

WHALING: AN INDUSTRY AT SEA

Mary Fay Jones Collections in Hand Program



PRE- AND POST- VISIT TEACHERS' PACKET

Suggested for Grades 3-6

HERITAGE
museums & gardens

Whaling: An Industry at Sea

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INTRODUCTION TO

Whaling: An Industry at Sea

This engaging and entertaining lesson will help your students understand the importance of the whale fishery. Students will feel, see and smell some of the products of the fishery, and develop an understanding of how these products were obtained. They will participate in a dramatic reading of a play written by a whaler, offering a unique look at the whale hunt. The lesson is approximately 60 minutes in length.

WHAT TO EXPECT

On the day of your lesson, a museum instructor (either a staff member or a professionally trained volunteer) will visit your classroom with a variety of materials. They will begin by introducing themselves, Heritage Museums & Gardens and the topic of the lesson. The instructor will facilitate an illustrated introduction and olfactory exploration helping students understand why whales were hunted. The lesson will allow students opportunities for exploration and participation, culminating in an object sharing session.

ABOUT THIS PACKET

This Teachers' Packet contains materials that were created to be easily used in your classroom. Introducing your students to the **pre-visit** information and vocabulary will enhance their experience during the lesson. The **post-visit** section contains additional lesson-related information and activities to help you to follow up after the instructor's visit. All of the materials in this packet were designed to help you tie the lesson into your existing curriculum and to create a more meaningful experience for your students.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

At Heritage Museums & Gardens, we are committed to helping you meet the demands of Education Reform. Each of our programs may be used to fulfill a multitude of standards across several disciplines. Listed below are examples of how the *Whaling: An Industry at Sea* program and its Pre- and Post-Visit Teacher's Packet can be used to meet specific standards. Detailed Curriculum Frameworks Connections listings for this or any other individual program may be obtained by calling the Manager of School & Youth Programs at (508) 888.3300 ext. 160.

Whaling: An Industry at Sea *Mary Fay Jones Collections in Hand Program*

English Language Arts

Language Strand

Learning Standards: 2, 3, 4

Literature Strand

Learning Standards: 9, 10, 13, 17, 18

Composition Strand

Learning Standards: 22, 23, 24

Media Strand

Learning Standards: 26

Science and Technology/Engineering

Life Science: 7, 8, 10

Technology/Engineering: 1.1

History and Social Science

Concepts and Skills:

History and Geography: 1, 2, 3

Learning Standards: 3.7, 3.9, 3.12, 3.13, 5.11

Arts

Visual Arts Strand

Learning Standards: 1, 3, 5

Connections Strand

Learning Standards: 6, 7, 9, 10

Layers of Learning

Scrimshaw & Song, *Discovery Workshop*
New England Art and History, *Focus Tour*

THE WHY AND WHERE OF WHALING

What are some of the historic reasons people hunted whales?

Whales were hunted because they provided many very useful products, such as:

- **Food** for humans and animals.
- **Oil** (from **blubber**) was used as an important source of light (**lamp oil**) and as a waterproof coating for cloth. During the 1800s (especially from 1820-1860 when Europe and the United States were rapidly building factories), whale oil became even more valuable as a machine **lubricant**. Until the manufacturing of synthetic oils was perfected in the 1960s, whale oil was regarded as the best oil to lubricate the gears in watches, clocks and sewing machines.
- **Baleen** commonly called whalebone, was used in fashion for corset stays, collar stays and skirt hoops. It was also used to make brooms, brushes, buggy whips, and riding crops. Baleen was also used for artistic purposes by whalers to make scrimshaw such as corset busks or yarn winders called swifts.

What are some of the other uses whales

- **Whale bone** was used for artistic purposes and for fashion items, such as walking sticks, toy and game pieces, and fertilizer.
- **Ambergris**, a waxy substance produced by the digestive system of sperm whales, was used in perfume.
- **Spermaceti**, a thick, waxy substance found in the head and oil of sperm whales, made the best and most valuable candles because they burned the brightest and longest, giving off very little smoke or odor.

Where did people go whaling?

By the 1850s whales in the North Atlantic were very difficult to find. Whalers were bound around Cape Horn, hunting whales along the coast of South America, then along the Equator, and moving north with the change of seasons. Ships would hunt along the coasts of Australia, New Zealand, and South America between October and February, and then head north for the grounds in the Arctic Ocean, and along the coasts of Alaska and Japan during the spring and summer. The pursuit of whales allowed American sailors to visit people who had never before encountered people from another culture. Whalers were able to bring back valuable information and objects from many different cultural groups.

When did people stop whaling?

There were several reasons for the decline in whaling, including:

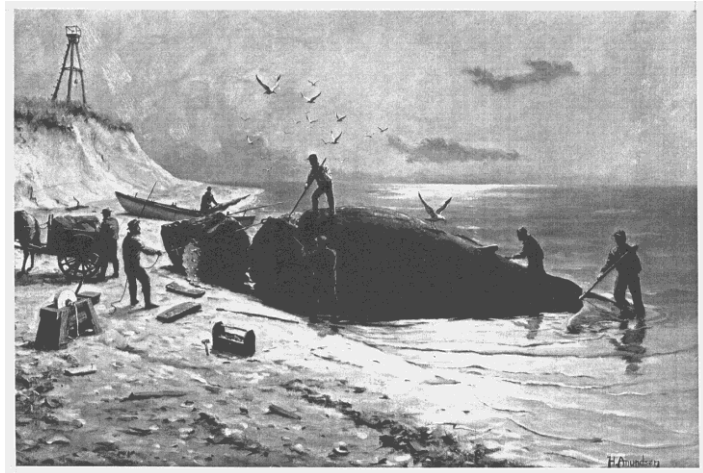
1. **The invention of electric lighting in the late 1800s.** This meant less need for oil lamps.
2. **The discovery of fossil oil in Pennsylvania in 1859.** Other land oil finds followed in other states like Texas. Oil was easier to obtain on land than from the sea.
3. **Changes in fashion.** Women stopped wearing corsets (after doctors showed their harmful effects) and hoop skirts in favor of unwaisted dresses in the 1920s, so baleen was not needed for busks or stays. Walking sticks and collar stays went out of fashion for men.
4. **SUCCESS!** The whalers were *too* successful killing whales. Whale populations declined making the voyages less profitable. It took more time to find a whale to kill because ships needed to go to more remote places, like Antarctica.

