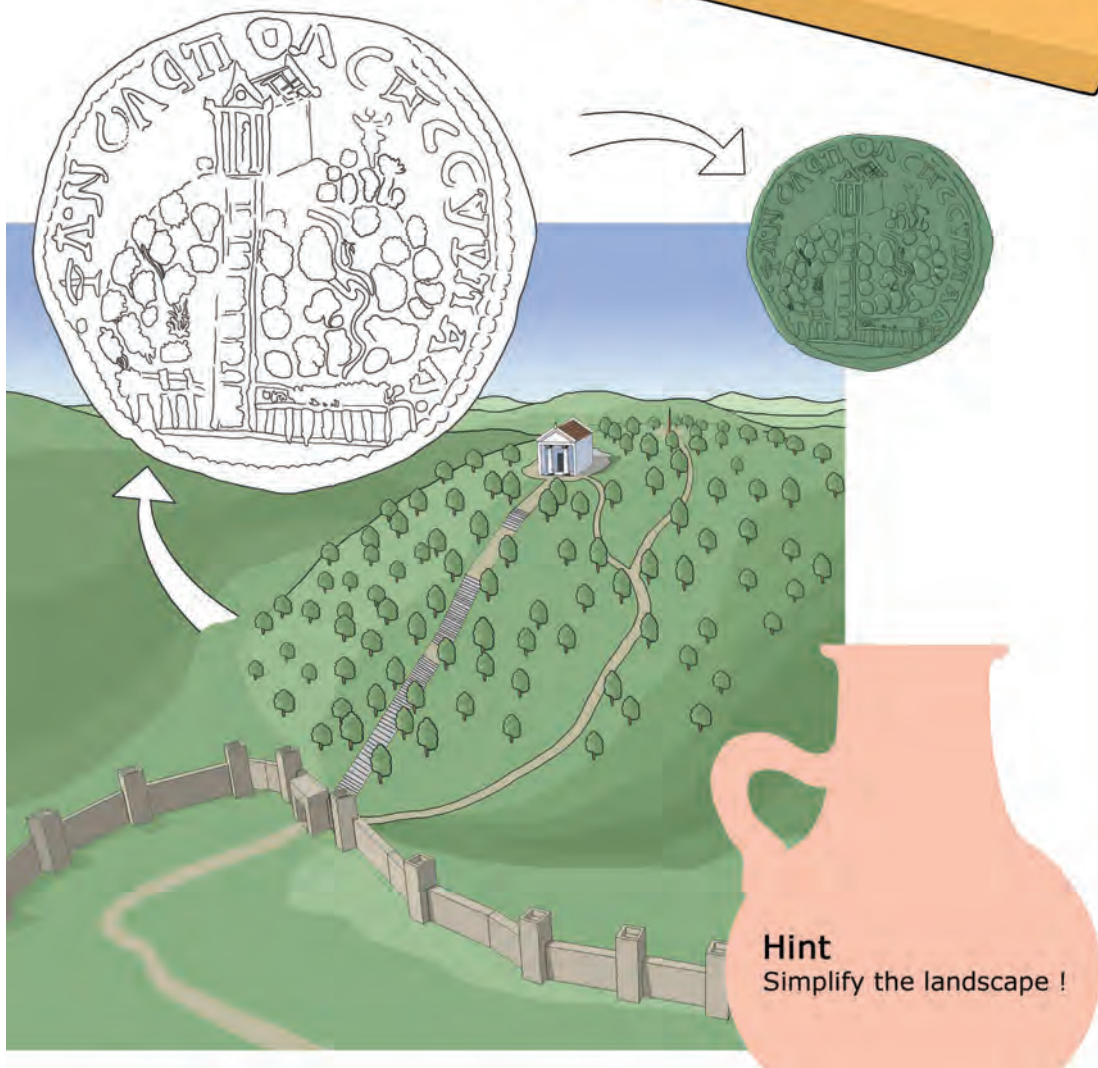


Look carefully at the old coin depicting Mount Gerizim, near Nablus and Tell Balata. Try to create a similar coin for your own neighbourhood.

### Preparation

- Drawing paper
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Clay
- Tools for the clay

**Information**  
Before the Greeks came to Palestine, people exchanged goods. But the Greeks started using coins for buying things. The coins were often decorated with the head of an important king and sometimes with a notable building from the local area.



## Making a mascot



Make a mascot (a figurine that brings good luck) out of clay or any other material you want.

