

The Glint of Gold



A Tale of Ancient Egypt
by Gawen Robinson

The Glint of Gold

By Gawen Robinson

I hope this musical resource will make the study of Ancient Egyptians more interesting and fun for children by presenting the facts in a new and exciting manner. It is designed to be used as a starting point in conjunction with other resources, not instead of them. This project can be used in the classroom, for an assembly or for a full school production, incorporating any other work you may have done on the topic (paintings, designs, costumes and models etc).

On side one of the tape you will be able to sing along and learn the melodies, while side two can be used as a backing tape for your own performances (feel free to adapt it as you wish). The accompanying "lead sheets" are included to help you learn the melodies and will also enable you to add instrumental backing should you require it (Guitar chords are provided).

The Plot

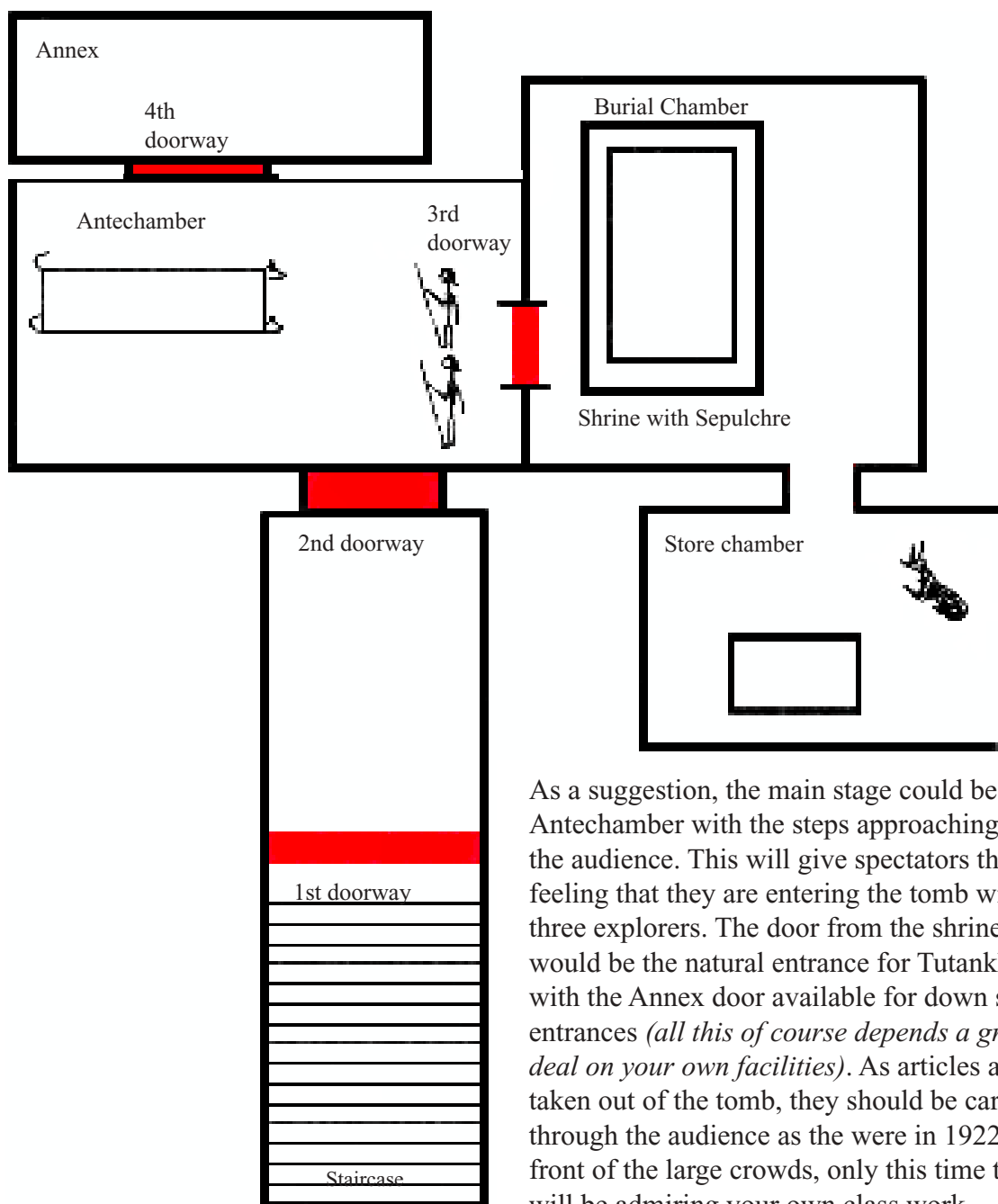
Set in November 1922, the story begins with Howard Carter's famous discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. Along with Lord Carnarvon and his daughter Lady Evelyn Herbert, Carter enters the tomb and is astounded by the treasures buried for over 3,000 years. Before long the visitors discover the story of this little known king through the writing on the walls of the tomb. These story telling pictures are called **hieroglyphs** and in our play they come to life, teaching us all about Ancient Egypt. King Tutankhamun, who had rested in peace for thousands of years, is now awakened and with our help needs to learn part of the "Book of the Dead" before he can join his father (The god **Osiris**) among the stars. In the meantime however, we learn all about hieroglyphs, Queen Hatshepsut, Egyptian society, the gods and pyramids.