Germany, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Russia, and other nations continued to hunt whales. They used new technology such as catcher boats and factory ships to catch and process whales. These innovations allowed whalers to hunt other species of whales, like blue whales, which previously had not been hunted. The 1930s saw the most whales killed ever. In 1946 the United States and fourteen other countries formed the International Whaling Commission to set quotas on the number of whales killed each year.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LOCAL WHALING

It is very likely that Native People living along the coast would have used stranded whales, but these people did not hunt whales. The history of whaling in New England begins with the arrival of Europeans in the 1600s. In colonial times, the soil along the shores of Cape Cod was found to be poor which made it difficult to grow crops; however, the sea offered the Colonists a dependable source of food and a way to make money.

Until the early 1700s, people hunted whales from land in a process called **shore whaling**. Whales would be spotted from watchtowers along the beach. Stations were located in places such as Great Island, in Wellfleet Harbor; and in what is now the town of Dennis. People, usually farmers, lived along the shore during the fall and winter when migrating whales would be passing or living nearby. When the whales came close to shore, men rowed out in small



FLENSING ON SHORE / CUTTING-IN A WHALE ON THE BEACH. by Hjalmar Amundsen KWM O-411

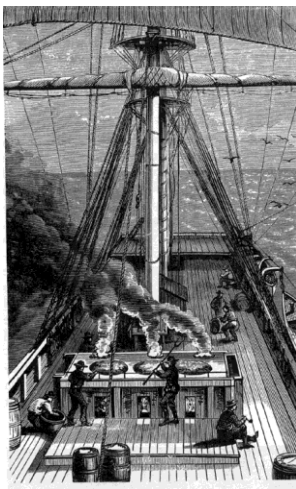
boats, harpooned a whale and towed it back to shore. On shore, the dead whale would have its blubber removed. Then the blubber could be **tried out** or **rendered** (boiled) to release oil.

As the whaling industry grew, however, many problems developed between communities all along the Cape. Often, if no whales were found along the shore of one's own town, some of the men would try their luck in the surrounding areas. This caused problems and feverish competition between many towns along the Cape.

In addition to these problems of territory, it is also thought that whaling was one of the contributing factors resulting in the loss of much of the Cape's forested area, because large amounts of wood were needed to fuel the **try-works**, where the blubber was tried out.

As the whale supply offshore was depleted, larger vessels were needed to go further from the coast. This move to deeper waters caused many Cape towns to give up whaling altogether. Some towns however, benefited greatly from whaling for years while their economies flourished. By 1690, Nantucket was recruiting experienced whale men from Cape Cod to teach them the art of catching whales. There is evidence that a shore-based fishery was active through the mid-1720s. Around 1712, a storm blew Nantucketer Christopher Hussey and his crew far out to sea. When the storm ended, they found themselves surrounded by sperm whales. They killed one and towed it back to Nantucket. Over the next few years, more ships ventured out to sea in search of whales. Fewer whales were coming near shore due to over-fishing, (migrating animals return to the same place year after year). At first, men only cut up the whales at sea and stored the blubber in barrels to be tried out on shore. Around 1750 ships began carrying **try-pots** to do this work on board. The whales that were most commonly hunted were the humpback and the right whale. Nantucket launched the world's first sperm whale fishery in the early 1700s. By 1775 its whaling fleet numbered over one hundred fifty vessels - Nantucket was to be the most influential port until the 1830s.

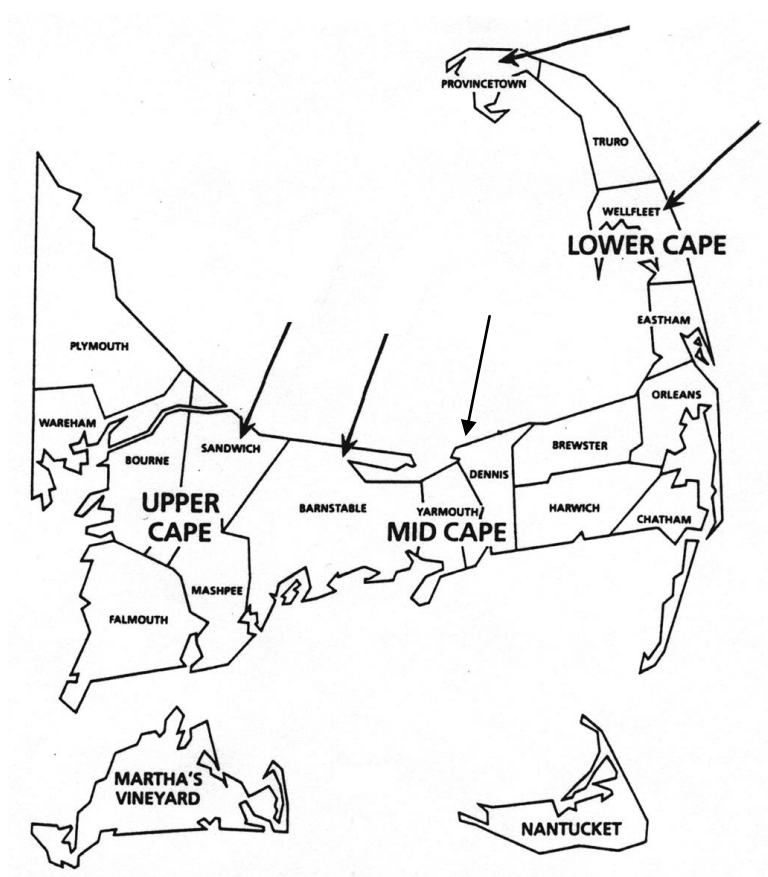
Try-pot: Richard Ellis, *Men and Whales*. p. 154



