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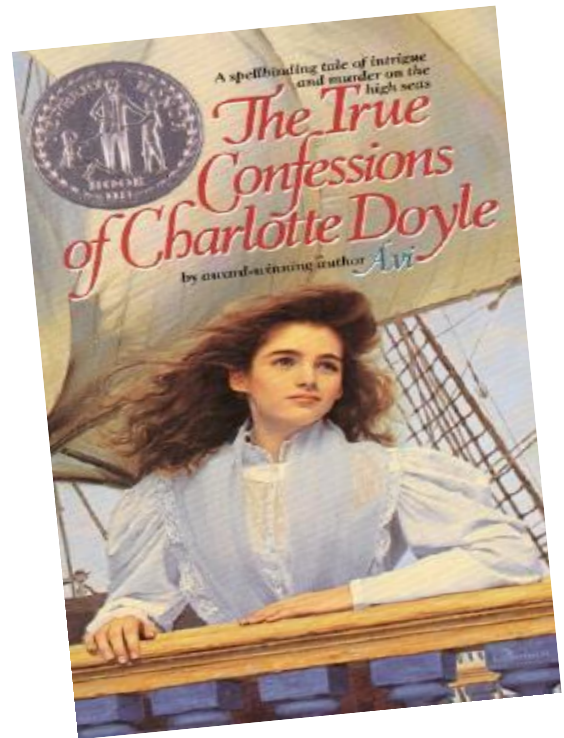
Building Communities that  
Support Children's Reading

Texas

# The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

By Avi

RL 5.3



6<sup>th</sup> Grade - M

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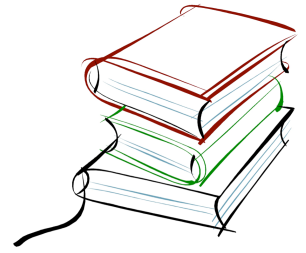
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# Synopsis

## The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle



In this fast-paced and suspense-filled novel, 13-year-old Charlotte Doyle describes a remarkable sea voyage that changes her life forever. In 1832, Charlotte crosses the Atlantic aboard the *Seahawk*, departing from England to join her family in Rhode Island. Raised to be a proper young lady, she is surprised to learn that she is the only passenger and only female aboard the ship. Frightened by a mysterious crew, at first she trusts only Jaggery, the captain, but soon discovers that he is cruel and slightly mad. She then joins ranks with the mutinous crew but must convince them of her loyalty by tackling death-defying feats unfamiliar to most females of her era. The old black cook, Zachariah, who eventually helps save her life, befriends Charlotte along the way. When the vengeful captain accuses her of murder, Charlotte is tried and found guilty. She escapes punishment in a life-and-death struggle with Jaggery and is finally reunited with her family. Charlotte misses the *Seahawk*, however, and, in an unusual twist of the plot, casts aside the comforts of home for the life of a seafarer.



# Vocabulary

## The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

**avenge** - to have justice by punishing someone for doing something wrong; to seek or impose justice by punishing a wrongdoer; to obtain justice or payback on behalf of oneself or another

**censure** - expression of disapproval or condemnation

**complicity** - partnership in wrongdoing or crime

**contempt** - a lack of respect; a feeling of intense dislike; scorn; disdain

**courting** - attempting to win someone's goodwill or love, often with marriage in mind; seeking the affections or approval of another

**decrepit** - broken-down; worse for wear; weakened by age; worn-out; feeble

**flushed** - reddened; having a pink or red color

**galley** - a kitchen on a ship or plane

**grotesque** - extremely distorted or deformed; abnormal and hideous; misshapen; repulsive; disfigured; bizarre

**menacing** - threatening; ominous; frightening or dangerous; terrorizing; endangering

**mortal** - causing or likely to cause death; fatal or deadly; having to do with beings who will someday die; bound to die; relating to humans as opposed to gods; neither lasting nor living forever

