



Before Your Bay Day!

Pre-Visit Materials designed by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Life in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse: Are You a Keeper?

Materials

KWL chart

“Life in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse”

worksheet

Answer Key & Teacher Tips

Grade Level

2nd-8th grade

Time

30-45 minute

Goal

To gain an understanding of what life was like for lighthouse keepers on a daily basis, without modern-day conveniences such as electricity.

Assessment

Collect or check off that students completed the Lighthouse Activity worksheet.

Procedure

1. Begin this lesson with a Know, Want to Learn, Learned (KWL) chart (page 2). Have students fill in what they already know about lighthouses and lighthouse keepers and what they would like to learn. If there is time, have students share items they have written in these first two columns.
2. Distribute “Life in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse” worksheets (pages 3 & 4) and introduce the lighthouse students will see at the museum. Examine the picture and have students point out details.
3. In pairs, have students complete the worksheet (page 4) to determine the purpose of various items in a lighthouse and their significance to the keeper.
4. Once everyone has finished, go over the answers as a class.
5. To conclude, have students fill in the last column on their KWL charts and share what they learned.



Before Your Bay Day!

Pre-Visit Materials designed by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Life in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse: Are You a Keeper?

Know	Want to Learn	Learned



Before Your Bay Day!

Pre-Visit Materials designed by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Life in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse: Are You a Keeper?

The shallow waters of the Hooper Strait were first marked by a lighthouse in 1867. After being detached from its base by ice in 1877, a second lighthouse was built to warn captains of the hazard. In 1965, this lighthouse was moved to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, after electric lights took the place of manned lighthouses.

The keepers who tended to the light of the Hooper Strait lighthouse had many responsibilities. Each day, the lighthouse keeper had to maintain the house, clean the light, and make sure the light stayed burning all throughout the night.

You will see this lighthouse on your visit to the museum!



The Hooper Strait lighthouse, a screwpile-style lighthouse, after being moved to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.



Before Your Bay Day!

Pre-Visit Materials designed by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Life in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse: Are You a Keeper?

Looking at the pictures below, describe how you think each item would have been important to the keepers of the Hooper Strait lighthouse.



Wick _____



Oyster _____



Clothespin _____



Button _____



Matches _____



Before Your Bay Day!

Pre-Visit Materials designed by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Life in the Hooper Strait Lighthouse: Are You a Keeper?

Answer Key

Below is information about each object and why it would have been important to lighthouse keepers of the Hooper Strait lighthouse.

Wick: Wicks were an essential object for all lighthouse keepers. Used on oil lamps, these wicks were soaked in oil and lit to create the light which would shine across the water. Because electricity was not yet invented, it was not as simple as flipping a switch to turn on the light.

Oyster: Keepers were mostly limited to foods that they could get themselves. Keepers would often have to catch their own foods, including tonging for oysters or clams and trapping fish. Trips to the mainland were occasionally made to purchase food items such as dried beef, canned vegetables, and coffee beans. To get fresh fruit, lighthouse keepers would have to hope for a friendly ship captain passing by, who would toss a bunch of bananas or a watermelon into the water for the keeper to retrieve.

Clothespin: No electricity means no washer or dryer! Lighthouse keepers likely washed their clothes in Bay water and hung them on a line to dry. Keepers had two sets of clothing: work clothes, worn when tending the light and maintaining the house, and a dress uniform, worn when traveling to the mainland and during inspections.

Button: To differentiate the keeper's uniform from other official uniforms, such as police officers, keepers' buttons displayed a lighthouse. Keepers took pride in their job and enjoyed wearing their uniforms on the very few occasions that they came in contact with the public.

Matches: Matches were necessary to start all fires, whether it be the stove for warmth or cooking, or the wick for the lighthouse light.



Before Your Bay Day!

Pre-Visit Materials designed by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Teacher Tips

To begin a conversation about the object or to steer students in the correct direction, you may want to ask the class the following questions for each object.

Wick: What part of a candle do we light? Does this look like the wick we see on modern day candles?

Oyster: What kinds of foods did lighthouse keepers eat?

Clothespin: Did lighthouse keepers have a clothes drying machine?

Button: What is special about this button?

Matches: Why are matches used? In what situations would lighthouse keepers need matches?

*Note: Several of these objects can be related to the fact that electricity did not exist (wick, clothespin, matches). Additionally, lighthouses were in the middle of a body of water (oyster). Reminding the students of these two facts may assist them in coming up with an answer.