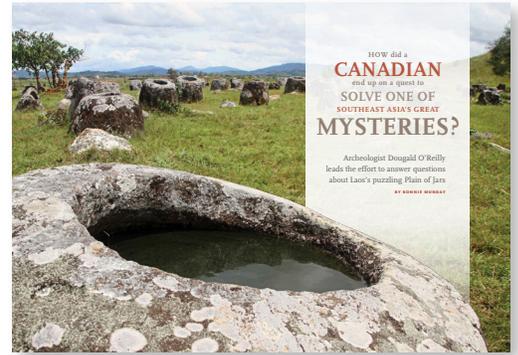


CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article 'Plain of Jars'
Issue March/April 2018



Lesson Overview:

Students will explore the article “How did a Canadian end up on a quest to solve one of Southeast Asia’s great mysteries?” (Laos’ Plain of Jars) by Bonnie Munday in the *Canadian Geographic* March/April 2018 edition. Students will learn about the physical and cultural characteristics of the Plain of Jars region in Laos, UNESCO World Heritage sites, technologies used to further the research at the Plain of Jars, as well as geography-related careers.

Grade Levels:

8-12

Objectives:

- Students will learn about the Plain of Jars in Laos by reading the article in Canadian Geographic (March/April 2018), pages 46-52, “How did a Canadian end up on a quest to solve one of Southeast Asia’s great mysteries?” (Laos’ Plain of Jars) by Bonnie Munday.
- Students will complete a worksheet, focusing their reading on the geography standards.
- Students will conduct research to gain deeper knowledge of the Plain of Jars.
- Students will conduct research to learn about geography-related careers.
- Students will learn about UNESCO World Heritage sites and plot these on a world map display board in the classroom.
- Students will learn about the importance of technology at the Plain of Jars.

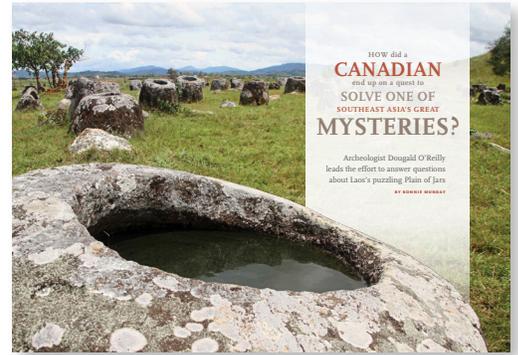
Materials:

- One or more copies of the March/April 2018 issue of Canadian Geographic
- Pens/pencils
- Computers or iPads for research
- Map of Laos with Plain of Jars region shown: worldeasyguides.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Where-is-Plain-of-Jars-on-map-Laos.jpg
- Map of the world, to use as a display board for UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Map of Canada (cangeoeducation.ca/resources/tiled_maps/docs/Education-Map.pdf) to use as a display board for UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Worksheet (provided)

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Sources of Information:

- phys.org/news/2016-10-laos-plain-jars-recreated-virtual.html
- whc.unesco.org/en/criteria

Links to Canadian Standards for Geography:

Geographic Skill 1: Asking Geographic Questions

1. Plan how to answer geographic questions

Geographic Skill 2: Acquiring Geographic Information

1. Use a variety of research skills to locate and collect geographic data.
2. Make and record observations about the physical and human characteristics of a place or region.

