



For Those in Peril on the Sea: Signalling at Sea

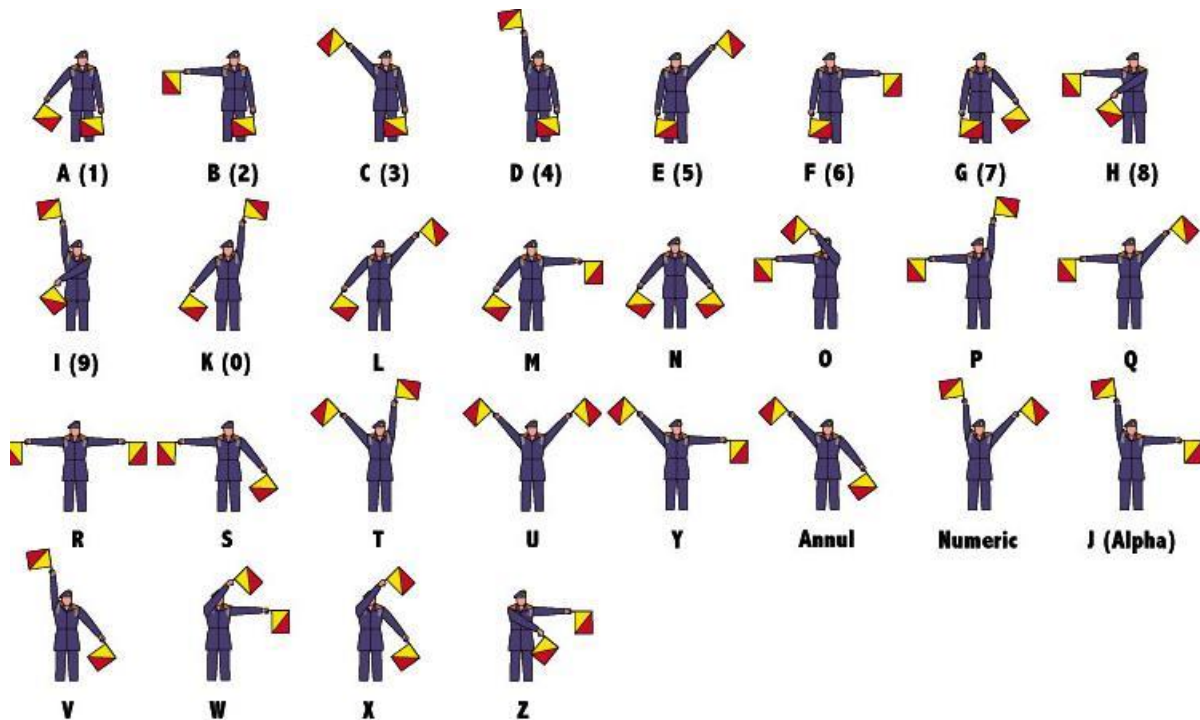
Lesson Plan: – Signalling at Sea	
Teacher/s	Date
Subject: History	Year
Learning Objectives Understand the methods of communicating at sea. Appreciate the limitations of such methods of communicating.	Success Criteria Pupils will understand both the methods and limitations of flag signals and semaphore flags at sea and how mistakes could easily arise.
Key Questions What was the system of flag communication at sea? How did the system of flag semaphore work?	
Starter Activity/Introduction Arguably poor British signalling almost lost the battle of Jutland. Ask the pupils how they think it was possible to communicate between ships whilst at sea e.g. shouting, signal lamps and so on. What would happen if they were in the middle of battle or if there was mist and fog? Radios were at an early stage of development, but did not always work very effectively. Radio messages were likely to be sent by Morse code.	Resources For the Morse code: http://morsecode.scphillips.com/tranlator.html
Main Activity 1 Semaphore flags – Pupils can construct their own semaphore flags using plant pot canes and paper flags. You may want to contact the local naval cadets who are often willing to provide signalling flags and also a visitor to school. Ask the pupils why they might use semaphore flags instead of signalling flags? Think of the need to send messages urgently. Although the signalmen were well trained, how might mistakes easily happen? Why would they have to devise a code for messages sent between ships at sea? 2 Signalling flags – The main ship of the fleet was called the flag ship . It would be from this base that the admiral of the fleet would send his orders to the other ships under his command. Quite often they would need to be in code so they could not be understood by the enemy. The most important command sent during the Battle of Jutland by Admiral John Jellicoe was 'Equal Speed – Charlie London'. Translated this meant 'maintain speed – C (manoeuvre into a single column) and L (proceed in an easterly direction)'.	Resources Activity sheets below: 1 Semaphore flags. 2 Signalling flags
Plenary Why were signalling flags no longer used after the battle of Jutland? What replaced them? Why was this more effective?	Resources http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/wireless_telegraphy