Voyages became longer and longer and reached farther and farther away from New England. Atlantic whales became endangered due to over-fishing. Finding fewer and fewer whales in the Atlantic Ocean, whalers tried hunting in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In 1788, Archelus Hammond, a Nantucketer and first mate on the English whaler *Emelia*, harpooned a whale in the Pacific Ocean. Shortly after, Nantucket whalers reached the Indian Ocean (1815), Hawaii (1819), and Japan (1820).

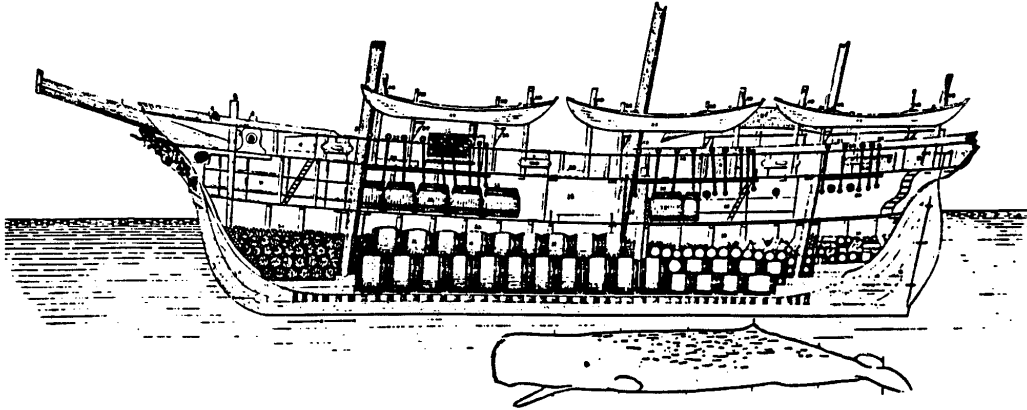
As men went farther and farther away from home in search of whales, their voyages began to last between two to four years. Many sailors became homesick and grew tired of the hard, dangerous life and poor conditions aboard whaling ships. For these reasons, whalers had a high rate of jumping ship, or **desertion**. A whaling ship needed about 24 crewmembers to operate. Captains found replacement sailors in ports around the world in places such as Alaska, Australia, the Azore Islands, the Cape Verde Islands, Chile, Hawaii, Madagascar, New Zealand, and Peru. Many of these new recruits returned to the ships' homeports -- places such as New Bedford and Nantucket -- and remained there after the voyage.

Until the 1820s, most of the world's whaleships claimed Nantucket as their homeport. (In 1819 that meant 61 vessels.) Over the next three decades (until 1854) New Bedford became the port with the most whaleships because it had ready access to more factories than Nantucket. However, many crew members and officers came from Nantucket. Whaling increased to such a point that by 1846 there were 735 American ships involved (plus 200 foreign ones), with over 300 of them from New Bedford. Many of the rest were from Nantucket. After 1854, San Francisco was the homeport for most whalers. By this time, almost all whaling was taking place in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans. The last square-rigged Yankee whaleship to leave from New Bedford was the bark *Wanderer* on August 25, 1924.



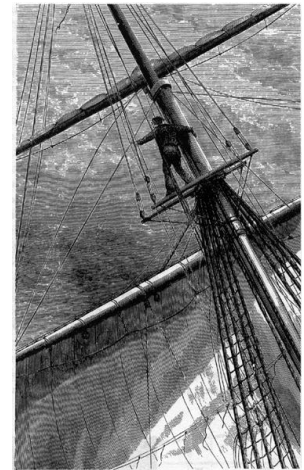
CATCHING A WHALE

The diagram below shows what it might look like if we could take a typical whaling ship and cut it in half to see inside. The ship pictured below is 105 feet long. Most ships used in whaling were 100 to 130 feet long. The sperm whale shown next to the ship is 60 feet long.



Catching a whale was a long, difficult and dangerous process that was quite often unsuccessful. The following description tells us what the process of catching a whale was like during the time period from the 1820s to the 1850s:

At the top of one of the ship's masts that hold up the sails (70-90 feet above the deck), two men (an officer and a seaman) stood "in the hoops" looking for whales. The hoops were metal rings larger than a basketball hoop on the left and right side of the mast. The men stood on one or two boards coming out from the mast. Each shift was two hours long and the watch person who spotted a whale received a bonus in their pay. A whale was usually spotted by the spout of air and mist it exhaled, sometimes called a **blow**. Upon seeing this, the watch person would alert everyone on deck by yelling either "There she blows!" or "Whale ho!"

