



Hands on Deck

An Educational Workbook





The **MERCATOR** Project



www.mercatorproject.eu

MERCATOR, Merchants' Routes and Trade Cities in the Mediterranean, is a European project which aim is to explore, through history and archaeology, the structures and systems of exchange forming part of the Mediterranean's cultural heritage pertaining to sea and land commercial transportation networks in the North and South shores of the Mediterranean Basin, and to valorise them through innovative methods.

One of these innovative methods is the creation of an electronic interactive trading game about merchants of the Mediterranean called 'MERCATOR Educational', targeting students aged between 8 and 11 years. The game is the fruit of a collaborative work between the partners of the project which include Malta, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, Morocco and Lebanon.

The 'Hands on Deck' educational workbook complements MERCATOR Educational by focusing on the Maltese Islands' merchants' history and heritage. It includes various creative and interpretative tasks focusing on merchants' history during the period of the Knights of St John, which can be carried out within the museum and in class.



MALTA MARITIME MUSEUM

The Malta Maritime Museum was officially opened to the public on the 24th of July, 1992. It is housed in the former Naval Bakery at Vittoriosa. Its primary aim is to illustrate Malta's maritime history from prehistory to the present day.

The building, designed by the British architect and engineer William Scamp and built between 1842 and 1845, is situated on the site of the former covered galley arsenal of the Order of the Knights of St John. The Bakery remained part of the naval establishment up to the closure of the British base in 1979.

TASK 1

The Knights of Malta



The sea was looked upon with fear since corsairs used to sail from city to city in search of goods to steal. It was very dangerous to build a house near the sea as it was more easily reached and burgled by the greedy corsairs. However, the presence of the Knights, and the setting up of the Order's naval base in Birgu, transformed the harbour area into a huge maritime centre and this fear turned into a valuable opportunity.

If you look inside the showcases, you will discover more about life at sea during the period of the Knights.

Try answering the following questions:

Can you name two types of food items that sailors used to eat on their galleys?

List three navigation instruments belonging to the Knights' period in Malta.

Why do you think that navigation instruments are important on board vessels?

Which 3 items would you take with you today if you had to embark on a journey at sea?

Find the painting which represents The Battle of Lepanto and write a short description of what you see in the painting.

TASK 2

Sailing the Mediterranean Sea

Malta's natural, deep harbours and position on major shipping routes made our islands an attractive location from earliest times. Therefore, due to its geographic position Malta has always been at the centre of maritime activity in the Mediterranean.

Name two other Mediterranean countries.

Besides ships, do you think there were other means of transporting goods from Malta to other Mediterranean countries during the Knights' period? Why do you think so?

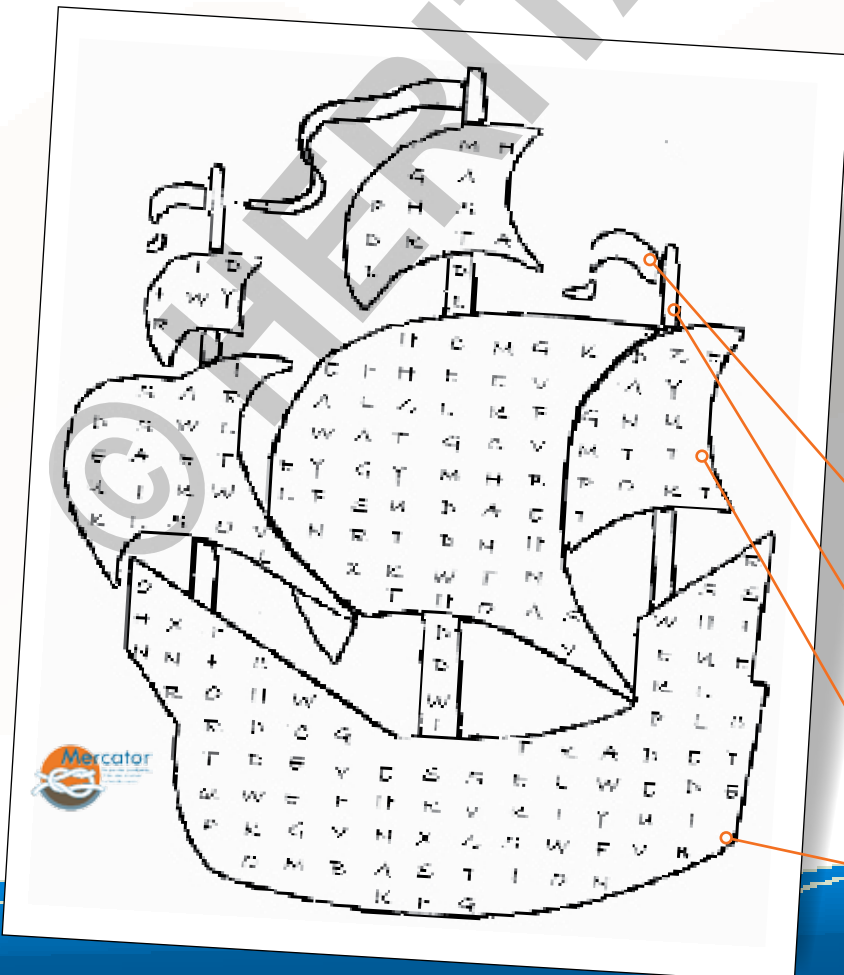
From which material do you think ships were made of?

