Writing System in Japan

After you watch the video, let’s fill out this sheet!

1. Japanese characters (alphabet) is made out of sounds (syllables). How many basic sounds does Japanese have?

2. In Japan, there are three different character writing systems. Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji. Which one is which?

3. Which country did kanji originally come from? ________________

4. Japanese characters can be written horizontally and _________________. Books are opened from ___________ → ___________.

5. Hiragana and Katakana are simplified from Kanji. Which characters would you use when you write foreign words and names? ________________

6. Stroke order is very important to writing beautiful characters. Usually it starts from 1.[left / right] to 2.[left / right] 3.[bottom / top] to 4.[bottom / top]. *Please please write combination and circle it.

Fun Fact!
Do you know what the meaning of “emoji” is? Did you know it actually came from a Japanese word? Emoji is made up of two Japanese words. Guess what these two word’s meanings are?

Answer........! [E (絵) = Picture    Moji (文字) = Character, letter or text ]

In 1990s, pagers/beepers became popular in Japan. Since the words could be fit into the small display, people became creative in sending their messages each other. Using picture characters to express their emotions digitally. Emojis became a universal font, but at the beginning, three big Japanese phone companies each had their own. Sometimes it did not “translate” to different cellular phones. Since mostly it was originally developed in Japan, you might find a lot of culturally related emoji like this!

Ogre (oni)  Tengu  Girl’s Festival  School Satchels  School Uniform  Children’s Day

Compare the different cellular emojis.