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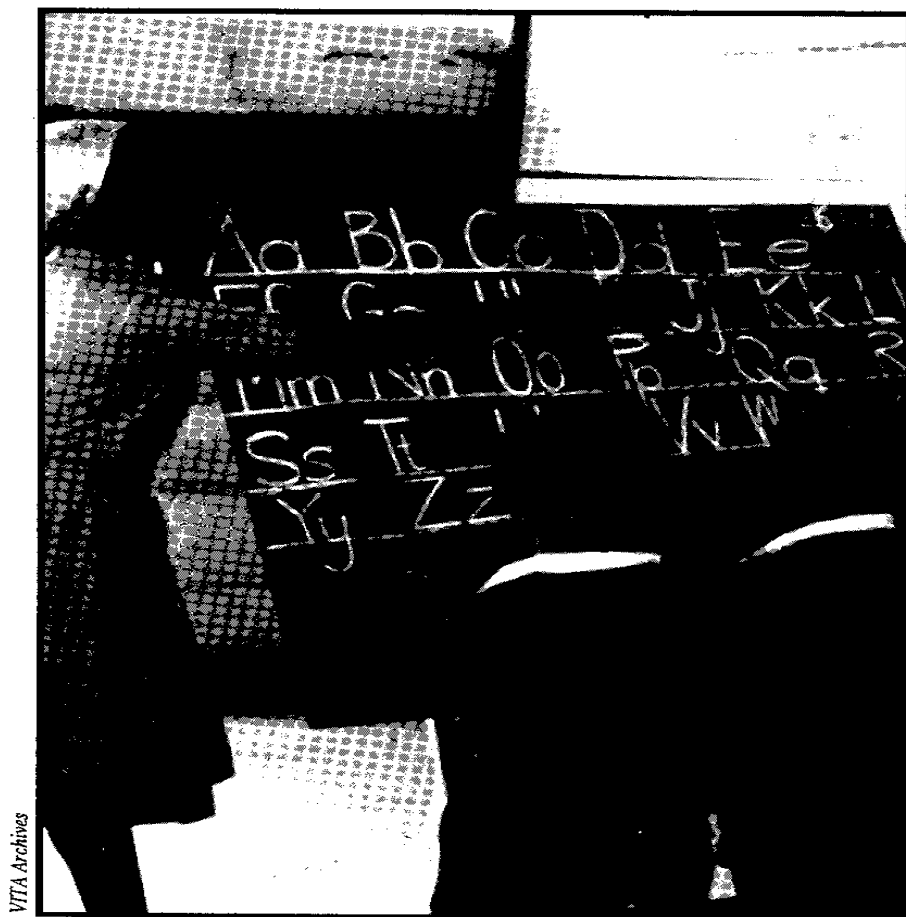
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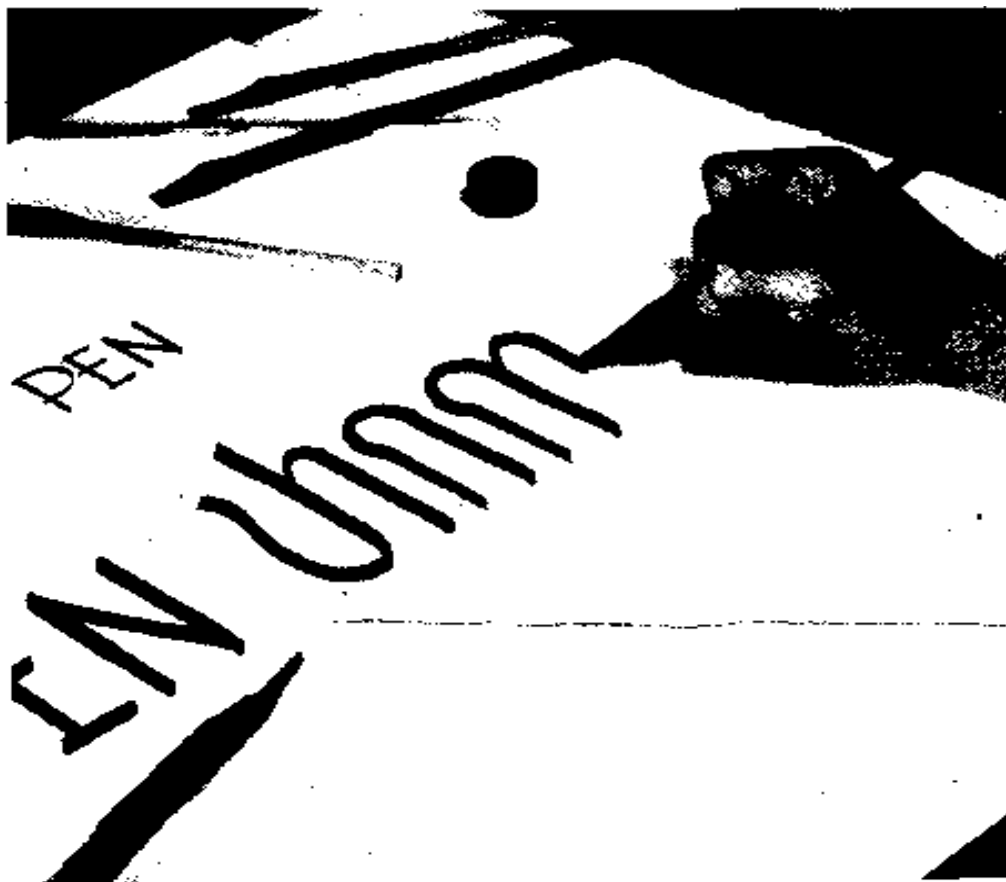
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## Bamboo or Reed Writing Pens

