



NANTUCKET
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

ISLAND
EXPLORERS

Printable Activities Book 4

Scrimshaw

Scrimshaw

NAME: _____

1 WHAT'S THE WORD?

Scrimshaw: Carvings or engravings made from whale ivory.

Folk Art: Tradition of art usually created by untrained people.

Swift: A reel for winding yarn or thread.

Ditty box: A box made by sailors to hold small objects.

Busk: A long, flat piece of decocarted whale bone.

2 ART IN ALL OF US

Art is for everybody. Self-taught artists, called folk artists, tell us about themselves, their community and our history through the work they create. **What is a favorite piece of art you or one of your friends has created?** _____

3 ART TO REMEMBER

The Nantucket whalers often spent years out at sea. Using the art of scrimshaw, they remembered home or an event from their journey. *Design your own piece of scrimshaw with something you want to remember.*



4 EXAMPLES OF SCRIMSHAW



Check out these examples of scrimshaw from the NHA collection. Whalers used what was around them to create their pieces. To make lines darker, they used charcoal, lamp black, and ink. To smooth off a piece, they used sharkskin. *Have you ever reused something to make art?*



5 SCRIMSHAW CRAFT



In order to protect the world's whale populations, buying and selling whale ivory is illegal today. We can still experiment with the craft. *Use these everyday household items to do your own carving activity.*

SOAP CARVING

Materials

paper
pencil
plastic butter knife
bar of soap
paint (optional)

Directions

Step 1: Trace your bar of soap on a piece of paper.
Step 2: Sketch a simple design inside of the tracing with a pencil.
Step 3: Cut out your design.
Step 4: Place your cut out on your bar of soap and carve the outline with a pencil. Remove cut out and brush soap dust.
Step 5: Cut off edges with your plastic butter knife to finish your sculpture.
Step 6 (optional): Paint your soap sculpture.