



What's going on this week?

Military families have been asking defence chiefs not to axe free messages from home for overseas troops to save £1million.

The messages known as e-blueys have been used in war zones like Iraq and Afghanistan; they are printed out for soldiers after being sent via a secure web server. The Ministry of Defence confirmed the service ended on March 31st because more troops now use social media.

Former soldier, John Nichol, commented, "I understand that technology means it's easier to stay in touch, but if people serving still want to receive a letter in the form of a bluey, it's quite important. For me, it was a very important link to home."

Main question:

How important is it to communicate with the people we care about?

Listen, think, share

Ask the children to list the different ways we communicate when we are around others, discuss talking, smiling, waving, hugging. Ask the children if anyone has family or friends who don't live close by, perhaps in another town or maybe even in a different country? Talk about how we can communicate with them, discuss the use of letters, texts, phone calls, video calls etc. Talk about how they can enable us to stay in touch with people who may not be close by. Ask the children if any have experience of a parent or close family member going away. How did it make them feel? Talk about how it feels when they call or send a letter. Discuss the week's story and explain that an e-bluey is a printed electronic letter that people back home can send to family or friends in the army when they are working away. Ask why we may want to keep in touch? Talk about how we may miss them or worry about their safety. Ask why they think the printed e-blueys might have been considered important? Talk about how the soldiers may not have much access to computers or technology and talk about the value of a piece of paper with a message they can keep looking back at. Use the assembly resource to talk through each of the different scenarios and discuss which would be the best way to communicate from the options and why.

Reflection

Sometimes the people we care about most aren't always close by, this could be because they are working away, going on holiday or they have had to move somewhere else – it's often very reassuring to hear their voice or read their words to know how they are and what they are doing. It's important to try to keep in touch with the people we care about.

This week...

We will get in touch with someone who we care about who doesn't live locally. This could be through writing a letter, sending an email or through phoning them. Hopefully – this will be a lovely surprise!



KS1 Focus

Question:

How do we communicate with others?

Listen, think, share

Ask the children how a baby lets others know what it wants? Talk about how babies cry and how they smile when they are happy. Ask the children to think which babies learn first, how to speak or how to write? Talk about how we gradually move away from crying and making noises to learning words and being able to say what we would like or need, to being able to write down thoughts, instructions or cards.

Use the KS1 resource and ask the children to work in pairs (cut the images into individual pictures or place on a big screen with half of the children facing away from the screen). Work through the different images using different ways of communication. Which did they find most effective and why?

Ask the children to think about which would be the best way to communicate in certain situations e.g. if they had a fall out with their best friend, if they wanted to wish a relative who lived far away a happy birthday or if they wanted to keep in touch with a friend who had moved far away.

Explain that we are very lucky to have such a wide range of ways in which we can communicate with people we care about.

Reflection

There are many ways we can communicate with others around us, we can talk, smile, send a letter or a card or simply just listen so that others know we care.

This week...

We will think about all the different ways we can show people how we feel and be sure to let the people we care about most know using the many ways we can communicate!



KS2 Focus

Question:

Are letters still important?

Listen, think, share

Ask the children if anyone has received a letter or card in the post recently? How did it make them feel? Do we think there is still a place for this type of communication? What's the difference between writing a card for someone on their birthday and sending them a text? Discuss which you would prefer and why.

Talk about how some ways of communicating can seem more impersonal and can be difficult to decipher what is meant. Ask the children to say the phrase "Do whatever you like" to the person next to them, first angrily, then with a smile. Talk about how these can have a completely different meaning depending on how they are communicated! Ask the children why it's important to communicate different ways in different situations – talk about how in the past we wouldn't have been able to text, call or email so a letter would have been the only way! Ask the children to think about what it may have been like during a war, decades ago, before we had access to modern communications. Read the letters in the KS2 resource to the children and first, ask who they think they may have been from and why they have been written, then discuss how important they must have been – so much so that they have been treasured all this time!

Reflection

Over the last decade, technology has evolved hugely, meaning communication can often be instant and, at times, impersonal in the automated world we live in. Sometimes, taking time and thought into a more personal method of communication can go a long way!

This week...

We will write a letter to someone we care about and ask them how it made them feel to receive something so personal!



KS2 Cross-Curricular Ideas

English: Look at a variety of letters (you could use KS2 resource letters). Discuss layout, structure and language. When we write to somebody we care for, how do you want them to feel? Discuss the use of powerful, emotive vocabulary. Ask the children to write a letter to someone they care for. Include why they are writing, what they love about them, a special/funny moment they shared etc. If you can, ask the children to bring a stamp in. You could walk to a post box and post your letters!

Maths: Explain that top secret information is often communicated using codes. Share the information from NRICH 'Cracking Codes'. Ask the children to create their own code.

History: Find out more information about how people communicated with each other during WW2. How were letters transported? What was the Enigma code, used by German military during WW2?

ICT: Discuss in further detail, how when you cannot see somebody's face or hear their voice, words can take on a different meaning. Use this to discuss use of social media and the internet and being safe.

DT/Geography/Science: Discuss why it is important to recycle. Explain that paper can be recycled and it can be used to write a letter! Think about the properties of paper and why it is can be recycled. Plan the paper-making process and evaluate the paper once it is completed. If time, experiment with colour and texture.

MFL: Ask the children to write a postcard using your MFL.



KS1 Cross-Curricular Ideas

English: Create a communications carousel. 1. Write a postcard about what you have been doing in school to send home. 2. Make a telephone call (if you can do a real one to a governor or to the office, that would be amazing!). 3. Send an e mail. 4. Draw a picture to share how you feel. 5. Talk to somebody on a walkie talkie. 6. Learn some sign language or use it to communicate with somebody. 7. Talk to a friend using your MFL.

Maths: Give the children word problems or number sentences at an appropriate challenge. Ask them to solve the problem then communicate how they solved it with a partner. If they are able to, children could create a 'maths pen pal' with a child from KS2 or another class where they write to explain how they solved their problem.

History: Look at how people communicated in the past or focus on your current history topic to discuss ways of communicating (see useful website for communication timeline useful for teacher).

Geography: Look at a map of the UK. Ask children if they have any family who live in different parts of the UK. Do you ever write to them or send cards/presents? How do they get there? Discuss the postal service and the route the letters might take.

Art: Look at the pictures drawn during English. Discuss use of colour and texture to communicate feelings and emotions. Which colours/textures are happy? Which are angry or sad? Add colour and texture to their picture.

Role Play: A postal service! Stamps, envelopes, parcels, post boxes and opportunities for the children to write and send letters and postcards to each other.



This Week's Useful Websites

This week's news story
bit.ly/2oFS2gn

How were important messages sent during WW1?
bbc.co.uk/education/clips/zq4dq6f

KS2 Maths
nrich.maths.org/8116

Communication timeline
www.atlassian.com/communication-through-the-ages-infographic