

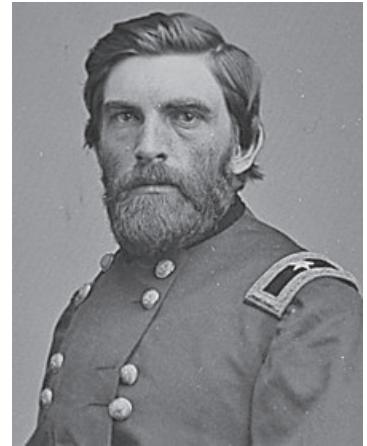
Innovative Iowans: Grenville Dodge

Activity Overview: Ready to crack some Goldie's secret codes? This Innovative Iowan focuses on Grenville Dodge's service during the Civil War, specifically his work with the "Corps of Scouts". In the activity, young historians will find hidden message by deciphering the secret questions on the Civil War Spies worksheet. Decode the messages, record your answers and become a master spy

Connection to Iowa History

Grenville Mellen Dodge settled in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and became a Union army officer and a pioneering figure in military intelligence. During the Civil War, Dodge led one of the largest intelligence gathering networks with over 100 agents (spies) for the Union Army under Ulysses S. Grant. The initial group included soldiers, unionists, female citizens and formerly-enslaved people in the Confederate territory. They were able to gather information by tapping telegraph wires and even intercepting mail.

Dodge was known for his tight operational security. For example, his spies corresponded by courier rather than telegraph and he would not share the names of his agents - even with Grant. Following the war, Dodge became the chief engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad and served one term in the United States Congress.



Instructions ([Video Instructions Available](#))

- 1 **Prep.** Review the materials list and gather all the necessary items.
- 2 **Draw.** Draw a circle (3-4 inches wide) on a sheet of white paper.
- 3 **Cut.** Using scissors, carefully cut out the circle.
- 4 **Write.** With a pencil or pen, write the alphabet (A-Z) around the outer edge of the circle. The letters should wrap clockwise around the entire edge of the circle.
- 5 **Learn the Code.** For this activity, each letter matches a different letter. In this worksheet a letter "I" is the letter "A" when decoded.
- 6 **Write the Code.** Rotate the decoder so the letter "I" is at the top. Underneath the letter "I", write the letter "A" right below it. This will be the beginning of the inner circle of code.
- 7 **Continue Writing.** Continue to rotate the decoder clockwise as you write the rest of the alphabet underneath the outside ring of letters. Each letter on the inner circle should line up with a different letter on the outer circle. For example, outer circle "J" will line up with the inner circle "B", "K" with "C", "L" with "D" and onward.
- 8 **Worksheet.** Once your decoder is finished, use it to break the codes in the provided worksheet.
- 9 **Create Code.** After completing the worksheet, try your hand at creating your own codes. Use the same method to create your decoder except start at a different letter and write the alphabet clockwise.

Materials

- Crackin' Codes Worksheet
- Printer Paper
- Pencil or pen
- Scissors

Instructions continued on next page

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10 Share! After you complete this activity, share your work with the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Email your codes to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with others!

11 Questions to Spark Learning

- Why do you think spies are important during wartime?
- What kind of skills are needed to become a spy?
- Why do you think it was important for Dodge to have a wide range of different people serving as spies?

12 Additional Resources

If your young historian would like to learn more about this topic, explore these additional resources below.

- Office of the Director of National Intelligence - [Grenville Dodge: The Fighting Spymaster](#)
- PBS American Experience - [The Transcontinental Railroad: Grenville Dodge](#)
- Council Bluffs Public Library - [General Grenville Dodge Collection](#)

Crackin' Codes with Goldie



Directions: Ready to crack the Goldie's secret codes? Use the outer letters of your decoder to match the letters provided. Then write the matching inner letters to decode the message. Complete the four clues and become a master spy worthy to join Grenville Dodge.

