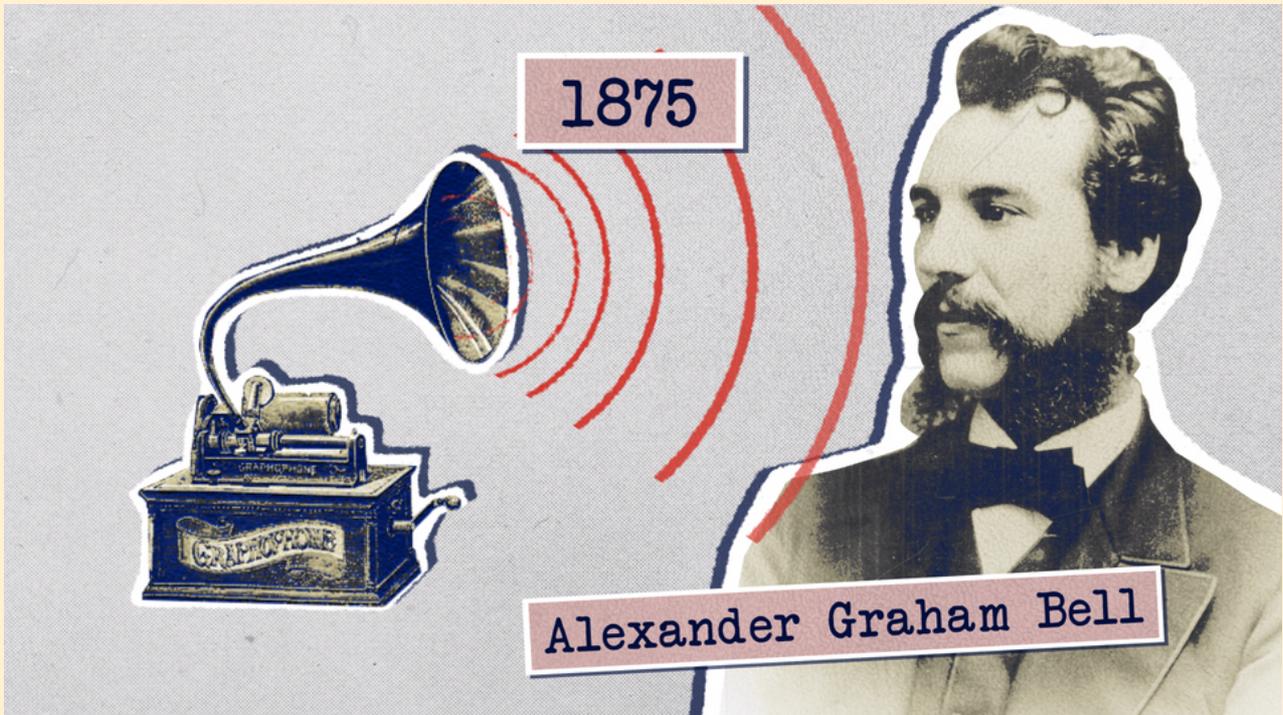


Miniclips: Snapshots of New York History

Communication in the United States



About this video



MINICLIPS: SNAPSHOTS OF NY HISTORY

Communication in the United States

Before the 19th century, one of the only ways you could communicate with people who lived far away was by writing a letter. This video tells the story of the development of communication technologies in the United States, from the telegraph to the telephone, to the mobile phones we all use today.

Essential question:

How has communication technology evolved over time in America?

Key vocabulary:

technology

switchboard

operator

invention

telegraph

telephone

inventor

Learning intention:

Learn about major developments in mass communication technology and understand how it impacted business and global relations.

Before watching

Activating prior knowledge: List the ways

Students will discuss modern-day communication technologies.

They will imagine that they have some incredibly exciting news to tell their best friend. There is one problem though. Their friend is currently in another country so they can't just go over to their house to talk to them.

Communication options:

- In their notes, students are to write down as many different ways that they could potentially share this information with their friends. Assume that time, technology, and money are not an issue so they can use any methods that are available.

Share and discuss:

- Place students into groups of 3-4 and have them share their lists with each other. As they describe each option, ensure they also discuss the benefits and drawbacks of this method of communication.

Class discussion:

- What is the best communication technology available today to connect with people far away? Why? Can you think of any technology that does not exist yet that would improve communication options?

Whilst watching



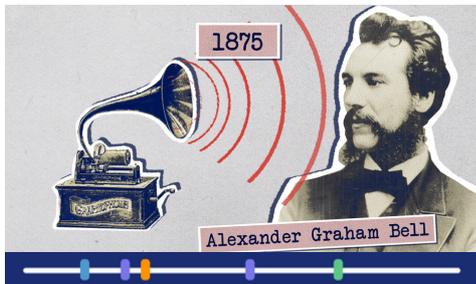
Watching as a class



Watch the interactive video as a class and ask students to respond to the prompts throughout the interactive.



Watching individually



Have students watch the interactive created for immediate feedback and solo viewing.

After watching

Below are two activities to extend students' learning and check for understanding.

Activity 1: Technology time capsule

This activity engages students in reflecting on the communication technology they learned about in the video and encourages them to consider their own thoughts and predictions about future communication advancements.

