

ENGLISH LEARNING FOR CURIOUS MINDS



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Episode #198

A History of Pirates

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[00:00:00] Hello, hello hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:00:12] The show where you can listen to fascinating stories, and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:21] I'm Alastair Budge, and today we are going to be talking about Pirates.

[00:00:27] Now, we all know something about pirates.

[00:00:31] As a child, we learn about pirates at school, we dress up as pirates, [countless](#)

¹ books, films and TV series have been made about the lives of pirates.

[00:00:42] But in this episode we are going to go a little deeper.

[00:00:47] We'll talk about the different types of pirates, who actually were these pirates, why did they become pirates, what was life as a pirate actually like, what was it like to be attacked by pirates, why pirates were the early masters of the power of image,

¹ too many to count



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what happened to a pirate when he was caught, and why pirates don't exist, at least in the same form, today.

[00:01:13] And, of course, we will learn all about this through the stories of some of the most famous pirates in history.

[00:01:21] I should say that this episode comes hot off the heels of episode number 197, our members-only episode that came out on Tuesday, and was on Highwaymen, the men and occasionally women who would stop you on the road, point a gun in your face, and [relieve](#)² you of your money. So, that episode was on one of the most famous types of [land-robber](#)³, and today, we're covering the most famous type of [sea-robber](#)⁴.

[00:01:49] OK then, pirates.

[00:01:54] When you hear the term pirate, a certain image might [spring to mind](#)⁵.

[00:02:00] For many, it will be a man with a hat, long dark hair, perhaps an earring, a parrot on his shoulder, he might be carrying a sword and a [pistol](#)⁶, maybe he is holding a bottle of rum, and he's probably wearing some [extravagant](#)⁷, colourful clothes.

² rob or steal something from someone

³ someone who robs people on land

⁴ someone who robs people on sea

⁵ come to mind

⁶ a small gun held in one hand

⁷ meant to impress



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[00:02:19] Perhaps he has a wooden leg, or even a [hook](#)⁸ instead of one of his hands.

[00:02:26] These images, although there are elements of truth to them, mainly come from the books and films that have [chronicled](#)⁹ the lives of pirates, from authors and directors who have created pirate characters, and fabulous stories about a particular type of pirate.

[00:02:45] And that is the pirate from the Golden Age of Piracy, a period which lasted from the mid 17th century to the early 18th century, a period of around 70 years.

[00:02:59] While this period will be the focus of today's episode, these pirates are far from the only type of pirates.

[00:03:07] Indeed, for as long as there have been ships with goods to steal, there have been pirates in some shape or form.

[00:03:16] Going back all the way to Ancient Egypt, there were reports of something called the "Sea Peoples", a group of people who lived in the Mediterranean and attacked Ancient Egyptian boats and cities.

[00:03:30] Essentially, pirates.

⁸ a curved device used to catch things

⁹ provided a written record of something



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[00:03:32] And the Middle Ages saw the arrival of a people from Scandinavia we don't normally refer to as pirates, but who certainly weren't much different from pirates: The Vikings.

[00:03:46] And it is of course not just a European [phenomenon¹⁰](#) - piracy in different shapes and forms has existed all over the world, ever since ships have sailed, people have [sought¹¹](#) to steal their goods.

[00:04:01] But no period in history is more famous for pirates than the period between 1650 and 1720, otherwise known as The Golden Age of Piracy.

[00:04:13] It was during this period that piracy [boomed¹²](#), that it became a real problem for [maritime¹³](#) trade, and from which most of the popular [conception¹⁴](#) of who pirates were originated.

[00:04:29] So, why was there a [boom¹⁵](#) in piracy in the mid 17th century?

[00:04:34] Well, there are several reasons, both on the supply and the demand side.

¹⁰ something interesting that has happened

¹¹ tried

¹² developed

¹³ connected with human activity at sea

¹⁴ Ideas or understanding

¹⁵ development



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[00:04:41] For piracy to be attractive, pirates need ships to steal from.

[00:04:47] The Age of Discovery had started a couple of centuries before. By the mid-17th century, European powers had established trade routes between Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, and North America.

[00:05:02] Much of this was, as you will know, the [grisly¹⁶](#) and [heinous¹⁷](#) business of slave trading.

[00:05:09] Ships would sail from Europe south to west Africa, where they would exchange weapons and machinery for human beings.

