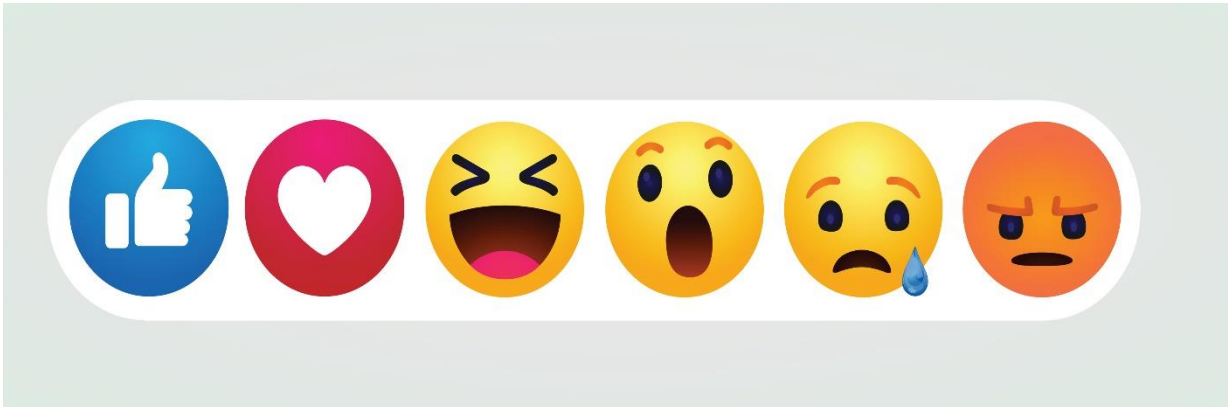


## THE STORY OF EMOJI



Some people love them, some people hate them, but they are everywhere. They are a kind of modern-day Esperanto. Emoji is the world's fastest-growing digital language and it can become the new international language of the world. The reason that emojis are becoming so popular is that we can express our feelings through an image. Text messaging is somewhat limited in expressing our emotions and emoji can help bridge that gap.

It all started with emoticons, facial expressions made with punctuation marks (for example :-), the expression that indicates a smile). The first emoticon appeared in an issue of a magazine way back in 1881. Yes, emoticons are very old. It was just about 100 years later (1982, to be exact) that emoticons were first used as a way of communicating emotions online and they became more commonly used after the turn of the millennium.

Emojis as we know them today, however, first arrived on the scene in Japan in 1999, thanks to a man named Shigetaka Kurita and the company he worked for, Docomo. The word 'emoji' comes from the Japanese for picture e + letter moji. It all started with 176 little symbols and they became an instant hit. They became popular with young people and started to spread around the world.

Now we can choose from over 3,000 emojis and on Facebook Messenger, people send and receive 5 billion emojis every single day. They say a picture can say a thousand words. An emoji can do the same. For teenagers who don't like writing very much, this idea sounds perfect. These little images are everywhere. More than a third of millennials say such tools actually communicate their thoughts and feelings better than words do.

The Oxford Dictionary even made an emoji its 2015 Word of the Year (the "Face with Tears of Joy"). They calculated that this single icon made up 20 percent of U.S. and U.K. emoji use, followed by the kissy-face emoji, which accounted for 9 percent in the

U.S., according to their research. There has even been a book fully translated into emoji: Emoji Dick (a complete emoji translation of Herman Melville's masterpiece "Moby Dick").

**A Mark the sentences T (true) or F (false).**

- 1 We can express our feelings using emojis.
- 2 The first emoticons appeared in 1982.
- 3 Emojis were created in Japan.
- 4 Shigetaka Kurita created 176 emojis.
- 5 Now there are almost 3,000 emojis.
- 6 The kissy-face emoji is the most frequently used emoji.
- 7 The Oxford Dictionary named the most popular emoji, 'face with tears of joy', as its 2015 Word of the Year.
- 8 Emoji Dick is a translation of Melville's classic novel Moby Dick into Emoji.

**B What about you?**

- 1 How often do you use emojis?
- 2 Which is your favourite emoji?
- 3 Is there an emoji that you find annoying?
- 4 Do you think that the emojis we choose can reflect our personality?

**C Do some research about the most popular emojis among your classmates and make a list of TOP FIVE EMOJIS in your class.**