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The world has seen millions of books and texts written throughout history, but only a select few have survived over the centuries or even millennia. These ancient works and writings have survived the consequences of war, fire, and decay, giving us a great look into the past and the knowledge of our ancestors. In this article, we will explore the top 5 oldest known surviving books and literary texts ever discovered. Note that in this list, were not only including books as we know them today, but weve also included some texts inscribed on walls or stone tablets. And even though some would argue those cannot be placed in the same category, indeed writings on the walls (like The Pyramid Texts), were some kind early of books. Interesting fact: Book printing is believed to have originated in China during the Tang Dynasty, which spanned from 618 to 907 CE. And so. Lets start with the list. The Dead Sea Scrolls or Qumran Caves Scrolls are a collection of Jewish texts that were discovered between 1947 and 1956 in the vicinity of the Dead Sea. The scrolls were found in 11 caves, and they comprise over 900 manuscripts, including fragments of every book in the Hebrew Bible except for the Book of Esther. The scrolls are believed to have been written between the third century BCE and the first century CE. The Dead Sea Scrolls include a variety of texts, including biblical commentaries, hymns, prayers, and legal documents. The texts provide insight into the beliefs and practices of the Jewish community during the Second Temple period. They also shed light on the development of Judaism and the origins of Christianity. See also: The Top 10 Oldest People Ever Interesting fact: Some of the Dead Sea Scrolls were written in code, and it took scholars many years to decipher them. The Pyramid Texts are a collection of ancient Egyptian religious texts dating back to the Old Kingdom period, around 2400 BCE. These texts were inscribed on the walls inside of pyramids and were intended to guide the pharaohs in the afterlife. The Pyramid Texts were first discovered in the late 19th century by the French Egyptologist Gaston Maspero. They were found in the pyramid of Unas, located in the ancient necropolis of Saqqara, near modern-day Cairo. Today, the Pyramid Texts can be found in the pyramids of the pharaohs who commissioned them, including Teti, Pepi I, Merenre, and Pepi II. And even though those texts do not have the same form as books today, they can be considered early forms of written literature or early books. In terms of their structure and content, the Pyramid Texts can indeed be compared to early books, as they represent a systematic compilation of religious and ritualistic knowledge intended for a specific purpose, much like later religious texts or instructional manuals found in early civilizations. See also: Top 5 Longest Books Ever Written Interesting fact: The Pyramid Texts are the oldest known religious texts in the world. The Pyramid Texts are also of great linguistic value as they provide insight into the ancient Egyptian language and its evolution over time. They are written in the form of hieroglyphics known as Old Kingdom Egyptian and contain many unique words and phrases not found in later Egyptian texts. Interesting fact: The Pyramid Texts contain the first known reference to the god Osiris, who would later become one of the most important gods in the Egyptian pantheon. The Epic of Gilgamesh is an ancient Mesopotamian epic poem that dates back to approximately 2000 BCE. The poem tells the story of Gilgamesh, the king of Uruk, and his quest for immortality. The epic is divided into twelve tablets, each of which tells a different part of the story. The tablets were discovered in the ruins of the Library of Ashurbanipal in Nineveh in the mid-19th century. The Epic of Gilgamesh has had a significant impact on world literature and culture. The story has been adapted into various forms of media, including plays, films, and novels. The themes of the epic, such as the search for immortality and the struggle between mortality and divinity, continue to resonate with readers today. Tablet V of the Epic of Gilgamesh, dating back to the old Babylonian period (20031595 BC), was relatively recently discovered and is now housed in the Sulaymaniyah Museum, Iraq. See also: Who Wrote Bible God Or Humans? The Rigveda is one of the oldest known surviving books in the world. It is a sacred text of Hinduism and is believed to have been composed between 1500-1200 BCE. The Rigveda contains a collection of hymns, prayers, and mantras that were recited by the Vedic priests during religious ceremonies. The Rigveda is composed of 1028 hymns divided into ten books, known as Mandalas. The hymns are written in Vedic Sanskrit and are dedicated to various deities such as Indra, Agni, and Soma. The collection of hymns was passed down orally from generation to generation until they were eventually written down on palm leaves. The Rigveda holds great religious importance in Hinduism. It is considered to be the primary source of knowledge about the Vedic religion and contains important information about the gods and goddesses worshipped in ancient India. The hymns in the Rigveda are still recited today during Hindu religious ceremonies. The oldest copies of the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda are currently on display at the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute in Pune, Maharashtra, India. See also: Top 5 Most Secret Places On Earth The Gutenberg Bible, also known as the 42-line Bible, is considered one of the most important books in the history of printing. It was printed by Johannes Gutenberg in Mainz, Germany, between 1455 and 1456. The