

Captain James Cook Mini Biography

1. James Cook is one of the most renowned explorers and navigators that the world has ever seen, and according to many has done more to fill the unknown spots on the map of the world than anyone else in history has. He is famous for having discovered the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of New Zealand and Australia on his ship Endeavor, while also disproving the existence of the fabled southern supercontinent, Terra Australis. He also provided the most detailed and accurate map of the Pacific through his many voyages.
2. James Cook was born on October 27, 1728, to a Scottish farmhand in Marton-in-Cleveland, Yorkshire, England. Cook worked as a farmhand alongside his father as he grew up, and had the first real exposure to the life on sea when he turned 18. Cook received an offer for apprenticeship from a Quaker ship-owner in Whitby, England when he came of age. This apprenticeship proved to be a life changing experience for Cook, and he developed intimate relation with the ships and the sea.
3. The apprenticeship with the Quaker ship-owner was just a beginning to a long and eventful career on the high seas. James Cook dreamt of joining the British Navy, and this desire eventually led him to joining the same a few years later. He showed great skill and fortitude during his life in the navy, and this resulted in Cook being promoted to the rank of ship's master by the time he was 29 years of age.
4. James Cook shone in his role as a ship's master in the British Navy, and this became even more apparent during the Seven Years War, which lasted from 1756 to 1763. During the war, Cook served the Royal Navy by commanding a captured ship with great success. However, his real claim to fame lay far away from the hustle and bustle of naval warfare, in the field of exploration to the far edges of the known world during the latter half of the eighteenth century.
5. James Cook was chosen to command the first scientific expedition to ever head for the Pacific Ocean. This was a monumental endeavor because of the limited knowledge in hand during those times regarding the geography of the region. Cook's ship was aptly named HMS Endeavor to reflect upon the mammoth efforts

made by the captain and crew to extend the horizon of knowledge regarding the world.

6. James Cook discovered and charted New Zealand in 1770 on his ship the HMS Endeavor, and this was in addition to the discovery and exploration of the Great Barrier Reef of the coast of Australia. The Great Barrier Reef was an incredible feat because of the fact that its infamy as one of the most dangerous areas to navigate for any ship.
7. James Cook returned to England after having completed his scientific expedition. However, he was soon chosen for a mission to circumnavigate and explore the Antarctica. On this voyage, Captain Cook charted a number of islands that exist in the Pacific such as Tonga, Easter Island, New Caledonia, the South Sandwich Islands, and South Georgia. Apart from that, he also disapproved the existence of the mythical southern supercontinent, Terra Australis.
8. James Cook also made valuable contribution towards improving the health condition of sailors while on long expeditions by trying to control scurvy, which is caused by vitamin deficiency, and was a huge problem for sailors. He sought to do so by feeding his crew a meal consisting of watercress, sauerkraut, and orange extract.
9. James Cook met his demise while fighting a skirmish with the islanders of Kealahou Bay, Hawaii, during a winter layover on February 14, 1779.

Questions

1. James Cook is famous as a –
 - a) Explorer and pirate
 - b) Explorer and navigator
 - c) Admiral and navigator
2. Which among the following is not a famous achievement of James Cook?
 - a) Discovering New Zealand
 - b) Discovering and charting the Great Barrier Reef

- c) Discovering Antarctica
3. Under whom James Cook did do his first apprenticeship?
- a) A naval officer
 - b) His father, a farmhand
 - c) A Quaker ship-owner
4. What role did James Cook play as a naval officer during the Seven Years War?
- a) He was the admiral of the Royal Navy
 - b) He commanded a captured ship for the Royal navy
 - c) He took no part in the war
5. Where did James Cook head during his first scientific mission and on which ship?
- a) The Atlantic, HMS Excalibur
 - b) The North Sea, HMS Enterprise
 - c) The Pacific, HMS Endeavor
6. What is the name of the fabled southern supercontinent whose existence James Cook refuted through his explorations?
- a) Terra Australia
 - b) Terra Australis
 - c) Terra Australasia
7. James Cook sought to fight scurvy with a combination of what diet?
- a) Sandwiches, sauerkraut, and orange juice
 - b) Sauerkraut, orange extract, and onions
 - c) Watercress, sauerkraut, and orange extract