

Curiosity Incubator

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[\[programme\]](#)

The Curiosity Incubator

Imagining new futures - cultivating artificial ideas

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In *Playing for Time*, Lucy Neal introduces the driving force behind her book as a 'desire to understand the role our imaginations and creative skills play in reimagining a world in which life on Earth is cherished and sustained.' In our current climate emergency, fear can freeze us towards incuriosity, so Neal makes strong argument for play as the space in which we can extend the range of possibilities we draw upon as we explore the world, learning what we need to know to survive:

'In this analogy of play in a contemporary world, it's possible artists can be circuit breakers of tragedy, surprising people with alternative ways of seeing, jolting them awake from denial and speeding up a public process of seeing and feeling the 'truth' of climate change.' Neal 2015

In Feb 2023, AUP lecturers Bridgette Ashton and Mel Brown will launch **The Curiosity Incubator**. A project delivered within Level 4 Unit Platforms of Exchange. This cross-uni, mixed-discipline unit invites students to work together, sharing their subject skills in pursuit of creative problem solving, pursuing visions of a better world.

The project begins with three workshops: **HOME**, **SUSTENANCE** and **FOLK**, each workshop oriented towards specific targets within the United Nations [Sustainable Development Goals](#)

HOME

- How can hostile environments sustain life? How might those lives be lived?
- Goal 11 Target: ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing

SUSTENANCE

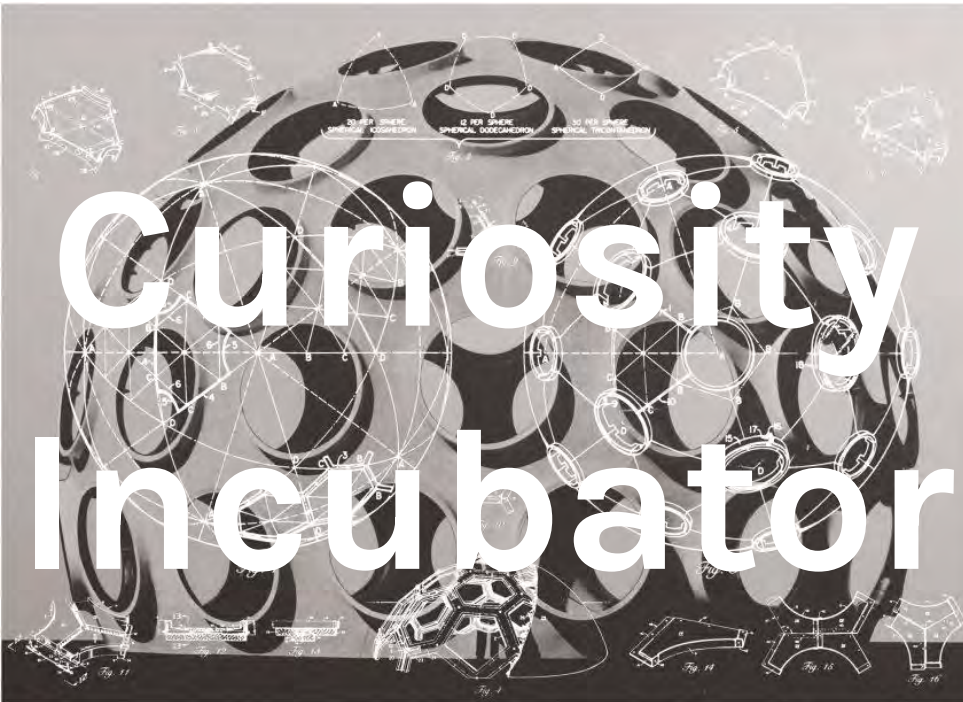
- What is needed to support living?
- Goal 2 Target: end hunger and ensure access by all people

FOLK

- What will society/culture look like? What artefacts will be made? What stories will be told?
- Goal 11 Target: protect and safeguard...cultural and natural heritage

For ELIA 2023, we would like to recreate our **FOLK** workshop through the playful invention of rituals, folk tales, artefacts and idols.

In **The Curiosity Incubator** we will be purposefully situating ourselves *off* this troubled planet to invent troublesome futures before imagining fantastic solutions. Creative ideas don't have to be feasible - in fact they might definitely be impossible - but they do need to be well considered.



