



In this passage, adapted from early on in Robert Louis Stevenson's famous novel, *Treasure Island*, young Jim Hawkins relates his first encounters with Long John Silver as they set sail on the *Hispaniola*.

## The Voyage

paragraph

- 1 All that night we were in a great bustle getting things stowed in their place. Ship-mates raced up and down the rigging like rats; barrels of gunpowder were rolled carefully up and down planks; heavy, plaited ropes looped and lashed and bundled belongings together. I was worked until I was about to collapse when, a little before dawn, the boatswain<sup>1</sup> peeped his pipe and the crew began to weigh anchor. I could have been twice as weary, yet I would not have left the deck, all was so new and interesting to me — the brief commands, the shrill of the whistle, the darkened figures of the men hustling to their places in the glimmer of the ship's lanterns.
- 2 “Now, Silver, sing us a song!” cried one voice.
- 3 “Aye, aye, mates,” said Long John, who was standing by with his crutch under his left shoulder, and at once broke out into words all sailors know well: “Fifteen men on the dead man's chest —” And then the whole crew bore chorus: “Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!”
- 4 Soon the anchor was hanging dripping at the bows; soon the sails began to puff out, and the land and shipping to flit by on either side, the whole of Bristol cast in gorgeous pink behind us. The *Hispaniola* had begun her voyage to the Isle of Treasure.
- 5 Captain Smollet, a man whose manner was sharp and short and dry, was on the quarter deck in troubled talks with Mr Trelawney, our sponsor. Trelawney had not only hired the ship, but Silver as well, taking pity on the fact that despite having lost his leg in the service of His Majesty's Navy, Silver had been left without a pension.
- 6 “Well, Captain, what have you to say? All shipshape and seaworthy?” inquired Trelawney.
- 7 “Better speak plain. I don't like this voyage; I don't like the men; I wish you would have let me choose my own men, instead of Silver.”
- 8 “But Silver is keeping them all in good spirits!” replied Trelawney.
- 9 “Far too good,” warned Captain Smollet. “Silver has the key to the grog<sup>2</sup>. And it was Silver's parrot that gave away the sealed orders of our journey.”
- 10 ‘Silver's parrot?’

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<sup>1</sup> The boatswain is the member of the crew responsible for the equipment

<sup>2</sup> Grog is a mixture of rum (a sweet brown alcohol derived from sugar cane), lime and water. It was the standard reward for sailors for a good day's work

- 11 'Blabbed it, sir! Now the whole crew's got wind of it. Don't like it, sir. Don't like it at all.'
- 12 The first time I had seen Long John Silver he was a landlord at the old tavern in Bristol bay; I had admired the way the man had hopped about with such wonderful dexterity, like a bird, whistling as he moved among the tables. To me, he seemed the best of men. Aboard ship, he carried his crutch by a string around his neck, to have both hands as free as possible. It was something to see him wedge the foot of the crutch against a plank, and, propped against it, yielding to every movement of the ship, get on with his cooking like someone safe ashore. Still more strange was it to see him cross the deck in the heaviest of weather. He had a rope or two rigged up to help him across the widest spaces — Long John's earrings, they were called; and he would hand himself from one place to another, as quickly as another man could walk.
- 13 "He's no ordinary man, is Silver," said one of the crew to me. "He had good schooling in his young days and can speak like a book when so minded; and brave — a lion's nothing alongside of Long John! I seen him grapple four and knock their heads together — and him unarmed."
- 14 All the crew respected and even obeyed him. He had a way of talking to each and doing everybody some particular service. To me he was unweariedly kind, and always glad to see me in the galley<sup>3</sup>, which he kept as clean as a new pin, the dishes hanging up polished and his parrot in a cage in one corner.
- 15 "Here's Cap'n Flint — I calls my parrot Cap'n Flint, after the famous pirate — don't I, Cap'n?"
- 16 And the parrot would say, at great speed, "pieces of eight<sup>4</sup>! pieces of eight! pieces of eight!" till you wondered why it was not out of breath, or till John threw his handkerchief over the cage.
- 17 "Now, that bird," he would say, "was there at the fishing up of the wrecked silver ships o'Spain. It's there she learned 'pieces of eight', and little wonder; three hundred and fifty thousand of 'em, Hawkins!" He would be lost in wonder at the thought of it. "What a man wouldn't do to keep a sum like that to himself," he would add, a heavy hand on my shoulder. "What a man wouldn't do."

