

In 1957 a European silver coin dating to the eleventh century was discovered at a Native American archaeological site in the state of Maine in the United States. Many people believed the coin had been originally brought to North America by European explorers known as the Norse, who traveled across the Atlantic Ocean and came into contact with Native Americans almost a thousand years ago. However, some archaeologists believe that the coin is not a genuine piece of historical evidence but a historical fake; they think that the coin was placed at the site recently by someone who wanted to mislead the public. There are three main reasons why some archaeologists believe that the coin is not genuine historical evidence.

Great Distance from Norse Settlements First, the Native American site in Maine where the coin was discovered is located very far from other sites documenting a Norse presence in North America. Remains of Norse settlements have been discovered in far eastern Canada. The distance between the Maine site and the Norse settlements in Canada is more than a thousand kilometers, suggesting the coin has no real connection with the settlements.

No Other Coins Found A second problem is that no other coins have been found at the Canadian sites that were inhabited by the Norse. This suggests that the Norse did not bring any silver coins with them to their North American settlements.

No Use for European Coins Third, the Norse who traveled to North America would have understood that silver coins would most likely be useless to them. Silver coins may have been in wide use in Europe at the time, but the Norse, as experienced explorers, would have known that native North Americans did not recognize silver coins as money.

Now listen to part of a lecture on the topic you just read about. Actually, many archaeologists believe that the coin discussed in the reading is not a fake. They believe it represents genuine evidence that the Norse came into contact with Native Americans a thousand years ago. First, the great distance of the Maine site from the Norse settlements in Canada. Well, many other objects found at that same Native American site had come from faraway places, not just the coin. There's a perfectly reasonable historical explanation for these objects. The Native Americans who lived at the Maine site traveled great distances within North America. They were interested in obtaining objects from faraway places. The Native Americans could have reached the Norse settlements during their travels and brought the silver coin back to Maine. Second, does the fact we found no other coins at Norse settlements mean that the Norse didn't bring any coins with them? Not necessarily. The Norse didn't create permanent settlements in North America. At some point, they went back to Europe. When they packed for their return voyage, they packed up all their valuable possessions. They would have packed up all silver coins they had as well. So it's completely possible that the Norse had originally brought the coins with them to North America, but when they returned to Europe, they took the coins back with them. Third, it's true that Native Americans wouldn't have viewed coins as money in the same way we do today, or the way the Norse did in Europe. But the Norse probably knew that the Native Americans valued attractive or unusual objects. Silver coins might have been very appealing because of their beauty. For example, they could have been used in necklaces or other types of jewelry. As long as Native Americans found the coins interesting and beautiful, the Norse could have used the coins to trade with them.

Summarize the points made in the lecture, being sure to explain how they respond to the specific arguments presented in the reading passage.

Some people believe that when busy parents do not have a lot of time to spend with their children, the best use of that time is to have fun playing games or sports. Others believe that it is best to use that time doing things together that are related to schoolwork. Which of the two approaches do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.