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12 week project / Level 4 Undergraduate Unit: **Platforms of Exchange** - a cross-uni, mixed discipline unit that invites students to work together to share their creative attributes in pursuit of creative problem solving addressing Global challenges.

With a focus on the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**, we are currently working with students from across a range of courses: Costume Production, Fashion Design, Fashion Communication, Illustration, Graphic Design, Interior Design and Textile Design.



Context

There are 17 SDG Goals which lead to 169 Targets.

The **Curiosity Incubator** initially focused on just three of those targets within three workshops

HOME

Goal 11 Target: ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services

FOOD

Goal 2 Target: end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

FOLK

Goal 11 Target: protect and safeguard...cultural and natural heritage

Curiosity Incubator

Negative emotions of anger, grief, guilt and hopelessness.

Climate Grief - sense of 'a world that might have been' slipping out of reach

Information overload and a sense of paralysis of where to start.



Illustration by Charlotte Leadley, AUP 2020

Eco-anxiety

Lucy Neal describes the driving force behind her book as a 'desire to understand the role our imaginations and creative skills play in reimagining a world in which life on Earth is cherished and sustained.' In our current climate emergency, fear can freeze us towards incuriosity, so Neal makes strong argument for play as the space in which we can extend the range of possibilities we draw upon as we explore the world, learning what we need to know to survive.

'In this analogy of play in a contemporary world, it's possible artists can be circuit breakers of tragedy, surprising people with alternative ways of seeing, jolting them awake from denial and speeding up a public process of seeing and feeling the 'truth' of climate change.'