Gutenberg Bible was the first book to be printed with movable type in the Western world. It marked the beginning of the printing revolution and had a significant impact on the spread of knowledge and ideas. The printing press allowed for the mass production of books, making them more accessible to a larger audience. Interesting fact: The Gutenberg Bible was printed in Latin and was the first book to include page numbers. Today, there are only 49 copies of the Gutenberg Bible known to exist, making it a very rare and valuable book. The majority of the surviving copies are held in libraries and museums, with only a few in private collections. The condition of the remaining copies varies, with some being in excellent condition and others showing signs of wear and tear. Some copies have missing pages or damaged bindings. See also: Top 10 Life-Changing Philosophy Books You Must Read Interesting fact: The last complete Gutenberg Bible to be sold at auction was in 1978 and got a price of over $2 million. Pratik Patil, an IT engineering graduate turned passionate writer, is known for his meticulous research and engaging storytelling at Oldest.org. Despite his technical background, his love for history, culture, and storytelling led him to explore the worlds oldest records across topics like people, sports, politics, food, nature, religion, and the arts. A curious mind with a knack for uncovering hidden stories, Pratik enjoys visiting historical sites, reading biographies, and watching documentaries on ancient civilizations. He has a deep love for traditional Indian cuisine, especially home-cooked Maharashtrian dishes, and often experiments with old recipes. When hes not writing, he enjoys sketching, playing chess, and listening to retro music. His ability to blend thorough research with engaging narratives makes history come alive, making it both informative and captivating for readers. The written word has been a cornerstone of human civilization for millennia. From clay tablets and scrolls to modern-day books, the medium for recording knowledge has evolved significantly over time. The question of the oldest surviving book is a complex one, as it depends on how we define a book and its significance. In this article, we'll delve into ten of the most ancient known surviving books in the world, each with its unique historical and cultural significance. The Madrid Codex, also known as the Tro-Cortesianus Codex, is a rare treasure from the pre-Columbian Maya culture, dating back to around 9001521 AD. It was discovered in Spain in the 1860s and is currently housed in the Museo de Amrica in Madrid. Experts debate its exact creation date, but some suggest it predates the Spanish conquest of the 16th century. Written in Yucatecan, a group of Mayan languages, this codex provides valuable insights into the Mayan civilization. The Gutenberg Bible, also called the 42-line Bible, stands as the world's oldest mechanically printed book, with the first copies produced in 14541455 AD by Johannes Gutenberg in Mainz, Germany. While China had earlier examples of book printing, such as the Diamond Stra, this Bible marked a significant advancement in Western printing technology. There are 48 known original copies, with 21 complete copies. The New York Public Library owns one of these iconic editions. Scotland's answer to the Book of Kells, the Celtic Psalter, is a pocket-sized book of Psalms. Created in the 11th century AD, it is Scotland's oldest surviving book. In 2009, it went on public display at the University of Edinburgh, allowing admirers to appreciate its historical and artistic significance. The Diamond Stra, a Buddhist holy text, claims the title of the world's oldest surviving dated printed book. Unearthed in China in a sealed cave, this scroll consists of Chinese characters printed on gray paper and dates back to May 868 AD. What sets this text apart is an inscription at the end detailing the book's creation by Wong Jei on his parents' instructions. In 2013, a remarkable discovery was madea Jewish prayer book, or'siddur,' dating back to around 840 AD. This parchment, still in its original binding, features Babylonian vowel pointing, reflecting the language of the Geonim during the Middle Ages. This remarkable find offers a glimpse into the religious practices of that era. Housed in the Trinity College Library in Dublin, Ireland, the Book of Kells is a masterpiece created by Celtic monks around 800 AD. This illuminated manuscript Gospel book is written in Latin and contains the four Gospels of the New Testament. Its intricate designs and vivid illustrations make it a marvel of medieval artistry. Europe's oldest known surviving intact book is the St. Cuthbert Gospel. It was acquired by the British Library in 2012 for 9 million as part of a fundraising campaign. This book was buried with St. Cuthbert, an early British Christian leader, around 698 AD. Its journey through history, surviving Viking conquests and rediscovery in 1104 AD, adds to its historical significance. Considered among the oldest surviving bound books, the Nag Hammadi Library consists of 13 leather-bound papyrus codices discovered in 1945 in Upper Egypt. These codices contain Gnostic texts and are dated to the first half of the 4th century AD. They are currently housed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo, shedding light on early Christian thought. In 1964, three gold plates were discovered in ancient Pyrgi, Italy, dating back to 500 BC. These plates, written in Etruscan and Phoenician, comprise a dedication from King Thefarie Velianas to the Phoenician goddess Astarte. Their display at the National Etruscan Museum in Rome offers a glimpse into the ancient Etruscan civilization. The Etruscan Gold Book, dating to about 660 BC, is