

សន្តិភាព

和平

שלום

शान्ति

•H.O.

へいわ | 平和

խաղաղուրթիւն

سلام

ဂဏှံ

PAX

ειρήνη

Writing Peace

მშვიდობა

สันติภาพ

МІСН

МИР

ഹൃദയം

ᠮᠢᠰᠢᠨ



Hòa Bình

평화

V.A. 𑂣𑂲

ལྷན་སྐྱོད།

ཞི་བདེ།



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz
International Programme for
a Culture of Peace and Dialogue

Writing Peace

សន្តិភាព

和平

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

शांति

◉𑌕◉

〜いわ | 平和

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

سلام

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

평화

ειρήνη

Hòa Bình

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

ສັນຕິພາບ

МИР

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

V.A.M

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇



PAX

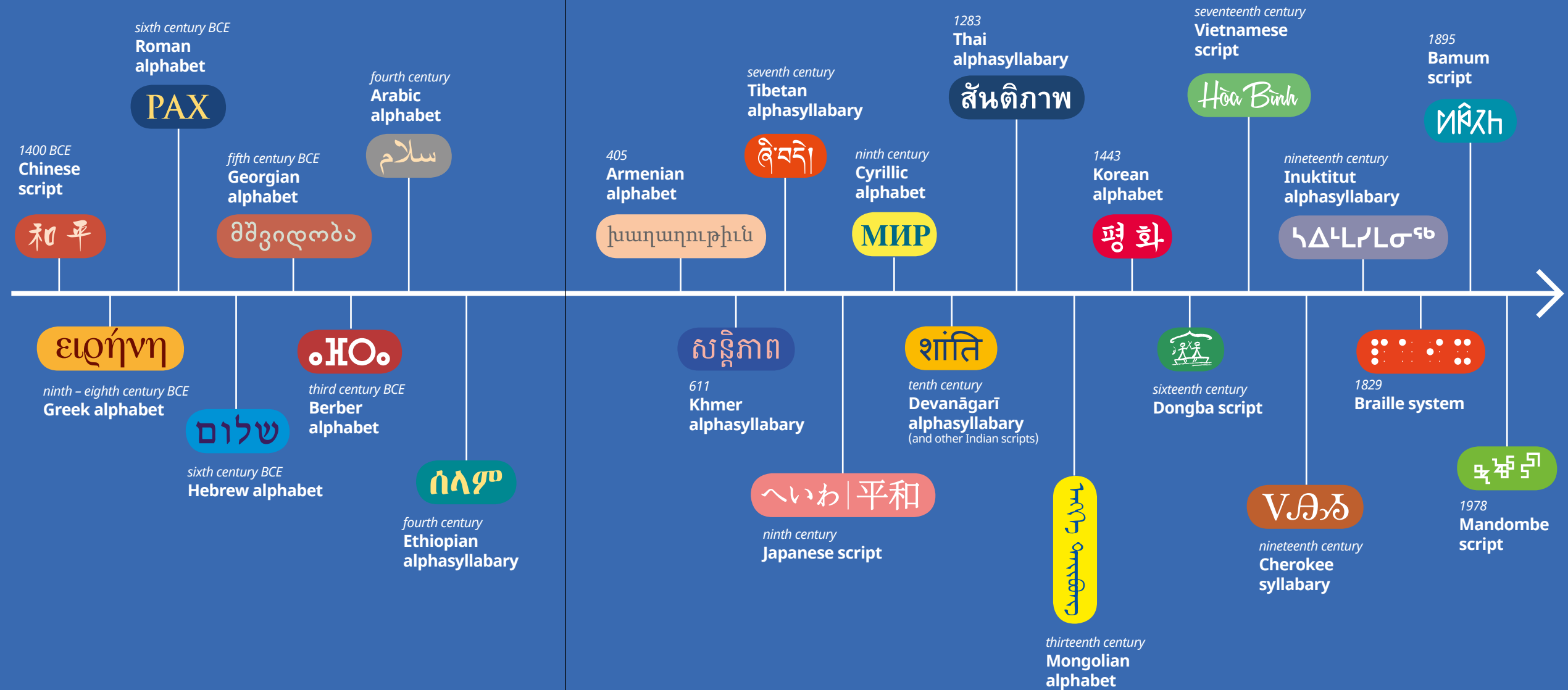


𑌕𑌆𑌇𑌇

Introduction

Writing. Writing a note, a speech or a love letter. Writing on a scrap of paper, writing on stone. Writing with the point of a pen or brush, or with a keyboard. Every time, writing is a special experience. Have we sometimes forgotten that fact? When we write, every one of us follows the path of civilization, the journey of time which has revolutionized human history through the ages by placing it in a medium, thereby passing it on to future generations. Let us remember...

Some 35,000 years ago, our ancestors began making signs on cave walls. Shapes appeared, particularly those of living beings in their environment: mammoths, woolly rhinoceros, ibex... and sometimes even stranger signs which have not yet been interpreted. Not all experts agree that those signs were "writing". Nonetheless, a magic had begun; later, the advent of cities, trade and commerce would lead to the need to keep records. That was how organized, assembled and combined sets of signs



Various current ways of writing "peace"

emerged in various places. Almost 6,000 years ago, writing appeared in Mesopotamia when that land “between rivers” saw the invention of a tool which would transform our relationship with the world. The new phenomenon was everywhere: in commerce and accounting, of course, as well as in areas such as science, medicine, religion and the arts. This was the beginning of a new adventure of the mind, ideas, knowledge and emotion, which we have inherited.

A great variety of systems came into being. Some people depicted concrete shapes; others sought to write ideas; yet others chose to represent sounds. Some combined those approaches. Successive pictography, ideography and phonography systems multiplied. People began to write on anything which was available in a given environment and historical period: clay, papyrus, parchment, paper, bamboo... Brushes, quills, reeds and styluses were used. Human inventive-

ness flourished everywhere. At the same time, quantities of written texts, whether on tablets, sheets or scrolls, accumulated and prestigious libraries were established. A history of the transmission of written texts started, precious and fragile.

A little later, a decisive step was taken with the invention of printing, whether Chinese, Korean or European, leading to unparalleled dissemination of written texts, which became more widespread and accessible and less costly. The sharing of knowledge and ideas followed until a more recent upheaval gave it an even greater boost: the development of digital technology.

It would take a whole lifetime and several libraries to detail the innumerable chapters in the history of writing, its experiments, its mysteries and the changes it brought about and to count the people who took part and its consequences in the many places where it

unfolded. To understand it would require sitting in the world’s classrooms, looking over the shoulders of poets and plunging into scholarly pages covered in equations and codes.

Our attention is, however, drawn to writing in this instance by another reason, another motive. Its origin lies in the “Writing Peace” exhibition which was opened on 21 September 2012, the International Day of Peace. A glorious tribute to the writing systems of the world, the exhibition also engendered a need, an expectation: not only to display that diversity but to familiarize us with it, to bring it closer and make it more alive. That was the source of the idea for the present document.

We have thought about how we could help the reader to get to know the basics of several writing systems. How we could, in future, be able to decipher signs as varied as those in Bangkok, Moscow, New Delhi,

Addis Ababa or Athens; how we might become able to write our names and addresses or a note necessary for our communication. Gradually, this book came into being, giving the reader an opportunity to discover the variety of our scripts and provide a concrete introduction to just over 20 different systems.

Naturally, this can be only a hint, a beginning, given the scale of the work required truly to learn so many scripts. Nonetheless, we hope that this initial action will provide support in our desire to prolong and extend this project. Who knows, each of these small steps might add up to a more significant mosaic, an unending journey through the beauty of the world and a source of peace.

We wish you good writing!

“From country to country, languages differ but the sight of the Moon is the same and the hearts of men are one!”

Ki no Tsurayuki (872-945)

How to read the description of a writing system...

This page shows how each script will be presented in this document.

Reminder of the "Writing Peace" exhibition

Korean alphabet
1443

Title giving the name of the script and its date of origin (invention or creation)

Introductory text

An incredible decision: to adopt a new writing system! This is what King Sejong brought about, with all the consequences that would result. A crucial time in the history of Korean culture.

Vowels, consonants, syllables, pictograms, ideograms... what are the signs which make up this writing system? Here we discover the main elements of the writing systems (such as alphabets and syllabaries). If they are too numerous, we provide some examples and use this sign to point out that there are more.

To put together the various syllables, Hangul mainly uses 14 basic consonants and 10 basic vowels.

한글
Hangul

There are 16 other letters which have to be added, such as "pp" 께, "e" 에 or "wa" 와. These phonological elements are known as *jamo*.

vowels

consonants

Consonants and vowels are put together to reflect various sounds.

평화
pyeonghwa

For example, the syllable **평** *pyeong* is a combination of **ㅍ** "p", **ㅕ** "yeo" and **ㅇ** "ng".

The syllable **화** "hwa" is a combination of **ㅎ** "h" and **와** "wa".

Peace

How do we say the word "peace" and, most importantly, how is it written? We show the written form and any breakdown into smaller elements.

안녕하세요
annyeonghaseyo

>Hello in Korean is **안녕하세요**, the word for "hello".

The word "hello" is a wonderful ambassador for meeting people. Here we consider the word and its possible variations.

Hello

조선글
joseongeul

To commemorate its creation, people in the Republic of Korea celebrate their writing system on 9 October. There is an equivalent festival in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea (PDRK) every 15 January. In the PDRK, the script is referred to as *joseongeul* (or *chosŏn'gŭl*).

Languages

Hangul is used for transcribing the Korean language, *hanguk-eo*, which is quite difficult to associate with any language family.

한국어
hanguk-eo

With what languages is this script associated? To what families do those languages belong?

Some examples of words (common or proper nouns)

세종대왕
sejongdaewang
(King Sejong)

History

The Korean alphabet was created by King Sejong in 1443. It was *King Sejong's* decision to create the Korean alphabet which is why he still holds an important place in the hearts of Koreans.

What do we know of the history of this script? We set out to discover its creation and evolution.

An interesting fact

The Korean alphabet is recognized for its ability to reflect the sounds of the language accurately. It is said that this accuracy was achieved by studying the movements of the speech organs such as the tongue, lips and teeth in order to draw the letters, as we can see in the two examples opposite.

A detail, an anecdote, an interesting fact? There are plenty of stories in the history of writing systems.

Now that the system, as well as the languages with which it is associated, have been introduced, will you undertake the challenge of writing in it? The Workshop is an invitation to practise this script, looking forward to continuing to learn it.

Workshop
20-30 minutes

As we have seen, to assemble a syllable in Korean is to put together consonants and vowels within a small square, placing them on the left or right and on the upper or lower level.

- Create a table with 10 lines and two columns.
- Fill in the first column with the following 10 syllables.
- In the second column, match them up with the following 10 syllables, which correspond to the numbers from 1 to 10, by consulting the alphabet on the left-hand page.

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

Answers on p.66.

The answers can be found on the page indicated.

Contents

Introduction	4-7
Explanatory graph	8-9
Contents	10-11

1. Chinese script	12-15		13. Cyrillic alphabet	38-39
2. Greek alphabet	16-17		14. Devanāgarī alphasyllabary (and other Indian scripts)	40-43
3. Roman alphabet	18-19		15. Thai alphasyllabary	44-45
4. Hebrew alphabet	20-21		16. Mongolian alphabet	46-47
5. Georgian alphabet	22-23		17. Korean alphabet	48-49
6. Berber alphabet	24-25		18. Dongba script	50-51
7. Arabic alphabet	26-27		19. Vietnamese script	52-53
8. Ethiopian alphasyllabary	28-29		20. Cherokee syllabary	54-55
9. Armenian alphabet	30-31		21. Inuktitut alphasyllabary	56-57
10. Khmer alphasyllabary	32-33		22. Braille system	58-59
11. Tibetan alphasyllabary	34-35		23. Bamum script	60-61
12. Japanese script	36-37		24. Mandombe script	62-63

Workshop answers	64-67
Glossary	68-69
Index	70-71





Chinese script

1,400 B.C.

Exceptional! This is the most appropriate description of the Chinese script, given its system and the number of its components. It is the most ancient script still in use, so it is also exceptional in its longevity! We will make it the first stage in our journey, to understand how it works and learn some of its signs. Who knows, we might develop a taste for it.



orchid



year

dragon

turtle



map

garden

joy, music



shellfish

floor

war

和, 平, 你, 好, 您... : Chinese script* comprises a large number of characters, each of which corresponds to one syllable* and to a number of meanings. To master this script, one must know several thousand such characters; 3,000 of them would be a good basic grounding. However, there are actually several tens of thousands of them! It should also be noted that each character comprises a number of "strokes", drawn in a specific order. For example, 和 has eight strokes and 平 has five. So that we can learn to discover them, we will examine several characters broken down into strokes.

Chinese punctuation has a number of specific characteristics: the full stop (period) [。], for example, is written as a small circle [。].