Permission to Play





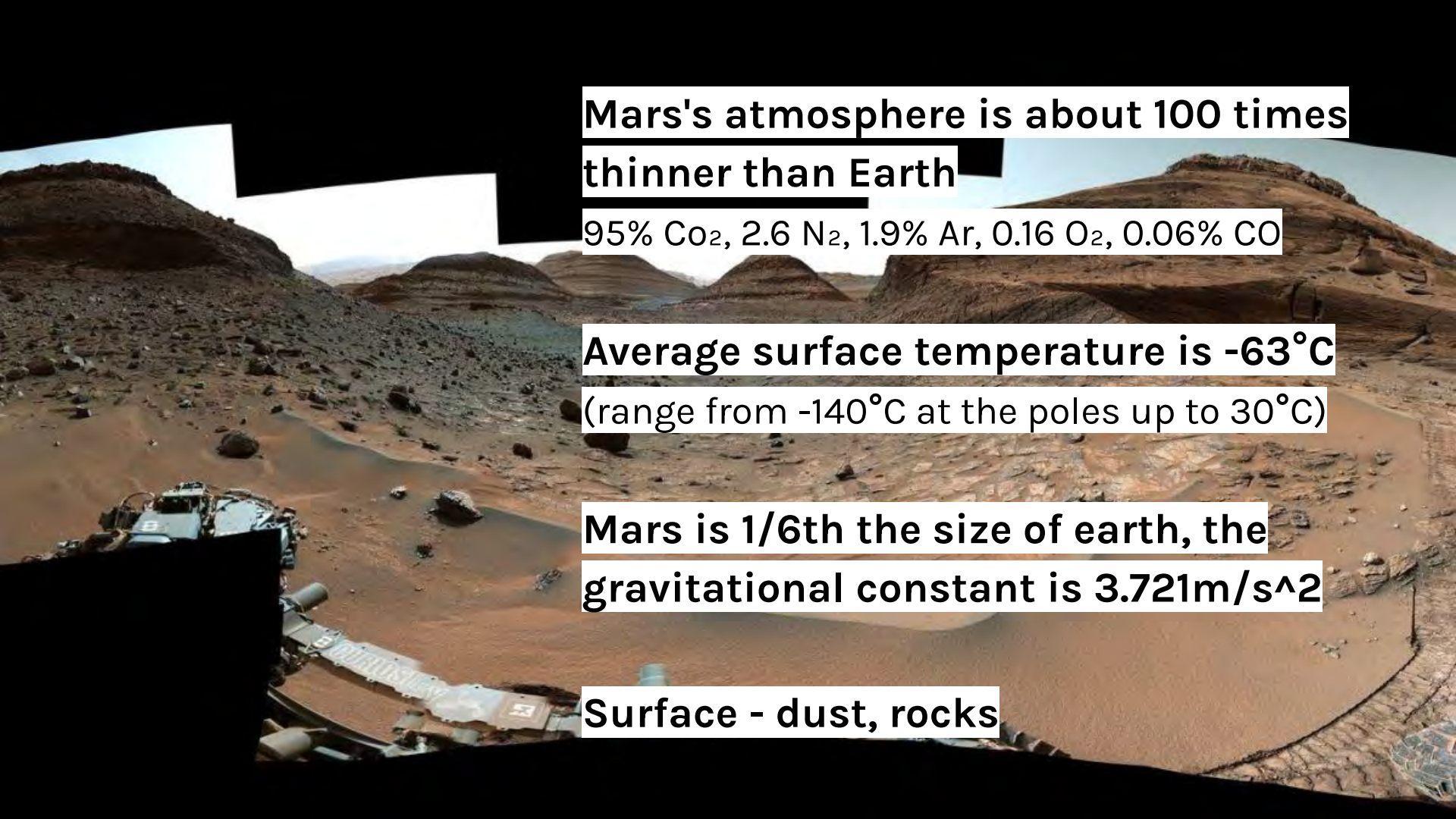
Mars

So...

we situated ourselves on Mars - at a non-determined future date as a result of an undisclosed Earth event

We invited our students to work together, sharing their subject skills in pursuit of creative problem-solving to pursue visions of other worlds. Through hands-on making. we asked them to build, destroy, imagine, play, curate, invent, share, think, question, relate, reject.

One rule: In the **Curiosity Incubator**, creative ideas don't have to be feasible - in fact they might definitely be impossible - but they do at least need to be considered.



Mars's atmosphere is about 100 times thinner than Earth

95% CO_2 , 2.6% N_2 , 1.9% Ar, 0.16% O_2 , 0.06% CO

**Average surface temperature is -63°C
(range from -140°C at the poles up to 30°C)**

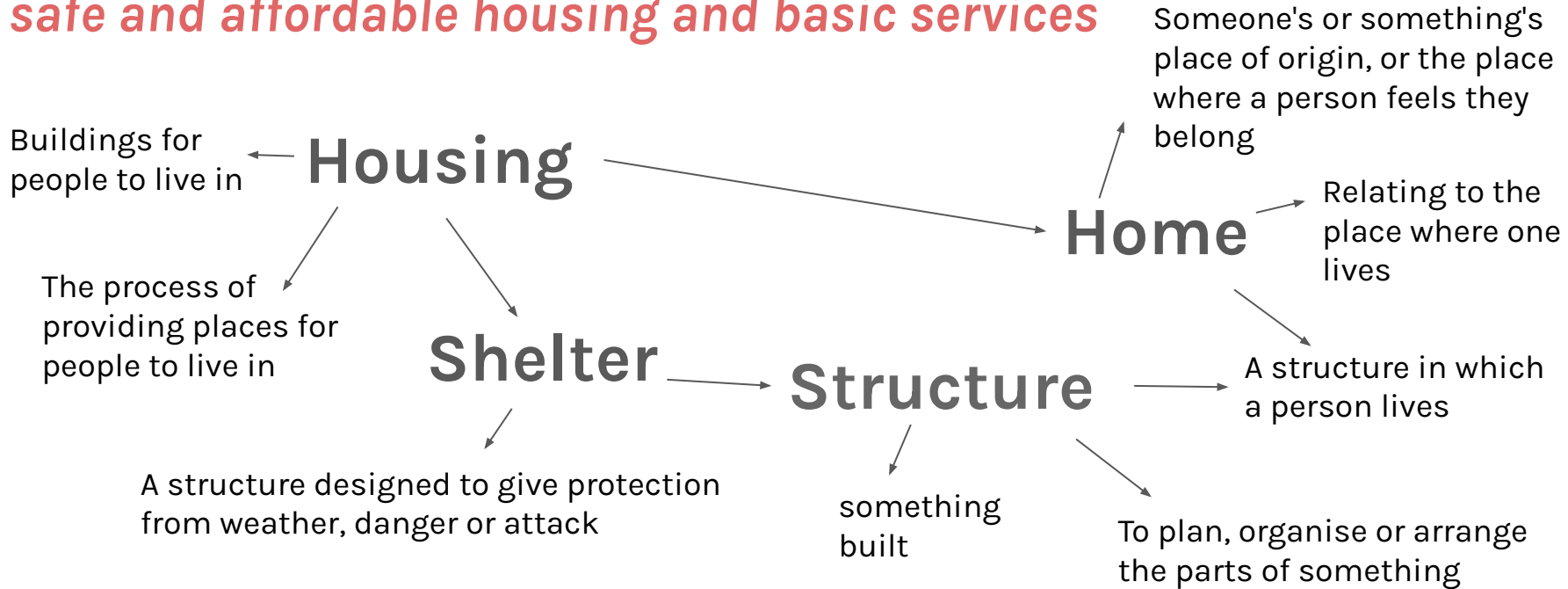
**Mars is 1/6th the size of earth, the
gravitational constant is 3.721m/s^2**