thought to be the world's oldest multi-page book. Comprising six sheets of 24-carat gold bound together with rings, this remarkable artifact features Etruscan characters and depictions of a horse, a horseman, a siren, a lyre, and soldiers. It was donated to Bulgaria's National History Museum in Sofia by an anonymous donor. These ten ancient surviving books provide windows into the rich tapestry of human history, culture, and knowledge. From the Mayan civilization to the dawn of printing technology in Europe, and from religious texts to illuminated manuscripts, these books transcend time, connecting us with our ancestors and their wisdom. They are not just records of the past but treasures that continue to inspire and educate generations. Top 12 Oldest Books in The World: The benefits of reading are countless. Since writing is a crucial component of all languages and a crucial talent for all people to master, it should go without saying.Writing is primarily established by humans as a means of communication and as a tool to record past events and transactions.Between the 7th and 4th millennia BC, it is believed that the first forms of writing and literature emerged. Clay, silk, pottery, papyrus, and even coffins have all been employed to record text since the invention of writing, among a staggering variety of other materials. The earliest book still in existence varies much on how you define it because some of these writings were done on paper, bones, gold, and walls.These Oldest Books are referred to as classics for various reasons; These works, which were written by the greatest writers ever, contain a timeless topic, intriguing characters, and perspectives and feelings that still apply today. They have also influenced other contemporary books in a variety of ways.You should be aware of these Oldest works because they will help you gain a better perspective on life, regardless of whether you have already checked off some of the greatest books to read or youre just beginning to expand your literary horizons. Consequently, we will explore the Top 10 Oldest Books in the World in this post.Recommended: Best Places To Read BooksTop 12 Oldest Books Ever Written In The World1. Pyrgi Gold Plates: These three gold plates were discovered in 1964 while working on an excavation at a temple in Pyrgi, Italy, during the time of the Bronze Age.Is there a book older than the BibleThese three gold plates have holes around them, which leads experts to conclude that they were previously bound together. King Thefarie Velianas dedicated one of the inscriptions to the Phoenician water goddess Astarte, while the other two are inscribed in the Etruscan and Phoenician languages.2. The Nag Hammadi Library: It is believed that some of the worlds first bound books are housed at the Nag Hammadi Library, which was founded in 1945 by a local in Nag Hammadi, Upper Egypt. Within a sealed container, they found 13 papyrus codices knotted in leather.Oldest manuscript in the worldA portion of the Gnostic texts, which date to roughly the first half of the fourth century AD, is included in the volumes. It is believed that Greek was the source of these Coptic ciphers. At the moment, the Coptic Museum in Cairo, Egypt, houses these Nag Hammadi ciphers. 1693 years are predicted to be lived.Also see: Advantages and Disadvantages of Oral communication3. Codex Sinaiticus: One of the most significant and priceless books in the entire world is known as the Sinai Bible. Because it is the only early Christian Bible text that is remained mostly intact. The Codex Sinaiticus is thus one of the earliest known Bibles.First book in the worldThe book is a handwritten transcription of the Septuagint, an ancient Greek translation of the Bible, which was initially created by four scribes sometime in the 4th century.4. The Garima Gospels: The two gospel books known as the Garima Gospels are the earliest complete illuminated Christian manuscripts and come from the Abba Garima Monastery in Ethiopia. The two books were thought to date to the 11th century up until the last ten years, but more recent carbon dating indicates that they date to between 330 and 650 AD.Some of the Oldest Surviving Books in the WorldThe books have reportedly been guarded and kept at the monastery since its founding, according to the monks at the Abba Garima Monastery. A Byzantine king who founded the monastery, Abba Garima, is also thought to have authored the books, according to these individuals. The Ethiopian Heritage Fund, a British charity that aids in the preservation of the artifacts, provided funding to a British bookbinder who restored both books sometime in the previous ten years.Also see: Differences Between Citation And Reference5. St Cuthbert Gospel: The St. Cuthbert Gospel, or Stonyhurst Gospel, was written in 698 AD. As the oldest surviving book in Europe, it is widely acknowledged. From 1979 until 2012, when it was eventually purchased from them for $14 Million through a campaign for the library, The Book was leased to the British Library by its owners, a congregation of Jesuits in Belgium.Oldest Books that ever ExistedThe book bears the name of St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne in England, in whose coffin it was put upon the mans passing in the year 687. The Gospel of Saint John was penned on 94 vellum folios and is located in a little volume that may fit in a pocket. Red goatskin leather serves as its binding.6. The Book of Kells: The most well-known artifact on display in Dublin is perhaps the Book of Kells (also known as the Book of Columba) at Trinity College. The Book of Kells is a topic that cannot be avoided while traveling to Irelands capital.Oldest Known Surviving Books in the WorldAlthough scholars have been unable to determine