

**МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ
СУМСЬКИЙ ДЕРЖАВНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ
КАФЕДРА ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ
ЛІНГВІСТИЧНИЙ НАВЧАЛЬНО-МЕТОДИЧНИЙ ЦЕНТР**

**МАТЕРІАЛИ
VIII МІЖВУЗІВСЬКОЇ НАУКОВО-ПРАКТИЧНОЇ
КОНФЕРЕНЦІЇ
ЛІНГВІСТИЧНОГО НАВЧАЛЬНО-МЕТОДИЧНОГО ЦЕНТРУ
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THE INVENTION OF THE PENCIL

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A pencil is a graphite stick and clay combination, sometimes with a colour pigment, encased mostly in a wooden cylindrical container. A pencil has two main parts: the “lead” which is a working part of the pencil and the “jacket” which surrounds it. The lead was originally made from a metal element which is called ‘lead’ in England. The metal lead is poisonous and it does not make such good marks as graphite. That is why people started to use graphite instead of lead. The jacket of a pencil is usually made of wood.

The history of a pencil can be traced to 16th century England, somewhere around 1564. Locals of Seathwaite village, in the north-west county of Cumbria, near Borrowdale, discovered a huge graphite deposit near their sleepy hamlet. Later on, they learned that the hard and compact material could be used to mark their cattle or sheep, in order to distinguish and keep an exact count of the same. This was the first invented pencil form. The natives also figured out how to shape the graphite into small sticks, for ease of use. Since the new substance was soft and delicate when thinned for use, there was a need for a support wrapping or casing for the graphite stick.

Initially, sheep skin or string was used to hold the substance together. The idea of a wood case for the graphite stick was first developed by an Italian couple. They thought of using carpentered juniper wood, made hollow, inserted with the core, and finally compacted in an oval shape. This was the first, crude form of the pencil we know today. The idea of using wood as the casing for the writing material soon began to gain ground. In an improved version, different types of wood were used to carve two halves into which the graphite stick was inserted, which were then glued together to make a strong and simple enclosure. This method continues to be used even today.