

# Darwin's Fantastical Voyage

## Further Activity: Splice the mainbrace!

[www.darwinproject.ac.uk/learning/7-11/darwins-fantastical-voyage](http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/learning/7-11/darwins-fantastical-voyage)

### How long will activity take?

- 20 minutes

### What do I need?

Access to dictionaries or other sources to find out meanings.

Maybe it is because Britain is an island that we have so many expressions that come from the sea.

The phrases below are all connected with ships and naval history.

See if you can work out their meaning.

### What do I do?

1. Look at the phrases below and their original meaning. Fill in the table to explain what the phrases mean today.
2. Can you think of any other nautical terms that we still use today? Add them to the chart.



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Phrase	Current meaning	Original meaning
Push the boat out		To help push a beached boat into the water, as an act of kindness or generosity.
The cut of your jib		The jib is a triangular sail; the shape varies and was used to identify nationality and whether or not the ship was friendly.
Batten down the hatches		To cover the hatchways or entrances to the decks with tarpaulin and wooden battens to protect them from storm.
Broad in the beam		The beam is the widest part of the ship.
All at sea		A ship was described as 'at sea' when it was out of sight of land and had the potential to become lost.
Chock a block		When the blocks (part of a pulley system used for raising the sails) are raised to their full extent with no space to move.
Loose Cannon		A cannon that has become loose and is rolling about on deck.
Plain sailing		Smooth and uncomplicated sailing.
Three sheets to the wind		Loose sails flapping in the wind, causing the ship to lurch like a drunken sailor. Progressively worse according to the number of sheets (sails).
Know the ropes		Possibly referring to the ropes and knots that sailors would need to know.