The Characters and Costumes

Howard Carter:	A large moustache, trilby hat, suit, waistcoat & bow tie.
Lord Carnarvon:	Similar to Carter but he used a walking stick.
Lady Evelyn Herbert:	Large, round rimmed, 1920s hat. Long coat.
Hieroglyphs 1 to 8:	Any you can find. Posed sideways with eyes facing audience
Tutankhamun:	Blue & yellow head-dress, necklace & bracelets. False beard. White loin cloth, gold belt and sandals. Flail & crook.
2 Guards:	Gold head-dress, necklace & loin cloth. Holding spears.
Servant:	White cloth, possibly carrying a basket on head.
Farmer:	White loin cloth, holding a farming tool.
3 Craftsmen:	White loin cloth, holding a blow pipe or hammer
1. Metalworker:	White loin cloth, holding a needle and piece of cloth
2. Weaver:	White loin cloth, holding a hammer and nail.
3. Carpenter:	Full white robe, holding jewellery, spices or fine cloth.
Merchant:	White cloth. Would be seated crossed legged with papyrus.
Scribe:	White robe, some jewellery. Holding a scroll.
Politician:	(Same as Tutankhamun)
Pharaoh:	Dressed the same as a male Pharaoh including false beard!
Hatshepsut:	White robes, head-dresses, each holding one of the 3 pictures or objects
3 Hand maidens:	Jackal headed man (Black mask). Colourful lower costume.
Anubis:	Tall white crown (Either white for upper Egypt or Atef type flanked by 2 ostrich feathers). Green skin, tight white robe.
Osiris:	Loose fitting green or brown robes. Light turban/head-dress.
Modern Egyptians:	Can be made up however you like. Could be cast members.
Chorus Singers/Musicians:	

Plan of Tutankhamun's Tomb

From the diagram below you can follow Howard Carter's steps as he discovers each room in turn. You can also plan your stage set should you wish to put on a production of the musical. Carter's team came across the staircase on November 4th 1922 and by the next day had made their way to the first doorway where they made out the name "Tutankhamun". Three weeks later, upon the arrival of benefactor Lord Carnarvon, the outer door was cleared and the digging continued. They soon uncovered a passage blocked with rubble and on November 26th came upon a second, sealed doorway. This led to the Antechamber of an entirely unspoiled tomb of this relatively unknown Pharaoh. With trembling hands, Howard Carter made a tiny breach in the door and as the mist from the escaping hot air settled he could see everywhere, "the glint of gold". Upon being asked what he saw he simply answered "wonderful things".



