



NCTA Lesson Plan

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Title: Language Builders

Theme/Topic: Language, art, writing, and fine motor

Introduction: The purpose of this lesson is to introduce children to a variety of types of languages/words very different than our own which is most prevalent in the picture-based languages of East Asia. The lesson will include an open-ended opportunity to create their own language after exploring a small sampling of East Asian characters.

Grade level: Preschool

Duration of lesson: 10 – 15+ Minutes (depending on interest level of children with follow-up independent opportunities during work time a.k.a. centers)

Early Learning Standards:

- 1. Motor Development: Small Muscle:** Coordinate the use of hands, fingers and wrists to manipulate objects and perform tasks requiring precise movements.
- 2. History: Heritage:** Develop an awareness and appreciation of family cultural stories and traditions.
- 3. Language: Expressive Language:** Use drawings or other visuals to add details to verbal descriptions & **Vocabulary:** with modeling and support, determine the meanings of unknown words/concepts using the context of conversations, pictures that accompany text or concrete objects.
- 4. Writing: Composition:** With modeling and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating and emergent writing to tell a story, to express ideas, and to share information about an experience or topic of interest & “read” what they have written

Essential Questions:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain our language/letters/words<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. What do our letters look like?b. How do you know when words end?c. What letters do you know?d. Can you draw some letters? | <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. How is it different compared to picture languages?<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Look at the lines: what do you notice?b. (After providing examples) Can you guess what any of the words mean?c. How can you tell what the words mean? |
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Learning Objectives (these objectives are listed easiest to hardest; children at higher levels are expected to complete each of the previous levels):

1. Lower Levels: Students will explore picture-based languages
2. Higher Levels: Students will create their own picture-based language
3. Highest Levels: Students will share their picture-based language with others

Materials Needed:

- Picture books/pictures of picture based language (specifically selected pictures that resemble the objected described such as mountain or big)
- Writing materials: crayons, markers, pencils, pens, paintbrushes/paint
- Paper
- Long is a Dragon: Chinese Writing for Children (or similar books)
- Smartboard/White board (for drawing pictures)

Pre-Assessment of Prior Knowledge: In order to complete the lowest level learning objective, students must be able to recognize language in print (home language). To complete the higher two level learning objectives, students must be able to manipulate classroom tools with ease.

Lesson Activities/Instructional Strategies (5-7 steps):

1. Introduce images of Chinese characters to children; allow for open discussion about the images while asking the essential questions (if needed include images of English words to compare)
2. Pull 2 to 3 examples of Chinese characters and have students guess the meaning
 - a. Mountain: “What can we think of that’s really big? You might see it in nature and there are usually a lot of them in one area. What do you climb up with a big back pack? Can someone draw a mountain for me?”
 - b. Big: “When we keep growing what happens to our bodies? If I stretch out my body what happens? Could you write/draw the word big?”
 - c. Sun: “What is high in the sky and warms our bodies? We draw this a lot in our pictures! Who can draw a sun? Can someone write the word sun?”
3. Compare the Chinese character to the English word and then have the students draw a picture of the object on the board
4. Explain to students that this is a picture-based language from China that does not use letter or words but instead pictures to send/write messages.
5. Provide the children the materials and invite them to recreate/create their own language/words
6. *Extended learning: Have students write the English words next to the new word. Ask students to explain the process of the formation of the new word.*
7. *Extended learning: Leave materials out during center time: invite students to write a story, draw a picture, or write a letter using their words*
8. After students have completed their word, have them explain the word and dictate their explanation on the sheet.

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Resources:

- Long is a Dragon: Chinese Writing for Children: <https://www.amazon.com/Long-Dragon-Chinese-Writing-Children/dp/1881896013>
- Shu Hui Lin (or other Chinese language teachers)
- Chinese Language/Characters for Beginners: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5FNvW19GbA&t=2s>
- See bottom for sample character pictures (via google/pinterest)

Closing/Reflection Activity: Reflect on the differences between our language and Chinese language.

Post-Assessment: Classroom teacher will engage in formative assessment during the lesson. Teacher will check for understanding based on student performance providing hand-over-hand assistants or engaging in informal conversation based upon the children's developmental level, language development, and process occurring during the lesson.

Extension Activities/Extending the Lesson/Cross-Curricular Connections :

In the HighScope curriculum (preschool, similar to Montessori), students have an hour “work time” where they are able to select one of the six centers presented in the classroom: art/writing, sensory table/manipulatives, library/books, blocks/train table, kitchen/dramatic play, and music.

- Art Center Offerings: Paint with different size brushes their own language and/or copy/trace over laminated words
- Classroom environment: Place Chinese/Korean/Japanese/Vietnamese characters around the room alongside picture label and English word label
- Higher level extensions/challenges: Students share/present their ideas to the classroom, other teachers, or other class.
- Block area/manipulatives: Print out large Chinese/Korean/Japanese/Vietnamese characters and have children “trace” with blocks

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Image Examples:

