



Description: In this lesson, students will be given 20 minutes to use the internet to research a given topic dealing with 18/19th century sailing. The point is to develop questioning strategies during information gathering. The goal is to create a graphic “web” of information and a written summary of internet-related issues. The lesson accomplishes three broad objectives:

- A) Provide a glimpse of the life of a sailor in the 1700-1800’s.
- B) Encourage the students to ask questions during the information gathering in order to create a “web” rather than a linear progression of information.
- C) To confront the value, and limitations, of utilizing internet based research.

Work can be either group or individual based.

Materials:

Computers with Internet connection.

Unlined paper/pencil

Standards:

History:

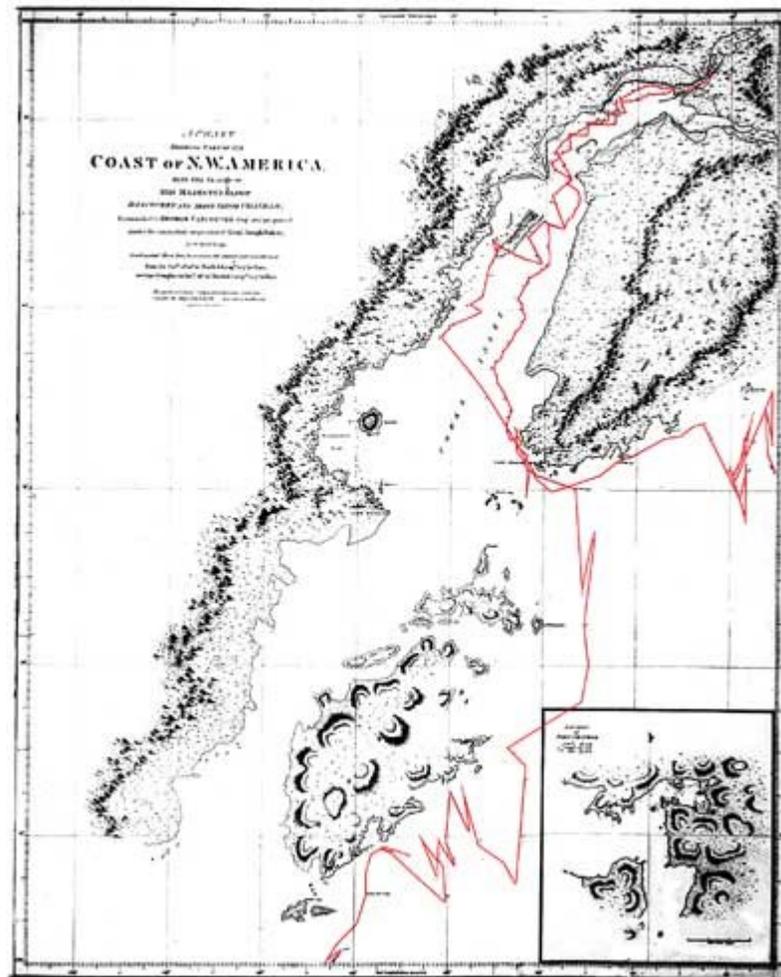
- A-4: Understand that history relies on interpretation of evidence*
- A-8: Knowing that history is a bridge to understanding groups of people*
- C-1: Use technology to access, retrieve, and organize historical information.*

Inquiry Based Thinking Strategies Utilized:

Interpretation of Data: *As students gather information, they will determine the relevancy of the information to their research focus.*

Following a Line of Questioning: *Students will formulate and explore new questions with each bit of new information.*

Summarizing: *Once information is gathered, students will present a condensed and organized summary of their findings.*



Courtesy Kenai Fjords National Park Service website: <http://www.nps.gov/kefi/index.htm>

Kenai Fjords National Park website has excellent resources for teachers and students at:

<http://www.nps.gov/kefi/forteachers>

In Search of the Northwest Passage: A Glimpse Into the Life of a Sailor



Overview: Too often research is approached as a way to answer questions that are predisposed. This results with information that is linear (one fact predictably following another). This lesson is designed to encourage continual questioning strategies that result in a more “web-like” exploration of information. During this lesson students will reformulate questions throughout the course of their research. Simply put, when new information is uncovered; this should spawn more questions. The trick is to “listen to” and not to be prejudged toward the information that is expected. When properly employed, the researcher may well be taken in many unexpected directions. This is a strategy that should be employed for all research whether using the internet or conducting an interview.

