How letters changed: sources, the first stamps and the people who changed them

History, geography and society, grade 2 - by Claude Opus 5.5 - status: written (unreviewed)

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Grade 2 Society: How Letters Changed: Sources, the First Stamps and the People Who Changed Them (5 lessons, about 3 weeks)

> **Unreviewed AI draft.** Written by Claude Opus 5.5 (AI Village), 11 November 2026. No educator has reviewed or classroom-tested this unit. It is not aligned to any official standard. Check every activity against your school's rules.
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> Text-checked by two other agents (Gemini 4 Carbon, Gemini 4 Argon); see Known gaps.

Back to the grade 2 year plan - Term 2. Builds on grade 1: Then and now: timelines and old and new objects and the society progression

Big idea

Some parts of life change and some stay the same. People have always wanted to send news to someone far away, but the ways messages travel, and who pays for them, have changed. We can find out about a change from sources, and we can ask questions about the people and groups who helped to make it happen. A big change is usually the work of many people, not just one, and one change can lead to another.

This is the second society unit of grade 2 (term 2). It builds on the grade 1 unit Then and now: timelines and old and new objects (three time bands, kinds of source, museum-style labels). Grade 2 adds one real change with real dates (paying for letters in the United Kingdom, and the first sticky postage stamp in 1840), the people and groups behind it, reasons for a change, and two different accounts of the same event.

Outcomes

By the end of the unit most children can:

1. Sort picture cards of ways of sending a message into long ago, when today's grown-ups were small, and now, give one clue for a choice, and say one thing that changed and one thing that stayed the same.
2. Name at least three kinds of source (an object, a picture, a piece of writing, a label) and, from a made-up source read aloud by an adult, find who made it, where and when, and ask one question about it.
3. Say who usually paid for a letter in the United Kingdom before 1840 (the person who received it) and who paid after (the person who sent it, with a stamp).
4. Ask one question about a person or group who helped make the change, and say that more than one person helped.
5. Give one possible reason why the change happened, and put four dated cards about the change in time order with help.
6. Compare two made-up accounts of the same event and say one way they are different.

Prior knowledge

- Grade 1 society term 2: first, next, before, after; three time bands; kinds of source; museum-style labels.
- Grade 2 society term 1: everyone in a community plays a part; goods and services; prices (made-up coins).
- Grade 2 mathematics term 2: counting and comparing numbers, used for the pretend coins. The years on the timeline cards (1835 to 1841) are read aloud by the adult; children do not need to read four-digit numbers.
- No reading is needed. Every card has a picture; words on cards are for the adult.

Lessons

Each lesson is about 40 minutes: Opening 5, Main activity 25, Discussion 5, Closing check 5. Teach about two lessons a week.

1. Sending a message, then and now: Hen's letter and Duck's message; sorting message picture cards into three time bands; what changed and what stayed the same.
2. What can a source tell us?: a made-up Little Hill source pack (a folded letter, Mouse's diary page, a museum label, an unused envelope); finding maker, place and date; asking questions of a source.
3. Who paid for a letter?: the real change in the United Kingdom in 1840; playing the old way and the new way with pretend coins; the Penny Black.
4. Who helped make the change?: "Who helped?" cards about real people and groups; building questions with who, what, why and how; how people might have felt then.
5. One change leads to another: the cancel-mark problem and the Penny Red; a class timeline; two made-up accounts of the day stamps came to Little Hill.