Peace

"Peace" is written 和平 in Chinese and pronounced *héping*. It consists of two characters, 和 *hé*, meaning "harmony", "concord", and 平 *píng*, "flat", "calm".



héping

Hello

Similarly, "hello" is formed in Chinese by combining the characters 你 *nǐ*, meaning "you" and 好 *hǎo*: "good, well". For greater politeness, we can use *nín hǎo*. One just adds a little heart 心 beneath the first character in order to write *nín* 您, which can be compared with "vous", the polite form of address in French.

你好

nǐ hǎo

您好

nín hǎo



Languages

Throughout its history, Chinese script has been used for writing a variety of languages: *the Chinese languages*, of course, including *Mandarin*, the official language of the People's Republic of China, but also

Korean, Vietnamese and Japanese. The Chinese language is referred to by several names. It can be called 中文, *zhōngwén* (*zhōng* denotes China, which is itself referred to as *zhōngguó*, the

中文

zhōngwén

"country 国 of the middle 中"). Chinese can also be referred to as 汉语 *hànyǔ*, which means the "language of the Han". The Han people make up 90% of the population of China. The other 10% comprises 55 "national minorities" (see *Nakhi*). Chinese characters themselves are referred to as 汉字 *hànzì*, meaning "characters of the Han".

汉语

hànyǔ

A characteristic of the Chinese language is that it has four tones (and a neutral tone); the meaning of a word can be completely different, depending on the tone. For example, on the syllable "ma" 妈 *mā* (flat tone) means "mother", 麻 *má* (rising tone) denotes "hemp" and 马 *mǎ* (falling then rising tone) is "horse". Lastly, 骂 *mà* (falling tone) means "to insult". We could also add 吗 *ma* (neutral tone), a final interrogative particle ... without thinking of all the other possible "ma"s!

Chinese script has constantly evolved. For some characters, there are two forms, one "traditional"* and the other "simplified"*. For example, here is the "horse" in the two systems, pronounced *mǎ*.

馬

traditional

马

simplified

The transcription of Chinese into the Roman alphabet is called *pinyin**, which means "assembling sounds". It dates back to 1958. Other systems have been invented in the past, such as *Wade-Giles* and *Bopomofo*.

拼音

pīnyīn

Workshop

⌚ 30-45 minutes

1

Ten traditional characters are depicted below, corresponding to the ten simplified characters in the left-hand column: orchid, year, dragon and so on. Clearly, some of them have many more "strokes" than the simplified characters!



2

Can you find the simplified characters corresponding to them? Please use this time to write the simplified characters in the correct order (left-hand column), each of them within a square.

Answers on p.64.

History

Writing has existed in China for a very long time, making the country even more exceptional: almost 3,500 years! You can imagine how many stories and legends there are about its creation and evolution. It is said, for example, that **Cang Jie**, a legendary soothsayer under the "Yellow Emperor", invented the characters by observing the tracks left by animals. By the way, Cang Jie had two pairs of eyes!



An interesting fact

Ideally, a Chinese character must be drawn in a balanced way within a square. Example: 和.



Chinese was traditionally written from top to bottom and right to left. Nowadays, it is mainly written horizontally from left to right.

214 radicals

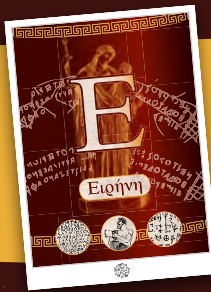
All the Chinese characters that we have seen are attached to a list of "radicals" dating back to the eighteenth century, at the time of the Kangxi Emperor. There are exactly 214 of them although there had been 540 in an earlier list. You need to know those keys if you want use a Chinese dictionary. For example, 中 is linked to radical 2 丨, 国 is linked to radical 31 口, and so on. Some of the radicals are shown below, particularly those underlying the characters we have used.

Here is the list of the characters we have encountered, classified by radical:

丨 中	戈 战 / 戰
丿 乐	文 文
人 仓 / 你	木 樂
八 兰	止 歲
口 和	水 汉
口 国 / 图 / 圖 / 园 / 園	艸 蘭
女 好	言 语
子 字	貝 贝
尸 层 / 層	頁 頤
山 岁	馬 马 馬
干 平	龍 龙 / 龍
心 您	龜 龜 / 龟

一 1 one	丨 2 line	丿 4 slash	二 7 two	人 9 man	八 12 eight	刀 18 knife	力 19 power	口 30 mouth	口 31 enclosure
土 32 earth	士 33 scholar	大 37 big	女 38 woman	子 39 child	宀 40 roof	尸 44 corpse	山 46 mountain	工 48 work	干 51 dry
弓 57 bow	心 61 heart	戈 62 halberd	手 64 hand	文 67 script	方 70 square	日 72 sun	月 74 moon	木 75 tree	止 77 stop
毛 82 hair / fur	气 84 steam	水 85 water	火 86 fire	牛 93 cow	生 100 life	田 102 field	禾 115 grain	米 119 rice	糸 120 silk
老 125 old	耳 128 ear	艸 140 grass	虫 142 insect	衣 145 clothes	言 149 speech	貝 154 shell	足 157 foot	車 159 cart	里 166 neighborhood
金 167 gold	門 169 door	雨 173 rain	頁 181 page / sheet	風 182 wind	飛 183 fly	馬 187 horse	魚 195 fish	鳥 196 bird	鼠 208 mouse / rat
龍 212 dragon	龜 213 turtle / tortoise								

(Small circles indicate variant forms of the radical.)



Greek alphabet

ninth to eighth century BCE

What magic can have been present among the Greek people to produce such inventions, knowledge and wisdom? The script inherited from the Phoenicians played a full role from philosophy to the arts, mathematics and medicine. What is more, another invention would play a decisive part: the writing of vowels.

Peace

In Greek, "peace" is pronounced *eirini* and written ειρήνη.

ειρήνη
eirini

Hello

"Hello" is pronounced *yassas*. This means "to your health". More colloquially, you can say *yassou*. There is also another way to say hello, especially in the morning: *kalimera*.

Γεια σας
yassas

Καλημέρα
kalimera

Languages

The Greek alphabet is mainly used for writing the *Greek language*, Ελληνικά (*Elliniká*), which is the only member (together with Ancient Greek) of its own branch of the *Indo-European languages*. It is noteworthy that many Greek letters are used in mathematics.

Ελληνικά
Elliniká

History

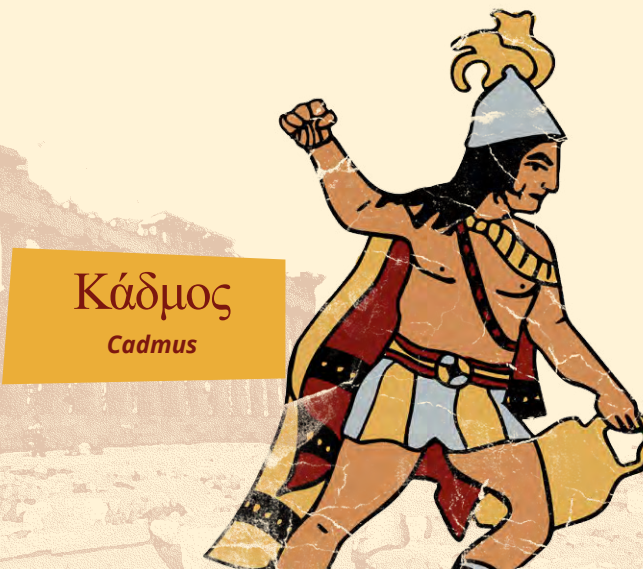
Legends say that the Greek alphabet was created by a man called *Cadmus*, the brother of Europa, who gave her name to the continent of Europe. It was while searching for her that he settled in Greece and, after many adventures and actions, created the Greek alphabet.

Historically, the Greek alphabet, which is derived from the Phoenician one, is thought to have appeared in the ninth to eighth century BCE. There were various alphabets around Greece, but in 403 BCE it was decided that the *Ionian alphabet* would be adopted.

An interesting fact

An amusing detail: there was a time when Greek was written in *boustrophedon* – the name comes from the Greek word *boūs* (ox) and *strophē* (the act of turning). This means writing first from left to right, then the next line from right to left, and so on.

βουστροφηδόν
boustrophedon



Κάδμος
Cadmus

Workshop

30-45 minutes

As we have seen, the Greek alphabet comprises both upper- and lower-case letters.

1

Create a table of 24 lines and two columns. In the left-hand column, write the upper-case letters found on the opposite page.

2

Can you match up the capital letters with their lower-case equivalents below, which, of course, are given in a random order? Good luck!



The Greek alphabet (*Ellinikó alfávito*) comprises 24 letters which are written in upper-case form (see below) or lower-case (see Workshop). It is therefore a bicameral alphabet.

The word "alphabet" was formed by combining the names of the first two letters of the Greek alphabet. In comparison with its predecessors, one major contribution of the Greek alphabet was to write vowels.



In Greek, the question mark is in the form of a semicolon [;]. The semicolon is represented by a raised point [·].



Roman alphabet

sixth century BCE

The Roman alphabet (*abecedarium latinum*) currently comprises 26 basic letters, with upper-case letters (left) and lower-case (right).



Through political power and the passage of time, the Roman alphabet spread from its Italian source to the whole world. It was adopted by the most diverse languages and peoples; this often involved adapting it by means of additional signs or marks.

Peace

One way of saying "peace" in Latin is **Pax**. Another word for it is *Otium*, which refers more to calmness, inaction, tranquility.



Hello

In Latin, when greeting one person, you say **salve**, and when addressing two or more people, you say **salvete**. Another way of saying "hello" is *ave* (and *avete*).



Languages

The Latin language (*Lingua latina*) is an Italic language which is part of the family of *Indo-European languages*. As its name suggests, it comes from Latium, a region in central Italy. The *Romance languages*, which include, among others, *Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Corsican, Catalan and Sardinian*, are descended from it.



History

The Roman alphabet came into being in the sixth century BCE, derived from the Etruscan alphabet, which in turn came from the Greek alphabet. At that time, it was somewhat different from our modern Roman alphabet; for example, no distinction was made between U and V. Initially it comprised 19 letters, then 20, 23 and so on.

When the Roman alphabet was born, there were other alphabets in Italy, such as the Faliscan, Umbrian, Oscan and Messapic ones, but the power of Rome would impose its alphabet on the other peoples. At that time, it was written in capital letters.

In Charlemagne's time (742-814), an educated elite led by the monk **Alcuin** established the *Caroline* ("minuscule") letters, the source of the lower-case letters which are still used today.

An interesting fact

Since the 26 basic letters of the Roman alphabet cannot transcribe all the sounds of the languages which use it, many different signs have been developed for the sounds requiring them. We can find some of those signs in the series of words for "peace" in the right-hand column, including Ñ and ð. There are others, such as ß and p.

The monk **Alcuin** (right) and **Charlemagne** (left).



Workshop

20-30 minutes

1

Consider the languages listed below and their geographical location.

2

Create a table of 16 lines and three columns.

Ewe	Western Africa
Afrikaans	South Africa
Zulu	South Africa
Aymara	Bolivia
Mapudungun	Chile – Argentina
Finnish	Finland
Hawaiian	Hawaii
Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia
Irish	Ireland
Icelandic	Iceland
Kikuyu	Kenya
Māori	New Zealand
Tagalog	Philippines
Czech	Czechia
Wolof	Senegal
Turkish	Turkey

3

Using the map on the left, can you match up the following words for "peace" with their respective languages? They are given here in alphabetical order.

Bariş Friður Hacaña Jàmm Kapayapaan
Maluhia Mír Nutifafa Perdamaian
Rangima'arie Rauha Síocháin Thayū
Tüγκülen Ukuthula Vrede



Hebrew alphabet

sixth century BCE

The Hebrew alphabet (*ha'alef bet haivri*) is composed of 22 letters, like its ancestor the Phoenician alphabet, via the Aramaic alphabet. It is an *abjad*, meaning that each letter stands for a consonant.

Vowels were added later, using small dots or "vowel points" in a system known as *niqqud*. Each letter relates to a common noun: aleph to "ox", beth to "house", gimel to "camel", and so on.

ניקוד
niqqud

Hebrew is written from right to left.

ה he	ד dalet	ג gimel	ב beth	א aleph
י yod	ט tet	ח het	ז zayin	ו vav
ם samech	נ nun	מ mem	ל lamed	כ kaf
ר resh	ק qof	צ tsade	פ pe	ע ayin
		ת tav	ש shin	

From right to left! That is how the Hebrew alphabet is written, which makes us think about the various other directions used in history. That is not the only distinctive characteristic of Hebrew script: for example, it did not write vowels.

Peace

In Hebrew, "peace" is pronounced *shalom* and written שלום.

שלום
shalom

Hello

שלום!
shalom!



שלום עליכם
shalom alekhem!

