**Activity: Writing a Lighthouse Keeper’s Log**

**Objective:**

Students will apply their knowledge of Great Lakes shipping, weather conditions, and the duties of lighthouse keepers to create a log entry for a lighthouse keeper in the early 1900s.

**Introduction (10 minutes):**

1. **Discussion:**
   * Imagine living at a lighthouse in the Great Lakes region in the early 1900s, What challenges might you face? How has technology evolved? What would you observe every day?
   * Provide Background on US Lighthouse Service,
     + [Lighthouse Keepers (U.S. National Park Service)](https://www.nps.gov/articles/lighthouse-keepers.htm)
     + [Lighthouses of the National Park Service (U.S. National Park Service)](https://www.nps.gov/articles/lighthouses-of-the-national-park-service.htm)
     + [Fresnel Lens (U.S. National Park Service)](https://www.nps.gov/articles/fresnel-lens.htm)
   * Review key topics:
     + The role of lighthouses in Great Lakes shipping.
     + Common goods shipped, such as copper, iron ore, and timber.
     + Weather conditions unique to the Great Lakes (e.g., sudden storms, fog, ice, gales). Could include historic storms such as, The Great Lakes Storm of 1913, Edmund Fitzgerald.
     + Duties of lighthouse keepers (maintaining the light, recording events, aiding ships in distress, working with US Life-Saving Service).
2. **Explain the Activity:**
   * Write a daily log entry as the lighthouse keeper at the Eagle Harbor Lighthouse. Create a log entry for a date of your choosing in the early 1900s.
   * The log should include:
     + Observations of shipping traffic (e.g., copper-laden ships heading to industrial ports, AM/PM).
     + Weather conditions (e.g., "dense fog rolled in by noon").
     + Challenges faced (e.g., equipment malfunctions, storm preparedness, isolation).

**Activity (20-30 minutes):**

1. **Preparation:**
   * Provide students with a template for a log entry.
2. **Reference (Optional):**
   * Watch the Eagle Harbor Lighthouse tour [video](https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=544E3889-939D-4B15-837F-2AAA0F6AE594).
   * Share a short text or visual with details about Great Lakes shipping in the 1900s and common lighthouse activities.
   * Primary sources, lighthouse keeper logs
3. **Writing the Log:**
   * Students use the template to draft their entry.
   * Encourage creativity but emphasize historical accuracy.



**Examples to Inspire Students:**

1. **Example Log Entry 1:**
   * **Date:** November 12, 1902  
     **Weather Conditions:** A bitter cold wind swept in from the northwest, with ice forming on the lake's edge. Gale conditions predicted.   
     **Shipping Traffic Observed:** The *SS Copper Queen* passed by mid-morning, carrying copper from Michigan’s Keweenaw Peninsula to Detroit.  
     **Duties Performed:** Cleaned and refueled the light. Polished the Fresnel lens to ensure maximum brightness.  
     **Challenges or Events:** The fog bell malfunctioned during the afternoon; spent two hours repairing it. A schooner sounded a distress call near midnight—assisted with communication using the signal lamp.
2. **Example Log Entry 2:**
   * **Date:** June 5, 1901  
     **Weather Conditions:** Clear skies with a gentle breeze; the lake was calm.  
     **Shipping Traffic Observed:** Two freighters, one carrying timber and the other copper, passed southbound.  
     **Duties Performed:** Checked the lighthouse foundation for storm damage. Raised the flag for fair weather.  
     **Challenges or Events:** None today, though the loneliness is heavy with no visitors this week.

**Debrief (10 minutes):**

1. **Share and Discuss:**
   * Students read their entries aloud or share with a partner.
   * Discuss what they learned about the life of a lighthouse keeper and how shipping relied on their work.
2. **Reflection:**
   * What would have been the most challenging part of being a lighthouse keeper? What would you have enjoyed?