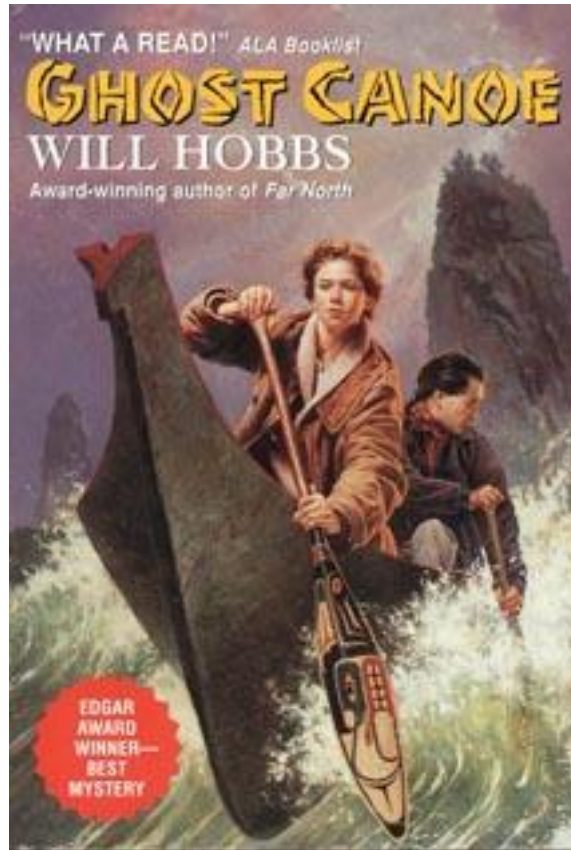


Ghost Canoe

By Will Hobbs

Edgar Allan Poe Award 1998—Best Young Adult Mystery



After a sailing ship breaks up on the rocks off Washington's storm-tossed Cape Flattery, Nathan McAllister, the fourteen-year-old son of the lighthouse keeper, refuses to believe the authorities, who say there were no survivors. Unexplained footprints on a desolate beach, a theft at the trading post, and glimpses of a wild "hairy man" convince Nathan that someone is hiding in the remote sea caves along the coast. With his new friend, Lighthouse George, a fisherman from the famed Makah whaling tribe, Nathan paddles the fierce water of the Pacific—fishing, hunting seals, searching for clues. Alone in the forest, Nathan discovers a ghostly canoe and skeleton that may unlock this mystery of ancient treasure, betrayal...and murder.

ISBN# 0-380-72537-1 Published by Avon Camelot Books, Division of Harper Collins.

Activities to do during reading

- Bring a map of Washington and let children find Cape Flattery at the state's northwestern tip; also find Neah Bay where the Makah live and the trading post in the story was located.
- Show children how a prism bends light and discuss the big first-order lens that once shone from Cape Flattery Lighthouse. (You can buy a plastic prism for just a few dollars.)
- Cape Flattery Lighthouse is 65-feet-tall. Measure out a piece of string 65-feet long—the length Cape Flattery Lighthouse is tall! Find a long hall or go outside. Lay down the 65-foot string and ask kids to walk alongside it, as if they are climbing the lighthouse.
- Make a picture of Cape Flattery Lighthouse in the fog (guide sheet included) and discuss how fog obscures the light and makes a fog signal necessary. Ask children to do some “fog-calling” by imitating foghorns.
- Provide some simple costumes—a hat, book, pencil, and a bucket will do—and allow children to act out a scene at the lighthouse.
- The area around Cape Flattery is rife with red cedars and Douglas firs. If you can obtain real samples of cedar and fir sprigs, cones, and bark, allow children to explore this tree with their senses. Or, give them a book on northwest trees so they can see the needles and cones.
- Make paper canoes and color them. You'll find a guide on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPByzQXtA-I>
- Learn some Chinook Jargon (sample in this kit)
- Visit Will Hobbs author website to learn more about him. (Below)
- Have children color a Makah salmon motif.
- Learn about the Makah tribe, Chief Tatoosh, and whale and seal hunts.
- As culminating activity, when the book is completed, do something special! Have a party with lighthouse-shaped cookies, a lighthouse cake, and drinks. For fun, pretend the cookies are sand dollars found on the beach, or the cake was made by the lightkeeper's wife. Imagine the drink is seawater!