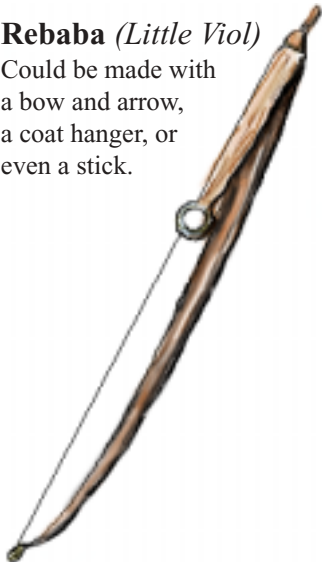
As a suggestion, the main stage could be the Antechamber with the steps approaching from the audience. This will give spectators the feeling that they are entering the tomb with the three explorers. The door from the shrine room would be the natural entrance for Tutankhamun, with the Annex door available for down stage entrances (*all this of course depends a great deal on your own facilities*). As articles are taken out of the tomb, they should be carried through the audience as the were in 1922 in front of the large crowds, only this time they will be admiring your own class work.

Instruments for your Egyptian Band

Despite their serious image, the Egyptians loved music making and dancing. The instruments below were played by people from all walks of life, from farmers to princesses. By adapting and decorating your own instruments, as well as by making simple replicas, you could have a small band to mime and play along with the songs. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Rebaba (*Little Viol*)

Could be made with a bow and arrow, a coat hanger, or even a stick.



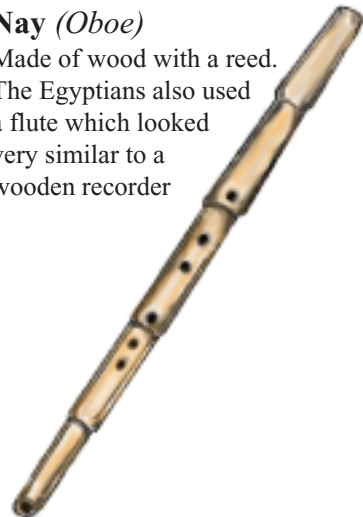
Darraboukah (*Finger drum*)

Either an existing drum or from a toilet roll and plastic bowl etc.



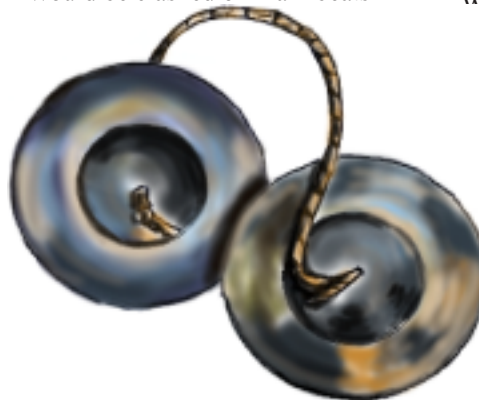
Nay (*Oboe*)

Made of wood with a reed. The Egyptians also used a flute which looked very similar to a wooden recorder.



Cymbals (*Bronze*)

Would be clashed on main beats



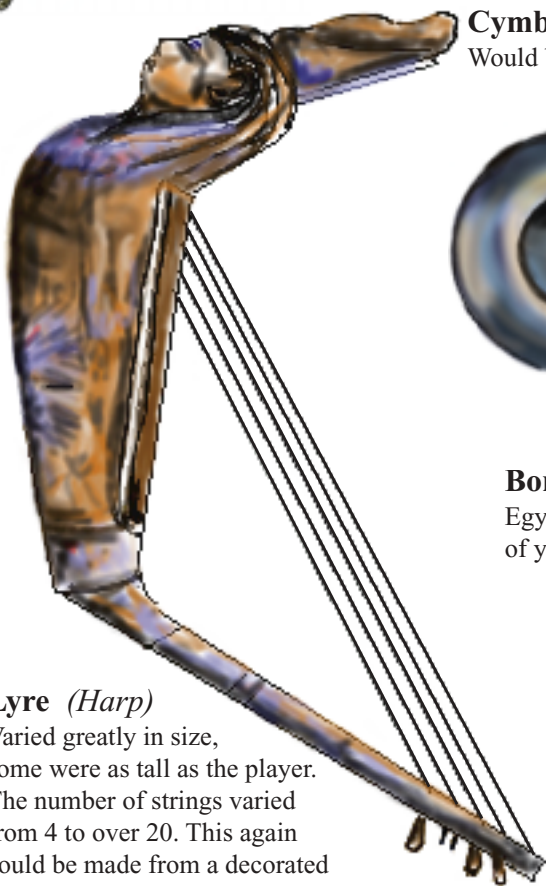
Sistrum (*Sacred rattle*)

Was used mostly in religious ceremonies by noblewomen and priestesses to honour the goddess of music and joy Hathor.



