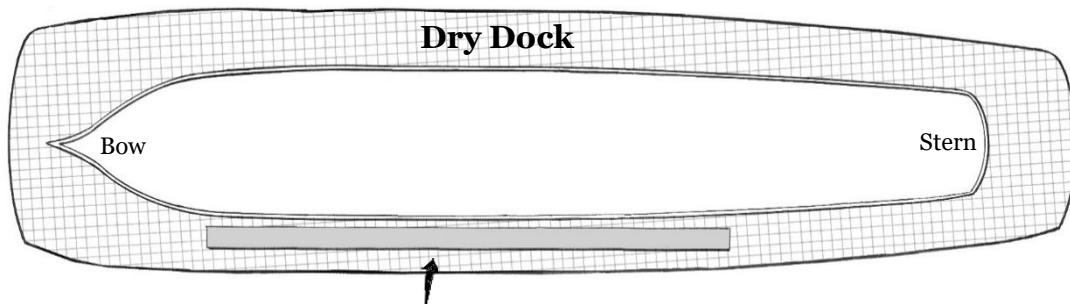


🌀 Dry Dock – Explorers Under the Glass Sea 🌀 🌀 Adult Guide 🌀

- The Dry Dock was built in 1839 for the construction of the SS Great Britain.
- Hundreds of people would have worked in this space building the ship.
- The SS Great Britain was launched from here on 19 July 1843.
- It was the first ship to have both an iron hull and a screw propellor.
- The ship returned to the Dry Dock on 19 July 1970 and has been here ever since.
- The glass roof and dehumidifiers were added in 2005 to help conserve the ship.



Start here - you can walk either way around the ship.

Before you start: remind your group to stick together and take care when walking around the Dry Dock. The ground is uneven and slippery in places.

➤ The tasks from the children's sheet are in **bold**.



Feel the air coming out of the pipes under the ship, what is it like?

A machine called a dehumidifier blows warm, dry air around the ship's hull to stop it rusting further. It helps to make the Dry Dock as dry as a desert. There are two dehumidifiers, one in the Dry Dock and one on the ship.

Can you spot the screw propellor?

Designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel it helped to make the SS Great Britain one of the fastest ships in the world. This one is a replica of the six-bladed screw propellor that Brunel designed for the SS Great Britain. Behind the propellor is the balanced rudder which was turned by the ship's wheel to make the ship change direction.



Look for holes in the SS Great Britain. What might have caused them?

The ship is made from iron. When you leave iron in water for a long period of time it goes rusty and starts forming holes.



What shapes can you see on the hull of the SS Great Britain?

Alongside the rectangular iron plates, the small circles visible on the hull are made by rivets (similar to bolts) which hold the plates together.

Cranes on the dockside would have lowered the large iron plates into the dry dock and there would have been small furnaces around the dock to heat up the rivets for the ship's construction.

Can you find the ship's anchor?

This is one of the ship's original anchors from 1852. It would have been one of up to three the ship carried.



Estimate how many rivets you would need to build the SS Great Britain.

It took at least 100,000 rivets; we don't know the exact number because no-one kept count when they were building!
There are also approximately 1000 iron plates.



How do you think the ship left the Dry Dock?

At one end of the Dry Dock is the caisson, this is a metal barrier that separates it from Bristol Harbour. Before the launch, the caisson was slowly removed, and the dock was flooded with water to float the ship. Once this had happened, they could pull the floating ship out. There would have also been pumps on the side of the dock to pump water into the Dry Dock as well to pump the water back out.



You can discover more about the Dry Dock by scanning this QR code and watching videos featuring Mr Brunel and Nicola, our ship's conservation engineer.



<https://www.ssgreatbritain.org/activities-and-learning-resources/videos/>