Seeing with Different Eyes

**Time:** 50 minutes  
**Grade Level:** 3-7  
**Group Size:** individual and crews  
**Vocabulary:** role-play, watch, interpretation, perspective

### KEY CONCEPTS
- Historical Perspective  
- Interpretation

### MATERIALS
- (1) copy of the *Character Descriptions and Seaward Situations* sheet per crew  
- Pencils and paper

### ADVANCED PREPARATION
- Make copies of the *Character Descriptions and Seaward Situations* sheet one for each student.  
- Divide into groups (or crews).

### PROCEDURE

**Engage:** Write *Captain*, *First Mate*, *Second Mate*, and *Cook* on the board. Have the students brainstorm the different responsibilities each had in carrying out their jobs. Write their answers under each character heading. Ask the students to imagine how they would react as each character if the ship was threatened by a storm.

**Challenge:** Have the students read each of the character descriptions, and choose one of the "Seaward Situations" listed and discuss how each of the different characters might react to it. Each crew should role-play two different characters' reaction to the same situation in front of the rest of the class.

**Discussion:** Have the students discuss why each character would react differently to a situation. How would they (as the student "greenhand") react to the same situation? What influences us to make certain decisions or judgments in our life?

**Extend:** Have the students contemplate; How could trying to understand someone else’s point of view, though different from their own, help them to be more successful in life?

### OVERVIEW

Student crews will discuss and role-play different situations from different perspectives.

### TEACHER BACKGROUND

When the *Euterpe* took its many voyages around the world, the passengers and sailors aboard wrote diaries and letters of their personal experiences. Today, these diaries and letters give us a variety of perspectives of life aboard a merchant vessel, from those who used her as a means of travel, to the crew who sailed her. The “truth” about history often depends upon who’s telling it. Everyone interprets events differently based on who we are where we come from and what we believe.

When the students come aboard the *Star of India*, they will be pretending to be poor emigrant sailors. Each of them will have their own perspective of their imaginary excursion just as each passenger and sailor did during the original *Euterpe* voyages. However, students should try to go beyond their personal experience to appreciate history in a variety of ways. When students develop the habit of interpreting the same events from different viewpoints it helps history become something rich, alive and exciting.
**SEEING WITH DIFFERENT EYES**

Choose one of the "Seaward Situations" listed and discuss with your crew how each of the different characters might react to it. Role-play two different characters' reaction to the same situation in front of the rest of the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Chief Cabin&quot;</th>
<th>The First Mate</th>
<th>&quot;Working&quot; Emigrant</th>
<th>The Second Mate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passenger</strong></td>
<td>The First Mate is the best sailor on the ship. It is his job to make sure everything works exactly right. It is also his job to make sure the common sailors and “greenhands” follow orders, behave perfectly, work hard, and show respect for their Captain. The most effective first mates are very strict.</td>
<td>They were the lowest class on board. They were poor and humble and stayed in the worst parts of the ship. They were served mainly “salt beef” and porridge and often ran out of fresh water. Many were young men and excited about the great adventure ahead.</td>
<td>The Second Mate is the sailors' friend. He tries to make the Captain happy but he often gets in trouble. Sometimes the Second Mate might seem lazy or foolish but he still knows more than greenhands and common sailors. That's why the Captain has made him an officer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**SEAWARD SITUATIONS: What would you do?**

1. During dinner you are served stew with fresh meat. After you take a bite you learn that the fresh meat is from rats caught on board.
2. As the moon lights the open ocean, you walk toward the bow and see a sailor sleeping during his assigned watch.
3. It’s the afternoon before the Euterpe is to leave port. The crew is short one sailor. A man asks to join the crew. He is strong, but unshaven, wears dirty old clothes and speaks little English.
4. A sailor lying in his bunk complains that he is too sick to go up on deck to work.
5. You are two weeks from reaching your destination and the Captain announces that your ship must change course to pick up cargo – adding another two months to your voyage.