

Problem Texts

Problem texts are the most important source of information on Egyptian mathematics. From the extant hieratic mathematical texts roughly 100 problems are known. They come from an educational context, written either in a teachers handbook (e.g. the Rhind mathematical papyrus) or by a student practising mathematical techniques (e.g. the Moscow mathematical papyrus).

As the name indicates, they name a problem and then give instructions to solve it. The general structure of a problem is to announce the type of problem in the heading (which may be written in red). Second the given data are listed and the entity that shall be calculated is named. Then a series of instructions follows. Each instruction usually