



Student Worksheet: History of the Current Pair 3

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 3 Student Worksheet with the profile of Samuel Worthington and answer the Pair 3 questions.

Character Profiles: Samuel Worthington - British Businessperson

Samuel Worthington was a businessperson who was running low on patience. For several years, his family had operated a successful cotton fabric manufacturing business. As trade with the British colonies in North America began to increase, Samuel saw a large increase in orders for cotton fabric. In 1750, Samuel began to import cotton from the colonies to supply his business. At first, this was a wonderful solution; Samuel imported the raw cotton via New York and then shipped the finished products back over to New York to be sold and distributed throughout the colonies, and also to the West Indies. But over time he began to notice a pattern. The packet ships delivering the raw materials from America arrived much faster than the British ships bringing his finished cotton fabric over to New York, even though they followed the same route. But what made him really angry was that the ships bound for the West Indies, which stopped in Spain before crossing the Atlantic, also arrived in the West Indies often faster than the ships traveling to New York. Samuel complained to the British authorities for years, but nothing changed. He was growing quite impatient and wanted answers. What was going on?

Directions

1. Locate and label New York City, London, Spain, and the West Indies on the chart.

2. Use the Colonial Trade Routes map on the History of the Current lesson web site to locate the trade routes Samuel Worthington's ships used. Sketch and label the approximate trade routes on the tracking chart.

Questions – Pair 3

3. Why was it possible for the ship leaving London, stopping off in Spain, and then crossing the Atlantic to reach the West Indies (approximately 6,300 miles) in about the same number of days than a ship sailing from London to New York (approximately 3,500 miles)?

4. If you were giving advice to Samuel Worthington, what solution would you propose?

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. 30th 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?