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Response Journal™

# Sample

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## Response Journal

Reflections: A Student Response Journal



*Treasure Island*  
Robert Louis Stevenson



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## *Response Journal*

### **To The Student**

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

## **PART I - THE OLD BUCCANEER**

### **Chapter 1 - The Old Sea Dog at the “Admiral Benbow”**

1. The dirty, scarred, rough man who comes to Jim Hawkins’ father’s inn, the “Admiral Benbow,” is scary looking, indeed. Jim had seen him around the cove singing the sea-song about fifteen men, a dead man’s chest, and a bottle of rum. The man took a room at the inn and he haunted Jim’s dreams. From this chapter, copy in a list of ten different things the author wrote to describe the “Old Sea Dog” of this chapter’s title and the page on which the descriptive phrase is found. Be sure to copy the phrase exactly and use quotation marks at the beginning and the end. The first one is given as an example:

“a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man”

2. The captain can be a frightening character, especially when drunk. In the scene in which he threatens Dr. Livesey with a knife, we see how brave a person can be in a confrontation with a bully. Suppose you were telling a friend about this scene. Complete the following dialogue about what you think you would have done if the fearsome captain had threatened you with a knife.

**Friend:** I’d have challenged him when he wouldn’t let me leave.

**You:** This old sea-dog would have scared me right out of the room. But then again, you may be right that he wouldn’t have *let* me out of the room. What I guess I would have done is...

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### **Chapter IV - The Sea Chest**

7. After the sea captain's sudden death, Jim and his mother are terrified that the blind beggar or Black Dog will come to the inn to take the dead man's money and belongings and perhaps do them harm. They run to the next town to get someone to help them but everyone refuses. Jim's mother scolds them with an angry speech. Answer the following in complete sentences:
  - 1) Write your opinion of what you think of her speech.
  - 2) Do you think she is right to make the request she did?
  - 3) Why do you think the townspeople do not help?
8. Jim and his mother seem incredibly brave in going back to their inn where the dead body of the captain still lay on the floor. Braver still, they search his body and room trying to find money to pay what is due in the way of rent. Not only that, but they are also in fear of the blind beggar who had issued the "Black Spot" (summons). And indeed, as they are searching, they hear the tapping of his stick outside. Write a brief paragraph about what you think would happen if the blind beggar comes into the inn and finds Jim and his mother searching for the sea captain's money.

### **Chapter V - The Last of the Blind Man**

9. As the blind beggar, Pew, is cursing his gang because they will not search for Jim and his mother, the gang leaves him where he fell on the ground. There is an old expression that talks about "a falling out among thieves." From what you've read about Pew and his men, explain to a friend who does not understand why you think that expression is a true one in this case, and what the expression means.

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15. Even though Jim Hawkins is only a boy, he seems to be treated as an equal by the older men of the novel. Think about a time in your life when an adult treated you as an equal. Relate that experience and how it made you feel.

### Chapter IX - Powder and Arms

16. The Captain of the “Hispaniola,” Captain Smollett, is proving to have an outspoken mind. He finds many things about the voyage about to begin very much not to his liking. He tells the squire and the doctor about these in no uncertain terms, even offering to quit the ship. Re-read this chapter. Make a list of Captain Smollett’s complaints. Then, in a short paragraph tell whether or not you agree with Captain Smollett’s belief that there are some things that just do not seem right and why you feel that way.
17. Jim has some reason to worry about the Captain when he hears him say, “I’ll have no favourites on my ship” and sends him off to Long John Silver, the cook, for some work. Suppose you are Jim and are writing a letter to your mother to tell her how you are getting along on the *Hispaniola*. In your letter, give her your honest impression of both Long John Silver and Captain Smollett, as well as telling her what life is like aboard a ship before sailing.

### Chapter X - The Voyage

18. The ship’s officer, Mr. Arrow, proves to be the problem Captain Smollett said he would be. Arrow is drunk more often than not and is a bad influence on the men. Then, “he disappeared entirely and was seen no more.” What do you think happened to Mr Arrow? Imagine you are the careful Dr. Livesey and write an entry into a trip journal he most likely would be keeping which tells about your theory of what happened to Mr. Arrow.

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## *Treasure Island*

### **Chapter XVII - Narrative Continued by the Doctor: The Jolly-boat's Last Trip**

29. As the doctor, the captain, the squire, and the few men rowing the small boat get near Treasure Island, they see the “long nine” gun being set up by the pirates. Their lives are now in danger because the pirates are firing upon them. Imagine that you are telling the story of what happened to the men in the small jolly-boat to your younger brother or sister as a bedtime story. Write down the story you would be telling in the most exciting way that you can. Begin like this:

The first shot flew past the boat, missing the captain's head by mere inches. The pirates reloaded and...

30. The doctor's narrative is written while Jim is still on the island. Though the captain, the squire, and the doctor trust Jim, they are worried about his safety on the island with the pirates. The author does not tell us what Jim is doing while the three men and their rowers are trying to get ashore. Write a paragraph that the author might have written at the end of this chapter describing Dr. Livesey's thoughts about where Jim may be on the island and what he may be doing.

### **Chapter XVIII - Narrative Continued by the Doctor: End of the First Day's Fighting**

31. Things are getting dangerous on the island. Squire Trelawney shoots a pirate dead; Tom Redruth is, in turn, shot by one of the pirates and later dies. Think about whether this kind of dangerous piracy could take place today. Complete the dialogue below which you might have with your teacher about this:

**Teacher:** Who has an opinion about whether there is such a thing as piracy on the high seas today?

**You:** I think there is. It sure could happen easily. All someone would have to do is...