Pirate Eye Patches
Fashion statement or practical tool?

Did pirates (and other seafaring folk) wear eye patches due to frequent eyeball-reducing injuries, or as a tool to help them see better when running above and below deck?

This program, suitable for grades K-5, is based off the Discovery Channel show MythBusters¹.

Step 1: Create awesome pirate name (Daisy "Commodore Chops" Quick)

Step 2: Make Eyepatches² (These could also be made ahead of time or purchased.)

Step 3: Wear the patch over one eye while exposed to bright sunlight for a few minutes. During this time you can read a fun pirate story like: Bad Pirate by Kari-Lynn Winters (Pajama Press, 2015)

Step 4: Enter the darkened space and navigate the *obstacle* without moving the eye patch.

*Sample obstacles:*
- Complete an enlarged maze on paper or whiteboard
- Navigate a walking/crawling obstacle made of cardboard
- Pin the tale on the parrot
- Play Operation

Step 5: Spend the same amount of time in the sunlight as the first time.

Step 6: This time, switch the patch to the other eye after entering the darkened space and navigate the obstacle once more.

Step 7: Discuss the experiment results with the pint-sized pirates! Did they notice any difference between navigating the obstacle the first and second time?

The Mythbusters concluded that keeping one eye adjusted for dim light through the use of an eye patch was a valid method for sailors to maintain good vision while working above and below a ship’s deck³.

¹ http://mythbusterstheexhibition.com/try-this-at-home/pirate-eye-patch/
² http://www.instructables.com/id/Make-a-pirate-eye-patch-for-your-kids-or-masquerad/
³ https://www.childrensmuseum.org/blog/why-did-some-pirates-wear-an-eye-patch

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