**punctilious** - very careful and exact in conduct; paying careful attention to details of dress, speech, or manners

**reticule** - a woman's drawstring bag

**sardonic** - bitter; mocking

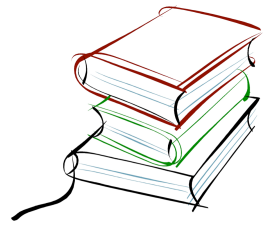
**sheath** - a covering or holder for a knife

**splicing** - joining by interweaving strands

**stench** - a bad smell; an offensive odor

**verdict** - a judgment or decision, most often made at the end of a courtroom trial

**welt** - a raised patch of skin as a result of a blow, scratch, or scrape



# High Level Questions

## The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

These questions can be used to differentiate and scaffold instruction as a basis for class discussions, small group work, and/or extended individual writing assignments.

1. Near the end of the story, Charlotte and Zachariah have a private conversation, and Zachariah says, "I am unique everywhere." What does he mean by that statement? How do you think Zachariah feels about his uniqueness?
2. When Charlotte settles in her Providence home, why does her father avoid speaking about the *Seahawk* voyage?
3. In the beginning of the book, Charlotte mentions that her ambition before the *Seahawk* voyage was to be a lady. What do you think her ambition is at the end of the voyage?
4. When the *Seahawk* approaches Providence, why is Charlotte melancholy?
5. What do you think Charlotte's father will do when he finds his daughter missing?
6. Would you have made the same choice as Charlotte at the end of the story? Why or why not?
7. What scene is the climax of the story?
8. When Zachariah told her about his plan to expose Jaggery to the authorities, why did Charlotte feel embarrassed?
9. Why did Zachariah think Charlotte and he were similar?
10. What similarities did Captain Jaggery and Charlotte's father have?



# Using Choice Boards

Choice boards give students the opportunity to participate in multiple tasks that allow them to practice skills they've learned in class or to demonstrate and extend their understanding of concepts. From the board, students either choose or are assigned tasks to complete. Individual tasks address learning style modalities.

To scaffold the activities for struggling readers, teachers can modify the tasks using the blank template provided or give more details for performance criteria. Some teachers like to assign point values for the different tasks.

# Choice Board

## The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle



<p>Create a charades game with key events from the story. Play the game in groups.</p>	<p>Use an encyclopedia to research the life of a sailor in the 1800's and compare your findings with life on the <i>Seahawk</i>.</p>	<p>Create a chart evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of being a black sailor in the 1800's.</p>
<p>Draw a diagram of the ship. Label where at least 6 key events took place.</p>	<p>Write 5 analogies about Charlotte's challenges.</p>	<p>Create several short video clips to present ideas from the book.</p>
<p>Create a Rap summarizing the story.</p>	<p>Create a table categorizing the natural elements in the story.</p>	<p>Make a PowerPoint about sailboats or storms at sea.</p>

# Choice Board






# Using a RAFT Matrix

A RAFT matrix enhances students' comprehension of novels they're reading and information they're learning. It also provides a fun way to encourage student writing. RAFT is an acronym for *role*, *audience*, *format*, and *topic*:

- **Role.** The role is the person or people the student becomes for this project. Sometimes students take on the role of a book character, historical figure, or contemporary personality, such as Peyton Manning, and at other times, they are themselves.
- **Audience.** The audience is the person or people who will read or view this project. They may include students, teachers, parents, or community members, as well as simulated audiences, such as book characters and historical personalities.
- **Format.** The format is the genre or activity that students create. It might be a letter, brochure, cartoon, journal, poster, essay, newspaper article, speech, or digital scrapbook.
- **Topic.** The topic pertains to the book. It may be an issue related to the book, an essential question, or something of personal interest.

RAFT is an effective way to differentiate instruction by providing tiered activities. The BSCSR RAFT matrices are scaffolded and can be adjusted according to students' achievement levels, English proficiency, and interests.





