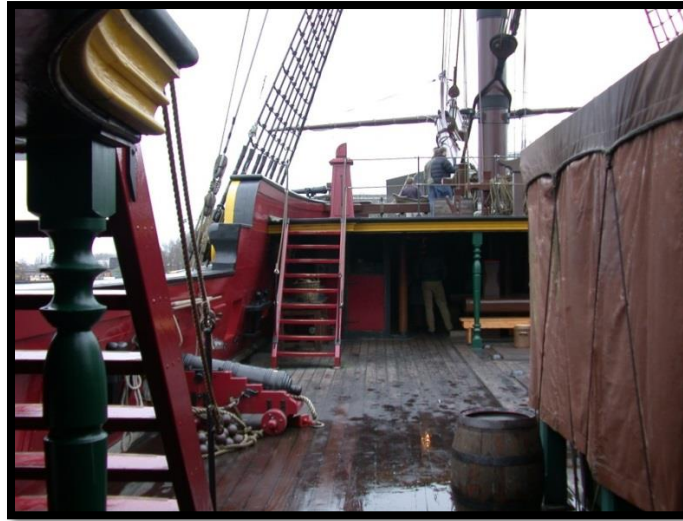


Sea Shanties



A sea shanty is a song sung by sailors at work aboard a ship or boat. The word “shanty” probably comes from the French word “**chanter**”, which means “to sing”. Sea shanties have been sung since as **far back** as the 16th century. However, there is no further mention of **them** in history until the 19th century.

Sea shanties were not sung merely as a form of entertainment. They were important for helping sailors to coordinate all their actions together at the same time. For example, the “short drag” shanty was used to give the sailors a rhythm for when they unfurled the sails. **This** helped to keep the crew safe, especially in rough seas.

Other shanties were developed for different tasks. The “long drag” shanty helped teams of sailors keep working together at tasks that took a long time. **These** shanties told the sailors when to pull together and when to take a **break**. This kind of shanty was often sung when pulling or lifting heavy ropes to lift or lower a heavy sail. One famous long drag shanty was called “Blow the man down”.

Not all sea shanties were designed for work. Whaling shanties were sung to keep men’s spirits high on the whaling boats. Life on a whaling boat was often unpleasant and dangerous. Sailors on these boats could be away from home for several years. Many started to **feel down** because of these hardships. Whaling shanties were often about coming home after a long tiring **voyage** and the difficulty of being on a whaling ship.



1. According to the article, what does the French word “chanter” mean?
 - a) to sail
 - b) to sing
 - c) to swim
 - d) to swing

2. The phrase “far back” in paragraph 1 could best be replaced by:
 - a) recently
 - b) long ago
 - c) distant
 - d) slowly to

3. In paragraph 1, “them” refers to:
 - a) centuries
 - b) sailors
 - c) mentions
 - d) sea shanties

4. In paragraph 2, “this” refers to:
 - a) sails
 - b) actions
 - c) rhythm
 - d) rough seas

5. The word “break” in paragraph 3 could best be replaced by:
 - a) rest
 - b) smash
 - c) snap
 - d) destroy

6. According to the article, what was life like on a whaling boat?
 - a) generally unpleasant and dangerous
 - b) always unpleasant and dangerous
 - c) rarely unpleasant and dangerous
 - d) never unpleasant and dangerous

7. The phrase “feel down” in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to:
 - a) work hard
 - b) fall hard
 - c) get tired
 - d) become sad

8. The word “voyage” in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to:
 - a) journey
 - b) relaxation
 - c) practice
 - d) illness

Answers: 1. (b) 2. (b) 3. (d) 4. (c) 5. (a) 6. (a) 7. (d) 8. (a)