

Semaphore Flags and Morse Code

Semaphore flags and Morse code were the methods of messaging in Juliette Low's time, before the telephone. Complete the tasks below to discover more about semaphore and Morse code.

1. Answer these questions: What is semaphore? Who used it?
2. Use the semaphore flags (in the Heritage Trunk) and alphabet to communicate with someone using flags.
3. Decode this message written in the original Morse Code:

- . . . -

4. What was the message in the famous phone call from Juliette to her cousin?
5. Text the message on a cell phone to someone.
6. Use semaphore flags or Morse code to pass that same message to someone.
7. What does your name look like in semaphore and Morse code?

Original Semaphore Flags



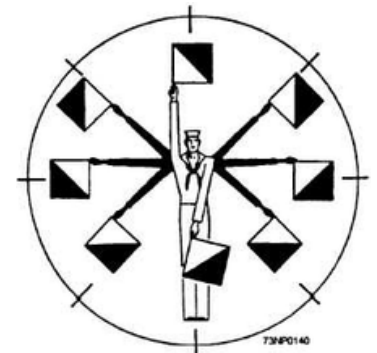
Did you know?

Semaphore flags used to be white & red but now they are yellow & red when at sea, or white & blue when on land.

Girl Scouts from the early 1900's practice semaphore.

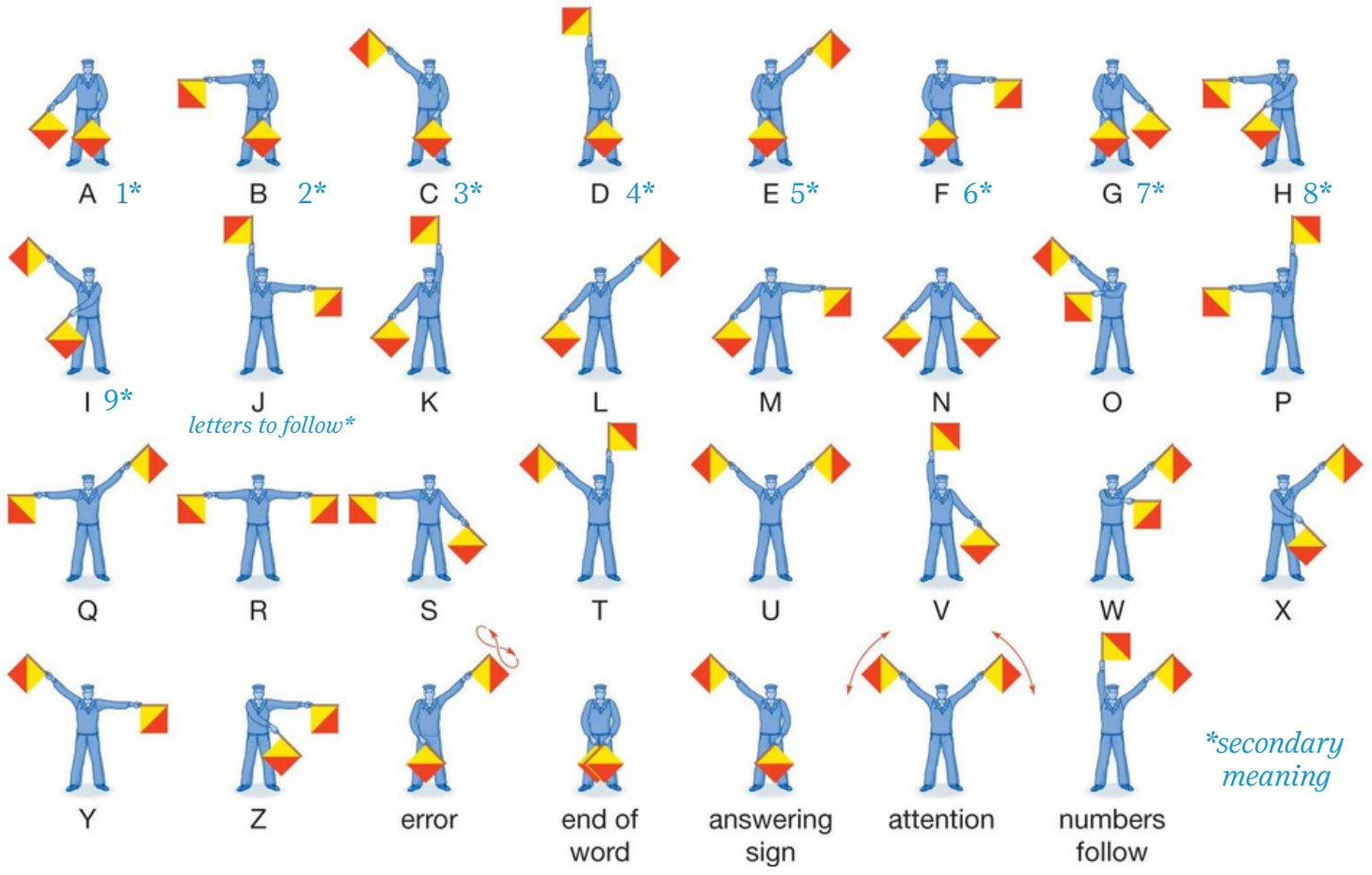


These are all of the possible positions for the semaphore flags. Semaphore works similar to a clock, starting with your right hand moving and then your left hand. The two flags are never in the same position.



Using the chart on the next page, what letters do you think the girls in these pictures are practicing?

Semaphore flags were used to signal between ships, before the telegraph was invented. A person would hold a flag in each hand and move them to different positions to communicate specific letters or numbers.



Morse Code was invented in the USA in the 1830s by Samuel F.B. Morse, and was used to communicate with the telegraph. International Morse Code started being used in the 1850s so it could be used in languages other than English.

	American	International		American	International		American	International
A	••	••	M	— —	— —	1	•• — —	•• — —
Ä		•• ••	N	— •	— •	2	•• — •	•• — —
Á		•• — ••	Ñ		— — • —	3	•• •• ••	•• •• —
Â		•• — ••	O	••	— — —	4	•• •• —	•• •• —
B	— •••	— •••	Ö		— — — •	5	— — — —	•• •• ••
C	•• ••	— •• ••	P	•• •• ••	•• — — •	6	•• •• •• ••	— •• •• ••
CH		— — — —	Q	•• — ••	— — • —	7	— — — ••	— — — ••
D	— ••	— ••	R	•• ••	•• ••	8	— — •• ••	— — — ••
E	•	•	S	•• ••	•• ••	9	— •• — —	— — — — •
É		•• — ••	T	—	—	0	— — — — —	— — — — —
F	•• — •	•• — •	U	•• —	•• —	@		•• — •• ••
G	— — ••	— — ••	Ü		•• — —			
H	•• •• ••	•• •• ••	V	•• •• —	•• •• —			
I	••	••	W	•• — —	•• — —			
J	— •• — ••	•• — — —	X	•• — ••	— •• —			
K	— •• —	— •• —	Y	•• •• ••	— •• — —			
L	— — — —	•• — ••	Z	•• •• ••	— — ••			

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