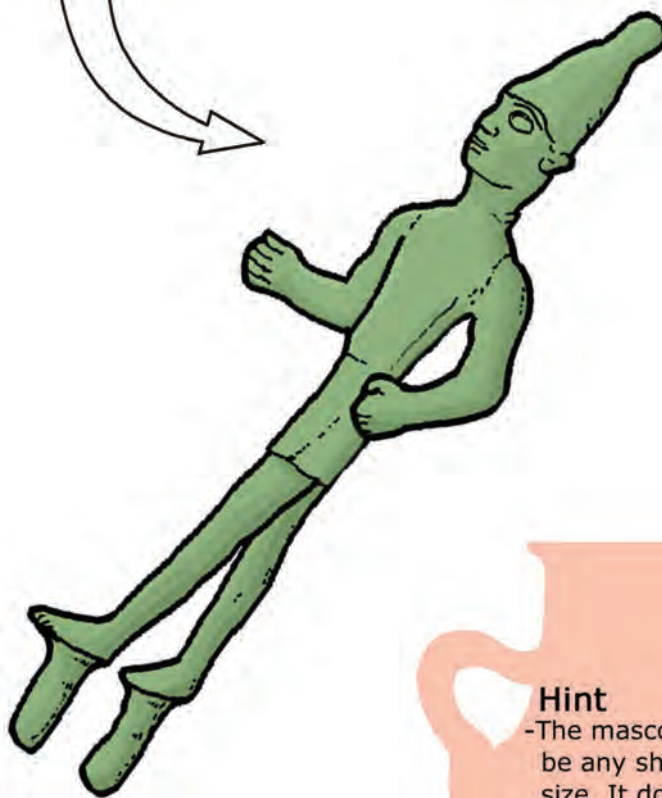
### Information

Here you see a Canaanite figurine from about 3500 years ago. It was found in Tell Balata.

People at that time believed that these kinds of figurines would bring them good luck, so they always carried them around

### Preparation

- Drawing paper
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Materials you think you need, like clay.



### Hint

- The mascot can be any shape or size. It does not need to be human.
- Before making the mascot, it is a good idea to make a sketch on paper.

## Writing in cuneiform



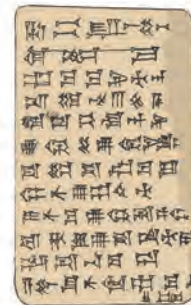
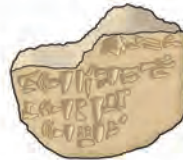
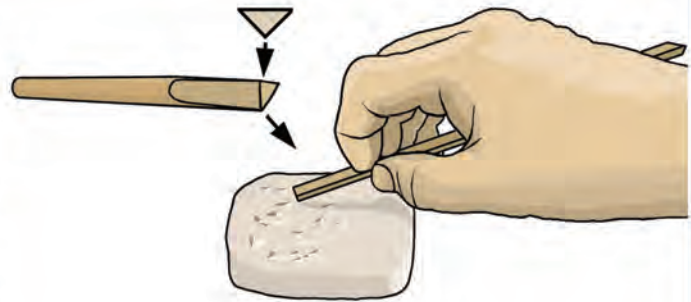
Learn how cuneiform script developed through time.

### Information

Cuneiform is a kind of writing that originated 5000 years ago in Mesopotamia (Iraq). It was written in soft clay (clay tablets). In Tell Balata archaeologists have found some clay tablets with cuneiform writing. Cuneiform script changed through time. We now recognise five phases in its development.

### Preparation

- Activity Sheet: Writing in cuneiform
- Pencil
- Eraser



Some clay tablets found in Tell Balata

## Making music, but with what?



Imagine...

You live 6000 years ago, at a time when people live in small villages, close to nature. There are no materials like iron or bronze. You want to play music, but how can you do that?

Can you think of materials you might make musical instruments from?

Make an instrument and compose a musical piece.



Musical instruments from later periods



### Hint

Think of stones, sticks, tree trunks, leaves, leather, water, ...

