Lesson One, Handout Three

What to do: Read the following adapted passage from R.H. Dana's <u>Two</u> <u>Years Before the Mast</u>. Ask students to answer the questions that follow in their sea journals.

LAYING OFF THE COAST OF SANTA BARBARA: RICHARD HENRY DANA

"This wind (the **south-easter**) is the bane of the coast of California.*

Between the months of November and April, which is the rainy season in this latitude, you are never safe from it. Therefore, in ports, such as this one, which are open to the wind, vessels are obliged to lie at anchor at a distance of three miles from shore with **slip ropes on their cables**, ready to slip and go to sea at a moment's notice. The only ports which are safe from this wind are San Francisco and Monterey in the north, and San Diego in the south."

*South-easters are a concern south of Point Conception. North of the point, north-westerly winds are most common.

Vocabulary:

south-easter: strong wind blowing from that direction

slip ropes on their cables: the ship is tied to the anchor cable with a line which is easily untied in order to 'slip' the anchorage quickly in case of emergency