

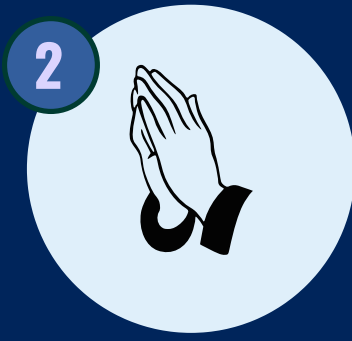
# Evolution of

# Calligraphy

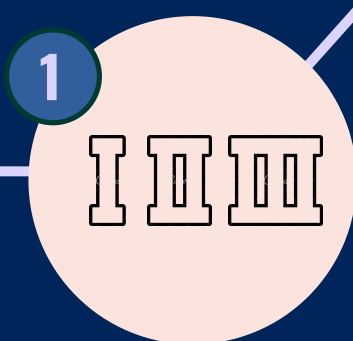


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Section 65B

Calligraphy originated from 2 Greek words: 'Kallo' (beauty) and 'graphein' (to write). Calligraphy plays an important and integral part in many cultures and religion (Peter, 2019). "Western calligraphy has its roots in Latin writing system, which emerged circa 3,000 BC ... Romans used long rolls of papyrus using reed or quill pens" (Harris, 2018) with a strong tie in religious expression and monks copied Biblical texts and other manuscripts in the Middle Ages.



History of Calligraphy



History of Writing

Stem from oral stories, writing is the most fundamental forms of communication and it traces back to its roots in hieroglyphs or pictograms (Siebert, 2015). The earliest writing system evolved independently and around the same time in Egypt and Mesopotamia, invented by the Sumerians around 3500 BCE. Writing has taken its course, as Bolter (2001) noted, that all writing involves mechanization. Educated and trained monks used chisels and pens to handcraft a stone tablet, or a scroll, or a book, which requires considerable technical skill for religious expression.

"THE VALUE OF A PRINTED BOOK IS ITS CONTENT, BUT THE VALUE OF A HANDWRITTEN BOOK WAS MOSTLY THE OBJECT ITSELF" - HARRIS (2018)

The advent of print in the 15th century, by Gutenberg in 1440, took over handwriting for mass printing. Typography was developed to create repeatable fonts to now type-able fashion. Through signs, posters, newspapers, etc., typefaces became larger and catchier. By the 1800s, medieval art and handcrafted individual art has become commonplace, and international artistic styles have developed considerably (Siebert, 2015).



Typography



Educational Pros & Cons

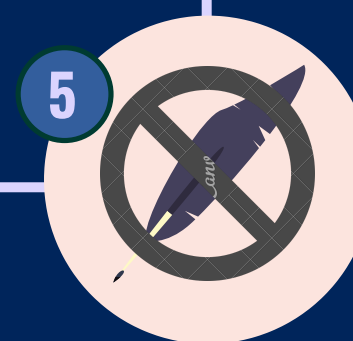
**Pro:** Calligraphy involves the concept of mental resources with reading, mathematics, and writing (Spear-Swerling, 2006). It is also used as a meditative and relaxing process that helps learners develop fine motor skills and memory retention. Most people are most creative when they are using their hands for self-expression, to process their thoughts and support critical thinking. Calligraphy also helps build confidence and facilitate connection with other people (Chan, 2020).

**Cons:** Some authorities argued for the superiority of one form over the other which posed an issue for children with learning disabilities (LD). Children with LD or physical needs often have difficulty learning and producing cursive. Educators have complained that cursive sometimes took longer for students to learn compared to printing (Spear-Swerling, 2006).

By the end of the 19th century, both Europe and America have seen a remarkable renewal of interest in calligraphy. This move goes back to the roots in Arts and Crafts. Under the influence of Edward Johnson, a self-taught scripter, he began teaching handwriting at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London in 1899 (Clayton, n.d.). The Writing Instrument Manufacturers Association created **National Handwriting Day** in 1977, which offers "a chance for all of us to re-explore the purity and power of handwriting" (Cohen, 2018).



Popularity on the Rise



No Longer Mandatory

Canadian revised curriculum dropped cursive writing as of 2006. With the rise in popularity of computers and mobile devices, students began learning to type rather than mastering handwriting (Neilson, 2017). With the loss of cursive, there is also a decline in the postal mail, losing the sense of connectedness through handwriting.

The rise of internet web resources brought calligraphy to light through social media over the past decade. Social media promoted the use of cursive for decorative items and calligraphy gained popularity once again; leading to more appreciation for cursive print on local or mass-produced items like postcards, wedding invitations, glass materials, logos, etc.



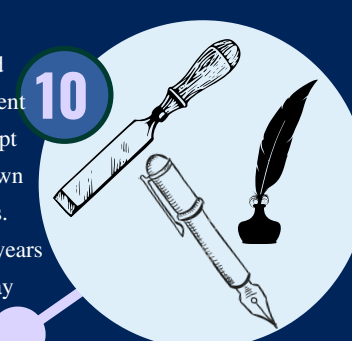
Art & tech



Self-Learning

Thanks to the internet, most people are self-taught cursive enthusiasts. There have always been groups that advocate the protection and preservation of the art of Calligraphy. Some gathered to produce books and video tutorials to educate people on how to begin learning Calligraphy. There is an abundance of tutorials, blogs, books, and even tracing Calligraphy print kit in book stores all across Canada for learners of all ages that would like to learn how to handwrite. As well as the development of computer and tablet apps created for learners to trace and learn the basics of cursive rather than using traditional materials.

In the past, most calligraphy prints were produced using a brush, a flat-balled or round-nibbed pen, water-based ink, parchment or paper, and tools such as templates, knives and lightboxes for producing strict, uniform patterns (Peter, 2019). In recent decades, typewriters and word processors began combining different handwriting styles globally. Modern script typefaces emulate the styles of hand-drawn lettering from different historical periods. More innovative development in recent years has been graffiti using paintbrushes, spray paint, etc. (Clayton, n.d.). Modern tools consist, but not limited to, brush pens, classic dip pens, pencil, markers, as well as more traditional broad nib pens. Modern calligraphy is any style of calligraphy that does not follow the fundamental rules of traditional calligraphy script, so it allows more room for creative expression



Old vs. New Materials



Modern Purposes

The modern purpose of calligraphy varies from business to personal use. Some take on calligraphy as a new hobby or as a personal challenge, to save or to earn money, for self-improvement, or to bond with family and friends. Calligraphy can be used as a creative outlet and calming meditation purposes or for memory keeps like scrapbooking (Fieber, 2021).

## References

See UBC blog for full reference list