













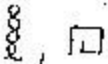










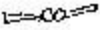


# **HIEROGLYPHIC HORSEPLAY**

Directions: Pass out the Hieroglyphic Decoder and scratch paper to each student. Begin reading the adventure!

## Hieroglyphic Decoder

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

You are a scribe living in the fertile blacklands of Egypt during the New Kingdom period. The year is 1272 B.C. You step out onto the terrace of your magnificent home and breath in the warm evening air. As you gaze into the setting sun, or Amon as he is known, you feel a sense of pride at the fact that you have graduated from scribe school and that you are now a wealthy servant of pharaoh. "Well, not everyone can claim to work for a god. ", you chuckle to yourself. Suddenly, you awaken with a jerk. As you wipe the drool off your writing board, you realize to your disappointment that you are still in scribe school, learning to be a scribe. You look up to see your school master working with another student. A student sitting near you passes you a piece of papyrus with some writing on it.

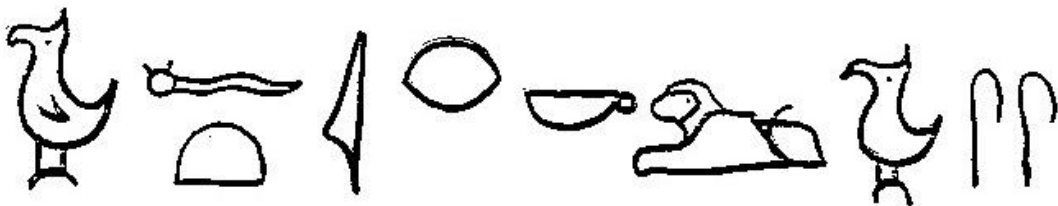
Do you?:

A) Accept the note

B) Ignore it and keep working

A) You take the note. You see the hieroglyphic writing and realize that you will have to translate it. You know that it will be difficult, because you have not yet mastered the sacred language. The following phrase is written on the note (Write the hieroglyphs from NOTE 1 on the board or overhead. Allow students time to translate):

Note 1 : "Meet me after class, behind temple."



Do you?

C) Meet him later

B) Throw the note away

B) You decide to keep working. Seconds later you are glad that you did, for without warning, the school master runs up to the student with the note and gives him a wallop with his cane. Yes, scribe students were dealt with harshly, but if you could graduate, what a life you could have! Wealth, servants, parties, and prestige were just a few of the rewards that awaited a dedicated scribe. You continue to work diligently, carefully printing your words on the rigid papyrus. Finally, after what seems like forever, the school master calls an end to the day's class. As you step outside into the dry desert air, you notice two older scribes writing in the sand. They seem noticeably disturbed.

Do you?

D) Walk home E) Walk near the scribes to see what's going on

C) You decide to meet him later, because it just sounds too intriguing. Minutes go by like hours, and every drip of the water clock takes an eternity. Finally, the master calls and end to the day's class. You dash outside, behind the temple to find out what is so important. The fig trees dance lightly in the desert breeze. Statues of Ptah, the god of craftsmen, adorn the temple gate. "Everyone is gone. ", you think to yourself. You wait for nearly an hour. "What a waste of time! "

Do you?

F) Continue to wait

D) Walk home

D) You decide to walk home. After all, enough is enough. As you stroll home, you watch as the crocodiles in the Nile river peer hungrily from the surface of the water. Their bulging eyes shine in the late afternoon sun. Along your path home, you see a curious sight. You see two older scribes, in the papyrus reeds near the water's edge. You quietly creep closer to listen in to their odd conversation. "Here's my gift to Khnum, god of the Nile. He just shouldn't have opened his big mouth. He knew too much anyway.", said the big, burly scribe. "Hey, its either us or him. ", said the smaller one, "This can be our offering to Sobek, the crocodile-god as well. Ha, ha, ha." "Now all we have to do is find his partner, the one he passed the note to." As you hear these final words, a sense of panic wells up from deep inside you. It is all you can manage not to gasp out loud.

Do you?

