



Fact File: The Minbar

- The minbar was made for a mosque in Cairo in Egypt more than **500 hundred** years ago.
- Every Friday at the midday prayer, a learned man would have **climbed the stairs** of the minbar to speak to the rest of the people in the mosque.
- The writing on the minbar mentions **Sultan Qa'itbay** who ruled Egypt for 28 years.
- During his long reign, Sultan Qa'itbay **built** new mosques with many beautiful furnishings, such as this minbar.

Step 1. Look at the patterns



The minbar is made of **wood** and decorated with geometric shapes. Some of the shapes are filled with small pieces of carved **ivory**. The ivory came from elephant tusks. Each ivory panel is decorated with symmetrical patterns made from curving lines and shapes that look like leaves.

Can you see the **geometric shapes** and plant patterns?

The minbar is very old and some of its carved ivory shapes are missing. Can you see the gaps?

Look for the place on the side of the minbar where a large ivory star is missing.

How many points has this star got?

.....

Can you find any other stars on the minbar?
How many points have they got?



Voyage: Through the Islamic Middle East

Design a new star for the Minbar



Step 2. Design your own star

Try designing a new star for the Minbar!

Draw curvy lines and leaf or flower shapes to make a symmetrical pattern in the star below.

