

Ancient Chinese Writing

Chinese writing originated with pictures, as plainly seen on oracle bones and shells. This bone is engraved with a rare pictograph character of a bird, describing features from its head down to the tail.



In China, there are **more than 3,000 dialects** of Chinese being spoken; however, Chinese writing symbols are all the same across the regions. So people from different provinces in China speak different dialects, but use the same written language.

Chinese writing characters go back more than 3,000 years. The symbols began as **pictures**. Pictures were drawn to resemble the items they represented.

A standard set of characters to be used throughout the Middle Kingdom emerged in 221 B.C. when China was unified for the first time, and the first Emperor Qin, issued that the same symbols should be used by all.



In ancient China, students had to memorize many pictures or characters each week and used brushes and ink to paint the "words".

We only have to learn the 26 letters in the alphabet to be able to read and write. Imagine trying to memorize hundreds even thousands of pictures in order to be able to read and write...

Chinese character writing is done in columns, from top to bottom and from right to left. So you start writing in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

NOW, write down **THREE** facts from the information above to go in your interactive notebook.

Your Turn!

1. Go to the www.mandarin tools.com/chinesename.html
2. Type in your first name in the "Given Name" box
3. Type in your last name in the "Family Name" box
4. Choose an essence, gender and put in your birthdate
5. Click on 'Get a Name' in the box
6. Copy your name and other information **carefully** on the sheet provide and practice it as you will get to PAINT it in a later station!