

ACTIVITIES

HOW WERE TELEGRAMS SENT?

1. First, you had to go into a post office and write a message to your friend on a telegram form.



2. The post office would send the message to a big control room called an exchange.

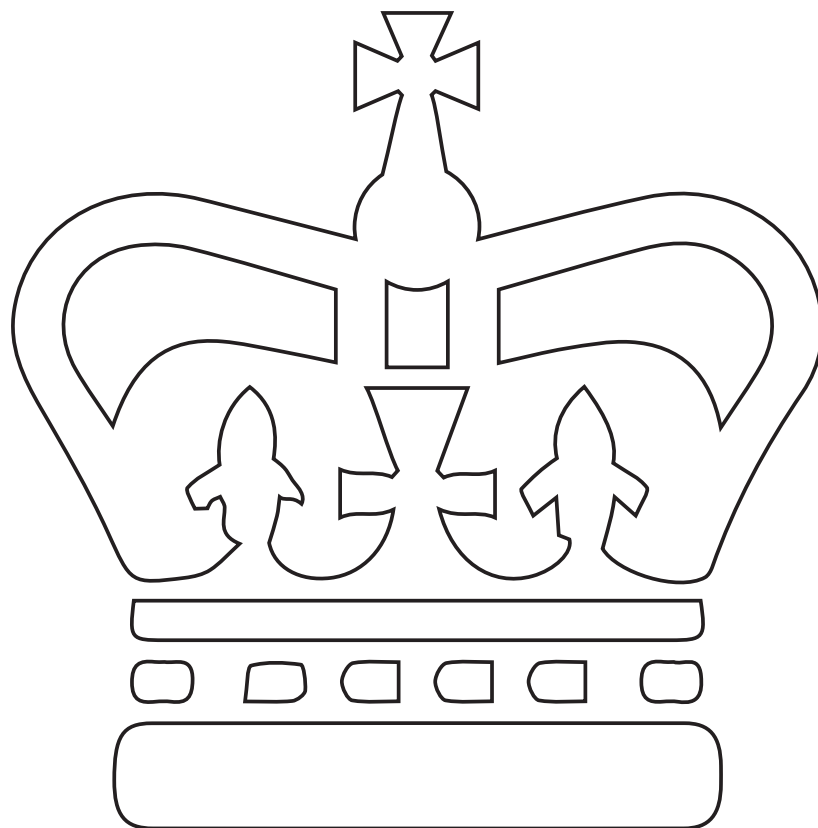
3. The exchange would send the message to another exchange in the place where your friend lived.

4. The exchange would send the message to your friend's local post office.

5. The post office would send a telegram boy to deliver the message to your friend!




This is what a telegram boy's armband would have looked like. Colour in the Post Office badge and decorate it to design your own armband.



This is what a telegram form looked like. Write your own message in the message box. Don't forget the address!

A telegram costs **6p for the first nine words (including the address), and a penny for every extra word.** How much would your telegram cost? Write the cost in the CHARGE box.



 INLAND TELEGRAM	
ADDRESS	CHARGE
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In *Billy Button*, Mr Button sends telegrams to the exchange by telephone. But before telephones were invented, he would have had to use code. Samuel Morse, who invented the telegram, also invented a code for sending messages down the wires. This was called Morse code.



Samuel Morse

This is Morse code, which was used in many countries to send telegrams.

A ● —	J ● — — —	S ● ● ●
B — ● ● ●	K — ● —	T —
C — ● — ●	L ● — ● ●	U ● ● —
D — ● ●	M — —	V ● ● ● —
E ●	N — ●	W ● — —
F ● ● — ●	O — — —	X — ● ● —
G — — ●	P ● — — ●	Y — ● — —
H ● ● ● ●	Q — — ● —	Z — — ● ●
I ● ●	R ● — ●	

Can you write your name in Morse code?

Write a message in Morse code here.

