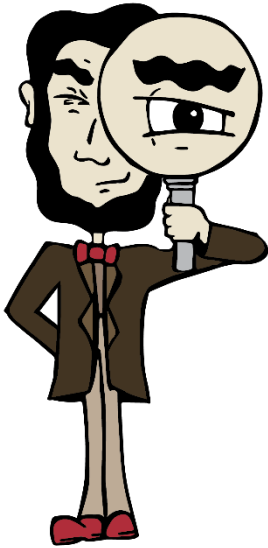


JUNIOR HISTORIANS



Rail Fence Cipher

What is Cryptography?

Cryptography is the art of writing and solving codes. It has been used for thousands of years to keep messages secret. During the Civil War, both sides sent important information about battles, supplies, and troop movements. Just as important was keeping that information a secret from the enemy. In order to hide important messages, soldiers relied on secret codes or ciphers. A **cipher** uses a letter, number, or symbol to replace an individual letter, combo of letters, or numbers. By using a code they agreed on, members of the same army could share important information without worrying about their enemy decoding the secret message. Today, computers use a form of cryptography called encryption to protect your valuable personal information in our digital world.

The sample message below uses a Rail Fence cipher to write “Mary Todd Lincoln.” Can you see how?

(HINT: Think on the diagonal.)

M	R	T	D	L	N	O	N
	A	Y	O	D	I	C	L

The Coded Message

A	R	H	M	I	C	L	H	D	A	Y	O	S	N	I	L	F	T	M	
	B	A	A	L	N	O	N	A	M	N	J	B	I	H	S	I	E	I	E
H	W	S	P	S	M	S	E	S	R	E	O	S	O	K	E	E	A	D	
	E	A	A	O	T	A	T	R	U	V	Y	R	H	P	E	P	R	N	L
A	Y	R	E	I	E	M	N	L	V	S	E	O	E	E	O	I	G		
	W	E	H	L	V	D	A	Y	I	E	B	F	R	B	C	M	N	T	
H	S	X	E	N	H	R	S	D	N	O	T	E	N	T	D	T	T	S	
	E	I	T	E	T	P	E	I	E	T	F	H	U	I	E	S	A	E	

Crack The Code

Decipher the message by using a zig zag line to move from the top row to the next row in the line. Keep repeating this pattern, using two rows at a time, until you reveal the secret message. Each line represents a letter and there are long spaces between words.

A _____

Code A Message

Use the space below to encode your full name by creating a Rail Fence cipher.

