

# ORIGINS OF THE SPANISH ALPHABET

Isabella Lisboa Saenz

Valentina Ramírez Ángel

Manuela Vélez Vásquez

7ºAF

Miss Manuela Edith Vanegas Muñetón

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## **JUSTIFICATION**

We are going to talk about how this system of communication started, when and where people began to use it, thinking specifically in the Spanish alphabet.

This information we bring also talks about different questions that everybody makes about the past, questions that also interested us. In the investigations we included other languages, because not always reading and expressing ideas were the same or in the same ways we use today.

We chose this topic for understand first, the beginning of it, and for identifying which languages and cultures were including in this process, but the most important reason is to know how the Spanish alphabet evolved until today.

## **PROBLEMATIC QUESTION**

How did the Spanish alphabet evolve through history until today?

## **OBJECTIVES**

### General:

To identify how and when Spanish alphabet was born and how it developed.

### Specific:

1. To describe what civilization started developing the Spanish alphabet.
2. To associate different alphabets that influenced the Spanish one.

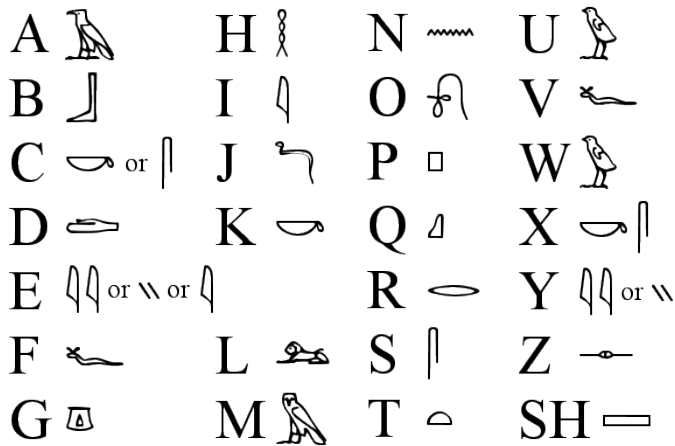
## ORIGINS OF THE SPANISH ALPHABET

As we know the alphabet is the base of the language. If there weren't letter or even an alphabet language could not be developed.

**The first alphabets** begin with the drawings of nomads because that was the way how they could communicate what they did and how they did.

Egyptian writing system (Hieroglyphics)

The first writings system was the pictographs that were developed by **Sumerians**, the pictographs were drawings, they drew what they saw; if they saw a tree they drew a tree, and also, they got in count the number of how many they saw. These



evolve to the cuneiform that is the antique mode of writing that everybody knows, the cuneiform is not so different to the pictographs is just that it doesn't include drawings, it includes straight figures: they all wrote in clay or in stone this "symbols". Priests were the

ones that develop this systems, they used for records sales, taxes and agreements. Then the **Egyptians** continued with the hieroglyphics that where similar to the pictographs.

Greek alphabet.

LETRA	NOMBRE	LETRA	NOMBRE		
A	α	alfa	N	ν	ny
B	β	beta	Ξ	ξ	xi
Γ	γ	gamma	Ο	ο	ómicron
Δ	δ	delta	Π	π	pi
E	ε	épsilon	Ρ	ρ	ro
Z	ζ	zeta	Σ	σ	sigma
H	η	eta	T	τ	tau
Θ	θ	theta	Υ	υ	épsilon
I	ι	iota	Φ	φ	phi
K	κ	kappa	X	χ	xi
Λ	λ	lambda	Ψ	ψ	psi
M	μ	mu	Ω	ω	omega

The next ones that continue the development of the alphabet were the **Phoenicians** and the **Greek**. As you know cuneiform is like the base of the writing .The Phoenicians developed an alphabet, this alphabet had 22 symbols. Each symbol stood for a consonant sound. This alphabet make easier to writing because was easier to memorize in which order it need to be

written to have sense. In 750 B.C, the Greeks had begun using this alphabet .Around 500 B.C the Greeks begun adding letters to the Etruscan alphabet since they adapted to their language. The word alphabet comes from the first two letters in Greek alphabet-*alpha and beta*.

					SAG Cabeza
					NINDA Pan
					GU; Comer
					AB; Vaca
					APIN Arado
					SUHUR Carpa
En torno al 3100 a.C. (Uruk IV)	En torno al 3000 a.C. (Uruk III)	En torno al 2500 a.C. (Fara)	En torno al 2100 a.C. (Ur III)	En torno al 700 a.C. (Época neosumeria)	Lectura sumeria + significado

Sumerian writing system  
(Cuneiform)

Phoenician alphabet.	
	'
	B
	G
	D
	H
	W
	Z
	H
	T
	Y
	K
	L
	M
	N
	S
	'
	P
	S
	Q
	R
	Š
	T

## ROMANS AND LATIN

Around 100 B.C, the Romans adopted the Greek alphabet. The **Romans** changed some letters. The result was an alphabet that looks much like ours today. The word *alphabet*, from the first two letters of the Greek alphabet—*alpha* and *beta*—was first used, in its Latin form, *alphabetum*, by Tertullian (2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century CE), a Latin ecclesiastical writer and Church Father, and by St. Jerome. The Classical Greeks customarily used the plural of *to gramma* (“the letter”); the later form *alphabētos* was probably adopted under Latin influence.

As all of us know, the Spanish language came from the **Latin**. The Latin alphabet belongs to the **Romans**.

According to the Romans legend; their ancestors adapted the Greek alphabet, while the adaptation Romans created the Latin. Well, there is no enough evidence to support this legend.

Y and Z were taken from the Greek alphabet; by the time the Latin alphabet was the base of other alphabets, one of them is the Spanish one.

*Details:*

- Latin was original written either from right to left, left to right, or alternating between those two directions (boustrophedon). By the 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century BC it was normally written from left to right.
- The sounds /g/ and /k/ were not distinguished in the oldest Latin texts. Before A the letter K was used for these sounds, before O or V, Q was used, and C was used elsewhere. The letter G was later added to the alphabet to distinguish these sounds.
- Before a vowel or between vowels I was pronounced /j/. Elsewhere it was pronounced /i/.



Greek alphabet

## **THE SPANISH FORM**

When the Phoenicians found the Sumerian writing system was too impractical, they began to think that, they should work in simplify the relation between sounds and images, so it isn't endless and hard to learn or speak.

The Spanish alphabet has its base in the Latin alphabet, which in turn descends from the Greek alphabet. The Greeks adopted letters from the Phoenician alphabet, which had Hebrew and Egyptian influence, and it is composed of twenty-seven letters: vocals called and consonants. Some have certain distinctive characteristics that can depend on training or by function. In its original intention, the alphabet or ordered series of the letters of a language continues the graphic representation of their usual phonemes.



## CONCLUSIONS

- All alphabets pass through some or many changes to get finished and useful for people.
- The first ways of writing were too easy as symbols and drawings.
- The Spanish alphabet has twenty seven letters in total, five are vocals and the rest are consonants.
- The ones that started writing were the Sumerians and then civilizations started developing and evolving too different.
- Alphabets were written in many things as stone, clay, and papyrus, etc.
- As the alphabet pass through many languages their names changed too.
- Alphabets are created much time ago.
- All the alphabets pass through many civilizations, but the most similar writing systems are of the: Sumerians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans.
- The Latin alphabet was written by right to left and in the actual age we write it by left to right.
- In last ages there were people specialized on the writing system, but nowadays all one.

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