

## **NEWS BREAK**

Article: **Human skull fragment about 8,000 years old discovered**

Section: **MAIN, A13**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, May 22, 2022** of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some teachers might use this as a take-home assignment and others might read and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

***\*Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for your students.***

### **Standards:**

#### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1**

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

#### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2**

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

### **Objectives:**

**Students will discuss the proper treatment of ancient Native American remains when they are found.**

### **Vocabulary Building:**

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the

Hable said he didn't expect more skulls, let alone one from a different **millennium**, to be unearthed in his area anytime soon. "This," he said, "is extremely rare."

### **Millennium Guess:**

### **Millennium Definition:**

### **Comprehension Questions:**

1. Two kayakers were enjoying the last glimmers of summer on the Minnesota River last September when they noticed an odd brown chunk along the bank. They paddled toward it and looked closer. It appeared to be a \_\_\_\_\_, so they called the Renville County Sheriff's Office.
2. The Sheriff's Office sent the bone to a medical examiner and then to a forensic anthropologist with the FBI, who was not able to pinpoint an identity but did make a startling discovery last week through what process?
3. The bone was part of a skull and most likely was from a young man who lived as many as \_\_\_\_\_ years ago, between 5500 and 6000 B.C., Hable said, citing the anthropologist's findings.
4. "We have this sort of bizarre report that it's ancient," Hable said by phone Wednesday. The young man had likely traversed parts of what is Minnesota during the \_\_\_\_\_ period in North America, Hable said, when people ate primarily nuts and seeds before subsistence farming, according to a report by the Archaeology Laboratory at Augustana University in South Dakota.
5. Kathleen Blue, a professor of anthropology at Minnesota State University, said the man would have likely eaten a diet of what?
6. Minnesota has three other remains from that period that have been studied, she said, adding that it is rare for Native American tribes in the state to allow what?
7. "\_\_\_\_\_ has an amazing ability to try to sort of fix itself after there's been a traumatic injury."
8. On Wednesday, when the Renville County Sheriff's Office posted a news release about the skull and pictures of it, Hable said, his office was contacted by various Native American groups in the state, including the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. It informed the Sheriff's Office that publishing photos of the skull was what?

9. “Because there’s a chance that the bones belong to somebody with Native American heritage, we’re just going to honor their request,” Hable said. Dylan Goetsch, a cultural resources specialist with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, said in a statement Thursday that the Sheriff’s Office “showed a complete lack of \_\_\_\_\_ by their failure to reference the individual as being Native American, their treatment of the individual as a piece of history and their lack of tribal consultation.”
10. The skull is expected to be returned to whom?
11. \_\_\_\_\_ can also affect precipitation patterns around the world, making dry areas drier. Hable said that parts of the Minnesota River “were exposed that hadn’t been before” because of the drought.

**Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:**

- *What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?*
- *At first, I thought \_\_\_\_\_, but now I think \_\_\_\_\_?*
- *What things did you already know from prior experience?*

***He added that the council had not been made aware of the discovery until seeing the Facebook post. Blue said the skull was definitely from an ancestor of one of the tribes in the area today. “The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and other ones are very protective of any remains,” she said. The Private Cemeteries Act in Minnesota states that it is a felony “to willfully disturb a burial ground.” If the sheriff had not sent the skull to the Medical Examiner’s Office — believing that it may have been from a recent homicide victim — the skull most likely would never have been analyzed by an anthropologist, Blue said.***

- Do you think it’s important that there is government protection within protecting skeletal remains of ancient Native Americans?

News Break is posted to the Web on Monday. Please share this NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the print replica for your class, please [register online](#) or call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.  
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