Discomforts of Travel:
Samuel Kelly, English Sailor, 1787

Historical Context:
Trying to piece together a sense of what life was like for a particular group of people in any given era takes historical thinking skills. Examining multiple sources gives historians a clearer idea of how people lived in the past. As you listen to Samuel Kelly’s first-hand narrative and review the supporting primary sources, you will discover important information about life at sea in the 18th century.

Instructions:
Answer the questions below using the accompanying primary sources found at: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthewater/oral_histories/life_at_sea/kelly.htm.
The questions are designed to help you practice working with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited, but all are authentic. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

Questions:
1. According to Samuel Kelly’s account, what was his primary difficulty and how did he try to solve it?

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2. According to the illustration, who is the central character in the drawing and what do you think the two standing characters are saying to him?

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3. Based on your examination of the map and a review of Samuel Kelly’s first-person account, when did this voyage occur and why do you think the American sailor would not give him detailed piloting information?

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