TELEGRAM FACTS

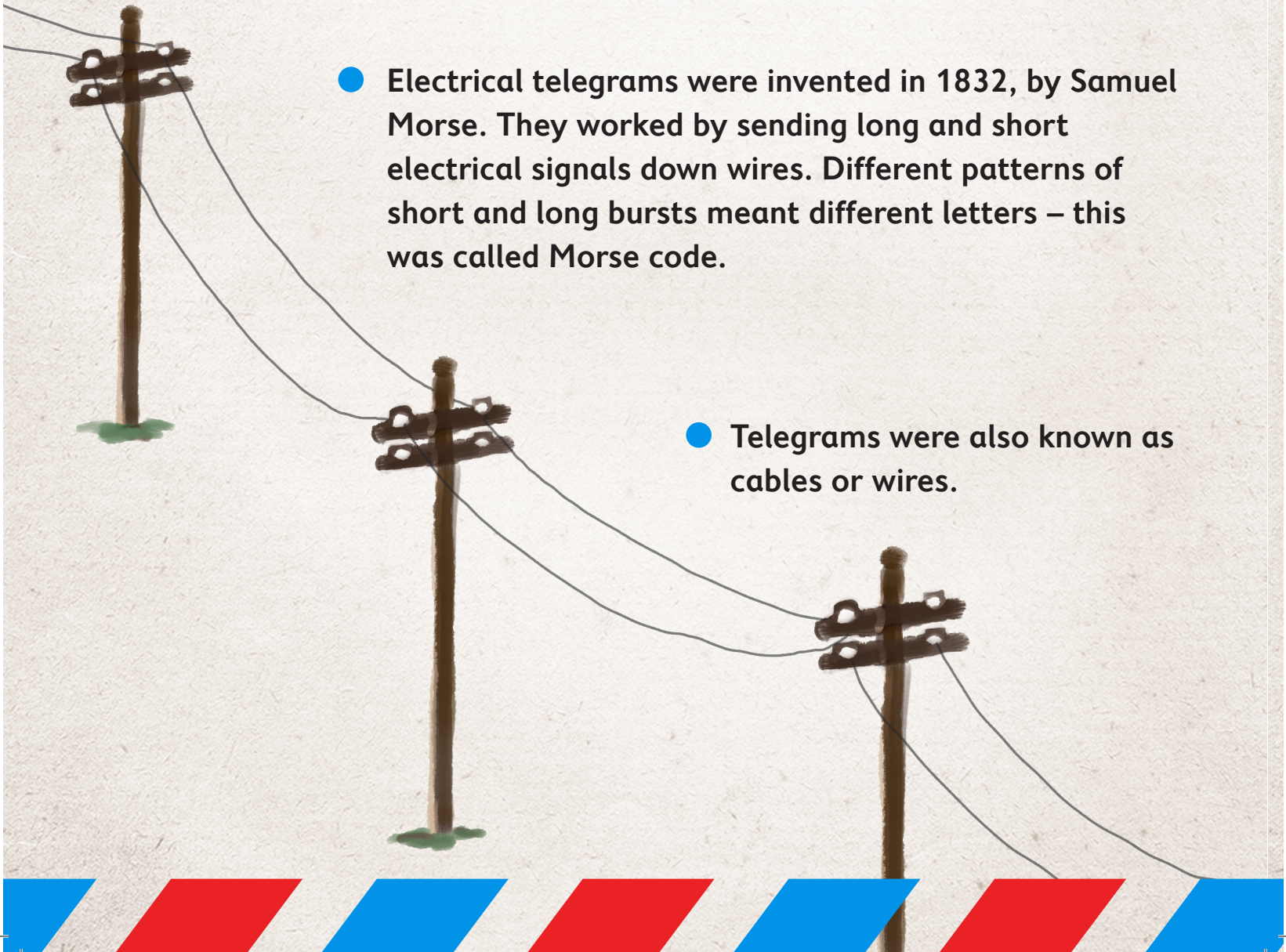
- Telegrams were invented in 1791, during the French Revolution. The first telegrams were sent using a large panel, painted black on one side and white on the other. Later, towers with big, movable arms were built on hilltops. By moving the arms into different positions, you could send messages in secret codes.

Is there a Telegraph Hill near where you live? It probably once had a Telegraph Tower on top of it.



- Electrical telegrams were invented in 1832, by Samuel Morse. They worked by sending long and short electrical signals down wires. Different patterns of short and long bursts meant different letters – this was called Morse code.

- Telegrams were also known as cables or wires.



- People often worried about people like Mr Button reading their telegrams – so they used to send them in code. Here are some real Victorian codes for telegrams:

INLAND TELEGRAM	
ADDRESS	CHARGE
GNAPHALIO – Please send a supply of light clothing.	

INLAND TELEGRAM	
ADDRESS	CHARGE
ENVELOPE – Great swarms of locusts have appeared and ravaged the crops.	

- In the 1840s, a man sent a message to his friend which read **YOUR LUGGAGE AND TARTAN WILL BE SAFE BY THE NEXT TRAIN**. This was a code. What it really meant was **A HORSE WEARING TARTAN COLOURS HAS WON THE DERBY**. The friend ran to the nearest betting shop, and put a bet on the winning horse.
- Mr Grundle and Alice aren't the only people to fall in love by telegram. In 1891, a telegraph operator called John Stansbury made friends with another telegraph operator called 'Mat'. John lived in a very lonely station in the desert, and used to talk to 'Mat' using Morse code. One day, he fell very ill. As he got better, he realised that a woman was in the room, looking after him. It was 'Mat', who had found out he was ill and come to help. John proposed – and 'Mat' said yes!



- In 1876, a telegraph operator called William Storey wanted to get married, but he was working in a remote army camp without a minister. He and his wife got married over the telegraph wire. A minister 650 miles away in San Diego married them using Morse code.
- Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb, was rather deaf. He and his wife used to talk to each other by tapping out Morse code on their hands. He proposed to her in Morse code – and she tapped ‘yes’.
- The Queen used to send a telegram to anyone in Britain who reached their 100th birthday. Today, she sends a letter instead.