Shalom is another common way of saying "hello" by wishing a person peace. The more complete form is *shalom alekhem*. The correct reply is *alekhem shalom*. In the morning, you can also say *boker tov!*

יידיש

Yiddish

Languages

The Hebrew alphabet is mainly used for writing the *Hebrew language*, which is one of the *Semitic languages*. It is also used for writing *Yiddish*, a language having a Germanic base but many Hebrew and Slavic loan-words, spoken in Jewish communities in central and eastern Europe. *Yiddish* is sometimes referred to as *Judaeo-German*; there are also *Judaeo-Arabic* and *Judaeo-Spanish* (Ladino) languages.

History

An ancient Hebrew alphabet known as *Palaeo-Hebrew* existed 3,000 years ago. The current form, *Hebrew square script*, appeared around the sixth century BCE and became generally used in the centuries that followed.

An interesting fact

At one time, the Hebrew language was no longer used as an everyday language. In the late nineteenth century, however, a group of people decided that its use should be revived. **Eliezer Ben-Yehuda** (1858-1922) is the most well-known of those people.



אליעזר בן־יהודה

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda

Workshop

⌚ 30-45 minutes

In addition to Hebrew square script, there is also Cursive Hebrew, the handwritten form. Some of its letters resemble the square script; others less so. Can you match up the letters of the two varieties?

1

Create a table of 22 lines and two columns.

2

Take the time to place the square-script letters on the left-hand page, in the order indicated: aleph, beth, gimel, dalet, he, vav, zayin...

3

Then try to match the equivalent letters in Cursive Hebrew shown above. The cursive letters have of course been placed in a random order.

Answers on p.64.



Georgian alphabet

fifth century BCE

The Georgians, one of the peoples of the Caucasus, have their own script. Varying in its styles, it is the result of evolution over time which reflects its beauty and wealth.

Georgian script (*kartuli anbani*) comprises 33 letters, five original letters having been dropped. For some time, it had both upper- and lower-case letters, but this has now been abandoned.

ა ani	ბ bani	გ gani	დ doni	ე eni
ვ vini	ზ zeni	თ tani	ი ini	კ k'ani
ლ lasi	მ mani	ნ nari	ო oni	პ p'ari
ჯ zhani	რ rae	ს sani	ტ t'ari	უ uni
ფ pari	ქ kani	ღ ghani	ყ q'ari	შ shini
ჩ chini	ც tsani	ძ dzili	წ ts'ili	ჭ ch'ari
ხ khani	ჯ jani	ჰ hae		

Peace

"Peace" can be expressed as *mshvidoba* in Georgian, and is written as მშვილობა.

მშვილობა

mshvidoba

Hello

გამარჯობა

gamarjoba

დილა მშვილობისა

dila mshvidobisa

"Hello" is pronounced *gamarjoba*. In the morning, you can say *dila mshvidobisa*; "mshvidobisa" is one of the ways of saying "peace".



ქართული ენა

Kartuli ena

Languages

Georgian is a *Caucasian language*, calling itself *Kartuli ena*. This alphabet is also used for writing *Abkhazian*, *Ossetian* and other languages in the region.

History

The history of the Georgian script remains a matter for passionate debate on its origins, and researchers still disagree. According to a Georgian tradition, it is linked to a king of Iberia, **Pharnavaz I**, who is said to have reformed it in the third century BCE. The oldest known traces of the script date back to the fifth century. As we will see in the Workshop, there have been a number of writing systems.



Pharnavaz I

An interesting fact

იბერია

Iberia

Caucasian *Iberia* should not be confused with the Iberian Peninsula, composed of Portugal and Spain. Iberia was a precursor of modern Georgia, which is called *Sakartvelo*.

საქართველო

Sakartvelo

Workshop

⌚ 15-25 minutes

The history of Georgian script has seen a succession of varied systems, shown below.

1

Look carefully at the following four writing systems. Copy them, reproducing the letters of the alphabet.

ხუცური

ნუსხური

ასომთავრული

მხედრული

2

Can you match these scripts with the following four names?

First of all came *Asomtravuli*, also known as *Mrgvlovani*, meaning "rounded".

Then, in the ninth century, *Nushkuri* ("minuscule") appeared, also known as *Kutkhovani*, meaning "square". At that time, upper-case letters were written in Asomtavruli and lower-case in Nushkuri.

A combination of the two gave rise to *Khutsuri*, also known as Church (or Priests') script.

Lastly, *Mkhedruli* ("secular" or "military") took over around the eleventh century. It is this script which is mostly used nowadays.



Berber alphabet

third century BCE

Spreading across the vast spaces of North Africa, across hills and deserts, this is the Tifinagh script! It covers many centuries, serving the Berber peoples known as the Imazighen, like a homage to the sun.

Here are some of the main letters of the various Berber alphabets known as *Tifinagh*:



There are other letters, depending on the languages being written:



Peace

One of the words for "peace" in the Berber languages is *afra*, which is written as ⵏⵉⵔⵓ. Other words, depending on the language, include *asrad* ⵏⵓⵔⵓⵏ and *talwit* ⵜⵓⵎⵓⵏⵜ.



afra

Hello



azul



Azul, is a word for "hello" among the Berber peoples. To say hello to several people, you say *azul fellawen*. You say *azul fellam* if you are addressing a woman, and you say *azul fellak* to a man.

Languages

Variants of Tifinagh script are used to write languages belonging to the *Berber* group, a branch of the *Afro-Asiatic family of languages*. They stretch widely across North Africa, including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mali, Niger and Mauritania. The general terms *Tamazight* and *Amazigh* are the most widely used; depending on local usage they denote varying realities – *Tamazight* is also the name of a Moroccan dialect. Locally, there are also *Chleuh* or *Tachelhit*, *Riffi* or *Tarifit*, *Kabyle* or *Taqbaylit*, and *Chaoui* or *Tacawit*, not to forget *Tuareg*, also known as *Tamasheq* or *Tamajaq*, and others.

The *Berber languages* also use the Arabic alphabet or the *Berber Latin alphabet*, which comprises 33 letters including *ɣ*, *ğ* and *z*.

History

There are several stories about the invention of Tifinagh script. For the Tuareg people, who retained it over the centuries, its creation is attributed to a giant, a hero not only of writing but of poetry and music. Historically, Tifinagh alphabets are derived from a set of Libyco-Berber (or Libyc) inscriptions, including one dating from the Numidian kings in the third century BCE, such as *Massinissa* (238-148 BCE). Some believe that they are even more ancient, even linking it to Phoenician. The present version is known as *Neo-Tifinagh*.

An interesting fact

Folk etymology has suggested that the word *Tifinagh* is made up of *tifin*, "a find", and *nagh*, "ours", in other words, "our find". Others believe it comes from a root related to the word "Phoenician".



Massinissa (MSNSN)



Workshop

⌚ 15-25 minutes

Given the various Berber languages that we have seen, and on the basis of the letters printed on the left-hand page, can you transcribe words written in Tifinagh into Roman letters? Copy them out.

ⵜⵓⵎⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵉⵔⵓ ⵏⵓⵔⵓⵏ

ⵜⵓⵎⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵓⵔⵓⵏ

ⵜⵓⵎⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵓⵔⵓⵏ

ⵜⵓⵎⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵓⵔⵓⵏ

ⵜⵓⵎⵓⵏⵜ ⵏⵓⵔⵓⵏ

Answers on p.64.



Arabic alphabet

fourth century

Exceptionally beautiful! Anyone coming into contact with the calligraphy styles of Arabic script can only be enchanted by their expressiveness. They are the product of transmission and gradual progress in which the sign has a central role.

The Arabic alphabet (*Al-abjadīyah al-trabīyah*) is composed of 28 letters, plus what is known as the *hamza*.

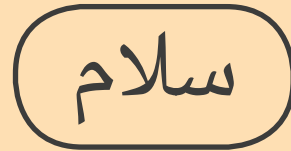
Arabic script is written from right to left.

ج ǧīm	ث tā	ت tā	ب bā	ا 'alif
ر rā	ذ dāl	د dāl	خ ḥā	ح ḥā
ض ḍād	ص ṣād	ش šīn	س sīn	ز zāy
ف fā	غ ǧayn	ع 'ayn	ظ ẓā	ط ṭā
ن nūn	م mīm	ل lām	ك kāf	ق qāf
ه hā	و wāw	ي yā	ء hamza	

It is an *abjad*, meaning that vowels are indicated by additional signs.

Peace

In Arabic, "peace" is pronounced *salaam* (salām) and written سلام.



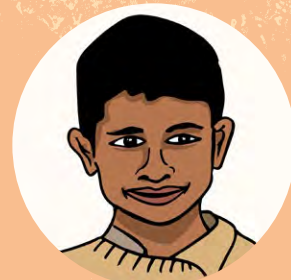
salam

Hello

There are many ways of saying hello in Arabic. One of the most widespread is *as-salāmu 'alaykum*, which means "peace be upon you". In responding, the word order is reversed: *wāalaykumu as-salām*.

السلام عليكم
as-salāmu 'alaykum

و عليكم السلام
wāalaykumu as-salām



صباح الخير
sabaḥu al-khair

صباح النور
sabaḥu an-nur

In the morning, one also hears *sabaḥu al-khair*, the reply to which is *sabaḥu an-nur*.

Languages

العربية

Al'arabiya

Arabic is one of the six official languages of the United Nations. Along with *Hebrew* and *Aramaic*, it is one of the *Semitic languages*, which in turn belong to the *Afro-Asiatic family of languages*. In addition to Classical Arabic, many colloquial varieties exist, such as *Algerian*, *Moroccan*, *Egyptian* and *Syrian*.

History

The Arabic alphabet comes from Aramaic (via Nabataean or Syriac). The earliest records of Arabic script include a dedication dating back to 512. With the advent of Islam (Hegira: 622), this alphabet began to be widely disseminated.

An interesting fact

As it spread across the world, the Muslim religion also conveyed the script in which the Qur'an was written. This is how non-Semitic languages have come to adopt the Arabic alphabet. This is the case in Iran with the *Persian language*, in Afghanistan with *Pashto* and in Pakistan with *Urdu*. In some cases, letters had to be created to adapt to those languages. Here are some examples:



Arabic script has been glorified by calligraphy in a number of styles, such as *Kufic*, *Nashk*, *Thuluth* and *Farsi*.

Workshop

30-45 minutes

The shapes of Arabic letters vary according to their position in a word (initial, median, final or isolated). Let's take a closer look.

1

Create a table of five lines and five columns.

2

Look carefully at the 20 letters below, which correspond to five letters in the four positions.

ق	ص	س	ج	ح
ق	ص	ج	ح	ف
س	ق	ف	ص	س
ق	ص	ف	ج	س

3

Write them in the table, together with the name of each letter. Fill in the table from right to left: name of the letter, isolated form, initial form and so on. For example:

finale	médiane	initiale	isolée	
س	س	س	س	sīn

Answers on p.65.



Ethiopian alphasyllabary

fourth century

Reflecting a culture several millennia old, Ethiopian script is an excellent way of learning about its immense heritage. The alphasyllabary features dozens of consonants with variations representing the vowels.

Ethiopian script (*Amharic Fidel*) features 26 consonants*. In order for certain languages to be transcribed, that number can rise to 35. Each consonant is associated with one of the seven vowels* to produce a syllabic sign, such as **sä ä** or **la ä**. Below are all the signs ending with the vowel "a".



Changing from one vowel to another slightly modifies the shape of the syllabic sign, as we see here with **sä**, **su**, **si**, **sa**, **sé**, **se** and **so**.



Peace

In Amharic, "peace" is pronounced **sälam**. This word is made up of three syllables from the Ethiopian script.



sälam

Hello

Sälam is also one of the friendly ways of saying "hello". If you want to be more formal, however, you can use **tena yistilign**.

ጤና ይስጥልኝ
tena yistilign!

To say "good morning", if you are addressing a woman you say **endemen adersh** and if it is a man, **endemen aderk**.

እንደምን አደርሽ
endemen aderk!

እንደምን አደርክ
endemen adersh!



Languages

This script is used for several languages, including **Ge'ez**, **Amharic**, **Tigrinya** and **Tigre**. **Ge'ez** is now considered to be a classical language. It belongs to the *Semitic family* (as do *Hebrew* and *Arabic*) and was replaced by *Amharic* in the thirteenth century.

ግዕዝ

Ge'ez

History

አክሱም

Aksum

ንጉሥ

Negus

The Ethiopian alphasyllabary dates back to the fourth century, the era of the Kingdom of **Aksum** (Axum), when the sovereign was converted to Christianity. The term **Negus** is a title of high nobility; the sovereign was *Negusa Nagast* (King of Kings).

An interesting fact

Ethiopian script is an **abugida** (alphasyllabary). The word *abugida* is derived from the names of four of its letters: ä - bu - gi - da.

አቡጊዳ

abugida

Workshop

⌚ 20-30 minutes

Since the vowel changes the form of the syllable, we can place the syllables containing the vowel "i" in a table by comparing them with the ones on the left-hand page (featuring the vowel "a"). For example, comparing ሂ hi with ሃ ha. Good luck!

1

Create a table of ten lines and two columns.

2

Fill the first column with the ten letters below.



3

Write in the second column the corresponding syllables ending with "i". Comparing them with the table on the left-hand page will help. We have an example with the syllable "hi".