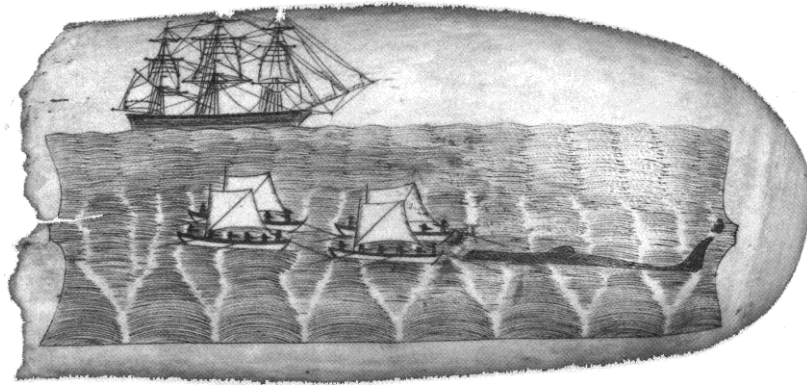


After relaying the information as to what species the whale was (each type could be identified by its distinctive spout), how far away it was, and in what direction it was traveling, the crew would lower the whaleboats from the side of the ship (see cutaway picture above). Each boat was about 30 feet long and held six men - an officer, a harpooner, and four regular sailors. Four men would row each boat and the officer steered using a long oar as the rudder. After rowing to the whale (sometimes five or more miles away!), the harpooner stood up, turned around, and picked up his harpoon. Upon the command of the officer, the harpooner "darted his iron" or stabbed the whale. He would then quickly use another harpoon that was tied to about 2,000 feet of rope coiled up in two tubs in the boat.

When harpooned, whales usually did one of three things:

1. **Stove the boat.** This was when a whale thrashed wildly about and its body (intentionally or unintentionally) damaged the boat and usually caused the men to fall out of the boat and into the water. Unfortunately, many men drowned because they did not know how to swim.
2. **Sound.** This is when a whale dives to the bottom of the ocean. Most whales take a few shallow dives before diving deep. Because the harpoon is connected to the boat, the officer needed to decide if and when to cut the line. If the line was not cut in time, a whale could pull the boat underwater!
3. **"Nantucket Sleigh Ride."** This was when a harpooned whale pulled a whaleboat across the ocean at a very fast speed (Some whales can swim at 20 miles per hour for several hours!).

When the whale tired out, the whaleboat approached the whale again. The officer, having switched places with the harpooner, used a killing lance to stab the whale in the heart or lungs. The whale died within 15 minutes and usually rolled onto one side. The whale was now "fin out." The men tied a rope around its tail and dragged it back to the ship either by rowing or by sailing.



Back at the ship, the real work began. The harpooners used long handled knives to cut the whale's blubber into long strips, called blanket pieces. Onboard, men cut the strips into two foot square pieces. These small pieces were put in the **try pots**—large kettles—and heated to the boiling point. Depending on the species, from 50 to 80 percent of the blubber melted into oil, just like bacon fat becomes bacon grease. Processing a whale usually took a day or two, and then the sailors had to clean the ship, which was dirty from the smoke and blood. The oil was stored in barrels in the ship's hold (see picture on previous page - notice how most of the space on the ship is for storage, not for living space). Whaleships typically gathered between 1,500 and 3,000 barrels before heading home. A large right whale could produce approximately 40 barrels; a sperm whale could produce around 90 barrels; a large blue whale could produce more than 100 barrels.

WHALE FACTS

Did you know that whales are *mammals*? Even though they live in the ocean, whales are not fish. They breathe air the way land animals do. They give birth to their young instead of laying eggs. They feed their calves milk. They are warm-blooded. They have a thick layer of fat under their skin called *blubber* that protects them from the cold.

The male whale is called a *bull*, the female is called a *cow*, and the baby whale is a *calf*.

The scientific name for whales is *Cetaceans* (pronounced "see-TAY-shuns").

There are two types of whales: *toothed* whales and *baleen* whales. **Toothed whales** catch fish and other sea animals with their teeth. Most toothed whales are comparatively small. Sperm whales, pilot whales and orcas (sometimes called killer whales) are all toothed whales. **Baleen whales** such as the right or humpback, have no teeth. Instead, they strain food from the water through their comb-like *baleen* plates. They gulp down millions of tiny sea creatures called *plankton*.

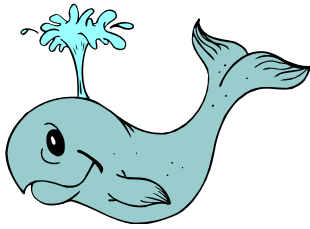
Toothed whales have one nostril, or *blowhole*; baleen whales have two. As a whale exhales, the warm air and moisture from its lungs make a spray called a blow, or *spout*. You can identify different whales by the shape of their misty blows.

Two flat lobes, or *flukes*, make up a whale's tail. A whale swims by moving its flukes up and down like a paddle. Fish swim by moving their tails from side to side.

How do whales sleep? When they rest, they float on the surface of the water and drift. This is called *logging*. It is not quite the same as when we sleep! Whales are voluntary breathers, which means they will suffocate if they become unconscious. Human beings are involuntary breathers; they can breathe even if they are unconscious (or asleep).

Whales can be very sociable animals. They often travel in pairs, or in groups called *pods*.

The blue whale is the largest animal that has ever lived—they can reach lengths of 80 feet and weigh 90 to 150 tons. Not even the largest of the dinosaurs alive millions of years ago, grew as large as the largest whales today.



A WHALE OF A QUIZ!

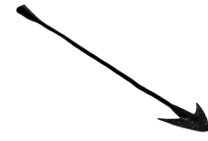
After reading the Whale Facts page, see if you can answer all of these questions. Good luck!

1. Whales are not fish. They are _____ that live in the sea.
2. Male whales are called:
a) breaches b) bulls c) cows d) pods
3. Another name for a baby whale is a _____.
4. Whales often travel in groups. What is the name for a group of whales?