# RAFT Matrix

## The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Charlotte	Her parents	3 journal entries	Why I went back to the <i>Seahawk</i> and what my life is like now
Charlotte's future grand-daughter	Charlotte	Interview questions	For a 6 <sup>th</sup> grade class report on how women's roles have changed
Zachariah	Oprah Winfrey	Talk show	Qualities of the best ship captain who have had
Masthead	Prospective sailors	Facebook post	Life on the <i>Seahawk</i>



# RAFT Matrix Rubric

**STUDENT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **NOVEL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Accuracy**

Information is accurate and supported with specific details from the novel.

5            4            3            2            1

Comments:

**Role**

The writing is credible in the role assigned.

5            4            3            2            1

Comments:

**Format**

The proper format was used.

5            4            3            2            1

Comments:

**Conventions**

The writing had no errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or spelling.

5            4            3            2            1

Comments:

**Creativity**

Writing shows imagination and originality.

5            4            3            2            1

Comments:

Assessment Guide

5 = Above and Beyond

4 = Meeting Standard

3 = Working to Standard

2 = Developing

1 = Incomplete



# RAFT Matrix

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Role	Audience	Format	Topic



# Extended Resources

## The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle

### **Kid friendly writing rubrics and checklists Grades 3-6**

<http://allwritewithme.com/for-teachers/kid-friendly-writing-rubrics-checklists/>

### **Background on Shipping routes**

[http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/eng/ch3en/conc3en/main\\_maritime\\_shipping\\_routes.html](http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/eng/ch3en/conc3en/main_maritime_shipping_routes.html)

### **Background on ship travel**

<http://www.photoship.co.uk/Browse%20Ship%20Galleries/>

[http://amhistory.si.edu/onthewater/exhibition/2\\_3.html](http://amhistory.si.edu/onthewater/exhibition/2_3.html)

### **Background on women's roles in 1800**

<http://staff.washington.edu/cgiacomini/courses/english200/historicalbriefs/women.html>

