

READING

1 Read the texts describing the history of the objects. Match objects a–c to texts 1–3.

1 The astrolabe is an amazing instrument. It can tell you the time, the date and your exact geographical position using the sun or the stars. It can do mathematical calculations and even figure out your horoscope. In its day, it was a high status object, very much like a modern day smartphone or tablet computer. It's the same size and shape as a pocket watch, but it's much more complicated. The first astrolabes were made in Greece around 150 B.C. They were further developed by Islamic scholars and were often used for finding the exact direction of Mecca. This astrolabe was owned by a Jewish scholar living in the south of what we now know as Spain in the thirteenth century—a time when Jewish, Islamic and Christian communities lived together in relative harmony.

2 This object dates from 2985 B.C. It is about 5 cm square, it's very thin, it's made of ivory and it looks and feels a little bit like a modern-day business card. In fact, it's a label that was once attached to a pair of sandals, just like a modern day name tag on a pair of school shoes. The sandals belonged to an Egyptian pharaoh (King Den), and they were just one of the many things that would accompany the pharaoh to the afterlife. The label would identify him to those he met, and the picture engraved on it would tell them what kind of leader he'd been. On the label we see the king attacking and beating a rival in a clear demonstration of force: an image and a message that has often been repeated throughout history.

3 This object doesn't have a practical purpose, but it does have a very powerful message. It is made from weapons from the Mozambique Civil War, (1977–92). Almost 1 million people died during the war, and 5 million people were left without homes. This sculpture represents both the tragedy of that war and the human triumph of those who succeeded in creating a lasting peace. It was made by the Mozambican artist Cristóvão Canhavato (Kester) in 2001 for the *Transforming Arms into Tools* project. In this project approximately 7 million guns were voluntarily exchanged for useful tools and hardware.



2 Read the texts again and match descriptions 1–6 to objects a–c.

- 1 It's a sophisticated piece of technology.
- 2 It was only used after the owner's death.
- 3 It represents two distinct ideas.
- 4 Its use is more symbolic than practical.
- 5 It has been used by people from several different religions.
- 6 It tells us a lot about its owner.

3 Find words in the texts that mean...

- 1 a person who has studied a lot (1)
- 2 come from a particular time in the past (2)
- 3 the material taken from an elephant's tusk (2)
- 4 a competitor (2)
- 5 guns and other instruments used for fighting (3)
- 6 is a symbol of (3)