

# Unicode

Words: Gary McGath, Copyright 2003  
Music: Shel Silverstein, "The Unicorn"

A long time ago, on the old machines,  
There were more kinds of characters than you've ever seen.  
Nobody could tell just which set they had to load,  
They wished that somehow they could have one kind of code.

There was US-ASCII, simplified Chinese,  
Arabic and Hebrew and Vietnamese,  
And Latin-1 and Latin-2, but don't feel snowed;  
We'll put them all together into Unicode.

The users saw this Babel and it made them blue,  
So a big consortium said, "This is what we'll do:  
We will take this pile of sets and give each one its place,  
Using sixteen bits or thirty-two, we've lots of space

For the US-ASCII, simplified Chinese,  
Arabic and Hebrew and Vietnamese,  
And Latin-1 and Latin-2, we'll let them load  
In a big set of characters called Unicode.

The Klingons arrived when they heard the call,  
And they saw the sets of characters, both big and small.  
They said to the consortium, "Here's what we want:  
Just a little bit of space for the Klingon font."

"You've got US-ASCII, simplified Chinese,  
Arabic and Hebrew and Vietnamese,  
And Latin-1 and Latin-2, but we'll explode  
You if you don't put Klingon characters in Unicode."

The Unicode Consortium just shook their heads,  
Though the looks that they were getting caused a sense of dread.  
“The set that we’ve assembled is for use on Earth,  
And a foreign planet is the Klingons’ place of birth.”

We’ve got US-ASCII, simplified Chinese,  
Arabic and Hebrew and Vietnamese,  
And Latin-1 and Latin-2, but you can’t goad  
Us into putting Klingon characters in Unicode.

The Klingons grew as angry as a minotaur;  
They went back to their spaceship and declared a war.  
Three hundred years ago this happened, but they say  
That’s why the Klingons still despise the Earth today.

We’ve got US-ASCII, simplified Chinese,  
Tellarite and Vulcan and Vietnamese,  
And Latin-1 and Latin-2, but we’ll be blown  
If we’ll put the Klingon language into Unicode.