Warm-Up Activity

Using your decoder, solve the message below as a warm-up. *Remember "i" is decoded as "a".*

The Code is: **OWWL UWZVQVO**

Translation: _____

Let's Get Code Cracking

Use your decoder to decipher both the questions and answers below to learn some interesting facts about Iowa history. To solve, match the provided letter with the corresponding letter from the inner ring of the decoder. *Remember "i" is decoded as "a".*



Secret Message #1

Question: **QWEI'A ABIBM JQZL?**
Translation: _____?

Answer: **OWTLNQVKP**
Translation: _____



Secret Message #2

Question: **QWEI'A ABIBM NTWEMZ?**
Translation: _____?

Answer: **EQTL ZWAM**
Translation: _____



Secret Message #3

Question: **QWEI'A KIXQBIB KQBG?**
Translation: _____?

Answer: **LMA UWQVMA**
Translation: _____



Secret Message #4

Question: **QWEI'A ABIBM BZMM?**
Translation: _____?

Answer: **JCZ WIS**
Translation: _____

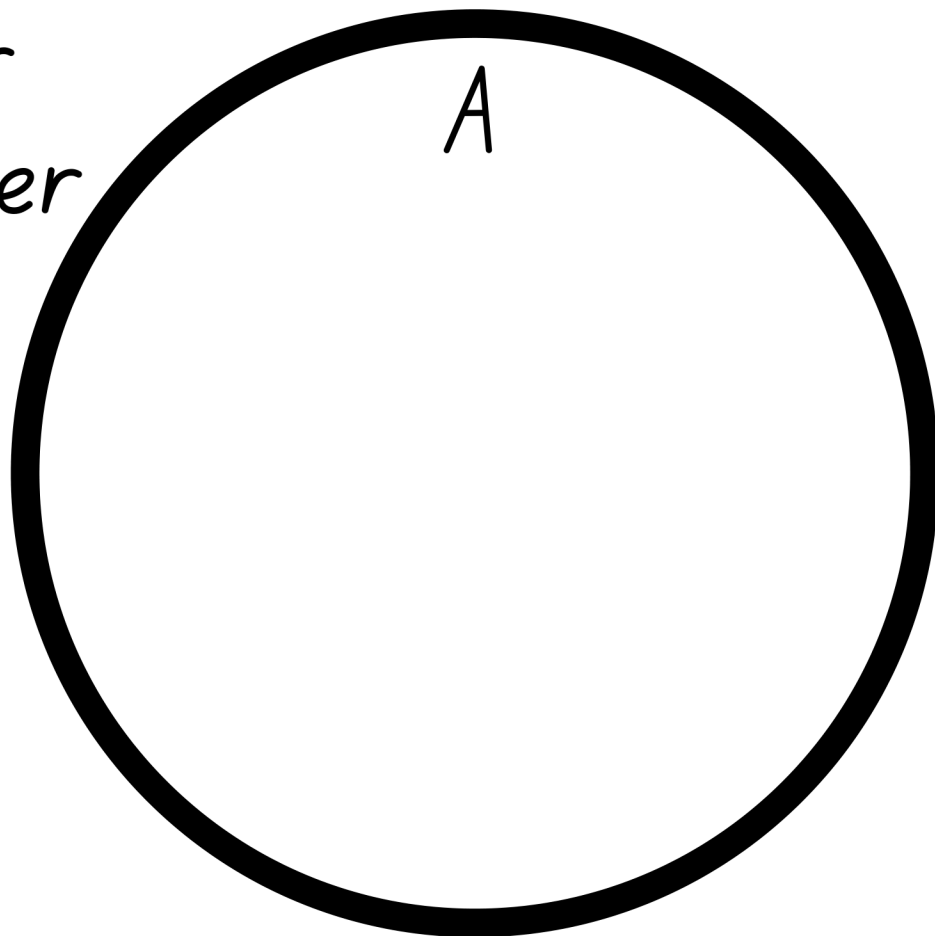


Final Secret Message

Question: **QWEI'A NQZAB BMZZQBWZG OWDMVWZ?**
Translation: _____?

Answer: **ZWJMZB TCKIA**
Translation: _____

Civil War
Spy Decoder



Civil War
Spy Decoder

