



**Digging in:** Tymisha Stewart, 9, of Bridgeport, carefully inspects her plot for artifacts during a mock archaeological dig Friday at the Discovery Museum.

Jeff Brush/Connecticut Post

## Kids learn it's hip to dig the past

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BRIDGEPORT — Move over, Indiana Jones. There's a new group of young archaeologists just waiting to get their hands on some ancient artifacts.

But until some real adventure comes along, they can be found at the Discovery Museum's most recent exhibit, DigNubia.

The exhibit, which runs through September, is designed to introduce youngsters to ancient Nubian culture from northeastern Africa, one of the earliest highly developed civilizations.

"For us, it's a neat science exhibit that talks also about culture," said Linda Malkin, the museum's vice president of education and operations.

Students in grades three through six in the Bridgeport schools' summer program were treated Friday to a day at the museum as part of a math and science enrichment program.

Their day began with an introduction to the exhibit that includes mockups of an ancient tomb, a chapel and an archaeologist's tent. Then they did some hands-on activities, such as making Egyptian mirrors and jewelry.

Eleven-year-old Bilal Jama talked about the exhibit while he strung together red, orange and black beads.

"I've learned about the Nubians, how they lived and that the Nile is the longest river in the world."

Across from him, 12-year-old Pulark Smith reached for gold beads. "And the Nile flows from south to north," he said.

After the crafts, it was time to practice their archaeological skills at a virtual dig site.

The children, armed with shovels, brushes and rulers, went to work in two sand-filled pits, hoping to discover treasures.



**Deep thinking:** Taeshonda Harding, 11; Melisa Santos, 10; Thao Dam, 11; and Bianca Robinson, 11; all of Bridgeport, work to answer questions about the culture of Nubia using their archaeological skills Friday at the Discovery Museum in Bridgeport. The exhibit, DigNubia, exploring the culture of ancient African civilization, will be on display through the summer.

"Remember, we're not doing major earth-moving, we're not scooping ice cream," a museum staffer told the children. They carefully sifted the sand, trying not to move any of the "artifacts."

"I found something!" said 9-year-old Stephanie Perez. "I think I found a rock." As she brushed off the sand, it appeared to be a piece of broken pottery. She also discovered something else that day, too.

"I found out what people did, long, long ago," she said.

*DigNubia will remain on display through September at the Discovery Museum, 4450 Park Ave. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Call 372-3521 for more information.*