



## Student Worksheet: History of the Current Pair 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Problem Statement

Mail sent from England to the American colonies was taking a long time to arrive—two months on average. And yet merchant ships, which were heavier and took a longer route than the mail packet ships, made the same trip from England in just a month and a half on average. It didn't seem to matter whether the packet ships sailing from England experienced good weather or bad, whether the wind was in their sails or not—something still held them back. What was causing the delays?

1. Create working groups of 6 students. Break each group of six into pairs.
2. Obtain the Pair 2 Student Worksheet with the profile of Timothy Folger and answer the Pair 2 questions.

### Character Profiles: Timothy Folger - Nantucket Whaler

In 1769, Benjamin Franklin asked for the assistance of his cousin, Timothy Folger, a Whaler from Nantucket, Massachusetts. Timothy Folger explained that the benefits of the Gulf Stream were discovered early by sea captains, but their maps of the Gulf Stream were closely guarded secrets handled with the utmost care. Why would American whalers be interested in the Gulf Stream?

### Directions

Use the Whale information on the History of the Current lesson web site to answer the following questions.

### Questions – Pair 2

1. Locate and label Nantucket on the chart.
2. Which species of whale was most affected by hunting?
3. What physical characteristics of this whale made it easy (favorable) to hunt?

4. What type of food does this whale prefer to eat and where is this food source normally found, in warmer or cooler water?

5. So where would you expect to find the whales?

6. How does the location of the whales relate to the Gulf Stream?

7. Why do you think whalers closely guarded this information?

8. How do you think sailors were able to determine if they were in the Gulf Stream or not?

9. What did Timothy Folger help Ben Franklin to understand?

**After each pair has collected their respective information and answered their questions, regroup into their group of six. As a group, answer the following Assessment questions.**

1. What tools were available to identify the current in Benjamin Franklin's time?

2. What type of water can be found in the Gulf Stream, warm or cold?

3. Where do you think the water in the Gulf Stream originates?

4. How do you think you could locate the approximate position of the Gulf Stream today? What tools could you use?

5. Which direction do you think the water in the Gulf Stream is flowing? Indicate the direction of water flow on the chart.

6. Look at these archived satellite images of the Gulf Stream during the same time of year as Franklin's voyage in the Berkshire. On the tracking chart, sketch in the approximate northern boundary (edge of the orange-red area) of the Gulf Stream.

[Sept 30, 2000](#) or [Sept 30, 2000](#)

7. Mark the approximate location of the Berkshire on the tracking chart from Franklin's Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> journal entry. Where is the ship in relation to the Gulf Stream?

8. Look at the Franklin-Folger chart of the Gulf Stream, do you think it is accurate compared to what we know today? Explain.

9. Why would it be important to identify the Gulf Stream?

10. Why would it be important to identify other currents?