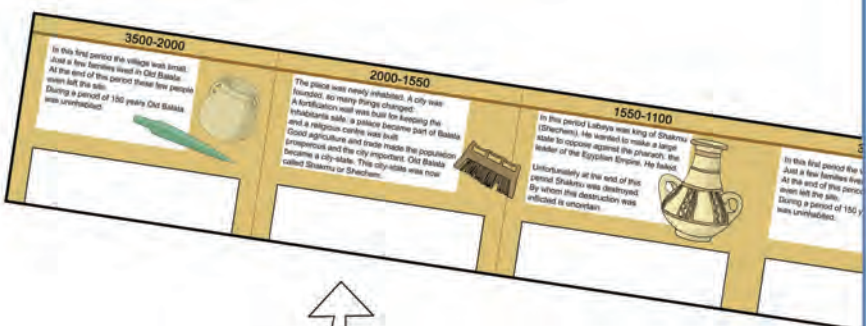
# Timeline of Old Balata



Put the pictures in the right place on the timeline.

**Information**  
 Old Balata started 5500 years ago. First it was a small village. Later it became a town. In time it became an important city. The more important Old Balata became, the more impressive were the buildings built there. At times parts were destroyed but Old Balata was always rebuilt. When the Romans came, they founded a new city further west: Neapolis (Nablus) in 72 A.D. After that Old Balata became less important. It grew smaller and eventually disappeared.

**Preparation**  
 - Timeline  
 - Cards with drawings of Old Balata over time



**Hint**  
 Do this puzzle together. Make sure you read the texts and look at the pictures carefully.

# Timeline of Old Balata



ANSWERS

**2500-2000**  
The first human settlements in the region were established. The site of Tell Balata was first occupied. The earliest structures were simple mud-brick houses. The site was abandoned around 2000 BC.

**2000-1850**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 1850 BC.

**1850-1700**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 1700 BC.

**1700-1500**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 1500 BC.

**1500-1350**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 1350 BC.

**1350-1200**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 1200 BC.

**1200-1000**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 1000 BC.

**1000-800**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 800 BC.

**800-600**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 600 BC.

**600-400**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 400 BC.

**400-200**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 200 BC.

**200-100**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 100 BC.

**100-1000**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 1000 AD.

**1000-2012**  
The site was re-occupied. The population grew, and more complex structures were built. The site was abandoned around 2012 AD.

**Timeline Card**  
Tell Balata Timeline Card

## Tell Balata on the map



Look carefully at the map of Tell Balata.  
Then answer the questions on the related activity sheet.

### Information

Old Balata was situated in a valley between two mountains: Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. It was a convenient place to live because the old road and trade route went through this valley. It was also convenient because there was a source of water.

### Preparation

- Map of Tell Balata
- Activity sheet T.Bal.
- Pencil



### Hint

- If you do not know how to read maps, ask your teacher or a fellow pupil to help you.
- Do this activity sheet together.

# What do these animals eat?



## Information

Tell Balata was not only inhabited by people. Particularly after Old Balata was deserted by man, many animals and plants made their home there.



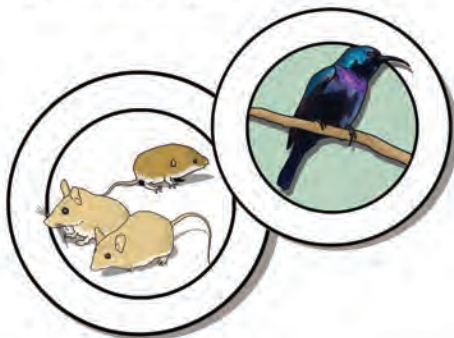
## Preparation



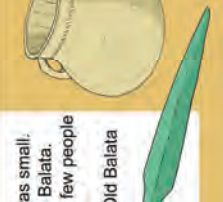




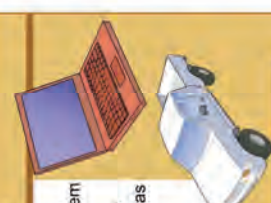
- Activity sheet:
- What do these animals eat?
- Crayons

Animal  
(green background)

Food  
(white background)

But what do the animals living at Tell Balata eat? Match the animal (green background) with his food (white background) by colouring the borders in the same colour)



