This early telephone was made by Ader in the 2nd half of the 19th century. Explore acoustics by making your own yoghurt pot telephone.

You will need; 2 yoghurt pots (or paper/plastic cups) scissors, string (approx. 90 cm), a sharp pencil, small piece of blutack.

Ask a grown up to help make a small hole in the bottom of each cup. Place the blu tack under the cup and then using the sharp pencil pierce a hole through the cup into the blu tack.

Carefully thread the string through the bottom of the cup towards the inside. Gently pull the string through so you have enough to tie a knot.

Tie a double knot in the shorter string. Pull the string back gently so the knot is against the inside bottom of the cup. Repeat the process with the longer piece of string and the second cup.

To use your telephone put your ear into a cup and then ask a friend to speak into the other cup. The string needs to be kept taut.

How is the sound travelling from you to your friend?

Find out more about our acoustics collection at the Whipple Museum see https://www.whipplemuseum.cam.ac.uk/explore-whipple-collections/acoustics