

## Discussion 10

# Why is writing important?

**Objectives:** To encourage pupils to think about why writing is important and how it is used.

**Materials:**

Photographs, books and/or illustrations of pictographic and writing.

**Class set-up:** Whole group discussion

**Vocabulary:** Script, pictographic

**Discussion:** Discuss why writing is important, emphasizing that writing is a way to communicate information over distance and time, and that writing is a way to record information about business, beliefs and ideas.

- *Why is writing important? How is writing used?*

Ask pupils how they use writing in their daily lives, and to imagine what life would be like if they did not write things down.

- *How could you communicate information if you did not have a writing system?*

Discuss different types of information recording systems. Ask pupils to consider how information could be communicated if you did not use a writing system. Explain that some of the characters in Ancient China were pictorial representations. Discuss what the benefits and/or difficulties of a system like that might be. Look at 'Writing' follow up activity. Compare and contrast a picture-based and a writing system.

- *What kind of information could you convey using a picture-based system?*
- *What kind of information would it be difficult to convey using a picture-based system?*

Ask pupils to consider other ways that information can be conveyed and 'recorded' such as through stories passed down through generations.

- *How are the details of your own life preserved?*
- *How does writing something down change the accuracy of the information you want to preserve?*
- *What are the benefits and problems with communicating and keeping track of important information through speaking and remembering?*

**Background information:**

Writing and Language

**Follow up activity:**

Writing