

Letter posted in 1916 delivered 107 years late

20th February 2023



Many moons ago, it took an age to send someone a message. Today, we have the Internet. We can instantly send someone on the other side of the world a message using email. One message that arrived earlier this week was not so

instant. A letter was mailed from the English city of Bath in 1916. It then got lost in the post. It was finally delivered 107 years later to an address in London. The Royal Mail postal service in the UK said it was "uncertain what happened". A spokesperson said she was delighted the letter finally arrived, but had no idea why it was more than a century late. She said it may have fallen behind a piece of furniture.

Before the Internet, people wrote letters on paper. They then put these letters in an envelope. The sender then bought a stamp from a post office and stuck it on the envelope. They then put it in a mail box in the street. A postal worker would collect the envelope and the letter would begin its journey. It usually took a few days to reach its destination, if the address was in the same country. It could take weeks if the address was overseas. It sailed on a ship and was called "sea mail". Later, airplanes transported mail and we used "air mail". However, there was a slight problem with the letter that arrived 107 years late. The person to whom it was addressed was no longer living. He passed away in 1951.

Sources: [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com) / [the-sun.com](https://www.the-sun.com)

Writing

Letters are always better than emails. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

moons / an age / message / the world / email / this week / address / delighted / idea / Internet / paper / stamp / postal worker / journey / overseas / air mail / airplanes

True / False

- 1) The article says a letter was delivered ten moons ago. T / F
- 2) The article said the late letter was sent by a person in Bath. T / F
- 3) The letter was delivered to someone in London. T / F
- 4) A post office worker said the letter was found behind some furniture. T / F
- 5) The article says the Internet ended the art of letter-writing. T / F
- 6) Letters used to take weeks to be delivered. T / F
- 7) All mail is transported by air today. T / F
- 8) The letter's addressee was very happy when he finally got the letter. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. an age | a. overjoyed |
| 2. instantly | b. small |
| 3. lost | c. item |
| 4. delighted | d. abroad |
| 5. piece | e. affixed |
| 6. stuck | f. misplaced |
| 7. destination | g. departed this life |
| 8. overseas | h. a long time |
| 9. slight | i. journey's end |
| 10. passed away | j. immediately |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of writing emails?
- c) Would you like to be a postal worker?
- d) When was the last time someone wrote you a letter?
- e) Are real birthday cards better than emails?
- f) Who would you like to write a letter to?
- g) What do you think of postage stamps?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the postal service?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. it took an age | a. on the envelope |
| 2. not so | b. problem |
| 3. It then got | c. a piece of furniture |
| 4. why it was more than a | d. it was addressed |
| 5. it may have fallen behind | e. to send |
| 6. stuck it | f. was called "sea mail" |
| 7. It usually took a few days to reach | g. instant |
| 8. It sailed on a ship and | h. century late |
| 9. there was a slight | i. its destination |
| 10. The person to whom | j. lost in the post |

Discussion – Student B

- What did you think when you read the headline?
- What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'letter'?
- What do you think of writing letters?
- Do you prefer getting letters or emails?
- In what way are letters better than emails?
- How environmentally friendly is sending a letter?
- When was the last time you bought a postage stamp?
- How useful is the Internet?

Spelling

- We can lasytnnit send someone
- It was finally dieelvrde
- it was caiertnun
- she was dgdiehtle
- more than a nutcyre late
- behind a piece of rirufetun
- put these letters in an velponee
- the letter would begin its nuoreyj
- a few days to reach its tetdnasoini
- if the address was avseeros
- airplanes daesrontprt mail
- there was a tishgi problem

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. j	3. f	4. a	5. c
6. e	7. i	8. d	9. b	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Pizza Delivery

You think a pizza delivery is the worst thing to be late. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't so bad for their things to be late. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these being late (and why): a train or bus, an Amazon delivery or the arrival of spring.

Role B – A Train or Bus

You think a train or bus is the worst thing to be late. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't so bad for their things to be late. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these being late (and why): a pizza delivery, an Amazon delivery or the arrival of spring.

Role C – An Amazon Delivery

You think an Amazon delivery is the worst thing to be late. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't so bad for their things to be late. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these being late (and why): a train or bus, a pizza delivery or the arrival of spring.

Role D – The Arrival of Spring

You think the arrival of spring is the worst thing to be late. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't so bad for their things to be late. Also, tell the others which is the least stressful of these being late (and why): a train or bus, an Amazon delivery or a pizza delivery.

Speaking – Being late

Rank these with your partner. Put the worst things to be late at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| • A friend | • A pizza delivery |
| • A birthday card | • A train or bus |
| • Teachers | • The start of a movie |
| • Spring | • An Amazon parcel |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	T	4	F	5	F	6	T	7	F	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.