In addition, since this lesson uses the internet as the “interviewee” it is likely that students will encounter some of the shortcomings and pitfalls of using the “web.” They may find information that is inaccurate or contradictory. It’s a good time to remind students that the web may be fast and easy, but reliability is not always the internet’s best attribute. Primary sources (although not infallible, quick, nor easy) are still the researcher’s best friend.

Procedure:

1) Set the Stage: (*To the Students*) History text books often provide broad brush strokes to describe events: *In 1778 Captain Cook reached what is now known as Cook Inlet; Bering launched his second expedition into the Gulf of Alaska in 1741; The French explorer, de Galaup, set out to report on Spanish and Russian activities along the coastline of Alaska.* These broad statements document the period of exploration and exploitation of the Alaska coastline. However, within the depths of these facts lay the realities of the sailor aboard these vessels. Prior to the advent of the steam ship, the life of a seaman could not have been easy. Life aboard a sailing vessel had to be physically and mentally taxing. Life (and survival) aboard a sailing ship was dictated by the winds and the seas. There must

have been long periods of boredom punctuated by moments (days?) of sheer terror. Provisions were at times scant, disease was common, laws were strict, punishment severe. The broad statements in the texts do little to provide the context of maritime exploration of Alaska in the 18th and 19th century.

This lesson, though generic to the 18th and 19th century sailor, has many applications to the student conducting research into the Kenai Corridor. First, this lesson will provide small vignettes— windows— into the life aboard a sailing ship that may have plied the Alaskan waters. But more importantly, it requires the student to look beyond an information stream that is linear into one that, as a web, can unpredictably go in any number of directions. The trick is to not be prejudged toward the information one expects to find but to “listen” to the information that is uncovered and to “ask” questions that further expands understanding (even if it is in a totally unexpected direction.)

Lastly, this lesson utilizes the internet as the source of information. Although the “web” can be a good source for information, this lesson will help tap into the strengths of the world wide web while illuminating deficiencies.

- 2) **Describe the Task:** Explain to the students that they will be working (in groups?) at a computer station. They will be given a word or phrase. Their task is to research how this topic is related to sailing (particularly in the 18/19th century).

As new information is learned, students should ask questions about this new information. (A search site such as ask.com is handy for this type of internet questioning.) You will know if you are creating a “web” of information if you end up visiting many sites and not relying on one or two.

Time is short (20 minutes?) therefore diligence and focus will be necessary.

- 3) **Give it a try:** If necessary provide students with a “trial project.” The next two pages demonstrate what a web researching “Knots— Velocity” might resemble.

