

# Communication: the many ways to talk

## *Welcome to Talk Time!*

How are you? How was your week?  
Discuss the idiom of the week – “Get back to you”

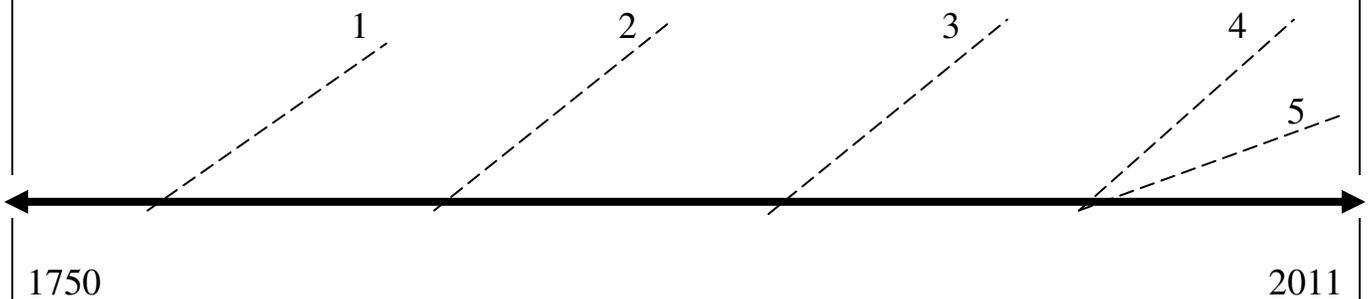


## Let's get started

As a group, read the timeline about communication. Then, do the following:

- In partners for five minutes, guess the date of each event. Write the dates on the dashed lines.
- Share your answers with the group. Then, compare your answers with the actual answers.

1. The United States Postal Service was created.
2. The first two-way, long distance telephone call is made in the USA.
3. The first call on a cell phone is made.
4. Email begins to be used as a form of communication.
5. The first person-to-person text message is sent in Finland.



Discuss these questions in pairs. Then, share something from your conversation with the group.

- Do you send letters by mail? Who do you write to? What do you write?
- Do you use a cell phone or a landline phone? How often do you talk on the phone?
- Do you use email? How much time each week do you spend reading and sending email?
- What do you think about text messages? Do you or your children send texts?
- Do you think the developments in communication are positive or negative? Why?

**Discussion:** Discuss these questions as a group. Questions are divided into three sections.

*General Communication:*

How do you prefer to communicate with your family – by phone, email, letter, or in person? How do you prefer to communicate with your friends? Why?

How do you communicate with family and friends who are in your native country? How often do you talk with them?

How do you communicate with people at work? Is workplace communication in America similar to workplace communication in your native country?



*Talking on the Phone:*

What is good telephone etiquette? What is considered rude in your culture?

What do you think about cell phone driving laws? Are there similar laws in your native country?



What is most difficult about talking on the phone in English?

Have you had a bad experience talking on the phone in English? What happened? How did you feel?

Have you ever dialed the wrong number? What happened?

When talking on the phone, what are some polite ways that you can ask people to repeat themselves?

Talk about “telephone language.” What do you say when you answer the phone in English? How do you say goodbye on the phone? (See the additional handout, and practice talking on the phone in pairs).

*Sending and Receiving Mail:*

What is the best thing you have received in the mail? What is the worst thing?

Have you ever had a problem using the United States Postal Service? Explain.

In your native country, how often is mail delivered? How much does it cost to send a letter?

What do you do if you receive someone else’s mail in your mailbox?

In your native country, what happens if an address is written incorrectly? Is the letter thrown away? Is it returned to the post office? Is it returned to the sender?



**Group Reflection:** What did you learn today? How can you practice talking on the phone in English at home? What do you want to talk about next week?