

SENDING AND DELIVERING

Royal Mail delivered over 16 billion letters during 2014-2015!

MORE MAIL

The introduction of the Penny Postage saw a huge increase in the amount of mail sent in the 1800s. In 1870 postcards were introduced. They became very popular and further increased the amount of mail being sent.

Big benefits

Penny Postage brought many new opportunities for everyone - from bakers to bankers. Trade grew, people such as scientists, writers and artists wrote large numbers of letters about their work, community and religious societies grew larger and the British Empire was united through the worldwide postal system.

Year	Mail sent
1839	76 million
1840	169 million
1850	347 million
1860	564 million
1870	863 million
1880	1,293 million
1890	1,940 million
1900	2,740 million

**Power
POINT**



St Martin's Le Grand, the headquarters of the General Post Office in London and the first purpose built Post Office in Britain

Money, money, money!

In 1881, the Post Office Savings Bank was introduced to encourage people to save money – especially poorer people. Postal orders were launched to enable people to send small amounts of money through the post.

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The Book Post

Rowland, once a headmaster, persuaded the government to allow a Book Post to encourage people to educate themselves.

Inside a Post Office offering several different services such as postal orders, postage stamps and letters registered to customers



Keeping in touch

Cheap postage meant more people learnt to read and write. Sending messages by post became very popular and greetings cards were produced with words to help people express their feelings.

This picture by J.P. Hall was painted in 1859. The expressions on the young ladies' faces show how important the post was in people's lives

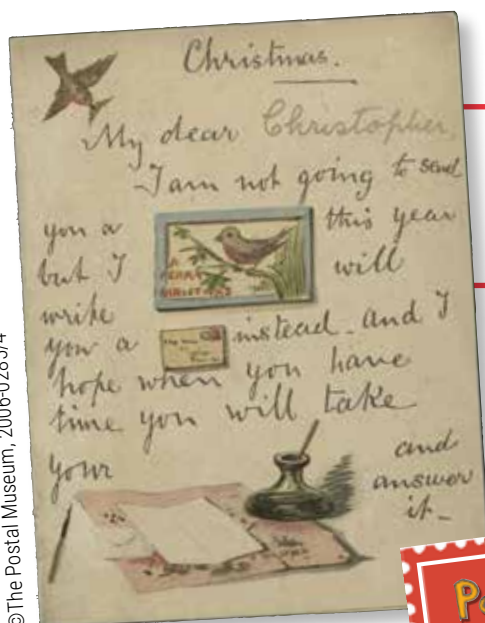


©The Postal Museum, OB1997.8



In this letter, a father uses pictures and words to send a Christmas message to his son

Henry Cole, a great supporter of postal reform, sent the world's first commercially printed Christmas card in 1843



©The Postal Museum, 2006-0285/4



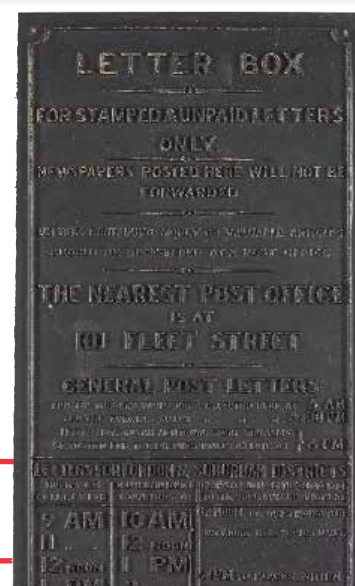
©The Postal Museum, 2003-0476

Delivering the post

In 1850, ten years after the introduction of the Penny Black stamp, British people sent 347 million letters. Postboxes were emptied up to ten times a day. Just one hour after posting, letters were collected for sorting, so that they were received on the same day!

But people living in isolated places still had to walk miles to collect their post. It was not until 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, that everyone was entitled to a postal delivery to their house – a service we still have today.

This plate showing collection times is from one of the first London postboxes



©The Postal Museum, E10432

Mail coaches

Until the arrival of the railways in the 1830s, letters were carried by mail coach, horse or on foot. The guard was the only General Post Office employee on the coach. He sat at the back on top of the letters and was heavily armed with two pistols in case of attack by robbers!