Playing with words

Try to find as many words as you can - Good Luck!

MERCHANT, SAIL, HULL, PORT, VESSEL, MAST, BASTION, FORT, FLAG, TRADE

Label the parts of the vessel using words from the list.



TASK 3

Merchants & Trade



Answer the questions below using the following words:

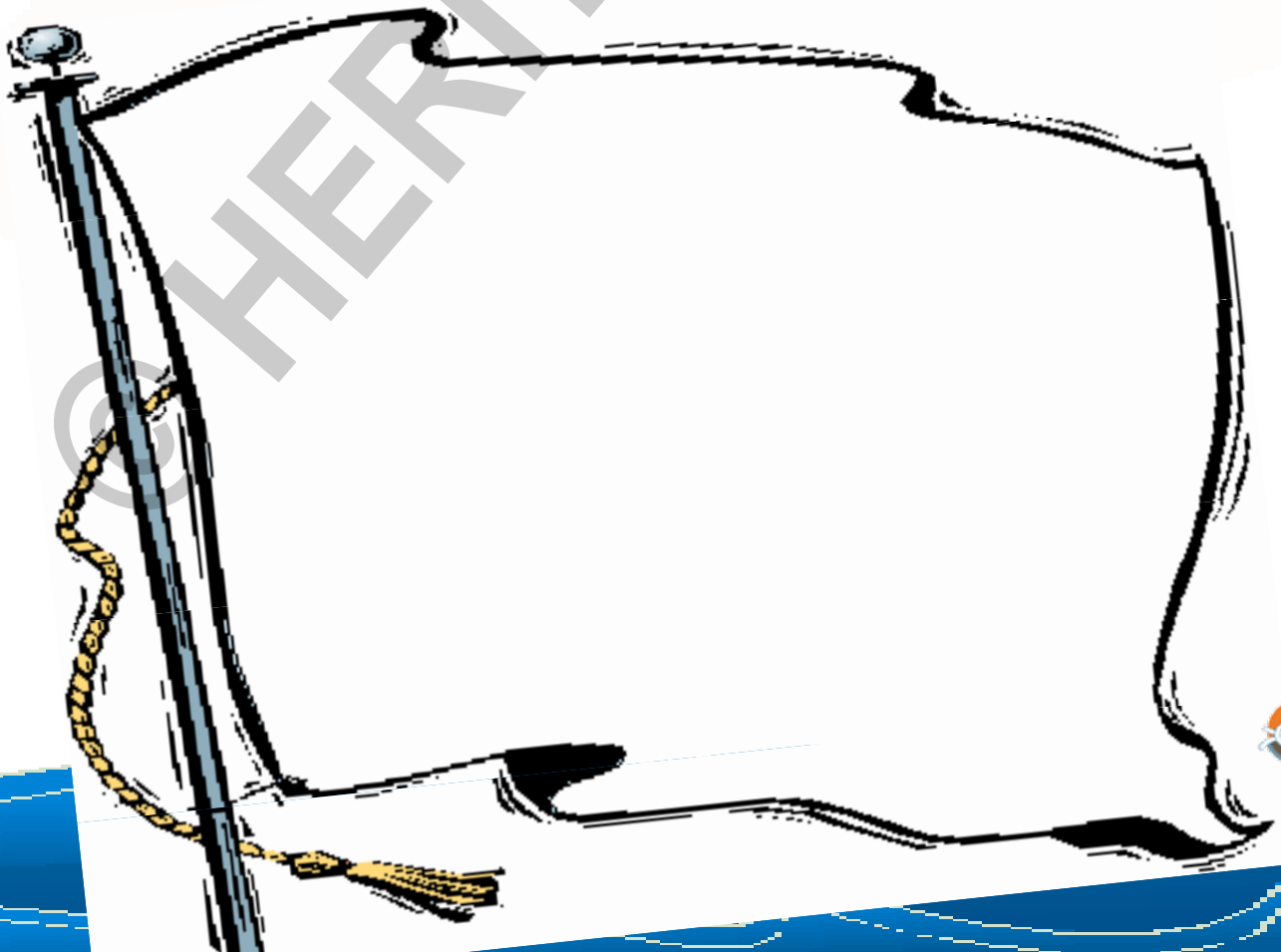
Truck, Horse, Aeroplane, Train, Ship, Galley