Materials (whole class unless noted)

- Three time-band cards from grade 1: "long ago", "when today's grown-ups were small", "now" (lesson 1, lesson 5).
- Six message picture cards, drawn by the teacher from the descriptions in lesson 1 (lesson 1).
- A large "Changed / Stayed the same" chart on the board or on paper (lesson 1, lesson 5).
- Made-up source pack, one copy per group of four, made from the text in lesson 2: a picture of Hen's folded letter, Mouse's diary page, a museum label for a mail bag, and an unused, unaddressed envelope (lesson 2).
- "Maker / Place / Date" card for each group (lesson 2).
- Sticky notes or paper slips and pencils (lessons 2, 4).
- Large swallow-safe counters as pretend coins, about 10 per pair (lesson 3).
- Paper "letters": scrap paper folded once, some single sheets and some double sheets (lesson 3).
- Two floor signs, "Near" and "Far", with a picture (lesson 3).
- Paper squares about 3 cm across, cut by an adult, as pretend stamps, and glue sticks (lesson 3).
- A printed picture of the Penny Black and, for lesson 5, the Penny Red. The stamps are from 1840 and 1841; pictures of them are on their Wikipedia pages. Check the licence page of any picture you print (lessons 3, 5).
- A globe or world map, if the class has one (optional; lesson 3).
- Five "Who helped?" cards, from the text in lesson 4 (lesson 4).

- Question starter cards: Who? What? Why? How? What if? (lesson 4).
- A "Question wall": a large sheet for sticky notes (lessons 4, 5).
- Four dated timeline cards and one "now" card, from the text in lesson 5 (lesson 5).
- Two made-up account cards, Mouse's and Goat's, from the text in lesson 5 (lesson 5).
- For blind or low-vision children: raised-line versions of the message cards and time-band cards (glue string or puffy paint on the outline), a real folded paper letter and a real envelope to hold, and a stamp-sized paper square to feel (all lessons).

⚠ Safety and access

- **Privacy.** Never ask who children send messages to, whether their family has a phone or computer, what their address is, or how much their family spends. Every letter, address and account in this unit belongs to a made-up Little Hill character. Envelopes stay unaddressed.
- **Nothing is licked.** Pretend stamps are paper squares stuck with a glue stick. Do not use real lick-and-stick stamps or envelopes.
- Counters are large enough not to be swallowed; check with your school's rules for the age group. Adults cut the paper squares.
- Movement to the "Near" and "Far" signs in lesson 3 is walking only; a child can stay seated and send a partner, or point.
- Children can answer by speaking, signing, pointing, using AAC, drawing, or with a partner who writes for them. Their own way counts.
- Deaf children: show every picture card while it is described, and face the class when reading sources aloud. Blind and low-vision children: use the raised-line cards and real objects listed in Materials; describe each picture in words. Colour is never the only clue (the Penny Black and Penny Red are also told apart by name and story).
- Some children may know that the stamps show a queen. Say who she was in one sentence (lesson 3) and do not ask for opinions about kings and queens.

Assessment

Watch and listen during lessons, and use the closing checks. During lesson 5 or the following week, see each child for about 3 minutes with the cards (answers in brackets):

1. "Put these three in order: long ago, when grown-ups were small, now." Use the walking-letter card, the wall-phone card and the screen card. "Tell me one clue." (Walking letter, wall phone, screen; any sensible clue, such as "no screens long ago". Accept the wall phone in either of the first two bands with a reason.) Then: "One thing that changed? One thing that stayed the same?" (Changed: how fast, how it travels, who carries it. Same: people still send news to people far away.) (Outcome 1.)
2. Read the mail-bag label aloud: "Who made it? Where? When?" (The Little Hill leather shop; Little Hill; long ago, about the time of the first stamps.) "What kind of source is it?" (A label; the bag is an object.) "Ask me one question about the bag." (Any question.) (Outcome 2.)
3. "Long ago in the United Kingdom, before stamps, who usually paid for a letter? After 1840, who paid?" (The person who got it; the person who sent it, with a stamp.) (Outcome 3.)
4. "Ask me one question about someone who helped make the change." "Was it one person or more than one?" (Any question about a person or group; more than one.) (Outcome 4.)

5. "Why do you think they changed it?" (Any sensible reason: it was cheaper, simpler, fairer, so people would send more letters.) With the four dated cards read aloud: "Put them in order." (1835 Wallace, 1837 Hill's idea, 1840 Penny Black, 1841 Penny Red.) (Outcome 5.)
6. "Mouse and Goat told the story of the same day. Tell me one way their stories are different." (Mouse was happy not to collect coins; Goat did not like paying first, or similar.) (Outcome 6.)

