

You do **NOT** need your textbook for this lesson but if you wish to refer to your book, you will find some of the information on pages 122 to 124.

Pottery

New words

pottery	pots shaped from moist clay and hardened by heat
artefacts	things like tools, pottery and buildings which are made by people
ceremonies	public events which repeat the same words and actions
initiation	a period of instruction or teaching in which teenagers are accepted as adults
ancestors	the spirits of those who have died

Archaeologists study remains from the past such as human and animal skulls, bones and **artefacts**. They often find broken pieces of pottery when they are excavating.

Pottery production was a very important feature of Iron Age society and the introduction of pottery was very important in the early African farming communities. They served many uses. Can you think of any?

Archaeologists have found many examples of pottery made by the first farmers. Clay pots, cups, plates, beads and ornaments have all been discovered.

While iron making was mostly a job for the men, making pottery was the work of women and girls. The Iron Age women were skilled potters. The women made pottery with clay and would fire them in the fire.

The differences in the pottery styles have helped archaeologists tell one group of farmers or communities or villages from another because each chiefdom would have different markings, features or patterns in their style of pottery decorations. Sometimes, archaeologists find pots from different communities in other communities' kraals and homes. This helps them understand how these people moved around as well as the trading habits and links between different chiefdoms.



Four steps in making pots

1. The women used clay to make the pots. They dug the clay from the ground.
2. Women mixed clay with water.
3. Women used their hands to shape the clay in the pots.
4. They decorated the clay by scratching pattern into the wet clay.
5. The pots were heated in a fire pit to make them hard.



Uses of pots

Pots were important to farming communities. They were used for:

Carrying water

Storing grain

Used in religious ceremonies

Cooking food

Drinking and eating

ACTIVITY- Answer these questions:

1. Who made the pottery in the farming community?
2. Why do you think pottery production was an important feature of the early African farming communities? Give three reasons why this was important.
3. How are archaeologists able to tell the origins (where they came from) of the pottery they find?
4. What does 'firing' pottery do?
5. Each community had its own kinds of markings on their pots but sometimes archaeologists find pots from different communities in other communities' kraals and homes. Why would archaeologists consider this to be an important discovery? Give two reasons.

Week 6 Lesson 1

The Lydenburg Heads

Date: _____

Pots were not the only things made with clay. Sometimes they made masks.



A very famous example of Iron Age pottery in the form of masks, is the Lydenburg heads. Small pieces of broken clay objects were found under the ground in the town of Lydenburg in Mpumalanga Province.

Archaeologists put the pieces together very carefully. When the pieces were put together, they turned out to be hollow pottery sculptures of human-like heads. The Heads can be seen today in the South African Museum in Cape Town.



Two of these human-like heads are big enough to have been put over the head to be worn as masks. The other five smaller heads could have been attached to a costume or carried on poles. They were made around 500 AD. It is believed that they **may** have been buried in the ground to keep them **safe**.

No-one is sure what they were used for. They could have been used as ornaments or in special ceremonies such as the initiation ceremony. Archaeologists believe that the Lydenburg Heads were probably used in initiation ceremonies.

Some of the heads are shaped like animals. Some people think this may show that they may have been symbols of strength. They also had a small shiny piece of stone painted on to them which would have shone brightly. This may also prove that they were used in ceremonies.

Before becoming adults, teenagers went through special initiation ceremonies. In these ceremonies, ancestors were asked to accept these young people as full members of their communities. The heads were used to help contact the ancestors in the spirit world. At the end of the initiation, it is **possible** that the heads were **broken and buried** as they were believed to be **dangerous**.

ACTIVITY: Complete the following.

1. The following sentences about the Lydenburg Heads are not written in the same order as the events happened. Write the sentences in the correct order under the heading: **The Lydenburg Heads** (p 124 act 9)
 - 1.1 The Lydenburg heads were put on display in a museum.
 - 1.2 The masks were broken and buried.
 - 1.3 Hundreds of years later archaeologists found the broken pieces of pottery under the ground in Lydenburg.
 - 1.4 Archaeologists put the clay pieces together, saw that they were magnificent masks and called them the Lydenburg Heads.
 - 1.5 Long ago teenagers were initiated into adulthood using clay masks.
2. What are the Lydenburg Heads made from?
3. What do archaeologist think that the shiny stone painted on to the Heads tell us about how they were used?
4. Why do you think the Heads were buried in the ground? Think of two reasons.
5. Describe the masks. You need to give FOUR facts in your description.