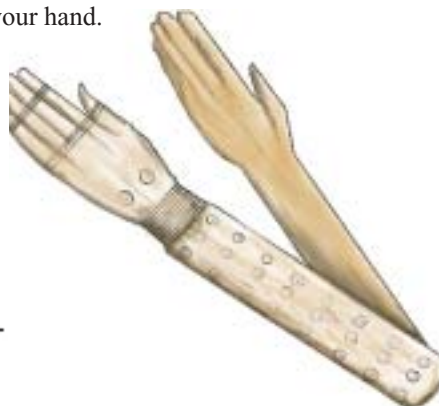
Lyre (*Harp*)

Varied greatly in size, some were as tall as the player. The number of strings varied from 4 to over 20. This again could be made from a decorated coat hanger with strings.



Bone Clappers (*Papyrus*)

Egyptian Castanets. Played in the palm of your hand.



Scene 1 *The opening of the tomb.*

In November 1922 Howard Carter and his team of archaeologists, after many years searching, came across an undisturbed Egyptian tomb. This turned out to be one of the most important finds of all time revealing unseen wonders and treasures. It was the tomb of the young, little known Pharaoh, Tutankhamun.

Music 1 *The March of the Kings*

(This dramatic music describes the moment when the great stone doorway was removed from the tomb. Howard Carter looks into the antechamber while the others follow close behind).

Lord Carnarvon: What can you see, Howard ?

Carter: *(Amazed)* Wonderful things!

(They move into the Antechamber where they find a gold bed, carved chariots, ebony and ivory stools, decorative vases and linen robes all in disarray. A number of figures (hieroglyphs) are placed around the walls in various positions, they are still but slowly come to life observing the intruders in their tomb).

Carnarvon: It's incredible! You were right Howard, the tomb of a forgotten Pharaoh and completely undisturbed.

Carter: Not completely, these treasures have been stacked up, probably by thieves shortly after the funeral. They obviously intended to come back but thankfully something stopped them.

Lady Evelyn Herbert: You mean there were thieves about three thousand years ago.

Hieroglyph 1: *(Without moving)* Too right my friend !

Carnarvon: Who said that?

(Suddenly, four hieroglyphs turn around. The explorers are shocked).

Carter: Who are you ?

Hieroglyph 2: We are called hieroglyphs.

Carnarvon: Pardon ?

Hieroglyph 3: Figures that were used to tell a story.

Hieroglyph 4: The very earliest kind of writing.

Lady Evelyn: How many of you are there?

Hieroglyph 1: Over seven hundred altogether

Music 2 The Story tellers

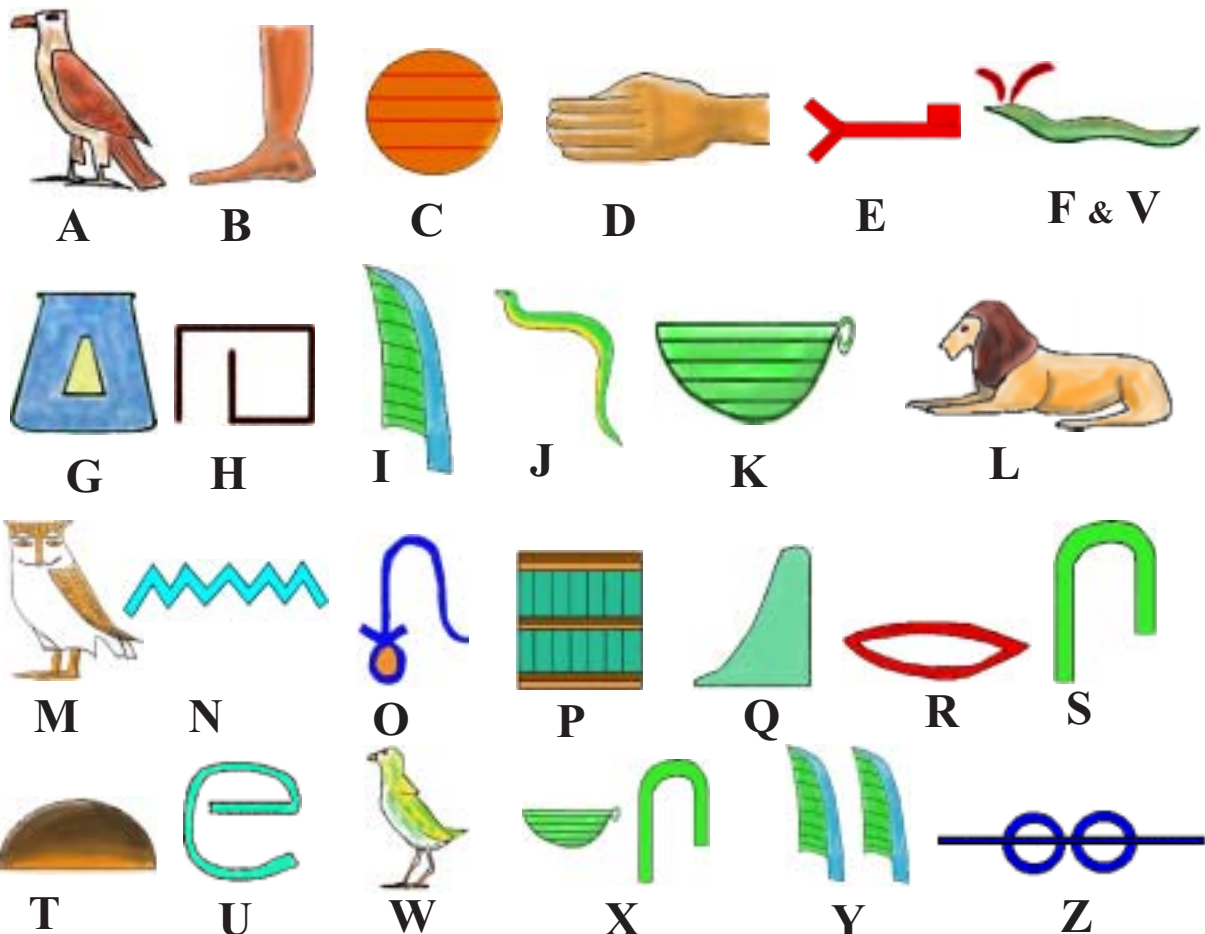
Hieroglyphs: The stories we tell from a time long ago,
were carved all around in stone.
Like pictures these words tell a thousand tales,
of the greatest race ever known.

We'll show you the Pharaohs that ruled this land,
the gods that reigned on high.
We are the storytellers, so know our name,
the hieroglyphs never lie.

Written by scribes for the eyes of the great,
on temples that rose so tall.
So few shared the secret, that was our fate.
The writing was on the wall.

Hieroglyphs

The earliest kind of writing is called **hieroglyphic** and was found upon the great monuments of Ancient Egypt. Dating back around 5000 years and with over 700 symbols to read, this writing remained a mystery to scholars until 1822, when a young Frenchman called Champollion finally cracked the code. In 1799 some French soldiers had found a stone dating 196 BC which had been inscribed by priests in three different languages. As well as hieroglyphs, they had used **Greek** and **Demotic** (a surviving Egyptian style) and this, after several efforts, proved to be the key in unlocking this forgotten language. The "**Rosetta Stone**" remains in the British Museum. Here are a few hieroglyphs which sound roughly like letters from our own alphabet. See if you can learn them.



Carnarvon: 700 letters! Now that's what I call an Alphabet !

Carter: Can you tell us the story of this Pharaoh Tutankhamun?
We know almost nothing at all about him.

Hieroglyph 3: *(moving closer)* Don't tell him we told you,
but he really wasn't all that important.

Hieroglyph 4: To tell you the truth he was only nine years old when he became
King. Ten years later he was dead !

Lady Evelyn: Oh dear! How did he die?

Hieroglyph 1: Well let's just say there were a few people who wanted him out
the way.

Hieroglyph 2: *(Weeping)* Poor lad, told what to do by those priests all his life.
He even had to marry his own sister just to keep the throne safe.

Carter: So he never really had time to achieve anything.

