



Tracing the Development of Cuneiform

Pictographs are written symbols that represent real objects. They are not exact representations of the objects, but are close enough that people can immediately recognize them.

Example: bird = 

		grain	
day		ox	
fire		snake	
food		star	
head		water	

Ideographs are written symbols that represent ideas or actions. Ideographs are created by combining pictographs or by using a single pictograph, such as using the pictograph for “foot” to represent an action.

Example: to go = 

		long	
angry		love	
eat		meal	
garden		month	
large		prayer	

Stylus writing is done with a pen-shaped tool with a rectangular end. Written symbols are impressed, rather than scratched, into soft material like clay. The resulting symbols consist primarily of straight lines.

Example:



Phonograms are written symbols that are used to represent the sound of a syllable in a word. For example, by combining phonograms for the sounds “kur” and “li,” one could represent the word “curly.”

Example:



	bi (as in “being”)		ni (as in “many”)
	ki (as in “key”)		re (as in “rainy”)
	kur (as in “curly”)		ti (as in “pretty”)
	li (as in “leave”)		til (as in “settle”)
	me (as in “men”)		u (as in “universe”)
_____		_____	
English word		Phonogram	