Surface - dust, rocks

HOME



Goal 11 Target: ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services



UN Sustainability Goals



A vintage, slightly faded photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest. The path is in the foreground, leading towards a dense line of trees in the background. The trees appear to be evergreens. The overall tone is muted, with a mix of greens and browns. Overlaid on the center of the image is the word "FOOD" in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font.

FOOD

Bridgette Ashton

Goal 6 Target: equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

Goal 2 Target: end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

Tradition
Experience
Ceremony
Community
Memory
Ritual

FOOD

Cuisine - manner of preparing food : style of cooking

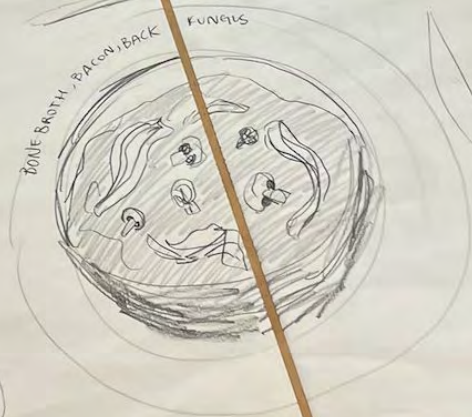
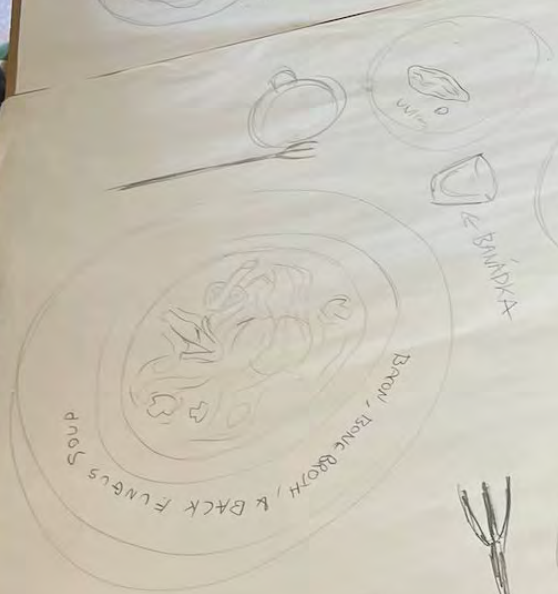
Material consisting essentially of protein, carbohydrate, and fat used in the body of an organism to sustain growth, repair, and vital processes and to furnish energy

Nourishment - the food necessary for growth, health, and good condition.