the exact date or location of writing, the book was likely written around the year 800. Instead of being read aloud, this book is claimed to have been written for ceremonial and exhibition reasons only. This is because, despite the detailed and sophisticated images, the text was haphazardly duplicated, with large paragraphs being repeated or missing entire sentences.Also see: Advantages And Disadvantages Of Working In A Team/Group7. Siddur, The Jewish Prayer Book: Asiddur, a Jewish prayer book from approximately 840 AD, was found in 2013, making it the third significant find of the year.What is considered the oldest book ever written in the world?Since the entire parchment is still bound in its original binding, it is so old that it still uses Babylonian vowel pointing, which is comparable to Old or Middle English in the English language.As a result, scholars were able to place the text in the Middle Ages, during the Geonim era of Babylonian and Talmudic authorities. Having a 1,173-year-old Approximate Age.8. The Diamond Sutra: The British Library considers the Diamond Sutra to be the worlds first printed book, also known in its original form as The Diamond That Cuts Through Illusion.What is the oldest book ever written?The paper, which was placed there in the year 1000 to protect it from a nearby warring nation, was found in 868 AD. The text was translated into various East Asian tongues, including Sanskrit, Japanese, and Chinese, where it was regarded as a sacred text. Due to the Diamond Sutra being a very little text with only 6000 words, this accomplishment was attainable at the time.Recommended: Most Corrupt Countries in Africa 2023 : Top 139. The Gutenberg Bible: The Guinness Book of World Records lists the Gutenberg Bible, also known as the 42-line Bible, as the earliest mechanically printed book in history. The Gutenberg Bibles initial printings took place in 1454 or 1455 AD.The worlds oldest-known printed bookAlthough the Diamond Stra, which was printed in China many centuries earlier, is one example of a book that was printed using moveable type, it is said to be the earliest book ever produced using this method in the West. It was printed by Johannes Gutenberg in Mainz, Germany.10. The Madrid Codex: In 1860, Spain was the location of the books initial discovery. This book is additionally referred to as the Tro-Cortesianus Codex and the Madrid Codex. The pre-Columbian Maya culture, which flourished from around 900 to 1521 AD, is the subject of this book. It has been alive for 494 years as of this moment.Oldest Preserved Books In The WorldRecommended: Richest Doctors In The World 202311. Etruscan Gold Book: The Etruscan Gold Book is thought to be among the earliest books in the world and dates back to roughly 600 BCE, even though not much is known about it. A horse rider, a mermaid, a harp, and soldiers are depicted in the images of the six sheets that make up the book, which is entirely composed of 24-carat gold. When Bulgarian canal construction workers dug up a tomb along the Struma River in the late 1950s, they discovered the book within.The first book in the worldThe book was found in 2003 and given to the National History Museum of Bulgaria by the finder, who asked to remain unidentified. Two specialists in Sofia, Bulgaria, and London, England, according to the museums then-director Bojidar Dimitrov, validated the books authenticity.12. Dead Sea Scrolls: The Dead Sea Scrolls are 972 texts that were discovered in a network of 12 caves in Qumran, in the West Bank. They are unquestionably the most well-known item on this list. They are considered to be the earliest complete biblical manuscripts to have survived to the present day, including texts recorded on parchments and papyri in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.First book ever printedThree Bedouin shepherds found the first scrolls in 1946, which launched a 10-year hunt that eventually led to the discovery of the others. One of the best-preserved manuscripts is the Great Psalms Scroll, which was copied between 30 and 50 CE. It is shown here and is one of the oldest scrolls still in existence.Recommended: Best Time to Read And Understand EffectiveConclusion: Reading inspires us. They can reduce your stress, make you happier, and be more intelligent.It is indisputable that these rare ancient texts, some of which date back thousands of years, have always been of enormous significance to us all.The evaluation process determines the SC value of these books based on the following criteria: printing method, materials, and ancient language usage.Edeh Samuel Chukwuemeka, ACMC, is a lawyer and a certified mediator/conciliator in Nigeria. He is also a developer with knowledge in various programming languages. Samuel is determined to leverage his skills in technology, SEO, and legal practice to revolutionize the legal profession worldwide by creating web and mobile applications that simplify legal research. Sam is also passionate about educating and providing valuable information to people. Share copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Newslifestylebooksfeatures7 interesting facts about Worlds oldest bookFollow Us On Social MediaNewslifestylebooksfeatures7 interesting facts about Worlds oldest bookFollow Us On Social Media Anthropologists in Greece have undertaken an awe-inspiring endeavor to shed light on the enigmatic Homo heidelbergensis, a relatively obscure cousin of the Neanderthals who roamed the Earth between 700,000 and 200,000 years ago. Using state-of-the-art facial reconstruction techniques, these scientists have meticulously crafted a portrait that offers a tantalizing glimpse into what Homo heidelbergensis might have looked like.Homo heidelbergensis, an extinct species within the Homo