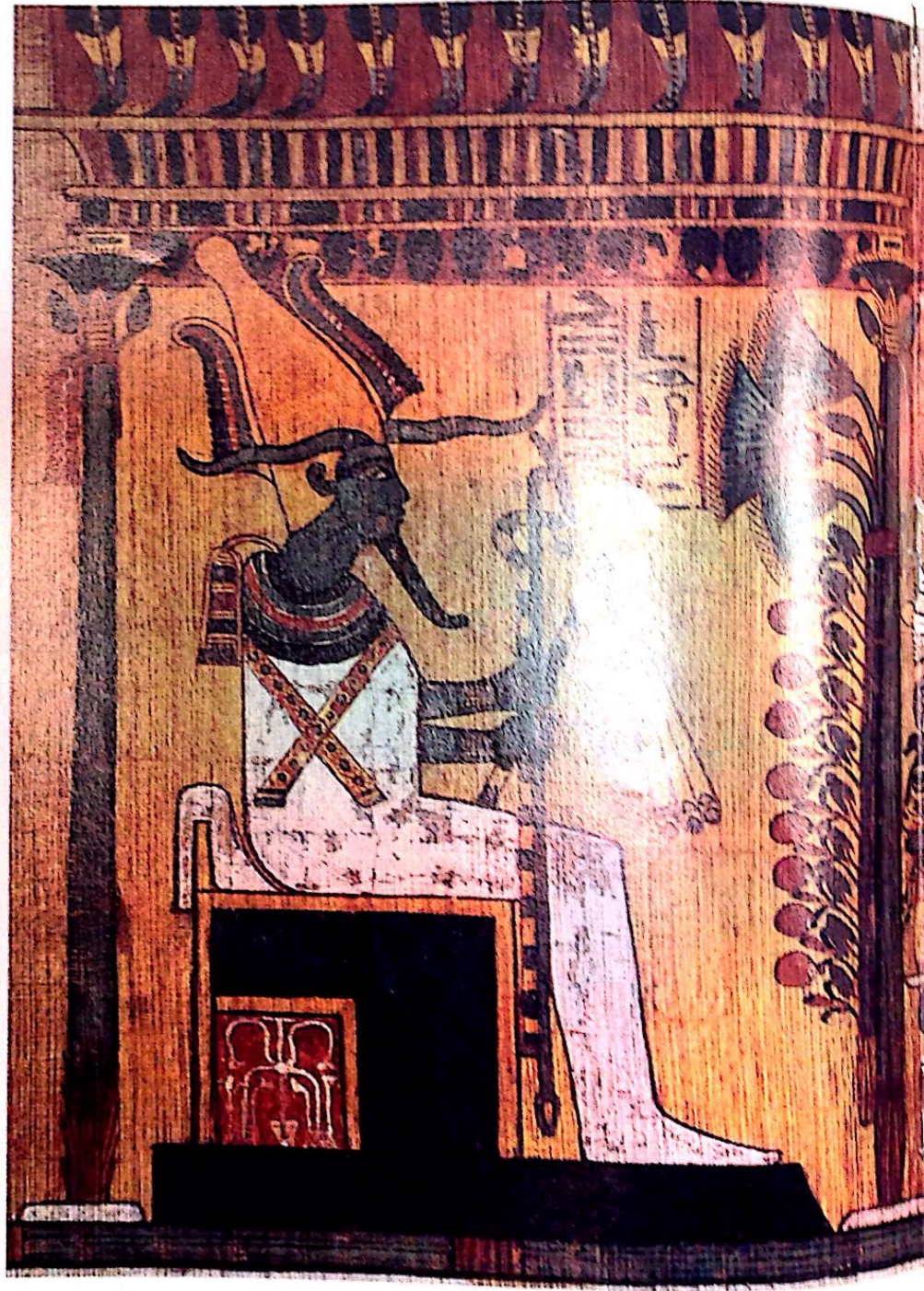


Draw Like an

Many modern artists pride themselves on "doing their own thing." This was definitely not the case in ancient Egypt. Artists had very strict rules to follow and were hired by wealthy people for one purpose—to make drawings and statues that could be used in the afterlife.

