

# HOW THE ALPHABET WAS MADE

by Rudyard Kipling

In the Early Times, there was a little girl named Taffimai Metallumai, but we'll call her Taffy. She lived in a cave with her mother, Teshumai, and her father, Tegumai. She was well loved by her parents, which was good because Taffy was very smart and could often get into trouble. Once she sent a letter to her mother. This would normally be fine, but Taffy did not know how to write, since writing had not been discovered yet. Instead, she drew pictures in her letter, pictures that Taffy thought were very beautiful. Her mother, however, did not understand Taffy's pictures, and thought they meant something else entirely. The letter made many problems, but that is another story.



One day, Taffy and her father were fishing. Taffy should have been helping her mother hang the hides to dry on the drying poles, but she would rather fish with her father. While they were eating lunch, Taffy had an idea for a secret surprise for her father. She asked Tegumai to make a sound, any sound at all.

"Ah," he said. "Is that what you wanted?"

"Yes!" said Taffy. "That's a great sound. You look like a fish with its mouth open!"

"Don't be rude," said Tegumai.

"I don't mean to be rude. This is part of my secret surprise for you." With that, Taffy took a shark's tooth and began drawing on some tree bark. "I'm going to draw a fish with its mouth all open."

"Why?" asked Tegumai.

"Don't you see?" replied Taffy. "I can draw this picture and it will remind you of the noise I made when I jumped out of the beaver swamp and scared you!"

"Go on" said Tegumai, who was now very interested.

Taffy finished her drawing and showed it to Tegumai. "That's very good, but you forgot the fish's feeler. Let me try," he said. Tegumai got a piece of bark and drew the fish with its mouth open. Then he added the feeler across the mouth. It looked like this:



"Will you be surprised when you see this?" asked Taffy.

"Oh yes," smiled Tegumai. "I will remember when you said 'Ah!' and scared me."

"Make another noise" said Taffy.

"Yah," said Tegumai.

Taffy began to draw. "It's the 'Ah' sound but with something more. I'll draw the fish and its tail, with its mouth open."


"The something more is the Yer sound," said Tegumai. "Try drawing just the tail for that sound."



"That's beautiful" said Taffy. "Now make another sound."

The rest of the afternoon, Tegumai would make a sound, then he and Taffy would draw the sound. When Tegumai said "Ooh!" it became a round egg.



The "Ssh" sound was a snake,  and so on and so forth until they had drawn all the sound pictures they wanted. There were 26 sound pictures and that was the alphabet, all complete.

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## Quick Quiz

Answer the following questions.

Who wanted to make a special surprise for her father?

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What did Taffy draw on?

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Where did Taffy and Tegumai live?

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What animal did Taffy draw when Tegumai said "Ah"?

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## Matching

Draw a line from the letter to the sound picture Taffy and Tegumai drew.

A



Y



O



S



## Vocabulary

Circle the correct meaning of the word.

normally

- A. in the usual way
- B. in olden days
- C. slowly
- D. happily

entirely

- A. quickly
- B. amazingly
- C. as a part of
- D. completely

feeler

- A. flat hat
- B. long antenna on some animals
- C. sharp and pointed teeth
- D. eyeglasses

## Word Search

Circle each of the words on the list in the puzzle. Words can go up, down, backwards or diagonally.

K N H W U E Q G F H S R X U N  
 W A R D J F N I G G H E W N C  
 S X P O K X S T X E S V W C L  
 R E K S I H W E I U R A Y D R  
 A W Q J P H E D R R V E J X S  
 F N A T R G N P U U E B B L X  
 A A L Y P U R U H L T L L Q A  
 V V P C O I A Y H J G C Y F Q  
 B N H S S Q A E K S Y I I M A  
 R K A E N O R M A L L Y T P V  
 N F B L X G M S U T J C F J Y  
 I D E S N A K E W N T A G O B  
 C M T F F Q D R U A E V V V S  
 I W R R I M F C H M M E X G M  
 B Y X B V J X X F Q A P U Z I

NORMALLY  
 ENTIRELY  
 WHISKER  
 ALPHABET  
 CAVE

FISH  
 PICTURE  
 SOUND  
 EGG  
 SNAKE

BEAVER  
 SWAMP  
 SURPRISE  
 DRAW