<http://www.bloomu.edu/wrc/timeline>

# Life As a Sailor

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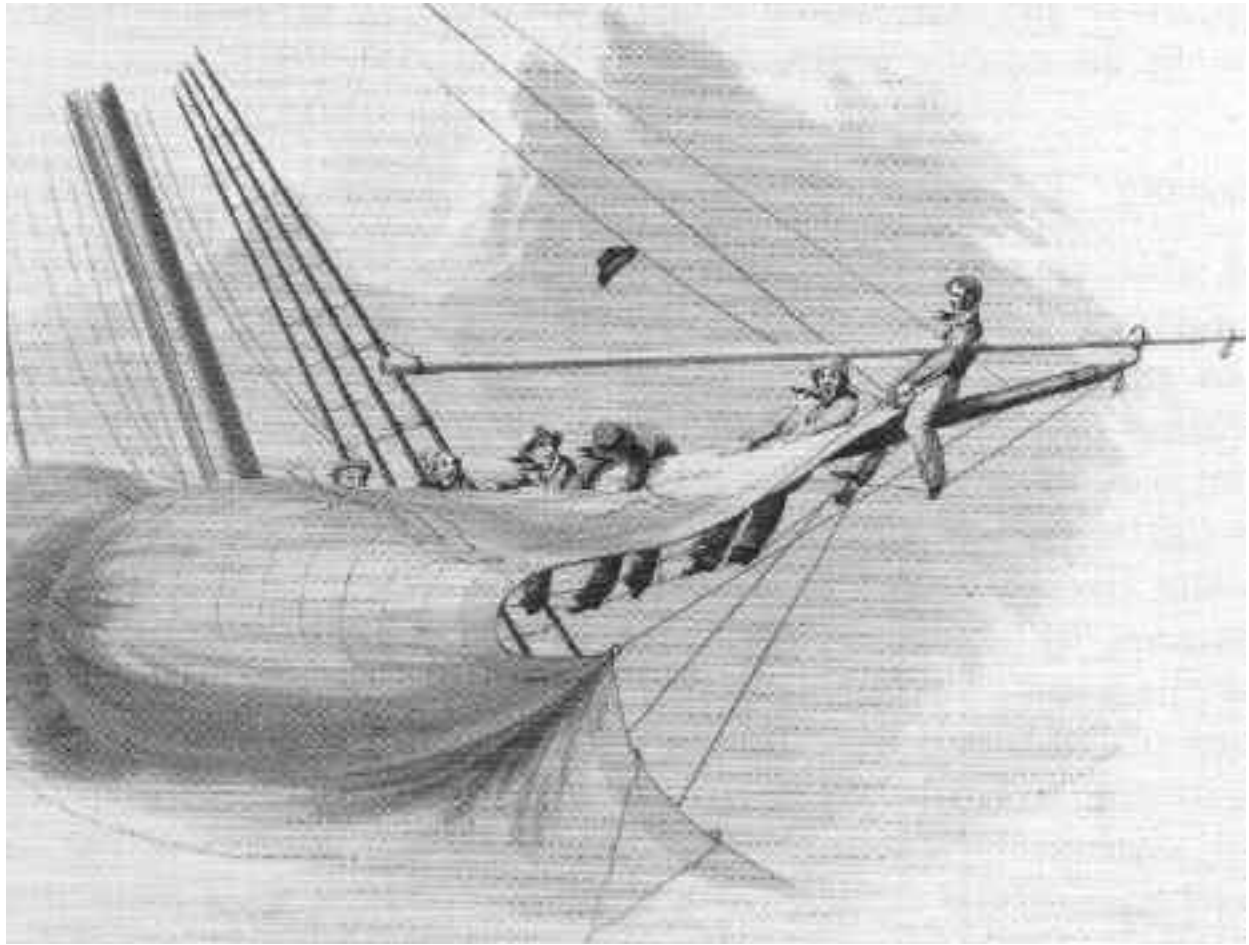
## Life of a seaman - Jobs

The jobs of a seaman aboard a schooner were many. Most merchant schooners carried a Captain or Sailing Master, who was sometimes the owner of the vessel. The mate was second-in-command, and was usually responsible for a crew of 3 - 4 seamen and a cabin boy. Any one of these people could assume the role of pilot, and the boy often acted as cook, although some vessels had a full-time cook on board. The "boy" was just a title - the person could be a grown man or woman.