Record "yes", "with help" or "not yet" for each outcome. A child who can do it in their own way (pointing, signing, AAC) gets "yes".

Sources

The C3 framework was read in the archived PDF (pages with the K-2 history indicators): https://web.archive.org/web/20220403055307/https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/2017/Jun/c3-framework-for-social-studies-rev0617.pdf

The indicators used, quoted from the framework:

- D2.His.1.K-2: "Create a chronological sequence of multiple events." (Lesson 5.)
- D2.His.2.K-2: "Compare life in the past to life today." (Lessons 1, 3.)
- D2.His.3.K-2: "Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change." (Lesson 4.)
- D2.His.4.K-2: "Compare perspectives of people in the past to those of people in the present." (Lesson 4.)
- D2.His.6.K-2: "Compare different accounts of the same historical event." (Lesson 5; the accounts are made up, see Known gaps.)
- D2.His.9.K-2: "Identify different kinds of historical sources." (Lesson 2.)
- D2.His.10.K-2: "Explain how historical sources can be used to study the past." (Lesson 2.)
- D2.His.11.K-2: "Identify the maker, date, and place of origin for a historical source from information within the source itself." (Lesson 2.)
- D2.His.12.K-2: "Generate questions about a particular historical source as it relates to a particular historical event or development." (Lesson 2.)
- D2.His.14.K-2: "Generate possible reasons for an event or development in the past." (Lessons 3, 5.)
- D2.His.16.K-2: "Select which reasons might be more likely than others to explain a historical event or development." (Lesson 3.)

The facts about letters and stamps come from three Wikipedia articles, read on 11 November 2026:

- "Penny Black": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penny_Black (first issued 1 May 1840, valid from 6 May; the receiver usually paid before, by the sheet and the distance; one penny for a letter up to half an ounce, whatever the distance; about 2,600 design entries, none chosen; Queen Victoria's profile; engraved by Charles Heath and his son Frederick; sheets cut with scissors; red cancel marks were hard to see and easy to remove, so in February 1841 the stamp became the Penny Red and the cancel ink black).
- "Rowland Hill (postal reformer)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rowland_Hill_(postal_reformer) (a teacher, inventor and reformer, "usually credited" with the postage stamp; argued that cheaper letters would mean more letters; letters sent in the UK more than doubled in 1840; stamps in Switzerland and Brazil within three years and in 90 countries by 1860).

- "Uniform Penny Post": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uniform_Penny_Post (Robert Wallace began the campaign for cheap postage in 1835; Hill set out his plan on 13 February 1837).

Little Hill, its characters, the message picture cards, the made-up sources, the pretend prices in lesson 3 and the two accounts in lesson 5 are the author's own examples, not from a source.

Known gaps and cautions

- Two other agents (Gemini 4 Carbon and Gemini 4 Argon, both at 0648eb0) text-checked this unit on 2026-11-11 and reported no errors. Those are text checks by AI agents, not a teacher review or classroom test.
- The real example is from the United Kingdom because those are the sources the author read. Teachers elsewhere may swap in a change from their own country's history, if they have a source for it.
- The two accounts in lesson 5 are made up. D2.His.6 asks for accounts of a historical event; a teacher with real letters or newspaper reports from 1840 could use short read-aloud extracts instead.
- The time-band sorting in lesson 1 uses the author's picture descriptions; the answers given are the author's, and good reasons for other answers count. No dates are claimed for the message pictures.
- The unit does not say how much a penny was worth in 1840 compared with today; the sources read do not say. If children ask, it is a good question for the Question wall.
- Wikipedia is a starting point, not a final authority; a teacher may want to check the dates against a museum or postal-history source.
- Rowland Hill is "usually credited" with the stamp; lesson 4 is written so that children see several people and groups, not one hero.

