# The Not-So-Jolly Roger

## About the Show

Joe's uncle gives him a mysterious book for his birthday (*The Book*), and when Fred wishes for buried treasure, the boys find themselves on the wrong end of the gun barrel of Edward Teach—more familiarly known as the vicious, infamous pirate Blackbeard.

## Introduction

Studying pirates may seem to be outside of the mainstream curriculum, but students love learning about pirates. Teachers can use this lesson to discuss pirate stereotypes and to help students distinguish myth from reality. "The Not-So-Jolly Roger" episode also explores life at sea in the 18th century.

## Historical Background

During the "Golden Age of Piracy"(1650–1720), pirates pillaged merchant ships and coastal towns, mainly in the Caribbean. Those who owed allegiance to no particular country were known as pirates. On Hispaniola and Tortuga in the Caribbean, pirates earned another name, buccaneers, from the Spanish word *boucans* (a wooden hut they used to smoke meat). Initially, the governors of the Caribbean islands (part of the empires of England, France, Holland, and Portugal) paid the buccaneers to attack Spanish treasure ships (galleons) traveling from South American gold, silver, and gem mines. Instead of sending the stolen cargo to Europe, the governors filled their own treasuries. Eventually, the pirates started keeping the money for themselves.

European governments also paid crews on private ships (privateers) to attack and rob the ships of other nations. Known as corsairs, Muslim privateers plundered ships in the Mediterranean on behalf of the Ottoman Empire from the 15th to the 18th centuries. The stronghold of the corsairs was along the stretch of northern Africa known

### Curriculum Connections

- government
- law
- pirates
- War of 1812

### Subject Areas

- language arts
- social studies



**Historical Background** *continued*

as the Barbary Coast. The young United States became involved with piracy in 1797 when Barbary pirates demanded payment to leave American ships alone. President Thomas Jefferson sent a naval force to defeat the pirates in a war against Tripoli that lasted several years.

Pirate ships carried many cannons and large crews that outnumbered those on merchant ships. The reputation of pirates for brutality was so terrifying that merchant ships sometimes surrendered without fighting. Pirates were known to sail under the national flag of a target ship until they were close enough to attack. Then they hoisted their own flag. Famous pirates, including Blackbeard, (see page 3) fashioned their own flags to inspire more terror.

Pirates preferred gold and silver coins and jewels, but they also took other precious cargo, such as tobacco or sugar, as well as food, drink, tools, and equipment for their ship. If the pirates' ship was inferior to the one they had just captured, they'd move the victims to the pirate ship and keep the other.

Although pirate society was violent, some pirate crews were governed more fairly than other naval crews. The ordinary sailor was often forced into service and kept at sea for long periods of time. Pirate ships often had more equitable rules for punishment, distribution of wealth and provisions, and other behavior.

*Want students to get even more excited about history?*



Check out the pirate adventure for kids at

**www.timewarptrio.com/adventures/jolly/**

**Wordsplosion** and other interactive games to play.

**Plentifax 487**—the ultimate time traveler's guide—gives facts about the way pirates lived, plundered, and more!

**Green Mist Mysteries** invites kids to write their own Time Warp Trio story.

**Cool Books** that kids will love.

**Historical Background** *continued*

### Blackbeard

Blackbeard built a reputation as the most fearsome of pirates. From 1716–1718 he terrorized the South Atlantic Coast and Caribbean. He perfected the technique of attacking in the dim light at dawn or dusk when his ship was hard to see. Legend has it that he burned little pieces of rope in his beard so that when he appeared his head was wreathed in smoke.

Blackbeard's real name was probably Edward Teach. He began as a British privateer but quickly figured out that it was more profitable to keep all the money. The first ship Teach captured as a pirate was *La Concord*, a French-owned slaver of more than 200 tons. He re-named it *Queen Anne's Revenge*, after the monarch who commissioned him as a privateer.

### Women Pirates

There were women pirates, despite the belief that a woman on a ship was considered extremely bad luck. Anne Bonny and Mary Read disguised themselves as men and fought as fiercely as their shipmates. Eventually they were captured, tried, and sentenced to death, but escaped death when they revealed they were pregnant. Other female pirates included Charlotte de Berry, Grace O'Malley, and Chen I Sao.

### Pirate Legends

**Pirates had wooden legs.** The classic novel *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson features Long John Silver, who had a peg leg. Before the modern development of antibiotics, amputation—to prevent infection, which was often fatal—was a common treatment for an arm or leg wound.

