

Kingdoms of the Nile

Module 4

Lesson 4



MAIN IDEAS

1. Egyptian writing used hieroglyphics.
2. Egypt's great temples were lavishly decorated.
3. Egyptian art filled tombs.

Key Terms and People

hieroglyphics Egyptian writing system, one of the world's first, which used symbols

papyrus long-lasting, paperlike substance made from reeds

Rosetta Stone a stone slab discovered in 1799 that was inscribed with hieroglyphics and their Greek meanings

sphinxes huge ancient Egyptian statues of imaginary creatures with the heads of people or animals and bodies of lions

obelisk a tall, four-sided pillar that is pointed on top

King Tutankhamen a pharaoh whose tomb was untouched by raiders, leaving much information about Egyptian art and burial practices

Lesson Summary

EGYPTIAN WRITING

Egyptians invented one of the world's first writing systems, using a series of more than 600 images, symbols, and pictures called **hieroglyphics** (hy-ruh-GLIH-fiks). Each symbol represented one or more sounds in the Egyptian language.

At first, hieroglyphics were carved in stone. Later they were written with brushes and ink on **papyrus** (puh-PY-ruhs). It was made by pressing layers of reeds together and pounding them into sheets.

Because papyrus didn't decay, many ancient Egyptian texts still survive, including government records, science texts, and literary works, such as *The Book of the Dead*. The discovery of the **Rosetta Stone** in 1799 provided the key to reading Egyptian writing because its text was inscribed both in hieroglyphics and Greek.

How was papyrus made?

What language helped scholars to understand the meaning of hieroglyphics on the Rosetta Stone?

Lesson 4, *continued*

The Egyptians created two 12-month calendars. One was based on the moon and the other on the sun. The solar calendar was more accurate.

EGYPT'S GREAT TEMPLES

Egyptian architects are known for designing magnificent temples. These structures were the homes of the gods. Temples were lavishly decorated with numerous statues and beautifully painted walls and pillars. **Sphinxes** and **obelisks** were usually found near the entrances to the temples.

EGYPTIAN ART

Many great works are found in either the temples or the tombs of the pharaohs. Most Egyptians, however, never saw these paintings, because only kings, priests, or other important people could enter these places.

Egyptian paintings depict a variety of subjects, like royal events, religious rituals, and daily life. The paintings also have a particular style. People are drawn as if they were twisting as they walked. They are shown in different sizes depending upon their stature in society. In contrast, animals appear more realistically. The Egyptians were also skilled stone and metal workers, creating beautiful statues and jewelry.

Much of what we know about Egyptian art and burial practices comes from the tomb of **King Tutankhamen**. It was one of the few Egyptian tombs that was left untouched by raiders looking for valuables. The tomb was discovered in 1922.

Why did only some people get to see ancient Egyptian sculptures and paintings?

What determined a person's size in an Egyptian painting?

Why is King Tutankhamen's tomb so important for the study of Egyptian history?

Lesson 4, *continued***CHALLENGE ACTIVITY**

Critical Thinking: Analyze Using the library or an online resource, find a key to translate Egyptian hieroglyphics into English. Write a message using hieroglyphics and trade off with another student to see if you can read each other's messages. Provide a copy of your message and the translation to your teacher.

hieroglyphics	obelisk	Rosetta Stone
King Tutankhamen	papyrus	sphinxes

DIRECTIONS Read each sentence and fill in the blank with the word in the word pair that best completes the sentence.

- _____ is a long-lasting, paperlike substance made from reeds. **(Sphinxes/Papyrus)**
- The Egyptian writing system is known as _____. **(obelisk/hieroglyphics)**
- The tomb of _____ was one of the few Egyptian tombs left untouched by raiders. **(King Tutankhamen/Rosetta Stone)**
- The _____ had hieroglyphics inscribed on it and became the key to deciphering Egyptian writing. **(obelisk/Rosetta Stone)**
- _____ were imaginary creatures with the bodies of lions and the heads of people. **(Sphinxes/Papyruses)**
- A(n) _____ is a tall, four-sided pillar that is pointed on top. **(obelisk/sphinx)**