

Robert Louis Stevenson

Treasure Island



free Audiobook



Robert Louis Stevenson

Treasure Island

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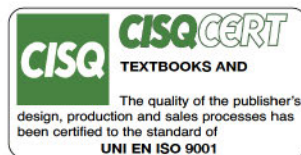
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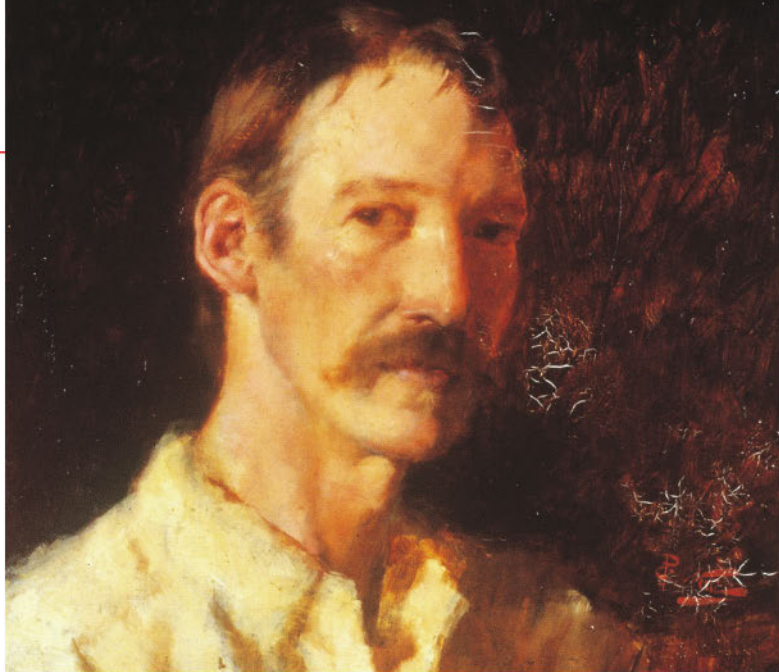
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These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the passages linked to the listening activities.



Robert Louis Stevenson (1892) by Girolamo Pieri Nerli.

Robert Louis Stevenson

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-94) was born in Edinburgh. He studied law at Edinburgh University. He suffered from lung problems all his life but despite this was a great traveller and adventurer. He toured France and Belgium in a canoe and wrote about his adventures there in *An Inland Voyage* (1878). The following year he went to California, where he married Mrs Fanny Osborne. His novels include *Treasure Island* (1883), *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), *Kidnapped* (1886), *The Black Arrow* (1888), and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889). In 1888, Stevenson left Britain because he hoped that a warmer climate would improve his health. He never returned. After sailing around the Pacific islands, he settled in Samoa. He became very interested in Polynesian culture and angry about European imperialism in the islands. During his last years in Samoa his health improved, and he wrote a lot. His best work from this period are two

novellas – *The Beach at Falesà* (1893) and *The Ebb-Tide* (1894) – set in the South Seas; both expressed his passionate opposition to European imperialists who destroy beauty for profit.

Stevenson originally wrote *Treasure Island* to entertain his wife's son Lloyd. It was published in parts in a boys' magazine from October 1881 to January 1882 then appeared in book form in 1883. Although Stevenson himself did not consider the book among his best or most serious novels, it has always been and still is the most popular. It has been made into films, musicals, and television series. There is even a *Treasure Island* pirate game based on the characters in the novel.

Some people believe that the song that the pirates sing in the novel is based on a true story:

Fifteen men on the Dead Man's Chest

Yo ho ho, and a bottle of rum!

Edward Teach (c. 1680-1718), a pirate captain who was also known as Blackbeard (see page 58), abandoned a group of sailors on Dead Man's Chest Island in Deadman's Bay on Peter Island near Tortola in the Caribbean. He gave each man a bottle of rum. The island had no fresh water, and the Caribbean sun was very hot. A month later Teach returned to find that fifteen men had survived. The story and the song still fascinate audiences today: *Dead Man's Chest* is the name of the second *Pirates of the Caribbean* film with Johnny Depp.

1 Comprehension check

Answer the questions.

- 1 Where was Stevenson born?
- 2 Why did he leave Britain in 1888?
- 3 Where did he go to live?
- 4 Why did Stevenson write *Treasure Island*?