**Pirates carried parrots on their shoulder.** It's unclear how this myth got started. After all, how could a pirate slice with his cutlass and swing from the rigging with a parrot on his shoulder? However, there is evidence that parrots were on board many pirate ships.

**Pirates wore a uniform.** Pirates wore whatever they could find or steal. They didn't necessarily wear a red-and-white striped shirt and a kerchief around their neck.

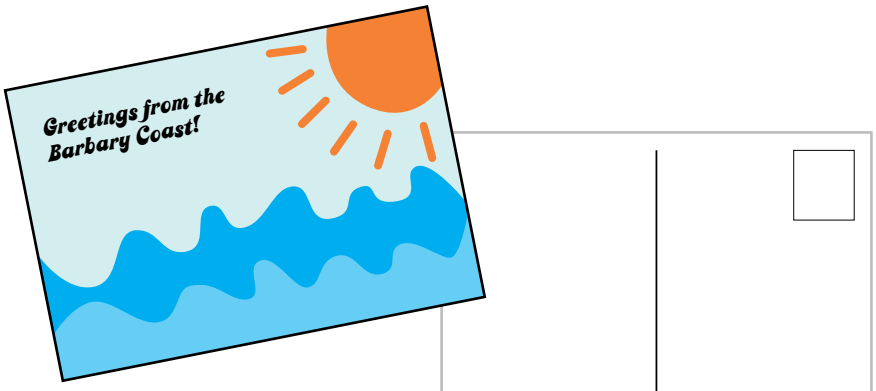
**Pirates made people walk the plank.** Pirates were more interested in seizing goods than in killing their victims. As Sam says in "The Not-So-Jolly-Roger," pirates "don't make you walk planks except in movies."

**Pirates wore black eye patches.** Some probably did. Eye injuries were difficult to treat in those days.

# Activity 1

## Postcard from the High Seas

**Writing to a specific audience is an essential skill for good writers. In this activity, students assemble details about a pirate voyage and choose which details to include on a postcard home.**




### Instructions

1. Tell students that even pirates' parents (or family members) want to hear from them and know that they are safe. It's time to send a postcard home. (Note: you may want to offer students the option of sending the postcard to the school or to a friend.)
2. Have students design the front of the postcard with a scene from their latest pirate voyage. They will first need to choose their location and research what that location (e.g., the Caribbean or the Barbary Coast) looks like.
3. Have students write a brief message and an address on the back of their postcard.
4. Ask volunteers to share their postcard with the class. Have them identify the location pictured on the front. Display students' work on a "Postcards from the High Seas" bulletin board.

### Take It Further

You may want to have classmates respond to each other's original postcards, pretending to be the family member or friend.

### Objectives

- to choose essential details in writing for a specific audience
- to create a visual that is linked to text
- to write and address a postcard
- to define and explain point of view

### Materials

- art and writing supplies
- postcard-sized paper or card stock

### Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**
  *Time, Continuity, and Change:* Students compare and contrast different stories or accounts about past events, people, places, or situations, identifying how they contribute to our understanding of the past.
- **NCTE/IRA**
  Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

# Activity 2




## Articles of Agreement

**In the second half of the 17th century, buccaneers began to develop a set of rules that governed behavior on board ship. These regulations were called by various names—The Pirate Code, Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct, and Articles of Agreement. The ship's company for a particular voyage would sign a document agreeing to the conditions.**

**In this activity, students explore what it means to make—and break—a rule or law.**

### Instructions

1. Have students imagine that they are on board a pirate ship somewhere in the Caribbean. A sticky situation arises and the crew must consult the Articles of Agreement.
2. Distribute the "Articles of Agreement" handout. Have students in small groups study the document and discuss the meaning of each article. Groups may want to "translate" the articles into simpler language or make a chart outlining the provisions of the Articles.
3. Photocopy the "Sticky Situations" handout and cut it up so that each situation is on a slip of paper. Put the slips of paper into a hat, handkerchief, or other pirate-related container.
4. Challenge each group to choose a slip of paper, read the sticky situation, and then decide what the outcome should be. Their decision must include which Article they used to solve the problem and why.
5. At the end of the activity, hold a pirate party! Play (or sing) sea shanties and use play money or gold-covered chocolate coins (be careful of food allergies) to award students for their hard work.

### Take It Further

Have students work together to develop Articles of Agreement for the class. Have students sign the document and post it in the classroom.

