Perhaps you’ve seen the handsome women and men in stylish green and gray uniforms and cool hats. They’re in your national parks and monuments all over the country. Maybe you’d like to become a Junior Ranger. We’re always looking for a few good kids to join our staff.

A Junior Ranger has to use brain power. You have to think, imagine, and write down your thoughts and observations. You also have to care. Care about the planet you live on and the people you share it with. Up for the challenge? OK! First, walk the trail around Wupatki Pueblo. Then, in the visitor center, check out all the neat things people made 800 years ago with just their hands. Now, you can begin.

As a Junior Ranger I promise to help protect our parks by leaving everything in its place.

Congratulations, and welcome aboard!

The past remains for everyone.

If you answered yes, then you’re the kind of kid we want as part of our staff. Together we can make sure your life would you want those things you left to be there if your children’s children came back to learn about Wupatki?

What would you have to leave behind?

Perhaps you have to walk to your next home. What would you take with you?

Maybe sickness and sadness signaled time to leave. Maybe it didn’t rain or the soil was worn out. Maybe people got greedy. Maybe it was just time to go. For whatever reasons, people left here only a short time. Today, those who remember Wupatki in their memories wonder where their ancestors lived for awhile.

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Yesterday and Today
Scientists who study people’s pasts are called archeologists. They assume people who lived in the past had the same basic needs as you and me, to eat, drink, have clothing, and a place to live. But the people of Wupatki didn’t have grocery stores, electricity, or shopping malls. Can you connect each item from our lives today with something the people of Wupatki might have used?

What Do You Think?
Sometimes archeologists have no idea how an artifact or building was used. But other people know. Stories of Wupatki have been told over and over through the years among Hopi and Zuni people. They might know what kind of game was played in the ballcourt even though archeologists aren’t sure.

Describe the game you would play:

The Hopi say drawings and carvings on rocks (pictographs and petroglyphs) tell of their ancestors’ journeys. Using your own symbols, illustrate your journey to Wupatki or a story about yourself:
Going Through the Garbage

Archeologists study the things people left behind to learn how they lived. For example, if we found corn cobs we might conclude that the people were farmers. Here are just a few of the artifacts — things made or used by people — found in the garbage at Wupatki. They are important clues.

Using these clues can you figure out:

1. What these people ate?

2. What they wore?

3. Name the raw materials they used to make their tools and jewelry.  
   (Hint: there are at least six)

Do you think they could find all these raw materials here?  
If not, how would they get them?

4. When we find the remains of a large village like Wupatki, we guess that the people were farmers.  
   Which of these artifacts would show you that the people of Wupatki were farmers?

5. What would your garbage tell about you and your family?
**Our Needs Make Us Alike**

In the first column, list some essential things you need to have in order to live. Next to each of your needs describe how you think Wupatki kids might have met those needs 800 years ago. Remember, they couldn’t go to the store. What do you see around here that could have been used?

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**Think About Your Home**

If your toys, clothes, furniture, and prize possessions were found by an archeologist, they would tell a story about you. Imagine someone scattered your things all over town or stole your toys. We would know very little about your life.

Why do you think it’s important to leave artifacts in place at Wupatki or any archeological site?

While at Wupatki your parents pick up a piece of pottery. When you tell them that artifacts must be left in place, they say, “Taking one little piece doesn’t count.” What do you do?

This is what kids at Wupatki saw out their bedroom window.

Draw what you see out your bedroom window:

Their door was a hole in the roof. How would they keep the rain out? Sometimes they had a fire in the room to keep warm. YIKES! Do you think they ever burned the house down?

**That’s Weird!** The way we think, believe, and live, and the way we do things is our culture. Wupatki kids probably never took a bath and drank from puddles. They likely knew more than you about plants, animals, soils, weather, seasons, and water, and how to use this knowledge to survive. One culture is neither better nor worse than the other. Not weird, just different.