

LESSON TITLE

USS Bowfin: Life on a Submarine

LESSON OVERVIEW

During this lesson students will explore the conditions of living aboard a WWII submarine and understand some of the sacrifices that sailors made during the long war. There are four parts of the student experience:

- **BEFORE THE EXPEDITION PART I :** Students will try to imagine what life aboard a submarine might have been like. They will brainstorm some questions they would ask a sailor aboard the Bowfin about daily life.
- **BEFORE THE EXPEDITION PART II :** During this exercise they will assume the imaginary role of a family member of one of the sailors aboard the Bowfin. Using the questions they brainstormed in the previous activity they will write a letter to the sailor.
- **DURING THE EXPEDITION:** As they tour the Bowfin, students will make connections between what they are seeing and the questions they brainstormed.
- **AFTER THE EXPEDITION:** Now students will assume the role of the sailor and respond to the letters written in the Before the Expedition activity.

As they craft their letters, students will be engaged in the 21st Century Literacy Cycle as they research, collaborate, review their peers' work, and publish final projects.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Grade(s): 5 and up

Subject(s): ELA, Social Studies

Number of Students: Whole class

Objectives: For students to write a first person narrative that demonstrates an understanding of what it felt like to serve on a World War II submarine.

Vocabulary: N/A

Place in Unit of Study: Beginning / Middle / End

Grouping: Whole Class / Small Group

Google Apps Used: Google Slides, Google Docs, Google Drawings, Google Expeditions

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

CCSS Anchor Standards

CCSS ELA Capacities

ISTE Standards for Students

Reading

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7](#)

Writing

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8](#)

Speaking & Listening

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5](#)

[They build strong content knowledge.](#)

[They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose and discipline.](#)

[They comprehend as well as critique.](#)

[They value evidence.](#)

[They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.](#)

[They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.](#)

[Empowered Learner A, C, D](#)

[Digital Citizen B, C](#)

[Knowledge Constructor A, B, C](#)

[Creative Communicator A, B, C, D](#)

[Global Collaborator A, B, C](#)

EXPEDITION PREP

Selected Expedition: USS Bowfin

Selected Points of Interest: All

Additional videos / resources: www.bowfin.org, [The Bowfin Story](#)

BEFORE THE EXPEDITION

Discussion Questions & Student Activity (*How are students building background knowledge to prepare for the expedition?*):

Imagining Life Aboard the USS Bowfin

In this activity students will start imagining what life aboard a World War II submarine would be like. Before the expedition have them break into groups of three or four. Share a Google Slides deck with the entire class and make sure everyone has editing privileges. You can make a copy of a sample deck by clicking the icon on the right.



Step 1: Tell students they are going to go on a tour of a real World War II submarine. Ask them to work together to come up with questions they might ask a sailor, who actually served on the Bowfin, what life was like. On their designated slide, have groups record the questions they brainstormed.

Step 2: Have groups take turns presenting their questions to the rest of the class. Teachers should try and redirect group questions back to the class to see what some possible answers could be. A possible discussion might sound like:

Student from Group 3: *Our group wants to know what it was like to sleep on a submarine.*

Teacher: *Alexa, what do you think it might have been like?*

Alexa: *I think it was probably uncomfortable because of how small a submarine is.*

Letter to a Bowfin Sailor

Explain to students it was common for military personnel and their loved ones to send letters back and forth to each other.

During the **BEFORE THE EXPEDITION PART I**, students developed questions they would want to ask a sailor aboard a World War II submarine. Now have them assume the role of a family member of a Bowfin sailor and write them a letter asking the questions. Then during the **AFTER THE EXPEDITION** activity students can write their letters in reply to the ones they generated during the **BEFORE THE EXPEDITION PART II** exercise.

Once students have had a chance to imagine life on a submarine, it is time to lead them through a tour of the USS Bowfin Expedition.

DURING THE EXPEDITION

Discussion Questions & Student Activity (*How are students recording and processing what they learn from the expedition?*):

Connecting Imagination to Reality

The USS Bowfin Expedition has questions and content embedded within each panorama. The teacher should look for opportunities within the Expedition to answer some of the student questions from the first exercise. A possible discussion might sound like:



The class is touring the Forward Torpedo Room and see the bunks stacked on top of torpedos.