Armenian alphabet

405

In 301, Armenia became the world's first country to adopt Christianity as its state religion. A century later, everyone was thinking about which script should be used to disseminate its message. A monk named Mesrop Mashtots was tasked with finding the solution.

Peace

In Armenian, "peace" is pronounced *khaghaghut'yun* and written as Խաղաղություն.

Խաղաղություն

khaghaghut'yun

Hello

Բարի լույս

bari luy

Բարև

barev

The most usual way of saying "hello" is *barev*. If you prefer to be a little less familiar, you can say *Բարև Ջեզ (barev dzez)*, and in the morning, the best greeting is *bari luy*, which means "good light".



Languages

Armenian is an Indo-European language and constitutes a separate branch of that family. *Eastern Armenian* is spoken in Armenia and *Western Armenian* is spoken mainly in the diaspora. Thanks to the Armenian script, a written language known as *Grabar* (Classical Armenian) has been developed.

գրաբար

Grabar

The Armenian alphabet (*Hayots' aybuben*) currently comprises 38 letters, or 39 (reformed orthography). Some time ago, there were only 36. There are both upper- and lower-case letters – the latter are shown above. See the Workshop for the capital letters.

There are some differences in punctuation, such as these: the colon [:] is equivalent to the full stop (period) [.], and the question mark [?] is placed above the interrogative word.

History

Երևան

Yerevan

The Armenian script was developed by the monk *Mesrop Mashtots* (362-440). As part of his work to create it, he undertook a long journey in Mesopotamia and Syria. It was only upon his return to the capital city *Yerevan* in 405 that he eventually created the script. The main influence is said to have come from Greek.

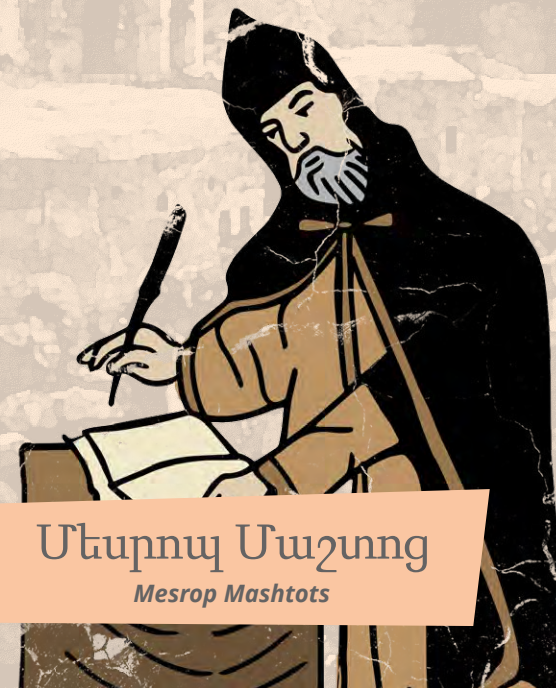
An interesting fact

The Armenian script is celebrated on 1 October, which is Alphabet Day.

Մատենադարան

Matenadaran

Matenadaran means "library" in Armenian. It is also the name of a special place in Yerevan where the most precious archives are stored.



Մեսրոպ Մաշտոց

Mesrop Mashtots

Workshop

⌚ 30-45 minutes

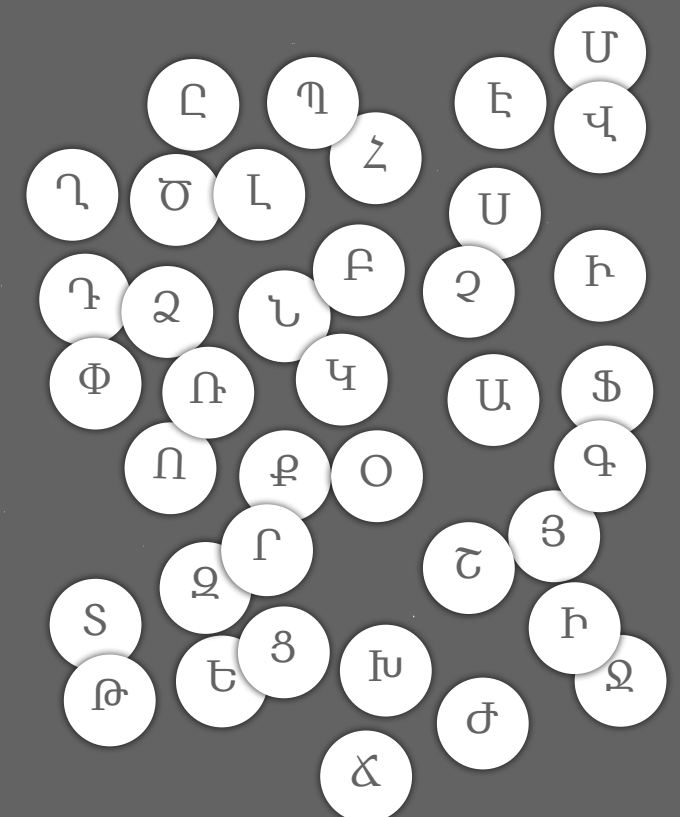
Armenian letters have two forms, upper- and lower-case. Can you match them up? For example, բ goes with Բ and դ goes with Դ. Some letters are easier to match than others. Good luck!

1

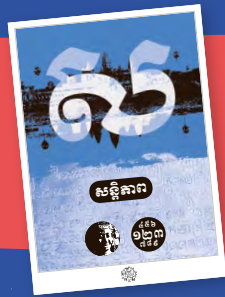
Create a table of 38 lines and two columns and fill in the lower-case letters.

2

Now try to pair them up with the upper-case letters, shown below in a random order.



Answers on p.65.



Khmer alphasyllabary

611

The expansion of the Khmer people had much to do with the power of the city of Angkor with its impressive majesty. Spreading over a wide territory, its influence also saw the expansion of something which had recently gone before it: writing!

The Khmer script is an alphasyllabary comprising 35 consonants (in fact 33 nowadays, see below). Each symbol has an inherent vowel, either â or ô.

ក kâ	ខ khâ	គ kô	ឃ khô	ង ngô
ច châ	ឆ chhâ	ជ chô	ឈ chhô	ញ nhô
ដ dâ	ប thâ	ឌ dô	ឍ thô	ណ nâ
ត tâ	ថ thâ	ទ tô	ធ thô	ន nô
ប bâ	ផ phâ	ព pô	ភ phô	ម mô
យ yô	រ rô	ល lô	វ vô	ស sâ
ហ hâ	ឡ lâ	អ 'â		

Peace

In Khmer, "peace" is pronounced as *santepheap* and written សន្តិភាព.



Hello



"Hello" in Khmer is *chomreabsuor*, which you should say with your hands joined in front of you.

1	2	3
១	២	៣
muøy	pir	bey

Languages

The Khmer script is mostly used for transcribing the *Khmer language*, which belongs to the *Mon-Khmer language group*, part of the *Austroasiatic family*.

It is used in Cambodia, but also in the neighbouring countries of Thailand and Viet Nam.

History

The first appearance of this script is said to date back to 611. It is thought to come from the Indian Brāhmī script via a southern Indian script called Pallava.

អក្សរជ្រៀង <i>âksâr chriêng</i>	អក្សរមូល <i>âksâr mul</i>
------------------------------------	------------------------------

The script has two styles, known respectively as *âksâr chriêng* (oblique or italic) and *âksâr mul* (round).

An interesting fact

Khmer numbers have an unusual feature: they are counted from 1 to 5; then 5(+1) is used for 6, 5(+2) for 7, 5(+3) for 8 and 5(+4) for 9. This is partly a base-five (or "quinary") system and partly a decimal one.

4	5	6 5+1	7 5+2	8 5+3	9 5+4
៤	៥	៦	៧	៨	៩
buõn	prãm	prãm muøy	prãm pir	prãm bey	prãm buõn

Workshop

15-25 minutes

Discover some Khmer names and their fascinating written forms.

1 First, have a look at the letters on the left-hand page. Then draw a table with six lines and two columns.

2 Now copy the following six words in the left-hand column of the table.

ជ័យវរ្ម័នទី៧
កម្ពុជា ក្រុងសៀមរាប
ប្រាសាទបាយ័ន អង្គរ
ភ្នំពេញ

3 Among those six words, try to find the following:

- *Kampuchea*, the name of the country,
- *Phnom Penh*, the name of the capital city,
- *Angkor*, the old capital founded in the ninth century,
- *Jayavarman VII*, the founder of Angkor Thom,
- *Siem Reap*, the town where Angkor is located, and
- *Prasat Bayon*, a temple decorated with 216 majestic faces.



Tibetan alphasyllabary

seventh century

In the heart of the Himalayas, a king brought about a series of decisive changes. Part of that process was the development by one of his ministers of a new script. Welcome to the Tibetan culture!

The Tibetan script is an alphasyllabary comprising 30 consonants. Vowels are placed above or beneath the consonants.

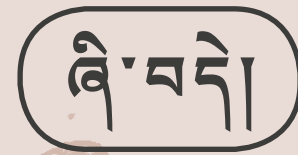
The most common method of transliteration* for Tibetan is known as the *Wylie* system, after Turrell Wylie, who created it in the twentieth century.



In Tibetan script, syllables are separated by a super-script symbol known as "tsek" [ʼ].

Peace

In Tibetan, "peace" is pronounced *zhi-bde* and written ཞི་བདེ།.



zhi-bde

Hello

བསྐྱོད་ཤིས་བདེ་ལེགས།

tashi delek

"Hello" in Tibetan is *tashi delek*. This is an expression of welcome and well-wishing which may be used in other situations.



An interesting fact

The Tibetan script exists in two forms. The first is known as *uchen*, meaning "with a head", which is used for printed documents. The other is called *umê*, "without a head", and is used for handwriting.

Languages

བོད་སྐད་

Bod-skad

This script is mostly used for transcribing the *Tibetan language (Bod-skad)*. Tibetan belongs to the *Tibeto-Burman* group of languages, a branch of the *Sino-Tibetan* family.

The Tibetan script is also used for *Dzongkha*, the main language of Bhutan, and for *Ladakhi*, spoken in northern India.

ཇོང་ཁ་

Dzongkha

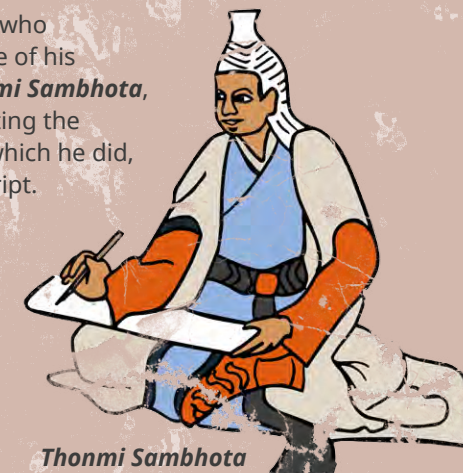
History

Songtsen Gampo, a king in the seventh century, made considerable changes in Tibet. It was in his time, for example, that the city of Lhasa expanded and Buddhism was introduced.

སྟོང་བཙན་སྐམ་པོ་

Songtsen Gampo

It was that king who entrusted to one of his ministers, *Thonmi Sambhota*, the task of creating the Tibetan script, which he did, from Brāhmī script.



Thonmi Sambhota

Workshop

⌚ 20-30 minutes

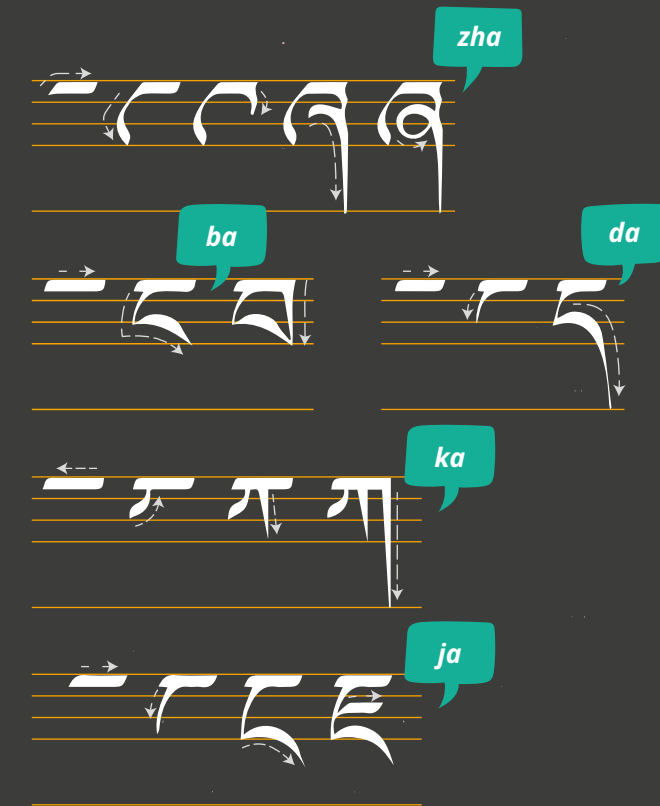
The Tibetan script is particularly suited to calligraphy and those who practise it derive considerable pleasure. So, have a good look at the letters below, whose downstrokes and upstrokes are produced using a trimmed piece of bamboo. One letter at a time, enjoy the pleasure of copying them.