5. Scientists have a special name for whales. They call them:
_____.
6. Baleen whales do not have _____.
7. Some toothed whales are: (circle the right answer)
a) Humpback, Sei, Fin c) Gray, Right, Bowhead
b) Sperm, Orca, Pilot d) Minke, Blue, Bryde's
8. Toothed whales have _____ blowhole(s).
Baleen whales have _____ blowhole(s).
9. The largest animal that ever lived is the
a) Giant Squid b) Elephant c) Blue whale d) King Kong
10. Write four facts about whales:
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

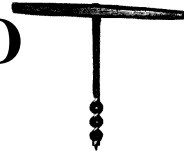


WORDS TO KNOW



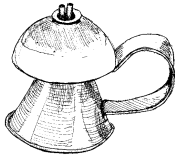
- Baleen** strong, lightweight, comb-like plates of keratin (the same material that your fingernails and horses' hooves are made of) that grow from the roof of the mouth of some whales. The baleen plates are used by whales to strain food from the water.
- Blubber** a thick layer of fat between the skin and the muscles of a whale. Whale oil came from boiling down blubber.
- Boatsteerer** man in the front of the whaleboat. It was his job to harpoon the whale.
- Bow** the front or forward part of a ship or boat.
- Corset** a close-fitting undergarment worn by women to give their waistlines a thinner shape.
- Cutting-in** removing blubber from a whale.
- Flue** razor sharp edges which form the point of a harpoon.
- Harpoon** a spear-like weapon that was used in hunting whales. Sometimes it is referred to as an “iron” by whalers.
- Lubricant** something such as grease or oil, which makes a surface smooth or slippery.
- Migration** an animal's movement, usually seasonal, from one region or climate to another to feed or to give birth.
- Primary Source** going back to the original record or object and not relying on someone else telling you about what happened.
- Spermaceti** a thick, waxy substance found in the head of sperm whales; spermaceti made the best and most valuable candles because they burned the brightest and longest without giving off smoke or an odor.
- Trying-out** the process of turning blubber into oil by heating the blubber.

INDUSTRIES CONTRIBUTING TO WHALING



Whaling only became the successful business it was with the help of other early American industries. Ask your students to brainstorm a list of other trades that may have been involved in either preparations for a whaling voyage or in processing the resulting products. The list below provides some suggestions.

1. **Shipwrights** - to build whaling ships.
2. **Banks** - to make loans to start new merchants toward a more prosperous future.
3. **Brokers and Merchants** - to finance and insure whaling voyages.
4. **Blacksmiths** - to supply harpoons, barrel hoops and other necessary metal items.
5. **Blockmakers** - to make the pulleys used in the complex rigging that held up the ship's sails.
6. **Coopers** - to provide the materials and make the barrels needed to hold the whale oil.
7. **Masons** - to help install the tryworks on the deck of a whaling ship.
8. **Riggers** - to put up the lines that were used to raise and lower the sails on whaling vessels.
9. **Rope Makers** - to provide the line for all the sail rigging and to attach the harpoons to the whaleboats.
10. **Sail Lofts** - to provide the best canvas for the sails that were used to power the ships of the whaling industry.
11. **Bakers** - to provide the ship's hard tack and other basic foods in a whaleman's diet.
12. **Oil Refineries** - to purify the main product of whaling – oil.
13. **Candlemakers** - to produce spermaceti candles, valuable because they were bright and burned for a long time, producing no smoke or odor.



WORDS TO REMEMBER



Ambergris	A waxy substance produced by the digestive system of sperm whales; it was used in the making of perfume.
Bible leaves	Blubber cut so that it opens like the pages or leaves of a book.
Blanket piece	A large piece of blubber, from 12 to 15 feet long and 5 to 6 feet wide. The first piece cut from a whale.
Fossil fuel	A deposit of oil or gas that comes from matter that was once living in a previous age.
Green hand	A whaler on his first whaling voyage.
Horsepiece	A strip of blubber cut from the blanket piece about six inches wide and two feet long.
Krill	Shrimp-like animals that are an inch long and travel in huge patches like schools of fish. They are food for baleen whales.
Log	A record of a ship's speed, its progress, and events that occurred on a voyage.
Nantucket sleigh-ride	When a harpooned whale pulled a whaling boat and its six crew members across the ocean at high speed in an attempt to get away.
Sounding	When a whale makes a deep dive underwater.
Stoving	When a harpooned whale would strike a whaleboat with its tail (flukes) or another body part.
Tryworks	A furnace on board a ship used to boil down the blubber and turn it into oil (<i>trypots</i> are the kettles in the tryworks).

REVIEW: OBJECTS IN THE LESSON

TEACHERS – PLEASE NOTE: in order to preserve the opportunity for discovery, we ask that you **DO NOT** share this material with your students prior to the museum instructor’s visit. It may not have been possible for all of the objects to be shown in your classroom due to time constraints.



WHALE OIL LAMP

This is a common whale oil lamp from the middle of the 1800s. It is made from tin and painted black. Whale oil would have been poured into the mushroom shaped cap at the top. The wick goes in the top. It has a peg on the bottom so it could stand in a candleholder. What do you think it would have been like to light your room with a lamp like this?



ADVERTISING PRINTS: *Ezra Kelley's Oils*

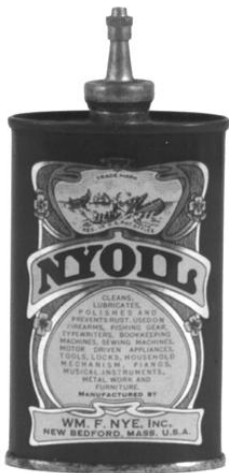
“Loaned by The Kendall Institute, New Bedford, Massachusetts”

Ezra Kelley was one of the first people to experiment with the oil from whales for lubrication. These advertisements are from the late 1880s. Why do you think Kelley used these pictures to advertise his oils? Are they similar to ads we see today? Do you think they were good advertisements?



