

Robinson Crusoe



By

Daniel Defoe

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

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Revisions Completed in 2022

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Suggestions and Expectations

This novel study is based on the complete and unabridged version of Robinson Crusoe printed by Aladdin Classics, which consists of a total of Thirty Three Chapters.

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on three chapters of *Robinson Crusoe* and is comprised of five of the following activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *anagrams*
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Determining alphabetical order
12. Identification of root words
13. Identify/create *similes*

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Create an Information Card
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

Who has not dreamed of life on an exotic isle, far away from civilization? Here is the novel which inspired countless imaginations by lesser writers, none of which equal the power and originality of Defoe's famous book. Robinson Crusoe, set ashore on an island after a terrible storm at sea, is forced to make do with only a knife, some tobacco, and a pipe. He learns how to build a canoe, make bread, and endure endless solitude. That is until, twenty-four years later, when he confronts another human being. First published in 1719, Robinson Crusoe has been praised by such writers as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Samuel Johnson as one of the greatest novels in the English language. (The Publisher)

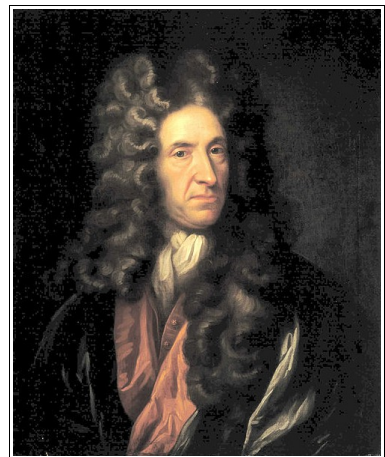
A complete synopsis can be found here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robinson_Crusoe

Author Biography

Daniel Defoe

Daniel Defoe (Born ca. 1660–1661, Died 24 April 1731)

Born **Daniel Foe**, was an English trader, writer, journalist, pamphleteer and spy, now most famous for his novel **Robinson Crusoe**. Defoe is notable for being one of the earliest proponents of the novel, as he helped to popularize the form in Britain, and, along with others such as Samuel Richardson, is among the founders of the English Novel. A prolific and versatile writer, he wrote more than 500 books, pamphlets and journals on various topics (including politics, crime, religion, marriage, psychology and the supernatural). He was also a pioneer of economic journalism.



Courtesy of Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Defoe

Robinson Crusoe



By Daniel Defoe

Name: _____

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Chapter 1-3



Before you read the chapter:

If you were stranded alone on a desert island, what would be your first three priorities and why?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

contrary	discourse	called	forward
terrible	amazement	excellent	answer

1. My father, a wise and grave man, gave me serious and _____ counsel against what he foresaw was my design.
2. I was sincerely affected with this _____, and, indeed, who could be otherwise?
3. "A capful d'you call it?" said I; "'twas a _____ storm."
4. The sixth day of our being at sea we came into Yarmouth Roads; the wind having been _____ and the weather calm, we had made but little way since the storm.
5. By this time it blew a terrible storm indeed; and now I began to see terror and _____ in the faces even of the seamen themselves.
6. Then all hands were _____ to the pump.
7. My comrade, who had helped to harden me before, and who was the master's son, was now less _____ than I.
8. We parted soon after; for I made him little _____, and I saw him no more.

Questions



Part 1 - Chapter 1

1. What was Robinson describing when he said “... *he had found, by long experience, was the best state in the world, the most suited to human happiness, not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings of the mechanic part of mankind, and not embarrassed with the pride, luxury, ambition, and envy ...*”

2. What promise did Robinson give his mother in order for him to receive a blessing from his father to go out on his first voyage?

- b. What was the outcome of his request at the end of the chapter?

--

Part 2 - Chapter 2

1. Describe the setting of chapter two.

2. What kind of ship did Robinson say stood the best chance of surviving the storm?

--

3. As the storm grew more violent, what did the Master, the Boatswain and many others do that Robinson found to be rather sensible under the circumstances?

Part 3 - Chapter 3

1. What famous Bible story did the master's son compare their dangerous voyage to, and what were the reasons for this comparison?

- b. What was the master's son's advise to Robinson?

2. What decision did Robinson's come to after thinking hard about his future?.

Language Activity



A. There are many writers that enjoy using **alliteration** - a literary device is where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example of an alliteration: "... screeching, screaming, shrieking about something or other."



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The sound of rain falling.	
The sound of rustling leaves.	
The sound of water flowing.	

B. A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. Here's an example from chapter two: *Now I saw plainly the goodness of his observations about the middle station of life, how easy, how comfortably he had lived all his days, and never had been exposed to tempests at sea or troubles on shore; and I resolved that I would, **like** a true repenting prodigal, go home to my father. .”*



What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) A dog barking at a bird in a tree.

--

b) A farmer milking his cows.

--

C. Choose Wisely

If you were stranded on a desert island, and you could only bring three items in your bag. Which items would you bring, and why?



1
2
3

Extension Activity

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first 3 chapters of *Robinson Crusoe*. You may wish to practice on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6