

Invention of Writing

History of Graphic Design

The term “graphic design” appears for the first time – 1922

- The article “New Kind of Printing Calls for New Design” (printed in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, August 29, 1922), book designer William Addison Dwiggins first used the term “graphic design” to describe exactly what his role was in structuring and managing the visuals in book design.
- A Graphic Designer is someone who brings together the various elements of a page (words, pictures, colors, shapes) to form a visually attractive page.



Origin of Graphic Design (Prehistoric)

- The roots of visual communication stretch all the way back to caveman times.
- Simple **drawings of animals**, hand imprints and events like hunting have been found carved or painted onto cave walls that are over **30,000 years old!**



Cueva de las Manos in Perito Moreno, Argentina

- Long, long before writing, humans were talking to each other and for thousands of years, ideas and information were passed down through the spoken word and storytelling.
- Historians debate that these were meant to communicate with (whether each other or their gods), but one thing that is clear, right from the start, people were capable to communicate with visuals. But the real purpose of these early cave drawings simply isn't known.

- And cave paintings have been found all over the world (Australia, Spain, Indonesia, France, Argentina).



A cave engraving of an antelope from Algeria.

Cave painting from
France, possibly as old as
40,000 years.





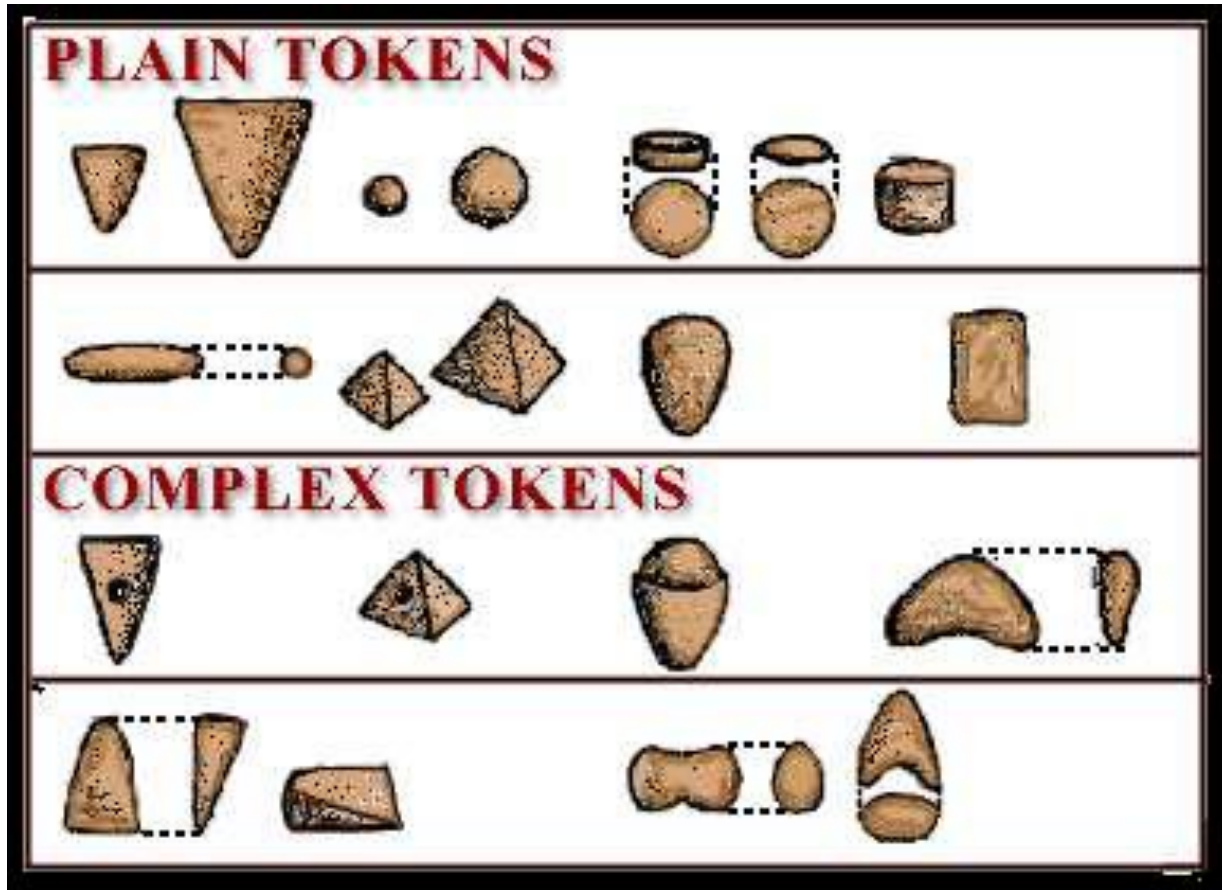
The Lascaux Caves in southwestern France feature clearly narrative scenes in rock art dated to

