

## Unit 1: Journey Filipinas

### Lesson 7: Diversity of the Written Language

Developed by Judith Miguel

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#### Background

Language is the ability to express and communicate making use of convention signs – verbally, through words; non-verbally, through sign language, visuals, and sounds. Language is also “inseparable from a local culture, (with) meaning that has intonations, gestures, looks, and facial expressions,” unique to the culture, as noted by sister author’s of the website “Building Worlds,” Sara and Teresa Costa. Writing is a system of visible signs used to represent language, and is diverse as the culture of its origin. Through written language, as in all cultures, allows people to use this commonality to communicate and express their beliefs, and perhaps, perpetuate their own culture.

#### Connections to NCSS Standards

*Culture* – students explore and ask questions about the nature of culture and specific aspects of culture, such as language and beliefs, and the influence of those aspects on human behavior.

*Time, Continuity, and Change* – students expand their understanding of the past and of historical concepts and inquiry; and begin to understand and appreciate differences in historical perspectives, recognizing that interpretations are influenced by individual experiences, societal values, and cultural traditions.

#### Lesson Objectives

The students are able to:

- learn how the Hawaiians, Chinese, and Filipinos communicated during ancient/early times
- practice writing and designing Petroglyphs, Shodo, and Alibata

- develop an appreciation for the diversity in writing
- define vocabulary words associated with Petroglyphs, Shodo, and Alibata
- gain a deeper understanding of the cultural history of the Hawaiians, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos

**Time:** four 1-hour sessions

#### Materials

##### Teacher

- samples of Hawaiian Petroglyphs, Japanese Calligraphy, and Philippine Alibata characters
- writing tools (\*identifies student supplies):

##### Hawaiian Petroglyph

- oaktag board
- brown paper bag
- black marker\*
- pencil\*
- scratch paper\*

##### Shodo

- paint brush
- black paint
- white paper
- mat frame

##### Alibata (Bababayin)

- segments of bamboo cut vertically
- permanent marker\*

#### Procedure

##### Opening: Diversity of the Written Language

1. Pass around a blank paper for the students to write their name as they wish.
2. Tell the students that language is “inseparable from a local culture, with meaning that has intonations, gestures, looks, and facial expressions” unique to that culture. Writing is a system of visible signs used to represent

language, and is diverse as the culture of its origin.

3. Post their written names of the board and ask the following:
  - a. How does it feel to write your name?
  - b. What are the similarities and differences between the writings of the names?
  - c. How did you learn to write your name?
  - d. What are the standards for writing in the English alphabet?
  - e. Is it possible for people to survive without language? Written language?
  - f. How can a culture's language help us to learn more about the history of people?
4. Have the students think of all the different forms of written language that they know of and list them on the board:
  - a. English alphabet
  - b. Egyptian hieroglyphics
  - c. Sumerian and Mesopotamian cuneiform
5. Explain that through written language, as in all cultures, it allowed people to use this commonality to communicate and express their beliefs and possibly perpetuate their own culture, while also preserving their cultural history.

### Hawaiian Legends: The Art of Petroglyphs

1. Tell the students that in almost every part of the world where early man has lived, he has made pictures by carving into natural rock surfaces. The early Hawaiians carved "*Na Ki'i*" ("picture") *Pohaku*" ("rock") or Petroglyphs, on the sides of cliffs, caves, and huge boulders. They used sharp rocks for carving their pictures into the rocks, and these petroglyphs can be found on all the Hawaiian Islands. Although they were carved long ago, dating as far back at 900A.D., some of the carvings are still visible today.
2. Share slides or pictures of Petroglyphs found on the different islands.

3. Ask the students what drawings they see and list them on the board:
  - a. people – warriors, kings, surfers
  - b. animals – dogs, pigs, chickens, turtles, birds
  - c. symbols representing transportation, birth, war, hunting, recreational activities
4. Tell the students that the Petroglyphs depict stories, legends, or myths of what might have been going on at the time.
5. Have the students take another good look of the petroglyphs, and have them write a generalization of what life may have been like in ancient Hawaii, and allow the students to share their generalizations.
6. Explain that as Petroglyphs are part of Hawaii's cultural history, the standards of its symbols remain the same.
7. Have the students describe the features – line, shape, color, texture, size, and space of the Petroglyphs they viewed.
8. Next, have the students practice drawing petroglyphs using symbols to express their own life.
9. Provide students with 5 rectangular cut pieces of brown paper bag and have them crush and rub on them to soften and create "wrinkles," resembling "*kapa*," or a Hawaiian loincloth made out of "*wauke*" or "*mamaki*" bark.
10. Next, tell the students that as you read a Hawaiian legend in 5 parts, they will create a Petroglyph for each part:
  - a. introduction
  - b. rising action
  - c. climax
  - d. falling action
  - e. resolution
11. After each part of the plot, allow the students to use their pencil to sketch their petroglyph on each paper bag sheet.
12. When the story is finished, allow the students to tract over their petroglyph with a black marker.

13. Next, have the students write a summary or explanation of what each petroglyph represents.
14. Then on an oaktag board, have the students glue and display their petroglyphs.

