"Living with Volcanoes": Geoarchaeology in the High School Classroom

Jolley, Alison* and Ayala, Gianna. Department of Archaeology, University of Sheffield.

Why teach geoarchaeology at high school?

Geoarchaeology is an increasingly popular course offering in social and natural sciences. Learning about this discipline offers an opportunity for students to connect with their world and gain a better understanding of their environment, cultural heritage, and humanity. By introducing this discipline early in education, students can develop a greater appreciation for interdisciplinary approaches to learning and problem-solving.

Initial development of the “Living with Volcanoes” activity

In order to introduce geoarchaeology in a high school setting, a study was conducted on student perceptions of the activity. Pre-interviews and post-interviews with two teachers and their students were conducted to better understand their experiences and insights. This information was then used to refine and improve the activity.

Implementation of the “Living with Volcanoes” activity

The “Living with Volcanoes” activity was developed as a result of the initial study. It was designed to engage students in exploring the connections between human societies and volcanic events, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges and resilience of these societies. The activity includes several components:

1. **Arts**: Comparative and contextual geographical and archaeological analysis
2. **Geology**: Introduction to volcanology and its historical significance
3. **Background knowledge and perspectives**: Understanding the role of geoarchaeology in shaping our understanding of human history

The activity was designed to be conducted in class over a period of two weeks, with each session focusing on a specific theme. Students were encouraged to work in groups to facilitate collaborative learning.

Data collection methods – students and teachers

The activity was evaluated through surveys administered to students and teachers. The surveys were designed to assess student engagement, interest, and understanding, as well as the effectiveness of the teaching strategies. The data collected included feedback on the activity design, teaching methods, and any challenges or areas for improvement.

Activity structure

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Observations of students during the activity: mode of high engagement

Throughout the activity, students were actively engaged and demonstrated a high level of interest in the material. This is evident through their active participation in group discussions, their enthusiasm in completing the activity tasks, and their willingness to explore the connections between human societies and volcanic events.

Conclusions: approaches, outcomes and future implementation

This activity has been successful in fostering a deeper understanding of the connections between human societies and volcanic events. It has also highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to learning and the need for continued engagement in these topics. Future implementation could focus on refining the activity and incorporating additional topics to further enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.