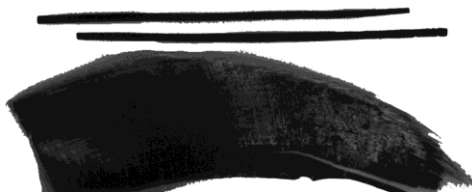
NYE OIL ADVERTISING PIN

William F. Nye and his company was Ezra Kelley’s main rival. After Ezra Kelly died in 1896 the Nye Company bought his company. The Nye Company gave away pins to advertise their oil. Pins like this one were given away at the beginning of the 1900s. Can you think of something companies give away today to advertise their products?



NYE OIL BOTTLE

Sperm whale oil was considered to be the best type of lubricant until the late 1960s. The William F. Nye Company sold its last can of whale oil in 1978. The front of this can says that it “Cleans, Lubricates, Polishes and Prevents Rust...” Can you name three things that people today or in the past might need to lubricate?



BALEEN PIECE CORSET STAYS

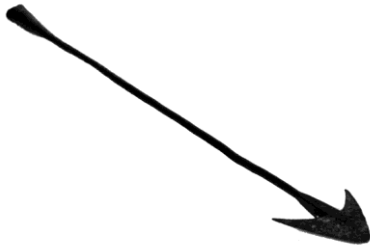
Baleen sold commonly as “whalebone” is not bone, but is made of the same kind of material as your fingernails or an animal’s horn, which is known as keratin. Baleen is comb-like and found in the mouths of some whales, instead of teeth. People used it in many of the ways we use plastic today. Can you name two types of whales that have baleen in their mouths and two types of whales that have teeth in their mouths?

MODEL OF A CORSET



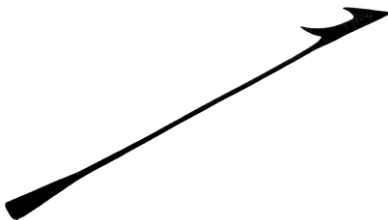
One of the main uses for baleen for over 300 years (from the 1500s to the 1800s) was for fashion (in types of clothing). Think of some types of clothing that were popular hundreds of years ago that we may or may not wear today. How are they alike or different from modern clothing? Do you think corsets were comfortable to wear? What do you think clothes will look like in the future?

DOUBLE FLUE HARPOON



The double flue harpoon was one of the earliest types of harpoons used by whalers. These tools were razor sharp. The three foot long iron piece you see here would have been attached to a six-foot long wooden pole. Approximately how many feet long would a harpoon be? Do you think it was hard or easy to harpoon a whale?

TOGGLE TYPE HARPOON



“Loaned by The Kendall Institute, New Bedford, Massachusetts”
Lewis Temple, an African-American blacksmith invented the toggle harpoon in 1848. He ran a blacksmith shop in New Bedford, MA that specialized in making tools used on board ships. Other than harpoons, what other types of tools do you think his shop could have made?

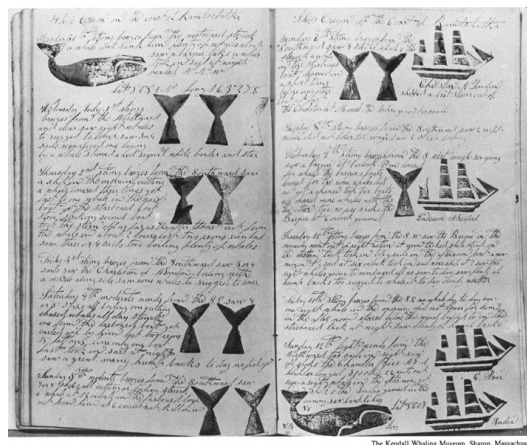
LEARNING ABOUT WHALING THROUGH PRIMARY SOURCES

To explore the past you have a choice. You can study an **original** document (which might be written, a spoken oral history or even a photograph) or you can inspect an **artifact** (a man-made object). Historians call these primary sources. You could also take other people's word for what happened in the past by reading a book, surfing the web or watching an educational television show. These are considered **secondary sources**. While they might be based on primary sources, they are not the original evidence.

To find out about the history of whaling, many primary sources are helpful. You can use:

- **logs** written aboard whaling ships
- **journals** written by people who traveled with the crew
- **oral history** reminisces

Logbook of the Ship *Oregon*



Logs Written Aboard Whaling Ships

Logbook entries provide information about where whaling ships traveled and how many whales they spotted on a voyage. They do have a drawback, however: very little detail is recorded about life aboard the ship in a log. You have to read between the lines.

Here is an example of an entry from Captain Thomas W. Lawrence of Falmouth, aboard the **Addison** (1848-1852). This ship sailed from New Bedford to the Pacific Ocean and back. Can you figure out what happened that day?

Fri Mar 16th light SW wind heading W at 1 1/2 saw a shoal of whales lowered and took two stuck a third & irons drew AM cutting in
Lat 36.12S Long 14.20 W
(from Thomas W. Lawrence's Log in the Falmouth Historical Society)

What day was this logbook entry written? _____

Did they catch the whale? If yes, how many were caught? _____



Journal Written by Someone Traveling with the Crew

This sample was written by Mrs. Ricketson, a captain's wife, who traveled aboard the **Tucker** from 1871-1874.

January 28th: This morning while at the breakfast table we heard the cry from aloft, "There she blows," after going on deck. Daniel went aloft. he soon told them on deck to get the boats ready. The boats did not get aboard till half past seven in the evening. Then they explained how it happened that they lost the whale. It seems as though the waist boat got two Irons in the whale, *good*, but There were several other whales along with this whale and the line got entangled round these other whales and the irons both drew out. We all felt very bad for we needed the oil so much. None of the boats got a whale. It seems as though they do have very bad luck.

