

# About Telegraphs

## VOCABULARY WORDS

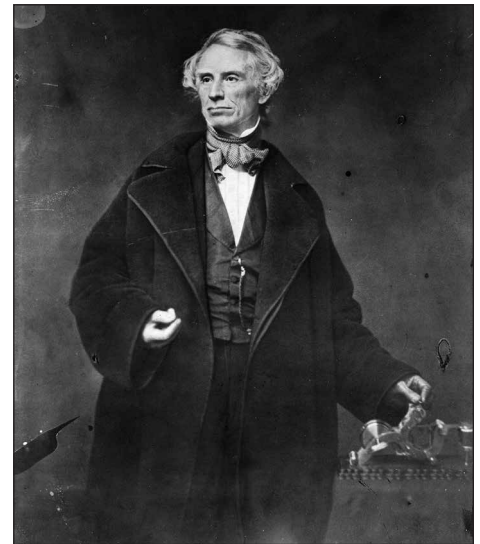
- **Telegraph Key:** A device that sends electromagnetic messages in Morse code across long distances.
- **Morse Code:** A code of dots and dashes that represent letters and numbers



Telegraph Key, Smithsonian Institution

## What is a telegraph?

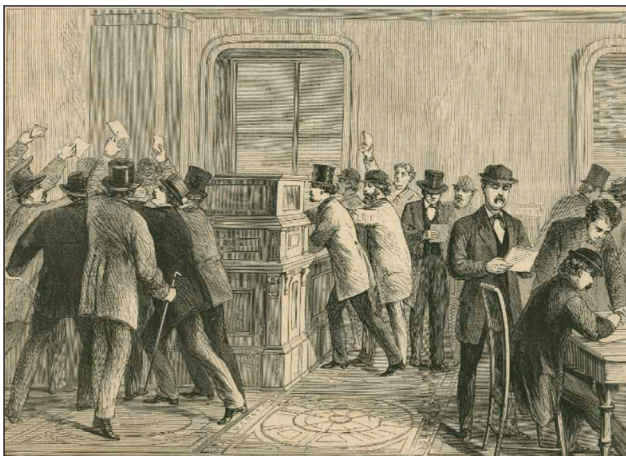
Telegraphs were an early form of electric communication. A **telegraph key** sent messages coded in dots and dashes that created clicking or beeping sounds.



Samuel Morse, Library of Congress, 1850

## Who invented the telegraph?

Many people tried to invent a telegraph. A man named Samuel F. B. Morse designed his own version and the code for it. Congress gave Morse money and space in the U.S. Capitol to develop the device. His versions became very popular. That's where the name "**Morse Code**" comes from!



Reporters at the Telegraph Office in the House of Representatives, 1875

## When was the first telegraph sent?

On May 24, 1844, Samuel Morse sent the first telegraph message from the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C. to Baltimore, Maryland. The message said "*What hath God wrought.*" This saying was suggested by 16-year-old, Annie Ellsworth to express amazement at the invention.



The Goddess Minerva teaches famous inventors Benjamin Franklin, Robert Fulton, and Samuel F.B. Morse. Detail from the Apotheosis of George Washington, Capitol Rotunda.

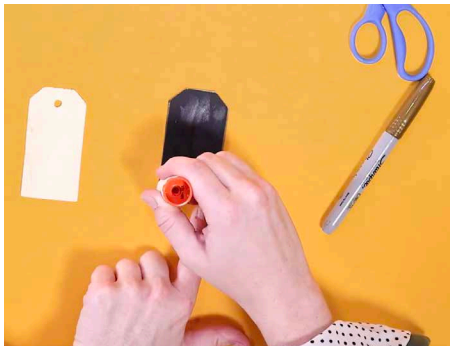
## Why was the telegraph important?

Before the telegraph, important information was usually delivered by mail. The invention of the telegraph allowed people to communicate faster and across greater distances than ever before! By 1865, telegraphs were sending messages all over the world. Today, cellphone messaging connects the world like telegraphs once did.

# Make a Telegraph

## YOU WILL NEED:

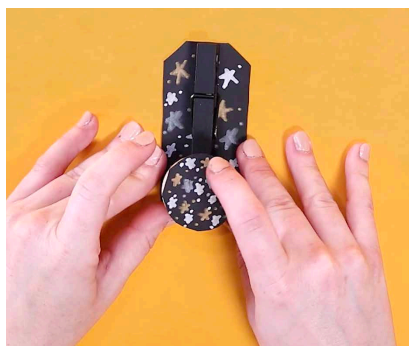
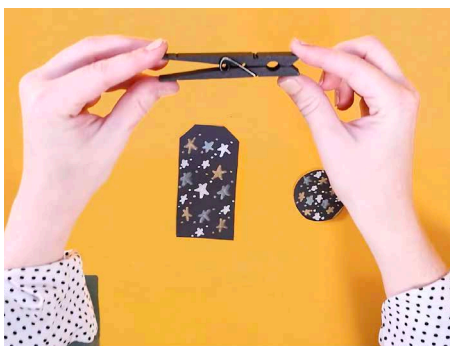
- Liquid Glue
- Glue Stick
- Markers
- Construction Paper
- Clothespin
- Wooden Tag
- Wooden Circle



1. Place a wooden tag or rectangle on top of black construction paper. Trace the outline and cut out the shape.
2. Repeat the two steps above with the wooden circle.
3. Glue construction paper to each matching wooden piece. Let dry.
4. Decorate!



5. Glue one side of the clothespin to the center of the tag (or rectangle) piece. Let dry.
6. Place a small dot of glue on the back of the wooden circle. Attach it to the open end of the clothespin. Let dry.
7. Pretend to send a telegraph-inspired message!



A	● —	U	● ● —
B	— ● ●	V	— ● —
C	— ● ● ●	W	● ● —
D	— ● ● ● ●	X	— ● ● —
E	●	Y	— ● ● —
F	● ●	Z	— ● ● ●
G	— ● ● ●		
H	● ● ● ●		
I	● ●		
J	— ● ● ● ●		
K	— ● ● ● ● ●	1	— ● ● ● ● ●
L	— ● ● ● ● ● ●	2	● ● ● ● ● ●
M	— ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	3	— ● ● ● ● ●
N	— ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	4	● ● ● ● ● ●
O	— ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	5	— ● ● ● ● ●
P	— ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	6	— ● ● ● ● ●
Q	— ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	7	— ● ● ● ● ●
R	— ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	8	— ● ● ● ● ●
S	— ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	9	— ● ● ● ● ●
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