

# Fort Matanzas

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Fort Matanzas National Monument



## A Fort Matanzas Scavenger Hunt The Life of a Spanish Soldier at Fort Matanzas in the 1740s

Teacher Page 1

### Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to--

- describe some of the daily activities of a Spanish soldier at Fort Matanzas.
- name five things we have and use everyday that a person in the 1740s would not have had.
- contrast several things about food/cooking, clothing, and recreational activities that are different between the two centuries.
- name one thing a soldier might have done for recreation.

### Materials:

A copy of the student Scavenger Hunt page for each group. Pencils and clip boards

### Florida State Standards addressed-- language arts, social studies

LA.B.1.2.1	LA.B.1.2.2	LA.B.1.2.3	LA.B.2.2.3	LA.B.2.2.5	LA.B.2.2.6
LA.C.2.2.4	LA.C.2.2.5	LA.D.1.2.1	LA.D.1.2.2		
SS.A.2.2.3	SS.A.3.2.4	SS.A.4.2.1	SS.A.4.2.2	SS.A.6.2.5	SS.B.1.2.5
SS.B.2.2.2	SS.D.1.2.2				

### Method:

#### Preparation:

Tell the students that they will be stepping back in time during their visit to Fort Matanzas--back in time over 200 years to the year the fort was finished in 1742. Ask them to use their senses as they visit the fort. Think about what it smells like. How do the beds feel? What sounds do you hear? Would they be the same sounds a soldier would have heard? Students should use their eyes to get clues about the soldiers' lives-- What did they wear? What did they do all day? How did they get and cook food? What might they have done for fun? Ask the students to think about how the soldiers' lives were different from ours today.

#### At the Park:

Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Give each group a copy of the Scavenger Hunt to work on during their visit. Explain that they may touch things gently because everything at the fort except the rock walls and two of the cannons are replicas,. Explain what the word "replica" means.

At the fort the students will have the opportunity to walk around the fort and explore using their Scavenger Hunt sheets. Then a ranger will lead a discussion on the Life of the Spanish Soldier at Fort Matanzas comparing and contrasting the soldier's 18<sup>th</sup> century life and customs with those of the students today.

#### Back at School:

##### Discussion:

Discuss with the students some of their answers on the Scavenger Hunt.

Review what the soldiers' real job was-- to keep watch and protect the southern approaches to St. Augustine, ultimately protecting their families living in town.

Some other things to discuss-- (Some may have been mentioned by the ranger)

- What did the students discover by using their senses?
  - How many people do the students share a house with? Share a bedroom with? What would it have been like to live in such close quarters with eight other people like the soldiers did? Conditions were similar in the soldiers' homes with a whole family living in one or two rooms. Discuss how the idea of privacy has changed over time.
  - What did they do to keep clean? Did they know about germs? Did they get sick? [Bathing, especially getting the whole body undressed, was not a custom at that time. Any washing would have been done without removing clothing.]
  - What would they have done all day to keep busy when not keeping watch? [The fort was originally plastered and whitewashed, so the soldiers probably worked at painting the walls. They could clean the cannon and polish their leather cartridge boxes and polish their brass buttons. They could re-stuff the mattresses with fresh grass. Also, go fishing or looking for other food.
- What might they have done for recreation or for fun? [Remember that few could read or write or swim.] What activities might they have been able to do in dim or no light? [sing songs, play guessing games, tell stories]
- How might they have communicated with St. Augustine without telephones? [Certainly by boat or by walking the 15 miles up the beach. Also, there may have been at least two wooden watchtowers between Matanzas and St. Augustine. How could they have sent signals?]
  - Catholicism and the Church played a big part in the lives of the Spanish colonists. There would have been no priest at the fort. What might the soldiers have done for their religious obligations?
  - Have any of the students ever been separated from their family for a long time-- At camp? In the hospital? Visiting relatives? How might the soldiers have felt being away from their wives and children for a month, especially with no way to communicate with them?
  - Do any of the students have a job or chore to do, one that is important, but one they might not enjoy doing? Did the soldiers have an important job? Did they have to do it even if they were bored or tired, hot or cold? What might happen if they were not doing their job (keeping watch)?
  - Think about how the technology of communications has changed our worldview. With satellite news, we can see things now as they happen on the other side of the world. Then, it might take two months for a message to come from Europe. (Usually more because ships did not often sail during the winter because of storms.) How do we get our news now? How did they get news then? [The common people of St. Augustine could not read or write. There were no schools. There were no newspapers. They knew only what the officers, governor, or priest told them.] How would this affect how they thought about things or what they believed? Do you think they would know much about the world? [Note that in the English colonies of the time, like Williamsburg, there was some attempt at educating at least the boys. Many English towns did have newspapers.]

### Further activities:

1. Individually, each student uses what he or she learned and experienced at Fort Matanzas to write and illustrate a story about one day in the life of one soldier at Fort Matanzas in the year 1743.
2. In the groups used for the Scavenger Hunt, each group creates a story, a skit, a poster, or other media presentation on life at Fort Matanzas.

# Fort Matanzas Scavenger Hunt

Names of Students in Group

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Have fun exploring Fort Matanzas!  
 See how many of these things your group can find during their visit to the fort. **Look for differences between then and now.**

**Answers might be upstairs or downstairs, but not outside the fort or on the roof.**

## A. FOOD, EATING, COOKING

1. With all of the salt water around, what do you think they ate? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What other foods might they have eaten? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How did the soldiers cook their food? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Name at least four foods we have now that they did not have here in the 1740s.

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## B. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Name six (6) things related to science and technology that we use nearly every day that the Spanish soldiers at Fort Matanzas did not have in 1743.

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2. Where did the soldiers get their drinking water? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Would it be very healthy living at Fort Matanzas? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not?

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## C. CLOTHING AND FASHION

1. Feel the soldier's uniform coat. What kind of fabric is it made of? \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Name two things about the soldier's clothing (other than kind of fabric) that is different from our clothing today. Look closely!
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3. How comfortable would the clothing have been? What makes you think this?

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*Turn page over. There's more on the back!*

**D. CUSTOM AND CULTURE**

1. Find something that shows that the Spanish soldiers were religious. What religion was it?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What holidays might they have celebrated? \_\_\_\_\_ What holidays didn't they have?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Find something that shows that the soldiers liked music, art, or decoration.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**E. RECREATION AND LEISURE**

1. Find three things that show what the soldiers might have done in their free time.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Think of a way to have fun with no props and even in the dark.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Find something that a soldier might have made himself.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**E. OTHER**

1. Look at and feel the mattresses. What are they stuffed with? \_\_\_\_\_
2. About how many soldiers were here at one time? \_\_\_\_\_ How can you tell?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is a "Powder Magazine"? How would a soldier have gotten powder out of it?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What sounds might a soldier have heard at Fort Matanzas?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What might be one good thing about being at Fort Matanzas?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Back in School--**

Think about how different these men's lives were from our own! When you get back to school, your teacher might have you or your group write and illustrate a story or make up a play about one day in the life of a soldier at Fort Matanzas in the year 1743. What would he have seen when he got up in the morning? What would he have done during the day? What did he eat? What sounds would he hear? Did he think about his family back in town? What do you think it was like here at night?