

AHOY, MATEY! TALK LIKE A PIRATE DAY

AGES

Children 8+

Teens/tweens

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Celebrate the seafaring life through knotting and pirate talk! This program has several activity ideas. Run a quiz-style game on sailor/pirate vocabulary, modified for age-appropriateness. Make temporary tattoos and set up a sailor's "tattoo parlor." Teach a few basic seafaring knots and let participants practice them before running a contest to see who can tie them the fastest. Children can also use basic knots to create one-of-a-kind friendship bracelets or reef knot necklaces. Choose whichever games and crafts would best suit your library and audience, or run them all as stations. This program works well outdoors, and the knot-tying component would be easy to include in take-and-make bags. Suggested runtime: 45–90 min.



Image source: Shutterstock

Clove hitch knot

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Sailor's Tattoo Parlor

Materials: Printable clip art (see Resources); regular inkjet printer; white letter-size printer paper; A4 tattoo transfer paper; popsicle sticks

Instructions:

- Print tattoo clip art onto regular printer paper
- Apply adhesive transfer paper to printed sheets and remove air bubbles with popsicle stick
- Cut out tattoos
- Set up a tattoo station

TIP:

If your library subscribes to Mango Languages, it includes Pirate!

NOTE:

International Talk Like a Pirate Day is on September 19, so you could also run this program in the fall.

TIP:

Temporary tattoos also make great prizes for other programs. Get some printed with your library's logo here: <https://bit.ly/2STarun>

ADAPTATION:

Older audiences might love a presentation about historical pirates or what life is like on the high seas.

TIP:

If you're printing words, remember to print a mirror image of the tattoo! Otherwise, it will print backwards on skin.

Seafarer's Knots

Materials: Lengths of rope or macrame cord; pieces of doweling or overturned tables (to hitch to the legs); knot-tying books from your collection; embroidery floss; tape; ocean-themed charms, beads, and letters (optional); Cotton rope 3–10mm; scissors; ruler; masking tape

Instructable tutorial here: <https://bit.ly/3yGUDv3>

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Add an extra volunteer to each station to help with crafts.

RESOURCES

Web

Reef knot necklace from *Instructables*: <https://bit.ly/3yGUDv3>

“How to Tie Friendship Bracelets” from *WikiHow*: <https://bit.ly/3bZq7Tz>

Ways to start and finish bracelets from *DIYholic*: <https://bit.ly/3bYseXQ>

Sliding knot paracord bracelet from *Bored Paracord*: <https://bit.ly/3fqJG9p>

“Junior Pirates” from *Talk Like a Pirate*: <https://bit.ly/3ySzEFY>

Books

Non-fiction

The Whydah: A Pirate Ship Feared, Wrecked, and Found (2017) By Martin W. Sandler (YA)

Brevertton's Nautical Curiosities: A Book Of The Sea (2010) by Terry Brevertton (YA)

Fiction

The Last Voyage of Poe Blythe (2019) by Ally Condie (YA)

The Abyss Surrounds Us (2016) by Emily Skrutskie (YA)

Daughter of the Pirate King (2017) by Tricia Levenseller (YA)

Along the Saltwise Sea (2021) by A. Deborah Baker (YA)

The Bloody Jack series (2002–2014) by L. A. Meyer (children's)

The Castaways of the Flying Dutchman series (2002–2005) by Brian Jacques (children's)

Hook's Daughter: The Untold Tale of a Pirate Princess (2018) by R.V. Bowman (children's)

Printables

Nautical Knots

Oysterman and Stevedore Knot Steps

Sailor/Pirate Tattoos

Sailor Vocabulary

TIP:

If running as a large event with many people, it might be helpful to have a “cool down” space, a smaller, quieter room that can be used if a participant becomes overwhelmed by the noise/number of people.



