

Hieroglyphics

For nearly 3000 years the Ancient Egyptian people lived by the River Nile and were ruled by a Pharaoh. They used a type of writing called hieroglyphics, which is made up of symbols instead of letters.

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There are objects from Ancient Egypt at the National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology.

Egyptian Hieroglyphs

Why were they written?

The Egyptians used hieroglyphics to write special prayers on tombs to help pharaohs and others travel to the afterlife. Today, hieroglyphics help to tell archaeologists about what life was like during this time.

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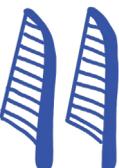
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Hieroglyphics are found on stone monuments, jewelry and painted onto a type of paper called papyrus.



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A 	B 	C 	D 
E 	F 	G 	H 
I 	J 	K 	L 
M 	N 	O 	P 
Q 	R 	S 	T 
U 	V 	W 	X 
Y 	Z 		

How did they write their names?

Usually names were written in a cartouche with one symbol under another or vertically. They could also be written horizontally and sometimes, they were written backwards!

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Design Challenge

Can you write your name, using hieroglyphics, inside this cartouche?



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What is a cartouche?

When a pharaoh's name was written, they used hieroglyphics for the letters and an oval was drawn around it to encircle it. This is called a cartouche.

Why was it used?

Cartouches were used to keep a pharaoh's name safe and it represented everything that they ruled over. They were engraved on the stone walls at pharaohs' tombs and sometimes onto a small stone and worn as an amulet.

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Design Challenge

Can you draw one of the hieroglyph symbols that you see on the wooden box?

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The Symbol I See:



Wooden Box for Ushabti Figures

This is an object in the Museum that has hieroglyphics on it. It was found in a tomb and was used for Ushabti, also called shabti. The Egyptians believed that the shabti models would help the person to travel to the afterlife.

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