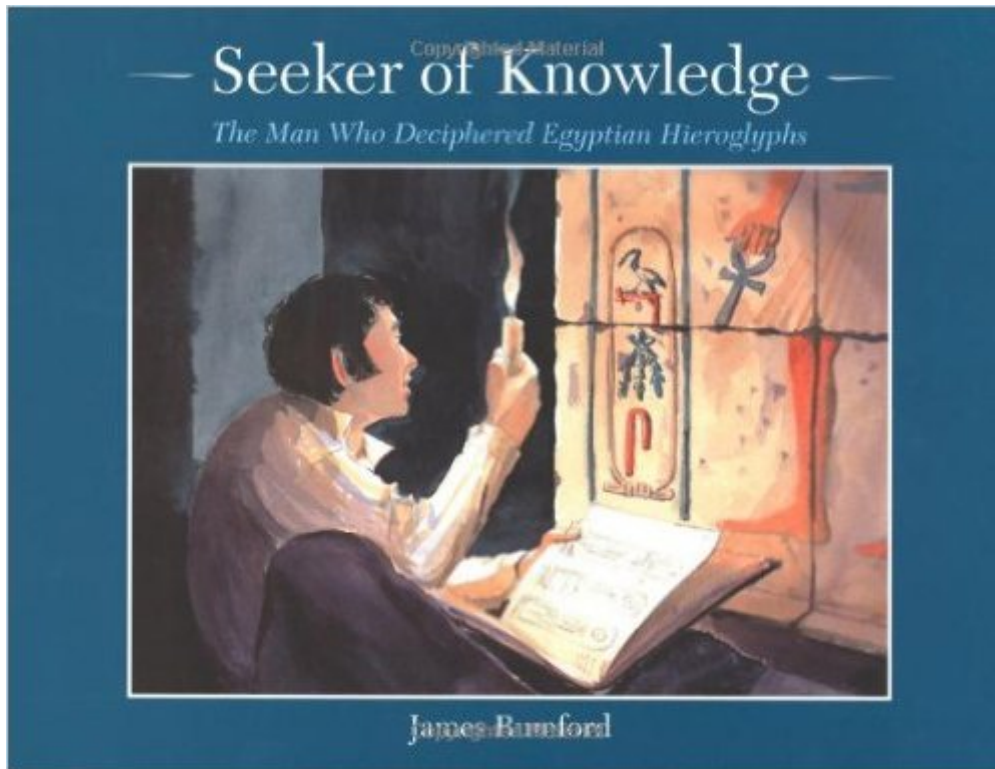


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# Seeker Of Knowledge: The Man Who Deciphered Egyptian Hieroglyphs



## Synopsis

To a child, the future is a magnificent dream. For Jean-Francois Champollion, the dream was to sail up the Nile in Egypt and uncover the secrets of the past. In 1802, when Champollion was eleven years old, he vowed to be the first person to read Egypt's ancient hieroglyphs. He faced great challenges over the next twenty years as he searched for the elusive key to the mysterious writing -- and the fulfillment of his dreams.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 720L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Product Dimensions: 11 x 0.1 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (18 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Remember the first books you read? How the puzzling out of the symbols was as exciting as the story? This evocative book by James Rumford revisits that experience. He interweaves text and images to let us know how meaning can be discovered. It's a little like reading a mystery story made up of pictographic clues. In structuring the story this way, Rumford is giving us the chance to do many things: relive our discovery of reading, learn the logic of a unique language, and imagine ourselves in the position of that of the subject of this book, the man who deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphs, Jean-Francois Champollion. Rumford's message is also a layered one, with the moral of the story reinforced by images within it. The moral: be curious, passionate and patient. First, imagine your dream. Then, pursue your dream even if others laugh at you or think you are too

young. Eventually your belief in your dream will affect others, too, just as Jean-Francois's brothers were affected. They bought him notebooks for his hieroglyphs and took him to Paris to meet Egyptian scholars. The structure of the Egyptian language, Rumford reveals, was in a curious combination of sight and sound. His telling of the tale made me wonder at all the steps the young Champollion went through to arrive at his eventual illumination of Egyptian hieroglyphics' meaning. When his powerful patron was discredited, when hours of study still revealed no answer, still he would not give up. At the end of the book, Rumford's last watercolor illustration (he is both author and artist) is evocative of the story. I could feel the colors of Egypt, and the birds that inspired the symbols used in the language.

Age Recommendation: 7-11; Children begin to get interested in informational books and past events around first or second grade. The main character is seven years old in the beginning of the novel, which makes it easy for a seven year old to relate to him. He grows to eleven, sixteen and then thirty throughout the book. Summary: Seeker of Knowledge: The Man who Deciphered Egyptian Hieroglyphs begins with a brief history lesson about the Egyptians. This is an informational picture book about Jean-Francois Champollion, the man who deciphered the Egyptian hieroglyphs and founded Egyptology. He was born in 1790, and with his brother's support he started studying Egypt. When Champollion was sixteen, and graduated from school, he was rejected from joining the scholars studying the Rosetta Stone. He was friendly with Napoleon, which ended up making his life difficult after Napoleon was defeated. In 1822, Champollion was sent a package from his friend in Egypt with the final clue he needed to solve the ancient riddle of the hieroglyphs. He almost killed himself from starvation and neglect while solving this final clue, but ended up being okay. Afterwards, he was sent to Egypt for a few years to uncover more secrets. Critical Review: Rumford begins with a brief introduction to Egyptian history. This sets the context for hieroglyphs, which were the characters used for writing in ancient Egypt. Additionally, after some of the words (e.g. bird, Thoth) there is a hieroglyph that represents that word. There is a glossary of terms at the conclusion of the book. The picture book jumps to important moments of Jean-Francois Champollion's life, and shows a close relationship with his brother. The illustrations capture and complement the text.

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