This low-cost, easy-to-make pen has been in use in Jordan since 3000 B.C. Pens of different sizes can be made for work ranging from fine writing to large block letters. Similar pens have also been used in Thailand. <see figure 1>

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**FIGURE 1. PENS CAN BE MADE FROM BAMBOO FOR WORK RANGING FROM FINE WRITING TO BLOCK LETTERS.**

### Tools and Materials

Dry bamboo, 15cm x 1cm x 0.5cm  
(6" x 3/8" x 3/16")

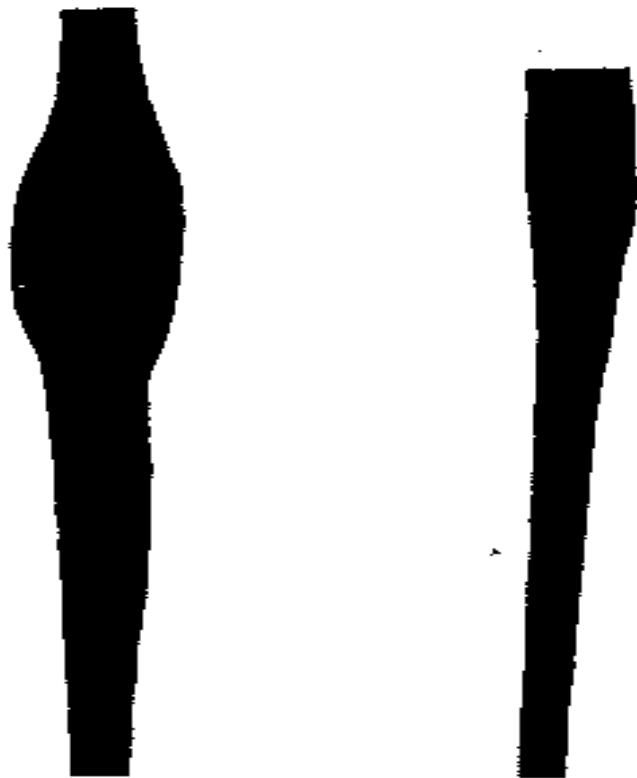
Small rubber band or fine wire

Sharp knife

**Fine sandpaper**

Whittle one end of the bamboo to the desired width, and then shave it down to make it flexible (see Figure 2).