The average speed for mail coaches was 7/8mph in summer and 5mph in winter



©The Postal Museum, OB1994.225.1

Delivered by train

In 1830, letters were carried by rail for the first time, between Manchester and Liverpool, less than two months after that railway had opened. Trains sped up the delivery of mail. Letters that had taken three months to reach far off places in the British Empire, such as India, now took just 35 days.

There were often complaints about late arrivals and breakdowns but despite delays, mail by train was far faster than mail coach. The last mail coach service from London ran in 1846.



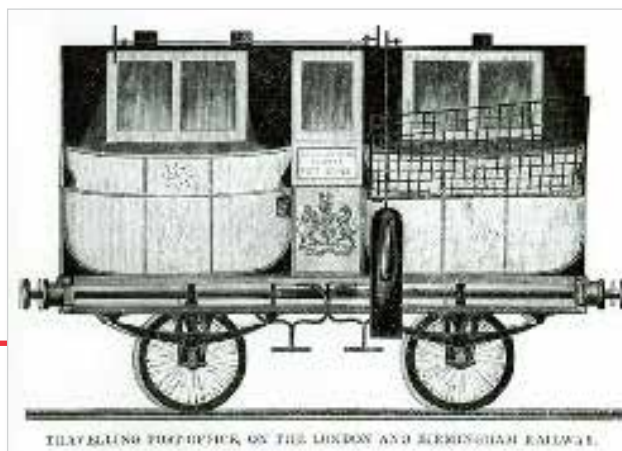
The sorting carriage on the North Eastern Railway, 1881



The Travelling Post Office

The Travelling Post Office (TPO) was introduced in 1838 to speed up delivery. Letters were cancelled and sorted in the sorting carriage while the train was on the move. The TPO had a net on the side of the sorting carriage to scoop up mail bags from the side of the railway track.

The Travelling Post Office used on the London & Birmingham Railway, 1839



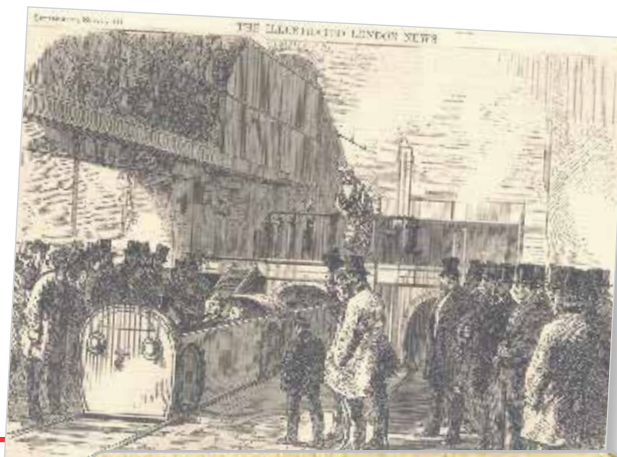
TRAVELLING POSTOFFICE ON THE LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY.

©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015, courtesy of The Postal Museum, POST 118/0489

The Pneumatic Railway

In 1855, Rowland wrote to the Postmaster General about ideas for moving mail more quickly, underground. The London Pneumatic Despatch Company built a railway with carriages that could be sucked through narrow underground tunnels using massive fans attached to powerful engines at either end.

The opening of the pneumatic tunnel at Holborn, London



©The Illustrated London News, November 1865



©The Postal Museum, 2010-0383/33

It was only supposed to be used for mail, but people loved to climb aboard the pneumatic railway before being blown through the tunnel at 30mph!

Was it a success?

In 1863, trials began to move mail between Euston railway station and sorting offices in central London using this system. But the pneumatic railway didn't reduce delivery times and in 1874 it closed.

This map shows the network of tunnels planned for the pneumatic railway. The tunnels were never finished



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The Mail Rail

Many years later in 1927, another method of moving mail underground opened. It operated successfully until 2003 when it closed. It was known as the Mail Rail and used driverless electric cars to move mail under London's streets. At its peak, over four million letters were carried in this way, every day.

