

Lisa: Dear Grandma and Grandpa, I wrote this letter to tell you that I love you and I miss you. The other day, I planted a garden with my friends and it was so much fun. I hope you visit me sometime soon. Love, Lisa.

Presenter: Lisa, that's a beautiful letter. Your grandma and grandpa will love it.

Cowy: Yes, that's nice, but why would anyone write a letter? It takes a long time to write and even longer to deliver.

Presenter: Well, Cowy, instead of telling you, how about we go back in time to learn more about letters?

Cowy: That sounds fun.

Presenter: Welcome to story time by Lingokids where we discover fascinating facts about the world around us, and the fun of playlearning. Come with us as we take a trip back in time and learn about the history of letters and communication.

Cowy: Whoa, where are we?

Presenter: We have just traveled back more than 5,000 years and are in ancient Egypt inside the palace of the pharaoh or King.

Elliot: Whoa, that's a long time ago.

Presenter: That's right. Can you believe that letters have been around for that long? Probably even longer.

Vizier: Hello friends I am the Pharaoh vizier and assistant. You're just in time. The pharaoh needs your help to deliver a very important letter to the courier.

Speaker: What's a courier?

Elliot: Oh, a career, like what I want to be when I grow up?

Presenter: Not a career, Elliot, a courier.

Elliot: Oh, what is that?

Presenter: A courier is the person who delivers letters and packages. It's similar to a postal worker who delivers lots and lots of letters and packages.

Lisa: Great, so where is this letter we need to deliver?

Vizier: Here you go, friends.

Cowy: That doesn't look like a letter. It looks like a roll of old-looking paper.

Presenter: That's a roll of papyrus, Cowy. In ancient Egypt, people wrote on special paper made out of a plant that lives in water called a papyrus plant. This special paper was one of the first kinds of paper that people used to write off on.

Lisa: How cool. I want to write my letter on papyrus now.

Cowy: What are all the symbols on the letter? Are they emojis?

Presenter: No, Cowy. Those are called Egyptian hieroglyphs. They are symbols and pictures that the ancient Egyptians used instead of letters to represent things and ideas.

Cowy: Kind of like emojis. I love emojis.

Elliot: Couldn't have they just sent a text message with emojis instead?

Presenter: Well, for a long time, people didn't have mobile phones or computers to send text messages or emails so they had to deliver physical letters.

Elliot: That sounds hard.

Presenter: They were very good at delivering letters. Many ancient civilizations like the Romans and the Greeks had very large delivery systems and networks of people to be able to deliver messages very far and fast.

Cowy: Cool.

Lisa: Well, it's delivered that letter then. Thank you, Mr. Vizier.

Presenter: Billy, can you fly this letter over to the courier?

Lisa: Wow. Birds like Billy are great at delivering letters because they can fly.

Presenter: Yes, they are. In fact, did you know that in the ancient days, it was pretty common to use pigeons to send messages?

Elliot: Wow. No way.

Presenter: Yes. Remember I mentioned the Romans and the Greeks. Well, they used pigeons in times of battle when they needed to send important messages secretly and quickly.

Elliot: That's awesome.

Lisa: Oh, look, Billy is back. Did you know that birds were used to send messages, Billy?

Presenter: That's right, Billy. Even about 200 years ago, pigeons were still being used often to send messages between ships at sea or other hard-to-reach places.

Cowy: Cool.

Presenter: Eventually, other forms of long-distance communication were invented like the telegraph.

Elliot: Do you mean the telephone?

Presenter: No, Elliot, the telegraph was invented before the telephone. You could use it to send messages in a special code called Morse code. It's made of short beeps and long beeps, or dots and dashes, and it sounds like this.

(Morse code)

Cowy: People can understand that?

Presenter: Yes, Cowy. It's not used as much today as it used to be, but there are people that still use it.

Elliot: Maybe secret agents.

Lisa: Or detectives.

Presenter: Maybe. Now it's much easier to communicate at long distances with inventions like the telephone, email and social media.

Elliot: So many choices.

Presenter: Yes and they're all great choices. How about we go back home and each send a message to someone special using the choice that we prefer?

All: Yes.

Presenter: Let's go.

Presenter: So how would you like to send your message?

Cowy: I want to send a text message with lots of heart emojis to my mom.

Elliot: I want to use my tablet to send an email to my Presenter and thank her for being a great Presenter.

Lisa: And I want to send the letter that I wrote to Grandma and Grandpa.

Presenter: Great choices. Oh, that's nice of you for offering Billy. Lisa, Billy can fly your letter over to the post office.

Lisa: Thank you, Billy.

Presenter: Don't forget to write down your grandparent's address and put a stamp on it before you send it.

Lisa: Good idea.

Elliot: What message will you send?

Presenter: Well, I think I will post on social media saying how much I care about all of you. Lingokids listeners, we had a great time today. Thank you for joining us on our trip back in time to learn about letters. I hope you enjoyed it too. In our next episode, we will continue playlearning together.