

# National Mathematics Day Activity

Title of activity	The Overland Telegraph line
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Each cipher and code activity has a suggested level: lower primary, upper primary or junior secondary. However, many of the activities can be enjoyed by students (and teachers!) of all ages.

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# The Overland Telegraph line

[primary/secondary]

The Australian Overland Telegraph line was completed in 1872, connecting Adelaide and other parts of Australia to the rest of the world via Darwin.

(See <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/overland-telegraph>)

Morse code was named after its creator, Samuel Morse. It is a code made up of a series of dots and dashes. The 'dot' is made with a short signal and the 'dash' is made with a long signal. The first telegraphed message was sent in 1844 from Baltimore to Washington, a distance of nearly 60 km.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
.-	-...	-.-.	-..	.	..-	--.	....	..	.---	-.-	.-.	--
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
-.	---	.-.	---.	.-.	...	-	..-	...-	.-	-.-	.-.	---
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
----	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....			
fullstop	comma	query										
.----	.....	.....										

- SOS is an internationally recognised sign of distress. It is symbolised by ... --- ... and can be sent using an electromagnetic signal, tapping it out or flicking the light from a torch. Try sending this message to a partner.
- Choose a letter of the alphabet and tap it out to a partner in Morse Code. Can they guess what it is? Take it in turns to repeat the process a few more times. Now try and tap out a word.
- Find out at what speed can a message be sent.
- Find out about African drum messaging.