Accelerator carriages introduced in 1829 were designed for postmen to jump off without stopping. They carried letter carriers from the General Post Office to the start of their delivery route in London

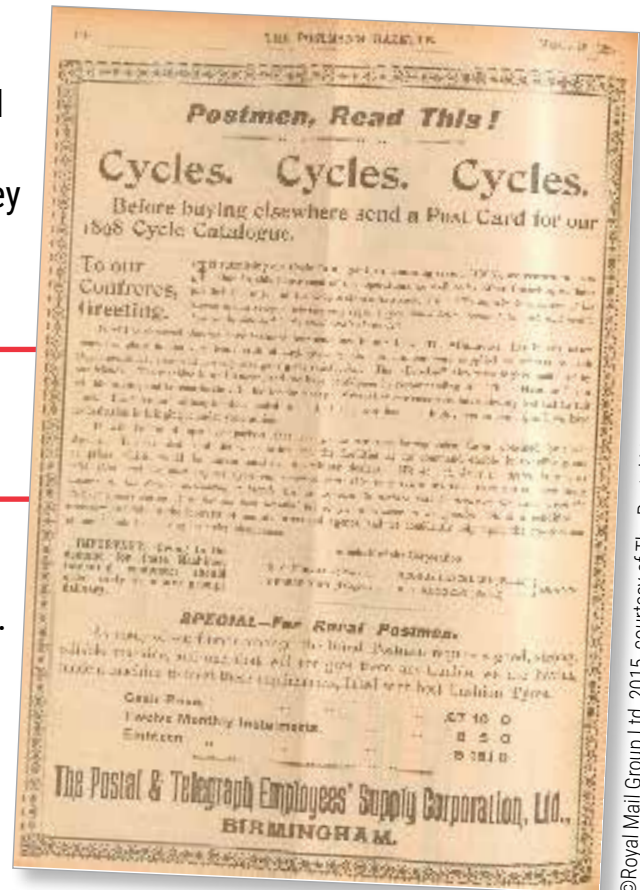


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On your bike!

Bicycles became popular during the 1860s and postmen used them to deliver mail. In country areas, postmen had to supply their own but they were paid an allowance to keep their bikes in good order.

This 1898 advert in The Postman's Gazette encourages postmen to buy good, strong bicycles



Tricycles

Tricycles were first trialled in Coventry in 1880. They were often used to carry heavier loads.



A tricycle with a big basket for heavier loads

'Hen and Chicks'

In 1882 the General Post Office experimented with five-wheeled machines known as Centre Cycles or 'Hen and Chicks'.

'Hen and Chicks' had large, heavy baskets, proved too difficult to steer and wore out postmen's trousers! They had one large wheel (the hen) and four smaller wheels (the chicks)



©The Postal Museum, 2011-0266/17

Delivered by sea

Before 1815, letters were sent abroad on packet boats (small cargo boats). By 1840, many big commercial shipping lines such as Cunard and the P&O had contracts with the General Post Office.

Daily packet lists recorded all the journeys on a particular day

**Power
POINT**

The Great Western

In 1837, the first steam ship, the Great Western, built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, was launched carrying mail to America.

This letter was sent from Bristol to Baltimore, USA on the Great Western on 15 November 1839



The Great Western steam ship



©The Postal Museum, PH64A/20b

Ocean Penny Postage

Sending a letter by sea was expensive. Some people said this made it hard for poor people who had emigrated to the British colonies to stay in touch with their relatives in Britain. So in 1879, the Ocean Penny Postage was introduced.

Unloading mail from America at Mount Pleasant sorting office in central London



©The Postal Museum

Overview of the lesson:

This activity tasks pupils to make a pop-up greetings card, a postcard or another type of card. It focuses primarily on **D&T**.

Before undertaking this activity, pupils are likely to have:

- ◆ Talked about how the Penny Black stamp generated a huge amount of social mail in the 19th century
- ◆ Researched the online archives examples of Victorian cards
- ◆ Thought about different types of social mail e.g. postcards, birthday, Valentine, anniversary, mourning, New Year and Christmas cards
- ◆ Discussed different formats such as novelty shaped cards and pop-ups
- ◆ Thought about words to put on the card.



