

Subject: The Technology of Writing from Mesopotamia to Now

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Sources used to create lesson plan: <https://jhiblog.org/2020/03/16/what-the-digital-dark-age-can-teach-us-about-ancient-technologies-of-writing/>

[https://www.academia.edu/2216869/Tablets\\_as\\_artefacts\\_scribes\\_as\\_artisans](https://www.academia.edu/2216869/Tablets_as_artefacts_scribes_as_artisans)

Age of students: Grades 9-10

Learning Objective:

What will students be able to do by the end of this lesson? What new skills will they have gained?

1. Students will be able to identify the drawbacks and benefits of storing information in different forms.
2. Students will be able to develop a plan for the long-term preservation of information.
3. Students will practice effective collaboration and presentation skills.

Materials needed:

A computer or equivalent with internet access

Space for effective group work

Discussion Questions:

Specific Comprehension Questions

1. What is systems theory?
2. Why are people afraid of the coming of the Digital Dark Age?
3. What are the major components of cuneiform writing?

Analytical Questions

4. Do you agree or disagree with the fears surrounding the Digital Dark Age?
5. What do you think are the most effective methods for preserving information?
6. Do you think we practice the most effective methods? Why or why not?

Activities:

1. In groups, check out projects online like the BBC Domesday Project and the Rosetta Project online. What are the goals of these projects?
2. Now, in your groups use the [Internet Archive Wayback Machine](#) to look at past versions of some of your favorite or most-visited websites. What do you notice about earlier versions of these sites? Is there any information from these versions that are missing?
3. After having explored internet archives and the technology of cuneiform through your readings, in your groups, design a plan that you think is best for the preservation of information. Think about materials, language, storage, and most of all, people!
4. Now that you have formulated your plan, present it to the class. Be sure to make clear your argument as to why your method is the best for information preservation. Pitch your work!
5. After all pitches have been made, come back together as a class. What did your pitches borrow from the Mesopotamians? What did you borrow from modern technology?