



WORKSHEET WRITING

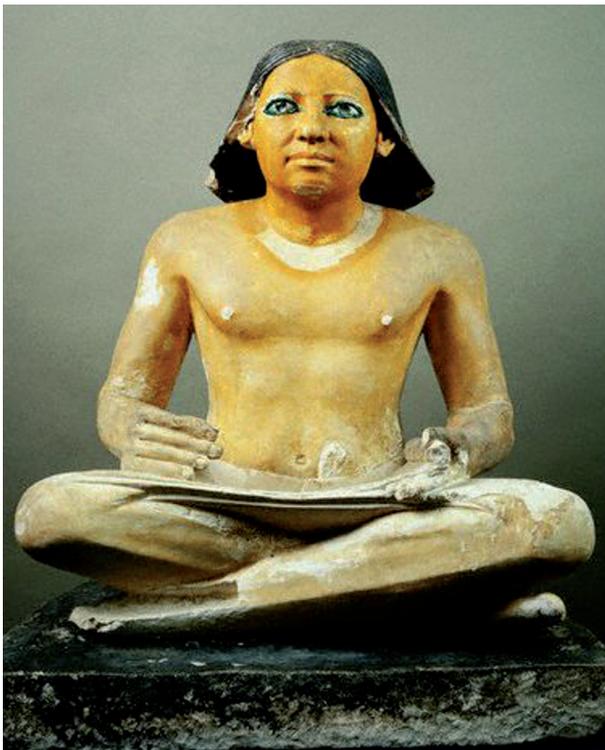
WRITING

What are hieroglyphics?

Egyptian, the language spoken in Ancient Egypt, is related to the languages of North Africa and the Near East and was conserved in writing at a very early stage. Today the official language of Egypt is Arabic. Only the Egyptian Christians still use Coptic, the most modern form of the Egyptian language, in their religious ceremonies.

Of course, the Egyptian language has changed and developed over thousands of years.

Hieroglyphics appeared as a form of writing around 3000 B.C. The word "hieroglyphics" comes from Greek and means sacred carving. The writing system had somewhere between 700 and 2,500 different symbols.



Statue of an Egyptian scribe

Hieroglyphs were inscribed on many temples and works of art, but they had one disadvantage – they couldn't be written quickly by hand. Because of this, there was also a script for writing on sheets of papyrus and bits of pottery, which is known as hieratic. It is from this that demotic script later evolved in the 7th century B.C.

People who knew how to write were highly respected in Ancient Egypt because not everyone could read or write. Hieroglyphs can have several meanings. Some hieroglyphs mean what they depict, others symbolize a sound while others still were written down but not spoken aloud. For instance, a picture of a seated woman or a seated man followed the symbol for person to make it clear which gender was meant. Hieroglyphs could be written from left to right, or the other way round, as well as from top to bottom. The direction of the text can be seen from the fact that the human and animal symbols are always facing the beginning. Mostly only consonants were written, rarely vowels.

Once the kingdom of the pharaohs came to an end, the meaning of this writing was forgotten and it was almost impossible to decode it again. It was only with the help of the famous Rosetta Stone, which is inscribed with the exact same text in Greek, demotic and hieroglyphics, that Jean-François Champollion managed to decipher the symbols.

I. THE ROSETTA STONE



Suggested Activity

1. Investigate who Jean-François Champollion was. Use a textbook and the internet. Find out how he translated hieroglyphics.

Write a summary of the most important points. Look in an atlas to find the city of Rosetta, where the Rosetta Stone was discovered. Write a profile of Champollion.

2. Find out where the Rosetta Stone is today. Make notes on your results.

2. Cartouches

Cartouches, also known as name rings or royal rings, were inscribed with the royal titles of the Egyptian kings. The cartouche consists of a line enclosing the birth and throne names of the pharaoh in hieroglyphs. The line is actually a length of rope, the ends of which overlap.



Cartouche of Tutankhamun



Suggested Activity

1. Various hieroglyphs can be found on the golden throne of Tutankhamun that is on display in the exhibition. On the right arm of the throne you will find Tutankhamun's cartouche.
2. Draw the cartouche of Tutankhamun on a large piece of paper and color it in.

