

# History: Telling a “Real” Story

For Pre-K, K & Grade 1

The tour will explore the everyday life of a sailor on a whale ship. Children will tour the *Lagoda*, a half scale model of a real whaleship, and our full-scale forecastle, working sails and windlass with supervision and experiencing the average crewman’s sleeping quarters. Children will be signed up as a crew, discover what sailors brought on voyages and have a music session highlighting what they learned.

Using hands-on exhibits, the children will experience the cooperation necessary for a successful voyage – from working the windlass to raise the anchor to understanding all the jobs on a ship.

The museum will also offer materials for follow-up activities, including block corner suggestions, art, language and math experiences.

## Developmental and Tour Tips:

1. For children of 4 to 7, understanding time is difficult. Birthdays are meaningful benchmarks...”when I was three I couldn’t do X,” etc. They understand yesterday and today, even last week. Last year, or a century ago is more difficult for them. Talking about what their mother or grandmother might have done when they were little can be helpful. Explain that whaling voyages happened “long ago.”
2. Children this age tire easily. Take the elevator to the main level, rather than the stairs. In the long run this will make transitions easier.
3. Sit the children down at each stop; the docent should sit as well. Sitting helps children to focus on the docent. If the docent sits, then he/she is closer to eye level.
4. Tour stops, as much as they can be, should be in quieter places in the museum. Group size would ideally be 5 to 6 children per docent, preferably with another adult, staff or parent.
5. Tour should last no longer than one hour, preferably 45 minutes.
6. To get the children’s attention, ask them to look at you. “It’s my turn to talk” is a good phrase. If you have a talkative group, try whispering. Or hiding something in your hand to show them and just waiting.
7. Have a good sense of humor and enjoy your group.
8. Understand that children this age will get the most out of a field trip by revisiting it afterwards—whether they make their own journals, draw pictures of or create block structures of the *Lagoda*. The goal of the tour is to expose children to the museum and its story and spark their interest in history in the hopes they will return.

## Learning standards that will be met:

- Exploring the vocabulary of time: long ago, past, future, now etc. in concrete way.
- Comparing objects from the past to their present day equivalent. This will be part of the docent’s follow-up visit.
- Exposure to the variety of different cultures involved in whaling through photos and other memorabilia, particularly musical instruments
- Use of rhyme and chant to explore the everyday activities of the American sailor.

-- Recognition of geometric shapes and using the two-dimensional shapes to create representations of three dimensional objects. Sequencing and matching activities promote math skills.

### **Introduction: Wattles Family Gallery (or Jacobs Family Gallery)**

- Ask children if they know what a museum is and if they have ever been to one.
- History is a “real” story, a story about how things actually happened, not something imagined.
- Do they know the difference between real and imagined.
- What is a “make-up story?” Ask the children. Give an example of a fairy tale... Three Little Pigs or Cinderella.
- A real story might be that Mrs. Vitorino’s class went to the Whaling Museum today.
- Explain that they are going to get to see how a sailor lived more than 100 years ago and learn a little bit about whales.
- Brief rules of the museum. Stay with docent, walk and talk in an “inside voice,” raise hand to ask a question, etc

### **Tour stops:**

#### **Bourne Building (Whaleboat) & Measuring Stick:** 12 minutes

After getting off elevator, go to Bourne Building near half-scale model of whaleboat – there will be a vinyl cutout of a whaleboat on the floor

a. Discuss how the whalemens rowed as a team to move through the water. If one person is rowing forwards and another is rowing backwards, they will not move. If one side rows and the other doesn’t, they will spin in a circle. The sailors had to work together to reach their destination. Have children sit down on the “seats” and pretend to row.

b. Go to agent’s desk area and measure and record every child’s name, and height on the ship’s roster. (Leave clipboard for subsequent groups. The last group should take the clipboard and roster and give to teacher upon reaching Wattles Family Gallery.)

#### **Lagoda:** 12 minutes

(Children may need assistance stepping on and off of the stairway to the deck. An adult should stand on the deck and help children step safely to and from the stairs.)

-- Have children peek through the stern portholes into the lower deck. Before going onto the ship, ask children to look at the boat for shapes...squares, ovals, circles, etc. What do they see? What were the squares painted on side?

--Once aboard, allow children to explore the ship for 2-3 minutes.

--Gather group at the carpenter’s bench and talk about the various jobs that sailors and other would do on the board. Cook, barrel-makers, captain, sailors. Point out sails, rigging, etc. Things that were used to make the ship go.

-- Bring group to the stern to the wheel and show them the dining area below. (If you use the word “mess” or quarters, make sure you take the time to explain them). Let children steer.

If you have time, bring students to whale oils and let them smell the brown and sticking whale oil (hold the test tube while they take turns smelling it). Ask what color it is (they will say red or brown). Does it smell bad? Show them the ‘official’ name for the oil.

**Cutaway Ship Model:** 12 minutes

- Explain that this is a model to show the inside of a whale ship. It is much like a dollhouse, showing the features in miniature form.
- It shows where everyone on the ship slept and where everything was stored.
- Have the students sit on mattresses from the bunks.
- Show them a sea chest and objects that sailors might have brought with them.
- Spend a few minutes comparing old and new objects (as done in What Is A Museum All About?)

**Center St. Gallery:** 12 minutes.

**Center St. Gallery (Sea Bags)**

- Have the children pair up (you may end up with 3 in a group if you have an odd number)
- Each pair gets one sea bag. Ask the students to take one object out at a time
- Explain that sailors would take these sea bags with them when they went away from home. What would the students take with them if they had to leave home for a long time?
- Students can try on the clothing as time allows
- Have students place items back into bags as neatly as possible for the next group

**Music Stop in the Wattles Family Gallery: 12 minutes**

Sailors used music to help them work together and as recreation.

- Teach a simple sea chantey to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” Students will sit in three rows of chairs (one for each group).. As they sing “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” they will pretend to row, which will hopefully help keep them moving together. Don’t worry about what your singing voice is like – you have all heard me sing...

Whaling Voyage  
(to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”)

Row, row, row your boat  
Through the rolling sea,  
Pull those oars together now,  
And a whaler you will be.

Raise, raise, raise the anchor  
And you’ll be on your way;  
Work, work, work, together  
As you begin the day.

Hoist, hoist, hoist your sail  
Up the tall, tall mast,  
Higher, higher, higher yet  
And make that line fast.

Climb, climb, climb the rigging  
To see the whales afar,  
Look here, there and everywhere;  
You might even see a star.

Row, row, row your boat  
Through the rolling sea,  
Pull those oars together now,  
And a whaler you will be.

*“Rolling sea” means a sea with waves that causes the boat ride up and down like a rollercoaster.*

*“Hoist” means to pull ropes until the triangular sails are up the mast.*

*“Make fast” means to tie securely.*

*“Rigging” is the rope ladders that go up the mast which sailors use to get to their look-out and to get to the yardarms to tie and untie the square sails of a whaleship.*

You can also teach a silly rhyme as the group gathers or at the end of the session:

“The Captain went to Sea, Sea, Sea  
To see what he could see, see, see.  
But all that he could see, see, see  
Was the bottom of sea, sea, sea.

Salute when you say, “Captain.”

Do a wave motion every time you say, “Sea.”

Glass motion every time you say, “See.”