1

Draw four lines together, then another line lower down, as in the examples below. Do so several times.

2

Follow the one-by-one movements to draw the letters as illustrated.

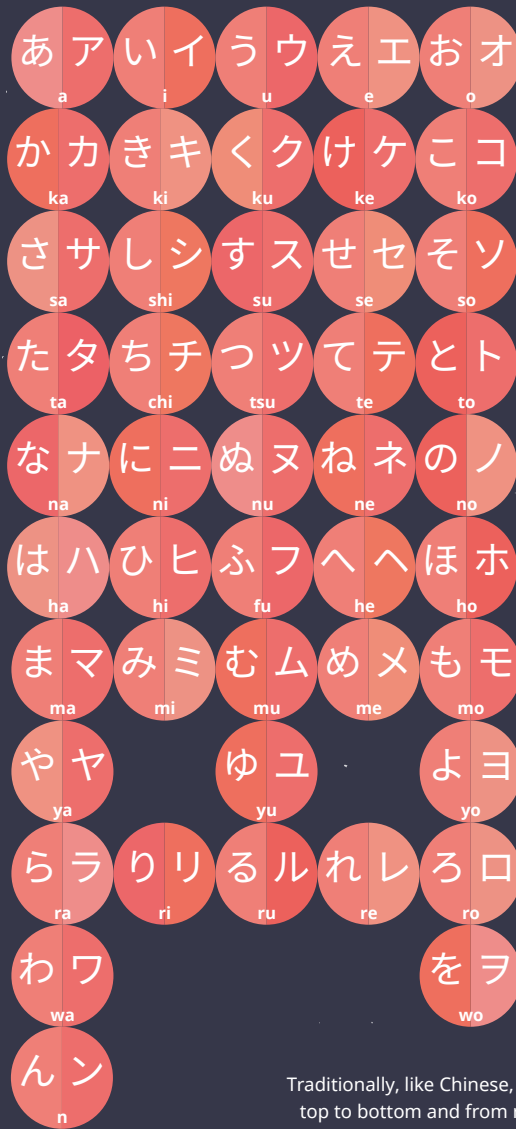




Japanese script

ninth century

Japanese script is definitely among the most complex in the world. For the pleasure of our eyes, there are four different writing systems! As for learning it, it's a clever mixture of syllabaries and Chinese characters: a unique combination of two different writing traditions.

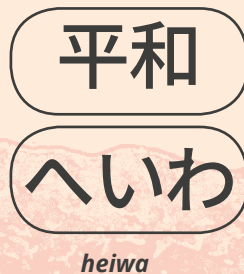


When it comes to writing, Japan has perhaps the greatest degree of diversity that can be imagined. Four different systems are used. First, the *kanji*, 漢字, the Chinese characters. There are also two syllabaries, each comprising 46 syllables, the *hiragana* 平仮名 or ひらがな (opposite, on the left) and the *katakana* 片仮名 or カタカナ (on the right). Fourthly, there is *rōmaji* ローマ字, the romanization of Japanese.

Traditionally, like Chinese, Japanese was written from top to bottom and from right to left. Nowadays, it is more often written from left to right.

Peace

"Peace" is *heiva* in Japanese. It can be written in different ways; this is one of the distinctive features of written Japanese. In Chinese characters, it is written as 平和. In another system, composed of syllables, it is へいわ.



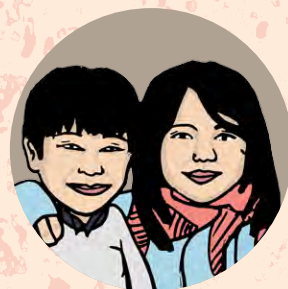
Hello

There are various ways of saying "hello" in Japanese. In the morning, you say *ohayougozaimasu*. In the afternoon, you should say *konnichiwa* and in the evening, *konbanwa*.

おはようございます
ohayougozaimasu

こんにちは
konnichiwa

こんばんは
konbanwa



Languages

The Japanese language is called *Nihongo*. It is a member of a separate group, the *Japonic languages*.

日本語
Nihongo

History

Japan is said to have begun using *kanji* as early as the fifth century; then, in the ninth century, the two syllabaries *hiragana* and *katakana* were developed.

According to tradition, they were created from Chinese characters (see Workshop) by the monk *Kūkai* (774-835). As for *rōmaji*, it is connected to the arrival of missionaries in Japan in the sixteenth century.

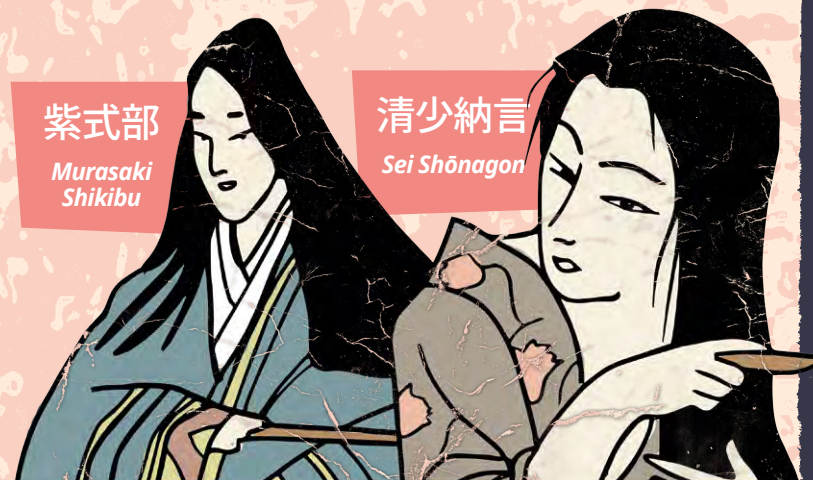
空海
Kūkai

An interesting fact

Certain women of letters played an exceptional role in the development of the Japanese syllabaries; for example, *Sei Shōnagon*, who wrote the *Makura no Sōshi* (the Pillow Book) and her rival *Murasaki Shikibu*, who composed the impressive *Genji monogatari* (the Tale of Genji). Both of these works were written a thousand years ago in *hiragana*. It is no coincidence that, for a while, *hiragana* was seen as "women's writing".

紫式部
Murasaki Shikibu

清少納言
Sei Shōnagon



Workshop

25-35 minutes

Hiragana is mostly used for transcribing words of Japanese origin, whereas katakana is used for foreign and onomatopoeic words. Both are of Chinese origin, as we are about to see.

1

Copy the ten characters below, remembering what we learned with Chinese on pp. 12-15.



2

Can you connect the Chinese characters with the kanas (hiragana and katakana) which relate to them and from which they are derived? A part of each character can be recognized.



Answers on p.65.



Cyrillic alphabet

ninth century

This alphabet can trace its origin to two brothers who set out on a courageous mission. Their adventure is a magnificent example of how human societies have mastered writing, each in its own way. Let us follow their story.

The Cyrillic alphabet (*kirillitsa*) has capital letters (left) and lower-case letters (right). It comprises 33 letters.



Peace

In Russian, "peace" is pronounced *mir*, which is a homonym of another word meaning "the world"; it is written МИР.



Hello

Здравствуйте
zdravstvuiyte

Добрый день
dobrii den'

Привет
priv'et

There are various ways of saying "hello" in Russian. One is *zdravstvuiyte*; another, more familiar, is *priv'et*; and there is also *dobrii den'*.



Languages

Aside from *Russian (Russkiy)*, one of the six official languages of the United Nations, the Cyrillic alphabet is used for several other languages, such as *Belarusian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Macedonian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz* and even *Mongolian*. Some of these are *Slavic* languages, and others *Altaic*.

Русский
Russkiy

Glagolitic letters



History

The brothers *Cyril* (also known as Constantine the Philosopher) and *Methodius* were monks in the ninth century. They lived in Thessaloniki, Greece. They were given a mission to evangelize the Slav peoples. It is thought that they then developed a writing system known as *Glagolitic*. On the basis of that script, their disciples are thought to have continued their work, creating the *Cyrillic* alphabet.



Кирилл и Мефодий
Cyril and Methodius

An interesting fact

There are a number of festivals celebrating the Cyrillic alphabet and its inventors; for example, the two brothers and their disciples are commemorated on 27 July. Also, a celebration of education, communication, culture and writing takes place on 24 May. In *Sofia*, for example, icons are displayed, praising the merits of the two monks and the letters of the alphabet.

София
Sofia

Workshop

20-30 minutes

The eight words below are place names (such as those of countries, buildings and mountains) written in Cyrillic letters. Can you write and recognize them by checking against the alphabet?

Кремль

Москва

Россия

Украина

Большой

Сибирь

Урал

Санкт-Петербург



Devanāgarī alphasyllabary

tenth century

As befits a huge country with innumerable treasures, the multiplicity of Indian writing systems is unparalleled. As you travel across India you encounter the various scripts and discover variations in their forms and styles. Quite a treat!

Here we see the main letters of the *Devanāgarī alphasyllabary*: vowels (independent on the left and on the right associated with the letter प, p) and consonants. This script has no capital letters and, as we can see, it has a horizontal line above the letters.

अ a	प p	आ ā	पा pā	इ i	पि pi	ई ī	पी pī	उ u	पु pu	ऊ ū	पू pū
ऋ ṛ	ॠ ṝ	ऌ ḷ	ॡ ḹ	ए e	पे pe	ऐ ai	पै pai				
ओ o	पो po	औ au	पाँ pāṁ	अं aṁ	पं paṁ	अः aḥ	पः paḥ				
क k	ख kh	ग g	घ gh	ङ ṅ	च c						
छ ch	ज j	झ jh	ञ ñ	ट ṭ	ठ ṭh						
ड ḍ	ढ ḍh	ण ṇ	त t	थ th	द d						
ध dh	न n	प p	फ ph	ब b	भ bh						
म m	य y	र r	ल l	व v	श ś						
ष ṣ	स s	ह h									

vowels ●
consonants ●

Peace

“Peace” is written as शांति in the Devanāgarī script, the most widely used writing system in India. In Hindi, the word is pronounced *shaanti*. Nonetheless, as we will see, India has a wealth of other systems.



Hello

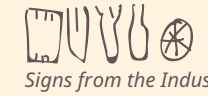
To say “hello” in India you can say *namaste* while holding your hands together in front of you. *Namaskar* is another way to say it.

नमस्ते
namaste

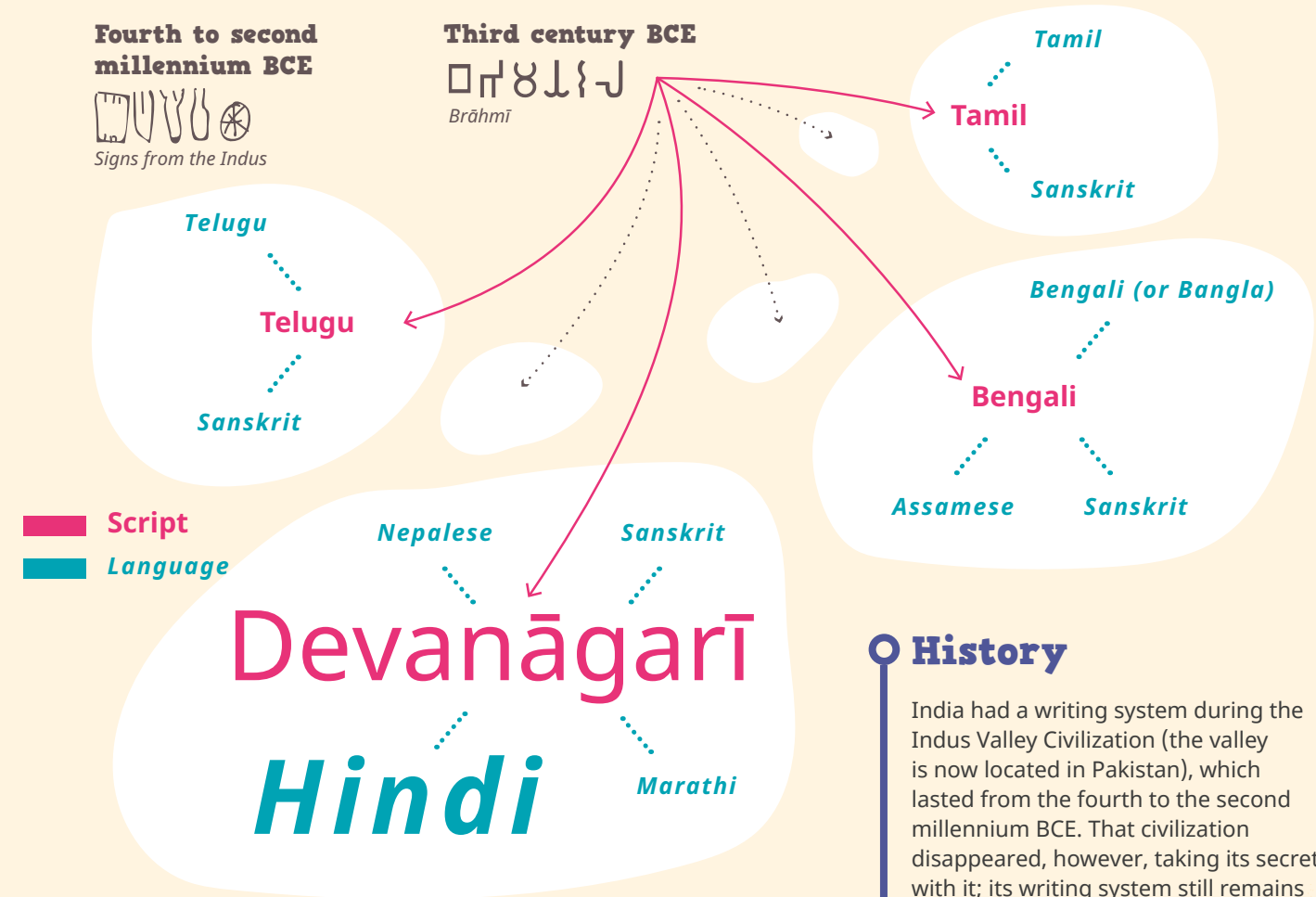
नमस्कार
namaskar



Fourth to second millennium BCE



Third century BCE



Languages

India (*Bhārat*) possesses a multitude of music, cuisine and religions; languages are no exception to this. In addition to the numerous spoken languages, there are 22 Constitutional Languages (plus English) which differ from one state to another. *Hindi* and *English* are the official languages of India.

