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NOTE-WORTHY FACTS

ABOUT PENS AND PAPER



1 Muslim civilization learned about paper in 751 from captured Chinese soldiers, who passed along the secrets of papermaking.

2 It was a lot cheaper to make books with paper than with more expensive materials like parchment or papyrus.



3 Artists used reed pens called *qalams* and different colors of ink to write on paper in a decorative script known as Arabic calligraphy.

4 The town of Jativa in Muslim Spain was famous for the thick, glossy paper produced in its mills.

5 Muslim papermakers pioneered the use of the trip hammer, a tool for beating linen rags or tree roots into the pulp used to make paper.



6 A large number of early Arabic manuscripts dating from the 10th to the 12th centuries are written on paper.

7 The boom in paper production meant that thousands of copies of a book could be made, and more books meant more people had the chance to learn.

8 Hemp, a crop grown in Syria, turned out to be a great source of low-cost, high-quality paper.



Closeup of marbled design in Turkish paper

9 Today more than one million books are published worldwide each year.



10 All the hand mixing and mashing that went into making paper in China was done by mills in Muslim civilization. Mills started in Baghdad and spread to other cities to meet the demand.

11 Gold and silver inks were used on blue paper to create impressive front pages for books.

12 In 953 the Sultan of Egypt, tired of having ink stain his hands and clothes, asked for a leakproof pen that held its own ink. What he got was much like today's fountain pen.



13 Papermaking was started in Europe by Muslims living in Spain and Sicily in the 10th century.



14 Muslim artists used inks and dyes to create patterns on paper called marbling. By the 1550s marbled paper became prized by Europeans, who referred to it as "Turkish paper."

15 The Muslim world was using block printing as early as the 10th century, some 500 years before Johannes Gutenberg started printing with moveable letters.