

Daniel Defoe ROBINSON CRUSOE

At the age of eighteen, Robinson Crusoe, a young Englishman, leaves his family to see the world. One night, there's a terrible storm. His ship goes down and all his friends die. Robinson gets to an island. There are no other people on this island. What will he do all by himself? How will he live? Will he ever see England again? Daniel Defoe's classic story, written in 1719, is considered the first English novel. It's retold here for beginners.

In this reader you will find:

- Information about Daniel Defoe
- Focus on: Atlantic Slave Trade
- A section focusing on Robinson Crusoe in the 20th and 21st Centuries
- Glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension activities
- Exit test

Tag

Classic literature, adventure

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Classic

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A1 Daniel Defoe

ROBINSON CRUSOE

Young Adult  Readers

Classic

Daniel Defoe

ROBINSON CRUSOE



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Book brief

- 1 This novel by Daniel Defoe, first published in 1719, is considered one of the first examples of the English novel and was an immediate success, both in England and then abroad.
- 2 Set in the middle of the 17th century, Robinson Crusoe an Englishman, tells the story of his adventures at sea and then the 28 years he spends on a deserted island.
- 3 Robinson Crusoe has many problems on the island at first, but he soon learns to make things grow, to build for himself, and to live a good life.
- 4 Defoe probably based part of *Robinson Crusoe* on the life of a real person, Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish sailor who lived on a deserted island from 1704 to 1709.
- 5 This novel is also considered the start of realistic fiction as a literary genre. Indeed, at first, many people thought Robinson Crusoe was a real person.

Daniel Defoe

Robinson Crusoe

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ROBINSON
CRUSOE

He tells the story of this adventures at sea and his life on a desert island.



ROBINSON'S
FATHER

A merchant, he wants Robinson to find a good job and stay at home.



ROBINSON'S
MOTHER

She's from a good English family. She doesn't want Robinson to travel the seas.

CHARACTERS



XURY

A slave boy who is with Crusoe in Saltee, Africa.



PORTUGUESE

CAPTAIN

He helps Robinson in Africa and takes him to Brazil.



FRIDAY

A Caribbean native, he becomes Robinson's slave on the island.

Before you Read

Vocabulary

- 1 Choose a word from the box to put under each picture.
Use a dictionary to help you. You will find all these words
in *Robinson Crusoe*.

pirate • island • sand • wave • raft • gun •
hammock • sail • hill • cave • goat • basket • umbrella • savage •
grapes • turtle • grain

PEOPLE



1 p _ _ _ _



2 s _ _ _ _

NATURE



3 i _ _ _ _



4 s _ _ _



5 w _ _ _



6 h _ _ _



7 c _ _ _

THINGS



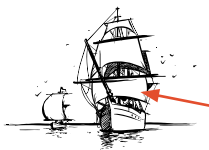
8 r _ _ _ _



9 g _ _ _



10 h _ _ _ _ _



11 s _ _ _



12 b _ _ _ _



13 u _ _ _ _ _

ANIMALS



14 g _ _ _



15 t _ _ _ _

FOOD



16 g _ _ _ _



17 g _ _ _ _

Listening

2 Listen and choose the right answer, A, B or C about Chapter One.

0 Robinson's father was from

A ☐ England.

B ☒ Germany.

C ☐ Scotland.

1 In Hull, Robinson's father bought

A ☐ a house.

B ☐ a wife.

C ☐ a boat.

2 His mother was from

A ☐ Germany.

B ☐ England.

C ☐ America.

3 Robinson had

A ☐ three sons.

B ☐ three brothers.

C ☐ two brothers.

4 Robinson didn't want to

A ☐ leave his town.

B ☐ find a job in his town.

C ☐ travel.

5 Robinson wanted to see the world

A ☐ by road.

B ☐ by sea.

C ☐ in books.

6 One morning, he spoke to his father

A ☐ in his bedroom.

B ☐ in his bathroom.

C ☐ in the living room.

7 His father wanted to help him

A ☐ buy a fast ship.

B ☐ find a good wife.

C ☐ find a good job.

A New Life

- ▶ 2 My name is Robinson Crusoe and I want to tell you about my life. My father was German but came to live and work in Hull, England. He made lots of money with his business and bought a nice house. Then, he met my mother. She came from a good English family called Robinson, and soon they were husband and wife. I came into this world in 1632. Now they had three sons and they called me Robinson. At that time, my family name was 'Kreutznaer'. After many years in England, everybody started to call us 'Crusoe'.

In the 17th century, the most important merchants in Hull sent most of their goods to Holland.

My first brother died and nobody knows anything about my other brother. He went out one day and never came back. My father was very old. He often asked:

'Robinson, my son, will you stay here, please and find a job near home?'

