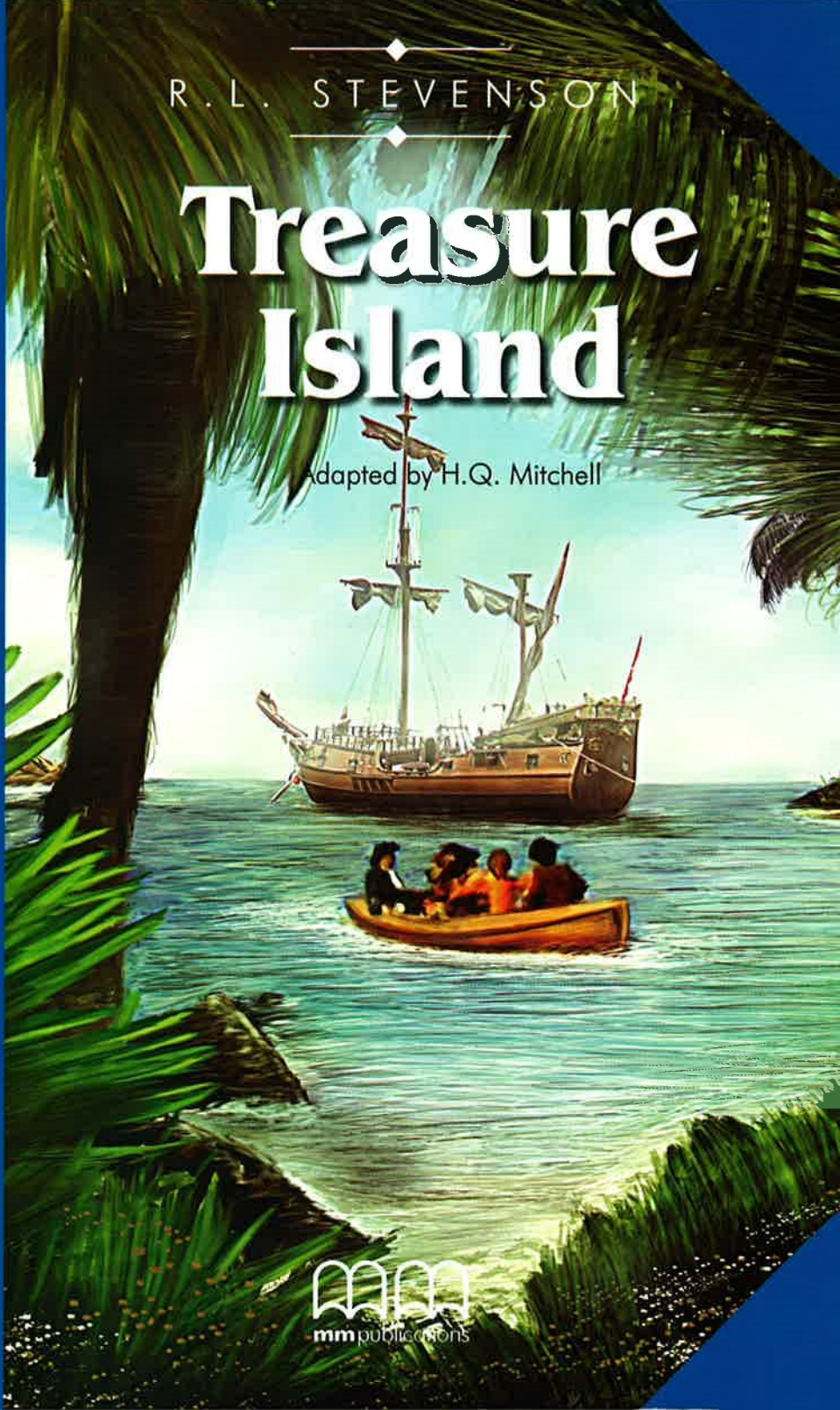
TOP READERS

level 3

R. L. STEVENSON

Treasure Island

Adapted by H.Q. Mitchell



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Introduction

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1850. His father wanted Robert to become an engineer, but ill-health forced him to choose another career, and he studied law. Dissatisfied with the lifestyle this offered, he decided to become a professional writer.

Treasure Island was published in 1883. It was his first success and proved to Stevenson that he could be a successful writer. Critics consider it a "coming of age" novel in which a young person fights to become mature and self-confident. Stevenson's first idea for the novel came to him after he had spent a rainy afternoon in the Scottish Highlands with his stepson drawing a map and talking about pirates.

