

Penny Archeology

Imagine the following: A civilization in the future has located a United States penny. The U.S. and/or American culture no longer exist. What information would a new civilization be able to collect from studying the penny?

Think about the following questions/information:

- Time period
- Appearance of people
- Control of fire (ability to mold)
- Mining technology
- Trade (if copper is found locally)
- Number system/monetary system
- Money instead of bartering (more advanced?)
- Religion (monotheist vs. polytheist) (government and religion combined?)
- Important values
- Clothing/climate
- Languages, cultures (Are there more than one? Communication between the two?)
- Name of country
- Architecture (math skills)
- Civilization ingredients: government, buildings, “cities”
- More than one state? (on quarters)

Other areas to consider:

- The importance of being able to decipher language (Rosetta Stone)
- Some ideas are conjecture, not fact. Example: Could the picture of Lincoln be what their god was supposed to look like or are government figures always on money? Is the architecture a government building, a house, or where the god is worshipped?