genus, left behind a fossil record dating back to the Middle Pleistocene era, spanning across Africa, Europe, and possibly Asia. This species possessed distinctive features, including a prominent browridge, a larger braincase, and a flatter facial structure when compared to its older hominid counterparts.One of the most remarkable aspects of Homo heidelbergensis was its ability to adapt to colder climates, characterized by its short and wide physique, likely an evolutionary response to conserve heat. Notably, this species pioneered the art of shelter-building, constructing rudimentary dwellings from wood and rocka testament to their resourcefulness. They were also the earliest known hunters of large animals, leaving behind fossilized remains of wild creatures such as deer, horses, elephants, hippos, and rhinos, bearing telltale butchery marks. Wooden spears unearthed at sites like Schningen, Germany, further attest to their prowess as hunters. Frontal view of the portrait of Homo heidelbergensis from Petralona, Greece, with hair and skin pigmentation. Image credit: Aidonis et al., doi: 10.1016/j.jasrep.2023.104206. The origins of the name "Homo heidelbergensis" can be traced back to 1908, when it was coined to accommodate the discovery of an ancient human jaw in a quarry near Heidelberg, Germany. However, it was only towards the end of the 20th century that this species gained broader recognition due to the unearthing of additional fossil specimens. Notable among these discoveries are specimens from Bodo in Ethiopia, Kabwe in Zambia, Ndutu in Tanzania, Petralona in Greece, Arago in France, and potentially Dali in China.The ambitious task of reconstructing the face of Homo heidelbergensis was entrusted to anthropologist Christina Papageorgopoulou and her colleagues at Democritus University of Thrace. They turned to the well-preserved skull found in Petralona, Greece, a treasure trove of anatomical information that has played a pivotal role in unraveling the mysteries of our ancient relatives."The Petralona skull is one of the most anatomically complete human fossils of the Middle Pleistocene and a key paleoanthropological finding in Europe," emphasized the researchers. It was serendipitously discovered in 1960 during an amateur exploration of Petralona Cave, nestled in the rugged landscapes of Chalkidiki, Northern Greece. Currently housed in the Museum of Geology, Palaeontology, and Paleoanthropology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Petralona skull has yielded critical insights. The scientists deduced that this skull belonged to a male individual, judging by its sexually dimorphic characteristics. Furthermore, the closure of cranial sutures indicated a young age, likely no older than 35 years, with an estimated body mass of approximately 52 kilograms.To bring the face of the Petralona man to life, the team employed a cutting-edge Artec Spider 3D scanner to digitize a cast of the original skull. While the facial skeleton remained intact and undistorted, minor deformations in the rear of the vault and temporal bones had no bearing on the facial morphology. However, a key piece was missingthe mandible. In this critical juncture of reconstruction, the researchers turned to the Mauer jaw, often referred to as the holotype specimen of Homo heidelbergensis. This ancient relic, dated to approximately 609,000 years ago, provided a vital missing link.The resulting facial approximation of the Petralona man showcased characteristic features: a sloped forehead, massive brow ridges, and facial robusticity that set Homo heidelbergensis apart from both Neanderthals and anatomically modern Homo sapiens. This meticulous reconstruction provides an invaluable window into the past and enhances our understanding of our distant ancestors."This facial approximation of the Petralona man represents a milestone in paleoanthropological research, marking the first hominin facial approximation derived from Greek material," the researchers remarked. While acknowledging the inherent limitations of facial approximation techniques, especially when applied to archaic hominins, they underscored the immense potential of this method in cultural, educational, and scientific contexts.In an age marked by rapid technological advancements, encompassing fields like medical imaging, geometric morphometrics, ancient DNA analysis, 3D scanning, image processing, and virtual reality, facial approximation stands poised to become an invaluable tool for the dissemination of cultural heritage and scientific exploration. The unveiling of Homo heidelbergensis's visage is not just a tribute to our ancestral lineage but also a testament to the power of cutting-edge technology in reconstructing the past.The team's groundbreaking research, which ushers us closer to our ancient relatives, has been published in the Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports, marking a significant milestone in our quest to understand the fascinating tapestry of human evolution. References:Asterios Aidonis et al., 2023 Digital 3D facial approximation of the Petralona skull Methodological issues and applications Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports 51: 104206; doi: 10.1016/j.jasrep.2023.104206. Long before the internet, the printing press, or even parchment, humans were already trying to record their knowledge, stories, and laws. Sometimes on stone, sometimes on clay, sometimes on papyrus.But what is the oldest book in the world? That question is not easy to answer, as much depends on the definition: does a clay tablet count as a book? Or only a bound codex with a cover? Still, there are works that undoubtedly rank among the oldest written documents we can (at least partially) still read.Here are 10 of the oldest known