The most important message of the novel is that, if good people trust and help each other, they will beat those who are selfish and cruel.

Today the book is still in print and there have been over 50 film adaptations of the story, including Walt Disney's 2007 animated version, *Treasure Planet*.

Stevenson is equally well-known for other books, particularly the famous novels *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1883) and *Kidnapped* (1886).

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Contents

Chapter 1 4
Chapter 2 8
Chapter 3 12
Chapter 4 17
Chapter 5 22
Chapter 6 26
Chapter 7 31
Chapter 8 36
Chapter 9 40
Chapter 10 46
Chapter 11 50
Chapter 12 55

Activity Section 61
Chapter 1 62
Chapter 2 64
Chapter 3 66
Chapter 4 68
Chapter 5 70
Chapter 6 72
Chapter 7 74
Chapter 8 76
Chapter 9 78
Chapter 10 80
Chapter 11 82
Chapter 12 84
Extra Activities 86

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CHAPTER 1

THE ADVENTURE OF TREASURE ISLAND STARTED WITH A mysterious guest called the Captain. Jim Hawkins remembers the day the man arrived as if it was yesterday. It was the year 17–, and Jim was working at the 'Admiral Benbow' inn. The 'Admiral Benbow' was on the coast of England, in a lonely spot. The customers were usually local people, but this stranger was obviously not from any nearby town. He was tall, strong, and heavy, with dark brown skin. His long hair hung over the back of his dirty blue coat in a pigtail and there was an ugly white scar on his face. Behind him, he dragged an old chest. Jim supposed he had been a sailor once, and watched him curiously.

"Much business here, madam?" he asked Jim's mother, looking along the shore.

"No, I'm afraid not!" Mrs Hawkins answered, sadly. The inn barely made enough money to support Jim and his mother, a widow.

The sailor looked pleased. "I'll stay here," he said. "I'd like breakfast every morning, and a room from where I can watch the sea. You can call me the Captain," he added. This was the only name for him they ever learned. The Captain rarely talked to them. He passed the time walking along the shore, or in his upstairs room, watching the sea. Once he gave Jim a silver coin, and told him to "watch out for a sailor with only one leg." At first Jim thought that the Captain was lonely and was hoping for some other sailors to visit, but soon he realised that the Captain was afraid of this one-legged man. In fact, he avoided any sailor who came to the 'Admiral Benbow'.

In the evenings, however, the Captain often joined the locals downstairs in the inn, and told stories of his days at sea – stories of robbing and sinking ships, of bloody murders, and the horrible punishments that pirates used, such as making people walk the plank. His most frightening stories were about Captain Flint, a pirate famous in England and all over the world. Flint was dead

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now, but he had robbed so many ships and murdered so many people that just hearing his name frightened the villagers. Jim was afraid that the Captain would keep people away from the inn. Once they got used to him, however, they found the Captain quite interesting. After all, nothing very exciting had ever happened until he came to the 'Admiral Benbow.' As for Jim, he was not afraid of the Captain. However, he often wondered about the one-legged man the Captain was watching for. This one-legged sailor seemed to be one of the two men that the Captain was afraid of. The other one was Dr Livesey.

Dr Livesey was an old friend of Jim's family. One evening he came to dinner. There were quite a few guests at the 'Admiral Benbow' that evening, all eating and talking together. The Captain was there too. Jim noticed the difference between the doctor, who had tidy clothes, a clean white wig and pleasant manners, and the Captain. As usual, their guest wore his dirty coat, and his white scar showed horribly on his red face. Suddenly, the Captain hit his hand on the table. This was the signal for people to stop talking, because he was ready to tell one of his stories. Silence fell over the room. Dr Livesey, however, ignored the Captain and continued talking with Mrs Hawkins. The Captain stared at him in surprise, then shouted: "Silence there!"

"Were you addressing me, sir?" the doctor asked politely.

"Yes, I was!" the Captain shouted back. To show he was serious, he pulled out a knife and pointed it at the doctor.

"I have just one thing to say to you," Dr Livesey replied, in a calm voice. "I am not just a doctor, but also a magistrate. Put that knife in your pocket right now, or you will be arrested immediately and hanged before the end of the month."