This might sound a little strange, but not if you understand more about the religion of ancient Egypt. A tomb was thought to be the place where a person would spend eternity. That was more important than their "short" lives on earth. Artists painted scenes on tomb walls showing the person who had died doing things he or she hoped to do in the afterlife. Pictures of the family and beloved pets were included to keep the person company. Paintings of food and drink guaranteed the person eating pleasure. Pictures of dancers and musicians were included for amusement. When the tomb was sealed, a priest would say a special verse that supposedly brought the drawings to life forever.

Artists had to follow special rules. Important parts of the body had to be shown properly. Because the nose was considered special, people's heads were shown from the side so the nose was clearly visible. The eyes, however, were also important, so they were shown as though seen from the front. Shoulders faced front, but the body from the waist down was shown from the side.



Egyptian



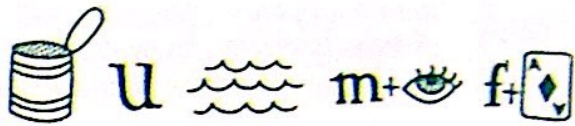
Egyptian painters also didn't show things in their proper size. A man might be bigger than a group of trees because the man was more important. Since the pharaoh was the most important person in Egypt, he was always the largest figure in any drawing.

Artists couldn't just pick up a brush and start painting on a tomb wall either. Special rules applied here, too.

The picture to be painted on the wall was first drawn on a small piece of papyrus. A grid was marked off over the drawing. When the tomb wall was ready to be painted, a grid was lightly marked on the wall with string dipped in red dye. The artist would then redraw the small picture (grid by grid) onto the wall in a much larger size, copying the drawing exactly.

After the artist had painted the picture, he added a coat of wax or varnish for protection. ■

WRITING WITH PICTURES: HIEROGLYPHS



This, believe it or not, is a sentence. It may not be written in words you are used to, because its words are picture symbols. Can you read it? *(Check the bottom of the page.)

There are many ways to write using symbols. If you've seen words written in Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, or Russian, you know they use alphabet symbols different than the English alphabet. When the ancient Egyptians wrote, they used different symbols too. Their symbols are called hieroglyphs.

Early hieroglyphs were simple drawings that stood for objects and word sounds or phrases. One symbol might stand for a whole thought. Messages were written by combining symbols. You can see some examples below. Try using the meanings on the left to figure out the hieroglyphs on the right.

Symbol	Meaning	Symbol	Meaning
	to see		?
	to go forward		?
	the sky		?

The 22 hieroglyphic symbols shown in the chart stand for the basic sounds in the language of ancient Egypt.

Can you see my face?

Hieroglyphic Symbol	What It Shows	Sound It Stands For
	Egyptian Vulture	A As in fat
	Flowering reed	Y
	Flowering reeds	Y As in yellow
	Forearm	AH As in father
	Stool	P
	Quail or Chick	W
	Foot	B
	Horned Viper	F
	Owl	M
	Water	N
	Mouth	R
	Reed sheltering field	H As in English
	Wick of twisted flax	H
	Bolt, folded cloth	S
	Pool	SH
	Hillslope	Q As in Queen
	Basket with handle	K
	Stand for jar	Hard G
	Loaf	T
	Tethering rope	CH As in chew
	Hand	D
	Snake	S



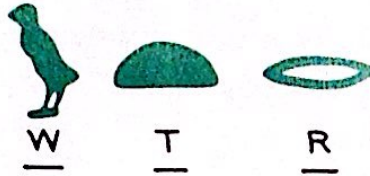
DECODING HIEROGLYPHS

Use the hieroglyphs given to decode the secret phrases below.

HINT: When forming words with hieroglyphs, only consonant sounds are given. Vowel sounds are not shown.

We'll do one for you:

What did Egypt get from the Nile?



The answer is water.
(The vowels a and e are left out.)

What common animal was considered holy in ancient Egypt?



What did they make from flattened papyrus plants?



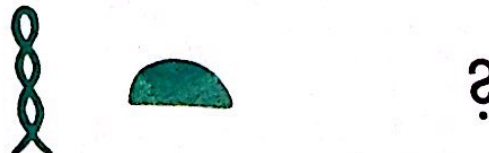
Where did many ancient Egyptians work?



Where were many pharaohs buried?



What was the weather in the desert like?



TRY IT!

Write your own message on a piece of paper, using these hieroglyphs. See if a classmate can read it.