books in the world and the stories behind them. 1. The Epic of Gilgamesh (ca. 2100 BCE)Origin: Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq)Language: Akkadian in cuneiform scriptOften considered the oldest literary work in the world. The story of King Gilgamesh and his quest for immortality was recorded on clay tablets. Themes such as friendship, loss, and the fear of death still resonate today.2. Pyramid Texts (ca. 24002300 BCE)Origin: EgyptLanguage: Old EgyptianThese religious inscriptions, carved into the walls of the pyramids of Djoser, Unas, and other pharaohs, contain spells and hymns intended to protect the king in the afterlife. Technically not scrolls, but undeniably the oldest religious texts known.3. Egyptian Book of the Dead (ca. 1550 BCE)Origin: EgyptLanguage: Old Egyptian (hieroglyphs on papyrus)A collection of spells and rituals placed in tombs to guide the deceased through the realm of the dead. Written on papyrus scrolls, these texts are often richly illustrated and provide deep insight into Egyptian beliefs about life and death.4. Prisse Papyrus (ca. 1800 BCE)Zunkir/wikipedia/CC BY-SA 4.0Origin: EgyptLanguage: Middle EgyptianThe oldest preserved papyrus scroll in the world, containing the Maxims of Ptahhotep wisdom literature on virtue, etiquette, and leadership. It is an early form of didactic writing.5. Rigveda (oral ca. 15001200 BCE, written from ca. 1000 BCE)Origin: IndiaLanguage: Vedic SanskritThe oldest of the Vedas and one of the oldest preserved religious texts in the world. Originally transmitted orally around 15001200 BCE, it was first committed to writing on palm leaves from about 1000 BCE. Contains hymns, philosophies, and ritual instructions still studied today.6. Enuma Elish (core from ca. 12th11th century BCE; copies from 7th6th century BCE)Origin: BabyloniaLanguage: AkkadianThe Babylonian creation myth, preserved on clay tablets. The oldest versions likely date from the 2nd millennium BCE, though the most complete copies are from the 7th6th century BCE. A key text in the religious traditions of the ancient Mediterranean.7. Diamond Sutra (868 CE)Origin: China (Dunhuang)Language: Classical ChineseThe oldest precisely dated printed book, created using woodblock printing. Printed in 868 CE and discovered in a cave near Dunhuang. A milestone in the global history of printing.8. Codex Sinaiticus (ca. 330360 CE)Origin: Egypt (Sinai)Language: GreekOne of the oldest and most complete codex-form manuscripts of the Christian Bible. Written on parchment, containing both Old and New Testament texts. Rediscovered only in the 19th century in a monastery in Sinai.9. Codex Gigas (13th century CE)Kungl. biblioteketOrigin: Bohemia (now Czech Republic)Language: LatinNicknamed The Devils Bible because of a massive illustration of the devil. This 75 kg behemoth contains the complete Latin Bible, medical texts, chronicles, and magical formulas. According to legend, it was completed in one night with the devils help.10. Dead Sea Scrolls (ca. 150 BCE 70 CE)alefbet / Shutterstock.comOrigin: Israel (Qumran)Language: Hebrew, AramaicA collection of about 900 manuscripts, including Biblical books, apocryphal writings, and sectarian rules. The scrolls, preserved in caves near the Dead Sea, date from around 150 BCE to 70 CE. Essential for the study of early Judaism and the Bible. The oldest book in the world is the Diamond Sutra, printed in China in 868 CE.Its a Buddhist text and is the earliest known surviving printed and dated book. Discovered in a sealed cave along the Silk Road, it was made using woodblock printingcarved wooden blocks pressed onto paper, page by page. Its now preserved at the British Library.The Diamond Sutra wasnt handwritten. It was printedbound, titled, and dated. That makes it the first of its kind: not just a scroll, but a book as we understand it today.And its still intact.Its strange to think that in a world with millions of books published every year, the very first printed book we still have was made over 1,150 years ago, in a quiet temple by Buddhist monks.They werent chasing bestseller lists and they werent going viral. They simply wanted to preserve wisdom and pass it on. That goal hasnt changed. Whether its a spiritual text or a fantasy novel, a good book still tries to do one thing: last.Ernest Hemingway never worked with carved woodblocks. He used paper, pencils, and typewriters. He believed in short sentences and strong verbs. But he also believed in permanence. He wanted his words to last.Thats where he connectsstrangelywith the Diamond Sutra, the oldest book in the world. Printed in 868 CE. Still here.Hemingways style was modern, but his hope was ancient: that something well written could stay. The monks carved their pages with great care. Hemingway carved his sentences the same way. Different time, different toolsbut both aimed for clarity. For truth.In the end, they both got what they wanted: books that didnt just say something, but stayed around long enough to matter.Franz Kafka wanted his work destroyed after his death. Thankfully, it wasnt. Most of what we now admirefrom The Trial to The Castlewas published later. Thats the irony: Kafkas legacy survived in ways he didnt plan.The Diamond Sutra, the oldest book in the world, was also nearly forgotten. It sat in a cave for centuries, untouched. Waiting. Silent. And then one day, it was found. Both Kafka and the Sutra remind us that books dont always rush. Some wait. Some get saved when no one expects it. And some resurface when theyre needed most.Kafkas writing speaks to our modern anxieties. The Sutra speaks to spiritual stillness. Yet both share a strange power: they last. Not because they were supposed tobut because someone chose to preserve them.Virginia Woolf once wrote that every