

Wiring the World – the Invention of Telegraphy. Eine bedeutende Erfindung in den Kontext des 19. Jahrhunderts einordnen und Gegenwartsbezüge herstellen (Klasse 8)

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The telegraph – an earlier version of the Internet?

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Die Telegrafie gilt heute als eine der bahnbrechendsten Erfindungen des 19. Jahrhunderts. Was genau versteht man unter Telegrafie? Welche positiven und negativen Auswirkungen hatte diese Erfindung auf Politik, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft der damaligen Zeit? Weshalb ist sie auch heute noch von großer Bedeutung? Und welche Parallelen lassen sich zwischen der Telegrafie und dem Internet ziehen?

In der vorliegenden Unterrichtseinheit setzen sich die Schülerinnen und Schüler mit diesen Fragestellungen auseinander. Im Rahmen eines Gruppenpuzzles beschäftigen sie sich anhand von Bild- und Textquellen mit der Entwicklung sowie den Auswirkungen der Telegrafie.

Klassenstufe: 8

Dauer: 3 Stunden

Bereich: Neuzeit, 19. Jahrhundert, Technikgeschichte, Globalisierung, Imperialismus

Kompetenzen:

- die Telegrafie als revolutionäre Erfindung des 19. Jahrhunderts erkennen
- Parallelen zwischen der Erfindung der Telegrafie und des Internets ziehen
- Bild- und Textquellen analysieren und in den geschichtlichen Kontext einordnen

Materialübersicht

1. Stunde: Development of the telegraph

- M 1 (Bi) New developments
 M 2 (Ab) Wiring the world – about telegraphy

2. Stunde: Effects of the telegraph

- M 3 (Tx/Bi) Telegraphy and the empire – expert group A
 M 4 (Tx/Bi) The Fashoda Crisis – expert group B
 M 5 (Tx/Bi) Telegraphy and trade – expert group C
 M 6 (Tx/Bi) Telegraphy and diplomacy – expert group D
 M 7 (Bi) Effects of telegraphy – working in your home group

3. Stunde: Now you! – Writing about telegraphy

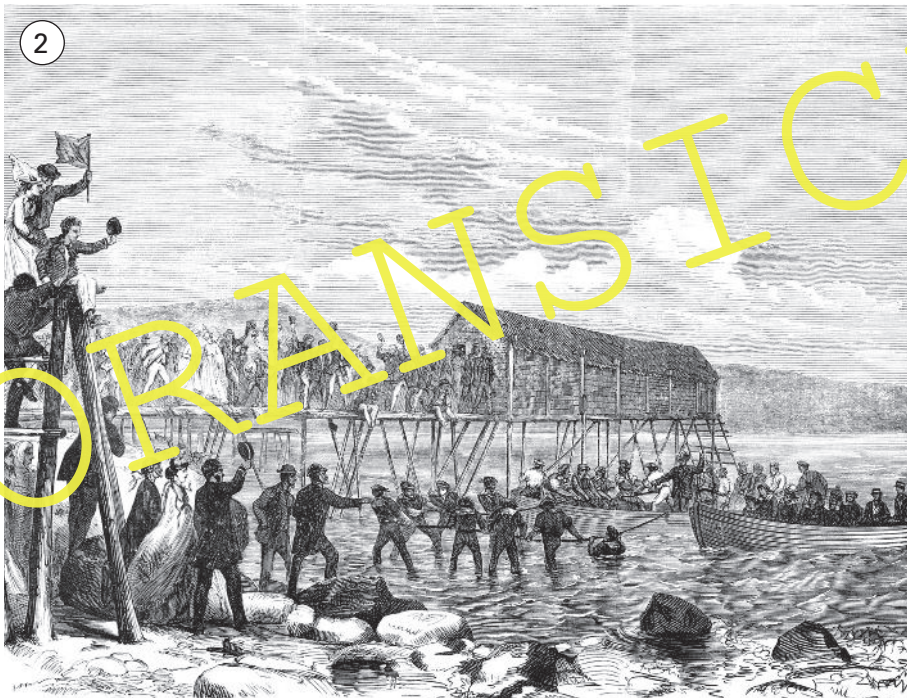
- M 8 (Bd) Telegraph vs Internet?
 M 9 (Ab) Creative writing – an essay
 M 10 (Ab) Creative writing – a letter to the editor

Lernerfolgskontrolle

- M 11 (LEK) Exam: Test your knowledge about telegraphy

A: Arbeitsblatt · **Bi:** Bild – **LEK:** Lernerfolgskontrolle – **Tx:** Text

M 1 New developments



Helpful words

to put up a pole: einen Mast aufstellen – sea shore : Küste, Ufer

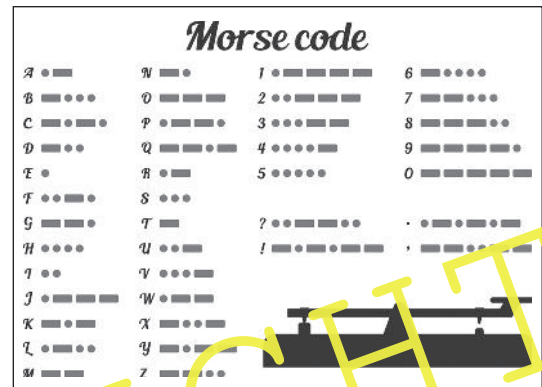
M 2 Wiring the world – about telegraphy

What is telegraphy? How does it work? And why was it so important? Let's get some basic facts.