<p><b>3500-2000</b></p> <p>In this first period the village was small. Just a few families lived in Old Balata. At the end of this period these few people even left the site. During a period of 150 years Old Balata was uninhabited.</p> 	<p><b>2000-1550</b></p> <p>Balata was inhabited anew. It became a big city, with: -A fortified wall was built for keeping the inhabitants safe. -A palace became part of Balata and a religious centre was built. Good agriculture and trade made the population prosperous and the city important. Old Balata became a city-state. This city-state was now called Shakmu.</p> 	<p><b>1550-1100</b></p> <p>In this period Labaya was king of Shakmu. He wanted to create a large state to oppose the pharaoh, the ruler of the Egyptian Empire. He failed. Unfortunately at the end of this period Shakmu was destroyed. By whom this destruction was inflicted is uncertain.</p> 
<p><b>1100-330</b></p> <p>Shakmu or Shechem became a city again. At one point the Assyrians conquered the city.</p> 	<p><b>330-60</b></p> <p>The city Shechem became more important, so it needed to be better protected. The gates of the city changed: a tower was added. There were more changes in buildings such as wall structures and the use of pillars. Furthermore money became a method for exchange.</p> 	<p><b>60-324</b></p> <p>The city became small. Especially after the Roman Emperor founded a new city further west: Neapolis (Nablus) in 72 A.D.</p> 
<p><b>324-1900</b></p> <p>In about 1850 Balata village was founded on and beside Tell Balata, near the water source.</p> 	<p><b>1900-2012</b></p> <p>In 1903 a German archaeologist discovered that Tell Balata was Shechem (Shakmu). A few years later (1913) the Germans started to excavate. The excavation was continued in 1956 by the Americans.</p> 	<p><b>A</b></p>
<p><b>B</b></p>	<p><b>B</b></p>	<p><b>B</b></p>



**Tell Balata** Timeline card



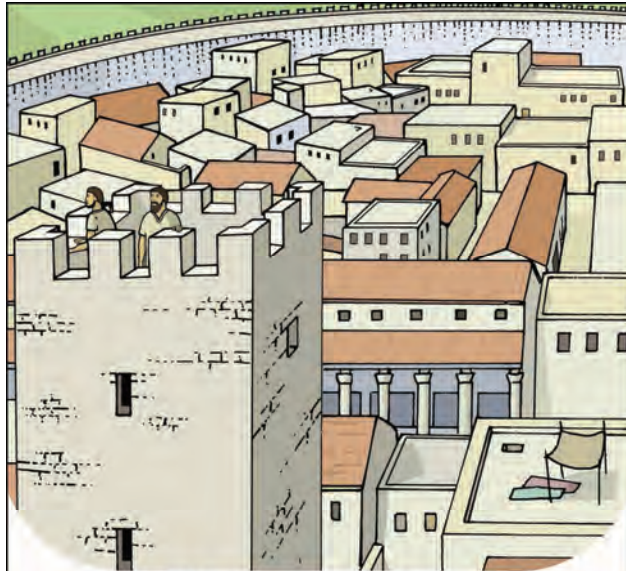
**Tell Balata** Timeline card



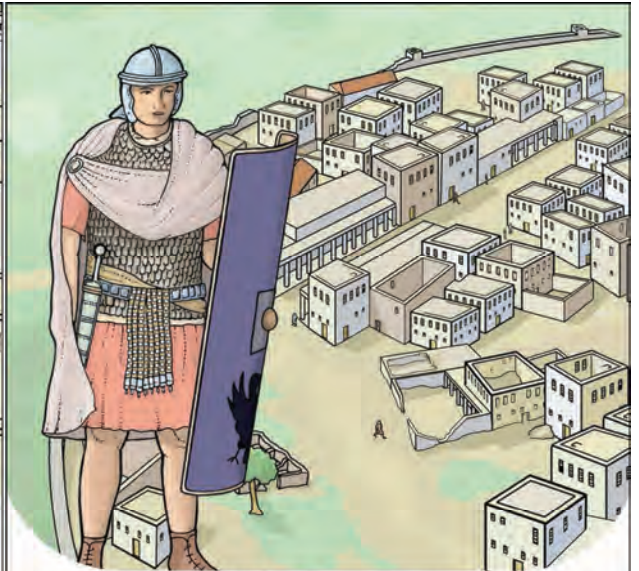
**Tell Balata** Timeline card



**Tell Balata** Timeline card



**Tell Balata** Timeline Card



**Tell Balata** Timeline Card



**Tell Balata** Timeline Card

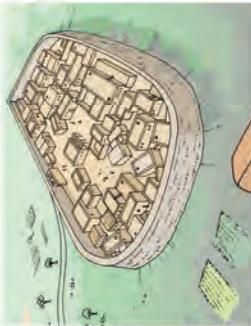
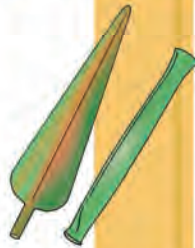


**Tell Balata** Timeline Card



### Early Bronze Age 3500-2000 B.C.

The Early Bronze Age is the beginning of a long Bronze Age period. From this time people started to use bronze for tools. Bronze is a material that can easily be made into different shapes. Before this time, tools were made of stone and wood. Wooden and stone tools were not always practical, because they were heavy and were not always an ideal shape. You can imagine how important this new development was for humans! More and more they were able to make things they needed. In this period the first cities were founded in the Middle East. Before this period people only lived in villages.