Get to Know the Author—

www.willhobbsauthor.com

Will Hobbs has the following resources and more on his website about *Ghost Canoe*:

National Geographic magazine, Vol. 180, No. 4, October 1991, has an excellent article about the way of life of the Makah before Columbus. (begins on p. 38) It has drawings of whale hunting and even of people pulling planks from living cedar trees, as in my story. You'll want to follow this up with research into the modern Makah today.

Two great reference books would be: Cedar: Tree of Life to the Northwest Indians, by Hilary Stewart, and The Great Canoes, by David Neel. Both are published by the University of Washington Press. The Great Canoes is filled with color photos of the contemporary canoe culture revival in the Northwest, and I think kids would love it.

- You can find more information about the Makah by visiting: www.makah.com
- Topics to explore: lighthouses, clipper ships, the old trading language called Chinook, or Chinook jargon, and of course, anything you can find on Native peoples of the Northwest Coast, both historical and information about the people today.
- Fishing: Compare early fishing techniques with modern ones. Are some species of fish being fished to extinction? What's happening with the salmon today?
- Whales: Research whales, especially the gray whales the Makahs were hunting in this story. How did they become endangered, what is their current status?
- The big trees: What uses did native people make of the giant cedars and other trees of the coastal forests? Has the modern timber industry damaged the coastal environment of the Northwest? Can timber harvesting harm the salmon? How?
- Clues: List all the clues Nathan found throughout the story that helped him solve the mystery of the missing survivor and what the man was looking for.



Sketch of Chief Tatoosh, from the University of Washington Special Collections.

Have fun with Chinook Trade Jargon—

Please note that since the Chinook Jargon is a trade pidgin (mixed language), many of the words in it come from English or French.

<u>English</u>	<u>Chinook Jargon</u>	<u>Origin of Word</u>
One	ikt	From Chinook <i>Ixt</i>
Two	mokst	From Chinook <i>Môkst</i>
Three	klone	From Chinook <i>Lun</i>
Four	lakit	From Chinook <i>Lakt</i>
Five	kwinnum	From Chinook <i>Kwanm</i>
Man	man	From English
Woman	klootchman	Combining Nootka <i>Lóóc</i> , 'female,' with English <i>man</i>
Child	be-be	From French
Canoe	canim	From Chinook <i>Ekanim</i>
Water	chuck	From Nootka <i>Ča'úk</i>

More Chinook words can be found at <http://chinookjargon.home.att.net/gibbsi-fr.htm>.

Make up a set of flash cards to represent each word above. On one side write the Chinook word and its English meaning. On the opposite side, paste or draw a picture to represent the word. For example—



canim

Add words together, such as two + man + canoe, or “mokst + man + canim.”

Historic Images of Cape Flattery to Share



Above, a potlatch at Cape Flattery. Below are keepers in about 1920.





Kids at Cape Flattery circa 1930.



A Coast Guard keeper, his wife, and dog at Cape Flattery in 1944.



Cape Flattery in 2004.

In view in the image at lower left is the Coast Guard's helicopter pad, the lighthouse, and the old fog signal building. The water cistern is the round object next to the helopad. Salal overgrows most of the island. The image in the upper right shows the modern foghorns (lower left against the building addition). Graves of children in the image at lower right, who died on the island in 1908, are surrounded by a picket fence and decorated with daffodils, planted long ago by Coast Guard families.

Today, Cape Flattery Lighthouse is empty. It was automated in 1940 and its great first-order Fresnel lens was removed and placed on display on the waterfront in Seattle. The lens was vandalized and ruined by weather. Only fragments of it remain, in the collection of Seattle's Museum of Labor & Industry. A modern, solar-powered beacon now operates at Cape Flattery. The island, while owned by the Makah tribe, is part of a marine sanctuary off limits to the general public. The lighthouse can be seen from a viewpoint at the end of a plank board trail west of Neah Bay.