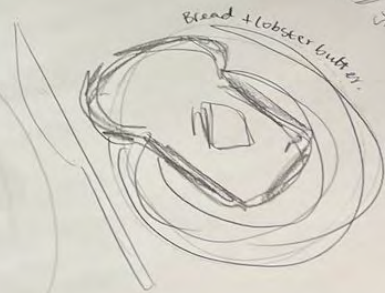
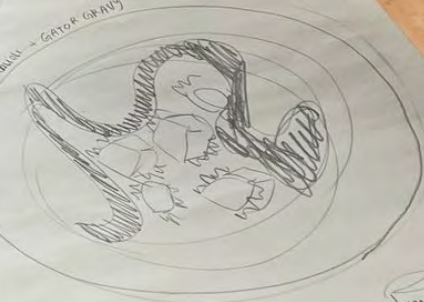
Fuel - a material used to produce heat or power

Sustenance

UN Sustainability Goals



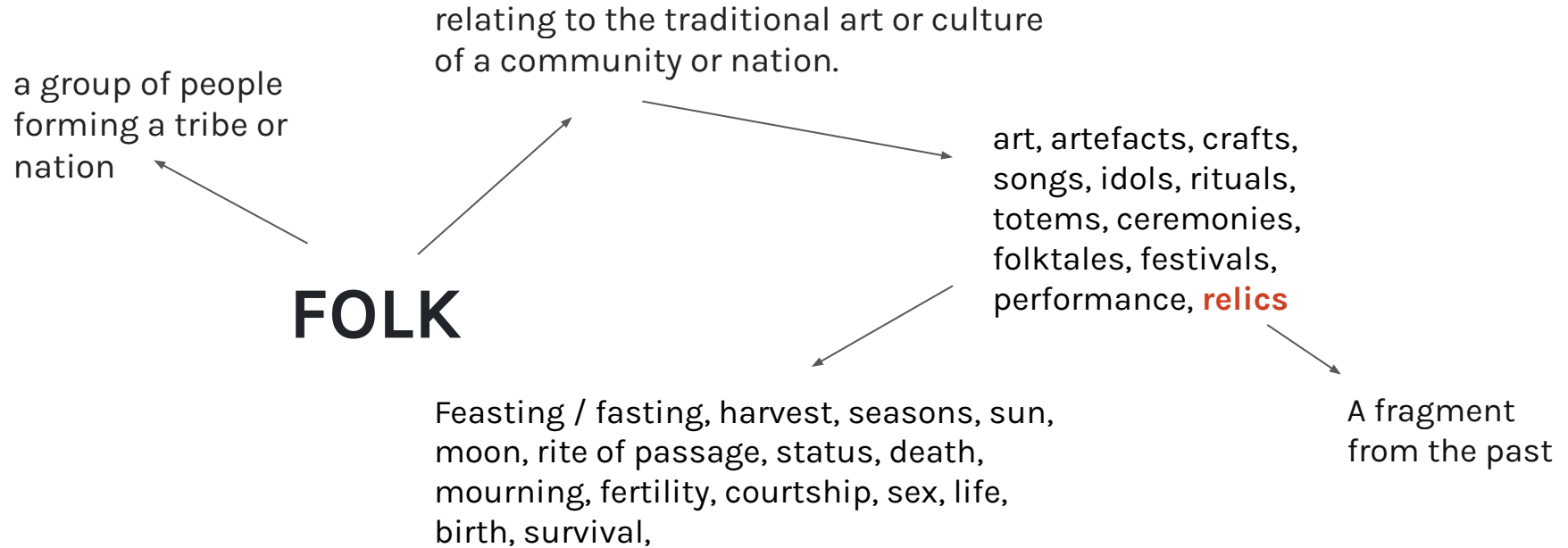
POURING BUTTER
SAUCE + GATOR GRavy



FOLK



Goal 11 Target: *protect and safeguard...cultural
and natural heritage*



UN Sustainability Goals



Thinking through making

Relic: *An object surviving from an earlier time,
especially one of historical interest*

We are situated on Mars.

A number of abandoned components made from petroleum based materials have been discovered. These materials are coveted since they cannot be manufactured on Mars.

Transform your plastic object using the materials and components supplied through enclosing, adorning, binding and wrapping.

Construct a new artefact that commemorates your chosen component, referring to a past which is no longer attainable.

Thinking through making

Relic: *An object surviving from an earlier time,
especially one of historical interest*

As you work, imagine and invent the narrative behind your relic and acknowledge the ritual you are performing.

Thinking through making

Relic: *An object surviving from an earlier time,
especially one of historical interest*

As you work, imagine and invent the narrative behind your relic and acknowledge the ritual you are performing.

Take a moment to write down your story on the label provided and attach to your artefact.

Thinking through making

