



# Artefacts

Movable objects that archaeologists find from the past are called artefacts. Artefacts are split into two types – organic and inorganic.

Organic artefacts come from human, animal or plant remains such as bones or wood. Inorganic artefacts were never living or breathing things, and are from materials like stone, clay and metal. Inorganic artefacts last much longer in the ground so there are more of them for us to study!



## Rock on!

Metal artefacts, such as tools, weapons or jewellery were originally made from a material called ore. This is a type of rock which contains metal. Some metals we get from ores include copper, tin and iron. The oldest example of ores being used is over 8000 years ago!



A "bulla" from Mesopotamia, the first type of receipt in the world!

## Printers didn't exist...

When you think of a receipt, you may be able to picture a cash register in a shop, printing out a small piece of paper. Long before electricity, in the Ancient region of Mesopotamia, clay balls were made to encase tokens of miniature models of what people had bought. So if you bought three donkeys from a tradesman, your receipt would be a clay ball, filled with three mini models of your donkeys!

## Clay

Bowls, and other similar containers, were often made from clay. When clay is fired in a kiln (another name for a large oven), it becomes very strong. Archaeologists have found that pottery looks very different (how it's made and decorated) depending on when and where it was made so looking at them and how the objects differ in style, can tell us many things about what era they're from.

Archaeological evidence throughout the world shows us that pottery originated with humanity's first attempts at settled life. When we find evidence of people settling down, building permanent homes and farming we find pottery, **why do you think that is?**

**Think about the plates and cutlery you use at home – can you imagine archaeologists digging up your dinner plate in thousands of years?!**