

The tale of Britain's travelling post office trains

Have you ever heard of a Travelling Post Office?

Vocabulary

1. on board 2. service 3. sealed 4. hanging 5. declined 6. exchange

True Story

The Travelling Post Office (TPO) was a special train _____ in Britain. It started in 1830 and used fast trains to sort and deliver mail. The workers sorted the mail while the train was moving. The best times for TPO were between the World Wars, but it _____ after World War II.

They used a system to _____ mail bags without stopping the train. Big nets on the trains caught the mail bags _____ on the side of the track. They also dropped off mail bags. This system was used until 1971.

The TPO service ended in 2004 because of different problems like cost and safety. But, trains still carry mail today, without any postal staff _____. "To this day, however, mail continues to be carried in _____ train carriages," the article said.

Quiz

1. What did TPO workers do?
2. How did they exchange mail bags without stopping the train?
3. Why did the TPO service end in 2004?

True or False

- | | | | |
|--|------|--|-------|
| 1. The Travelling Post Office service used fast trains to sort and deliver mail. | True | | False |
| 2. They used a system to exchange email without stopping the train. | True | | False |
| 3. Trains still carry mail today, without any pastry chefs on board. | True | | False |

Conversation

- A: Sad to see the Travelling Post Office go, isn't it?
B: Yes, it's the end of a historic era indeed.
A: No more sorting mail at high speeds across the country.
B: I'll miss the rhythmic clatter of the rails at night.
A: Guess it's all emails and instant messages now.
B: Progress marches on, but the romance is lost.

Discussion

1. Have you ever sent a letter or package by mail?
2. What other ways of delivering mail can you think of?
3. Can you think of any other jobs that need to be done while moving?3.