The Characters



Ben Gunn

Doctor Livesey

Billy Bones

Squire Trelawney

Jim

Long John Silver

PET 1 Book reviews

The people below are looking for a book to buy.

Below there are some reviews of different books by Robert Louis Stevenson. Decide which book (letters A-E) would be the most suitable for each person (numbers 1-3).

- 1 ☐ Patrick has a very boring job in an office, and every holiday he travels to some exciting, distant country. But he does not just go swimming in blue seas and walking about tourist places. He wants to know about the real life of the people that he meets and their problems. He always takes excellent and serious photos of the people that he meets.
- 2 ☐ Sylvia lives in New York City, and she loves crime and mystery stories. She likes knowing about the bad things that people do for money, for power and even for love. But she prefers mysteries with friendly detectives who always catch the criminal: she doesn't want to be too scared.
- 3 ☐ Sheila lives in small old town in northern Scotland, and she loves to imagine the past of this town. She especially likes reading about the old families — their loves and hates and battles. In other words, she wants to learn about history but in an entertaining way.

A Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

The models for this philosophical story were the popular, inexpensive thrillers of the period. It tells us about crime and horror in the streets of nighttime London. But Stevenson does more: he also gives us an exciting look at the good and evil in all of us.

B Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes

This is one of the first books that presents hiking as a recreational sport. The author describes a 12-day hike through the Cévennes mountains in France with a donkey named Modestine — an important character in the book. The young Stevenson also gives many pleasant and accurate descriptions of the people.

C In the South Seas

This book was not at all successful when it came out. Stevenson fans expected his usual poetic style and imagination. This book,

though, has more in common with good modern investigative journalism. He shows us how the Europeans changed the lives of the peoples living in the islands of the South Pacific.

D The New Arabian Nights

This collection of short stories presents mysteries of the dark and criminal side of London. These mysteries are solved by the intelligent and elegant Prince Florizel. These stories show us the playful and fun-loving side of this great Scottish writer.

E The Master of Ballantrae

This novel tells the story of the conflict between two Scottish brothers: one good and the other evil. It takes place in 1745, an important moment in Scottish history. The story is entertaining and contains a lot about history. But today many people like this book because of the interesting literary techniques used by Stevenson.

Before you read

1 Vocabulary

Match each word (1-9) to the correct picture (A-I). Use a dictionary if you need help.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|------------|---------|
| 1 pigtail | 2 cliffs | 3 sword | 4 scar | 5 bacon |
| 6 coins | 7 chest | 8 chest | 9 shoulder | |



A



B



C



2

Listening

track 02

PET

You will hear about a boy called Jim Hawkins and a strange man who came to his family's inn, the Admiral Benbow. For each question, fill in the missing information in the numbered space.

The Sea Captain

His appearance

His hair was (1)

His coat was (2)

His meals

He drinks (3)

He eats (4)

His payment

He paid Jim's father with some (5)

His habits

During the day he looked for (6)

In the evening, he drank but he didn't (7)
very much.



CHAPTER ONE

The Captain

My name's Jim Hawkins, and my story begins in the year 1761, when I was eleven years old. My father and mother had an inn¹ called The Admiral Benbow by the sea near Bristol.² One day an old sea captain came into our inn. His skin was dark brown from the sun, and there was a scar on his face. His long hair was tied back in a pigtail. He wore a dirty blue coat, and under it he carried a sword.



track 02

'Give me some rum,' he said.

My father poured him a glass of rum and watched as he drank it slowly.

'This is a nice little place,' said the captain. 'Do you get much business?'

'Unfortunately, no,' my father replied.

'Good,' said the captain. 'I'll stay here a while. I'm a simple

1. **inn** : a small hotel which is also a pub.

2. **Bristol** : a city in the south-west of England. In the eighteenth century Bristol was a busy port and a centre of trade and shipping.





man. I eat eggs and bacon, and I drink rum.’ He put some gold coins on the bar. ‘Tell me when I’ve spent all that, and I’ll give you some more,’ he said.

