

Elite Comprehension: Treasure Island

In the mid-18th century, an old sailor who identifies himself as "The Captain" starts to lodge at the rural Admiral Benbow Inn on England's Bristol Channel. He tells the innkeeper's son, Jim Hawkins, to keep a lookout for "a one-legged seafaring man". Black Dog, a sailor, recognises the captain as his former shipmate Billy Bones, and confronts him. They get into a sword fight; Black Dog flees, and Bones suffers a stroke. That night, Jim's father dies. Days later, Pew, a blind beggar, visits the inn, delivering a summons to Bones called "the black spot". Shortly thereafter, Bones suffers another stroke and dies. Pew and his accomplices attack the inn but are attacked and routed by mounted excise officers, and Pew is trampled to death by one of their horses. Jim and his mother escape with a packet from The Captain's Sea chest, which is found to contain a map of the island on which the infamous pirate Captain Flint hid his treasure. Jim shows the map to the local physician Dr. Livesey and the squire John Trelawney, and they decide to make an expedition to the island, with Jim serving as a cabin boy.

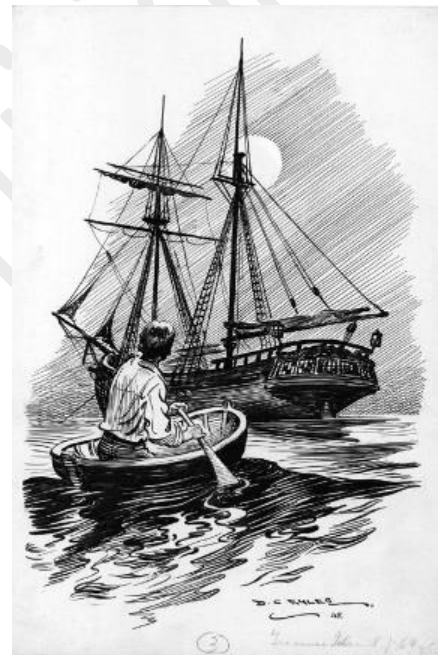


They set sail from Bristol on a schooner chartered by Trelawney, the *Hispaniola*, under Captain Smollett. Jim forms a strong bond with the ship's one-legged cook, Long John Silver. The crew suffers a tragedy when first mate Mr. Arrow, a drunkard, is washed overboard during a storm. While hidden in an apple barrel, Jim overhears a conversation among the *Hispaniola*'s crew which reveals that many of them are pirates who had served on Captain Flint's ship, the *Walrus*, with Silver leading them. They plan to mutiny after the salvage of the treasure, and to murder the captain and the few remaining loyal crew. Jim secretly informs Captain Smollett, Trelawney, and Livesey.

Arriving at the island and going ashore, Jim flees into the woods after witnessing Silver murder a sailor. He meets a marooned pirate named Ben Gunn, who is also a former member of Flint's crew. The mutineers arm themselves and take the ship, while Jim and Smollett's loyal band take refuge in an abandoned stockade on the island. After a brief truce, the mutineers attack the stockade, with casualties on both sides of the battle. Jim makes his way to the *Hispaniola* and cuts the ship from its anchor, drifting it along the

ebb tide. He boards the ship and encounters the pirate Israel Hands, who had been injured in a drunken dispute with one of his companions. Hands helps Jim beach the schooner in the northern bay, then attempts to kill Jim with a knife, but Jim shoots him dead with two pistols.

Jim goes ashore and returns to the stockade, where he is horrified to find only Silver and the pirates. Silver tells Jim that when everyone found the ship was gone, Captain Smollett's party had agreed to a truce whereby the pirates take the map and allow the besieged party to leave. In the morning, Livesey arrives to treat the wounded and sick pirates, and tells Silver to look out for trouble once he's found the site of the treasure. After a dispute over leadership, Silver and the others set out with the map, taking Jim along as a hostage. They find a skeleton with its arms oriented toward the treasure, unnerving the party. Ben Gunn shouts Captain Flint's last words from the forest, making the superstitious pirates believe that Flint's ghost is haunting the island. They eventually find a treasure cache, but it is empty. The pirates prepare to kill Silver and Jim, but they are driven off by the doctor's party, including Gunn. Livesey explains that Gunn had already found the bulk of the treasure and taken it to his cave, long ago. The expedition members load this portion of the treasure onto the Hispaniola and depart the island, with Silver as their only prisoner. At their first port, in Spanish America, Silver steals a bag of money and escapes. The remaining crew sail back to Bristol and divide up the treasure. Some treasure was never found, but Jim refuses to return to the "accursed" island to look for it.