### Late Bronze Age 1550-1100 B.C.

Palestine was part of the Egyptian Empire. The pharaoh was now the big king. Some city-states tried to become independent. The local people of Palestine and Lebanon were called the Canaanites. They were again prosperous because of their trade. At the end of this period many things changed; city-life ended. The reason for this big change is still uncertain. Earthquakes had probably a role in this.



### Middle Bronze Age 2000-1550 B.C.

In the Middle Bronze Age Palestine was divided into city-states (a city with much of land and villages around). Every city-state was ruled by a different king. The cities were prosperous at that time. They traded with many states around them, such as Egypt, Greece and Syria.



### Iron Age 1100-330 B.C.

This period is called the Iron Age because now people made also tools of iron, which is stronger than bronze. In the beginning people lived in small villages, but they were independent from Egypt or any other state. After some time cities came up again. Some of them conquered much land and made that into a state. However, sometimes large neighboring states like Egypt came to conquer this land, but they failed. But the Assyrians from Iraq and Northern Syria managed to make Palestine part of their empire. The Assyrians were succeeded by the empires of the Babylonians and the Persians.



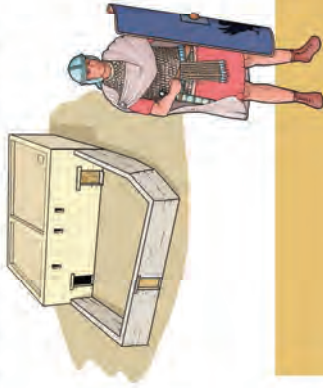
**Hellenistic Period 330 - 60 B.C.**

The Persian Empire was overtaken by the Greeks (Alexander the Great and his successors). Through this Greek people and Greek culture came to the region. This can be seen in how houses are built.



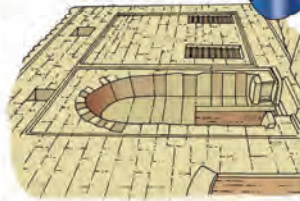
**The Roman Period 60 B.C. - 324 A.D.**

The Romans took over this part of the Greek empire around 60 B.C. People from Rome came to this country and founded new cities. They also brought new architecture.



**Period between 324 and 1900**

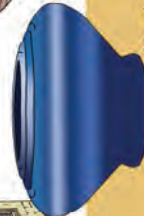
Many empires govern this region. From 1517 it became part of the Ottoman Empire from Istanbul.



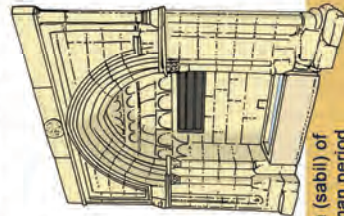
Palace and tomb of Lady Tunshuq



Glass flask of the Mamluk period



Mamluk glass bowl

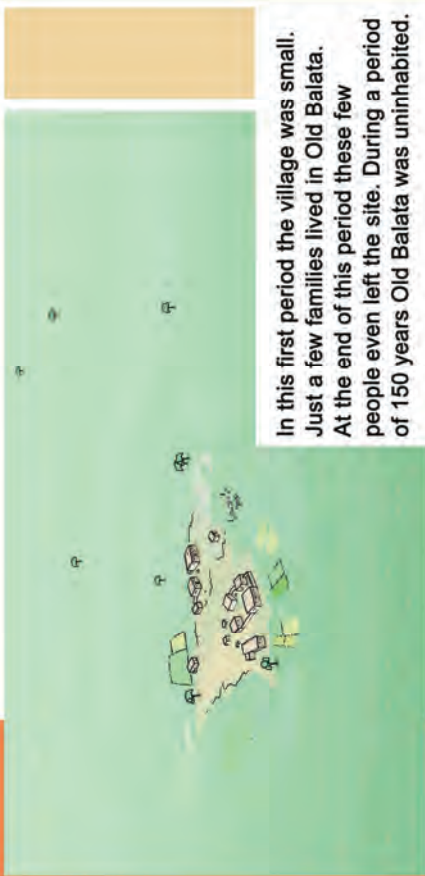


Fountain (sabil) of the Ottoman period

**The last 100 years**

The Ottoman Empire ended by the First World War. After that Palestine was placed under British Mandate, and this was followed by the Nakbah.