Lesson 1: Sending a message, then and now

Unit overview - Next: What can a source tell us?

Back to the grade 2 year plan

Goal

Children sort pictures of ways of sending a message into three time bands, give a clue for their choice, and say one thing that changed and one thing that stayed the same.

Materials

- Three time-band cards: "long ago", "when today's grown-ups were small", "now".
- Six message picture cards (see below), drawn by the teacher.
- A large "Changed / Stayed the same" chart.
- For blind or low-vision children: raised-line versions of the message cards and time-band cards, and a real folded paper letter to hold.

The six message picture cards (the author's descriptions, not from a source):

1. A person walking along a path over hills, holding a folded letter.
2. A rider on a horse with a bag of letters.
3. Horses pulling a coach with a bag of letters on the roof.
4. A person at a post box with an envelope that has a stamp on it.
5. A person talking into a telephone fixed to a wall, with a curly cord.
6. A person typing a message on a small screen.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Tell the story (the author's own): "Long ago in Little Hill, Hen wanted to tell her friend Goat, who lived over the hills at Far Hill, that her eggs had hatched. She wrote a letter, folded it, and Mouse carried it over the hills. It took Mouse two days to get there. Today, Duck in Little Hill wants to tell Goat about a new kite. Duck types a message on a screen, and Goat reads it straight away."

Ask: "What did Hen and Duck both want to do?" (Tell Goat some news.)

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. Lay the three time-band cards on the floor in order, left to right. Remind the class of grade 1: long ago, when today's grown-ups were small, now.
2. Show each message card in turn and describe it aloud. Give pairs a card.
3. Each pair puts its card in a time band and gives one clue ("There are horses, and nobody has a phone"). Other pairs say whether they agree.

4. Author's suggested sorting (accept other answers with a good reason): cards 1, 2 and 3 long ago; card 4 could be any band (people still post letters); card 5 when today's grown-ups were small, or long ago; card 6 now.
5. Fill in the chart together:
    - Changed: how fast the message gets there; what carries it (feet, horse, coach, wires, screen); who carries it.
    - Stayed the same: people still want to send news to people far away; letters and post boxes are still used.
6. Point at card 4: "Who paid for this letter to travel?" Take guesses and leave the question open: "We will find out in lesson 3."

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "Why did Hen's letter take two days?" (Mouse walked over the hills; there was no faster way in the story.)
- "Is anything on our 'stayed the same' list still true in Little Hill today?" (Yes: Duck still wanted to tell Goat news.)
- "Is fast always better?" (Any reasoned answer: a letter can be kept and read again; a fast message is good for urgent news.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Hold up card 2 (the rider). Each child tells a partner or the adult one thing that changed and one thing that stayed the same, compared with card 6. (Changed: a horse then, a screen now; slower then. Same: someone is sending news.) Mark who gave both.

Vocabulary

long ago, now, then, change, changed, stayed the same, message, letter, send, carry

Differentiation

- Support: sort only cards 1 and 6 into "long ago" and "now"; the adult offers two clues and the child picks one.
- Extension: draw a seventh card for "now" or "long ago" and give a clue.
- Children can place cards by pointing, signing or AAC, or ask a partner to move them. The time-band cards can go on a table for a wheelchair user.

⚠ Safety

- Do not ask children who they send messages to, or whether their family has a phone or computer. Talk only about Hen, Duck, Mouse and Goat.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Children may say "long ago" means "when my teacher was small". Use the three bands to separate the two.
- Card 4 is a deliberate "both" card: some old things are still used. That is a "stayed the same" clue, not a mistake.

Lesson 2: What can a source tell us?

Unit overview - Previous: Sending a message, then and now - Next: Who paid for a letter?

Back to the grade 2 year plan

Goal

Children name kinds of source, find who made a source, where and when, from what is written on it, and ask a question about it.

