



NSF GK-12 Graduate Fellows Program

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*University of North Carolina at Wilmington*

# Radiocarbon Dating

## Activity Instructions

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Radiocarbon Dating:

\*THE DATING GAME was borrowed from:

<http://tea.rice.edu/activities/tully/thedatinggame>

—Optional extension—

After the students have been presented with the powerpoint, done the m&m simulation, and determined the age of the mummified seal and man, you can use this extension to keep their interest in radiocarbon dating.

Chose some kids to participate in an alteration of the real Dating Game.

The students will be the prospective “dates.”

One student will be the one choosing a “date.”

Each prospective date will have a card with the name of a famous historical figure (for example is a girl is playing she may have a card that says Cleopatra).

The student choosing a date will then have to guess the identity of each date.

One the correct identity is guessed, and then the date will flip their card over to reveal the amount of radioactive carbon 14 in the “date.”

Then the students can determine how old the “date” is.

Example of historical figures:

Cleopatra

Napoleon

Charlemagne

Caesar

Christopher Columbus

Queen Elizabeth

Lucy (Australopithecus—ancient human)

\*You can use any type of “date” beside historical figures. Other idea—eras in geological time, specific species (dating when they first appeared in the fossil record), etc. Use your imagination.

