

Reading level 3.1 – 4.1

North Carolina Standards – Social Studies – Grade 3

3.G.1: Understand how geography impacts the development of regions and communities.

### **Hatteras Island Life**

The first people of Hatteras Island ate fish and shellfish. Native Americans used nets to trap fish. Then they would spear the fish. They hunted for meat. They also grew food.

In time, more people came to the island. They raised farm animals and grew gardens. They fished, too. Men, women, and children mended fishing nets. At first, fishermen didn't go out too far into the ocean. The ship-to-shore radio made it safer for them. Bad weather could bring strong winds and waves. They could use the radio to call for help if they were in trouble. Today, people still fish for a living and for fun. Lots of people come to Hatteras Island to fish.

People living near the ocean built boats. They used them to fish and travel. Native Americans built canoes. Later in time, people built shad boats. Shad is a kind of fish islanders caught and sold. Charter boats were built to go in deeper water to fish. Boats carried mail and people to the island. Even today, there are many boat builders and boat captains working in coastal North Carolina.

Hatteras Island has a lighthouse. It was built to help sailors. The spiral stripes on the lighthouse told them they were at Cape Hatteras. The light told them they were close to shore. If sailors got too close to shore, they could get stuck on a sand bar. If there was a storm, it could wreck the stuck ship. The lighthouse and the keepers who worked there helped keep people safe. Keepers worked hard. They kept the light glowing. They polished the lens. They also watched for shipwrecks.

There are many shipwrecks in the ocean off Hatteras Island. Storms can cause shipwrecks. Wind and waves push ships onto sandbars and tear them up. Lifesavers watched for wrecks. They saved people stuck on sinking boats.

Sometimes they used a boat to save them. They also used a breeches buoy that is like a pair of pants the people sat in. It was attached to a rope that reached the ship from the shore. The people traveled along the rope to safety.

Many jobs Hatteras Island people did had to do with water. Some people became boat pilots. They guided ships away from sand bars where they would get stuck. They also took people off ships in deep water. They carried them to land through shallow water. We've also learned that people were lifesavers, lighthouse keepers, net menders, mail boat captains, and fishermen. There are boat builders and people who work on ferries that carry passengers and cars across the water.

Today, people living by the water still fish. They help visitors fish. The island fishermen sell fish to local restaurants. Visitors eat the fish. Many islanders work in motels and restaurants. The islanders teach visitors how to surf. They rent them kayaks. They teach them about the history of the island. The islanders help the visitors have a good vacation.

#### Questions

1. What did the Hatteras Island people eat?
2. What helped fisherman be safer when going into deep water?
3. What kind of boats did islanders build?
4. How did the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse help sailors?
5. What kind of jobs did keepers do?
6. What could cause shipwrecks?
7. Who watched for shipwrecks and saved people on them?
8. What did lifesavers use to save people?
9. What kind of jobs did Hatteras Island people do?
10. How do islanders help visitors?

#### Answers

1. Fish, shellfish, meat, and food they grew.

2. Ship-to-shore radio
3. Canoes, shad boats, charter boats
4. It shone a bright light to let them know they were close to land. It was painted a black and white spiral design to let them know they were at Cape Hatteras
5. They kept the lighthouse lit. They also polished the lens and watched for shipwrecks.
6. Storms with strong winds and waves.
7. Lifesavers
8. A boat or a breeches buoy.
9. They were fishermen, pilots, ferry boat workers, boat builders, lifesavers, lighthouse keepers, and net menders.
10. They teach them how to fish. Visitors eat fresh fish islanders catch. Islanders teach visitors how to kayak and surf. They wait on visitors at motels and restaurants. They teach visitors about island history.

### **Hands-On Activity**

*Supplies: Images, glue, chipboard, construction paper or cardboard for a backing, scissors.*

Using photos found online create a collage related to Outer Banks history. Teachers can readily find images such as lifesaving station surfmen, lighthouses, ocean and sound fish and shellfish native to coastal North Carolina, different kinds of boats such as shad, ferry, mail, charter boats, and kayaks, Native American images created by John White, Outer Banks land and seascapes, and shipwrecks.