

Chapter Nine: Development of Writing

1. PICTURE-WRITING

Pictures came to represent particular images in a consistent way

2. IDEA-WRITING

Pictogram was accepted as the representation of an object, its meaning was extended to attributes of that object, or concepts associated with it

3. WORD WRITING

Over the centuries the Sumerians began to produce the symbols of their written language by using a wedge-shaped stylus. This form of writing is called cuneiform or wedge-shaped:



became



fish

Sumerians began to think of the symbols more in terms of the name of the things represented than of the things themselves → **Logographic writing**, the symbol stands for both the word and the concept

- **Note:** Example of modern symbols: +, %, @, &
- **Note:** Chinese writing system is logographic → pinyin

hěn gāo xìng rèn shi nǐ
很高兴认识你

Very happy to know you



Rebus principle → the symbol for one entity is taken over as the symbol for the sounds of the spoken word used to refer to that entity, e.g. we see **4 sale** instead of **for sale**.



4. SYLLABLE WRITING

Babylonians, Assyrians, and Persians → cuneiform characters represented the pronunciation of parts of a word, namely a syllable (consisting of a consonant and a vowel) → **Syllabic writing**

At the time that Sumerian writing was flourishing, a similar system was being used by the Egyptians, called **hieroglyphics**; originated as pictography, later turned into logograms, eventually became syllabic

Phoenicians took earlier Egyptian writing:  (beth) →  (syllables starting with *b*)

Japanese writing is part word writing, part syllable writing:


Katakana, used for loan words and for special effects similar to italics in European writing

Hiragana, used for native Japanese words

Kanji, borrowed Chinese characters

5. CONSONANTAL ALPHABET WRITING

Phoenicians developed a writing system of twenty-two characters through **Acrophonic Principle**:

Written words consist of symbols for the consonant sounds, with the appropriate vowel sounds being applied by the reader, e.g.,  for [b].

→ most of the characters stood for consonants alone → **Consonantal Alphabet**: consonants express lexical meanings, and vowels express grammatical meanings, e.g., *ktb*

6. ALPHABET WRITING

A system in which both consonants and vowels are symbolized

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