

Writing Hieroglyphics

Introduction

Read the Hieroglyphics article on World Book Online.

Hieroglyphics is a form of writing in which picture symbols represent ideas and sounds. The word hieroglyphics comes from two Greek words that mean “sacred carving.”

The ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphic writing for more than 3,000 years. They used hieroglyphic writing primarily for religious inscriptions on temples and stone monuments and to record the words and deeds of royalty. In fact, the Egyptians called their writing the words of God. The inscriptions were written or carved by highly trained men who were called scribes.

Directions:

Work in small groups to create your own language based on idea of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Make symbols for the items you most commonly talked about and give each a sound. Create a sheet with this information clearly labelled. Then write a sentence or two, or even a paragraph, using your invented language.

Hand out a copy of your sheet to the rest of the class. Take turns reading aloud your language and see if anyone can translate, using the sheet. At the end of your script, if no one has been able to decipher your writing, tell the class what you said.