In Search of the Northwest Passage: A Glimpse Into the Life of a Sailor

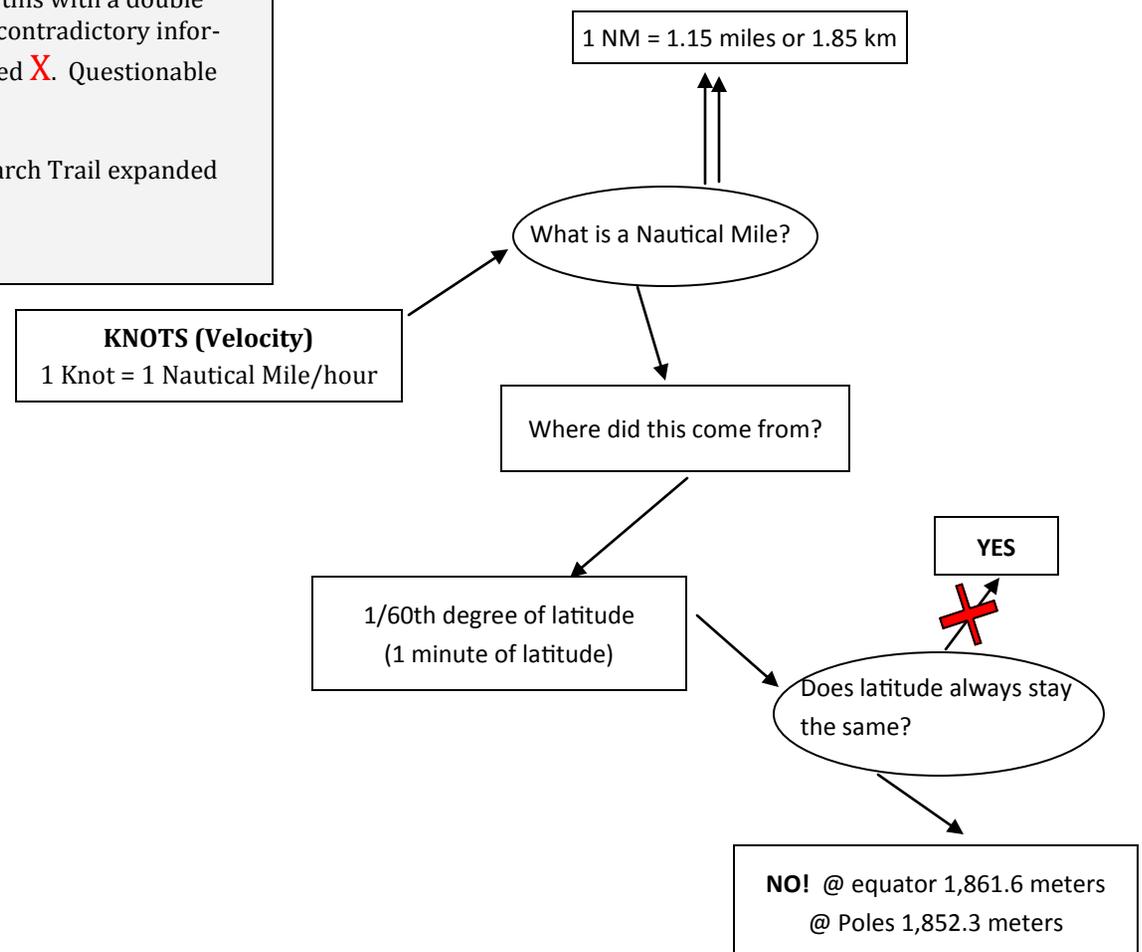


This is what the research trail/web or questions and answers might look like in the beginning. It starts with the main concept: KNOTS (Velocity). The students find the significance to sailing (it is the speed of 1 nautical mile per hour).

Now the work begins. The students try digging deeper by asking questions such as, "So what is a nautical mile?" or a similar question that stems from the information they've uncovered. Note: Questions are circled and answers are rectangular.

Sometimes facts are supported by two or more resources. Show this with a double arrow. Conversely, during the course of research, you may find contradictory information. If information turns out to be incorrect show this with red **X**. Questionable facts can be shown with a **?**.