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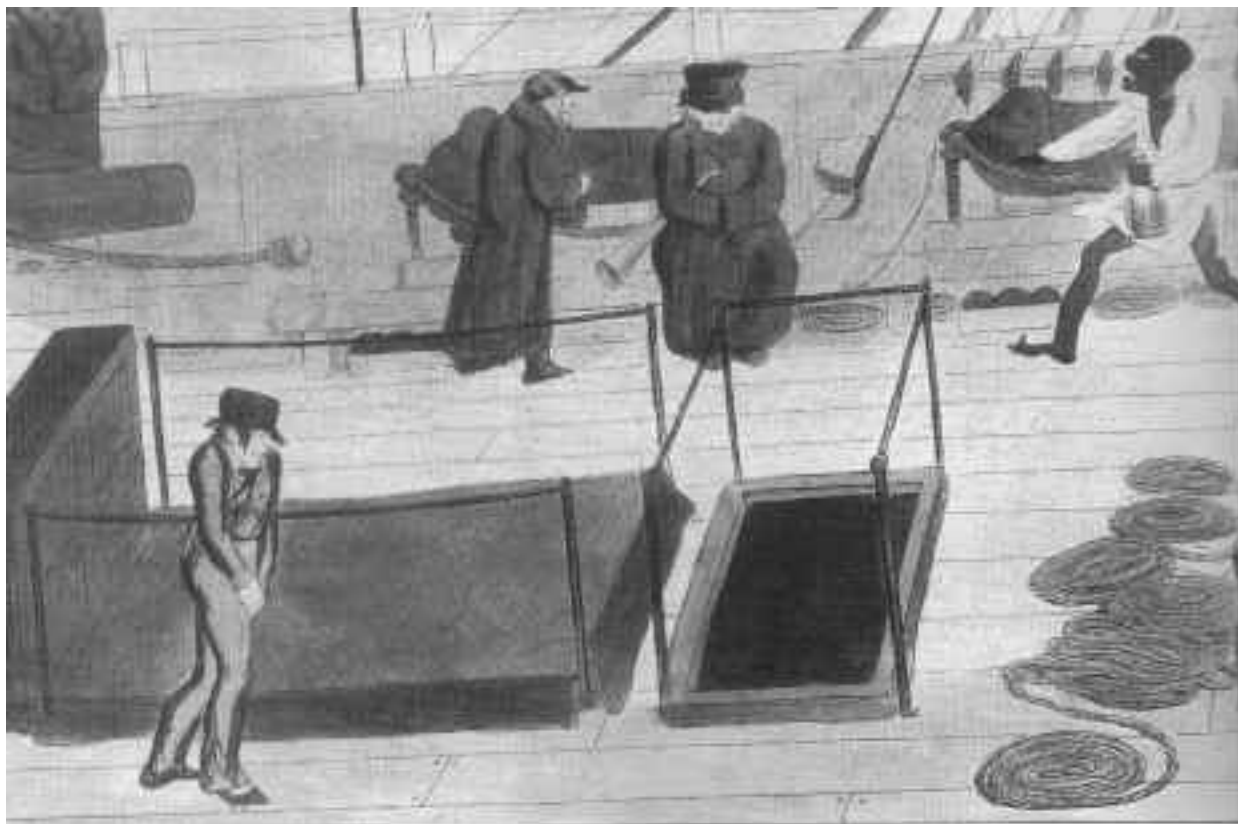
## Life of a Seaman - Duties

The crew's duties required a lot of muscle, for raising the masts, hoisting the anchor, and manning the winches that loaded cargo on board. You also would not want to be afraid of heights!



Hooking Sail

A crew member's day was divided into watches, with each crew member alternating four hour on and four hours off. The night watches were taxing on the seamen, who often had trouble staying awake.



A cold, windy night watch on board ship



When they were not sailing, the seamen had to help maintain the ship. The rigging had to be repaired, and the masts had to be oiled. The flax sails also had to be repaired and maintained. Every ship, no matter how well built, still took on water, so the ship had to be pumped every day. And, at least once a year, the ship was re-caulked, tarred and painted.

