Writing is typically viewed from the perspective of speech — as a mode of communication that strives to accurately and unambiguously capture the spoken word in visible form. From this standpoint, however, writing can only be but a pale reflection of speech as it fails to express much of the information of the speech act — intonation, gesture, and facial expression, for example, are not generally notated in writing. Yet from a different perspective — one more compelling but less commonly considered — writing, by virtue of visibility, materiality, and permanence, is capable of expressing meaning beyond speech. Color, size, style, and format, for instance, are often recruited as vehicles of meaning by writing systems of all kinds. Logographic scripts, which employ word signs, not only make use of these same means, but can also graphically express complex semantic associations that are conditioned by culture and worldview. Seen Not Heard explores the various ways in which the earliest writing systems — Egyptian, Anatolian, and Maya hieroglyphic systems, Mesopotamian cuneiform, and Chinese writing — exploited visible language to express meaning beyond the spoken word.