

Life on board

School Session Overview

October 2025

Key information

Length of session: 60 mins

Key Stage: SEND: Adaptable for students following pre-formal, semi-formal or formal curriculums (SLD, MLD, ASC, SLCN)

Location(s) of session: Cutty Sark

Learning objectives	GLOs
<p>Learners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop communication and social skills • be inspired to explore the collection further • appreciate the importance of working as a crew • have fun 	<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the ship carried different cargo around the world • Acquire new vocabulary (as appropriate) related to the ship and its history e.g. clipper, cargo, crew etc. <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop communication and social skills <p>Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have fun • Be inspired to explore collections further <p>Attitudes and Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation of importance of working together as a crew (team) • Empathy for those who sailed on the ship <p>Activity, Behaviour and Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to activity

Key words

Sail, Cutty Sark, River Thames, rope, mast, wheel, captain, sailor, telescope, brush, sails, wind power

Overview of the session

Dry dock

Learners meet the facilitator in the dry berth and are welcomed with a call and response sea shanty. Learners explore boxes to find out what cargo Cutty Sark carried when it was at sea.

Main deck

Learners move to the main deck and using props such as telescopes to think about / act out what sailors did onboard. Learners visit the sailor cabins & the captain's quarters.

Tween deck

Learners explore an interior deck and have a chance to use some interactive ship games

Dry dock

The session ends with a discussion about what sailors eat (using props) and another sea shanty.

Suggested pre visit knowledge/ activities	Suggested post visit activities
<p>Introduce a picture of a sailing ship (like the <i>Cutty Sark</i>). Ask: What do you think people had to do on board? How do you think they worked together? Explain: On a ship, everyone had to be part of a crew - if they didn't work together, the ship couldn't sail. Pass soft beanbags/balls from one end of the ship (room) to the other without dropping them. They must cheer each other on and work as a team.</p>	<p>Provide learners with a simple template or tactile props to retell their experience (looked through a telescope, saw cabins, sang shanties, touched food props). Learners sequence or choose their favourites. Provide a sensory story bag with items such as a telescope, captain's hat, wooden spoon, rope for learners to retell the day by handling the items again. Ask learners to share their favourite moment or point to an image/prop that represents what they liked most. End with singing the sea shanty again, so they connect their classroom reflection back to the ship visit.</p>
Links to useful resources	
<p>Social skills at the museum Royal Museums Greenwich Sign-along Sea Shanty Royal Museums Greenwich Meet Cutty Sark's Captain Royal Museums Greenwich Meet Cutty Sark's Cook Royal Museums Greenwich Family Activities Online Events & Things To Do</p>	