book is a record of a state of mind. That phrase stays with me when I think about the oldest book in the world, the Diamond Sutra.Printed in 868 CE, the Diamond Sutra doesnt shout. Its quiet. Focused. Its not about events. Its about how the mind works when it slows down. When it lets go.That feels close to Woolf, doesnt it?In To the Lighthouse, nothing much happens. Theres no major twist. No grand conclusion. But everything matters every thought, every silence, every flicker of perception. Its modern fiction built on ancient insight.The Diamond Sutra teaches impermanence. Woolf shows us how fleeting each moment is. They live far apart in history, but they echo the same mood: slow down, pay attention, let go.Both books make you sit still. And sometimes, thats where the truth hides.Albert Camus once said, The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a mans heart. He didnt believe in easy answers. He believed in clarity. Honesty. And carrying on, even when the world doesnt explain itself.Thats why I think of Camus when I read about the Diamond Sutra, the oldest book in the world. Printed in 868 CE, it teaches that reality is always shifting. That clinging to anythingideas, outcomes, even the selfleads to suffering.Camus wasnt a monk. But he understood impermanence. In The Stranger and The Myth of Sisyphus, he wrestled with meaning in a world that doesnt hand it to you. That refusal to look away from the absurd? Thats spiritual, even if its not religious.Both the Diamond Sutra and Camus offer this strange comfort: the truth might be hard, but you can face it. Quietly. Fully. With both feet on the ground.Camus didnt carve woodblocks. But he carved sentences that still feel like stone. How many Harry Potter books are there? How many Harry Potter books are there? Sometimes the question arises: How many Harry Potter books are there? There Famous Book Series Famous Book Series: Facts & Figures Some stories dont end after one book. They expand and they build worlds. What are the most lucrative book genres? What are the most lucrative book genres, three categories dominate What is the least popular genre of books? What is the least popular genre of books? When people ask about the least popular genre of books, the What is the most popular genre of books?What is the most popular genre of books? The most popular genre of books in the world is romance. Year Facts about Book GenreWhat Makes a Book Genre So Useful? When we talk about a book genre, were really talking about patterns. Stories The CorrectionsThe Corrections by Jonathan Franzen A Family Saga that Illuminates the Modern Condition What I have learned from The The Tin Drum (by Gnter Grass)A Masterpiece of Postwar German Literature: Gnter Grass The Tin Drum How I experienced The Tin Drum by Gnter GrassReading The House of the SpiritsThe House of the Spirits by Isabel Allende Memory, Magic, and the Weight of Silence Some novels walk; others The Mother by Bertolt BrechtThe Mother by Bertolt Brecht: A Compelling Dive into the Struggles of Working-Class Women My View on The Mother by Dantons DeathDantons Death by Georg Bchner A Tale of Revolution and Tragedy My quick Summary on Dantons Death by Georg Fire Down BelowFire Down Below by William Golding Into the Depths of Humanity A quick summary of my thoughts on Goldings Travel PicturesTravel Pictures by Heinrich Heine A Vivid Journey Through Time and Space My Summary of Travel Pictures by Heinrich The Black TulipThe Black Tulip by Alexandre Dumas A Story of Obsession, Politics, and Love Alexandre Dumas is best known for A Winter`s TaleA Winters Tale Heinrich Heines Vision of Germany and the Human Condition Quick Summary: My Thoughts on A Winters The SpireThe Spire William Goldings Towering Tale of Ambition and Descent Quick Summary: My Thoughts on The Spire by William The RobbersA Review of The Robbers by Friedrich Schiller My Learnings from The Robbers by Friedrich SchillerI was captivated by the Don QuixoteUnveiling the Timeless Brilliance of Don Quixote: A Journey Through Miguel Cervantes Masterpiece My Summary of Don Quixote by Miguel The book believed to be world's oldest mulitpage book contains six bound sheets of 24-carat gold, with illustrations of a mermaid, horse-rider, harp and soldiers. Ivorrusev/CC BY-SA 4.0/Wikimedia At Bulgaria's National Museum of History, there lives a book comprising six pages of beaten 24-carat gold covered with Etruscan script, one of the few writing systems scholars have yet to decipher. It features illustrations of a horse-rider, a mermaid, a harp and soldiers [source: BBC News]. According to reports, the book, exhibited in 2003, was estimated at about 2,500 years old. It was found along the Strouma River in southwestern Bulgaria in an old tomb, and was donated to the museum by the finder, who remained anonymous. Its age and authenticity were confirmed by two independent scientists, whose names also remain unknown. This book is often cited as the world's oldest book because it is the oldest book containing several pages that we know about. There are older pages around but not bound together in a book. But the case isn't closed. The question of what is the oldest book in the world will likely never be answered. First, there's the question of what exactly is a book. Books are slippery artifacts. Think of your favorite novel. It has a physical presence, a specific shape and form that fits on a shelf and requires dusting. It also has a nonphysical form the story itself, what it means to you and the memories and enjoyment it conjures. So is the book a mere physical presence, or is the content more important than the shape? Or do they both play a role? Take it a step further and ask what if your favorite book wasn't printed but handwritten, would it still be a