He was very quiet. All day he walked on the cliffs by the sea, listening to the waves crashing¹ on the rocks below and looking out for ships through his telescope. All evening he sat in the bar beside the fire and drank rum. People tried to talk to him, but he usually didn’t reply. Soon we learned to leave him in peace. Sometimes he sang quietly to himself an old sailor’s song that started like this:



end

*Fifteen men on the Dead Man’s Chest,
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!*

I couldn’t understand the words of the song. Did ‘chest’ mean a sea-chest like the captain’s — a big box for carrying his clothes and other things — or did it mean the top part of the dead man’s body, around his heart?

Every evening, when he came back from his walk, the captain asked if any sailor had come into the inn during the day. At first we thought he wanted company of people like himself, but then we realised that he didn’t want to see other sailors. Whenever one came into the bar, he was even more silent than usual.

One day he gave me a silver coin. ‘I want you to watch out for a sailor with one leg,’ he said. ‘I’ll give you another silver coin on the first day of every month if you watch out for a man like that.’

Some nights, I dreamed that the sailor with one leg was running after me. They were terrifying dreams.

1. **crashing** : making a loud noise as they hit.

When winter came, my father fell ill. My mother and I were very busy doing all the work of the inn and taking care of my poor father, so we didn't have time to pay much attention to the captain.

The captain was out as usual on the cliffs one cold morning when a sailor came into the Admiral Benbow. He was a strange pale¹ man with two fingers missing from one hand. 'Is my friend Billy Bones here?' he asked.

'I don't know your friend Billy Bones,' I replied.

'He's an old sea captain with a scar on his face.'

'Yes, he's staying here. He's out now, but he'll be back soon.'

'I'll wait for him.'

When the captain came in, he seemed shocked and angry to see his visitor. 'Black Dog!' he cried.

'Yes, it's me, your old friend Black Dog.'

'Well?' cried the captain. 'You've found me. Now — what do you want?'

'I want to drink a glass of rum with you, Bill, and talk.'

The captain sent me to get the rum then told me to leave them in peace. I went into the next room and listened, but at first they spoke quietly, so I couldn't hear what they were saying. After a while, though, they started to shout at each other. The captain cried 'No! Never!' then I heard the sounds of chairs and tables falling to the floor. I ran into the bar and saw that the captain and Black Dog were fighting with swords. Suddenly, Black Dog let out a cry of pain. The captain had cut him on the shoulder. Black Dog ran through the door and down the road.

1. **pale** : without much colour in his face.



‘Get me some more rum, Jim,’ said the captain.

His face was very pale, and he looked ill. When I came back with the rum, I found him lying ¹ on the floor. Just then, the doctor came to see my father. We carried the captain up to his room. The doctor said, ‘He drinks too much rum. It will kill him in the end.’

The next day, when I took some food to his room, the captain said to me, ‘I must get away from here, Jim. Black Dog and the others want to kill me — especially the sailor with the wooden leg. They want my sea-chest. They’re bad men, and they want to steal my treasure map. It’s mine! Old Flint gave it to me before

1. **lying** : in a horizontal position.



he died! I was the first mate ¹ on Captain Flint's ship, and Black Dog and the others were the crew. ² They want that treasure, and they'll kill me to get the map! But first they'll give me the Black Spot. They always give you the Black Spot before they kill you. Help me, Jim. Watch out for them, and tell me if you see them, and I'll give you half the treasure!'

That night my poor father died. In the days that followed, my mother and I were very sad. At the same time we were very busy organising the funeral and doing all the work at the inn. The captain came downstairs during the day. We gave him his meals

1. **first mate** : the second in command of a ship, after the captain.
2. **crew** : the people who operate the ship.



CHAPTER ONE

as usual, but he didn't eat much. He drank rum and sang his ugly old song, even on the night before my father's funeral. He didn't speak to me, and I think he had forgotten the things he had told me when he was ill.

On the day after the funeral, a blind man came to the inn. 'Take me to the captain,' he said.

'I can't,' I replied.

The blind man held my arm so tightly that I cried out in pain. 'Take me to him now!' he cried in a cold cruel voice. I took him into the bar where the captain was drinking rum.

'Hello, Bill,' he said. 'I have something for you. Hold out your hand.'

The poor captain looked very pale and held out his hand. The blind man put something in it — a strange piece of paper cut into a circle — then he turned and left us quickly.

The captain looked at the circular piece of paper in his hand. On one side, it was completely black. On the other side the words, 'Tonight at ten o'clock' were written in small letters. I knew that this must be the Black Spot the captain had mentioned.

