

Bookfolio for **Carry On, Mr. Bowditch**

Author: [Jean Lee Latham](#)

Illustrator: John O'Hara Cosgrave

First Publication Date: 1955

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin

ISBN: 0395068819

Recommended for: [Grades 5-8](#)

Classification: Fiction

Genre: [Historical Fiction](#)

Story Summary: In 1779 at age six, Nathaniel Bowditch moved to Salem, Massachusetts, with his family headed by his father, a failed, alcoholic sea captain. Nat amazed his schoolmaster with his extraordinary gifts in mathematics, but he and his family suffered many misfortunes during the next few years including the deaths of his mother and grandmother. At the age of twelve Nat was indentured for nine years as a bookkeeper for a ship's chandler, but his master encouraged him to study on his own. He learned navigation at the chandlery, and in his free time he read an encyclopedia and taught himself Latin so he could read astronomy. At twenty-one he was free and went to sea as a bookkeeper and second mate. There he honed his navigational skill and even made a breakthrough innovation. He also amazed seafarers with his ability to teach navigation to uneducated seamen. On his first voyage as captain, he accomplished the still legendary feat of navigating the dangerous entrance to Salem harbor in spite of three days of dense fog. He then wrote a navigation text and reference book, still known as "the sailor's Bible."

Read-aloud Recommendation: Chapter 24, pages 241-251

The skills for each activity are identified by the following abbreviations:

R=Reading, W=Writing, S=Speaking, L=Listening, D=Drawing

Carry On, Mr. Bowditch - Independent Activities	Skills
1. Dialogue of the Times (Creating a modern dialogue)	S , W
2. Accepting a Challenge (Learning from biography)	S , W
3. Self-Made People (Writing a comparison)	R , W
4. A Learning Notebook (Keeping a notebook)	R , W
5. Very Capable People (Researching a topic)	R , S
6. Sailing, Sailing (Drawing a diagram)	D
Carry On, Mr. Bowditch - Group Activities	Skills
1. Fact and Fiction (Differentiating fact from fiction)	S , W
2. Becalmed (Analyzing characters)	S , W
3. Navigation Map (Charting a voyage)	D
4. Sea Market (Designing a newspaper page)	D , S
5. A Venture in Time (Taking part in a story event)	S , W
6. "Let's Talk About..." (Discussing the story)	L , S

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