Write A Secret Message

Grade Level: Elementary

Purpose: Students are to identify a major component of culture: writing/language.

Objectives: 1. Students will work in pairs to create a message using the Phoenician alphabet.
   2. The pairs will then present their Phoenician messages to the class.

Materials: butterfly paper  
colored pencils  
Phoenician alphabet with translation

Background Information:
Thousands of years ago, people called Phoenicians lived near the Mediterranean Sea. The Phoenicians used an alphabet much like ours. In fact, scholars think the modern Western alphabet developed from the ancient Phoenician one. As you look at the chart on this page, you will see many similarities in the letters. You’ll notice that some symbols stand for more than one letter. Scholars think different letters may have developed from one symbol. Four pairs of letters have the same symbol: C and G, F and V, I and J, and U and W. The Phoenician alphabet did not have all the letters ours does. We have added symbols to complete the ancient alphabet. You can use the chart to read the secret words below. They are written the way Phoenicians wrote - from right to left.

Procedures:  
1. Instructor will read the background information: “Write a Secret Message.”  
2. Instructor will form the class into pairs.  
3. Each pair will then receive the Phoenician alphabet with translation.  
4. The pairs will write their message and then translate the message.  
5. An oral presentation will then follow with each pair explaining their message.

Benchmarks:  
SS.A.2.1.1- Knows methods of communication from long ago and the technological developments that facilitated communications.  
SS.A.2.2.1- Knows the significant scientific and technological achievements of various societies.  
GEOGRAPHY STANDARD 10-HUMAN SYSTEMS: The characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics.
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\begin{array}{cccccccc}
A & B & C & D & E & F & G & H \\
I & J & K & L & M & N & O & P \\
Q & R & S & T & U & V & W & X \\
Y & Z & \text{æ} & \text{æ} & \text{æ} & \text{æ} & \text{æ} & \text{æ} \\
\end{array}
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