Hieroglyph 1: No, apart from rebuilding the temple of the old god 'Amun Ra'
at **Karnak**.

Hieroglyph 4: Which had been destroyed by his father, **Akhenaten**.

Hieroglyph 3: *(Looking round nervously)* Sh ! I can hear something moving.

Tutankhamun: *(Unseen)* Who disturbs me from my rest !!

Hieroglyph 2: *(Worried)* Oh no ! Now we've done it !

Carnarvon: What was that ?

Hieroglyph 3: We've woken him up

Hieroglyph 4: It's King Tutankhamun!!

(Tutankhamun walks between his 2 guards. He is busy unwrapping bandage from himself. The hieroglyphs run back to their places while Carter and his team bow their heads in reverence).

Carter: Your majesty, please forgive this intrusion.

Tutankhamun: *(Impressed by his manners)* No need to grovel. Who are you ?

Carter: My name is Howard Carter and this is Lord Carnarvon.
We are here to find out more about you and your people sir.
Can you help us?

(Tutankhamun starts to sing, telling his tale)

Music 3 The Boy King

Tutankhamun: I was sealed in this Tomb for all eternity,
when I was just a boy.
And now I'm revealed so you can learn from me
with treasures I could not enjoy.

The graves all around were raided long before,
by thieves in the 'Valley of the Kings'.
So I am the one that you've been waiting for
and now at last the Pharaoh sings.

Chorus: Don't believe everything that Tutankhamun tells you.
He was just a minor king.
Ramesses and Cleopatra, Menes and Khufu,
all did much more than him.

Just because the others are gone
doesn't make you the mighty one.

Tutankhamun: Lying in a desert under the sun,
isn't my idea of fun.

Chorus: Tutankhamun there's no harm in dreaming of glory,
Come out and tell us more.
There's no charm in us embalming you for this story
What's all that bandage for ?

Tutankhamun: At nine years old I became a king.

Chorus: A mummy at nineteen, there's a thing !

Tutankhamun: Powerful priests make dangerous friends

Chorus: A bang on the head and your story ends

Nefertiti wrote graffiti on the temples of Aten,
that's how we know her name.
The pyramids of Giza never could be forgotten,
now it's your turn for fame

Tutankhamun: Uh huh huh. Oh ho !
Oh yeah, I'm all wrapped up !

Chorus: Uh huh huh, oh ho, oh yeah,
HE'S ALL WRAPPED UP !!

(Four new hieroglyphs appear from Tutankhamun's shrine, they take over the story).

Tutankhamun: Well it feels great to be out again
(Picking up some bandage). Anyone got a bad leg ?

Hieroglyph 5: Please be serious your majesty !

Tutankhamun: You sound just like Ay !

Carnarvon: Who is this Ay ?

Tutankhamun: *(Bitterly)* Vizier, head of government and general all round busy body. I couldn't even take a bath without his say so.

Carter: And have you any idea what happened to him ?
(Tutankhamun shakes his head)

Hieroglyph 6: If you would allow me your majesty. After your erm..... how shall I put this, erm death, Ay became Pharaoh.

Tutankhamun: What ??

Hieroglyph 7: It's true sir, he took your throne, your wife, and eventually your intended tomb.

Hieroglyph 5: Although all his plotting came to nothing as he only survived another four years.

Tutankhamun: Well, that's one in the eye for him ! *(Everyone groans)*

Lady Evelyn: *(Picking up a stick)* Your majesty, What did you need this boomerang for?

Tutankhamun: *(delighted)* Oh you've found it!
My favourite one, I've been looking everywhere for that.
(Takes it off her and looks at it)

Hieroglyph 6: It was used for Fowling.

Lady Evelyn: Fowling ?

Hieroglyph 6: Yes, it was a sport mainly for the wealthy.
(Acting it out) First you would sail along the banks of the River Nile in a boat, then your cat would jump up and disturb the birds from the bushes.

Hieroglyph 7: That's when you struck with your "throw-stick".

Tutankhamun: Oh yes, those were the days, it was almost as good as ostrich hunting.
We'd feast on our kill and praise the god of the Nile.

Hieroglyph 8: Hapy !

Tutankhamun: Yes thank you !!