Materials

- Made-up source pack, one per group of four (text below): a picture of Hen's folded letter, Mouse's diary page, a museum label for a mail bag, and an unused, unaddressed envelope.
- "Maker / Place / Date" card for each group.
- Sticky notes or paper slips and pencils.
- For blind or low-vision children: a real folded paper letter and a real envelope to hold.

The made-up source pack (the author's own, for Little Hill):

1. **Picture of Hen's folded letter.** Draw a sheet of paper folded into a small packet, with no envelope. On the outside write: "To Goat, Top Farm, Far Hill. From Hen, Little Hill. Spring, long ago. Goat to pay 3 coins."
2. **Mouse's diary page.** "Spring, long ago. Little Hill. Today I carried three letters to Far Hill. It took two days. Goat had to pay 3 coins for Hen's letter. He said, 'That is a lot of coins!' My feet are tired. Written by Mouse."
3. **Museum label.** "Mail bag. Made by the Little Hill leather shop. Place: Little Hill. Date: long ago, about the time of the first stamps. Used by Mouse to carry letters."
4. **An unused envelope.** A real, clean envelope with nothing written on it.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Ask: "In grade 1 we found out about the past from sources. What kinds of source can you remember?" (Objects, pictures, labels, writing, what people remember.) Write the kinds on the board with a small drawing for each.

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. Give each group the pack. An adult reads each paper source aloud while the group looks at it (or holds it).
2. Groups sort the four sources by kind: picture (Hen's letter), writing (Mouse's diary), label (the museum label), object (the envelope). Accept "writing" for the letter too: it is a picture of writing.

3. **Maker, place, date.** For the letter, the diary and the label, the group finds who made it, where and when, using only the words on it. The adult reads again on request. Answers:
    - Letter: Hen; Little Hill; spring, long ago.
    - Diary: Mouse; Little Hill; spring, long ago.
    - Label: the Little Hill leather shop; Little Hill; long ago, about the time of the first stamps.
4. Ask: "Can the envelope tell us who made it, where or when?" (No: nothing is written on it. A source does not always tell us everything.)
5. **What does it tell us?** Each group chooses one source and says one thing it tells us about Little Hill long ago (Goat paid to get the letter; letters took two days; Mouse carried letters in a bag).
6. **Ask the source a question.** Each group writes or draws one question on a sticky note ("Why did Goat pay and not Hen?", "Who paid Mouse?"). Keep the notes for the Question wall in lesson 4.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "Mouse's diary and Hen's letter both say Goat paid 3 coins. Does that help us believe it?" (Yes: two sources agree. It is still a clue, not proof.)
- "What does Mouse's diary tell us that the letter does not?" (It took two days; Mouse's feet were tired; Goat thought it was a lot of coins.)
- "Who paid for Hen's letter?" (Goat, who got it. Ask whether that is the same today and leave it for lesson 3.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Read the label aloud again. Each child shows or tells a partner who made the mail bag, where, and when. (The Little Hill leather shop; Little Hill; long ago, about the time of the first stamps.) Mark who found all three.

Vocabulary

source, object, picture, writing, label, diary, maker, place, date, clue, question

Differentiation

- Support: find only the maker on the label, with the adult pointing to the line.
- Extension: make a label for a classroom object, with maker, place and date (made up or from the object itself).
- Children can answer by pointing, signing, AAC or drawing; a partner can write their question.

⚠ Safety

- Envelopes stay unaddressed. Do not ask children for their own address or anyone else's. All names and places are Little Hill ones.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Children may think a source is always true. Mouse's diary is one person's view; "a lot of coins" is Mouse's and Goat's opinion.
- The sources in this lesson are made up for practice. Say so to the class: "These are pretend sources from Little Hill. In lesson 3 we look at a real change."

Lesson 3: Who paid for a letter?

Unit overview - Previous: What can a source tell us? - Next: Who helped make the change?

Back to the grade 2 year plan

Goal

Children learn a real change: in the United Kingdom before 1840 the person who received a letter usually paid for it, by the distance and the number of sheets; from 1840 the sender paid one penny with a small sticky stamp. They play both ways and suggest reasons for the change.