1. What does Jim's decision to inform Captain Smollett about the mutiny suggest about his character?
 - A) He is loyal and courageous.
 - B) He is fearful and indecisive.
 - C) He is selfish and manipulative.
 - D) He is easily influenced by others.
2. Why might Long John Silver have chosen to befriend Jim early in the voyage?
 - A) To gain his trust and manipulate him later.
 - B) Because he genuinely liked Jim.
 - C) To impress the rest of the crew.
 - D) To keep an eye on him for the captain.

3. What does Pew's death by being trampled suggest about the consequences of a life of piracy?
 - A) It indicates that pirates are immune to normal dangers.
 - B) It suggests that justice is always served to criminals.
 - C) It implies that Pew was careless and unworthy of his position.
 - D) It shows that pirates often meet unpredictable and violent ends.
4. Why is the discovery of the empty treasure cache significant to the pirates?
 - A) It represents the futility of their quest and the consequences of greed.
 - B) It proves that Ben Gunn had outwitted them.
 - C) It shows that the treasure was never real.
 - D) It demonstrates that the treasure was moved by Captain Smollett.
5. What can be inferred about Captain Flint's influence on his former crew, based on their fear of his ghost?
 - A) Flint was not well-liked but had a significant influence.
 - B) Flint was a deeply feared and respected leader.
 - C) Flint's crew believed he had supernatural powers.
 - D) Flint's leadership was based on superstition rather than skill.
6. Why might Dr Livesey and Squire Trelawney have decided to bring Jim along on the expedition?
 - A) They saw potential in him and wanted to mentor him.
 - B) They needed someone expendable for dangerous tasks.
 - C) They wanted to ensure his safety by keeping him close.
 - D) They thought he could help negotiate with the pirates.
7. What does the interaction between Jim and Ben Gunn reveal about Jim's ability to adapt to new situations?
 - A) Jim is resourceful and quick to form alliances.
 - B) Jim is hesitant to trust others and slow to act.
 - C) Jim is overconfident and reckless.
 - D) Jim is easily manipulated by those around him.
8. Why might Jim be horrified to find only Silver and the pirates at the stockade?
 - A) He fears that his friends have been killed.
 - B) He understands that the truce has been broken.
 - C) He realises he is now in grave danger.
 - D) He is upset that Silver has betrayed him.
9. What does the pirates' willingness to make a truce with Captain Smollett suggest about their situation?
 - A) They were desperate and running out of options.
 - B) They respected Smollett and wanted to negotiate peace.
 - C) They believed Smollett had the upper hand.
 - D) They were planning to betray the captain later.
10. Why does Jim's decision to cut the ship from its anchor reveal about his character?
 - A) He is impulsive and willing to take risks.
 - B) He is reckless and does not think things through.
 - C) He is strategic and understands the importance of timing.
 - D) He is desperate and acting out of fear.

11. What might be the reason behind Jim showing the map to Dr Livesey and Squire Trelawney instead of keeping it to himself?
- A) He trusts them to help him find the treasure.
 - B) He is afraid of what might happen if he keeps it secret.
 - C) He wants to ensure the treasure is found and shared fairly.
 - D) He is unsure of the map's significance and needs their advice.
12. Why does Silver's decision to take Jim hostage indicate about his leadership?
- A) Silver values strategic advantages over brute force.
 - B) Silver is desperate and sees no other option.
 - C) Silver believes Jim can be easily manipulated.
 - D) Silver wants to use Jim to bargain with the loyal crew.
13. What does Jim's reaction to killing Israel Hands suggest about his growth throughout the story?
- A) He regrets his actions and wishes there was another way.
 - B) He is indifferent to the death of his enemies.
 - C) He is proud of his ability to defend himself.
 - D) He has become more hardened and capable of violence.
14. Why might Captain Smollett agree to the truce with the pirates, knowing they are untrustworthy?
- A) He sees it as a temporary solution to buy time.
 - B) He believes the pirates will honour their word.
 - C) He is too weak to continue fighting.
 - D) He wants to use the truce to trap the pirates later.
15. What does the eventual escape of Long John Silver with a bag of money suggest about his character?
- A) Silver feels guilty and wants to start a new life.
 - B) Silver is ultimately motivated by self-preservation.
 - C) Silver has a secret plan to retrieve the treasure later.
 - D) Silver is satisfied with a small portion of the treasure
16. What does the term "mutiny" most likely mean in the context of the story?
- A) A sudden rebellion against authority.
 - B) A secret alliance among the crew.
 - C) A planned voyage.
 - D) A formal meeting.
17. The word "marooned" in the story most likely refers to:
- A) Being captured by pirates.
 - B) Taking refuge on a safe island.
 - C) Being stranded alone in an isolated place
 - D) Escaping from danger.