©The Postal Museum

'My School' painting, 1987. This competition was judged by Roald Dahl. It was entered by over 19,500 primary school children. The winning entry was considered for a special stamp design in 1989.

Extension activities could include:

- ◆ **History, Literacy:** Researching The Postal Museum collections to find social mail and related resources from other periods e.g. the First World War
- ◆ **Maths, Citizenship:** Weighing the card to find out how much it would cost to send today
- ◆ **Geography:** Using maps to explore ways to send cards from, say, your school to Australia
- ◆ **ICT, Music:** Develop animated/musical cards inspired by The Postal Museum collections using computer programmes such as Scratch

To do:

- ◆ Print off examples of various types of cards. For more greetings cards see Sending and Delivering Powerpoint
- ◆ Assemble art materials such as thin coloured card, rulers, white paper, scissors, collage materials, felt-tips, glue, etc.

Key terms

- ◆ Penny Post
- ◆ Social mail

Success criteria

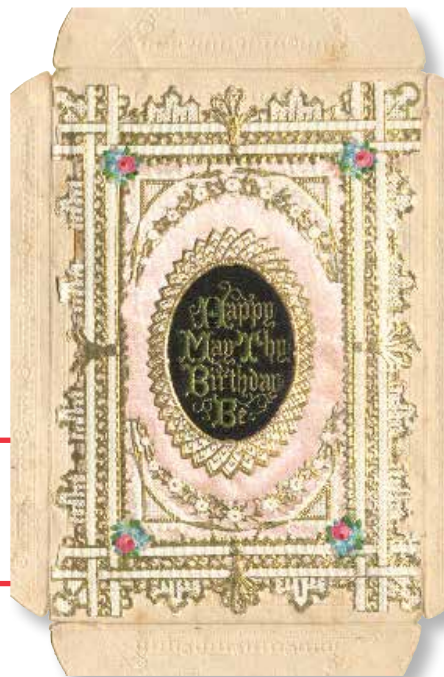
- ◆ All pupils will know that postal reform generated a huge amount of social mail
- ◆ All pupils will be aware of different types of social mail introduced in Victorian times
- ◆ Some pupils will want to explore and design other types of social mail.

When the Penny Postage was introduced, cheap postage meant that everyone could send a letter. More people learnt to read and write. Many new ways of sending messages, such as greetings cards, became popular. Cards with pictures of postmen and postboxes were especially fashionable!



©The Postal Museum, OB2006.0885/7

Victorian card with child postman, c1860-1890



©The Postal Museum, OB1995.162/57

Happy Birthday card made from scraps of fabric, c1870

Post box shaped Christmas card, printed in Berlin c1869-1890



©The Postal Museum, 2006-0285/5



POP UP

Your task is to design a POP-UP greetings card

Things to think about

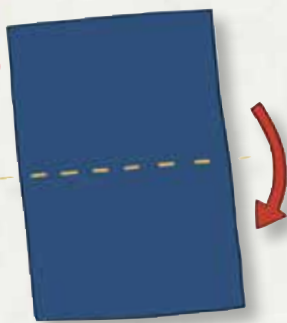
- ◆ The type of greetings card you want to make e.g. a birthday or Christmas card, or a postcard
- ◆ Who you will send it to
- ◆ What shape you want to 'pop up'
- ◆ How you will make the card
- ◆ The materials you will need to make your card
- ◆ The words you will use on your card



To make

- 1 Cut out a two rectangles of card, one coloured and one white. Fold the coloured one in half
- 2 Design and cut out a shape from the sheet of white card
- 3 Glue half of your shape to one side of your folded coloured card so that when the card is open your design pops up above the top of your card
- 4 Write your message