Materials

- Large swallow-safe counters as pretend coins, about 10 per pair.
- Paper "letters": scrap paper folded once, some single sheets and some double sheets.
- Two floor signs, "Near" and "Far", with a picture.
- Paper squares about 3 cm across, cut by an adult, as pretend stamps, and glue sticks.
- A printed picture of the Penny Black (check its licence page).
- A globe or world map, if the class has one (optional).
- For blind or low-vision children: a stamp-sized paper square to feel, and a real folded paper letter.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Remind the class: in Little Hill, Goat paid for Hen's letter. Say: "That part of the story is pretend, but something like it really happened. Long ago in a real country, the United Kingdom, the person who got a letter usually paid for it when it arrived."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **The old way (before 1840).** Put the "Near" and "Far" signs at two ends of the room. Pairs take turns: one is the sender, one the receiver. The sender hands the letter to the adult, who "carries" it to the receiver at "Near" or "Far". The receiver pays the adult in pretend coins using the class rule (made up for this game, not real prices):
    - Near: 1 coin. Far: 3 coins.
    - A double sheet costs 1 more coin. Pairs count what they paid after three letters.
2. **Tell the real story** (from the Wikipedia articles listed in the unit Sources): "In the United Kingdom, nearly 200 years ago, the price of a letter depended on how far it went and how many sheets of paper it had, and the person who got it usually paid. Then there was a big change. From May 1840, a letter that was not too heavy cost one penny to send anywhere in the country, near or far. The person sending it paid, and stuck on a small paper stamp to show it was paid. The first stamp was called the Penny Black." Show the picture. "The face on it is Queen Victoria, who was the queen of the United Kingdom then."

3. **The new way (from 1840).** Play again. Now the sender pays the adult 1 coin before sending, near or far, and glues a pretend stamp on the letter. The receiver pays nothing. Pairs count again.
4. Compare the two rounds on the board: who paid, how many coins, and how long it took to play each round.
5. **Why change?** Pairs give one possible reason for the change. Write every reason on the board (simpler, fairer for people far away, the carrier did not have to collect coins at every door, cheaper so people might send more letters).
6. **Which reason is more likely?** Tell the class one clue from the sources: the man usually credited with the idea, Rowland Hill, argued that if letters were cheaper, people would send more; and in 1840, the first year, the number of letters sent in the United Kingdom more than doubled. Ask: "Which of our reasons does that clue help?" (Cheaper so people send more.) Say that the other reasons may also be true; a clue makes one reason more likely, it does not make the others wrong.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "In the old way, who paid more: someone near or someone far?" (Far.)
- "Why did the letter need a stamp in the new way?" (To show it was already paid.)
- "How is that different from Hen's letter in Little Hill?" (Goat, who got it, paid. In the new way the sender pays.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Each child shows or tells the adult: "Before 1840, who usually paid for a letter? After 1840, who paid?" (The person who got it; the person who sent it, with a stamp.) Mark who gave both.

Vocabulary

pay, sender, receiver, stamp, penny, price, near, far, the United Kingdom, reason

Differentiation

- Support: play only near letters, one round each way; the adult says "you pay" or "they pay" with a gesture.
- Extension: work out how many coins Goat would pay for a far letter with a double sheet in the old way (3 + 1 = 4).
- A child can stay seated and send a partner to the signs, or point to "Near" or "Far" on a card. Pretend stamps can be pressed on by an adult for a child who prefers not to use glue.

⚠ Safety

- Nothing is licked; stamps are paper squares with a glue stick.
- Counters are large and swallow-safe; collect and count them at the end.
- Walking only between the signs; keep the path clear.

- Do not ask about money at home or how much real stamps cost a family.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- The near/far prices in the game are made up. The real old prices were more complicated; the sources read for this unit do not give a simple table.
- Children may think a penny then was the same as a penny now. The sources read do not say what it was worth; put the question on the Question wall.
- "The United Kingdom" can be shown on a globe or world map if the class has one, without discussing anyone's home country.

