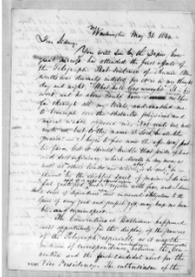


Teaching with Primary Sources Lesson Outline

Grade Level: High School (9-10)

Standard(s) or Objectives: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

Library of Congress or Morris Special Collections Resources:



Samul B Morse Letter to Sidney Morse, 1844

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/mmorse.017001/?sp=275>

Specific pages used:

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/mmorse.017001/?sp=275>

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/mmorse.017001/?sp=276>

Topic Background:

Surrounded by an audience of Congressmen, Samuel Morse sent the first official telegraph from the Supreme Court Chamber, then located in the Capitol, to his partner, Alfred Vail, in Baltimore. He tapped the message, "What hath God wrought!" Once Morse's system was installed in the Capitol, Congress found the telegraph an indispensable tool. At first the telegraph connected only Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, MD; gradually lines were extended to other large east coast cities. With the westward expansion of the country and the addition of new territories to the union, improved communication became a necessity.

Excerpted from: <http://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/Electronic-Technology/Telegraph/>

Source(s) Used:

The source used for this assessment includes excerpts of a letter from Samuel Morse to his brother, Sidney Morse, dated May 31, 1844. Seven days after his great success with the first telegraph message, Morse writes, in a humble and cautious tone, to his brother, Sidney, of the responsibilities of success. Twice he quotes the famous message, "What hath God wrought?" and uses it to invoke his deep religious feelings. Still feeling the flush of success, he quotes a former opponent, now won over, as saying, "It is an astonishing invention."

Excerpted from: <https://www.loc.gov/item/mmorse000017/>

Answer Key:

Question 1: C

Question2: A

Samul B Morse Letter to Sidney Morse, 1844 [Excerpt]

Dear Sidney,

You will see by the papers, how great [?] has attended the first efforts of the telegraph. That sentence of Annie Ellsworth's was divinely [?], for it is in my thoughts day and night, "What hath God wrought." It is his work, and he alone could have carried me thus far through all my trials, and enabled me to triumph over the obstacles physical and moral which opposed me...

The Conventions at Baltimore happened most opportunely for the display of the powers of the Telegraph, especially as it was the medicine of correspondence in one instance between the Democratic Convention and the first candidate elect for the Vice Presidency. The enthusiasm of the crowd before the window of the Telegraph Room in the Capitol, was excited to the highest pitch, at the announcement of the nomination of the Presidential Candidate, and the whole of it afterwards [?] turned upon the Telegraph. They gave the Telegraph 3 cheers, and I was called to make my appearance at the window, when those cheers were given to me by some hundreds present, composed mainly of members of Congress. Such is the feeling in Congress that many tell me, they are ready to grant anything. Even the most **inveterate** opposers have changed to admirers and one of them Hon. Cave Johnson, who ridiculed my system last session by associating it with the tricks of animal magnetism, came to me and said, "Sir I give in, it is an astonishing invention." When I see all this and such enthusiasm every where manifested, and contrast the present with the past season of darkness and almost despair, have I not occasion to exclaim, "What hath God wrought"?

Questions:

- 1) Which statement best explains why Morse chose the phrase "What hath God wrought?" to use as the first telegraph message? (CCSS-RH9-10.1)
 - a. "The Conventions at Baltimore happened most opportunely for the display of the powers of the Telegraph, especially as it was the medicine of correspondence in one instance between the Democratic Convention and the first candidate elect for the Vice Presidency."
 - b. "They gave the Telegraph 3 cheers, and I was called to make my appearance at the window, when those cheers were given to me by some hundreds present, composed mainly of members of Congress."
 - c. "It is his work, and he alone could have carried me thus far through all my trials, and enabled me to triumph over the obstacles physical and moral which opposed me."
 - d. "The enthusiasm of the crowd before the window of the Telegraph Room in the Capitol, was excited to the highest pitch, at the announcement of the nomination of the Presidential Candidate."

- 2) Which of these words is closest in meaning to "inveterate"? (CCSS-RH9-10.4)
 - a. Committed
 - b. Angry
 - c. Short-lived
 - d. Reasonable