

Firefighting in 19th Century America

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What should my class do before we visit?

1. **Discuss.** Ask your students, “What is a Museum?”
2. **Brainstorm.** They will be visiting a room in the museum that has old fire vehicles. How do they think they will be different than today’s fire engines?
3. **Review.** Learn the vocabulary words listed below.

Vocabulary

Firefighter	A person whose job is to put out fires.
Carriage	A mode of transportation used before cars were invented.
Bucket Brigade	A method of putting out fires. Two lines are formed between a water source (lake, river, well). One line passes water to the fire and the other line passes empty buckets back to the water source.
Gooseneck Pumper	A 19 th century fire fighting vehicle. Fire fighters would raise and lower levers to pump the water through the hose and finally the nozzle.
Steam Pumper	A 19 th Century vehicle that used steam instead of manpower to pump the water onto the fire.
Hose Carriage	A wheeled vehicle used to carry long, heavy hoses to the fire.
Trumpet	A metal instrument which fire fighters would shout directions through so that everyone could hear.

Related Reading

“Firefighters A to Z”	Demarest, Chris L. (Pre-K – 2)
“Hercules”	Gramatky, Hardie (Grades 1 and 2)
“New York’s Bravest”	Osbourne, Mary Pope (Grades 2 and up)

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What should my class do after the visit?

1. Have students complete the Color Your Own Adventure sheet below.
2. Conduct a sing-along to the song you learned today! Find the lyrics to one of our favorite firefighting songs below, or create your very own!

Pump Up the Water!
Put Out the Fire!
Pump Up the Water!
Put Out the Fire!
Pump it Up!
Put it Out!
Pump it Up!
Put it Out!
(Repeat)

3. Discover the photograph below. Can you name the vehicle the firefighter is driving?



Nott Horse Drawn Steam Pumper, Freeport, N.Y. 1907.
Photograph courtesy of the Freeport Historical Society & Museum.



HOW WILL YOU PUT OUT THE FIRE?