

Podcast Questions - A Famous Archeological Hoax

This short 2-minute podcast from HistoryPod describes how a seemingly invaluable scientific discovery in 1912 turned out to be a hoax. Use the vocabulary and questions in class to practice your listening and speaking skills.

Vocabulary you can preview

forgery	remarkable	cranium
gravel	missing link	propose
fragments	preconceived	authenticity
confirmation	bias	skepticism

Watch **21st November 1953: Piltdown Man exposed as a hoax, undermining studies of human evolution** on YouTube.

Questions for the podcast

1. Where was the Piltdown Man claimed to have been discovered?
2. What was unusual about the skull of this man?
3. Why did people initially believe the remains were important?
4. Was the Piltdown Man the only fossil that Dawson supposedly discovered?
5. How did people discover that the skulls were hoaxes?
6. Which museum finally stated that these skulls were hoaxes?
7. What is confirmation bias?
8. Belief in the Piltdown Man was a barrier to what?

Extra Discussion Questions

1. Do you think hoaxes are harmful? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think Dawson committed this hoax?
3. Do you think Dawson should have been punished for this hoax? If not, why not? If yes, what would be a suitable punishment?
4. Do you know of any other famous hoaxes? If yes, what are they?
5. What's the difference between a hoax and a prank?
6. Have you ever played a prank or known someone who has? What was it?
7. How do you feel about prank TV shows? Why?
8. Are you interested in archaeology? Why or why not?
9. Do you think it's important to know where humans have come from? Why or why not?
10. If you could be an archaeologist for the day, would you want to? Why or why not?