In 1850, there was no such thing as a telephone. You couldn't send _____ around the world with a mobile phone or chat with someone on another continent by using Skype. The electric telegraph by the American _____ Samuel Morse changed everything!

Before electric telegraphy, most messages that travelled long _____ were given to a messenger¹ who memorized them² or transported them in written form. These messages could be delivered³ no faster than the fastest _____, ship or train. For example, before 1870, the transportation of a message from Sydney to _____ took sixty days – that's two _____! The telegraph reduced the time to only four days.

How was this possible? Telegraph messages (telegrams, also known as “_____”) were sent by tapping out⁴ a special code for each letter with a telegraph key⁵. The telegraph changed the dots⁶ (short) and dashes⁷ (long) of this code into electrical impulses and transmitted⁸ them over telegraph _____. A telegraph receiver⁹ on the other end of the wire “translates” the electrical impulses to dots and dashes on a paper tape and then into full _____. Later, this code became known as Morse code.



Unlike the telephone or the Internet, sending telegrams was _____. So if you wanted to send a cable you had to go to the closest telegraph office and pay the telegraph clerk¹⁰ for sending it. People often used short sentences and _____ to reduce the cost. Actually, telegrams sound a bit like tweets, the messages you can send on _____.

At first, many people – including politicians – were sceptical because they didn't understand Morse's invention. Once, the wife of a German soldier even asked a telegraph clerk to use the telegraph to send _____ to her husband who was fighting in France at that time (1870)! But after a while, telegraphy became a booming industry which wired the whole world. In 1908 there were 226,232 _____ of telegraph cables, many of them running on the bottom¹¹ of the sea (_____ cables) or parallel to railway lines¹².

Task

1. Read the gap text carefully and fill in the gaps with the words in the box.

abbreviations¹³ • cables • distances • expensive • horse • inventor • kilometres • months
London • sauerkraut • submarine • text messages¹⁴ • Twitter • wires¹⁵ • words

2. Now find a partner at the “bus stop”. Try to send messages to each other with the Morse code.

Annotations

1 **messenger**: Bote, Kurier – 2 **to memorize sth.**: etw. auswendig lernen, sich etw. merken – 3 **to deliver sth.**: etw. zustellen – 4 **to tap out**: abklopfen – 5 **telegraph key**: Morsetaste – 6 **dot**: Punkt – 7 **dash**: Strich – 8 **to transmit sth.**: to deliver sth. – 9 **receiver**: Empfänger – 10 **clerk**: a person who works in an office – 11 **bottom**: Grund – 12 **railway line**: Eisenbahnstrecke – 13 **abbreviation**: Abkürzung – 14 **text message**: Nachricht, SMS – 15 **wire**: cable

M 4 The Fashoda Crisis

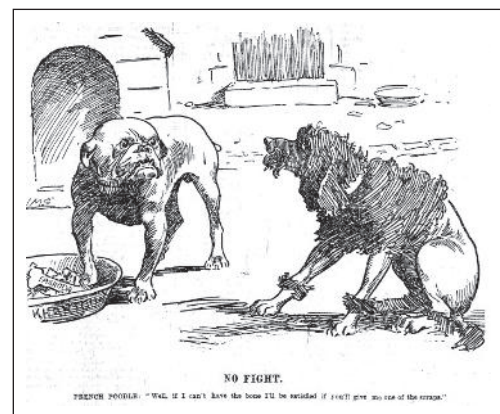
Expert group B

Find out how Great Britain used telegraphy against its rival France during the Fashoda Crisis:

1 _e_	In 1898 most parts of Africa had been conquered ¹...	... because they had used telegraphy to deceive ² the French.	a
2 ___	The two leading colonial powers in Africa ...	... he had access ³ to a telegraph line to London.	b
3 ___	Both of them wanted to have control over today's ...	... so they agreed to contact their governments in London and Paris.	c
4 ___	A French military expedition was led by Major Marchand ...	... Sudan, which lies in the centre of the African continent.	d
5 ___	Both armies arrived at Fashoda on 7 September ...	... by European nations ("scramble for Africa" ⁴).	e
6 ___	However, neither of them wanted to start a battle ...	... army as weaker than the British – which wasn't true!	f
7 ___	General Kitchener had an advantage because ...	... and another expedition by the British army was led by General Kitchener.	g
8 ___	He sent a cable ⁵ on 24 September in which he portrayed the French ...	... government in Paris had to believe what they heard from London.	h
9 ___	Marchand didn't have telegraphy so the French ...	... but to order Marchand back to France.	i
10 ___	The French government felt it had no choice ...	... and claimed ⁶ the area for their respective countries.	j
11 ___	In the end, Great Britain won the confrontation ...	... were France and Great Britain.	k

Tasks

1. Read the sentences and match the beginning of each sentence (1–11) with the correct ending (a–k) by writing the letters on the lines on the left.
2. Look at the cartoon and interpret it with the help of the new information. Tip: Khartoum is the capital of Sudan and Fashoda is a city in South Sudan (today Kodok).
3. Prepare a short presentation on your topic for your home group. Take notes. Don't talk about your cartoon in your presentation!