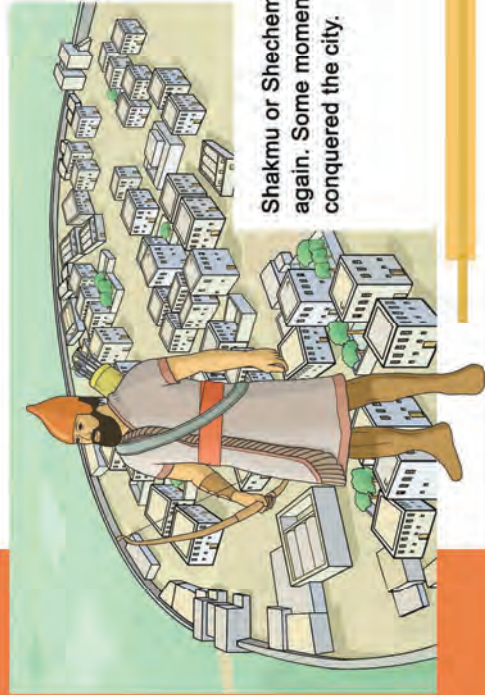
In this first period the village was small. Just a few families lived in Old Balata. At the end of this period these few people even left the site. During a period of 150 years Old Balata was uninhabited.



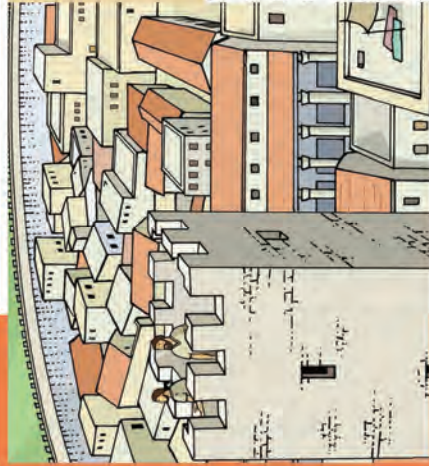
The place was newly inhabited. A city was founded, so many things changed:  
 -A fortification wall was built for keeping the inhabitants safe  
 -A palace became part of Balata  
 -A religious centre was built  
 Good agriculture and trade made the population prosperous and the city important. Old Balata became a city-state. This city-state was now called Shakmu.



In this period Labaya was king of Shakmu. He wanted to make a large state to oppose against the pharaoh, the leader of the Egyptian Empire. He failed. Unfortunately at the end of this period Shakmu was destroyed. By whom this destruction was inflicted is uncertain.



Shakmu or Shechem became a city again. Some moment the Assyrians conquered the city.



The city Shechem became more important, so it was needed that the city was better protected. The gates of the city changed: a tower was added. There were more changes in buildings such as wall structures and the use of pillars. Furthermore money became a method for exchange.



The city became small. Especially after the Roman Emperor founded a new city further west: Neapolis (Nablus) in 72 A.D.



In about 1850 Balata village was founded on and besides Tell Balata, near the water source.



In 1903 a German archaeologist discovered that Tell Balata is the same as old Shechem (Shakmu). A few years later (1913) the Germans started to excavate. The excavation was continued in 1956 by the Americans.



This Teachers Handbook is a product of the Tell Balata Archaeological Park project and is one of the results of an intensive and fruitful cooperation between Palestinian and Dutch members of the team.

The main goal of this handbook is to involve children with their heritage in a diverse and attractive way. During the pilot-lessons in Nablus in 2010 and 2011, it became clear how interested and enthusiastic the children are about their heritage. This became apparent in the diverse, well thought of and relevant questions that the children asked about the archaeological site of Tell Balata. We hope that via this handbook, with help of the teachers, together with heritage and educational institutions, this enthusiasm and interest of the children remains or even gets stronger.

Some examples of questions highlight the childrens' interest:

- “
- When did the first inhabitants come?
  - Who lived here?
  - How did the people live?
  - How important was this settlement?
  - How did the people prepare food?
  - How did the people make clothes and shoes?
  - Where was the water source for the people?
  - Did the people eat sweets like kanafa?
  - Why is this site called Tell Balata?
  - Which prophet lived here?
  - What kind of animals live here?
  - How can the workers and archaeologist work in this heat?
  - Why do the archaeologists use squares?
  - What was the purpose of that building?
- ”



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