'Ten o'clock!' he cried. 'That's six hours from now! I can escape before they come to kill me!' But, as he spoke, his face went even paler, and he fell over, dead, at my feet.

I had never liked the man, but, when I saw that he was dead, I burst into tears.¹ It was the second death I had known, and I was still very sad about the first one.

1. **burst into tears** : suddenly began to cry.



Go back to the text

PET 1 Comprehension check

For each question, choose the correct answer — A, B, C or D.

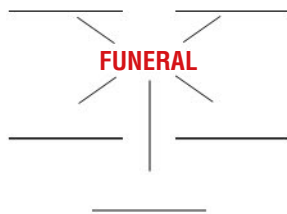
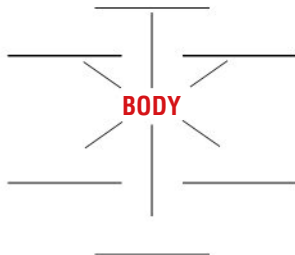
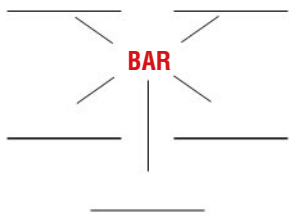
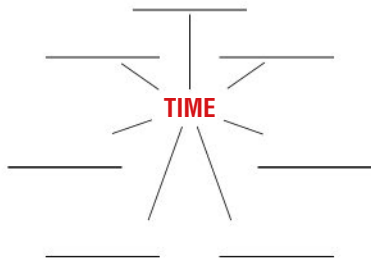
- 1 The captain chose to stay at the Admiral Benbow because
 - A ☐ it didn't cost much to eat and sleep there.
 - B ☐ few people came there and the food was good.
 - C ☐ he could watch the sea from the cliffs and few people came there.
 - D ☐ he could watch the sea from the cliffs and he liked Jim.
- 2 Every day the captain asked if a sailor had come to the inn because
 - A ☐ he wanted the company of another sailor like himself.
 - B ☐ he was waiting for important news.
 - C ☐ he knew that his enemies were looking for him.
 - D ☐ a sailor was bringing him his sea-chest.
- 3 Black Dog came to see Billy Bones because
 - A ☐ he wanted to take Billy Bones's money.
 - B ☐ he wanted the treasure map.
 - C ☐ he wanted Billy Bones to help him find the treasure.
 - D ☐ he wanted Billy Bones to protect him from the blind pirate.
- 4 A good translation of the 'Black Spot' is
 - A ☐ 'We are going to kill you if you don't help us.'
 - B ☐ 'We are going to kill you if you don't pay us.'
 - C ☐ 'We are going to kill you at this time.'
 - D ☐ 'Run away or we will kill you.'
- 5 Jim took the blind man to Billy Bones because
 - A ☐ the blind man hurt him badly.
 - B ☐ Jim didn't like Billy Bones.
 - C ☐ the blind man gave him some gold coins.
 - D ☐ Jim thought that the blind man was Billy Bones' friend.
- 6 Billy Bones died because
 - A ☐ he was so afraid of dying.
 - B ☐ he was hurt by Black Dog.
 - C ☐ he drank too much at the funeral of Jim's father.
 - D ☐ he ran away from the Admiral Benbow.

- 7 Jim cried when Billy Bones died because
- A ☐ he had become good friends with him.
- B ☐ he felt sorry for him.
- C ☐ he still felt very bad about his father's death.
- D ☐ he was afraid.

2 Vocabulary

Fill in the word maps with the words in the box. The words must be related to the central word. There are seven words you do not need to use. All the words come from this chapter.

pain ill drink face tonight month leg fingers
captain sailor shoulder pour bottle glass mate
dead death tears died cry rum cut scar day
morning evening skin hour hand sword year kill



Before you read



track 03

PET

1 Listening

Listen to the first part of Chapter Two. Choose the correct picture and put a tick (✓) in the box.

1 Where does Jim want to go with his mother?

A ☐B ☐C ☐

2 What time is it?

A ☐B ☐C ☐

3 What does Jim's mother want to take from the sea-chest?

A ☐B ☐C ☐

4 What was the man in front holding?

A ☐B ☐C ☐