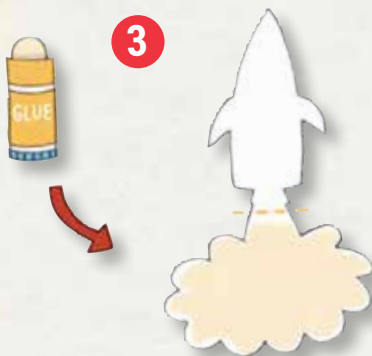
1



2



3



4



Overview of the lesson:

Paintings that told stories (narrative paintings) were very popular in Victorian times. The Postal Museum collection has several that were inspired by the General Post Office (see Sending and Delivering Powerpoint for more examples). This activity uses ***The Country Letter Carrier***, painted in 1859 by J.P. Hall, linking primarily to **Literacy and History**.

Before undertaking this activity, pupils are likely to have:

- ◆ Discovered that Victorian narrative paintings were the television soap stories of their day, illustrating everyday tales of city or country life
- ◆ Examined the painting, discussed the story the artist is illustrating in the painting
- ◆ Described details such as the role of the rural letter carrier, (rural letter carriers often had to walk further, work longer hours for smaller wages than town letter carriers), and whether this letter carrier reflects these facts
- ◆ Thought about the relationship between the figures and used the internet to find out whether their clothes are suitable for country people
- ◆ Compared the scene with historic images of country villages in Victorian times and the rural postman on page 17 to think about whether the scene is realistic or not.

Extension activities could include:

- ◆ **Literacy, History:** Looking at how the General Post Office was described in 19th-century literature e.g. Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollop, William Makepeace Thackeray or Jane Austen
- ◆ **Literacy:** Sourcing contemporary children's books e.g. *The Jolly Postman* by Allan and Janet Ahlberg (see page 48)
- ◆ **Art & Design, History:** Using other Victorian narrative paintings in the collection for storytelling and historical evidence (see page xx for further details); creating examples of other types of artwork e.g. illustrations for posters and cards.

To do:

- ◆ Download good-quality A4 colour copies of ***The Country Letter Carrier*** for each carousel group
- ◆ Assemble art materials
- ◆ Source a simple animation programme such as Scratch or Kodu

Key terms

- ◆ Narrative painting
- ◆ Letter carrier
- ◆ Realism

Success criteria

By the end of the project:

- ◆ All pupils will be familiar with the term 'narrative paintings'
- ◆ All pupils will know that the General Post Office was a source of inspiration for artists and writers

The Country Letter Carrier is a story painting by J.P. Hall. It shows a letter carrier delivering a letter to three girls. Receiving a letter was very exciting in Victorian times, as this painting shows.

YOUR TASK

We don't know anything about the real story. Your task is to invent one!

Did you know?

... On 1 August 1883, Miss Geraldine Maine of 2 Belsize Park Gardens, London, received the first Post Office parcel

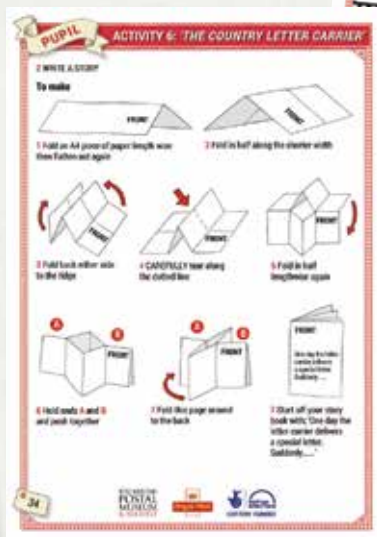
Things to think about

- ◆ Do you think the people in the painting are rich or poor? Why do you think this?
- ◆ To whom do you think the letter carrier is trying to deliver the letter?
- ◆ What are the two girls on the left trying to do?
- ◆ What do you think the girl on the right is thinking?
- ◆ Who do you think the letter is from? Why do you think this?
- ◆ What do you think woman sitting at the table is thinking?
- ◆ And finally... what do you think happened next?

To make

Use one of the templates to describe your story in any way you want e.g.

- ◆ A cartoon
- ◆ A written story
- ◆ A stop-start animation
- ◆ A painting



1 DRAW A CARTOON

One day the letter carrier
delivers a special letter.
Suddenly.....