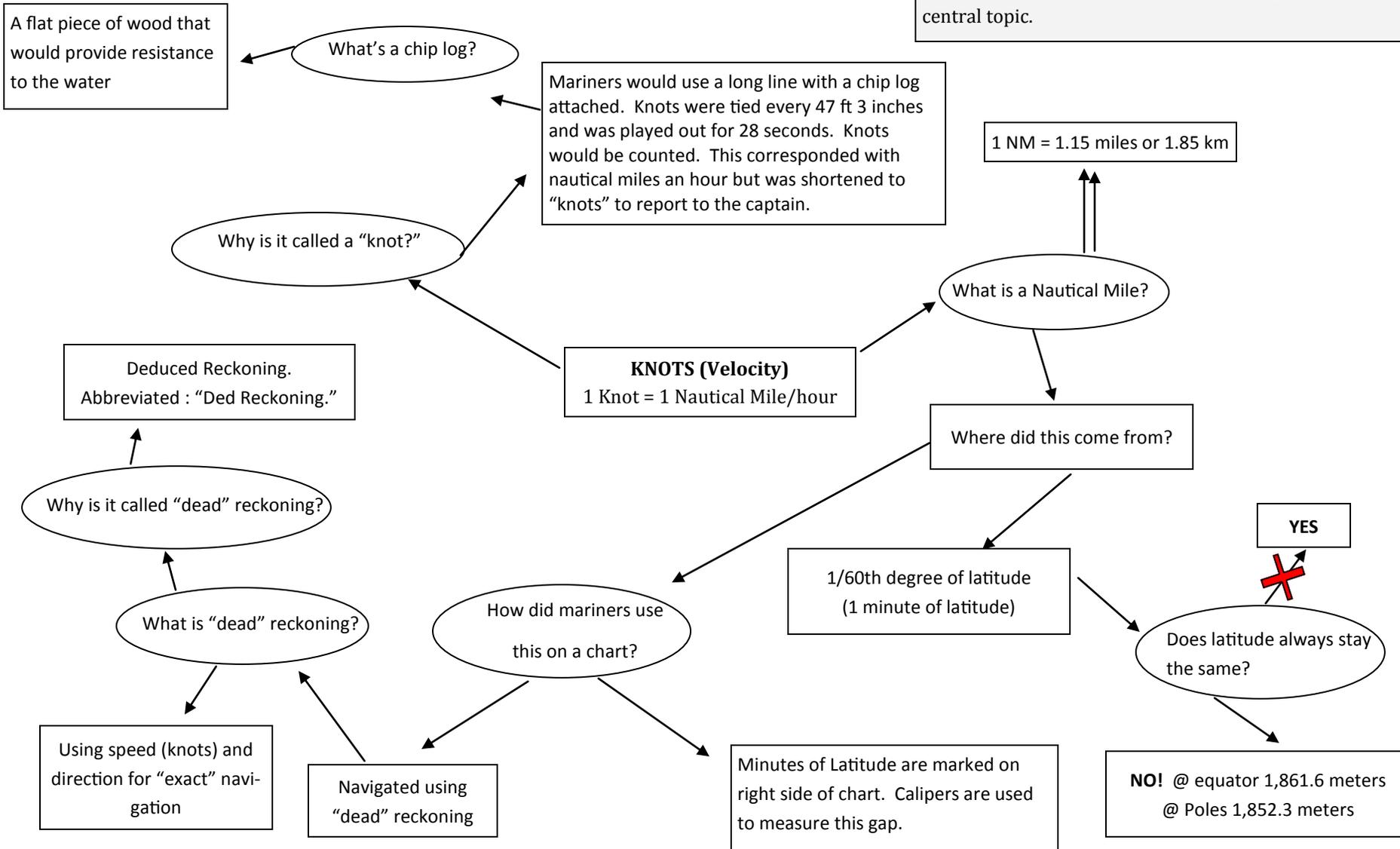
Take a look at the following page to see how this student's Research Trail expanded into other areas.



In Search of the Northwest Passage: A Glimpse Into the Life of a Sailor



Students' charts will likely look different than this example. The goal is to create a chart that explores in several different directions while still keeping on the central topic.



In Search of the Northwest Passage: A Glimpse Into the Life of a Sailor



4) Now it's time to try out this technique. Here are some suggested topics and the core points that students should be able to discover. The key behind a successful topic is one that has a compelling story and can spawn many divergent questions.

Examples of Sailor Topics	Basic	Possible Questions	Possible Details
<i>Pigs and Chickens</i>	<i>Sailors would tatoo pigs and chickens onto their feet or calves</i>	<i>Why did sailors have pigs and chicken specifically?</i>	<i>< Pigs and chickens were kept on the top deck in wooden crates. If a ship went down, these would float away sometimes making it to shore. It was believed that tatooing these figures on their feet or legs would keep the sailor from drowning.</i>
		<i>What other tatoos were common to sailors?</i>	<i>< Lighthouse- Guide Sailors Home. Turtle - For crossing equator. Dragon: Crossing Dateline. Note: Various sources have conflicting information.</i>
		<i>Why is tatooing part of the sailor culture?</i>	<i>Sailors were illiterate. They would tatoo images to tell the story of places they had been. Many cultures of the world utilize tatooing. Sailors would learn and utilize different techniques encountered during their travels.</i>

In Search of the Northwest Passage: A Glimpse Into the Life of a Sailor



Shanghaied *Being impressed unwittingly (kidnapped) into service upon a ship* *Where did the expression come from?*

It was a a common practice to force sailors (sometimes by drugging them) onto ships bound for foreign ports. Once a ship left shore, the sailors could not escape. The act of kidnapping was known as crimping. On the West Coast this gained the name "Shanghaied" since many of the ships sailed to Oriental ports.

