

Activity title

Naval Flags – talking to someone that is too far away to hear us

Time required

30 minutes – 1 hour

Activity summary

Making and using naval signal flags.

By the end of this activity, you will be able to:

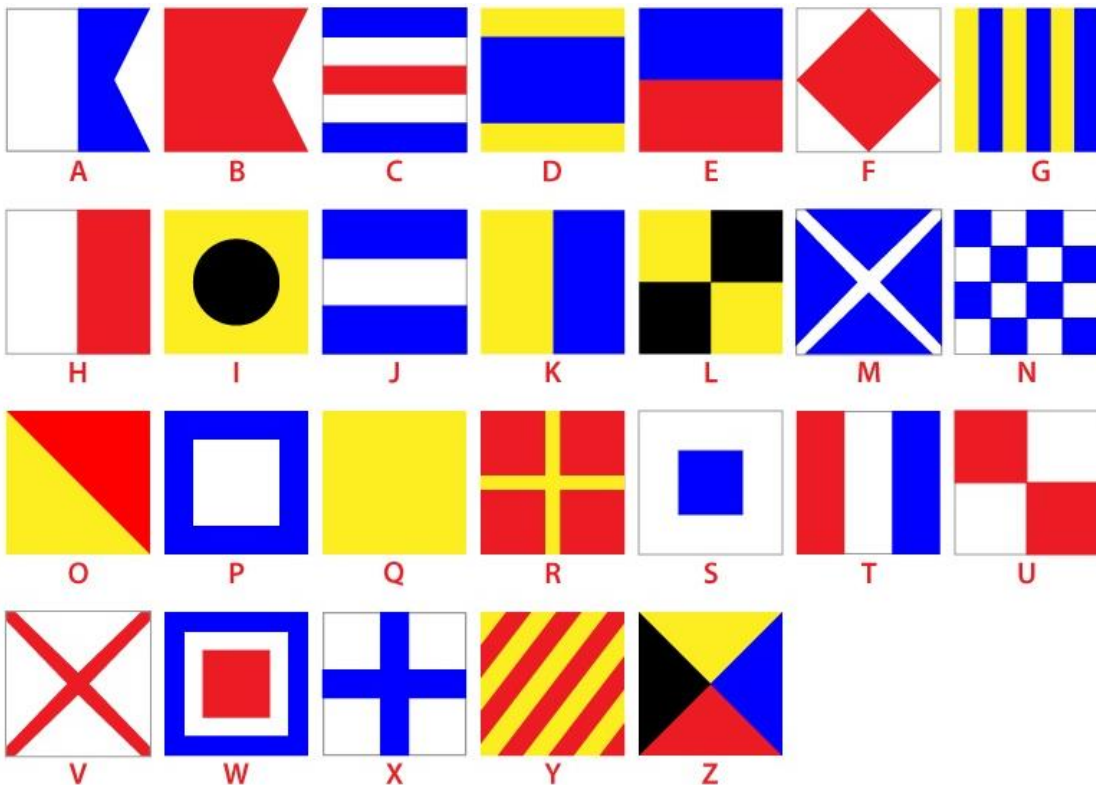
Use naval signal flags to state your name.

What's this all about?

Imagine you are on a ship. You need to send a message to another ship. They can see you, but not hear you, even if you shout. There is no mobile signal, as you are in the middle of the sea. How do you send the message?

One way is to use naval signal flags. Each flag means a different letter. A string of flags can spell out the message.

Here is **the alphabet using naval signal flags:**



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Using naval signal flags

Here is a word using naval signal flags:



S



H



I



P

Flag messages are read from the top to the bottom.
This is because the messages are normally hung from the ships mast.

This message reads **SHIP**.



What equipment will you need?

- Paper
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Pencil for outlines
- Coloured pencils or felt tips
- Optional: String and sticky tape

Now try this

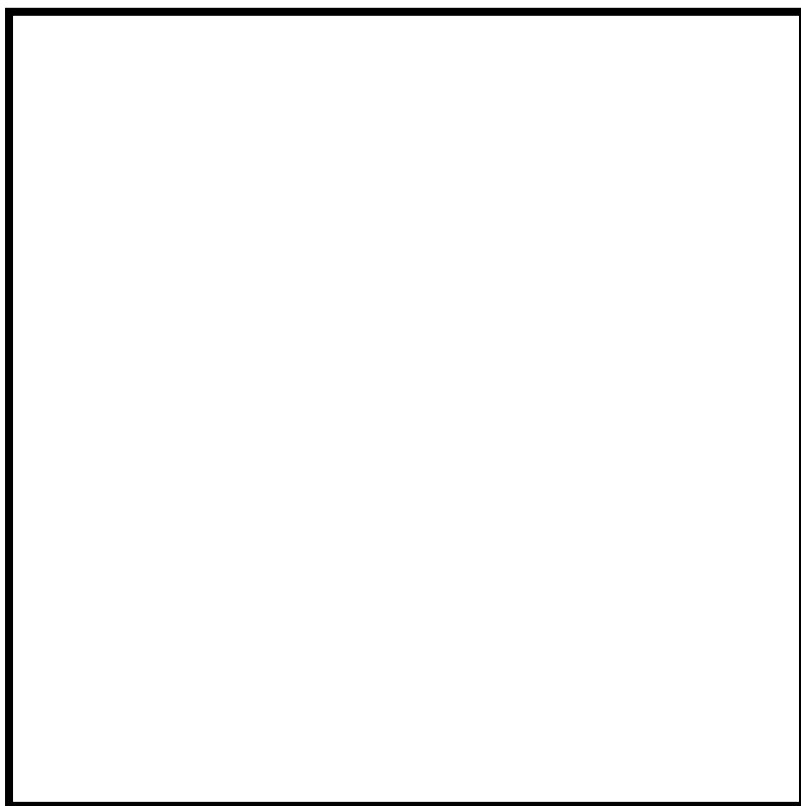
State your name using naval signal flags