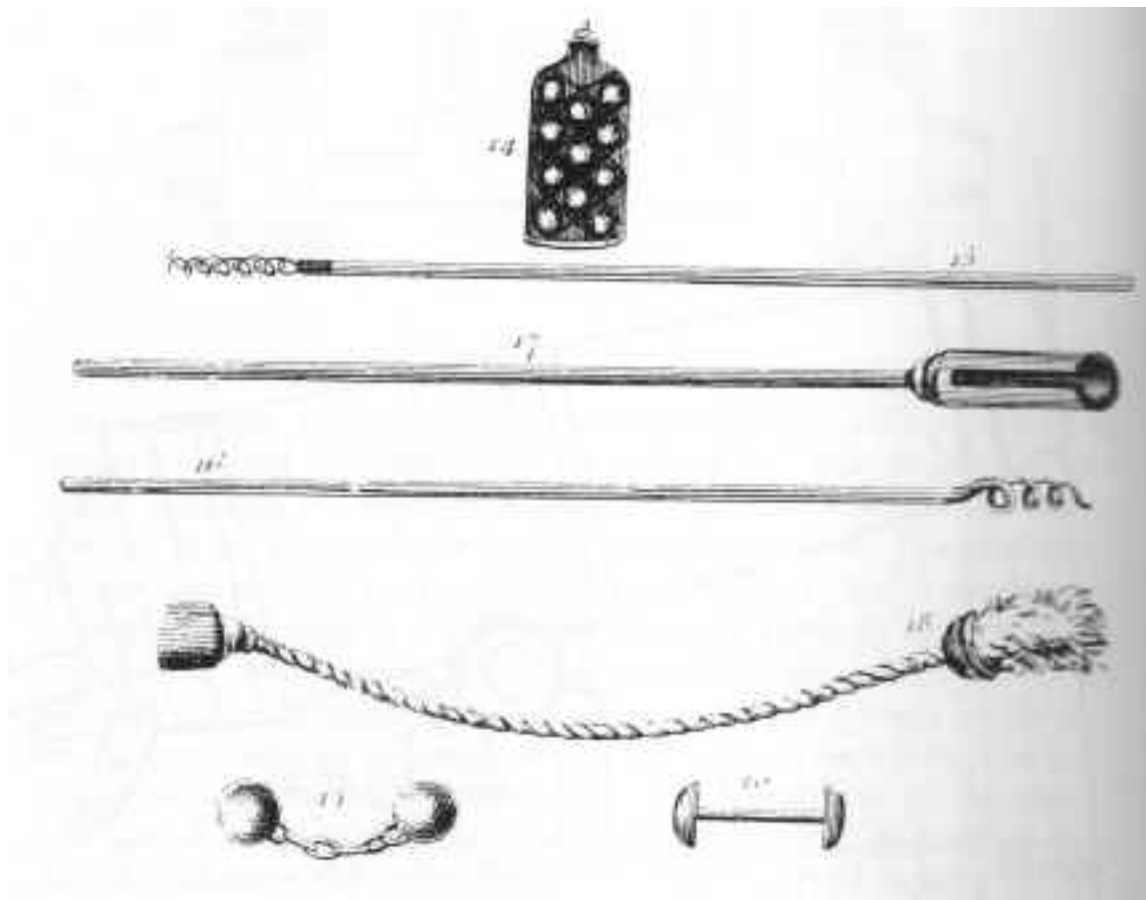
**Life of a Seaman - Military Ships / Gun Loading**

The regular duties of a seaman were increased if the vessel was in military service. In addition to their regular positions, some men on military vessels were assigned to a gun. In times of war, the gun crew spent the night sleeping beside their gun (as did Ned Myers and his guncrew - [click here](#) for the whole story). The Scourge carried enough men to fire all the guns on one side of the ship. Each gun crew had a captain; on the night that the Scourge capsized, Ned Myers was a gun crew captain. The gun captain commanded the crew on where to point the gun and when to fire, with each crew member being assigned a specific role in the loading and firing sequence. Some of the steps in this sequence would include:

Loosing the gun from its lashings.

Removing the [tompion](#).

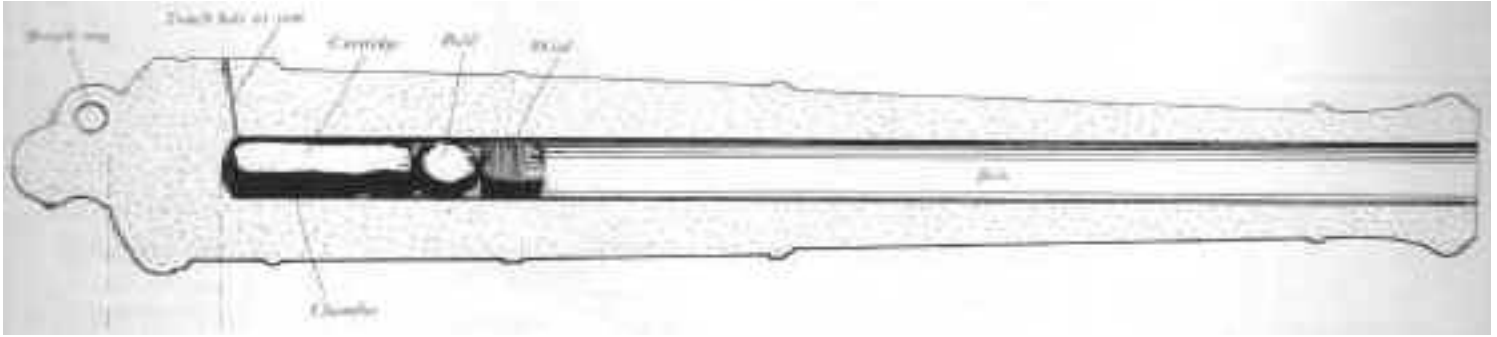
Loading the gun by pushing a flannel bag of gunpowder into the bore, followed by a [shot](#), and finally a wad to prevent the shot from rolling out. This would be rammed as tightly as possible into the gun.



