

Task X

Read the text below. Then decide whether the statements (1-8) are true (T) or false (F) and write T or F on the answer sheet. Then identify the sentence in the text which supports your decision and write the first four words of this sentence in the space provided on the answer sheet. There may be more than one justification; write only one in the box. The first one (0) has been done for you.

Ban Chiang Artefacts

Thailand is set to celebrate the return of ancient Ban Chiang artefacts that were smuggled to Britain over three decades ago. The collection, comprising 15 items ranging from bronze ornaments and tools to a set of signature Ban Chiang pottery, has been kept by University College London (UCL)'s Institute of Archaeology since the 1970s. The institute rediscovered the collection, which dates variously from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age, in its storage room during an audit of collections last year and – in a show of goodwill – contacted the Royal Thai Embassy in London to make way for the return of these priceless items back to their origin. It initially found 13 items in the first audit. Two more items, including wrist bones with bangles, were located only a few weeks ago.

The return of the collection, initiated by Prof. Stephen Shennan, director of UCL's Institute of Archaeology, was made for ethical reasons. "Ethics is a very important issue," he said. The collection is to be handed over to the Royal Thai Embassy in London in a ceremony tomorrow at 6pm (British time). And it is to be shipped to Thailand soon, with the UCL shouldering the costs.

Ban Chiang is considered the most important prehistoric settlement discovered in Southeast Asia thus far, with evidence of prehistoric occupation beginning as early as 3600 BC and continuing, probably intermittently, until about AD 200. While it is named Ban Chiang archeological site, after the name of a village in Udon Thani's Nong Han district, the ancient settlement is believed to have stretched to parts of nearby provinces, including Sakon Nakhon. UNESCO placed it on the World Heritage List in 1992.

According to British archaeologist Prof. Ian Glover, the UCL collection had been bought by a Vientiane-based British diplomat when he made a trip to Sakon Nakhon province in the late '60s to the early '70s. The diplomat bought the antiquities for his own interest rather than for investment or sale, noted Prof Glover, adding that he was contacted by the diplomat to discuss his collection and met only once at the latter's home. "I told him that it was probably illegal and certainly unethical to buy and export such materials from Thailand, although he may have acquired these before there were any regulations in

place,” the archaeologist said. However, to assuage any guilt he may have felt on this score, the diplomat gave this small collection to Prof. Glover for use as teaching materials on Southeast Asian prehistory at the Institute of Archaeology. The donated lot is a very small part of a much bigger collection the diplomat had at that time. The archaeologist said he used the materials for such a purpose until he retired from the institute in 1996. The collection stayed forgotten in the storage room until August last year when the institute made a survey of its collections.

Prof. Glover said this collection is very small, and with limitation in range, he believed it is “of little importance to Thailand” since the country has plenty of larger and more representative yet still unprovenanced archaeological antiquities in both national and other local and private museums. Pisit Charoenwongsa, director of SEAMEO-SPAFA, lavished praise on UCL, saying that its voluntary return of the artefacts has set an ethical precedent.

Pisit, a UCL graduate and a student of Prof Glover, stressed that the number of the returned artefacts does not count in this matter. “Returning even just one piece to its origin deserves praise. Such an ethical act sets a very good example indeed,” he said.

	Statements
0	All of the items being returned are similar objects.
Q1	All of the items were found by the institute at the same time.
Q2	The institute is returning the items because it is the right thing to do.
Q3	Thailand will pay for transporting the items back to Thailand.
Q4	The finding of Ban Chiang is significant for archeologists.
Q5	A member of the British embassy wanted to sell the items for a profit.
Q6	The diplomat gave all the items he had to the archaeologist.
Q7	Thailand already has many items similar to those being returned.
Q8	It is not important how many items are given back.

Source: “Priceless items back to their origin”, 09/08/2010. Reproduced with the kind permission of the Bangkok Post

Answer Sheet

	T / F	Justification
0	F	<i>The collection, comprising 15</i>
Q1		
Q2		
Q3		
Q4		
Q5		
Q6		
Q7		
Q8		