

# Lighthouses: Lighting The Way

## All about lighthouses

A lighthouse is a building that shines a bright light out to sea to warn ships and boats that they are nearing land. They help people at sea navigate. Lighthouses are important because they help people to know where they are and to avoid hazards like rocks, reefs or cliff sides. Lighthouses are normally built on raised points of land such as cliffs or at entrances to harbours so that they can be easily seen.

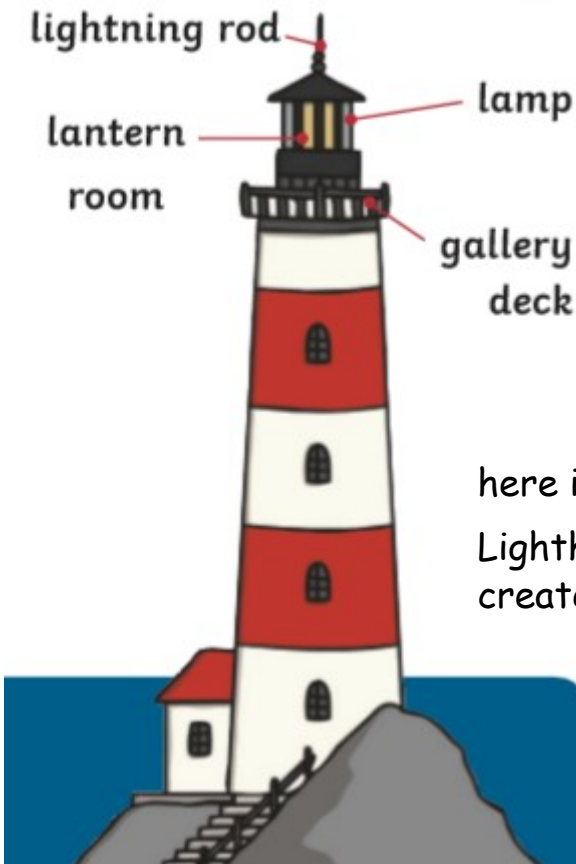
## Lighthouses through time

To begin with, sailors were warned that they were nearing land by fires that were lit on top of hills.

People realised that the fires would be more easily seen if they were raised high up on platforms, leading to the design of the lighthouse. The first known lighthouse was built in Egypt but this was destroyed by an earthquake.

By the time lighthouses were built in England, the lighthouses were made from stronger more weatherproof materials. The first British lighthouse was built in Devon! We have more than 100 lighthouses here in the UK but they are expensive to maintain and very few are still in use today.

Lighthouses that are in use today are believed to be safer because they use electricity to create light, rather than creating light from lamps burning oil or candles. However there are fewer lighthouses now because there is less need for them where people can now navigate using newer technology. However, the lighthouse still remains a powerful and important symbol of hope to many who travel at sea.



A drawing of the first lighthouse:

The Lighthouse of Alexandria