

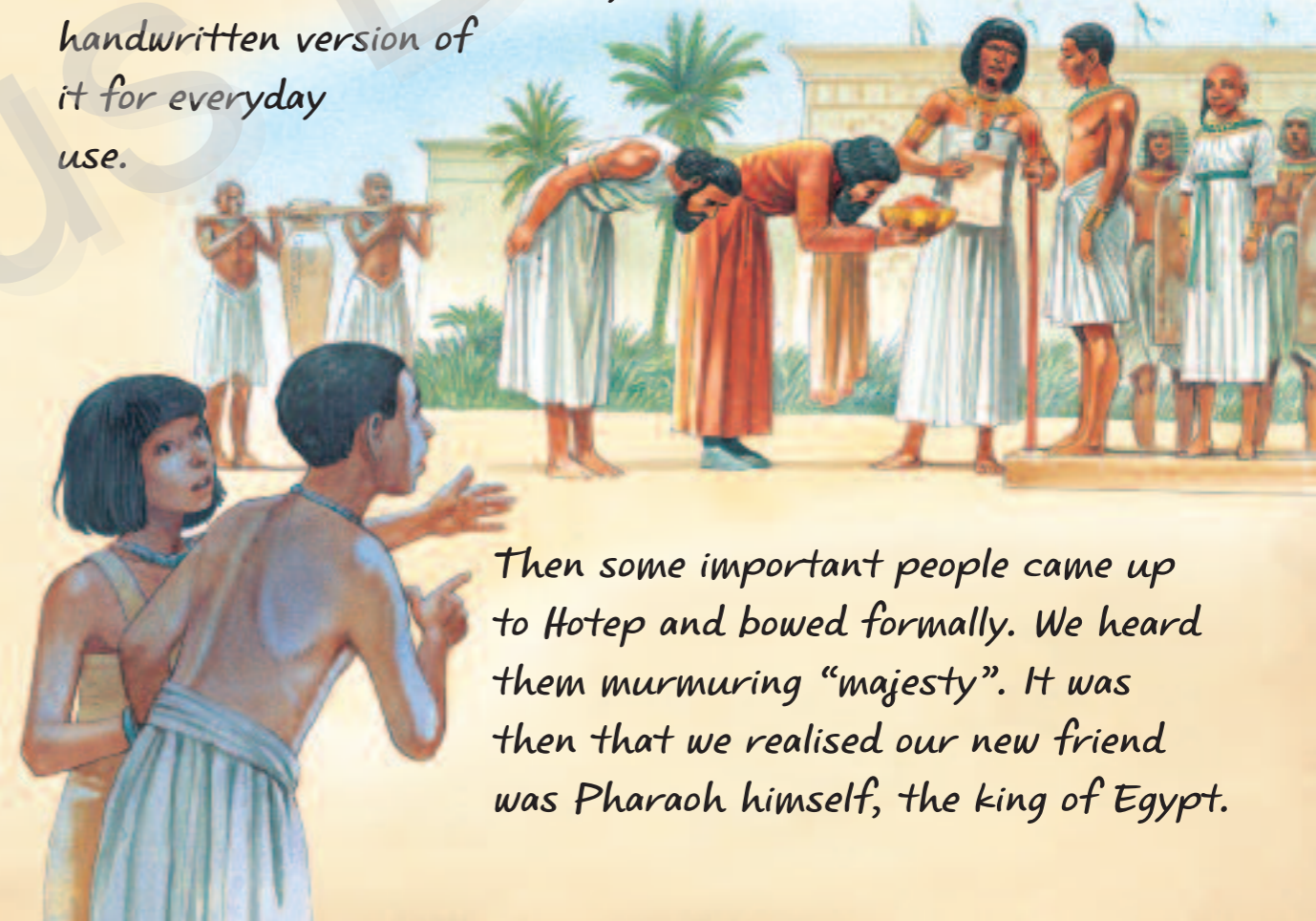


This was AWESOME! We hid behind one of the columns. How did we get here? What if we were spotted? Hey, maybe now we'd get to see the REAL pyramids! Just then a boy and a girl, just a little older than we are, popped their heads round the column. They gave us friendly, welcoming smiles. "Hi!" said the boy. "I'm Hotep and this is my sister Kimu. There's something going on at the palace today but it's no fun

for us kids. We need some cheering up. Wanna come with us?" Amazingly, we could understand their language, and they could understand us. They showed us around a vast complex. They even invited us to one of their lessons.



We wouldn't normally be so keen to do our lessons, but this was really fun! We sat with Hotep and Kimu around our teacher on mats made of reeds. Each of us had our own pens, palettes and inks. We learned to write hieroglyphs, the beautiful ancient Egyptian script. This kind of writing, the teacher told us, was for recording the events and great deeds in the lives of kings. They would be written on monuments and on the walls of tombs. We also learned a more ordinary handwritten version of it for everyday use.



Then some important people came up to Hotep and bowed formally. We heard them murmuring "majesty". It was then that we realised our new friend was Pharaoh himself, the king of Egypt.



HIEROGLYPHS

The ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphic script for writing on monuments and the walls of tombs. They used a simplified version, called hieratic, for everyday writing. Hieroglyphs are pictures of people, animals and objects, but most of them represented a sound. There are more than 700 of them. This chart shows the hieroglyphs that represent the simpler sounds—like the letters of our alphabet. There are also a few of the many that stand for part of a word.



GODS AND GODDESSES OF EGYPT

People in ancient Egypt believed that many different gods and goddesses ruled over every part of their lives. Some were thought to control natural events, such as the flooding of the River Nile each year. Others were believed to protect people in danger, for example women giving birth, or soldiers fighting in battle. National gods were worshipped in major cities and the largest temples, while local gods were only worshipped in certain towns or regions.

