

0. The History of Writing - Story Preface

1. The History of Writing

2. Expository Writing

3. Descriptive Writing

4. Argumentative/Persuasive Writing

5. Narrative Writing

6. Poetry Writing

7. Writing for Learning

8. Writing as an Extension of your Mind

Writing began over 5000 years ago in the ancient Sumerian civilization. Most of the early writing systems consisted of small pictures or icons representing words and by combining these pictures one could represent a concept. For instance, if one put a picture of a man with an inverted V over his head, it would mean “home”. These symbols would be drawn on wet clay and when the clay hardened it could be carried to others who could interpret its meaning. This first writing was called “cuneiform”.

About a century later, Egyptians began to develop writing using a similar but different system of pictures representing words. This Egyptian system is called “hieroglyphs” and these symbols were most often written on a type of paper called papyrus using a fine reed point and ink. (These symbols were a mystery to modern generations until the discovery of the Rosetta stone about 200 years ago).

In China, about 3500 years ago, this early civilization formed their own form of writing. This form of writing has thousands of characters but it has survived to today—even though it is not easy to print, and difficult to use in word processing.



Then, about 2000 years ago, writing began to move from a pictorial representation of words to an alphabetic representation that contained consonants and vowels that could be put together in different combinations and interpreted by a reader as a word. Words could be grouped into sentences; sentences into paragraphs. This alphabetic system simplified and standardized writing and soon became a part of everyday life.

Since then, writing has evolved through many different alphabets and languages, but no matter which language is used, writing has the same purpose today as it did centuries ago:

Writing fills the need to communicate with others when spoken language is not possible.

It is vital that all human beings learn to communicate in writing to be considered literate in the modern world. It opens us to expressions of our thoughts, ideas, and stories, and allows us preserve our thinking for others to share. It creates a place where literature can flourish, and information can be transmitted and enhanced. It is what separates us from other species on earth.

Footnotes:

1) Gascoigne, Bamber, History of Writing, History World, Mar/24/2016, Mar/24/2016,
<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?ParagraphID=asp>

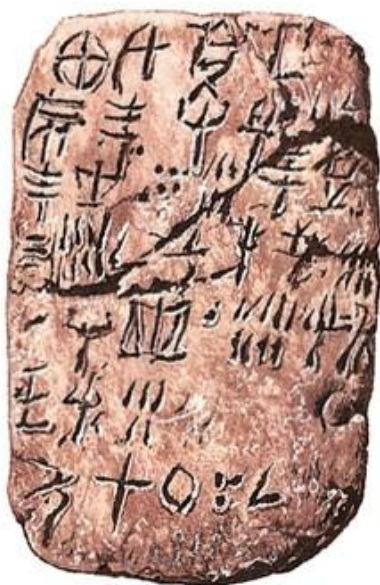
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/The-History-of-Writing-The-Story-of-Writing>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/The-History-of-Writing-The-Story-of-Writing>

Media Stream



Early writing

Alphabets and the History of Writing, Usborne Quicklinks

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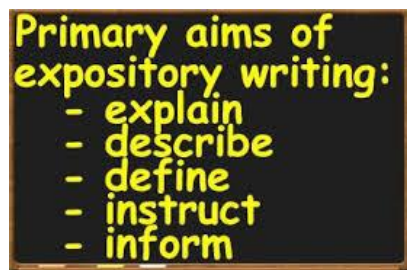
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友谊 和谐 眼 治疗 健康 心 希望 报应 知识 笑
色欲 金钱 田产 音乐 喜 寿 考 爱 幸运
奇迹 无畏 热情 和平 坚持 尊敬 性 姐妹 儿子
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Expository Writing

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