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**FIGURE 2. ONE END OF THE BAMBOO IS WHITTLED TO THE DESIRED WIDTH. THEN IT IS SHAVED DOWN TO MAKE IT FLEXIBLE.**

Be sure that the writing tip is made from the more durable material near the outside of the bamboo.

Cut the writing end straight across with a sharp knife. Use sandpaper to make the end smooth. The point of the pen can be shaped to the proper writing angle for your hand by gently writing on the

sandpaper with the dry pen.

To make a retaining hole for ink, place the tip of the knife on the pen, at least 3mm (1/8") up from the point of the pen, and then rotate the knife to drill a hole about 2mm (3/32") in diameter.

The pen can now be used for writing, but it will need to be reinked frequently. To make a reservoir pen, attach a thin bamboo cover plate to the pen as shown in Figure 3. Attach the cover

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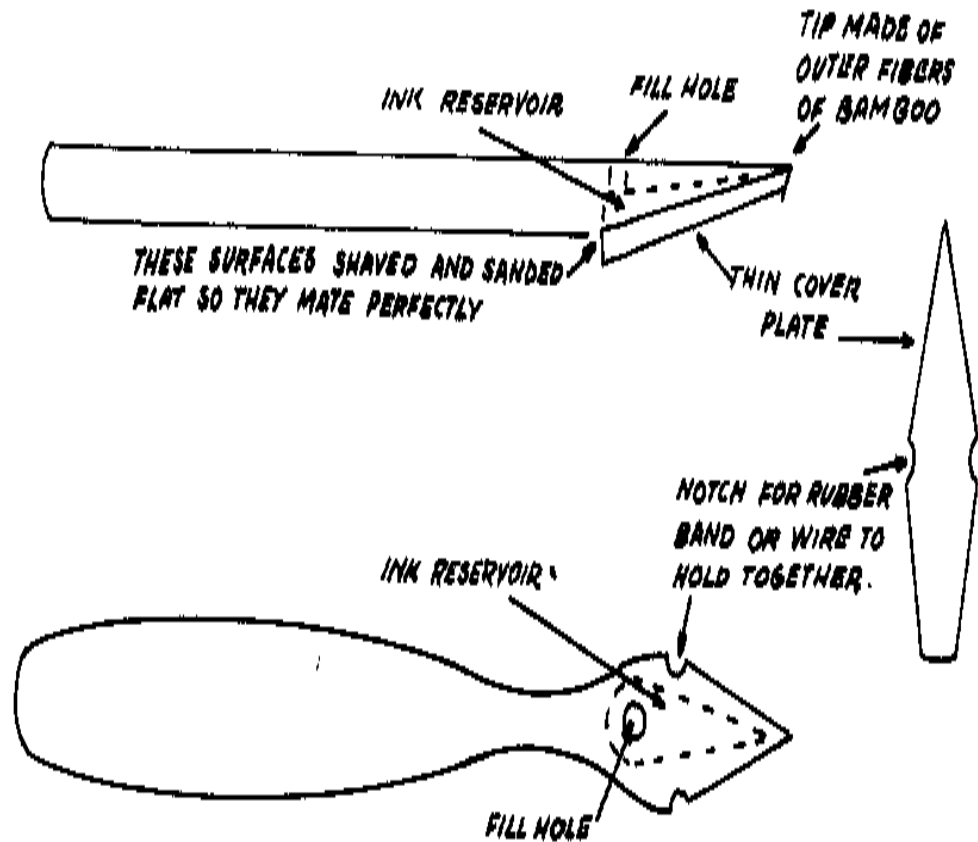


FIGURE 3. IF A THIN, NOTCHED COVER PLATE IS ADDED, THE PEN NEEDS REFILLING LESS OFTEN.

plate by wrapping a small rubber band or a piece of fine wire around the notches provided for this.

Source:

The Multiplier, Vol. 3, No. 10. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, Agency

**for International Development, 1960.**