

4TH GRADE LESSONS/ACTIVITIES: PIRACY

Piracy (Reading Level 4.6)

North Carolina Essential Standards, Fourth Grade Social Studies

Essential Standards 4.H.1 - Analyze the chronology of key historical events in North Carolina history.

Essential Standards 4. E. 2 – Understand the economic factors when making personal choices.

Essential Standard 4.E. 1 - Understand how a market economy impacts life in North Carolina

Piracy

Pirates came to the Outer Banks for many reasons. The islands were a good place to hide. In the late 1500s, English explorers attacked ships off the Outer Banks. History calls these English pirates privateers. They were sent by the queen of England to rob Spanish ships. England wanted to be more powerful than Spain.

In the late 1600s, there weren't many people living on the Outer Banks. There also was little form of government. Pirates walked freely among the people.

Because pirates felt safe, they chose the area to make repairs on their boats. They scraped the bottom where barnacles formed. Barnacles slowed down ships. Fast ships helped pirates escape quickly.

The Gulf Stream is off the Outer Banks. It moves fast. Sailors came from far away to catch a ride on the stream. It made their trip faster. This busy shipping lane attracted pirates. There were lots of ships to rob.

The coastal area had shallow water. The water was filled with sandbars. Pirates used boats that could sail through the shallow water. They sailed out to deeper water to rob ships. Then they sailed back to their island hideout. The larger ships they robbed couldn't follow them. They would get stuck in the shallow water on sand bars.

The people didn't always mind the pirates being on the Outer Banks. Trade was not as busy here as it was in other places. The islanders liked having the things the pirates brought to sell. They also liked the money pirate's spent while on the island.

In 1718, a lot of pirates came to the North Carolina coast. They were kicked out of the Bahamas and other areas. This was done under orders of the king of England. That same year, a pirate crew captured the ship *Expedition* near Hatteras.

Stede Bonnet is a pirate who sailed Outer Banks waters during this time period.

The pirate Blackbeard hid on Ocracoke Island. In late 1718 he was killed when the governor of South Carolina sent warships to arrest him and his crew. Blackbeard was killed in battle at Ocracoke Island.

Piracy died down after Blackbeard's death. But in 1726, William Fly captured the sloop *John and Hannah* off Hatteras. He was a pirate for a brief time before being arrested. He was a violent man. Fly took over the ship on which he was working by killing the captain and the ship's mate. (Source: The Carolina Pirates and Colonial Commerce, Shirley Carter Hughson.)

Questions

1. Why did the Queen of England send pirates (privateers) to the Outer Banks?
2. Pirates were attracted to the Outer Banks for many reasons. Name two reasons related to the environment.
3. Name a reason why pirates seemed to be safe at the North Carolina coast?
4. Name two reasons why pirates needed to be in an isolated area?
5. How did pirates contribute to the Outer Banks economy?
6. What event caused more pirates to flock to North Carolina?
7. How could this affect the Outer Banks in a positive way?
8. What pirate hid out on Ocracoke Island?

Activity

Purpose: To think about the impacts of piracy on the Outer Banks and also the needs of people living in an isolated coastal area.

Project: Look up the history of Blackbeard, Stede Bonnet, and William Fly and write down where they traveled before coming to the Outer Banks. Research products that come from those areas and what might possibly be carried on ships traveling along those routes to the Outer Banks. Make a list of the products that pirates might bring to the Outer Banks as a result. Discuss whether these might be useful products and if they would be readily available in an isolated coastal North Carolina community. Also, would there be products on the Outer Banks that pirates could use?

Materials: Internet, books, paper, pencils.