

## READING

### READING PASSAGE 1

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13 which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.*

#### Collecting for pleasure

People from almost every culture love collecting things. They might collect stamps, books, cards, priceless paintings or worthless ticket stubs to old sports games. Their collection might hang on the walls of a mansion or be stored in a box under the bed. So what is it that drives people to collect? Psychologist Dr Maria Richter argues that the urge to collect is a basic human characteristic. According to her, in the very first years of life we form emotional connections with lifeless objects such as soft toys. And these positive relationships are the starting point for our fascination with collecting objects. In fact, the desire to collect may go back further still. Scientists suggest that for some ancient humans living hundreds of thousands of years ago, collecting may have had a serious purpose. Only by collecting sufficient food supplies to last through freezing winters or dry summers could our ancestors stay alive until the weather improved.

It turns out that even collecting for pleasure has a very long history. In 1925, the archaeologist Leonard Woolley was working at a site in the historic Babylonian city of Ur. Woolley had travelled to the region intending only to excavate the site of a palace. Instead, to his astonishment, he dug up artefacts which appeared to belong to a 2,500-year-old museum. Among the objects was part of a statue and a piece of a local building. And accompanying some of the artefacts were descriptions like modern-day labels. These texts appeared in three languages and were carved into pieces of clay. It seems likely that this early private collection of objects was created by Princess Ennigaldi, the daughter of King Nabonidus. However, very little else is known about Princess Ennigaldi or what her motivations were for setting up her collection.

This may have been one of the first large private collections, but it was not the last. Indeed, the fashion for establishing collections really got started in Europe around 2,000 years later with the so-called 'Cabinets of Curiosities'. These were collections, usually belonging to wealthy families, which were displayed in cabinets or small rooms. Cabinets of Curiosities typically included fine paintings and drawings, but equal importance was given to exhibits from the natural world such as animal specimens, shells and plants.

Some significant private collections of this sort date from the fifteenth century. One of the first belonged to the Medici family. The Medicis became a powerful political family in Italy and later a royal house, but banking was originally the source of all their wealth. The family started by collecting coins and valuable gems, then artworks and antiques from around Europe. In 1570 a secret 'studio' was built inside the Palazzo Medici to house their growing collection. This exhibition room had solid walls without windows to keep the valuable collection safe.

In the seventeenth century, another fabulous collection was created by a Danish physician named Ole Worm. His collection room contained numerous skeletons and specimens, as well as ancient texts and a laboratory. One of Ole Worm's motivations was to point out when other researchers had made mistakes, such as the false claim that birds of paradise had no feet. He also owned a great auk, a species of bird that has now become extinct, and the illustration he produced of it has been of value to later scientists.

The passion for collecting was just as strong in the nineteenth century. Lady Charlotte Guest spoke at least six languages and became well-known for translating English books into Welsh. She also travelled widely throughout Europe acquiring old and rare pottery, which she added to her collection at home in southern England. When Lady Charlotte died in 1895 this collection was given to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. At around the same time in the north of England, a wealthy goldsmith named Joseph Mayer was building up an enormous collection of artefacts, particularly those dug up from sites in his local area. His legacy, the Mayer Trust, continues to fund public lectures in accordance with his wishes.

In the twentieth century, the writer Beatrix Potter had a magnificent collection of books, insects, plants and other botanical specimens. Most of these were donated to London's Natural History Museum, but Beatrix held on to her cabinets of fossils, which she was particularly proud of. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt began his stamp collection as a child and continued to add to it all his life. The stress associated with being president was easier to cope with, Roosevelt said, by taking time out to focus on his collection. By the end of his life this had expanded to include model ships, coins and artworks.

Most of us will never own collections so large or valuable as these. However, the examples given here suggest that collecting is a passion that has been shared by countless people over many centuries.

### ***Questions 1 – 6***

*Do the following statements agree with the information given in the reading passage 1?*

*In boxes 1-6 on your answer sheet, write:*

<b>TRUE</b>	<i>if the statement agrees with the information</i>
<b>FALSE</b>	<i>if the statement contradicts the information</i>
<b>NOT GIVEN</b>	<i>if there is no information on this</i>

1. Dr Maria Richter believes that people become interested in collecting in early childhood.
2. A form of collecting may have helped some ancient humans to survive.
3. Leonard Woolley expected to find the remains of a private collection at Ur.
4. Woolley found writing that identified some of the objects he discovered.
5. Princess Ennigaldi established her collection to show off her wealth.
6. Displaying artworks was the main purpose of Cabinets of Curiosities.

### ***Questions 7 – 13***

*Complete the notes below.*

*Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.*

*Write your answer in boxes 7 – 13 on your answer sheet.*

### **Some significant private collections**

#### **15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries**

- The Medici family made their money from (7)\_\_\_\_\_
- At the Palazzo Medici there was a hidden ‘studio’ which had no (8)\_\_\_\_\_
- Ole Worm liked to show when other scientists had made mistakes
- Ole Worm made an important (9)\_\_\_\_\_ of a bird

#### **19<sup>th</sup> century**

- Lady Charlotte Guest created a collection of (10)\_\_\_\_\_, which she left to a museum
- Joseph Mayer paid for (11)\_\_\_\_\_ that are still given to the public today

#### **20<sup>th</sup> century**

- Beatrix Potter did not give away her collection of (12)\_\_\_\_\_
- Franklin D. Roosevelt believed collecting helped him deal with the (13)\_\_\_\_\_ of his job.