



Unknown (Egyptian)  
*Palette*  
New Kingdom (ca. 1570–1070 BCE) or  
26th Dynasty (664–525 BCE)  
basalt  
2 5/8 x 13/16 in. (6.6 x 2 cm)  
Gift of Mrs. Cole Porter  
SEG.3

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*Palette*  
New Kingdom (ca. 1570–1070 BCE) or  
26th Dynasty (664–525 BCE)

Palettes were used by artists for grinding pigments and for preparing makeup. Makeup was worn by men and women for adornment, for physical protection from flies and the sun, and for spiritual protection from evil. Pigments (colors) were derived from powdered minerals, such as galena and malachite, which were mixed with oils to create a paint or makeup that could be applied to the face, sheets of papyrus (ancient Egyptian paper), and other surfaces.

Ancient Egyptians often placed provisions in their tombs. They believed that they would need food, tools, and other supplies in the afterlife. Eye makeup palettes were no exception. Their appearance in even the humblest burial sites suggests that makeup was an important part of the daily routine of Egyptians of all walks of life.



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## DISCUSS

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If you lived in ancient Egypt, what items from everyday life would you consider essential provisions for the afterlife?



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## CREATE

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Palettes for grinding pigments for artwork and for makeup, like this one, have been found in many tombs. The objects that archaeologists have found in tombs reveal a great deal about life in ancient Egypt.

Imagine that an archaeologist one thousand years from now unearthed the remains of your bedroom! Write a fictional account, from that archaeologist's point of view, of what he or she finds there.

Would some items in your room survive better than others?

What thoughts and questions do you think someone from the future would have about your belongings?

What conclusions do you think they would draw about you? About 21st century culture?