

BLACKBEARD - PIRATE OF THE SEAS

I.- READ BOTH TEXTS ABOUT *BLACKBEARD* AND THEN... DECIDE WHICH ONE IS HOLLYWOOD FICTION AND WHICH ONE IS TRUE!!!

Edward Teach, (1680 - 22 November 1718) commonly referred to as ***Blackbeard***, was a notorious pirate and enemy to most of the other famous pirates of the time. He is one character from the novel '[On Stranger Tides](#)' by Tim Powers. Blackbeard was the heartless pirate captain of the ship, the *Queen Anne's Revenge* and a master of black arts. He wanted to find the Fountain of Youth to escape a prophecy of his death by a one-legged man. Blackbeard's prophetic murderer is later revealed to be another pirate, Robert Maynard, who had earlier cut off his leg to escape Blackbeard's attack on his ship, the *Adventure*, which Blackbeard then shrunk and placed in a bottle with countless other ships. Blackbeard cruelly threatened most of his officers to follow his every order. He was said to be "the one pirate that all pirates fear". Blackbeard practiced voodoo, which he probably learned during his early years. This cost him the support of other pirates.

By 1750, the story about his death at the battle of Ocracoke Inlet in 1718 was still told in the Caribbean. As stated by Alexander Spotswood, another great pirate, people believe that Blackbeard was beheaded, and that his headless body swam three times around his ship before climbing back on board.

Eventually, according to tales and letters sent from Alexander Spotswood to allies and spies in the Governor of Virginia's office, Maynard cornered Blackbeard on a little island and shot him dead. He burned the corpse so Blackbeard wouldn't come back to life again. To ensure he got his reward for killing the infamous pirate, Maynard took Blackbeard's sword and used it to cut his own nose and moustache!

Edward Teach (1680 - 22 November 1718), better known as **Blackbeard**, was a notorious English pirate who operated around the West Indies and the eastern coast of the American colonies. Although little is known about his early life, it is likely he was born in Bristol, England. He may have been a sailor on privateer ships during Queen Anne's War, before settling on the Caribbean island of New Providence. This was a base for Pirate Captain Benjamin Hornigold, whose crew Teach joined sometime around 1716. Hornigold placed him in command of a [sloop](#) (a type of sailing ship) he had captured, and the two of them then engaged in numerous acts of piracy. Their numbers were boosted by the addition to their fleet of two more ships, one of which was commanded by Stede Bonnet.

Teach captured a French merchant vessel, renamed her *Queen Anne's Revenge*, and equipped her with 40 guns. He became a renowned pirate, his nickname came from his thick black beard and fearsome appearance; in some battles he was reported to have tied lit fuses under his hat to frighten his enemies! He formed an alliance of pirates and blockaded the port of Charleston, South Carolina, USA. After successfully ransoming its inhabitants, he ran *Queen Anne's Revenge* aground on a sandbar near Beaufort, North Carolina. He parted company with Bonnet, settling in Bath Town, where he accepted a royal pardon. But he was soon back at sea and attracted the attention of Alexander Spotswood, the Governor of Virginia. Spotswood arranged for a party of soldiers and sailors to try to capture the pirate, which they did on 22 November 1718. During a ferocious battle, Teach and several of his crew were killed by a small force of sailors led by Lieutenant Robert Maynard.

A shrewd and calculating leader, Teach preferred not to use force, relying instead on his fearsome image to gain the desired response from those he robbed. Contrary to the modern-day picture of the traditional, tyrannical pirate, he commanded his vessels with the permission of their crews and there is no known account of his ever having harmed or murdered anyone he held prisoner. His acts were exaggerated after his death. He became the inspiration for many of pirate-themed works of fiction that followed.

2.- Now, write three TRUE facts about Blackbeard.

a)

b)

c)

3.- Write FALSE sentences that are the opposite to the ones you wrote before.

a)

b)

c)

NOTES FOR PARENTS/ CARERS:

Give the 2 different paragraphs to your students and let them read carefully. The first text is loosely based on the "*Disney's Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*" film; the second text has the real facts in a short version. Have them try to guess which one is true and which is not and try to explain why they decided that. After that, reveal which is the correct one.

In the second exercise, students must look for 3 facts about Blackbeard that they find interesting, but they must be true facts. They could be from further reading that the student has done on Blackbeard (www.smithsonianmag.com , <https://royalarmouries.org/stories/popular-culture/blackbeard-facts/>, <https://www.history.com/news/blackbeard-pirate-killed>). Then they should write 3 false sentences which are somehow opposite, or contradict, the ones that are true.