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Use the Fact-File and questions to help you find interesting objects and record ideas in your sketchbook to use back at school/college.

### Fact File: Safavid textiles

- The Safavid dynasty ruled Iran from the early 1600s to about 1750.
- The textiles produced in Safavid Iran have plant and flower designs which look very real and naturalistic. They often show people or animals in a garden.
- Similar designs were also used on ceramics and illuminated manuscripts.

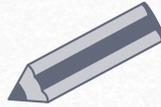
The Chelsea carpet, Iran, 1500-1550. Museum no. 589-1890



1. Find the section of the gallery in which Safavid carpets and textiles are displayed (use the map at the entrance to the gallery to help you). Look carefully and find as many examples of objects with flower patterns as possible.

2. Choose objects with designs you find interesting and make sketches of them.
3. Find one plant-based design and make a detailed drawing of it.

### Find out...



- ▶ What **motifs** can you see in the decoration?
- ▶ Are the designs **naturalistic** so they look like real plants? Or are they simpler, **stylised**, shapes which make you think of plants?
- ▶ How has the decoration been applied to the object?
- ▶ How is plant-based decoration part of the overall decoration of your object? Is the decoration solely plant-based or is it combined with other design elements such as **geometry** or **calligraphy**?
- ▶ Is there any **symmetry** in the motifs or overall design? Is it **reflective** symmetry where one half of the image is a mirror reflection of another, or **rotational** symmetry where the object would look the same after rotation?
- ▶ Has just **one colour** been used or **more** than one? Is the colour naturalistic or not?

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