

RESOURCE LIBRARY
ACTIVITY : 45 MINS

Life on the Half Moon

Students watch videos about Hudson's ship, the *Half Moon*, and write a journal entry describing life on the ship from a firsthand perspective.

GRADES

3 - 5

SUBJECTS

English Language Arts, Geography, Human Geography, Social Studies, World History

CONTENTS

4 Videos

OVERVIEW

Students watch videos about Hudson's ship, the *Half Moon*, and write a journal entry describing life on the ship from a firsthand perspective.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/life-on-the-half-moon/>

DIRECTIONS

1. Introduce the prewriting activity.

Ask students to imagine they are sailors living on the *Half Moon* in 1609. Their fellow crew members include Henry Hudson and Robert Juet. Tell students they will view a photo gallery and watch two videos about life on the *Half Moon*. Then each student will write a journal entry describing a day on the ship, including details about food, clothing, weapons, and responsibilities. Make sure all students have paper and pencils. Ask them to jot notes about daily life as they watch the videos and view the photos. They can include these notes in their journal entries later.

2. Have students watch and discuss the video “The Half Moon Tour: The Galley.”

Watch the video. Then check students’ comprehension. Ask:

- *What was the galley used for?* (It was the part of the ship where the sailors’ food was prepared.)
- *Why was firewood so important on the ship?* (It was used to boil water for cooking food, including split peas and grains.)
- *What was hardtack?* (Hardtack was a baked cracker of wheat, water, and salt that sailors would soften in stew to make it edible.)
- *What were some of the other foods the sailors ate?* (salted cod, beef, cheese)
- *Why did the sailors drink a mild beer instead of drinking water?* (Fresh water was hard to keep clean; the hops in the beer preserved it.)
- *Where was the ship’s bathroom?* (the head, or the forward part of the ship)

3. Have students watch and discuss the video “The Half Moon Tour: Below Deck.”

Watch the video. Then check students’ comprehension. Ask:

- *What kinds of clothing did the sailors wear because of the weather?* (a woolen cap in cold weather; a flat cap in warmer weather; layers to keep warm)
- *What kinds of weapons did the sailors have for protection?* (matchlock muskets, swivel guns, falconet)
- *Did the sailors use these weapons? When?* (yes, when they were attacked by unfriendly Native Americans)
- *What tool was used to prevent fires aboard a ship?* (special lanterns made of cow horn)
- *What was a capstan? What did it do?* (It was a simple machine to help lift and drop, or “weigh,” anchor.)
- *What personal luggage did sailors bring with them on the ship?* (a chest with clothing, personal mementos)
- *What, if anything, in the two videos surprised you? Why?*
- *What do you have questions about?*

4. Create a word bank for students to pull from.

As a whole-class activity, create a word bank of terms that were introduced during the video segment. Have students volunteer words and write the words on the board.

5. Have students use their prewriting notes and word bank to write journal entries.

Make sure students have clean sheets of lined paper, or a writing notebook. Ask them to use their prewriting notes to write a short journal entry from the point of view of a sailor on the *Half Moon*. Write the following list of requirements for the journal entry on the board:

- Include today's date as the date of the journal entry.
- Write in the first person. Include *I*, *we*, *me*, and *my*.
- Include a beginning, middle, and end. If possible, use sequential order.
- Include real events, people, and places.
- Use specific details that let the reader "see and feel" what is happening.

6. Have students revise and then publish or present their journal entries.

If time allows, have students take their journal entries through the remaining steps of the writing process, including revising, editing, and presenting, or publishing in a visible space in the classroom or hallway.

Informal Assessment

Evaluate students' writing based on the following criteria:

- Included today's date as the date of the journal entry.
- Wrote in the first person. Include *I*, *we*, *me*, and *my*.
- Included a beginning, middle, and end. If possible, used sequential order.
- Included real events, people, and places.
- Used specific details that let the reader "see and feel" what is happening.

Extending the Learning

Students can do one or both of the following:

- Watch an additional video, "The Half Moon Tour: Sailing Instruments," research one of the navigation instruments shown in the video in pairs or small groups, and share their findings with the class.
- Watch an additional video, "The Half Moon Tour: Native Tools," and write a journal entry from the perspective of a Native American observing the *Half Moon*. Encourage them to make sure their writing includes the same requirements listed in Step 6.

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

- English Language Arts

Geography

- Human Geography

Social Studies

- World History

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- take notes during a prewriting activity
- describe information presented in a documentary-style video
- interpret information from both a historic and modern point of view
- write a journal entry to meet specific criteria

Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

Teaching Methods

- Discussions
- Multimedia instruction
- Writing

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
 - Information, Media, and Technology Skills

- Media Literacy
- Critical Thinking Skills
 - Applying
 - Creating
 - Remembering
 - Understanding

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

IRA/NCTE STANDARDS FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- Standard 5:

Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

- Standard 6:

How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

Preparation

What You'll Need

MATERIALS YOU PROVIDE

- Notebooks
- Pencils
- Writing paper

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom, Projector, Speakers
- Plug-Ins: Quicktime

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

GROUPING

- Large-group instruction

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

Sailors who journeyed with Henry Hudson aboard his ship, the *Half Moon*, experienced the excitement of exploration and the challenges of daily life aboard a ship. These challenges included getting fresh drinking water, cooking food, dressing appropriately for changing weather, defending the ship, and making sure the ship did not run out of supplies.

Prior Knowledge

Recommended Prior Activities

- [Mapping the Explorations of Henry Hudson](#)

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
crew	noun	workers or employees on a boat or ship.
galley	noun	kitchen area of a ship or plane.
hardtack	noun	hard bread or biscuit made from flour and water. Also called a sea biscuit.
sailor	noun	person who works aboard a ship.

PARTNER



FUNDER



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