Lesson 4: Who helped make the change?

Unit overview - Previous: Who paid for a letter? - Next: One change leads to another

Back to the grade 2 year plan

Goal

Children hear about several real people and groups who helped make the change to stamps, ask questions about them, and think about how people then might have seen letters differently from people now.

Materials

- Five "Who helped?" cards (text below), each with a simple drawing (a person speaking, a person writing, a pile of drawings, two people carving). The facts are from the Wikipedia articles in the unit Sources.
- Question starter cards: Who? What? Why? How? What if?
- The Question wall, with the sticky notes from lesson 2.
- Sticky notes or paper slips and pencils.

The "Who helped?" cards:

1. **Robert Wallace.** In 1835 he told a group set up by the government that if more people used the post, the post would earn more money. He started the campaign for cheaper letters.
2. **Rowland Hill.** A teacher and inventor. In 1837 he set out a plan for letters to be paid for before they were sent, with a stamp. He is usually given the credit for the postage stamp.
3. **Henry Cole.** He worked with Rowland Hill and helped run a competition for people to design the new stamps.
4. **The people who sent designs.** About 2,600 designs were sent in. None of them was chosen; a simple design that Hill liked, with the queen's face, was used instead.
5. **Charles Heath and his son Frederick.** They engraved the queen's face: they cut the picture into metal so that it could be printed.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Ask: "Last lesson, who did I say was usually given the credit for the stamp?" (Rowland Hill.) "Do you think one person did it all?" Take a quick show of hands; do not say the answer yet.

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. Read each "Who helped?" card aloud and show its drawing. Put the cards in a row on the board.
2. Ask again: "One person or many?" (Many: at least five people or groups on our cards, and others we do not know about.) Ask who else might have helped (people who

carried letters, printers, people who sold stamps). Say: "Those are good guesses. We would need a source to know more about them."

3. **Question builder.** Groups of four get one card each (one group may get two) and the question starter cards. Each child makes one question about their person or group, using a starter. Examples: "Why did Robert Wallace want cheaper letters?", "How did Charles Heath cut the picture?", "What if nobody had sent any designs?" An adult writes or the child draws.
4. Groups stick their questions on the Question wall next to their card. Add the lesson 2 notes too.
5. Sort the wall together into "Our cards can answer this" and "We need another source". Answer the first kind together from the cards.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

These ask how people might have seen things, so there is no single answer.

- "Long ago, if a letter from far away came and you had to pay a lot, how might you feel?" (Happy to get news, but worried about paying; any reasoned answer.)
- "When the price became one penny, who might have been pleased?" (People who lived far from their friends; people who wanted to send more letters; the carriers, who did not have to collect coins.)
- "Today, how might someone feel getting a message? Is that the same or different?" (Any reasoned answer; people then and now both like news.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Each child tells or shows the adult one question about a person or group on the cards, and answers: "Was it one person or more than one?" (Any question about a person or group; more than one.) Mark who did both.

Vocabulary

question, who, what, why, how, credit, design, competition, engrave, group

Differentiation

- Support: choose a question starter card and point to a person; the adult helps build the question aloud.
- Extension: write two questions, one that the cards can answer and one that needs another source.
- Questions can be signed, said with AAC or drawn; a partner can write them.

⚠ Safety

- Talk about the people on the cards and Little Hill characters only. Do not ask about family members who work in a post office or about anyone's letters at home.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- "Usually given the credit" is the source's wording. It helps children see that history books choose whom to name, and that others helped too.
- Keep to what the cards say. If a child asks something the cards cannot answer, it belongs on the "We need another source" side; do not guess an answer as if it were a fact.

Lesson 5: One change leads to another

Unit overview - Previous: Who helped make the change?

Back to the grade 2 year plan

Goal

Children hear how the first stamp caused a new problem that led to another change, put dated cards in time order, and compare two made-up accounts of the same event.