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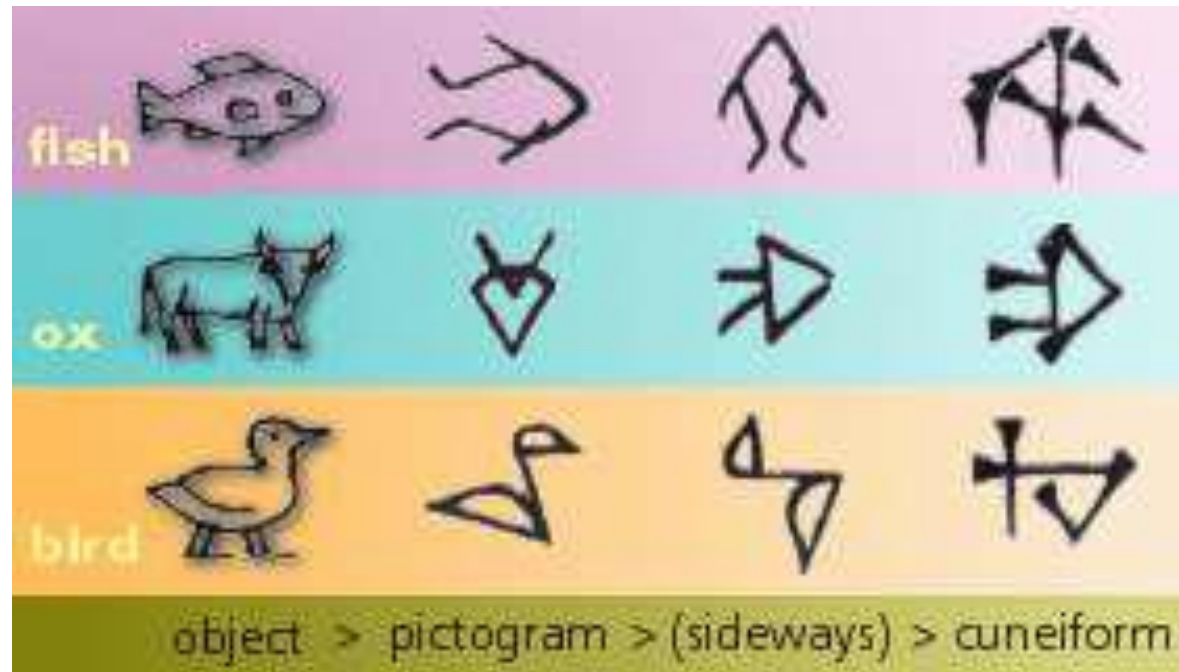
- Graphic Design actually began millennia earlier with the invention of writing.
- Writing seems to have been invented in different parts of the world at more or less the same time.

- According to historians, the earliest writing system was invented for the purpose of trade. To keep records about quantity and identity of products.
- Counting tokens made of clay were used for this purpose to trade around 6,000 years ago.





- They used large hollow balls of clay as a sort of envelope.



- Eventually 3d tokens convert into 2d pictograms

Seal from Indus Valley



Writing in Sumer (Pictographic)

- One of the first groups of people to start real writing were the **Sumerians**.
- Sumerian writing began about 5000 years ago as pictographs.
- The pictures were carved into clay tablets then baked in an oven to make it permanent.



- Eventually, the pictographs were simplified as straight lines made using a wedge-shaped stick called a *stylus*. This early writing is called **Cuneiform**. The word comes from the Latin word for ‘wedge’.





