Text Synopsis

How did people send messages to each other long ago? This book looks at the history of written messages with a new chapter for each major development. The focus is strongly Australian and the text relates many of the older concepts to the modern day. Textual development is chronological.

Overall Learning Opportunities

Students will:

• Make predictions about the text
• Identify and extract required information
• Extend understanding of the text by participating in interactive activities
• Record information in chronological order using BLM 1 as a guide
• Extend vocabulary

Activity Menu

Guided Reading, pages 2 and 3

Students are matched to text and grouped for like-learning needs. The teacher introduces the book with preliminary discussion, then guides the students through a preview of the pictures and graphics. After independent reading, students revisit the text for subsequent discussion.

As a Group, page 4

Whispers - Students play a modified game of Chinese whispers and discuss the reasons the message changes.
Code Breaker - Students use the Morse code in the text to write messages then devise their own code and discuss the problems with sending coded messages.

Independent Work, pages 5 and 6

BLM 1 - Students write the dates from the text in order and record the communication development that occurred in that year.
BLM 2 - Students record the types of messages mentioned and the methods used to send them. Research will be needed to find out some of the methods used.
Guided Reading

Book Orientation
Show the students the cover of the book and read the title aloud. Encourage a discussion about what they already know about how people sent messages to each other in the past. Ask:
- How do you think people used to send messages to each other before e-mails and airplanes?

Have the students turn to the contents page to find out more about what is in the book. Ask:
- What do you think we are going to read about?

Reading the Text
Read the introduction to the students while they follow their own text. Then lead them through the book by prompting with questions and comments about the photos, charts and maps, using the language structures and vocabulary from the text.

Have the students turn to pages 4/5. Say:
- This is a message stick. Who used it?
- What was it used for?

Turn to pages 6/7. Ask:
- In the past, where did people get their mail?

Turn to pages 8/9. Say:
- These are old Australian stamps. How much did they cost in 1850?

Turn to pages 10/11. Ask:
- What is shown in this image?
- Where did they get started?
- When did they stop carrying the mail?

Turn to pages 12/13. Ask:
- How old is this post office?
- How can you tell?

Turn to pages 14/15. Ask:
- What was this plane used for?
- Which cities did it travel between?

Turn to pages 16/17. Ask:
- What is being shown on this chart?
- How does it work?
- What was it used for?

Turn to pages 18/19. Ask:
- What is the code for Mm?

Turn to pages 20/21. Say:
- Look at this map. How were different telegraph offices linked together?
Guided Reading

Turn to pages 22/23. Ask:
- What ways of sending messages can you see in these photos?

**Independent Reading**

Invite the students to read the text independently. While they are reading, observe and support selected students to monitor their ability to gain meaning from the text.

**After Reading**

Use the following open-ended prompts to engage the students in discussion. Ask:
- How has people’s ability to send messages changed over time?
- What were some of the ways that people in the past sent messages?

To encourage recall of specific information, ask:
- What did Aborigines use to send messages? (pages 4/5)
- How did they use it? (page 4)
- In 1809 letters were not delivered to people’s houses. How did people get their mail? (page 7)
- Where did the first post office open? (page 6)
- When did people first use stamps? (page 9)
- How did it change how people got their mail?
- How did Cobb and Co. deliver mail? (page 10)
- How are letters sent today? (page 12)
- What was special about Australia’s first airmail flight? (page 14)
- What was used to sort the mail when people no longer did it? (page 16)
- What number was used to sort the mail? (pages 16/17)
- What kind of message used a code? (pages 18/19)
- How was this kind of message sent? (page 19)
- In what ways can people send messages today? (page 22)
- How do you think people might send messages in the future?

Have the students complete BLMs 1 and 2 to reinforce and extend what they have learnt in the text.

**Vocabulary**

Some students may need help with the following words:
- written
- message
- posted
- envelope
- telegraph
- telegram
- Aboriginal
- letterbox
- overseas
- airmail
- flight

**Assessment Ideas**

While students read independently, monitor each individual student. Does the student:
- Use textual and graphical cues to help gain meaning from the text?
- Re-read?
- Ask for help?
- Sub-vocalise?
- Attempt to pronounce and make meaning from unknown words?
- Speak unknown words aloud in their sentences to try and gain contextual meaning from them?

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Activity 1: Whispers

Ask the class to sit in a semicircle. Give the first person in the semicircle a written message.

Have the first person whisper the message to the last person in the semicircle. The last person then sits out of the circle and the first person whispers the message to the second person.

The second person whispers the message to the third person and so on until the message has been passed on to everyone. The last person stands up and says the message aloud. Then the person sitting out of the semicircle says what their message was and the first person confirms it.

Give students the opportunity to repeat the exercise at least once. Invite students to discuss which method was better and why. Invite them to also discuss why a written message is better than a spoken one.

Activity 2: Code Breaker

Ask students to examine the code on page 17. Take time to explain to them what a code is and how the code works.

Invite students to use the code to write a message to another student. When they have written their messages they should swap them with each other and try to work out what was written.

After the discussion, organise students into pairs and invite them to invent their own code for writing messages. Then have them use it to write a message and swap it with another pair. The pairs should then see if they can understand each other’s codes.

Engage students in a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of using codes to send and receive messages.
Order of Events

Name ____________________________________________

Fill in the dates and the events that happened on those dates, in the order they occurred.

1778

Today
# Message Methods

**BLM 2**

Read through the text and find out how many different types of messages are mentioned. Write each one down in the left column. In the right column write down the ways that each type of message is sent. You may need to do some extra research to find out how some messages are sent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message Type</th>
<th>Way it is Sent</th>
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