Every time he asked, I didn't answer. My father understood that I wanted to leave my town. He was very sad. I was a good student but I wanted to stop studying and see the world. I didn't want a job at a desk. I wanted to travel the seas and make lots of money.

My father said: 'Robinson, please don't go!'

My mother said: 'Robinson, don't leave your father and I!'

My friends said: 'Robinson, stay here, where you're safe!'

Robinson Crusoe

Did I listen to them? No! It was my life and I wanted to live it!

One morning, my father called me to his room. He was in bed because he wasn't very well. I was only eighteen at the time. I looked at his tired, sad eyes and felt sorry. Again, he asked me to stay at home.

'You don't have to travel the seas to make money,' he said. 'I'll help you find a good job. You'll have a great life here.'

'But father,' I said, 'it's not only for the money. I want to see the world. Can't you understand? I love you and mother, but I have to do this.'

'But you'll have a hard life, my boy. Your life here now, is easy. You aren't rich* but you aren't poor. You've got all you need.'

'I know, but I need more,' I answered.

 **3** On 1st September 1651, I left Hull to go to London on my friend's ship*. I didn't tell my parents. There was a lot of wind and the ship went up and down, up and down. I didn't feel very well. I wanted to go home but I couldn't. I remembered my mother and father and felt sad.

The morning after the storm*, the weather was good. I forgot the difficult night before and started to enjoy my first voyage*. I was excited about seeing London. Then, there was a storm again.

'Robinson,' said my friend, 'we have to leave the ship, it's going down! Come with me. There's a small boat we can use!'

With the small boat, we got to Yarmouth. Here, my friend's father said to me:

'Young man, don't go to sea again, please! After two storms on your first voyage, can't you see it isn't the life for you? We don't want to travel with you again!'

rich with a lot of money
ship big boat

storm very bad weather with wind and rain
voyage travelling by sea



I didn't answer him. I was sorry, but I wanted to go to London. I had some money and travelled to London by road. I stayed there some time and waited for a new voyage.

This time I travelled on a ship to Africa. The captain* was my friend, and I enjoyed talking to him.

He taught me lots about ships, and I was happy to learn these things. This voyage went very well.

In Africa, the people bought some small things from me, so I came back to London with some money. I stayed in London for two or three months, because my friend, the captain, died. One of his friends had a ship, so we left for Africa together. Before I left, I gave the captain's wife some of my money. I also took some money with me on the voyage. But we didn't get to Africa because pirates came and took our ship and all our money. Now, we had nothing. The captain of the pirates took me to his home in Sallee, North Africa, to be his slave* because I was young and could work hard. I thought of my father and mother and wanted to go home; I couldn't. I didn't know that this was only the first of many problems to come.

The captain of the pirates didn't take me on his voyages. He left me at home to work in his garden and in the house. It was all very boring for me. When he came home from his voyages, I had to stay on the ship and clean it. Every evening, I thought about my difficult life and how much I wanted to go home.

After about two years, the captain of the pirates stayed at home all the time because he had no money for his voyages. He liked catching fish and went out in his small boat every week. He often took me and a young boy called Xury, with him.

The Barbary pirates were based in North Africa and they attacked ships in the Mediterranean, south along West Africa's Atlantic coast and into the North Atlantic as far north as Iceland. They took merchant ships and attacked towns on the coast to take slaves.

captain the person who is the head of a ship

slave this person has to work for other people, but he/she doesn't get any money and isn't free



One morning, we went to catch some fish. The weather was good when we left. Then, two hours later, a storm started. Before the storm, we could see the beach. After the storm, there was only the sea. It was difficult to get back to the beach and we didn't get home till late in the evening. From that day, the captain of the pirates stayed at home. When he wanted some fish, he sent me and Xury with one of his friends. One day, he invited some friends for dinner. That morning he told me:

'Go and get some fish for me. Use the big boat. My friend will go with you and Xury. Take some water and biscuits too.'

I started to think: a big boat, water, biscuits... with these things, was it possible for me to leave and never come back? I began to think about the things I needed for a long voyage. I found some tools* and put them in the boat.

We left early in the morning. There was a good wind and the boat went fast. We stopped to catch some fish. I called the captain's friend.

'Look at this big fish!' I said.

He came to see and looked into the water. I was behind him. I kicked him. The next minute, he was in the water below.

'Help! Help!' he said.

I looked at Xury. He looked at me and we were both happy. I was free*. The captain's friend swam well, but he couldn't catch us, so he swam to the beach. We never saw him again. I was so happy and excited. Xury was surprised.

I said, 'Xury, I'll take you with me, but you must be good and help me.'

tools you use these to work or make things

free not a slave

Robinson Crusoe

‘Don’t worry, I’ll work hard for you,’ said Xury.