The Captain and Dr Livesey stared at each other for several long moments. Jim held his breath. Nobody had ever dared stand up to the Captain before! Then suddenly, with a short laugh, the Captain put his knife away and sat down. Dr Livesey turned to Jim's mother and continued his conversation as if nothing had happened. The Captain stayed very quiet that evening.

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CHAPTER 2

JIM AND HIS MOTHER SOON WISHED THAT THE CAPTAIN WOULD leave the inn, because he never paid his rent. Whenever Jim's mother asked for money, he looked very angry and she was too frightened to say anything to him. The Captain continued to give Jim a silver coin every month, however, to watch out for the one-legged man. But the winter months went by, cold and rainy, and few people came to the inn.

Then early one January morning a stranger walked in the door. Two fingers were missing on his left hand, and he carried a sword. But he looked nervous rather than fierce. Jim asked the man if he wanted anything.

"Is my mate Bill staying here?" he asked.

"I don't know your mate Bill," Jim replied. "Our only guest is someone we call the Captain, and he is out walking."

"Well, my mate Bill was a captain once," said the man with a short laugh. He took Jim tightly by the arm. "Come hide behind the door with me and we'll give him a surprise!" Jim did not think the Captain would be happy to see this man at all.

Suddenly the Captain walked through the door, slamming it. "Bill," the stranger called out nervously, and the Captain turned and stared.

"Black Dog!" he said, very pale as he sat down on a chair. "What do you want?" Black Dog let go of Jim and walked towards the Captain.

"I'm here for the rest of the crew," Black Dog replied. "We know you have Flint's map, and now we've found you. We want our fair share."

The Captain stared at him, and then at Jim. "Get out of here!" he shouted. "And don't listen in on us!" Jim didn't need to be told twice. He ran to the kitchen, wondering what the men were talking about and what would happen next. Suddenly he heard the sound of fighting. Jim went to look, and saw Black Dog running out the door. He thought the Captain would chase him, but instead he sat

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CHAPTER 1

Comprehension

1 **Decide if the following statements are True or False. Write T or F in the boxes.**

1. Jim Hawkins had an ugly white scar on his face. ☐
2. Captain Flint was a guest at the 'Admiral Benbow' inn. ☐
3. Jim was not afraid of the Captain. ☐
4. Dr Livesey was wearing nice clean clothes. ☐
5. Dr Livesey threatened someone with a knife. ☐

2 **Choose a, b or c to complete the following sentences.**

1. The 'Admiral Benbow'
   - **a.** was by the sea
   - **b.** made a lot of money for Mrs Hawkins
   - **c.** was the name of a local town

2. The Captain spent a lot of time
   - **a.** watching out for a man with one leg
   - **b.** counting his silver coins
   - **c.** walking along the shore

3. Dr Livesey was
   - **a.** a guest at the inn
   - **b.** a family friend
   - **c.** Jim's father

4. The Captain hit his hand on the table when
   - **a.** he wanted silence in the room
   - **b.** he wanted to stop a conversation
   - **c.** Dr Livesey attacked him

5. Dr Livesey told the Captain to
   - **a.** give the knife to him
   - **b.** stop talking
   - **c.** put away the knife

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Vocabulary

3 **Complete the sentences using the words in the box.**

rarely widow punishment villagers guests several suddenly

1. Mark has different types of trainers in_____ colours.
2. The_____in Bishopston are very pleasant neighbours.
3. The hotel has a swimming pool for its_____.
4. When I was at school, I_____went to parties.
5. Unfortunately, my aunt's husband has died and she is a _____.
6. His_____for stealing a car was one year in prison.
7. As we were walking to the park, it_____began to rain.

4 **Find words in Chapter 1 to match the definitions below. The first letter has been given for you.**

1. the land next to the sea c_____ (page 4)
2. round shaped metal used as money c_____ (page 4)
3. when there isn't any noise s_____ (page 6)
4. a type of judge m_____ (page 6)
5. to keep doing something c_____ (page 6)

Follow-up activities

5 **Discuss.**

1. Why do you think the Captain chose to stay at the 'Admiral Benbow' inn?
2. Is an inn a suitable place for a child to grow up? Why? / Why not?
3. Jim notices a big difference between the Captain's and Dr Livesey's appearance. Do you think it is right to judge people by their appearance? Why? / Why not?
4. Why do you think the Captain is so afraid of the one-legged sailor?

6 **Imagine you are Jim keeping a diary. Write a page in your diary after the Captain's arrival at the 'Admiral Benbow'. (60-80 words)**

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