Languages are classified depending on their membership of the *Indo-European* family (for example, *Hindi* and *Bengali*) or the *Dravidian* family, whose members are spoken mostly in the south (*Tamil*, *Telugu*, *Kannada* and *Malayalam*).

The *Devanāgarī* script is used to transcribe a variety of languages: *Hindi*, the sacred language *Sanskrit*, but also *Nepalese*, *Marathi* and so on.

भारत
Bhārat

History

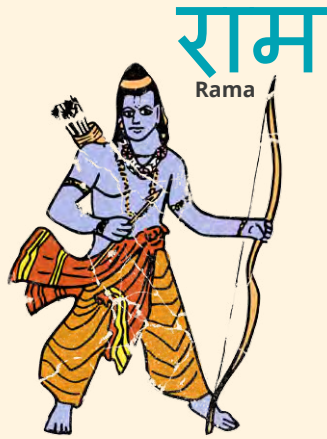
India had a writing system during the Indus Valley Civilization (the valley is now located in Pakistan), which lasted from the fourth to the second millennium BCE. That civilization disappeared, however, taking its secret with it; its writing system still remains a mystery today. Thereafter, it was not until the third century BCE that two writing systems came into being: *Kharoṣṭhī*, which left no descendants behind, and *Brāhmī*, which is the origin of modern scripts such as *Gurmukhi*, *Gujarati* and *Odia*. *Devanāgarī* comes from the writing system known as *Gupta*, which is a descendant of *Brāhmī*; its modern form dates back to the tenth century. Its full name means “the divine city”, but sometimes it is simply referred to by the name of *Nāgarī* (a script which preceded it, beginning in the seventh century).

ब्राह्मी
Brāhmī

An interesting fact

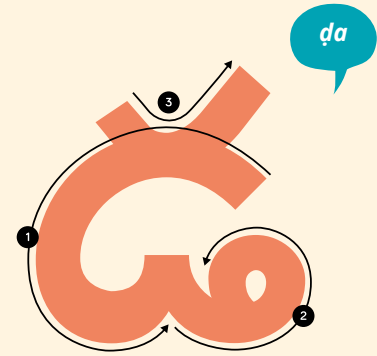
People celebrate all sorts of things in India. *Holi* is the festival of colours, celebrated at the spring equinox; *Diwali* is the festival of lights (October-November). There is also **Vijayadasami**, also known as *Dasara* (September-October); *vijaya* is the word for "victory". It is so called because it commemorates the victory of two great heroes over terrible demons: **Rama** overcame *Ravana* and **Durga** struck down *Mahishâsura*. What does this have to do with writing? Simple: anything that begins at the time of *Vijayadasami* is destined for great success; so let us take the chance to start writing!

विजयादशमी
Vijayadasami



বাংলা
Bangla

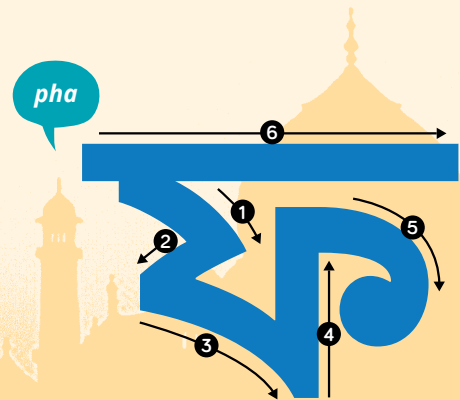
On 21 February 1952, in Dhaka (now the capital of *Bangladesh*), there was a demonstration to defend the Bangla (Bengali) language. Many students were arrested, and several of them were killed. As a result, in 1999, UNESCO decided that 21 February should be celebrated as International Mother Language Day.



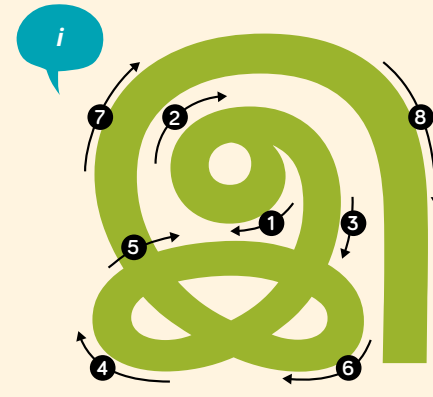
Telugu script



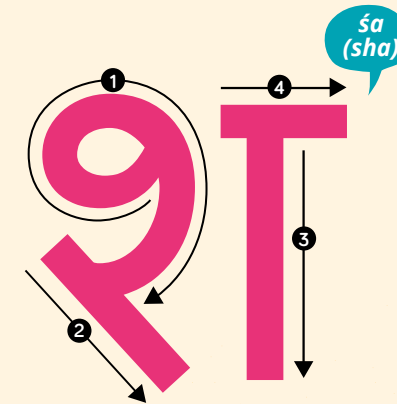
Gujarati script



Bengali script



Tamil script



Devanāgarī script



Malayalam script

Workshop

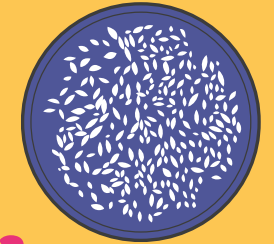
⌚ 20-30 minutes

After the fashion of Vijayadasami, let's discover some Indian scripts through gestures.



1

First, we need some raw rice. A packet of 500g should be enough.



2

To cook it? Certainly not! We must also find a tray, preferably a round one, and pour the rice onto it. There needs to be a layer deep enough so that we can draw in it with our fingers.



3

For Vijayadasami, very small children approach the tray, sometimes sitting on the lap of an elder. The child's index finger is then held in order to form the first letter of the syllabary by drawing in the dry rice while pronouncing its name aloud. The process continues all the way to the last letter.

4

Here, we will modify that process by learning to write six letters from different scripts.





Thai alphasyllabary

1283

With the emergence of Thai power, thanks to an inspired king, came a script full of curves and loops. Enough to fill us with wonder and invite us to practise the script!

ก	ข	ฃ	ค	ค	ฅ
k	kh	kh	kh	kh	kh
ง	จ	ฉ	ช	ซ	ฌ
ng	ch	ch	ch	s	ch
ญ	ฎ	ฏ	ฐ	ฑ	ฒ
y	d	t	th	th	th
ณ	ด	ต	ถ	ท	ธ
n	d	t	th	th	th
น	บ	ป	ผ	ฝ	พ
n	b	p	ph	f	ph
ฟ	ภ	ม	ย	ร	ล
f	ph	m	y	r	l
ว	ศ	ษ	ส	ห	ฬ
w	s	s	s	h	l
อ	ฮ				
	h				

● Low class consonants ● Middle class consonants ● High class consonants

The charm of Thai script, with its procession of rounded forms, is seen through the basic shapes making up the 44 consonants (two of which are no longer used) and added signs to mark the numerous vowels. Here we see the main consonants, classified into three categories, linked to the sounds of the associated vowels.

Peace ○

In Thai, “peace” can be spoken as *ṣantiphāph* or, more briefly, *ṣanti* สันติ.

สันติภาพ

ṣantiphāph

Hello ○

สวัสดีครับ

ṣwaṣḍī khrāb

สวัสดีค่ะ

ṣwaṣḍī khà



In Thailand, if you hear *ṣwaṣḍī khrāb*, which means “hello”, you can tell it’s a boy speaking. A girl would say *ṣwaṣḍī khà*. Sentences end in *khà* in the feminine and *khrāb* in the masculine.

อักษรอมลาว

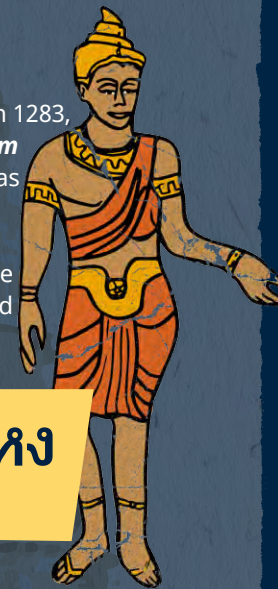
There is an alphasyllabary for the Lao language, spoken in Laos, which has the same origin as that of the Thai script. It is called *àksǝn lao*.

Languages

The Thai language is a member of the Tai-Kadai language family, also spoken in China, Laos and Viet Nam. When you listen to the Thai language, one thing you notice is variations: the language has five different tones. It is important to learn the tones, otherwise you may say something completely different!

History

It is traditionally believed that it was in 1283, during the reign of *Po-khun* (King) *Ram Khamhaeng* (1239-1317), also known as Rama the Strong, that the Thai script came into being. Experts have found both Khmer and Indian influences. The current syllabary (*àksǝn thai*) is derived from that ancient system.



พ่อขุนรามคำแหง

Po-khun Ramkhamhaeng

An interesting fact

Although Arabic numerals are also used, numbers can be written with Thai characters. You can see them on Thai coins.

1	๒	๓	๔	๕
๑	๒	๓	๔	๕
neung	song	saam	see	haa
6	๗	๘	๙	๐
๖	๗	๘	๙	๐
hok	jet	paet	gao	soon

Workshop

⌚ 30-45 minutes

Each letter is named by associating it with a Thai word in which it appears. For example, ไก corresponds to the initial consonant ก and denotes a “chicken”, *kai*, and เต่า corresponds to ต and denotes a “turtle”, *tao*.

1

Create a table of 14 lines and two columns.

2

Find the letter to which the following words correspond. The letter is underlined within the word.

<u>ไก</u>	<u>ฝ</u> ิ่ง	เ <u>ม</u> อ	ม <u>้า</u>	งู
ระ <u>ม</u> ัง	<u>ช</u> ้าง	เด <u>็</u> ก	<u>ไ</u> ช้	<u>ล</u> ิง
<u>ท</u> หาร	หน <u>ู</u>	เส <u>ื่อ</u>	เต <u>่า</u>	

3

Write them in the table, to the right of the letters to which they correspond. The answers will tell us the meanings of these words.

ก	ไก
...	ฝิ่ง

Answers on p.66.



Dongba script

sixteenth century

Fascinating in its beauty, practised by a handful of people, the Nakhi or Dongba script is truly unique, bringing us to, or returning us to, the infinite pleasure of artistic drawing around the world.



This is the only pictographic script in the modern world, comprising about 2,000 signs. Some of the signs depicted above relate to weather events.



Peace

The sign for “peace” in Nakhi (or Dongba) combines the earth, the sky, two armed men fighting, and a negative sign on the left-hand side.



Hello

We are in southern China, in Lijiang, in the province of Yunnan. The Nakhi people (纳西族, nàxīzú in Chinese), one of the country's 55 minorities, are characterized by a very original writing system.



Languages

Nakhi is a *Sino-Tibetan language* having four tones, subdivided into *Eastern* and *Western Nakhi*. It can be written in Dongba pictographic script, although this is known by few people, or in *Geba* characters or the Roman alphabet.

The *Geba syllabary* comprises signs derived from either Yi characters (used by another Chinese minority) or Chinese characters. Here are some examples:



History

It is difficult to place the beginnings of Dongba script. Some say it is 1,000 years old; others, 400. What we do know is that priests have passed it on from generation to generation to the present day. They have also given their name to the writing system, since they are known as *Dongba*.