### Objectives

- to understand the components of rules or laws
- to apply the rules or laws to situations

### Materials

- "Articles of Agreement" handout
- "Sticky Situations" handout

### Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**
  *Power, Authority & Governance:* Students recognize how groups and organizations encourage unity and deal with diversity to maintain order and security.
  *Civic Ideals & Practices:* Students identify and interpret sources and examples of the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
- **NCTE/IRA**
  Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions of human experience.

The Pirate Code of Bartholomew Roberts

# Articles of Agreement

### ARTICLE I

Every man shall have an equal vote in affairs of moment. He shall have an equal title to the fresh provisions or strong liquors at any time seized, and shall use them at pleasure unless a scarcity may make it necessary for the common good that a retrenchment may be voted.

### ARTICLE II

Every man shall be called fairly in turn by the list on board of prizes, because over and above their proper share, they are allowed a shift of clothes. But if they defraud the company to the value of even one dollar in plate, jewels or money, they shall be marooned. If any man rob another he shall have his nose and ears slit, and be put ashore where he shall be sure to encounter hardships.

### ARTICLE III

None shall game for money either with dice or cards.

### ARTICLE IV

The lights and candles should be put out at eight at night, and if any of the crew desire to drink after that hour they shall sit upon the open deck without lights.

### ARTICLE V

Each man shall keep his piece, cutlass and pistols at all times clean and ready for action.

### ARTICLE VI

No boy or woman to be allowed amongst them. If any man shall be found carrying a woman to sea in disguise he shall suffer death.

### ARTICLE VII

He that shall desert the ship or his quarters in time of battle shall be punished by death or marooning.

### ARTICLE VIII

None shall strike another on board the ship, but every man's quarrel shall be ended on shore by sword or pistol in this manner. At the word of command from the quartermaster, each man being previously placed back to back, shall turn and fire immediately. If any man do not, the quartermaster shall knock the piece out of his hand. If both miss their aim they shall take to their cutlasses, and he that draweth first blood shall be declared the victor.

### ARTICLE IX

No man shall talk of breaking up their way of living till each has a share of £1,000. Every man who shall become a cripple or lose a limb in the service shall have 800 pieces of eight from the common stock and for lesser hurts proportionately.

### ARTICLE X

The captain and the quartermaster shall each receive two shares of a prize, the master gunner and boatswain, one and one half shares, all other officers one and one quarter, and private gentlemen of fortune one share each.

### ARTICLE XI

The musicians shall have rest on the Sabbath Day only by right. On all other days by favor only.

Note: Bartholomew "Black Bart" Roberts was an English pirate from 1718–1722. One of the most successful pirates, he captured more than 400 ships.


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# Sticky Situations page 1

### Sticky Situation 1

The First Mate
decides that he should
have better food
and double the rum of the
regulars on board.

### Sticky Situation 3

Barnacle Bill
goes up on deck to look at
the stars,
but it's so dark he lights
a candle to find his way.
The Captain tells him that
he must swab
the deck an extra time.
Bill is furious.

### Sticky Situation 6

Dangerous Dave
couldn't be found in his
quarters when the ship
was attacked at dawn.
He said he was too sleepy
and didn't hear the
commotion. The company
votes to maroon him and
Dave protests.

### Sticky Situation 2

During a fierce fight,
Fuzzy Beard
is revealed to be a girl!
She's fought so well
that she'd like to join
the crew.

### Sticky Situation 4

Tatters is so excited
about climbing aboard
a Spanish galleon and
helping to defeat the enemy
that he demands a huge
share of the prize.

### Sticky Situation 7

Red has been wounded.
The surgeon amputates
his leg just below the knee.
The Company
wants to put him ashore
at the next port
without pay.

### Sticky Situation 5

Curly Kid spent
his free time playing
poker for money.
He bets his first share
of plunder and loses it.
Now he'd like to get
reimbursed.

continued on next page


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# Sticky Situations page 2

### Sticky Situation 8

It's Friday night
and Bangles is tired.
He doesn't feel like
playing his fiddle,
but the Captain insists.
What should
Bangles do?

### Sticky Situation 9

Johnny claims
he's the best pirate
on board and Patches
disagrees.
They start fighting
until the Quartermaster
tells them to
go get their pistols.
Suddenly Patches wants
to apologize.

### Sticky Situation 10

It's dawn
and an enemy ship is
approaching but
Cool Hand Luke
says he can't join the
fighting. He forgot
to clean his pistols
after yesterday's fight.