Geographic Skill 3: Organizing Geographic Information

1. Integrate various types of information to organize geographic information for display purposes.

Geographic Skill 4: Analyzing Geographic Information

1. Use texts, photographs, charts, tables, graphs, documents and maps.

Geographic Skill 5: Answering Geographic Questions

1. Develop and present combinations of geographic information to solve geographic problems and make reasoned decisions.

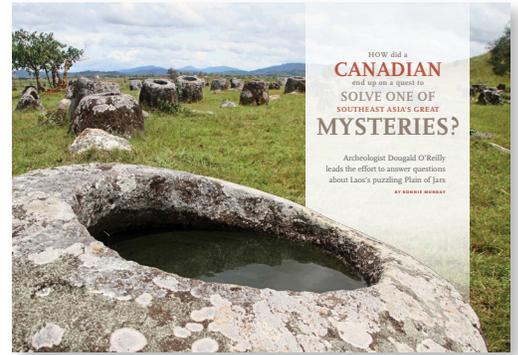
Lesson Development/Activities:

- Display a map of Southeast Asia, where you have highlighted the location of the Plain of Jars in Laos. worldeasyguides.com/asia/laos/plain-of-jars/where-is-plain-of-jars-on-map-laos/
- Create a word wall by asking students what they know about Southeast Asia – make a list of countries, climates, biomes, cultural traditions, religions, etc.
- Write the word “archeology” in the centre of the chalk/whiteboard. Ask students to consider “archeology” as it’s connected to the discipline of geography.
- Invite students to write their comments/questions/reflections/ideas about the subject on the board.

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- Read the article (individually, in small groups, or as a class) “How did a Canadian end up on a quest to solve one of Southeast Asia’s great mysteries?” (Laos’ Plain of Jars) by Bonnie Munday, from the March/April 2018 issue of *Canadian Geographic* (pages 46-52). Have students use the worksheet provided to make notes as they read the article.
- After reading the article, discuss the following questions with your class:
 - What did the students find most interesting/surprising?
 - What patterns and trends did the students notice?
 - Discuss some possible geographical reasons for the location of the Plains Jars.
 - What is the fable told by villagers to explain the Plain of Jars?
 - What is the current theory put forward by experts to explain the Plain of Jars?
 - What are some geographical characteristics that make this area of Laos geographically unique?
 - Why were there no major excavations of the area since the 1930s?
 - Describe and explain how human activities have affected the physical environment.
 - What are some potential benefits of the Plain of Jars becoming a UNESCO World Heritage site?
 - Why has it been so difficult to attain designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site?
 - Discuss the role of technology as it relates to the Plain of Jars.
 - Discuss Dougal O’Reilly’s biography – What inspired him? What steps did he take to become a highly renowned archaeologist?
 - Ask students to brainstorm a list of geography-related careers – add these to the word wall.

Assignment:

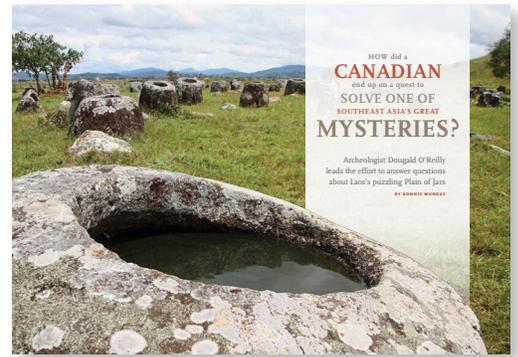
Allow students to choose one of the following assignments and present their findings in a format of their choosing:

1. Investigate geography-related careers relevant to the Plain of Jars site: e.g., archaeologist, cartographer, GIS technician, land surveyor, field technician, cultural resource manager, conservator, anthropologist, museum curator.
2. Write a brief biography of O’Reilly, including his passions, influential people in his life, his education and professional experience.
3. Research technologies being used at Plain of Jars that could also be used to assist geographers in other locations. Discuss the significance of the technology used at the Plain of Jars and its impact on the archaeological research.
4. Research UNESCO sites in Canada (natural and cultural designations). Create a timeline showing when each location was added to the UNESCO list. Place these on the map of Canada on the display board.