An interesting fact

Joseph Rock (1884-1962), an American botanist, devoted much effort to raising awareness of the Dongba culture and script.



Workshop

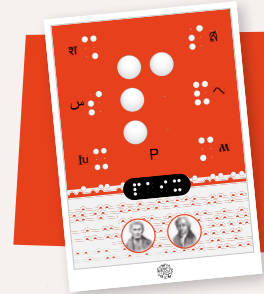
20-30 minutes

Can you copy the following signs and, perhaps, even guess their meaning?



Answers on p.66.

J'ÉCRIS LA PAIX

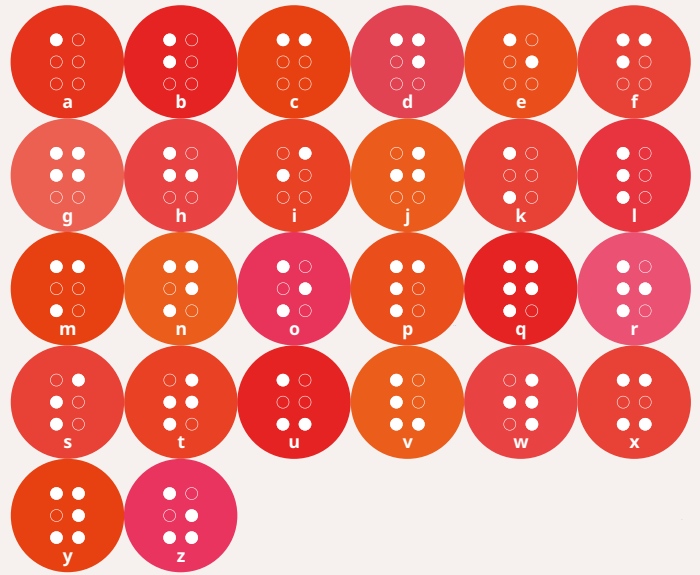


Braille system

1829

Dots, either embossed or indented, reflect a wonderful invention perfected by Louis Braille. Created to serve blind people, Braille offers a different approach to writing and to how it is conceived.

Below are the 26 letters of the Roman alphabet in Braille. The white dots represent raised areas which are felt by the fingers.



There are Braille letters for other alphabets. For example, here are some Cyrillic letters...

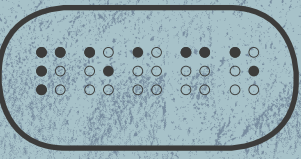


... and some punctuation marks:



Peace

To write "peace", five signs are needed.



peace

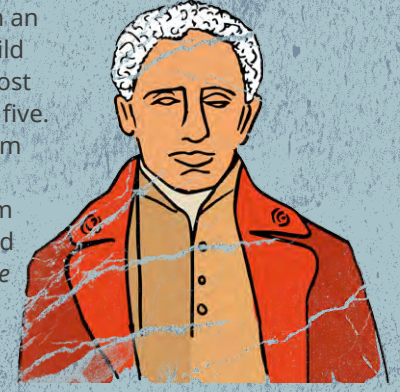
Hello

How you write "hello" in Braille depends on which language is being transcribed. Here it is in three of the six official languages of the United Nations: English, Spanish and French.



History

Louis Braille (1809-1852) gave his name to this ingenious system, which was first published in 1829. He lost an eye in an accident as a small child and then completely lost his sight at the age of five. The idea for this system occurred to him when he learnt of the system invented for the armed forces by Charles-Marie Barbier.



Louis Braille

An interesting fact

Classical Braille, with its six dots, can transcribe 64 characters (2x2x2x2x2x2). This, however, is not sufficient for the needs of data-processing, which requires a larger variety of combinations. This is why the Unicode system, used for encoding written signs, has adopted an 8-point code page. This allows for four times more possibilities (64x2x2), or 256 characters.

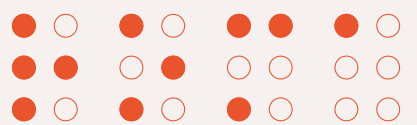
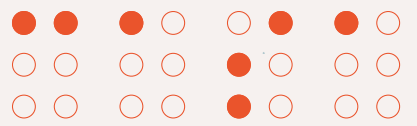


Workshop

20-30 minutes

1

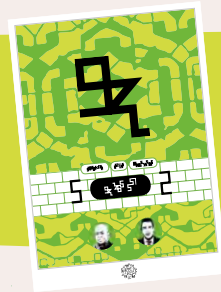
Now that you understand the principle, can you begin by deciphering the following combinations, which relate to languages using the Roman alphabet?



2

Inversely, draw five lines with sets of six "empty" dots, as below. Try to write in the following five words by filling in the dots which correspond to the letters: friend, cousin, horse, pizza, sun.





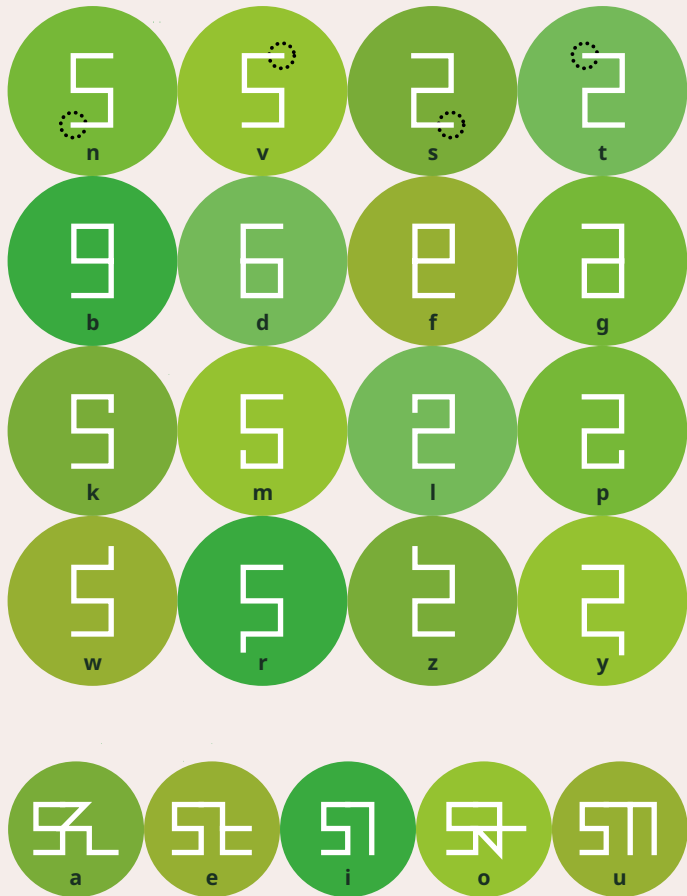
Mandombe script

1978

A writing system for most of the African continent? This is the vocation of Mandombe, a script created in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and intended to serve any African language which desires it. Let's take the time to learn what it can do.

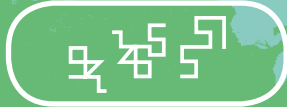
Mandombe script was created on the basis of the forms of "5" and "2", with all other combinations derived from them.

The sign  shows where the first line of the letter is drawn.



Peace

"Peace" is *amani* in Swahili; *kimia* (or *boboto*) in Lingala; *bupole* in Chiluba and *luvuvamu* (or *ngemba*) in Kikongo. Here you can see those words written in Mandombe script.



amani



kimia



bupole



luvuvamu

Hello



"Hello" in Swahili is *hujambo* or *jambo* in the singular and *hamjambo* or *jamboni* in the plural. In Lingala it is *mbóte*, in Chiluba, *moyo* or *moyo wenu* and in Kikongo *kiambote*. These are all ways of saying "hello" in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While all these words can be written in the Roman alphabet, an alternative has been available for several decades: to write them in Mandombe.

Languages

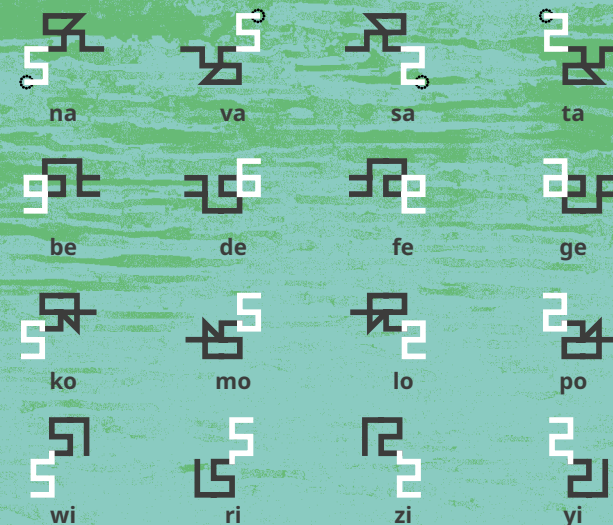
Initially created in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mandombe was specifically intended to be used for transcribing the country's four main languages, *Swahili*, *Lingala*, *Chiluba* and *Kikongo*. However, its purpose was not to be restricted to those four; the ambition was to transcribe as many African languages as possible.

History

Wabeladio Payi (1957-2013) was a mechanic. Having seen Simon Kimbangu (1887-1951), the founder of the Kimbanguist Church, in a dream, he recognized two figures, 5 and 2. It was on the basis of these two signs that he created the Mandombe script in 1978, in Mbanza-Ngungu.

An interesting fact

Writing in Mandombe is very interesting. Starting with basic consonants and vowels, you can put them together to write letters. For example, if you begin with *na*, by pivoting it you can write *ri*, by taking a mirror image you obtain *fe*, and with both rotation and reflection, *po*.



Workshop

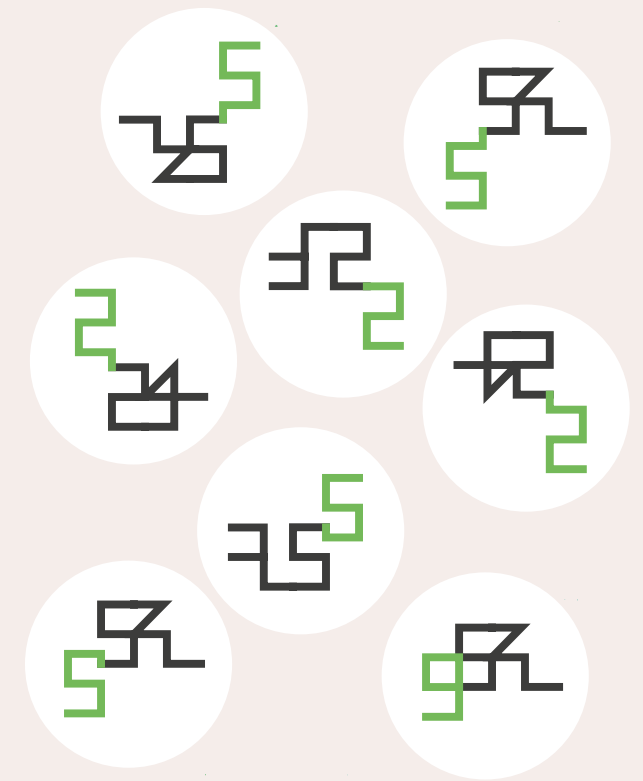
⌚ 30-45 minutes

1

Look carefully at all the letters we have already seen and the ways of combining them (see "An interesting fact").

2

Can you work out how to transcribe the following eight syllables? To help you, they correspond to *ba, ka, ra, wa, me, se, yo* and *zo*.



Answers on p.67.