The
Postal
Museum

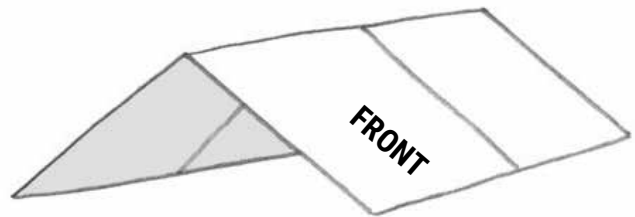


2 WRITE A STORY

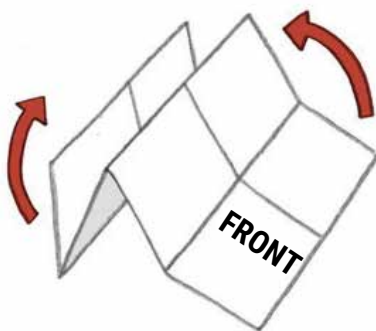
To make



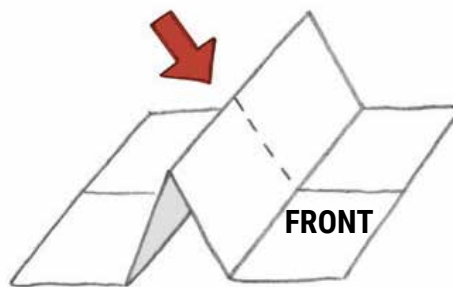
1 Fold an A4 piece of paper lengthwise then flatten out again



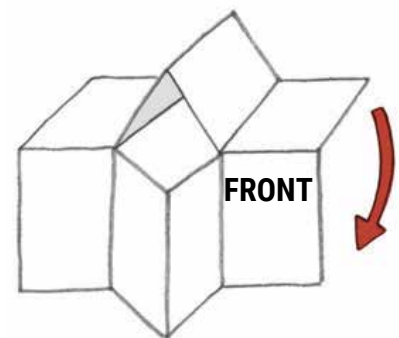
2 Fold in half along the shorter width



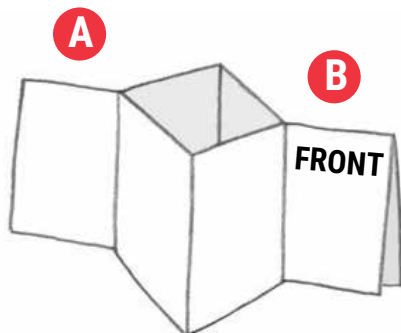
3 Fold back either side to the ridge



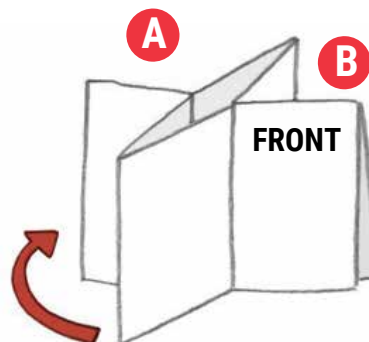
4 CAREFULLY tear along the dotted line



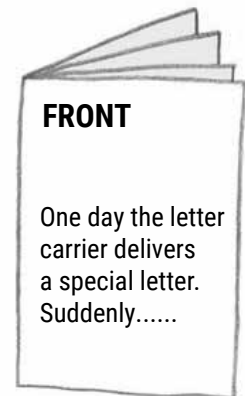
5 Fold in half lengthwise again



6 Hold ends **A** and **B** and push together



7 Fold this page around to the back



7 Start off your story book with; 'One day the letter carrier delivers a special letter. Suddenly.....'



ACTIVITY 6: 'THE COUNTRY LETTER CARRIER'

3 MAKE AN ANIMATION

FRAME 1	FRAME 2	FRAME 3
'One day the letter carrier delivers a special letter. Suddenly.....'		
FRAME 4	FRAME 5	FRAME 6
FRAME 7	FRAME 8	FRAME 9
FRAME 10	FRAME 11	FRAME 12

3 PAINT A PICTURE