### The Art of Shodo Writing: Japanese Calligraphy

1. Share that during the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century, the art of “Shodo” came to Japan from China, as well as the methods of making brushes, ink, and paper. During those times, calligraphy was an important component of education in the ruling noble families, although it was not long until Shodo spread amongst the common people.
2. Explain that in the Japanese elementary school, the students participate in “*Kakizome*” at the beginning of each calendar year, where the students create calligraphy works that symbolize their wishes for the New Year.
3. Have the students learn more about “Shodo” and view a virtual experience of:
  - a. the writing implements
  - b. correct sitting posture
  - c. correct brush grip
  - d. correct stroke technique
  - e. vocabulary words
4. To check the students’ understanding, have the students reflect on what they learned from their virtual experience:
  - a. What are the Shodo writing implements?
    - “bunchin” (paperweight)
    - “shitajiki” (writing pad)
    - “hanshi (calligraphy paper)
    - “fude” (brush)
    - “suzuri” (ink stone)
    - “sumi” (black ink)
  - b. What is the correct sitting posture?
    - sit up straight without leaning on back of seat
    - do not sit up too close to the desk
  - c. What is the correct brush grip?
    - held midway between two ends
    - use three fingers – thumb, index, and middle finger

- rest ring finger for support, allowing pinkie to lay naturally
- brush is held upright, hand not touching paper

d. What is the correct stroke technique?

5. For each character the class practices, demonstrate the correct stroke order, and have the students paint accordingly.
6. When done practicing several Shodo characters, have the students use a mat frame to border their favorite painting.

### Closing: Ancient Philippine Writing: The Art of Alibata

1. Explain that the ancient form of Philippine writing is called “*Baybayin*” (“to spell” in Tagalog) or “*Alibata*” (mimicking the first two letters of the alphabet of the Maguindanao, used in the southern Philippines, which derived from Arabic – “*alif*” and “*bet*”), derived from East Indian Sanskrit. The earliest known book written in Alibata is the Doctrina Cristiana or the “Christian Doctrine” published in 1593.
2. Share that the Alibata writing system is made up of 17 symbols, including 14 consonants and 3 vowels. Symbols placed above, below, or along the side of the letter, changes the sound of the symbol.
3. Share the written form of the Alibata.
4. Further explain that Alibata is written vertically from top to bottom, and from left to right. They were usually on palm leaves and pieces of bamboo and were used for business transactions, love letters, and other personal matters, as well as, for magical and/or religious purposes. In addition, Alibata never adapted to writing English or Spanish words, therefore, it is not fully capable of representing non-Filipino names and words. Fortunately, through the following website: <http://fatoprofugus.net/alibata/alibata.cgi>, the students will be able to get a close translation of their name or almost any other word.

5. Allow students to view this website to get 2 translations to print out:
  - a. Full name
  - b. An adjective of themselves
6. When the students have their printed translations, provide them with a cut segment of a bamboo stalk to write their names and adjective using a permanent marker.

## Suggested Assessment

After each writing practice, ask the students to reflect on how each writing experience made them feel, and to compare and contrast between the written forms of the English Alphabet, Hawaiian Petroglyph, Japanese Calligraphy, and Philippine Alibata.

In written format, have the students explain what may have encouraged a people of a culture to form a (written) language and how this development helped them in everyday life.

Have the students respond thoughtfully to the following questions:

1. Is it possible for people to survive without language?
2. How can a culture's language help us to learn more about the history of its people?

## Enrichment/Extension

Encourage the students to do an independent study of ancient or contemporary forms of writing and have them create an example using the same or similar tools and/or artifacts as the "local" people would.

## Resources

### Writing Systems And Languages

1. "Omniglot: Writing Systems & Languages of the World." <http://www.omniglot.com/>
2. "Building Worlds: The Foundations of Language."

<http://criarmundos.do.sapo.pt/Linguistica/researchlinguistic01.html>

### Hawaiian Petroglyph

1. "Ki'i Pohaku – Hawaiian Petroglyphs." <http://www.hawaii.gov/hidocs/petroglyphs.html#photographs>
2. Cox, Halley and Edward Stasack. Hawaiian Petroglyphs.
3. "Hawaiian Legends." <http://www.nativehawaii.com/hawaiianlegends.html>

### Shodo

1. "Shodo." <http://web-japan.org/kidsweb/virtual/shodo/shodo.html>
2. "What is Calligraphy." <http://www.tooter4kids.com/Japan/calligraphy.htm>
3. Earnshaw, Christopher J., and Charles E. Tuttle. Shodo Japanese Calligraphy.

### Alibata

1. "Filipino Tribal, Alibata, & Baybayin Script Tattoos." <http://www.filiislander.com/filipinotattoo.html>
2. "Baybayin – The Ancient Script of the Philippines." <http://www.mts.net/~pmorrow/bayeng1.htm>
3. Bayani Mendoza De Leon. Baybayin: The Ancient Script of the Philippines: A Concise Manual.
4. "Alibata." <http://fatoprofugus.net/alibata/origin.html>