Workshop answers



Chinese script

Simplified characters	Traditional characters
兰	蘭
岁	歲
龙	龍
龟	龜
图	圖
园	園
乐	樂
贝	貝
层	層
战	戰



Greek alphabet

Upper case	Lower case
A	α
B	β
Γ	γ
Δ	δ
E	ε
Z	ζ
H	η
Θ	θ
I	ι
K	κ
Λ	λ
M	μ



Roman alphabet

Language	Region	The word "peace"
Ewe	West Africa	Nʉtifafa
Afrikaans	South Africa	Vrede
Zulu	South Africa	ukuthula
Aymara	Bolivia	Hacaña
Mapudungun	Chile - Argentina	Tüγκülen
Finnish	Finland	Rauha
Hawaiian	Hawaii	Maluhia
Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia	Perdamaian
Irish	Ireland	Síocháin
Icelandic	Iceland	Friður
Kikuyu	Kenya	Thayũ
Māori	New Zealand	Rangima'arie
Tagalog	Philippines	Kapayapaan
Czech	Czechia	Mír
Wolof	Senegal	Jàmm
Turkish	Turkey	Barış



Hebrew alphabet

Cursive Hebrew	Square Hebrew	Name
א	א	aleph
ב	ב	beth
ג	ג	gimel
ד	ד	dalet
ה	ה	he
ו	ו	vav
ז	ז	zayin
ח	ח	het
ט	ט	tet

Cursive Hebrew	Square Hebrew	Name
י	י	yod
כ	כ	kaf
ך	ך	lamed
מ	מ	mem
נ	נ	nun
ס	ס	samech

Cursive Hebrew	Square Hebrew	Name
ע	ע	ayin
פ	פ	pe
ף	ף	tsade
צ	צ	qof
ק	ק	resh
ש	ש	shin
ת	ת	tav



Georgian alphabet

Asomtavruli	ასომთავრული
Nuskhuri	ნუსხური
Khutsuri	ხუცური
Mkhedruli	მხედრული



Berber alphabet

Taqbaylit	ⵜⴰⵎⴻⵣⵓⵏⵜ
Tamazight	ⵜⴰⵎⴻⵣⵓⵏⵜ
Tacawit	ⵜⴰⵎⴻⵣⵓⵏⵜ
Tamajaq	ⵜⴰⵎⴻⵣⵓⵏⵜ
Tarifit	ⵜⴰⵎⴻⵣⵓⵏⵜ



Arabic alphabet

final	median	initial	isolated	
ح	ح	ح	ح	ṣād
ق	ق	ق	ق	qāf
س	س	س	س	sīn
ج	ج	ج	ج	ǧīm
ف	ف	ف	ف	fā



Khmer alphasyllabary

Jayavarman VII	ជ័យវរ្ម័នទី៧
Kampuchea	កម្ពុជា
Siem Reap	ក្រុងសៀមរាប
Phnom Penh	ភ្នំពេញ
Prasat Bayon	ប្រាសាទបាយ័ន
Angkor	អង្គរ



Ethiopian alphasyllabary

hi	ከ	ti	ተ
li	ለ	fi	ፊ
mi	ሜ	yi	የ
si	ሲ	ki	ከ
ki	ቁ	ni	ኒ



Armenian alphabet

Upper case	Lower case	Upper case	Lower case	Upper case	Lower case
Ա	ա	Ծ	ծ	Ջ	ջ
Բ	բ	Կ	կ	Լ	լ
Գ	գ	Հ	հ	Ս	ս
Դ	դ	Ձ	ձ	Տ	տ
Ե	ե	Ղ	ղ	Ր	ր
Զ	զ	Ճ	ճ	Յ	յ
Է	է	Ս	ս	Ի	ի
Ը	ը	Յ	յ	Փ	փ
Թ	թ	Ն	ն	Ք	ք
Ճ	ճ	Շ	շ	Օ	օ
Ի	ի	Ո	ո	Ֆ	ֆ
Լ	լ	Չ	չ		
Խ	խ	Պ	պ		



Japanese script

Chinese character	Kana
不	ふ
仁	に
毛	も
江	エ
保	ホ
利	リ
計	け
牟	ム
千	チ
末	ま



Cyrillic alphabet

Kremlin (Kreml)	Кремль
Moscow (Moskva)	Москва
Russia (Rossiya)	Россия
Ukraine (Ukraina)	Украина
Bolshoy Theatre (Bol'shoy)	Большой
Siberia (Sibir')	Сибирь
Urals (Ural)	Урал
Saint Petersburg (Sankt-Peterburg)	Санкт-Петербург



Thai alphasyllabary

ก	ไก่	kor kai	chicken
ผ	ผึ้ง	phor phueng	bee
ณ	เนื้อ	chor choe	tree
ข	ไข่	khor khai	egg
ฆ	ระฆัง	khor rakhang	bell
ง	งู	ngor nguu	snake
ช	ช้าง	chor chaang	elephant
ด	เด็ก	dor dek	child
ต	เต่า	tor tao	turtle
ท	ทหาร	thor thahaan	soldier
น	หนู	nor nuu	mouse
ม	ม้า	mor maa	horse
ล	ลิง	lor ling	monkey
ส	เสือ	sor seua	tiger



Korean alphabet

1	il	일	6	yuk	육
2	i	이	7	ch'il	칠
3	sam	삼	8	p'al	팔
4	sa	사	9	ku	구
5	o	오	10	sip	십



Mongolian alphabet

Ger	Tsagaan Sar	Khanbaliq	Khöömii	Kublai Khan
1	2	3	4	5



Vietnamese script

	neutral tone	high tone	low-falling tone	low melodic tone	high melodic tone	low glottal tone
a	à	á	â	ã	ä	à
ã	â	ã	ä	ä	ä	ä
â	â	â	â	â	â	â
e	é	è	é	è	è	è
è	è	è	è	è	è	è
i	í	ì	í	ì	ì	ì
o	ó	ò	ó	ò	ò	ò
ơ	ơ	ơ	ơ	ơ	ơ	ơ
u	ú	ù	ú	ù	ù	ù
ư	ư	ư	ư	ư	ư	ư
y	ý	ỳ	ý	ỳ	ỳ	ỳ



Cherokee syllabary

2	WP	tali
5	A∞Y	hisgi
8	J∞W	tsunela
10	∞AA	sgohi
13	KSS	tsogadu
15	A∞SS	hisgadü
17	SPTS	galiquadu
19	∞∞WS	soneladu
20	WP∞AA	talisgohi



Dongba script

1. temple 2. antelope 3. family
 4. fire 5. dance 6. dispute
 7. panther 8. dragonfly 9. comb
 10. mirror 11. car 12. to paint



Inuktitut alphasyllabary

ᐅᐅ	ulu	knife
ᐅᐅᐅ	iglu	house
ᐅᐅᐅᐅ	qajaq (kayak)	boat
ᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ	angatkuq (angakkuq)	shaman
ᐅᐅᐅ	Sanna (Sedna)	ocean goddess
ᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ	inuksuk (inukshuk)	structure of stones as a landmark or for hunting



Braille system



Mandombe script

ba		me	
ka		se	
ra		yo	
wa		zo	

Glossary

Abjad

An alphabet which transcribes consonants only. Examples: the Hebrew and Arabic alphabets (systems were, however, created subsequently to add the vowels).

Abugida

See Alphasyllabary (cf. Ethiopian script).

Alphabet

A writing system consisting of a set of signs representing the minimal speech sounds of a language. Although such systems existed for centuries before the Phoenicians, their alphabetic system became widely disseminated around the Mediterranean and beyond, influencing the creation of many other alphabets.

Alphasyllabary

A writing system consisting of a set of signs representing the syllables of a language, with vowels associated with them by default. Other signs can then modify or replace the default vowel.

Bicameral

A bicameral writing system has both upper-case (capital) and lower-case letters.

Calligraphy

The art of decorative handwriting (from the Greek *kállos*, “beautiful”, and *graphein*, “to write”). Subject to precise rules associated with styles and historical periods, this art requires much practice, which is often acquired from master calligraphers.

Capitalization

Writing a word with its first letter as a capital letter (upper-case letter) and the remaining letters in lower case.

Consonant

A speech sound which is produced when the airstream encounters an obstacle (teeth, lips, palate etc.). Among the world’s languages, there are many different consonant sounds which use, for example, the mouth or the nose, with or without vibration of the vocal cords and with other differences. The word comes from the Latin *consona-*, “sounding together”.

Diacritic

Also known as a diacritical sign, a diacritic is a glyph added to a letter to modify the sound or prevent an ambiguity.

Downstroke

The thickest type of stroke in a letter, according to the instrument being used, such as a quill, a reed pen or a brush. (Cf. Upstroke.)

Hieroglyph

Literally “sacred writing”, the word comes from the Greek *hierós* “sacred” and *glýphō* “to engrave”. Often associated with ancient Egyptian writing, this term can also apply to the writing of the Hittite and Maya peoples, among others.

Ideogram (or Ideograph)

A written character designed to transcribe an idea (see ideography).

Ideography

A writing system comprising graphic signs each one of which represents one, and usually several, ideas. Chinese writing is often said to be composed of ideograms, but these in fact make up around 10% of the characters. Most of the characters of Chinese are more combinations of meaning and sound.

Illiteracy

The situation of a person who does not have, or has lost, the ability to read and write.

Jamo

A phonological element of Korean script (see Korean alphabet).

Ligature

The joining together of two signs in a writing system. For example, o + e = œ.

Literacy teaching

Teaching of reading and writing to the illiterate.

Logogram

A written character designed to transcribe a word. See Logography.

Logography

A term denoting all writing systems where each sign represents a whole word in the language concerned.

Lower-case letter

A small-format letter in a bicameral writing system.

Monocameral

Said of a writing system which has only a single letter format (case). Cf. bicameral.

Niqqud

A system of dots to indicate vowels in the Hebrew alphabet.

Phoneme

The smallest unit of sound which is significant in a language.

Phonography

Name given to writing systems whose signs represent the sounds of a language.

Phonogram

A written character intended to transcribe a speech sound (see Phonography).

Pictography

A writing system consisting of figurative drawings representing objects and ideas, without reference to pronunciation.

Pinyin

A Roman-alphabet transcription system for the Chinese language initiated in 1958 and adopted two decades later by the International Organization for Standardization. It has been revised several times.

Script

See Writing system

Simplified character (Chinese)

Resulting from a reform implemented in several stages during the twentieth century, simplified characters are easier to write than traditional ones, comprising fewer strokes. While this reform has helped to promote literacy, some observers have criticized this simplification, noting that it has made it more difficult to understand the meaning of the characters.

Syllabary

A writing system consisting of a series of signs representing the syllables of a language.

Syllable

A sequence of sounds pronounced with a single voicing emission. Syllables are combined to make up longer words.

Traditional character (Chinese)

Chinese characters are either “traditional” or “simplified”, the difference being mostly in the number of strokes they comprise. Traditional characters, which are older and have not been subjected to a reform designed to reduce that number of strokes, may comprise some tens of strokes for certain characters. See Simplified character (Chinese).

Transcription

Writing the words of a language in a different writing system.

Transliteration

Writing down a language letter by letter, without regard to pronunciation.

Unicode

An international computing standard which can be used for coding the characters of a very large number of writing systems. (<https://unicode-table.com>)

Upper-case letter (Capital)

A large-format letter in a bicameral writing system (see Capitalization).

Upstroke

The finest type of stroke in a letter, according to the instrument being used, such as a quill, a reed pen or a brush. (Cf. Downstroke.)

Vowel

A speech sound in which the voice encounters no obstruction (cf. Consonant).

Writing system

A set of graphic signs combined in order to represent language and thought, often associated with the dissemination of knowledge. It should be borne in mind that oral traditions also meet this need in accordance with their own systems. For around 6,000 years, writing has used a wide variety of systems (such as pictography, ideography, logography and phonography) and of media and instruments, reflecting human societies and their inventiveness.

Published in 2017 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

© UNESCO 2017

ISBN: 978-92-3-100260-1

EAN: 9789231002601

An Open Access publication under the licence Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO (CC-BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo/>). Users of the contents of this publication accept the terms of use of the UNESCO open access archive (www.unesco.org/open-access/terms-use-ccbyncsa-fr).

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

The publication “Writing Peace” has been produced in the framework of the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for the Culture of Dialogue and Peace.

Coordination :

Intercultural Dialogue Section
Social and Human Sciences Sector of UNESCO

Designer and author:

Eric Cattelain, linguist, expert in intercultural communication

Layout:

Vincent Técheney Hostein and Yves Saint-Lary

This publication is produced under the direction of:

Nada Al-Nashif
Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences
UNESCO

Acknowledgements :

Abderrahim Nehnahi (Arabic), Sona Falakyan and Anaïde Tchapoutian (Armenian), Nchare Oumarou (Bamum), Philippe Benoît (Bangla), UNADEV (Braille), Suyu Liu and Wang Wei (Chinese), Kim Hyeon Gu and Hyunkyung Lee (Korean), Ariunaa Jargalsaikhan (Cyrillic and Mongolian), Helen Gemetchu Hailemeskel (Amharic), Irakli Khodeli (Georgian), Konstantinos Tararas (Greek), Roni Amelan and Didier Guedj (Hebrew), Indira Bucha (Indian scripts), Sotheary Lim (Khmer), Libère Tumba, Godefroy Madzoumou and Fwakasumbu Luwawanu (Mandombe), Yu Fei (Russian), the UNESCO office in Bangkok (Thai), Dadul Samtan (Tibetan), Selma Bennani (Tifinagh), Nguyen Huu Hai, Hoang Minh Nguyet, Pham Thi Thanh Huong, Susan Vize (Vietnamese).

Writing Peace

Writing Peace invites us to explore contemporary scripts. The idea is to introduce us to dozens of them through the act of writing, to make the world a little more close-knit and a little more familiar.

Amid today's digital world and its major upheavals, *Writing Peace* reminds us of another decisive revolution: the advent of writing 6,000 years ago. The genesis of writing and its development within human cultures significantly changed our relationship to trade, education, religion and the arts. How does that translate to our own situations today? What is our understanding of the different writing systems used? How could these contribute to a better understanding of the world and the role we play in it?

By setting out on a journey to discover these scripts and their fascinating beauty, our purpose is to embrace them in their diversity to tackle the most important of challenges: that of peace and our awareness of it. As UNESCO recalls in the preamble of its Constitution, *"since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed"*.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz
International Programme for
a Culture of Peace and Dialogue

ISBN: 978-92-3-100260-1

EAN: 9789231002601



9 789231 002601