### Sticky Situation 11

While unloading the
treasure, Slippery Sam
pockets an emerald.
When it falls out,
the Captain says he's
dropping Sam off
at the next deserted
island. Sam pleads to
stay on board.

## Sticky Situations

Answer Key

**1**
Shiver me timbers, he's wrong.
Everyone shares food and drink equally.
(Article I)

**2**
Sorry, mate. No boys or women are
allowed on board.
(Article VI)

**3**
Bill had better control his temper.
Lights out on deck after 8 p.m.
(Article IV)

**4**
You know better than that, Tatters.
Only the quartermaster and the captain
receive a double share of the treasure.
(Article X)

**5**
Sorry, Curly. No one is allowed to play dice
or cards for money.
(Article III)

**6**
Dangerous Dave, farewell.
Anyone who deserts the ship or his
quarters in time of battle can be punished
by death or marooning.
(Article VII)

**7**
Red is entitled to get $800
out of the Common Stock.
(Article IX)

**8**
Play on! Musicians
could only rest on Sunday. Otherwise they
could be made to perform.
(Article XI)

**9**
Too late.
Once one pirate strikes another,
they must end their quarrel with pistols
or a sword fight.
(Article VIII)

**10**
Luke's in trouble.
You need to keep your weapons clean and
ready at all times.
(Article V)

**11**
It's going to be lonely on that island.
If anyone steals from the company,
he will be marooned.
(Article II)


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# Resources

## Recommended Books

### For Teachers

***The History of Pirates*** by Angus Konstam. (Lyons Press, 2002)
A thorough portrait of the world of pirates, with maps, photographs, and illustrations.

***The Pirate Wars*** by Peter Earle. (Thomas Dunne Books, 2005)
A critical look at 250 years of piracy, from Cornwall to the Caribbean, and the realities of the pirate life.

***Under the Black Flag: The Romance and Reality of Life among the Pirates*** by David Cordingly. (Harvest Books, 1997)
An authoritative guide to pirates—their lives, legends, and appeal.

### For Students

#### Fiction

***The Ballad of the Pirate Queens***
by Jane Yolen. (Voyager Books, 2000)
The story of Anne Bonney and Mary Reade—two 18th century women who became pirates—told as a rollicking ballad.

***The Barefoot Book of Pirates***
by Richard Walker. (Barefoot Books, 2002)
This anthology of tales contains stories about pirates from around the world.

***The Man with the Silver Oar***
by Robin Moore. (HarperCollins, 2002)
In 1712, Daniel, a young Quaker from Philadelphia, stows away on his uncle's ship—bound for the high seas in search of pirates.

***The Not-So-Jolly Roger***
by Jon Scieszka. Illustrated by Lane Smith. (Puffin, 1991)
The Trio must figure out how to escape from Blackbeard, the meanest pirate of them all.

***Peter and the Starcatchers***
by Dave Barry. (Disney Editions, 2004)
Inspired by J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan,* this story features an orphan named Peter, a ship called The Never Land, the evil King Zarboff, and a feisty girl named Molly. For older readers.

***Pirate Diary Journal of Jake Carpenter***
by Richard Platt. (Candlewick Press, 2003)
Set in 1716, this is the story of 9-year-old Jake's adventures when pirates capture the ship he and his uncle are traveling on. The illustrations and oversized format add to the appeal.

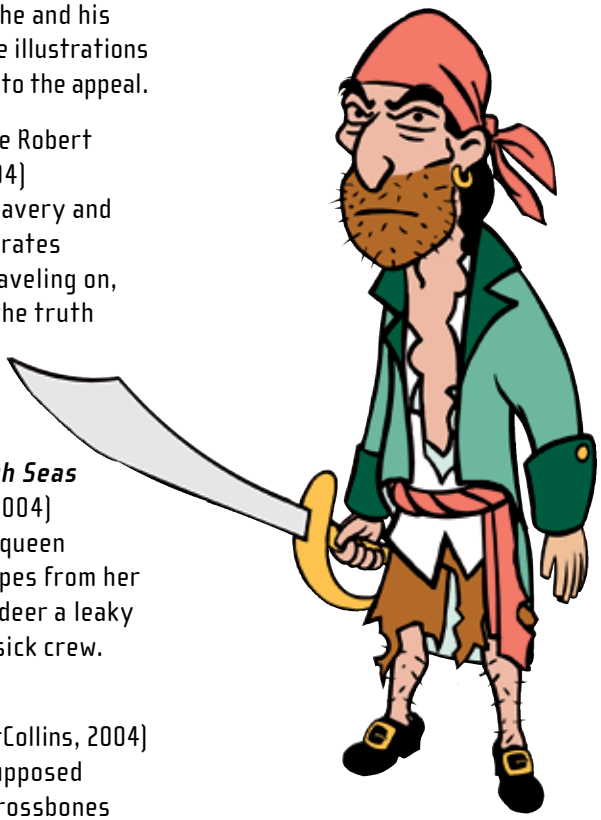
***Pirate's Promise*** by Clyde Robert Bulla. (HarperTrophy, 1994)
Tom has been sold into slavery and sent to America. When pirates capture the boat he is traveling on, he is surprised to learn the truth about the pirate life.

