

Early in the Second World War, in late May 1940, the Allied forces of British, French and Belgian troops were trapped by the invading German army on the coast of France and Belgium, in the area around Dunkirk. The rescue that followed – controlled from Dover Castle – saved the Allied cause in Europe from total collapse, and was the biggest evacuation in military history.

Operation Dynamo was the rescue operation implemented by the Royal Navy. It was co-ordinated by Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsay and his small team in Dover Castle. There, beneath the fortress, a network of tunnels deep within the cliffs became the nerve centre controlling the evacuation of Allied forces.

Using code to transmit important messages was a key part of military operations. Below we've outlined some different code keys that have been used to communicate and conceal important information. Use this code key to help you uncover the code challenges we will be setting as part of our Dunkirk 1940 activity.

Can you take on the role of a Cypher Officer at Dover Castle?

Follow [@EHEducation](#) on Twitter to see our code breaking challenges and use the code keys to decode secret messages.



## CAESAR SHIFT CODE

This code is named after the famous Roman Emperor Julius Caesar. He used it to communicate with officers in his army across the Roman Empire.

The code works by shifting all the letters in the alphabet across by a certain number of places. For example, a shift of PLUS 3, would move all the letters along 3 places. So A would become D, B would be E etc.

A useful device to help use this type of code is the Caesar shift wheel, shown here.

If the code breaking challenge requires a 'shift cypher code key', use the cyphers opposite to crack the code and reveal the message.



## PIGPEN CYPHER

The Pigpen Cypher was used by Freemasons in the 18th Century to keep their records private. It was also very popular during the American Civil War. It uses symbols rather than letters.

The name came about because it was thought that the letters were like "pigs" trapped in the straight lines that looked like "pens".

If the code breaking challenge requires a 'pigpen cypher code key', use the code key opposite to crack the code and reveal the message.





FLAG SEMAPHORE

Semaphore was used in the First World War as a way of communicating with people who were far away. They used flags or sometimes paddles to make sure the person they were sending the message to could see them clearly.

If the code breaking challenge requires a 'flag semaphore code key', use the cyphers below to crack the code and reveal the message.

