

Egyptian Numbers

The Ancient Egyptians had a way of writing numbers just as they had the hieroglyphic alphabet for letters.

Strokes were used for 1s.

1 = I 2 = II 3 = III 4 = IIII 5 = IIIII

These were used up to 10.

A hoop was used for a 10.

10 = Λ 20 = $\Lambda\Lambda$ 30 = $\Lambda\Lambda\Lambda$

A rope was used for a 100.

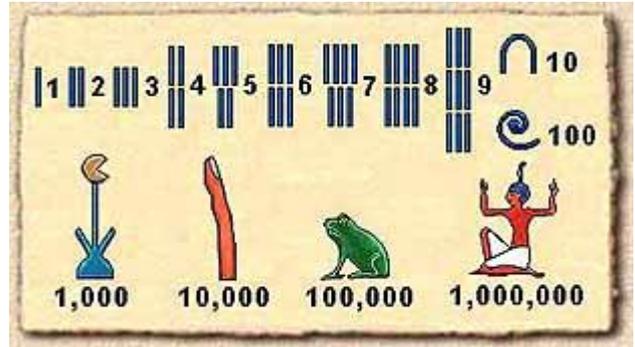
100 = ζ 200 = $\zeta\zeta$ 300 = $\zeta\zeta\zeta$

A lotus plant was used for 1000.

1000 = δ 2000 = $\delta\delta$ 3000 = $\delta\delta\delta$

The symbols were written in place order like we do with our numbers so you would write the thousands first, then the hundreds, then the tens and finally the ones.

14 = Λ IIII 37 = $\Lambda\Lambda$ IIIIIIII 114 = ζ Λ IIII 237 = $\zeta\zeta$ $\Lambda\Lambda$ IIIIIIII



Challenges –

Can you write these numbers using Egyptian symbols?

- 1) Your age
- 2) The number of players on a football team
- 3) The number of years in a century
- 4) The telephone number for the emergency services
- 5) This year

Activities

- 1) Write a coded message using hieroglyphs

The hieroglyphs are a bit like a code. Can you write a message in hieroglyphs for someone else to decode?

- 2) Create your own picture alphabet

The Ancient Egyptians chose plants and animals for most of their symbols. These were things that everyone knew and were familiar to them. Can you create your own picture alphabet? Draw something for each letter from A to Z. Remember that you don't want them to be too complicated if you are going to have to write them lots of times if using them for a message!

- 3) Make your own cartouche



Ancient Egyptians used to write the names of their royal families in an oval shape. In hieroglyphic texts, you often see signs enclosed in oval shapes, which are called **cartouches**.

To make your own cartouche you need to write your name in hieroglyphs. Use the alphabet above to help. When you have finished you should draw an oval around the outside and add a line at one end.

Think about how you can decorate your cartouche. Add colour and decoration around the outside.



Alternatively, you could make your cartouche out of salt dough.

Ingredients: salt, flour, water

- You can make salt dough using 3 ingredients (salt, flour and water). For every 1 spoon full of salt you need 2 spoons full of flour.
- Mix the salt and flour together.
- Add water slowly and stir. You won't need a lot of water.
- It should all come together and feel like playdough. If it is too sticky add more salt and flour.
- Make your dough into an oval shape and carve your name into it in hieroglyphs. You could use the end of a bbq skewer or a cocktail stick.
- If you would like it to be a pendant you should make a hole in the top before baking it.

Drying out salt dough takes a long time. Put them on a tray in the oven at 120 degrees. How long it takes will depend on the size of your pendant. The thinner it is the quicker it will dry.