

Islamic art has distinctive design elements which are often combined in a single object. These include:

- calligraphy
- plant or floral designs, arabesques and flowers
- geometric shapes and designs
- symmetry and repeated patterns
- rich colours
- decorative patterns

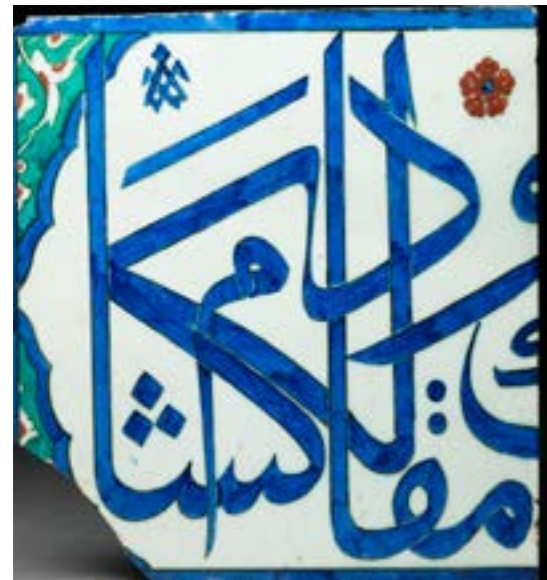
Recording your thoughts...

- > Descriptive words - shape, design or pattern
- > Look for repeated motifs and patterns
- > How might these designs be used as inspiration for a contemporary artist?
- > What are the key colours - how are they used?
- > Compare and contrast decorative objects and architectural elements from buildings.



Good galleries to explore:

- Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East
- Gallery 7: Money, Islamic coins
- Gallery 6: Reading and Writing
- Gallery 33: Mughal India



End of a calligraphic tile panel written in naskh script, Turkey, about 1575
Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East (EA1978.1517)

Bowl with flying phoenixes and foliate background, Iran 1270-1350

Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East (EA1978.1637)



Panel of 48 tiles with vases, flowers and cypress trees, Syria 1600-1700
Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East



Dish with floral decoration, Iran 1890s
Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East (EA1978.1483)



Star tile with vegetal and calligraphic decoration, Iran, about 1270-1320
Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East (EA1978.1549)



Tiles with peonies and serrated leaves, Turkey 1550 - 1560

Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East (EA1978.1529)



Nomadic carpet, 18th century
Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East



Door with geometric inserts, Egypt, 1300s-1400s
Gallery 31: Islamic Middle East (EA1984.16)

Further resources

Ashmolean Education:
www.ashmolean.org/learning-resources

Ashmolean Eastern Art Online:
www.jameelcentre.ashmolean.org/