

## Ship explorer tour

School Session Overview

October 2025

Key information	
<p><b>Length of session:</b> 75 mins</p> <p><b>Key Stage:</b> KS1</p> <p><b>Location(s) of session:</b> <i>Cutty Sark</i></p>	
Learning objectives	Curriculum links
<p>Learners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a basic understanding of the history of <i>Cutty Sark</i> including its destinations</li> <li>• Understand why <i>Cutty Sark</i> is now in Greenwich</li> <li>• Know the jobs sailors did</li> <li>• Have a basic understanding of the chronology of <i>Cutty Sark</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>KS1 History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an awareness of the past</li> <li>• Identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods.</li> <li>• Use a wide vocabulary of everyday historical terms.</li> <li>• Ask and answer questions, choosing and using parts of stories and other sources to show that they know and understand key features of events.</li> <li>• Understand some of the ways in which we find out about the past and identify different ways in which it is represented.</li> </ul>
Key words	
sail, sailing, sailor, cargo, China, Australia, Greenwich, captain, River Thames	
Overview of the session	
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Learners start below the ship sharing what they already know about <i>Cutty Sark</i> and observing the shape of the ship. Gaps in basic knowledge of <i>Cutty Sark</i> are filled in through questions and discussions. Learners are introduced to the first of a series of animals (mainly puppets) to support them in learning more about <i>Cutty Sark</i>.</p> <p><b>Guided Tour</b></p> <p>Learners visit each level of the ship with the facilitator. On each deck, the animals help to tell some of <i>Cutty Sark</i>'s stories and give a focus to the learners' own historical enquiry. On the main deck, learners are encouraged to role-play being a sailor. The session finishes back under the ship with a brief discussion about <i>Cutty Sark</i>'s place in local history and links to learners' own lives.</p>	
Suggested pre visit knowledge/activities	Suggested post visit activities
Introduce the different roles on a historic sailing ship to spark curiosity about life at sea. (e.g. captain, sailor, cook, carpenter). Encourage them to think about what skills they would need and what challenges they might face.	Invite learners to write a letter from the perspective of a young sailor on board the <i>Cutty Sark</i> . What were their daily duties? How did they feel during the long voyage and what challenges did they face? What did they miss most about home and what incredible things did they see?

**Links to useful resources**

[Stories from the Sea: Shipwrecks resource | Royal Museums Greenwich](#)

[Cutty Sark KS1 Literacy activity: A day in the life of a sailor | Royal Museums Greenwich](#)

[Stories from the Sea: Exploration resource | Royal Museums Greenwich](#)

[Cutty Sark learning resources | Royal Museums Greenwich](#)

[Nautical terms and everyday phrases | National Maritime Museum](#)