

Source #2

What historians believe:

Historians believe it is a spear thrower (atlatl*) that is designed to increase a spear's speed and accuracy. Some historians **believe** that [Paleolithic](#) artists carved the horse at the end of the spear thrower solely as decoration. Others **believe** that the horse was used in a [ritual](#) or related to a particular season in which the spear thrower was to be used. Another **theory** is that Paleolithic people carved the horse onto the spear thrower to create a talisman (good luck charm) and thus to influence the spirit world. They might have believed that the talisman had supernatural or protective powers. Still others **think** that the animal served as a form of [clan](#) identification.

***Atlatl (Defined)** – It consists of a shaft with a cup or a spur at the end that supports and propels the butt of the dart. The atlatl is held in one hand, gripped near the end farthest from the cup. The dart is thrown by the action of the upper arm and wrist, using the atlatl as a low-mass, fast-moving extension of the throwing arm. The atlatl acts as a lever that trades force for speed (the inverse of "leverage" as the term is commonly used).

Video Link: [Atlatl being used](#).