



ACTIVITY

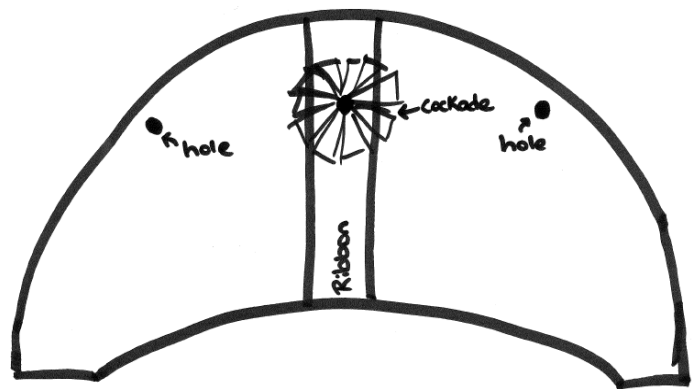
Make an Officer's Hat

During the early 19th century, each naval officer wore a folding cocked hat, or chapeau bras, with his full dress uniform. The chapeau was flat and crescent-shaped. It stood 9 to 11 inches high and could stretch 16 inches or more from point to point. Designed to fold flat, the hat could be easily stored in a box or carried beneath the arm. Have your students view [William Swift's hat](#) and then they can make their own paper versions to wear.

Paper Officer's Hat

Materials (per hat):

- Black Construction paper (18" x 12") – 3 pieces
- Yellow paper, cut down to 8"x3"
- Yellow ribbon or yarn.
- Scissors
- Clear tape
- Hole punch
- Black string or yarn
- Cardstock or cardboard to create a template



Directions:

1. Cut one sheet of black construction paper in half so that you have two 18" strips.
2. Tape the two strips together to make a 36" strip.
3. Measure the strip around your head and tape it closed to fit comfortably and set aside.
4. Draw the image below onto a piece of cardstock or cardboard about 18" x 12" so that it is an appropriate size.
5. Trace and cut out two hat sides from the two pieces of black paper using the template.
6. Punch a hole in the hat sides, as indicated on the picture below.
7. To make a cockade to decorate the hat
8. a) Pleat the 8" x 3" piece of yellow paper folding it one way then the other, every 1/4 inch until it looks like an accordion.
9. b) Pinch the pleats together at the middle (4" down from the top) and fan out in both directions to form two half circles.
10. c) Tape the edges to form a full circle of pleated paper.
11. Cut the ribbon or yarn to the height of the black hat side.
12. Tape down the ribbon or yarn onto one of the hat sides from the top of the hat to the bottom.
13. Punch a hole in the center of the cockade. Layer the cockade on top of the ribbon or yarn and secure it to the hat using a metal brad.
14. Tape the sides of the hat to the round headpiece.
15. Thread the string or yarn through the holes and tie each side.



This collapsible silk hat, also known as a chapeau bras, belonged to Surgeon William Swift. Naval officers in the early 1800s typically wore hats like this to mark their rank among the crew.



Current captains of *USS Constitution*, like Commander BJ Farrell pictured here, still wear a chapeau bras as part of their historic uniform.