



NEW BEDFORD FISHING HERITAGE CENTER

Visit to NBFHC Activity

Activity Overview: Students will visit the New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center (NBFHC) to see the new permanent exhibit, *More than a Job: Work and Community in New Bedford's Fishing Industry* with a focus on the section, *A Changing Way of Life* which explores topics related to labor, immigration, and sustainability. This activity includes pre-visit and post-visit instructions.

If you are unable to visit the Fishing Heritage Center in-person, you can complete this activity using the digital version of [A Changing Way of Life](#).

Grades: This activity was created for students in high school, but can be adjusted for other grades as needed.

Materials:

- Sketchbook/notebook
- Drawing implements
- Camera (phone)
- [A Changing Way of Life Digital Exhibit](#)

Prior to Visit:

- Questions to have students think about:
 - Why visit the NBFHC?
 - Where in the city is it located? What is significant about the location? (Look at a map of New Bedford if this will help you.)
 - What is its function/role in our community?
 - How does the current exhibit serve our community, the world of fishing and port cities and students, in particular?

During Visit:

- Say: We will focus on the following:
 - Labor
 - Immigration
 - Sustainability
- Ask: Let's access prior knowledge.
 - In your sketchbook/notebook, in your own words, define and describe the aforementioned (labor, immigration and sustainability).
 - Who cares about these things? Why?
- Share: Share with your group YOUR definition of labor, immigration and sustainability.

- Explore: Give students the opportunity to explore the new exhibit with a focus on the interactive tablet from the “A Changing Way of Life” section.
 - Say: As you peruse the exhibit **choose three things** to sketch from the exhibit. The sketch can be very simple (schematic) or detailed. You choose. **Label your sketch:** describe what you are drawing and why you chose the particular item. What speaks to you about the item? **Date your drawings.** You will use these for your discussion at the end of your visit and in a follow up visit/lesson.
- Discuss: Come back together as a group to look at the “Changing Way of Life” interactive tablet.
 - Labor Unrest:
 - Study the photograph, “Confrontation Outside a Dealer’s Auction.” Write in your notebook/sketchbook what you see and why this image is prominent in the exhibition.
 - Examine the division of labor presented in the exhibition.
 - What are the inherent risks to the workers of going on strike?
 - How are women represented?
 - Can you witness something like this today in New Bedford (not necessarily related to the fishing industry)? Where might that be?
 - Do you know any union workers/ Would you join a union? If so, why/why not?
 - Possible post-visit research: track the rise and fall of unions in the USA in the past century. Does this fishing industry fall in line with other industries or is it an outlier?
 - New Immigrants:
 - Write in your notebook/sketchbook what you see and how these images reflect the work of an immigrant in New Bedford.
 - Many of the workers are undocumented. How does this affect their health, safety and economic well being? Why did they come to the city? Why choose the fishing industry in 2021? Would you be willing to do that kind of work if you were forced to flee your native country and start a new life? Reflect on this in your notebook/journal.
 - Do you know anyone who has experienced this? What supports exist in the city for their family, work life, health and safety? Do you think being aware of the immigrant’s plight in the fishing industry will change your outlook for this population? Reflect in your notebook/journal.
 - Fun fact: Did you know that architecture in the city of New Bedford reflects the influx of immigrants to the city? Houses of worship in the city were built for the new immigrant populations with donations from the immigrant population. These structures create a map of where different immigrant populations lived and congregated. As you walk or drive through the city of New Bedford look for churches and other houses of worship and try to ascertain which immigrant population contributed to the sanctuary.
 - A Changing Environment:

- Listen to the “Warming Waters” audio clips. From these short audios, is there alarm in their voices? What did you think when you heard this? What is the big picture, the implications of a rise in water temperature and changing patterns of fish availability? Who cares about this? Why? Reflect in your sketchbook/notebook.
- Listen to “Wind Turbines” audio. Wind turbines are controversial in marine sanctuaries. The space for the turbines is also where fishing takes place. What are the pros and cons of the wind turbines in the water?
- Listen to “Wind Turbines” audio. In this audio clip, Rodman Sykes says, “businessmen are just doing what businessmen do.” What are the implications of this statement? Changing the work and industry of fishermen could change the fabric of New Bedford. Wind turbines are meant to reduce the use of fossil fuels which is good for our environment. How can we justify wind turbines in the water? Respond in your notebook/sketchbook.

Post- Visit Follow Up:

- Create: Document your visit and what you learned by creating a photo montage and display our sketches in our classroom or in a prominent place in the school. The work should have descriptive labels. also include some of our overview questions and some responses. We can also include current news items and personal anecdotes about the three topics we have discussed. This could look like news items in the community or nationally and internationally. It can also include quotes, stories or snap shots gathered by students from their personal experience or family history post visit.
 - How shall we divide our work?
 - Curate-select the work that best describes what your study has uncovered
 - Install- artfully arrange and create a space for your work
 - Signage and copy- label and describe what is being displayed
 - Public Relations- broadcast your work and invite others to see what you have learned

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