book? What about if you read it on an electronic device? If printing defined what a book was, then the oldest book would be the Gutenberg Bible, printed in about 1450. Of course, that was printed with moveable type. Chinese cultures were printing pages of booklike structures using carved wood plates and simple presses hundreds of years before Gutenberg. Now take the Egyptian pharaohs. Their scribes were creating songs and prayers to them close to 3,000 years ago, but these were on papyrus scrolls, which could be considered a book, albeit with only one very long page. "These are questions scholars are still wrestling with," said Laurent Ferri, curator of rare books and manuscripts at Cornell University whom we interviewed in 2010. "For me, a book would be defined by having a binding and supporting a world view." By this definition, the collection of clay tablets maintained by Cornell also the largest collection in the world wouldn't be considered the world's oldest books. They aren't bound, and most are legal proceedings or financial accountings and do not espouse a worldview. With his own definition in mind, Ferri said his bet on the oldest books in the world would be Homer's "Iliad," and the "Epic of Gilgamesh." Indeed, the British Museum's version of the Gilgamesh tale, written on clay tablets, dates to about the seventh century B.C.E. However, the tablets aren't bound, so they're technically not a book, but they do come close, especially in the sense they propose a certain view of the world. But we don't really know when the stories started or how they evolved. "This is another situation to consider," Ferri said. "These (two stories) are the product of a very long oral tradition. We know roughly when the text was fixed, but the stories pre-existed the physical book." And so the questions turn. Some people think the Bible was written shortly after the world was created, making it the oldest book. Yet biblical scholars know the books that make up the Bible were written over many centuries and that many of the stories included in it were set down centuries after the events they recorded happened. Bringing religion, or worldviews, into the question begets more twists and turns. The I Ching, the foundation book for Taoist philosophy, was allegedly written by Lao-Tze more than 2,000 years ago. Pharaonic texts exist with a similar vintage. There are likely other more obscure religions that claim to have a toehold in centuries further in the past and that their more recent printings are merely modern manifestations of ancient texts. For Ferri, the quest for the world's oldest book is just that a quest. "If you find the oldest book you find the oldest truth, the oldest revelation," he said. "This is a revelation of original things; this is what humans always look for. So, we ask the questions again and again, 'What is the oldest?" So, the question of what is the world's oldest book will likely never be answered conclusively, and this may not be a bad thing. The simple asking of the question seems to lead to insight, whether from an archaeological perspective or a philosophical perspective. And it addresses the ultimate point of books (whether they're on clay tablets or online), summed up by Ferri: "We wouldn't be human without books." With news this week of the discovery of what could be the earliest known siddur, a Jewish prayer book dated at around 840 AD we have put together a list of 10 of the oldest known surviving books in the world today. Writing and literature are thought to have been first developed between the 7th and 4th millenium BC. Since the dawn of writing an incredible array of different materials have been used for recording text, including clay, silk, pottery, papyrus, even coffins so the question of the oldest surviving book depends very much on how you classify one.The Mirriam-Webster Dictionary defines a book as: a set of printed sheets of paper that are held together inside a cover; a long written work. This definition rules out clay tablets, scrolls and similar, though many scholars have expanded the definition to include any significant piece of writing bound together inside a cover.The question can also touch on the nature of the book. Some scholars have considered that a significant book should contain a worldview, setting it apart from mere accounting or administrative records.We have tried to pull together what we hope is an interesting range of some of the oldest surviving books in the world. We cover everything from the earliest surviving printed books, to the oldest known surviving book in existence.Madrid CodexDiscovered in Spain in the 1860s, the Madrid Codex also known as the Tro-Cortesianus Codex is one of the only surviving books attributable to the pre-Columbian Maya culture of around 9001521 AD.Most likely produced in Yucatn, the book is written in Yucatecan, a group of Mayan languages which includes Yucatec, Itza, Lacandon and Mopan.Experts disagree on the exact date the Madrid Codex was created, though it is said by some to have been made before the Spanish conquest of the 16th century.The book is currently held in the Museo de Amrica in Madrid, Spain.Source: 1. Image: 1.Estimated age: 494 years old. Gutenberg BibleThe Gutenberg Bible, also known as the 42-line Bible, is listed by the Guinness Book of World records as the worlds oldest mechanically printed book the first copies of which were printed in 1454-1455 AD.Printed by Johannes Gutenberg, in Mainz, Germany, it is considered to be oldest printed book using movable type in the West though in China there were examples of book printing many centuries earlier, such as the Diamond Stra.There are 48 original copies in known existence, of which 21 are complete. The above image is of the New York Public Libr