

Key information

Pirates: Fact or Fiction?

School Session Overview October 2025

Length of session: 90 mins	
Key Stage: KS2	
Location(s) of session: Classroom and Gallery (Tudor and Stuart Seafarers)	
Learning objectives	Curriculum links
Learners will:	KS2 History
 Investigate what they know about pirates, 	A study of an aspect or theme in British
and where that knowledge comes from	History that extends pupils' chronological
 Handle replica objects to explore what life 	knowledge beyond 1066
was really like for a pirate	• Understand how our knowledge of the past is
 Come to conclusions about what the truth is 	constructed from a range of sources

Key words

pirate, evidence, fiction, fact, evaluate

Overview of the session

about pirates

Learners will consider the questions 'Were pirates real? What was being a pirate really like?' To help them answer this they will take part in the following activities:

Introduction

As a whole class the facilitator leads a discussion about who pirates are and where our knowledge about them comes from.

Pick your pirate objects

In five groups, learners handle a range of modern objects associated with pirates to decide which ones are most useful to tell us about pirates and why.

Gallery visit—Tudor and Stuart Seafarers

The class is split into two groups. One looks with the facilitator at objects in one part of the gallery and what they tell us about pirates, while the other half explores pirate objects elsewhere in the gallery. The groups then swap over.

Object handling—Real pirates

In five groups, the learners handle replicas of objects used by real pirates and work out what they can tell us about the life of a pirate.

Conclusion

Learners come to some conclusions about pirates by reviewing all the objects they have looked at during the session.

Suggested post visit activities
The Stories from the Sea: Pirates resource has a wealth of creative follow up activities as well as images of our collection items to spark curiosity
and allow more source work. Link below.

Links to useful resources

Stories from the Sea: Pirates resource | Royal Museums Greenwich

Content guidance

We will be looking at real-life pirates and therefore there will be mention of violence, but it will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner. Learners will visit the Tudors and Stuart Seafarers Gallery and look at a range of weapons.