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Activities and Resources: Semaphore



(Flagexpressions.wordpress.com)

The flag ship (lead table in the classroom) will send the first signal to the other tables in the classroom (e.g. 'Full Speed'). Each table is a ship in the fleet. The pupils write down the letters in secret and then reveal what they think is the message.

Each table can make up a simple naval message to begin with and then semaphore the message to a neighbouring ship.

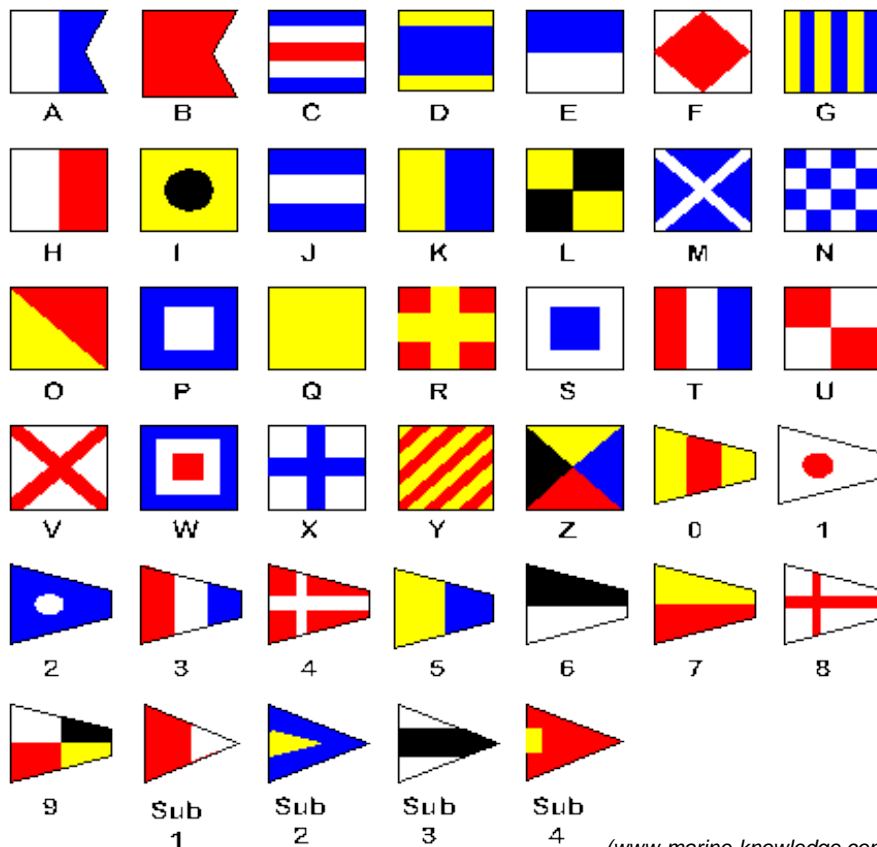
Try a more complicated message and one where you will need an answer from the other ship.

If you were going into battle the enemy would be able to read your signals. You will need to work out a simple **code** so the enemy won't know what you're signalling. Once you have invented your code you will have to give the code to the fleet so they can interpret the message.

What would happen if the enemy discovered your code?



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Activities and Resources: Signal Flags

(www-marine-knowledge.com)

String a line across the classroom and place the flags that spell out your name along it. Stick the flags on with sellotape.

How have the flags been designed to avoid mistakes being made?

This is the famous signal from the Battle of Jutland:

'Equal Speed C(harlie) L(ondon)'. Construct this message with the flags shown above.

Draw the flags with these messages:

Turn port (left) Turn starboard (right)

Full steam ahead Turn back for port

Make up your own message to send to your partner or neighbouring table.