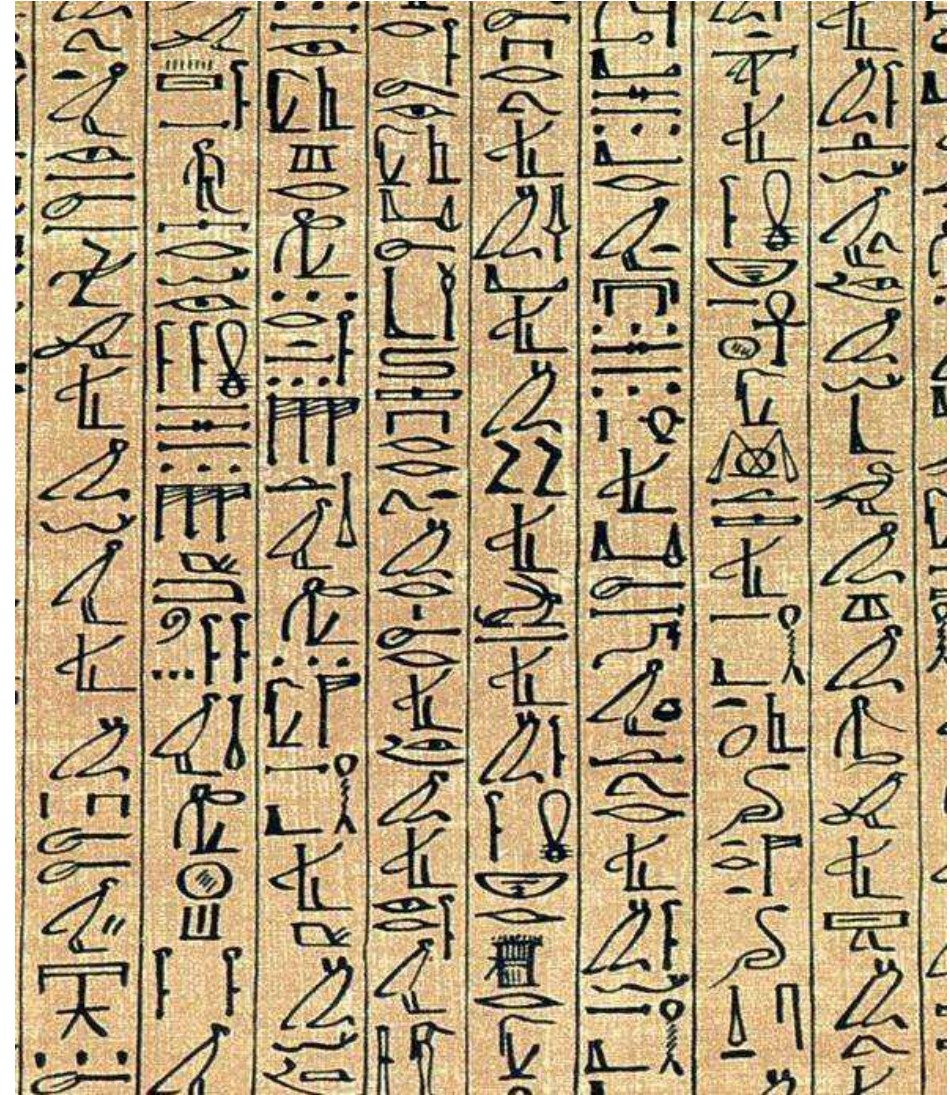
Writing in Egyptian

- At around the same time as the Egyptians also developed their own writing system known as Hieroglyphics.
- The word ‘hieroglyph’ means ‘sacred’ and ‘glyph’ means ‘carved’ or ‘engraved’. For the Egyptians, it was something sacred and divine.



- Hieroglyphics was a very complicated way of writing involving 1000s of symbols. Some of the symbols represented sounds, like our letters, and other's represented entire words.
- It could be written in almost any direction; left to right, right to left, or top to bottom. The reader would figure out which way to read it by the direction of the symbols.
- They didn't use any punctuation.
- One of the goals in writing hieroglyphics was that the writing would look like art and be beautiful to look at.
- A single picture symbol could stand for a whole word, called an ideogram, or a sound, called a phonogram. For example, a picture of an eye could mean the word "eye" or the letter "I".

- Writing was in both Egypt and Mesopotamia, it was an activity reserved for professional people called scribes.
- They were highly trained, important people.
- At first, they wrote vertically.



- The Egyptians used papyrus (an ancient paper made from the papyrus grass plant).



- The Phoenician Alphabet was adopted by the early Greeks who earned their place in alphabetic history by symbolizing the vowels. Therefore, the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek scripts all came from the Phoenician. The Greek alphabet led to Latin and Cyrillic. Aramaic led to Arabic and most of the scripts used in India.