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<sup>3</sup> A galley is the ship's kitchen, usually a very long and narrow space

<sup>4</sup> 'pieces of eight' was the name for a Spanish silver dollar, that could be split up into eight smaller pieces. Each coin was worth about £20 in today's money.

1. **This is a comprehension question.** Answer briefly **in your own words**.

*For  
examiner's  
use only*

a. Why do you think the barrels are being rolled on deck 'carefully'? (Paragraph 1)

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b. Captain Smollet's manner is described as 'sharp and short and dry'. (Paragraph 5)

This means he is... (Circle the correct answer)

- i) not very talkative
- ii) not very imaginative
- iii) not very tall

c. Give one reason why Mr Trelawney has taken pity on Long John Silver. (Paragraph 5)

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d. Who has chosen the men for the voyage? (Paragraph 7)

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e. What do you think the 'sealed orders' for the voyage are....? (Paragraph 9).

(Please circle the correct answer)

- i) Instructions about the direction the ship should travel
- ii) Instructions about how the ship works
- iii) Instructions to find secret buried treasure

(all 1 mark; 5 marks)

Q1 TOTAL
/ 5

2. **This question tests your ability to analyse language.** The following three quotations are from the **first paragraph**. Explain how the writer conveys a sense of **activity and excitement** in each of them. Your ability to discuss the meanings of individual words and to identify literary techniques (such as metaphors or similes) will be rewarded.

a) **'Ship-mates raced up and down the rigging like rats.'**

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b) **'...heavy, plaited ropes looped and lashed and bundled belongings together.'**

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c) **'...the darkened figures of the men hustling to their places in the glimmer of the ship's lanterns.'**

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(3 marks each; 9 marks)

[QUESTIONS CONTINUE OVERLEAF]

Q2 TOTAL
/ 9

3. **This question tests your ability to find quotations.**

**Reread paragraph 12.** This paragraph explains how well Long John Silver has adapted to the loss of one leg in this paragraph. Find a quotation that supports each of the statements below. **Find ONE quotation per answer from paragraph 12 only.** Do not use the same quotation twice. You may use your own words to help explain the quotation if you need to.

- a. Long John Silver is very **skilful** in the way he uses his crutch.

[QUOTATION]

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- b. Another way he has adapted to the loss of one leg is in the way he has **used the things around him.**

[QUOTATION]

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- c. Long John Silver is also very **strong and determined.**

[QUOTATION]

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(2 marks each; 6 marks)

Q3 TOTAL

/ 6

4. **This question tests your ability to explain the meanings of quotations.**

**Reread paragraphs 13 and 14.** What good qualities does Long John Silver possess that would make him a strong leader? Explain the meanings of the following quotations and why they show this. (4 marks for each explanation).

QUOTATION ONE

**'He had good schooling in his young days and can speak like a book when so minded.'**

EXPLANATION

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QUOTATION TWO

**'...a lion's nothing alongside of Long John! I seen him grapple four ... and him unarmed.'**

EXPLANATION

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**[QUESTION 4 CONTINUES OVERLEAF]**

**(Question 4, cont.)**

QUOTATION THREE

**'All the crew respected and even obeyed him. He had a way of ... doing everybody some particular service.'**

EXPLANATION THREE

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(4 marks for each explanation.  
12 marks available for the question)

Q4 TOTAL
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