We travelled for five days. Then one evening, we came to a little river. I wanted to look for water to drink, and waited until it was night. But then we heard the noise of animals, so we waited until morning. The animals came and swam near us. I didn’t know what kind of animals they were. They were very big and there was a lot of noise. We didn’t sleep that night. Morning came and Xury said:

‘I’ll go and look for water. Stay here on the boat where it’s safe.’

‘You’re a good boy, but no, we’ll go together,’ I said.

We found clean water and didn’t see any big animals. I didn’t know what country we were in, only that it was Africa. We didn’t meet any people, so we went back to our boat to start our voyage again. We travelled for 12 days and stopped sometimes for water. By day, we saw nothing and nobody. By night, we heard the noise of the animals. We didn’t have many biscuits and I started to worry. Then, one afternoon, Xury said:

‘Look! A big ship!’

‘Hurrah!’ I said, ‘We’re safe!’

It was a Portuguese ship. They took us on their ship and gave us food and water. I said I was an Englishman. I told them about the captain of the pirates. I also told them about my life when I was a slave and who Xury was.

‘You’re safe now, my friend,’ said the Portuguese captain. ‘You can travel with us. We’re going to Brazil.’

‘But I haven’t got money to pay for the voyage,’ I said.

‘Don’t worry, I don’t want any money,’ said the captain.

‘Thank you, my friend,’ I said.



The captain bought my boat from me and gave me money for Xury too. I was sorry for this, but I needed the money.

‘Don’t worry,’ said the captain. ‘The boy will be free after ten years with me.’

The voyage was fine and we got to Brazil after twenty-two days. In Brazil, a lot of people were rich because they had sugar plantations*. I bought a plantation and started to make sugar. It was a hard life and there weren’t any houses with families near me. I had nobody to talk to. Sometimes, I thought my plantation was a desert* island and I felt sad. I stayed there for four years. Each year, I made a lot of sugar from my plantation and I now had a slave to help me with the work. But, I was bored and wanted to travel again. Eh? I hear you ask. What can I say? I was young... too young. Some other men had plantations. They wanted slaves to work on them.

‘I’ll go to Africa to get the slaves,’ I said. ‘Can you work on my plantation for me? I’ll be back soon.’

They all said yes. I left on 1st September 1659. I was so happy to be on a ship again! I felt free!

At first, the weather was good. Then, there was a big storm for twelve days. The wind and rain drove our ship into the sand at the bottom of the sea, where it stopped. Eleven of us went into a small boat. It was early morning. A big wave came. I was in the water. I thought it was time to die, but I swam and swam. I closed my eyes... then... I was on a beach! A beach! I opened my eyes. I was safe!



plantation big farm

desert (here) with no people



After-Reading Activities • Chapter One

Reading

- 1 Are these sentences about Chapter One right (A) or wrong (B)?

- Robinson Crusoe's mother was German.
- 1 His brothers weren't at home.
2 Robinson wanted to see the world.
3 After the storm, he went to London by boat.
4 The captain of the pirates was Robinson's friend.
5 The Portuguese captain took Robinson to Brazil.
6 Robinson had his sugar plantation for eight years.

A	B
☐	☒
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐

Speaking - Pair Work

21st Century Skills

- 2 Talk to a partner about these questions and write your answers.

- 1 Which countries would you like to visit? Why?

.....

.....

.....

- 2 Would you like to work or study in another town or city? Why?

.....

.....

.....

- 3 What can we learn by visiting other countries?

.....

.....

.....

- 4 What can be difficult about moving to another country?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



Vocabulary

3 Finish the sentences with a word from the box.

river • days • work • sugar • fish • family • business •
money • ~~life~~ • home • world

- In Africa, Robinson had a hard *life*
- 1 His father made a lot of money with his
 - 2 Robinson didn't want a job near his
 - 3 His mother came from a good
 - 4 Robinson wanted to see the
 - 5 Robinson gave the captain's wife some
 - 6 One morning Robinson went to catch some
 - 7 One evening, Robinson and Xury came to a little
 - 8 Robinson bought a plantation and started to make
 - 9 Robinson had a slave to help him with the
 - 10 There was a big storm for twelve

Pre-Reading Activity • Chapter Two

Speaking

4 At the end of Chapter One, Robinson Crusoe is on an island. Answer these questions with a friend. Then read Chapter Two, and see how many of your answers are right.

- 1 Are there other people on the island?
- 2 Are there any animals on the island?
- 3 What kind of fruit is there on the island?
- 4 Is there any clean water to drink on the island?
- 5 Does Robinson like the island?
- 6 Can he catch fish to eat?
- 7 Where will he make his house?