Gun implements. From top to bottom:



Canister; Gun Worm; Gun Ladle; Another Gun Worm; Rope Rammer;  
Chain Shot (bottom left) and Bar Shot (bottom right)



A Loaded Cannon: The first object loaded into the gun is the cartridge, followed by the ball, and then finally a wad. The touch-hole, or vent, connects from the outside to the cartridge.

Once loaded, the gun was then "run out" of the [gunport](#) (each cannon could roll or slide back onto the deck for loading).

The cartridge was pricked by a wire through the touch-hole on the top of the cannon, and then the touch-hole itself was filled with gun powder.

Once the gun was aimed, the gun's captain fired it by touching a glowing match to the touch hole, being sure to leap away from the gun to avoid the recoil after the gun fired.

After firing, the gun was rolled back onto the deck and "sponged" to extinguish any remaining fire (if fire remained, the gun could go off before the loading sequence was complete).

Then the gun could be loaded again.



Gun Crew

To read about a crew in action, check out gun captain Ned Myers' account of the sinking of the *Scourge*. [Click here](#).



### Life of a Seaman - Provisions

Captains had to feed and provision their crews. On March 15, 1812, Commodore [Woolsey](#) ordered food for the men stationed at [Sackets Harbor](#). For a year's worth of supplies for 120 men, he ordered:

"74 barrels of beef, 70 barrels of pork, 24 barrels of flour, 27500 pounds of bread, 1600 pounds of cheese, 650 pounds of butter, 2064 gallons of whiskey, 286 gallons of vinegar and 72 bushels of beans."

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### **Life of a Seaman - Clothing**

The crew of the *Hamilton* and *Scourge* had to purchase their "slops", or working uniforms, from the ship's [purser](#). Many sailors made their own clothes, because the purser was allowed to mark up the cost of slop clothing and keep the profit for himself. A contemporary list of slop clothing included:

Common hats, pea jackets, cloth jackets, duck jackets, cloth and duck trousers, duck frocks, Guernsey frocks, check shirts, shoes, stockings, blankets, mattresses.

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### **Life of a Seaman - Entertainment and Seasonal Activities**

In the winter, when the lake was frozen, sailing activities were at a standstill. The ships were wintered by dismantling the riggings and covering the hulls of the ship with planks to keep off the snow and preserve the decks.

According to [Ned Myers](#), "the winter lasted more than four months, and we made good times of it. We often went after wood, and occasionally we knocked over a deer. We had a target out on the lake, and this we practices on, making ourselves rather expert cannoneers. Now and then they rowed us out on a false alarm, but I know of no serious attempts being made by the enemy to molest us."

At other times in the year, there were still moments of repose and entertainment, but the sailors and commanding officers found that entertaining in the manner to which they were accustomed was more difficult in this frontier wilderness.

When the *Oneida* was launched on March 31, 1809, a ball was held which exemplifies the problems:

"Building a brig hundreds of miles from a ship-yard was a trifle compared to the attempt to give a ball in the wilderness. True, one fiddle and a half a dozen officers were something to open the ball with; refreshments and a military ball-room might also be hoped for, but where, pray, were



the ladies to come from? The officers declared that they would not dance with each other. Ladies must be found .... At length, by dint of sending boats miles in one direction, and carts miles in another, the feat was accomplished; ladies were invited, and ladies accepted."