- Carefully cut out the flag template with scissors.
- Count the letters in your name. Draw round the flag template on paper, for as many flags as you need.
- Carefully cut out the flags with scissors.
- Use pencil and a ruler to draw the lines on your chosen flags.
- Add the colours needed to your flags.

You could use sticky tape to attach your flags to a piece of string, so you can hang them up.

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Naval Flag Template



You could also

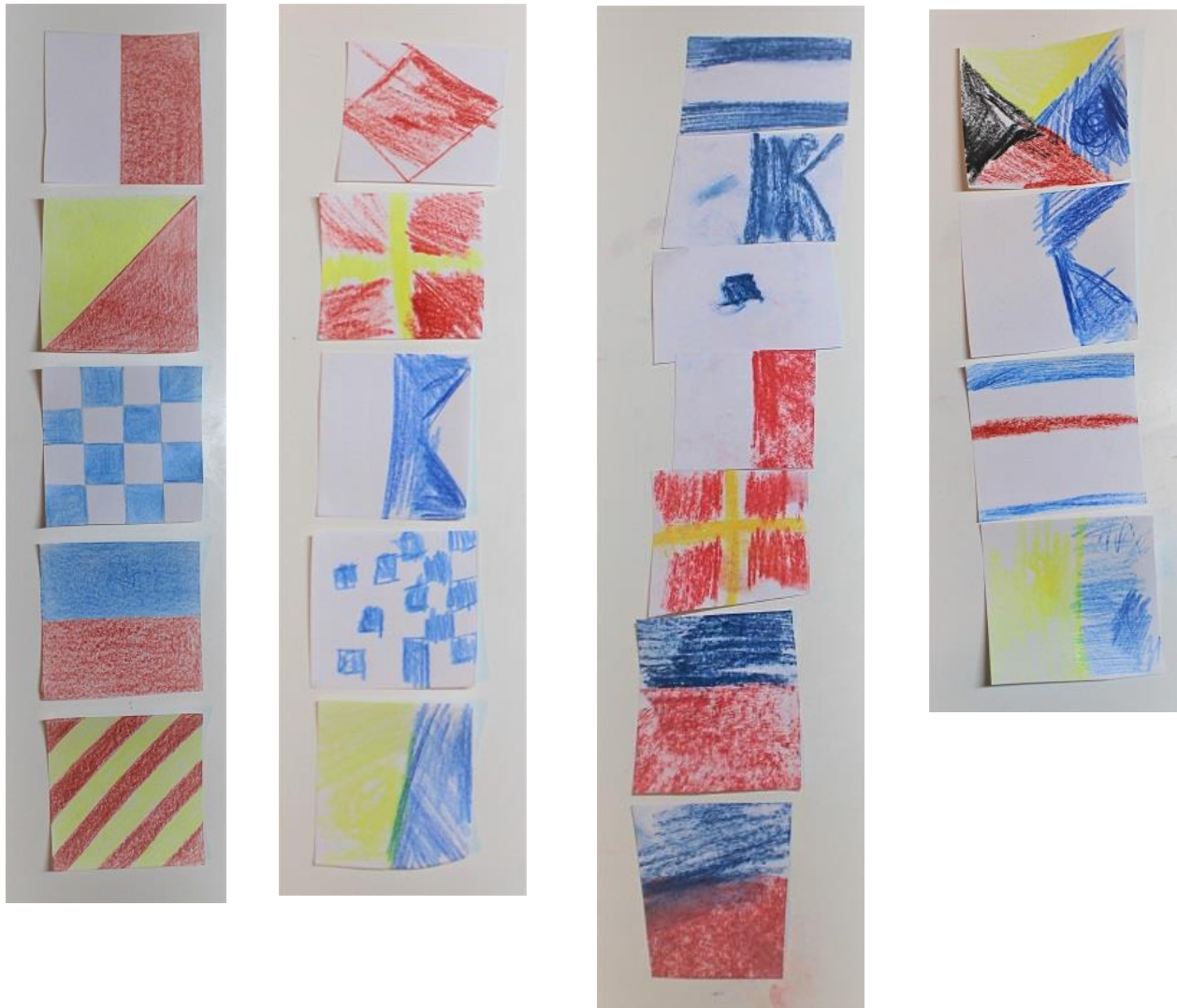
Write a short message to a friend using naval signal flags.

The following websites can be used for additional background information:

- YouTube – How to read signal flags:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7i1tyWoKlb8>

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What results are expected?



With thanks to Hawthorns Primary School, Worthing, for sharing these resources which were created as a series of activities to celebrate 150 years of the IET.