

Unit 3 - Spoken vs. Written

Lesson 1 - The Development of Writing

Day 1

Discuss

This is a topic that could be expanded greatly for older children. You could go into great detail looking at hieroglyphs, cuneiform, and Chinese characters at this point. We have brought in a guest who explained the difference between Chinese characters and alphabet letters to us. The following are just some topics to consider:

- The first language humans produced, most likely the grunting of the cavemen, was oral.
- The sounds of words may have been the imitation of sounds from nature or the sounds made from expressions of human emotions: fear, surprise
- As more complex oral language developed, there developed a need to write it down. - to keep records - to record events - to preserve fame through recording deeds and thoughts. Some think the Greeks believed that they would achieve the immortality that fame brings only through the written word.
- Written language takes different forms - pictograms and ideograms representing objects directly and ideas represented by those objects - logograms, phonograms, or syllabaries representing sounds of names of objects and combined to make words - alphabets with letters representing individual sounds, the most versatile way of representing thousands of words
- Written language usually represents the oral language, but sometimes a spoken language dies away and the script used to write it remains. e.g. hieroglyphs and cuneiform
- Two forms of Chinese, Mandarin and Cantonese, use the same written language, but the oral languages are very different. Someone speaking Mandarin and Cantonese could share something written, but would not understand each other when speaking.

Homework
Pages 9-12

Day 2

Activity

Spend a day creating pictograms and logograms - perhaps do a poster project and presentation.

Activity

Spend a day in the computer lab exploring the links for this unit, experimenting with hieroglyphs, and trying out other alphabets.