Sheet Bend



Square Knot



Clove Hitch



Reef Knot



Figure 8 Knot



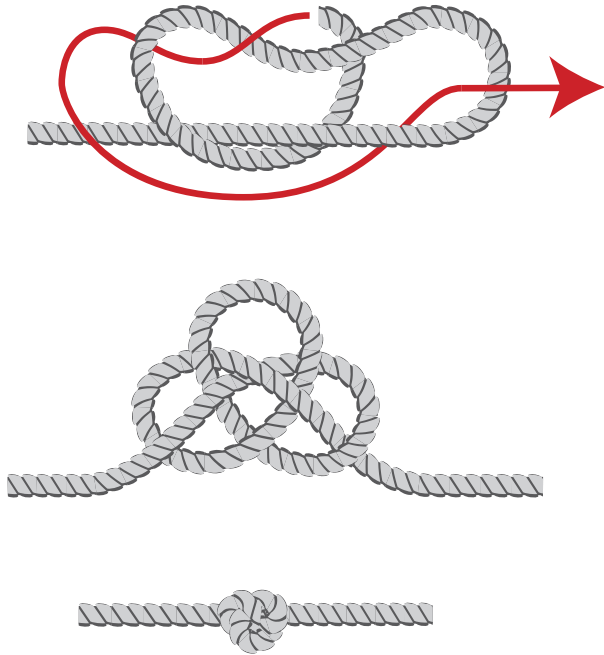
Fisherman's Knot



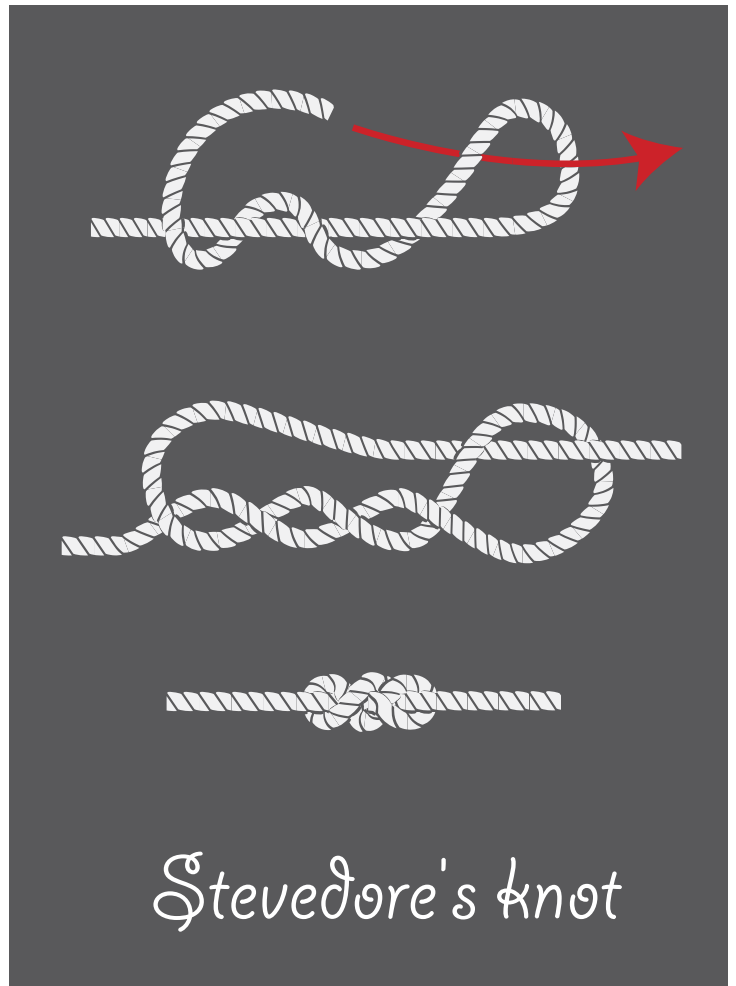
Carrick Bend



Overhand Knot



Oysterman's knot



Stevedore's knot

Image source: Shutterstock



Image source: Shutterstock

SAILOR VOCABULARY

Ship Vocabulary

1. Baggywrinkle: A soft covering for standing rigging that prevents sail chafing.
2. Bumpkin: A beam projecting from the hull of a vessel.
3. Scantlings: The dimensions of a ship's structure.
4. Port and starboard: The left and right of a vessel.
5. Bow and stern: The front and back of a vessel.
6. Fathom: Unit of length to measure depth, the equivalent of six feet.
7. Bear: A large square stone used with sand to scrape wood decks clean.
8. Skiff: A small boat for leisure or fishing.
9. Stow: To store or put things away.

Sailor Vocabulary

1. Geedunk: Junk food.
2. Avast!: Stop what you're doing.
3. Scuttlebutt: Sailor gossip; also, an open cask of drinking water.
4. Landlubber: Someone unfamiliar with the sea.
5. Sea dog: An experienced sailor; also, a pirate or a harbor seal.
6. Flotsam: Wreckage from a ship floating on the water.
7. Jetsam: Goods from a ship cast deliberately overboard.
8. Grog: A mix of rum and water.
9. Bottomry: Pledging a ship as security in a financial transaction.