

# Meet the Cippi of Malta

## Activity Guide



اللوفا أبو ظبي  
LOUVRE ABU DHABI



LOUVRE



Heritage  
Malta





These are *cippi* (pronounced "sipi") from Malta! *Cippi* are types of pillars. Each pillar has a different type of writing carved into its base, here we see Phoenician and ancient Greek.

Cippus  
Malta  
3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE  
Marble  
Musée du Louvre



The Phoenicians were a people who lived in modern-day Lebanon more than two thousand years ago. They were skilled shipbuilders, navigators, and sea-traders who spread their alphabet to different parts of the Mediterranean while on trade voyages.

The Phoenician alphabet was made up of twenty-two consonant letters, and was written from right to left.

The ancient Greeks used the Phoenician alphabet to create their own writing. Later, the Romans did the same to create the Latin alphabet, which most people who speak English or French use today.

Cippus  
Malta  
3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE  
Marble  
National Museum of  
Archaeology,  
Valletta, Malta

## Fun Fact

Three hundred years ago, the Greek writing on these pillars was used to translate the Phoenician alphabet.

It is thanks to the *cippi* of Malta that we can read Phoenician writing!

Can you think of any other language that is written from right to left?

Hint: It is the official language of the UAE.

On the next page, challenge your friend to crack the secret code using the alphabet chart.

# Use the Phoenician alphabet below to write a secret message to a friend.

Remember to write your message from right to left and to sign it with your name in Phoenician!

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## Phoenician Alphabet Chart



A



B



G



D



E



F



Z



H



TH



I



K



L



M



N



X



O



P



S



Q



R



S



T