Teacher: *Group 3, now that you have seen some of the bunks does that help answer your question about what it was like to sleep on a submarine?*

Student from Group 3: *Yes! It looks like it was uncomfortable AND very dangerous!*

As students begin to find answers to their questions, the teacher should pause the Expedition to give them time to fill in the answers on the shared Slide deck. While not all questions will be answered, students should have enough to understand some of the challenges of serving on a World War II Naval submarine.

AFTER THE EXPEDITION

Discussion Questions & Student Activity (*How are students synthesizing and analyzing what they learn from the expedition?*):

Letters Home

Now that students have experienced the inside of a submarine and made connections between the unique environment and quality of life, it is time for them to create. During this activity students will imagine life as a sailor aboard the USS Bowfin and write a letter back home to loved ones. Students will leverage the 21st Century Literacy Cycle to complete their letters. You can see a student work sample by clicking the icon to the right.



Research

During this phase students will start brainstorming ideas to include in their letters home. It is important they make connections between the content in their letters and what they learned during the tour. For students to effectively research the different events, it is important they are able to reference the Points of Interest as they collect more information and artifacts for their letters. For students to access the panoramas and slides, they will need to have access to the devices they used during the Expedition.

NOTE: To gain full access to all of the panoramas in the Expedition they will have to switch from Follower to Guide. They can do this by pressing the “Explorer” menu in the top left and choosing to “Be a guide” and “LEAD” instead.

Plan

Students should now take time to start shaping their understanding of life on the Bowfin into a letter home. Graphic organizers are an excellent way for students to begin connecting important pieces of information and crafting their narrative.

If students are having trouble thinking about topics or content for their letters have them brainstorm together to list the important day-to-day events in their own lives. Some day to day events include but are not limited to:

- Sleeping
- Eating
- Working
- Personal hygiene
- Leisure/fun
- Relationships

● Dangers & Hazards

Students can create their own graphic organizers with the Google Drawings template to the right. Unlike traditional, pre-made paper organizers, Google Drawings allows students more flexibility and freedom to map out the key points they feel are important. Students can work independently or can collaborate in real time with a partner by sharing the Drawing between each other. Inside the template is a link to a video students can watch to learn how to use Google Drawings.



Write

Once they have organized their narratives they can begin writing. Even if students collaborated on the graphic organizer they should work independently as they write. Students should create their own Google Doc so they can share during the Peer Review stage of the cycle.

To get students thinking about how to craft their narrative they can use the [6 + 1 Writing Traits](#) to guide them. Using these as a guide will help them in both the Writing and the Peer Review stages because it provides them a lens from which to critique other student work. Teachers can also use the [6 + 1 Writing Traits Rubric](#) to assess student work at the end of the Cycle.

Peer Review

Once students have written their first drafts they can share them with another student to engage in the Peer Review process. Peer Review will not only help improve the quality of writing for the student being reviewed but it will also help the reviewer to assess their own writing in the context of the other students.

Students can use the Insert Comment feature in Google Docs to leave their thoughts and recommendations about how to improve the narrative. Remind students to think about the 6 + 1 Writing Traits as they review. When they are finished give students time to reflect on the comments in their documents and to make the corrections and improvements to their letters.

Publish

The act of making student work public inherently improves the quality of work. There are a number of ways students can publish their letters using Google tools. Some ideas include but are not limited to:

- Post the document to a student or class Site or Blog.
- Paste their letter into a Google Slide deck to share with the class. Students can then go on a Gallery session and leave comments.
- Students can create videos about the Bowfin with their letters as voice over narration. The teacher can then publish to YouTube.
- Have a contest for most creative letter and include it in the digital school bulletin that is sent to parents.

Another creative way to share their letters is to mail them home to students' families the old fashioned way. Students can handwrite their letters and include historical photographs of the USS Bowfin and her crew.

Publishing to the Hawaii Expeditions Student Gallery

Have some cool student projects you want to share? We would love to see them! As more and more students use Expeditions and these lesson plans we will be building a Student Gallery where students can have their work published for the world to appreciate. Just click on the Google Form to the right and send us a link!



NOTE: The Form has information on how to protect student privacy so you can share their work safely and appropriately.

EXTENSION IDEAS

Students can use YouTube to create video blogs and narrate their letter over pictures and video of the USS Bowfin. Students can use the YouTube Capture app on any mobile device and upload to video. From there they can use the YouTube video editor to refine their videos.

Find more Expeditions lessons at www.moonshotincubator.com/expeditions.

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