

# • Code Breakers •

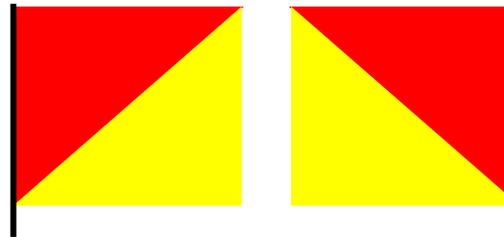
In the early 1800s there were no radios or telephones. Sailors used signal flags to communicate over long distances, using a code called semaphore.

Can you master the code?

Make two semaphore flags and spell out a word. Can a friend or family member decode your message?

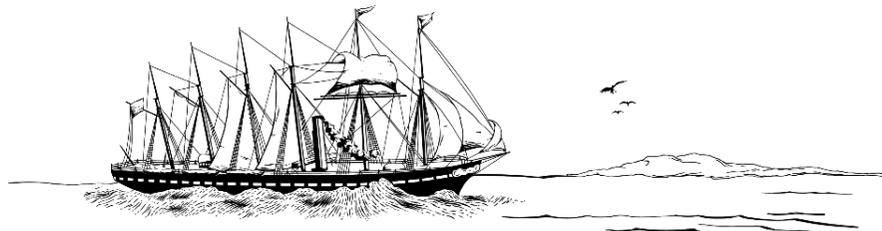
## Make your own flags

Traditional semaphore flags look like this



Using 2 pieces of paper, you can design and colour in your own flags – draw the flags on both sides of the paper.

Stick your flags on to a pencil, wooden spoon, straw or similar so you can hold them.



## **Sending a message**

One person is the signaller; the other person is a decoder. If there are more than two people, have a team of decoders. The signaller will need two flags and a copy of the semaphore alphabet; the decoder will need paper and pencil (for recording letters) and a semaphore alphabet.

### **Signaller**

Decide what word you are going to signal, it could be your name, a colour, an animal - the choice is yours!

Hold a flag in each hand and move your arms into the exact position shown by the letter on the semaphore alphabet.

Once the decoder has written down their guess for the first letter, move your arms to make the next letter.

Repeat until you've spelt out your chosen word.



### **Decoder**

Stand or sit in front of the signaller. Use the semaphore alphabet to work out what word the signaller is spelling out. They will signal one letter at a time.

Once you've worked out what the letter is, write it down and ask them to move to the next letter.

When they've finished spelling out the word, tell them what you think the word is. Have you got it right?

Swap roles and have another go with a different word.

### **Top tips**

Start with a short word e.g. ship; you can move to longer words as you get more confident.

The semaphore alphabet figures are facing forward in the diagrams – pay attention to the flag positions (for example in the letter B your right arm should be horizontal and your left arm down)

# Semaphore Alphabet