What time of day did they lower the whaling boats? _____

When did they return? _____

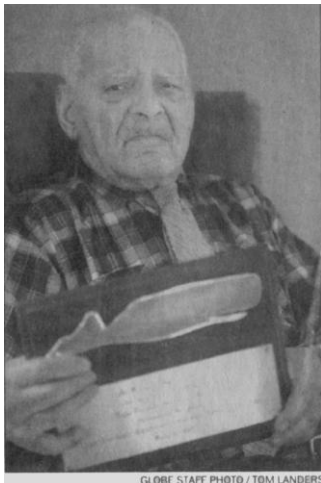
How long was the hunt? Was it successful? _____

What is the "iron"? _____

How do you think the writer of this journal feels about not getting any whales? _____

Oral History Reminisces

Another way to learn about whaling is through the words of whalers themselves. Antonio L. Lopes, a Cape Verdean who whaled in 1921 and 1922, remembered his voyages this way when he talked to a reporter in 1998:



"It was hard, hard work going after whales. Sometimes you go two weeks without seeing a whale, but you never sit. Never. You paint, you wash the decks, always you wash the decks. You don't sit...

...My job was on the whaleboats, the 20-foot small boats that would chase the whale. There was one man steering, another man in the lead, the harpooner. There were six men on the boat in all, and there were three boats. We'd row and row and row, 18-foot oars, lot of work, and the harpooner would stab the whale, and then the next man, he would kill the whale, shoot him in the head with a bomb, a gun that would shoot bombs. Blood everywhere, but it would kill the whale.

Then we'd have to row and row and drag the whale back to the schooner. That was very hard but we did it. Then we'd cut the whale right there, in the water. Big pieces . . . It would take six hours to bring one in and then two, maybe three days to cut it up and get all the blubber out and into the pot to get the oil.

Seasick? Yes, we got seasick, it was very rough out there. What we ate wasn't much, beans, lots of beans, rounds of bread, and whatever fish we caught. We'd eat whale, sure, all ground up, like hamburger. It taste okay.

It was dangerous, yes, but no one ever got killed on my trips. One time, a whaleboat flip over, all the men go in the water, but nobody got hurt."

Source: "It Was Hard Work Going After Whales" Boston Globe, January 1998

What was Antonio Lopes job on the whaling boat? _____

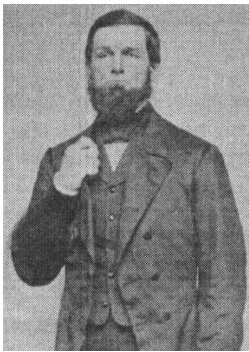
What are some other jobs the whaling men do on the ship? _____

What are some foods that whale men ate? _____

A LOOK AT FOUR LOCAL CAPTAINS

Read each biography and answer the questions.

Captain Thomas H. Lawrence (1821 – 1896) Falmouth



In 1837, at the age of 17, Thomas signed on as a green hand aboard the *Ohio* of Nantucket, where he served until April 1841. All five of Thomas Lawrence's brothers were also whalers. After Thomas worked on board the *Ohio* and the *Addison*, (from October 1845 – April 1848) he was hired to be a captain. He commanded three vessels, the ship *Addison* (Aug. 1848 – June 1852), the *Anaconda* (Nov. 1852 – Aug. 1856) and the *Alto* (June 1857 – May 1862). His wife, Mercy and a daughter, Fanny, went with him on the *Anaconda* and *Alto*. During these two cruises the Lawrences had two more daughters. After a successful whaling career Thomas, retired to become a postmaster and to run a general store in Falmouth. The story of Captain Thomas Lawrence and the Lawrence family is very similar to the stories of many other families who sent

fathers and sons, husbands, wives, and brothers off to sea.

1. What did Captain Lawrence do after he stopped whaling?

2. How many years did Thomas Lawrence spend at sea? (Hint: He went whaling in 1837 and stopped whaling in 1862.)

Captain Samuel Lawrence (1818 – 1892) Falmouth



Samuel joined his brothers at sea on the *Magnolia* of New Bedford in 1842 as a mate. This was probably not his first voyage. A mate on board a whaleship helps the captain tell new crewmembers how to do their jobs. Before Samuel could sign on a ship as a mate he would have had learn how to hunt whales. He was a mate on two other vessels before becoming the captain of the *Lafayette* and *Addison*. On his last voyage, November 1856 – June 1860, he took his wife Mary and daughter Minnie. While at sea Mary kept a record of her voyage which was later published as "The Captain's Best Mate: The Journal of Mary

Chipman Lawrence on the whaler *Addison*, 1856-1860." When Samuel retired from whaling he continued to command other types of ships.

1. What did a mate do on board a whaleship?

2. What was one-way Mary Chipman Lawrence spent her time at sea?

Captain Edward Penniman (1831 – 1913), Eastham



Courtesy of the National Park Service, Cape Cod National Seashore

Edward Penniman began his career on the sea at age 11 as a fishing boat cook. Born August 16, 1831, he embarked on his first whaling voyage at the age of 21, and by age 29 he had become a whaling captain. He and his wife Betsy Augusta had three children: Eugene, Betsy and Edward. His family would sometimes accompany him on his journeys. Between 1860 and 1883, he was the captain on at least five voyages out of New Bedford. He captained voyages on the *Minerva* (two voyages), the *Cicero*, the *Europa* and the *Jacob A. Howland*. He retired from whaling at the age of 53 to Eastham and died October 16, 1913. The grand house he built still stands in Eastham.

