The importance of accurate communications
(The “Telephone” Game)

Objective
Students will learn how messages can become jumbled in common communication.

Materials
None

Supplemental materials
1. Who we are & what we do briefing
2. Articles on cia.gov:
   • Intelligence in the War of Independence
   • Intelligence in the Civil War

Activity

The teacher should divide the class into multiple groups of four or more, and give each group a different spoken message to relay. For example, “My dog was feeling blue about the book he read at the cafeteria” or “When I went to start the car, the bunny high-fived the squirrel.” Random sentences such as these will work the best.

Students will then whisper their “interpretation” of the message to the next student in the group, spreading the message around a small circle. The last student will write the message down and then share with the entire class. The teacher will then share what the message(s) should have been. The activity can be repeated several times, increasing group size, as well as reversing directions and increasing the complexity of the message.

At the end of the activities, the teacher can talk about the importance of clear and accurate communications and how messages can get mixed up when more people get involved.

In summary, the teacher should ask students to consider some incidents in history where accurate communications were vital, such as Paul Revere knowing that two lanterns in the Old North Church meant the British were advancing on the Charles River instead of over land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE LEVEL</th>
<th>SUBJECTS INVOLVED</th>
<th>TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary, Middle, High school</td>
<td>Social studies, History, English</td>
<td>15-30 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>