Time capsule preparation:

- Explain to students that they will create a "Communication Time Capsule" that contains their thoughts, predictions, and reflections about communication technology. Distribute small boxes or containers for the time capsules.

Artistic depiction:

- Instruct students to draw or write about three communication technologies from the video that stood out to them. They should depict the technology and write a few sentences about why it's important or interesting.

Predicting the future:

- Have students predict what future communication technology might look like. They can draw or write about a new invention they imagine will exist in the future. Encourage creativity and imaginative thinking.

Sealing the time capsule:

- Once students have completed their drawings and writings, ask them to place their artifacts inside the time capsule. Seal the time capsules shut.

Opening the time capsules:

- Distribute the time capsules to students so that each student has a time capsule from someone else in the class. Ask students to open the time capsule and explore the artifacts within it.

Discussion and reflection:

- Engage the class in a discussion about the variety of communication technologies and predictions shared. Discuss how communication technology has evolved and speculate on what might come next.



Support:

Visual imagery: Provide printed images of communication technologies for students to choose from if drawing is challenging.

Group work: Allow students to work in pairs to complete their time capsules together.

Video recap and discussion: Begin by briefly recapping the main points of the video about communication technology in America. Discuss with students the different inventions discussed in the video.

List of technologies: Provide students with a list of different communication technologies to choose from. For example:

- Telegraph
- Telephone
- Computer
- Smartphone

Extension:



This extension activity encourages students to research and present an important inventor or innovator who contributed to new communication technologies. The goal is to enrich their understanding and broaden their knowledge about the evolution of communication.

Introduction:

- Begin by explaining to students that they will be conducting research on an important inventor or innovator in the field of communication technology. Emphasize that they will share their findings in a research showcase.

Inventor selection:

- Allow students to choose an inventor or innovator from a provided list or give them the option to research and select someone of interest to them.

Research phase:

- Instruct them to research their chosen inventor's life, contributions, and impact on communication technology. Encourage note-taking and organizing information.

Creating the showcase:

- Once research is complete, guide students in creating a presentation showcase about their inventor. They can design a physical or digital presentation with visuals, pictures, and text that highlight the inventor's accomplishments and contributions.

(Optional) Practice presentations:

- Give students time to practice presenting their showcases to a partner or in small groups. Encourage them to practice speaking clearly and confidently about their inventor's work.

(Optional) Showcase and discussion:

- Hold a research showcase session where each student presents their inventor to the class. After each presentation, open the floor for questions and discussions. Discuss how each inventor's contributions have influenced the way we communicate today.

Activity 2: Communicating with the past

This creative writing activity allows students to imagine sending letters back in time to Samuel Morse and Alexander Graham Bell, updating them on current communication technologies, and expressing gratitude for their inventions. It fosters historical understanding and critical thinking about the evolution of communication.

Explain to students that they will be writing letters that will "time travel" back to Samuel Morse and Alexander Graham Bell.

Letter writing:

Instruct students to write a letter addressed to Samuel Morse or Alexander Graham Bell.

The letter should:

- Thank the inventor for his invention and explain the impact it had on society long after his death.
- Describe current communication technologies and how they have evolved.
- Reflect on the ways these technologies have influenced their own lives.
- Include a couple of questions for the inventor about his work and ideas that they would want to know more about.

Sharing letters:

Allow students to share their letters with a partner or in small groups. They can take turns reading their letters aloud to each other.

Class discussion:

Lead a class discussion about the content of the letters. Encourage students to use their imagination to envision how Morse or Bell might react to their letters. What questions might they ask? How might they feel about the advancements in communication?

Reflection:

Conclude the activity by having students reflect on the experience of writing to historical figures and what they learned from imagining the past and present intersecting through their letters. Discuss how communication has changed over time and the role that Morse and Bell played in laying the foundation for modern communication technologies.

Support:

Sentence starters: Offer sentence starters for the letters, such as "Dear [Inventor's Name], I am writing to you from the future to tell you about..."

Letter outline: Provide a template for the letters with labeled sections for different points (e.g., Introduction, Current Communication Technologies, Gratitude).



Collaboration: Allow struggling students to work in pairs to collaboratively write their letters, helping each other with ideas and structure.

Extension:

Students will imagine they are hosting a podcast where they interview Samuel Morse or Alexander Graham Bell about their inventions and their thoughts on current communication technologies.

Podcast concept:

- Explain to students that they will create a fictional podcast episode where they interview either Samuel Morse or Alexander Graham Bell.

Research and scriptwriting:

- Have students research the chosen inventor's life and their contributions. In pairs or individually, instruct them to write a podcast script that includes questions, answers, and imaginative dialogues between the host and the inventor.

(Optional) Recording:

- If possible, use recording equipment or digital devices to allow students to record their podcast episodes. They can take turns being the host and the inventor, bringing their script to life.

(Optional) Podcast sharing:

- Let each group or student play their podcast episode for the class. After each episode, engage in a brief discussion about the creative questions and responses.

(Optional) Discussion and reflection:

- Lead a class discussion about the insights students gained through their podcast interviews. Discuss the significance of Morse's or Bell's inventions in the context of modern communication.

Conclusion

Ask students to respond to the essential question posed at the beginning of the lesson.

How has communication technology evolved over time in America?

Ask if they still have any questions about the content presented in the video. Discuss and answer these questions as a class.