H) Confront the two scribes

l) Hide out

E) The scribes quickly leave as you approach. There is part of a hieroglyphic message written in the sand. It says the following: (Pass out the hieroglyphic decoder and write the hieroglyphs from SAND WRITING on the board or overhead. Allow students time to translate):

Sand Writing: "Stealing from Pharaoh . . . must not find out! "



GOTO D

F) After a while, you hear approaching footsteps. You spin around to give this scribe a piece of your mind, how dare he keep you waiting this long. To your shock, a priest of the temple of Ptah strides toward you. You quickly remove your sandals in the presence of your superior, as is customary. The priest's bald head glistens in the sunlight. "You are NOT permitted here, you must leave. The god must rest, he has heard too many prayers today. The temple is littered with votive tablets! ". "I'm sorry, I'm not here to pray. I'm simply waiting for . . . "GET OUT!! ", he cries. Oh well, I tried, you think to yourself.

GOTO D

H) You run toward the two scribes with clenched fists. "I'm the one you're looking for! ". Startled, the scribes look up, then begin to grin. As they look up, you look down at a large basket they are hoisting into the river. A lifeless hand protrudes from the crooked lid. You begin to wish that you had thought before you acted. Quick as lightning, the large scribe tackles you to the ground. The two of you slip and slide in the rich, dark mud along the river bank. As the larger one holds your wrists, the smaller one ties your hands and legs together. "So you're the one who knows that we've been stealing from pharaoh!". "No, no!", you protest, "I don't know anything!" "Oh, really? ", the larger one asks with a surprised look on his face. "Well, you do now! ", says the smaller one with an annoyed look on his face, "So its too late for you. By sunset you'll be passing through the field of reeds! " No need for explanation. You feel a sharp blow to the back of your head and the lights go out. . . . You awaken to a cold, wet nose in your face. A stray dog is obviously trying to wake you up. As you rise, to your amazement, you realize that this "dog" has the body of a human being. "Ah! I must be dead you think to yourself, and this must be the god Anubis. " Uh...oh... Could it be that the weighing of the heart is no myth after all? You think of all the good and bad deeds you had ever done while you were alive. Anubis holds you tight. He then removes your heart and places it on a large scale. A feather is balancing on the opposite side.

(Flip a coin. If students call the toss correctly, read WIN. If not, LOSE.)

WIN) Some kind soul must have placed a scarab beetle over your heart while you were embalmed. Thank Osiris, you think, otherwise you would have been in trouble. Thoth, the ibis-headed god of scribes and wisdom, records more good deeds than bad deeds and your heart at the end is lighter than the feather. Thoth then permits you to enter the afterlife and become one with Osiris and Ra.

THE END

LOSE) You must have drowned in the river! Obviously, there was no one to place a scarab over your heart. You listen in agony as your heart tells of one bad deed after another. Amit the devourer begins to lick his chops. At the end, Thoth, the ibis-headed god of scribes and wisdom, records more bad than good deed. The last sight you ever see is Amit lunging at you with his crocodile teeth gleaming. Your Ka, or soul, has been destroyed.

THE END

I) You decide to hide in the swaying reeds of papyrus. The scribes pass you, too busy to notice your presence. You silently slip over to the place where the two scribes were conversing. A large basket is slowly drifting away in the current.

Do you?

J) Swim out to the basket

K) Follow the scribes

J) You splash out to the basket. The water is a little chilly, but not overwhelmingly so. As you near the basket, you see a hand sticking out from the wicker lid. But wait! You hear groans from inside the basket! Maybe the person inside isn't dead after all! You reach for the basket and lift the lid. The person inside falls out, into the brisk water. He comes to, apparently unaware of his surroundings. Then you recognize him! He is the scribe who passed you the note in class. He tells you of a plot by the two older scribes to steal gold from pharaoh. The two of you swim to shore in Amon's golden rays of the setting sun. As you swim you begin to believe that your dreams of being a real scribe in pharaoh's court might some day in fact become a reality.

THE END

K) You follow the scribes. On the way you hear them talking about the young scribe student that they had just killed. They also discuss plans for capturing the other student who received the note. You suddenly make the connection that the scribe student they just killed was the one who passed you the note in class and that you are the "other" student. At this you become angry and do something rash.

GOTO I

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** Directions: After reading the adventure, discuss the questions below with the listeners.

1. During which time of the year did the people work on the Great Pyramids? Why do you think this was so?
2. What was the Egyptian form of writing called? How was it different from our modern alphabet?
3. Which river was essential to Egyptian life? What resources did the Egyptians get from this river?
4. Why were scribes held in such high regard in Egyptian society?
5. How was the Egyptian point of view of the Afterlife similar or dissimilar to modern points of view on the subject?

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