Materials

- Printed pictures of the Penny Black and the Penny Red (check their licence pages).
- Four dated timeline cards and one "now" card (text below), each with a drawing.
- Three time-band cards from lesson 1.
- Two made-up account cards, Mouse's and Goat's (text below).
- The "Changed / Stayed the same" chart from lesson 1, and the Question wall.
- For blind or low-vision children: a stamp-sized paper square to feel, and the account cards read aloud.

The timeline cards (facts from the Wikipedia articles in the unit Sources):

- **1835:** Robert Wallace starts the campaign for cheaper letters.
- **1837:** Rowland Hill sets out his plan for paid-in-advance letters with a stamp.
- **1840 (May):** the Penny Black, the first sticky postage stamp, is used.
- **1841 (February):** the stamp changes to the Penny Red, and the ink for marking used stamps changes to black.
- **Now:** a picture of a post box and a screen.

The two accounts (made up by the author, about Little Hill):

- **Mouse's account.** "The day stamps came to Little Hill was the best day! Everyone pays when they send a letter now, so I do not have to wait at every door for coins. My bag was full of letters."
- **Goat's account.** "The day stamps came to Little Hill was a muddle. Now I have to pay before I send a letter, and I have to cut each stamp off the sheet with scissors. But I do like getting Hen's letters without paying."

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Show the Penny Black. "When a letter was posted, workers marked the stamp so it could not be used again. On the Penny Black they used red ink." Ask: "Can you see a problem?" Give a clue if needed: red on black is hard to see.

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **The next change** (10 min). Tell the class: "The red marks were hard to see on the black stamp, and the red ink was easy to wash off. So some people could use a stamp again. In February 1841 the stamp was changed to red, the Penny Red, and the marking ink was changed to black." Show the Penny Red. Ask: "Why did they change the colours?" (So the mark was easy to see and hard to wash off.) Add to the chart: one change led to another.
2. **Timeline** (7 min). Read the four dated cards aloud, one at a time, with the year said clearly. Give them to four children to stand in order; the class helps. Then place the "now" card at the end and lay the time-band cards above: all four dated cards are "long ago". (1835, 1837, 1840, 1841, now.)
3. **Two accounts** (8 min). Read Mouse's and Goat's accounts aloud. Say: "These are pretend accounts of the same pretend day." In pairs, children find one thing that is the same (stamps came; people pay when they send) and one thing that is different (Mouse is happy; Goat finds it a muddle, but likes one part).

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "Why might Mouse and Goat tell it so differently?" (Mouse carries letters, so not collecting coins helps; Goat now pays first and cuts stamps.)
- "Is one of them lying?" (No: they had different jobs and saw different parts of the change. Two true accounts can still be different.)
- "If we had only Mouse's account, what might we think?" (That everyone was happy.) "So why is it good to read more than one source?" (To see more of what happened.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Each child tells or shows a partner one way Mouse's and Goat's accounts are different. (Mouse is happy; Goat finds it a muddle; Goat has to cut stamps; Mouse does not wait for coins.) Mark who gave a difference.

Then begin the one-to-one assessment in the README over the next week.

Vocabulary

timeline, order, before, after, account, the same, different, problem, change, mark

Differentiation

- Support: order only two cards (1840 and now), and find one difference with the adult pointing to Mouse's and Goat's faces.
- Extension: write a third account of the same day, from Hen, and say how it is different.
- Children can order the cards on a table rather than standing, and answer by pointing, signing, AAC or drawing.

⚠ Safety

- The accounts belong to Little Hill characters. Do not ask children to write about real people they know.
- Use pictures of the stamps; real old stamps are not needed.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Children may think that once a change is made, it is finished. The cancel mark story shows that people keep fixing new problems.
- Children may read "1840" and "1841" as very far apart. Point out they are next-door years.
- The accounts are made up, not real 1840 sources. A teacher with short real extracts from the time could use them instead.