1. Which means of transport were used in the past in Malta for transporting traded goods?

2. Which means of transport are used today for transporting traded goods?

3. Which means of transport were used in the past and are still used today for transporting traded goods?

Design a flag for your own vessel



TASK 4

Match-up

Lebanon-
Beirut



Morocco-
Mohammedia



Italy-
Pisa



Italy-
Genoa



Italy-
Rome



Match-up the cities with their location on the map by drawing an arrow.



Greece-
Tessaaloniki



Portugal-
Mertola



Portugal-
Evora



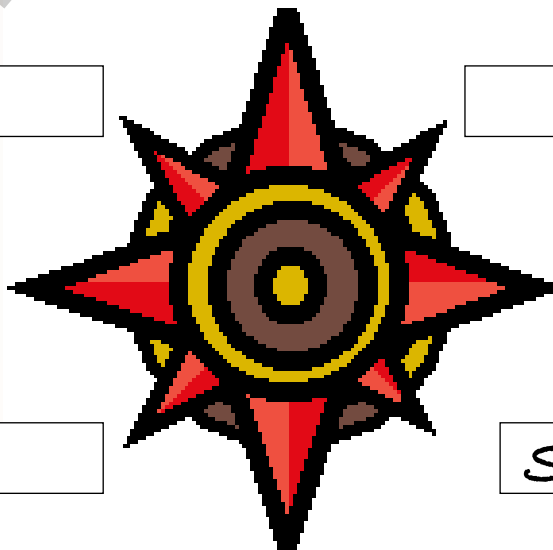
Spain-
Alicante



Malta-
Valletta

Complete the compass points

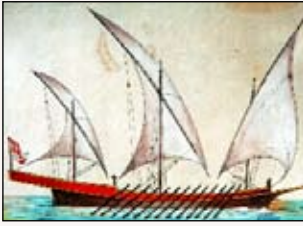
North



South East

TASK 5

Merchant Ships



Brigantine

- Used in Malta from the 15th to the 19th century.
- Very popular with Maltese merchants.
- It transported small cotton items such as socks, lace and handkerchiefs.
- The Brigantine was slightly larger than the Speronara.

Tartana

- Used by the Knights up to the early 18th century.
- Normally carried cargoes of grain, meat, wood or cheeses.
- Used also by merchants to transport large items such as wine barrels.
- They were also used to carry passengers.

Speronara/Xprunara

- Used until the 19th century.
- Slightly small, often painted in bright green and blue and had two sails.
- It was the fastest means of transport available so it carried certain items such as cheese, ricotta, ice and snow!

Pollacca

- Used until the 19th century.
- They used to carry food for the galleys of the Knights of the Order of St John.
- A number of these vessels were taken as prizes during corsairing activities.

Have your say

If you were to own one of these vessels, which would it be?

Why would this be so?



Exhibition

DESIGN YOUR OWN MERCHANT SHIP!

*Media: Pencil colours,
paint or mixed media*

Size: Should not exceed A3

OR

WRITE A SHORT STORY

about an adventure at sea inspired by your
visit at the Malta Maritime Museum

About 300 words

All drawings and short stories will be exhibited at the Malta Maritime Museum.



Send your entries to:

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