18. What does the term "truce" imply in the context of the conflict between the loyal crew and the pirates?
- A) A temporary cessation of hostilities.
 - B) A permanent peace agreement.
 - C) A deceptive tactic used by the pirates.
 - D) A friendly negotiation.
19. In the context of the story, the word "schooner" most likely refers to:
- A) A large treasure chest.
 - B) A secret pirate code.
 - C) A naval rank.
 - D) A type of ship.
20. What does the word "stockade" most likely mean in the context of the story?
- A) A hidden cave.
 - B) A pirate's hideout.
 - C) A storage area for supplies.
 - D) A defensive barrier or fortification.

Difficult Inference Multiple Choice Questions

1. A
2. A
3. D
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. A
8. C
9. A
10. A
11. C
12. A
13. D
14. A
15. B
16. A
17. C
18. A
19. D
20. D

Explanations

A - He is loyal and courageous.

Jim's decision to inform Captain Smollett about the planned mutiny shows that he is loyal to the legitimate crew and courageous enough to take a stand against the pirates, even though it puts him at risk.

A - To gain his trust and manipulate him later.

Long John Silver befriends Jim to gain his trust, knowing that having Jim on his side could be strategically beneficial, especially if he needs to manipulate him for information or as a bargaining chip.

D - It shows that pirates often meet unpredictable and violent ends.

Pew's death by being trampled reflects the often violent and unpredictable fate that befalls pirates. It illustrates the dangers of the pirate lifestyle, where death can come in unexpected ways.

A - It represents the futility of their quest and the consequences of greed.

The empty treasure cache is a powerful symbol of the futility of the pirates' greed-driven quest. Despite all their efforts and sacrifices, they are left with nothing, highlighting the theme of the emptiness of greed.

B- Flint was a deeply feared and respected leader.

The pirates' fear of Flint's ghost shows that Flint had a profound psychological hold over them, indicating that he was a leader who inspired both fear and respect, even after his death.

A - They saw potential in him and wanted to mentor him.

Dr Livesey and Squire Trelawney likely see potential in Jim and decide to bring him along on the expedition as a way to guide and mentor him, helping him grow through the experience.

A - Jim is resourceful and quick to form alliances.

Jim's quick decision to ally with Ben Gunn after meeting him in the woods shows that he is adaptable and resourceful, able to form alliances that will benefit him in difficult situations.

C - He realises he is now in grave danger.

Jim's horror upon finding only Silver and the pirates in the stockade reveals his realisation that he is now in serious danger, as the odds have shifted against him and his allies.

A - They were desperate and running out of options.

The pirates' willingness to make a truce suggests they were in a desperate situation, possibly running out of resources or facing an untenable position, making them more open to negotiation.

A - He is impulsive and willing to take risks.

By cutting the ship from its anchor, Jim demonstrates impulsive behaviour, showing that he is willing to take significant risks in order to gain an advantage or escape danger.

C - He wants to ensure the treasure is found and shared fairly.

Jim shows the map to Dr Livesey and Squire Trelawney because he trusts them and wants the treasure to be found and distributed in a just manner, rather than keeping it to himself.

A - Silver values strategic advantages over brute force.

Silver's decision to take Jim hostage indicates that he values strategic moves over direct confrontation, using Jim as a bargaining tool to gain leverage over the loyal crew.

D - He has become more hardened and capable of violence.

Jim's reaction to killing Israel Hands shows that he has become more capable of violence as the story progresses, reflecting his growth and hardening in response to the harsh realities he faces.

A - He sees it as a temporary solution to buy time.

Captain Smollett likely agrees to the truce as a strategic move to buy time and regroup, knowing that the pirates are untrustworthy but seeing no better immediate option.

B - Silver is ultimately motivated by self-preservation.

Silver's escape with a bag of money shows that, despite everything, he is primarily motivated by self-preservation and seizes the opportunity to escape with whatever he can get.

Vocabulary Multiple Choice Questions

A - A sudden rebellion against authority.

The term "mutiny" refers to a sudden rebellion, especially by soldiers or sailors against their commanding officers, which fits the context of the crew planning to overthrow the legitimate authority on the ship.

C - Being stranded alone in an isolated place.

"Marooned" refers to being stranded in a remote and isolated place, as Ben Gunn was left on the island alone, reflecting his abandonment and isolation.

A - A temporary cessation of hostilities.

A "truce" is an agreement between opposing parties to stop fighting for a certain time, which is what the pirates and Captain Smollett's crew agree to in the story.

D - A type of ship.

A "schooner" is a type of sailing vessel with two or more masts, which is the type of ship the characters use to sail to the island.

D - A defensive barrier or fortification.

A "stockade" is a defensive barrier, usually made of wooden posts, used to protect those inside, which is where Jim and the loyal crew take refuge on the island