1. What major whaling port did Captain Penniman sail from?

2. How many whaling voyages was he the captain on?

Absalom Boston (1785 – 1855), Nantucket



Absalom Boston was born and died on Nantucket. He was the first person in his family to be born free. Many of his family members, like most people on Nantucket during his lifetime, were involved in the whaling industry. Absalom's uncle, Prince Boston, a slave sailed on a whaling vessel called the *Friendship*. At the end of a voyage the Swain family, which owned Prince, claimed that they should be paid his wages. The captain of the ship refused to pay them, and gave Prince his wages. The Swain family sued the captain, and lost. Price Boston was freed, allowed to keep his wages and slavery ended on Nantucket in 1770. Absalom followed in his uncle's footsteps, taking his first voyage at the age of 15. He became the master of a ship called *Industry* at age 37. This was a ship manned by an all African-American crew. Absalom was very successful but in his personal life he suffered many tragedies. Several of

his children died young and two of his sons died at sea. Absalom Boston was devoted to the Nantucket Black Community, was a trustee of the African Baptist Church as well as a supporter of the black elementary school.

1. When did slavery end on Nantucket?

2. Name two things that Captain Boston did, other than become the captain of the ship *Industry*.

BALEEN: WHAT WAS IT USED FOR?
Read the advertisement below and answer the questions.

#31-2

ARTICLES MADE OF WHALEBONE

BY
J. A. SEVEY,

40 Essex Street - - - Boston.

<p>No.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Whip Makers' Bone.2. Whip Makers' Bone (Patent).3. Parasol Makers' Bone.4. Umbrella Makers' Bone.5. Gross Dress Bone.6. Samples to sell by.7. Dress Bone in Boxes.8. Round Dress Bone.9. White Dress Bone.10. Corset Makers' Bone.11. Corset, showing Place of Bone.12. Corset Clasps.13. Hip Busk Bone.14. Cap Makers' Bone.15. Hat Makers' Bone.16. Whalebone Hats.17. Ribbon Weavers' Bone.18. Suspender Makers' Bone.19. Neck Stock Makers' Bone.20. Bonnet Makers' Shurs.21. Whalebone Canes.22. Whalebone Riding Whips.23. Whalebone Rosettes.24. Ribbon Bone.25. Billiard Cushion Springs.26. Fishing Rod (New Style).	<p>No.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">27. Fishing Rod Tips.28. Landing Rods for Nets.29. Divining Rods.30. Drill Bows.31. Ferules.32. Busks.33. Back Supporters.34. Fore Arm Bones.35. Probaggs.36. Tongue Scrapers.37. Pen Holders.38. Plait Raisers.39. Paper Folder and Cutters.40. Painters' Graining Combs.41. Boot Shanks.42. Shoe Horns.43. Bone Fibre Shoe Brushes.44. Fibre of Whalebone.45. Fibre Curled for Beds.46. Brush Makers' Bone.47. Flue Brushes.48. Caterpillar Brushes.49. Whalebone Shavings for Beds.50. Policeman's Clubs.51. All Bone Whips.52. Twisted Whip Handles.
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53. Rio Corset Bone, all lengths and sizes.

Copyright, by J. A. SEVEY.

Image from
Men and Whales
Richard Ellis,
p. 237.

1. Identify three items we still use today. _____
2. What are these items made from today? _____
3. Pick one article you have never heard of, find out what it is and then share your information with your classmates.



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES BOOKS



FOR TEACHERS:

Cary, Lorin Lee; and Francine C. Cary. "Absolom F. Boston, His Family, and Nantucket's Black Community." *Historic Nantucket*, Summer 1977, 14-23.

Ellis, Richard. *Men and Whales*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1991.

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----- . *Sea Chanteys and Sailors' Songs*. Sharon, Mass: The Kendall Whaling Museum. 2000.

----- . "The Origins of Engraved Pictorial Scrimshaw." *The Magazine Antiques*. 142:4 (October 1992), 510-521.

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Lawrence, Mary Chipman. *The Captain's Best Mate: The Journal of Mary Chipman Lawrence on the Whaler Addison, 1856-1860*. Stanton Garner, ed. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1966.

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----- . "From Boston Harbor We Set Sail." Sharon: Kendall Whaling Museum and Boston African American National Historic Site, 1992.

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FOR STUDENTS:

Berger, Melvin, et al. *Do Whales Have Belly Buttons?: Questions and Answers about Whales and Dolphins*. New York: Scholastic, 1999.

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Johnston, Johanna. *Whale's Way*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965.

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RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

MUSEUMS and ON-LINE

On the World Wide Web: **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE EACH SITE IS SUITABLE FOR USE WITH YOUR STUDENTS.**
These addresses are current as of September 1, 2008.

Heritage Museums & Gardens
67 Grove Street
Sandwich, MA 02563-2147
www.heritagemuseumsandgardens.org
(508) 888-3300

Mystic Seaport Museum
Greenmanville Avenue
Mystic, CT 06355
www.mysticseaport.org
(860) 245-3955

Nantucket Historical Association
P.O. Box 1016
Nantucket, MA 02554
www.nha.org
(508) 228-1894

Falmouth Historical Society
55-65 Palmer Avenue
Falmouth, MA 02541
www.falmouthhistoricalsociety.org
(508) 548-4857

New Bedford Whaling Museum
18 Johnny Cake Hill
New Bedford, MA 02740
www.whalingmuseum.org
(508) 997-0046

Peabody Essex Museum of Salem
East India Square
Salem, MA 01970
www.pem.org
(978) 745-9500

Cape Cod National Seashore
Salt Pond Visitor Center
Nauset Rd. & Rte. 6
Eastham, MA
www.nps.gov/caco
(508) 255-3421

Current whale related news:
www.whaling.com