## Research Simulation Task and Literary Analysis Task Rubric

Construct Measured	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
<b>Reading Comprehension of Key Ideas and Details</b>	The student response demonstrates <b>full comprehension</b> of ideas stated explicitly and inferentially by providing an <b>accurate</b> analysis and supporting the analysis with <b>effective</b> textual evidence.	The student response demonstrates <b>comprehension</b> of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a <b>mostly accurate</b> analysis and supporting the analysis with <b>adequate</b> textual evidence.	The student response demonstrates <b>limited comprehension</b> of ideas by providing a <b>minimally accurate</b> analysis and supporting the analysis with <b>limited</b> textual evidence.	The student response demonstrates <b>no comprehension</b> of ideas by providing <b>inaccurate or no</b> analysis and <b>little to no</b> textual evidence.
<b>Writing Written Expression</b>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the prompt and provides <b>effective</b> development of the topic that is <b>consistently appropriate</b> to the task by using <b>clear</b> reasoning and <b>relevant, text-based</b> evidence;</li> <li>demonstrates <b>effective</b> coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task;</li> <li>uses language <b>effectively</b> to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the prompt and provides <b>some</b> development of the topic that is <b>generally appropriate</b> to the task by using reasoning and <b>relevant, text-based</b> evidence;</li> <li>demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task;</li> <li>uses language to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses the prompt and provides <b>minimal</b> development of the topic that is <b>limited in its appropriateness</b> to the task by using <b>limited</b> reasoning and <b>text-based</b> evidence; or</li> <li>is a developed, text-based response with <b>little or no awareness</b> of the prompt;</li> <li>demonstrates <b>limited</b> coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion appropriate to the task;</li> <li>uses language that demonstrates <b>limited</b> awareness of the norms of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is <b>undeveloped</b> and/or <b>inappropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li><b>lacks</b> coherence, clarity, and cohesion;</li> <li>uses language that demonstrates <b>no clear awareness</b> of the norms of the discipline.</li> </ul>
<b>Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions</b>	The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>full command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a <b>few minor errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but <b>meaning is clear</b> .	The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>some command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There <b>may</b> be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>occasionally impede understanding</b> , but the <b>meaning is generally clear</b> .	The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>limited command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There <b>may</b> be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>often impede understanding</b> .	The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>no command</b> of the conventions of standard English. <b>Frequent and varied errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage <b>impede understanding</b> .

## Narrative Task Rubric

Construct Measured	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
<b>Writing Written Expression</b>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>is effectively</b> developed with narrative elements and is <b>consistently appropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li>• demonstrates <b>effective</b> coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task;</li> <li>• uses language <b>effectively</b> to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is developed with <b>some</b> narrative elements and is <b>generally appropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li>• demonstrates coherence, clarity, and cohesion appropriate to the task;</li> <li>• uses language to clarify ideas, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is <b>minimally</b> developed with <b>few</b> narrative elements and is <b>limited in its appropriateness</b> to the task;</li> <li>• demonstrates <b>limited</b> coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion appropriate to the task;</li> <li>• uses language that demonstrates <b>limited</b> awareness of the norms of the discipline.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is <b>undeveloped</b> and/or <b>inappropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li>• <b>lacks</b> coherence, clarity, and cohesion;</li> <li>• use of language demonstrates <b>no clear awareness</b> of the norms of the discipline.</li> </ul>
<b>Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions</b>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>full command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a <b>few minor errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but <b>meaning is clear</b>.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>some command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There <b>may</b> be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>occasionally impede understanding</b>, but the <b>meaning is generally clear</b>.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>limited command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There <b>may</b> be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>often impede understanding</b>.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>no command</b> of the conventions of standard English. <b>Frequent and varied errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage <b>impede understanding</b>.</p>