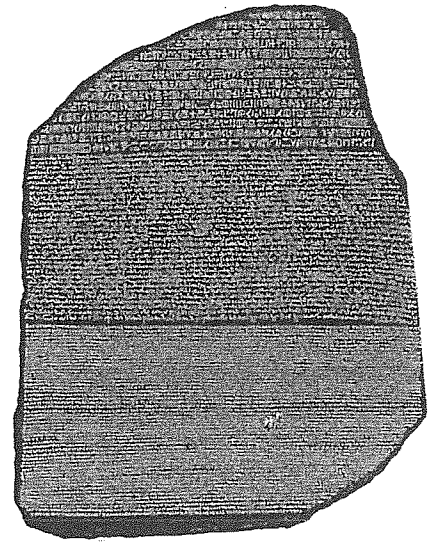


# The **Rosetta** Stone

The Rosetta Stone is a stele, a piece of stone with writing on it. It was discovered by French soldiers in Napoleon's army when he invaded Egypt. The basalt slab was found in the town of Rosetta (now Rashid) in 1799. What has come to be called the Rosetta Stone was written on March 27, 196 B.C.



Carved into the stone was a decree praising King Ptolemy V. What was written on the stone was not of great importance, but the way it was written was very important! The Rosetta Stone has the same information in three different languages: Egyptian hieroglyphics; Demotic (a late form of hieroglyphics), and the third section was written in Greek. When the stone was found

in 1799, no one knew how to read hieroglyphs or Demotic, but they could read ancient Greek. Although people tried, no one was able to figure out the meaning of the Egyptian writing.

Finally, though, a French expert in languages was able to unlock the key to the translation. Jean-François Champollion was able to read Coptic, Arabic, and Hebrew, three languages related to Egyptian. Using his background and the conclusion that all three passages said the same thing, he figured out the sounds for each the hieroglyphs. He then could identify the characters of the Egyptian alphabet, along with the fact that some hieroglyphs stood for whole words. Amazingly in 1822, Champollion became the first person in 1500 years to be able to read the language of the ancient Egyptians.

Based on your study of Ancient Egypt, explain why Champollion's discovery was so important.

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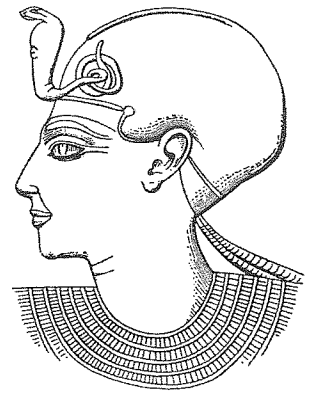


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# PHARAOH FOR A DAY



**DIRECTIONS:** Based on the Rosetta Stone, scholars learned that cartouches (decorative panel) like the one below were used in hieroglyphics to indicate the name of a pharaoh or possibly some other member of the royal family. Use the hieroglyphic alphabet to write your own name in the cartouche. **NOTE** that hieroglyphics are written from right to left.

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

