

(E) The Script of Your Dreams (1/3) [15 Points]

Mandombe is a script, or writing system, created in 1978 by Wabeladio Payi. Today, it is used to write the Democratic Republic of the Congo's four national languages — Kongo, Lingala, Tshiluba, and Swahili. According to legend, the script was revealed to Payi by Congolese prophet Simon Kimbangu in a dream.¹

| | |
|---|--|
| 1.  | 12.  |
| 2.  | 13.  |
| 3.  | 14.  |
| 4.  | 15.  |
| 5.  | 16.  |
| 6.  | 17.  |
| 7.  | 18.  |
| 8.  | 19.  |
| 9.  | 20.  |
| 10.  | 21.  |
| 11.  | 22.  |

¹That's not all for the backstory — at one point, the script landed Payi in trouble with the authorities. The problem was related to the fact that in traditional Kongo culture, mirrors are powerful, magical devices. Evidently, something about the script was too mirror-like.



(E) The Script of Your Dreams (2/3)

On the previous page, in an arbitrary order, are 22 words of the Kongo language² written in the Mandombe script. Below are the same Kongo words, written in the Roman alphabet, each one accompanied by its English translation.

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------|------------|--------------------|
| A. wonso | <i>"at all"</i> | L. mongo | <i>"mountain"</i> |
| B. tewa | <i>"bang"</i> | M. mpuku | <i>"mouse"</i> |
| C. tuti | <i>"cloud"</i> | N. mwisi | <i>"smoke"</i> |
| D. mfumvu | <i>"cord"</i> | O. fula | <i>"to blow"</i> |
| E. ngombe | <i>"cow"</i> | P. zenga | <i>"to cut"</i> |
| F. fumbuka | <i>"dead"</i> | Q. zuba | <i>"to hit"</i> |
| G. kutu | <i>"ear"</i> | R. simba | <i>"to hold"</i> |
| H. tiya | <i>"fire"</i> | S. yimbila | <i>"to sing"</i> |
| I. mfinda | <i>"forest"</i> | T. venza | <i>"to strike"</i> |
| J. mpunda | <i>"horse"</i> | U. maza | <i>"water"</i> |
| K. lumonso | <i>"left"</i> | V. nani | <i>"who"</i> |

E1. Match the words written in Mandombe (1-22) to their Romanized equivalents (A-V).

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.
9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16.
17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22.

² Kongo, also called Kikongo, is a language of the Bantu family spoken natively by about 7 million people in central Africa. It is also widely learned and used as a second language in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and has served as a basis of several creole languages in Africa and the Americas.



(E) The Script of Your Dreams (3/3)

E2. Given the numerals 1, 2, 3, and 4, how would you write 5 in Mandombe? Choose from W, X, Y, and Z:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 𐌁 | 𐌂 | 𐌃 | 𐌄 |

| w | x | y | z |
|---|---|---|---|
| 𐌅 | 𐌆 | 𐌇 | 𐌈 |

The number 5 is written as (write W, X, Y, or Z):