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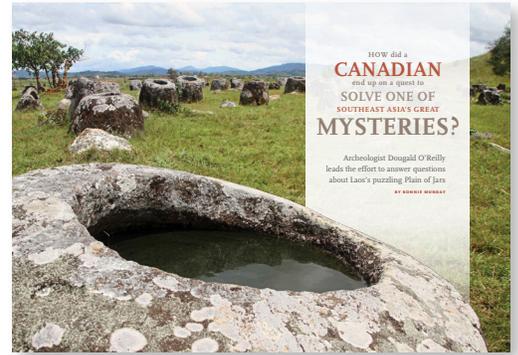


Extending Your Geographic Thinking:

- Research areas near your community that have unique cultural significance, such as ancient burial sites, middens, etc.
- Write a letter to UNESCO, either supporting or disapproving of the Plain of Jars becoming a World Heritage site. Students must provide supporting evidence.
- "Preserving Cambodia's Past" (March/April 2018 issue of *Canadian Geographic*, pg. 52): What programs are being implemented to preserve the cultural treasures of Cambodia?
 - Do you think these programs would be effective in other parts of the world? Explain why or why not.
 - Are any of these programs necessary in Canada? Explain why or why not.
- Create a travel brochure to the Plain of Jars that includes the following information:
 - What is the best time of year to travel there? Explain your criteria.
 - Flights from your home town (time, cost, time zones)
 - Hotels (location, costs)
 - Tour pricing
 - Provide background and history of the Plain of Jars and surrounding area.
 - Other possible activities, sites to see while in the area

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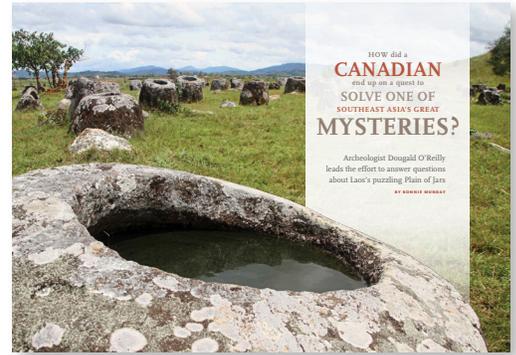
NOTEBOOK WORKSHEET:

"Plain of Jars", March/April 2018 issue of *Canadian Geographic* (pages 46-52)

GEOGRAPHIC STANDARD (TOPIC)	YOUR NOTES
<p>The World in Spatial Terms: Provide the longitude and latitude.</p>	
<p>Places and Regions: How have humans interacted with the region? How have different cultures affected the region? What are the natural/physical characteristics of the region? What are the human impacts on the region? How have the above changed over time?</p>	
<p>Physical Systems: Describe the ecosystem(s). What are the soil types? Display a climograph.</p>	

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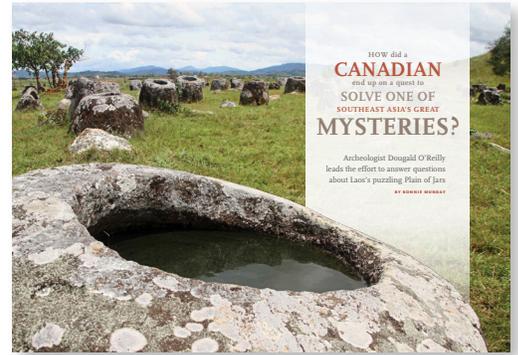


GEOGRAPHIC STANDARD (TOPIC)	YOUR NOTES
<p>Human Systems:</p> <p>What are the cultural traits of the region? How have transportation and communication patterns affected the area? How have territorial disputes/wars affected the region?</p>	
<p>Environment and Society:</p> <p>How has the physical environment influenced human activities? How have humans modified the local environment?</p>	
<p>Uses of Geography:</p> <p>What types of geography-related careers have been involved with the Plain of Jars research? What geographic tools are being used with the Plain of Jars research? What technologies are being used at the Plain of Jars?</p>	



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GEOGRAPHIC STANDARD (TOPIC)	YOUR NOTES
<p>Other: What did you find interesting or surprising? Is there anything you were left wondering about?</p>	