© Bild: JM Staniforth

No fight.

French poodle: "Well, if I can't have the bone I'll be satisfied if you'll give me one of the scraps⁷."

Annotations

1 to conquer sth.: etw. erobern – 2 to deceive so.: jmdn. täuschen – 3 access: Zugang – 4 "scramble for Africa": "Wettlauf um Afrika" – 5 to send a cable: ein Telegramm senden – 6 to claim sth.: etw. verlangen, beanspruchen – 7 scraps: Speisereste

M 8 Telegraph vs Internet?



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This picture shows ...

On the left/right, there is ...

In the picture, you can see ...



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VORANSICHT

At the top/ bottom, there is ...

In the foreground/ background, there is ...

Tasks

1. Describe the pictures.
2. Find out what both pictures have in common.

Helpful words

to tap out: abklopfen – Morse code: Morseschrift – keyboard: Tastatur

M 9 Creative writing – an essay

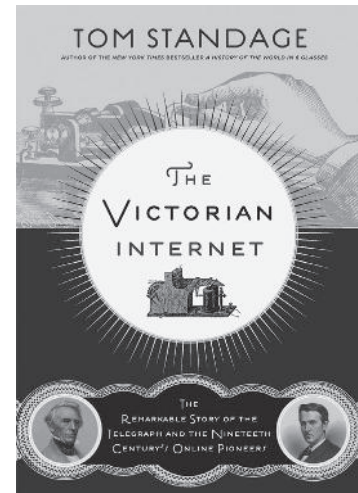
Option 1

In 1998, the historian Tom Standage wrote a book about telegraphs and their impact on Victorian Britain and the world. The book is called "The Victorian Internet".

Task

Write an essay and concentrate on the following points. The info box and the phrases in the box below will help you.

- Find similarities and differences between the Internet and telegraphy.
- Discuss if Standage choose an appropriate¹ title for his book.



© Bild: Bloomberg Publishing Inc.

Cover of "The Victorian Internet" by Tom Standage

Info box: Here's how you structure a typical essay:

1. Introduction:

- Introduce the topic. → Give some background information, tell something about the current situation, ...
- Explain the main aim of the essay. → What's your central question? State your thesis!
- Outline your essay.

2. Body:

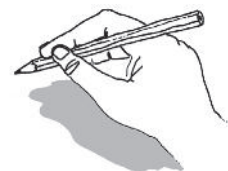
- It consists of a number of paragraphs.
- Answer your essay question on the basis of facts, evidence, examples, your knowledge and so on. → Develop a discussion on your topic!
- There has to be a golden thread²!

3. Conclusion:

- Summarize the essay's key points.
- Answer your essay question.
- Give a final statement, for example about your own opinion or future prospects.³

The following expressions will help you:

Firstly, ...; secondly, ...; thirdly, ...	Moreover, ...
Besides, ...	Although ...
However, ...	It's different from ...
It's both ... and ...	It's neither ... nor ...
It's similar to ...	They have ... in common
In contrast to ...	Unlike ...
whereas ...	To sum up, ...



Annotations

1 **appropriate**: angemessen – 2 **golden thread**: roter Faden – 3 **prospect**: (Zukunfts-)Aussicht

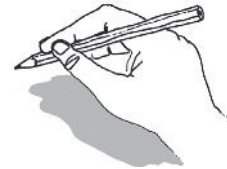
M 10 Creative writing – a letter to the editor

Option 2

Imagine you lived in Germany in the late 19th century. On 22 March 1889, you read the article "Telegraphs take over" in a British newspaper. It's an article about Great Britain, the world's dominant nation at that time, offering Germany the chance to establish a telegraph connection between the two countries.

Tasks

1. Read the info box on how to write a letter to the editor.
2. Should Germany establish a telegraph connection with Britain? Write a letter to the editor.



Info box: That's how a typical letter to editor is structured:

your name
your address
place and date

name of the editor
name of the newspaper
name of the article

Dear Sir,

Introductory phrase: I refer to your article "..."

Body of the letter

- use formal language → avoid colloquial expressions
- come up with interesting and new aspects → don't repeat well-known facts
- concentrate on one major point → make it short (about 200 words)
- letters to the editor are always about personal opinions → use phrases to express your opinion (*In my opinion ...*, *To my mind ...*, *In my eyes ...* etc.)

Concluding sentence²

Your name (signature)

Annotations

1 **to offer:** anbieten – 2 **concluding sentence:** Schlusssatz