

# Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities

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# Egyptian Inventions

**By: Cairo Dedini**

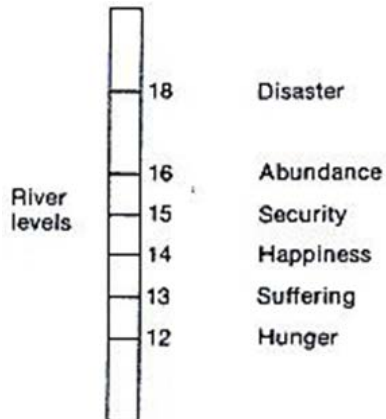
Imagine having to do your homework on a piece of wood. Have you ever wondered when some things, like the paper we use today, were invented? Well, if you can't imagine that than the Ancient Egyptians. The Egyptians made a lot of great inventions such as cosmetic makeup, scrolls, and the nilometer.

Cosmetic Makeup was one invention that Egyptians made. They invented eye makeup in 4000 BCE to give them protection from the sun and to imitate the impressive look of the gods. According to [discoveringegypt.com](http://discoveringegypt.com), "They combined soot with a lead called galena to make the ointment Kohl. Egyptians also made green eye makeup by combining malachite with galena to tint the make up." Galena, an ingredient used in Kohl, is a type of poisonous lead. The Egyptians risked their health to wear the eye makeup. Cosmetic makeup is still worn today to protect our faces from the sun. Even though we don't use galena, we still wear makeup to try to look impressive. While the invention of cosmetic make up altered the Egyptians' appearance, other inventions made their lives more practical.

The invention of scrolls transformed the way the Egyptians communicated. Before scrolls, writing was done on clay palettes and scraps of wood and pottery. These items were difficult to store and transfer. Scrolls are made of the water plant papyrus that they get from by the river. The stem of

papyrus was harvested, turned into sheets, and dried. These scrolls of papyrus were lightweight and small which made it easier to store information and transport to Pharaohs and priests. Getting the papyrus was dangerous because there were ferocious crocodiles and hippos in the river. The Egyptian invention of papyrus scrolls led current people to use other plants to make what we now call paper. Paper is used all over the world as part of daily life. According to [archive.epa.gov](http://archive.epa.gov), “we use about 69 million pounds of paper and paperboard each year.” While scrolls were used to monitor what was going on in their civilizations, other inventions helped monitor their resources.

Water is a really important resource to all civilizations. Water is used to produce food. Without water, animals and crops die, and there would be hunger and suffering. The Egyptians came up with a tool, called the nilometer, to monitor that the water level of the Nile River. The



nilometer was a structure and, according to the book Passport to the Past, “was used to measure how deep the water was and how much it flooded each year.” Markings on the side of the structure predicted how the water level was going to impact the society. For example, 12 and 13 (when the water is low) are hunger and suffering, 16 is abundance, and 18 (when the water is too high) is disaster. Today, we still have people monitoring our water supply. Like the nilometer, we still use a

measuring device to measure the depth of the water and make predictions about how much water we have. This helps us decide how to use our water wisely.

Ideas the Egyptians came up with in ancient times helped them in their daily lives. Cosmetic make up protected their skin from the sun and made them look like gods. Scrolls made life more practical and transformed the way the Egyptians communicated. The Nilometer was the beginning of monitoring water levels. We can still see parts of Egyptians ideas in some things we use today. All the Egyptian inventions are very cool!

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