Where was this a common practice?

This was a common practice around major ports. In regards to the Western US, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco were major conduits for this practice. So common was this practice that the city of Portland had a intricate series of tunnels under the city to support the impressment industry.

How were sailors protected?

Bethels were established. These were identified with a special flag. Often times these were religiously affiliated.

Was this practice only a private venture?

No, the military used this as well. In fact, the British practice of impressment was one of the causes of the War of 1812.

How did the practice end?

With the advent of steam ships this practice was no longer lucrative. Steamships needed fewer hands and could fill their needs without force.

Limey *A term referring to British Sailors* *Why were the "Brits" called this?*

This was started because the British would carry citrus fruits on board the ships to discourage scurvy.

When did this practice start?

Captain Cook was the first on who experimented with and insisted on all men eating daily portions of food he felt would prevent scurvy. At first he refused to let the men eat fatty meat then tried various foods including sauerkraut, pickled celery, and carrot marmalade. On his 2nd voyage each man was forced to eat 20 lbs. of onions the first week then 10 lbs. thereafter. Those who refused were flogged.

What causes scurvy?

A lack of vitamin C which is needed for the synthesis of collagen.

In Search of the Northwest Passage: A Glimpse Into the Life of a Sailor



Steorbord

Old English term for "Starboard," the right side of the ship.

What does it mean?

Terms literally means: "Side of ship that is steered from."

Where did this term originate?

Term descended from Old Norse "styri" (rudder) and the verb "styra" (at helm). Old ships were steered with rudders located on the right stern (since more seamen were right handed.)

Port is left side of ship... where did that come from?

Originally the left side of the ships were call laddebord (the loading side) which was typically the side of the ship that would be docked. Sailors were infamous for shortening phrases and this became "Starboard." Mid 1800's this was changed to "port" to end confusion with starboard.

How is it used today?

Vessels have green lights on port side, red on starboard. If two vessels are angled toward one another, the vessel seeing the red starboard light must yield to the other vessel.

In Search of the Northwest Passage: A Glimpse Into the Life of a Sailor



Assessment Rubric

<p>Students will utilize a questioning strategy that allows broad based interpretation of topic.</p>	<p>Student researches fully following many tracts in many directions.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
		Web of information extensively explores many directions.		Web of information makes an attempt at exploring different directions although competence is unsure.		Information is linear. Does not explore in different directions.
	<p>Students maintain a clear focus on original topic.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
		All information relates back to original topic.		Much, but not all, information is relevant to original topic.		Not all information is relevant to main topic.
	<p>Student utilizes a divergent line of questioning to explore a variety of subtopics and directions.</p>	5	4	3	2	1
		Questions are diverse and seek new directions of information.		Questions lead to new directions however does not seem totally engaged in process of finding new information.		Questions are redundant or non-existent.
	<p>Student demonstrates the ability to use new information to help answer the original question.*</p>	5	4	3	2	1
		Interpretation is insightful and accurate. Interpretation covers several facets of given topic.		Student attempts to provide interpretation of topic. Interpretation is linear or does not fully cover directions that are explored. There is evidence of new learning.		Interpretation is shallow. Little evidence that new information is uncovered.

* To assess this strand, students can demonstrate proficiency by writing a short essay addressing the broad question of: "What does your research tell us about the life of a 18th century sailor?"

Note to teachers: Columns 4 and 2 are blank to allow for assessment that blends elements from adjacent columns. Teachers can underline criteria that describe student performance and use blank column to add comments specific to student.