***Piratica: Being a Daring Tale of a Singular Girl's Adventure Upon the High Seas***
by Tanith Lee. (Dutton, 2004)
The daughter of a pirate queen —or so she thinks—escapes from her stuffy school to commandeer a leaky boat and a curiously seasick crew.

***Roger the Jolly Pirate***
by Brett Helquist. (HarperCollins, 2004)
An amusing tale of the supposed origin of the skull-and-crossbones pirate flag, told in picture book format.

***The Thirteenth Floor***
by Sid Fleischman. (Yearling, 1997)
A magical elevator takes Buddy and his lawyer sister 300 years into the past, where they must find the hidden treasure aboard a pirate ship. See also *The Giant Rat of Sumatra* and *Pirates Galore* by the same author.

***Treasure Island***
by Robert Louis Stevenson. (Signet, 1998)
When young Jim Hawkins becomes the owner of a treasure map, he must deal with the ruthless pirate known as Long John Silver.



# Resources

## Nonfiction

***100 Things You Should Know about Pirates*** by Andrew Langley. (Mason Crest, 2003)
A humorous look at pirates, with facts, trivia, and more.

***Life Among the Pirates*** by Stuart Kallen. (Lucent Books, 1999) The Way People Live series.
This history features period drawings and illustrations. See also *Pirates* by Stephen Currie (Lucent Books, 2001), which includes primary sources.

***Piracy & Plunder*** by Milton Meltzer. (Dutton, 2001)
The true story about pirates, then and now.

***Pirates*** by Gary L. Blackwood. (Benchmark, 2002)
A look at notable pirates and their activities over four centuries.

***Pirates*** by Richard Platt. (Knopf, 1994)
Eyewitness Books series.
Presents facts and artifacts about pirates, from ancient Greece to the 19th century.

***The Pirate's Handbook: How to Become a Rogue of the High Seas*** by Margarette Lincoln. (Puffin, 1998)
Information, arts and crafts, and illustrations present a detailed look at pirate life.

***What if You Met a Pirate?*** by Jan Adkins. (Roaring Brook, 2004)
Maps and illustrations help reveal the facts behind the fiction about pirates.

## Web Sites

**HISTORY DETECTIVES: TEXAS CITY, TEXAS**
**pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/case/texas.html**
A spyglass, reputedly handed down from pirate Jean Lafitte to his ship's captain, is donated to a Texas library. Is the claim true or false?

**ISLE OF TORTUGA**
**geocities.com/Tokyo/Garden/5213**
This site contains many links to articles about pirates and piracy.

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**
**nationalgeographic.com/pirates/index.html**
This site offers facts and fiction about pirates. A related site (nationalgeographic.com/silverbank) offers a virtual tour of an ill-fated Spanish galleon that sank on the shoals of Silver Bank, near the Dominican Republic.

**PIRATES AND PRIVATEERS**
**cindyvallar.com/piratelinks.html**
A wealth of information about pirates, including a virtual tour of the ship used in the movie *Master and Commander*, and information about weapons, medicine, nautical words, and more.

**PIRATES OF COLONIAL TIMES**
**homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/explore/pirates.htm**
Lessons and information for children, as well as links to pirate sites for kids.

**QUEEN ANNE'S REVENGE**
**www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/qar**
Learn about salvage, preservation, and historical interpretation efforts for an early 18th-century shipwreck believed to be the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, Blackbeard's flagship, discovered in North Carolina in 1996.

**TIME WARP TRIO**
**www.timewarptrio.com**
This site for kids includes interactive games, fascinating facts, and booklists that help make the past alive.

**Please note:**
Although these sites were verified at the time of publication, Web site addresses and content are frequently subject to change.

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