[00:05:18] These poor people would be packed into ships and sent to the Caribbean and North America, where they would be sold as slaves, to work in [plantations¹⁸](#).

[00:05:28] In exchange for the slaves, the ships would receive goods like tobacco, coffee, sugar, and rum.

[00:05:36] They would then return to Europe filled with these riches, that they would sell to European traders.

[00:05:43] In order to cut costs and increase profits, these ships would typically have very few sailors on them, normally around 20 men on a ship.

¹⁶ bloody and extremely unpleasant

¹⁷ shocking and ugly

¹⁸ large farms



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[00:05:55] So, the Caribbean, the North Atlantic and the waters off West Africa contained an increasing amount of ships filled with valuable goods and not many men to guard them.

[00:06:07] An attractive **proposition**¹⁹ for a potential pirate.

[00:06:11] Back in Europe, the 17th and 18th centuries were **characterised**²⁰ by long and **brutal**²¹ wars, which were increasingly being fought at sea.

[00:06:22] Every time one of these wars ended, it resulted in well-trained sailors being out of work, and looking for a new job.

[00:06:32] Even if they did manage to find a job on one of these merchant ships, one of the ships transporting goods, the pay was terrible, and conditions were worse.

[00:06:44] There is even one report of more merchant seamen dying on the journey from west Africa to the Caribbean than the slaves that the ship was carrying.

[00:06:55] In England, more and more small farmers were being pushed off the land, and industrialisation was starting to push people towards the cities in search of work.

[00:07:08] These conditions were **ripe**²² for a **boom** in piracy.

¹⁹ offer

²⁰ having the characteristic of

²¹ very cruel and violent

²² fully developed or ready



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[00:07:13] But this wasn't just a case of people deciding "well, I'm going to be a pirate now", and setting sail on a pirate ship from London to the Caribbean, which was the centre of pirate activity.

[00:07:25] In many cases there was actually a thin line between who was a pirate and who wasn't.

[00:07:33] Indeed, one of the most famous pirates in British History, a man called Captain Kidd, protested that he was never actually a pirate, and he was acting on the orders of the English King, King William III.

[00:07:49] Kidd was something called a [privateer²³](#), which one might best describe as a [state-sanctioned²⁴](#) pirate. This meant that he was given official permission to engage in acts of piracy by the English king.

[00:08:06] This was in 1696, when England was fighting in The Nine Years' War against France.

[00:08:13] Partly in order to raise money, and partly in order to steal from and [disrupt²⁵](#) the enemy, countries would give special licenses to ships to attack and steal from ships from certain countries.

²³ a commander of his own ship authorised by a government during wartime to attack and capture enemy ships

²⁴ given certain permissions from the government

²⁵ interrupt their activities and cause problems



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[00:08:27] Captain Kidd was the leader of one of those ships, so at least when he first set sail, he wasn't an illegal pirate.

[00:08:35] He was given specific permission from the king to attack and steal from ships from certain countries who were not allies of England.

[00:08:45] He was provided with a large ship with powerful [cannons²⁶](#), and a [crew²⁷](#) of sailors [eager²⁸](#) to go and find merchant ships, because they would all get a proportion of what was stolen.

[00:08:58] But knowing which ships to attack and which ships not to attack wasn't always easy.

[00:09:06] After having set off from London, Kidd sailed all the way down the Atlantic and around the southern tip of Africa without finding a [suitable²⁹](#) ship to attack.

[00:09:17] When they came across a Dutch merchant ship, his [crew](#) urged him to attack it, despite The Dutch Republic being an ally of England's at the time, and the King of England, William III, being Dutch by birth.

[00:09:31] Kidd knew that attacking this ship would have been a very bad move.

²⁶ large, powerful guns that fire metal balls

²⁷ the group of people who work together on a ship

²⁸ wanting very much

²⁹ acceptable, appropriate



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[00:09:36] He refused to attack it, and as a consequence was called a “[lousy](#)³⁰ dog” by one of his [crew](#).

[00:09:45] [Furious](#)³¹, Kidd took an iron bucket and hit the man over the head with it. He must have hit him very hard, because the man died of his injuries the following day.

[00:09:58] Although captains were allowed to use violence to [discipline](#)³² their men, Kidd had gone too far. He had killed one of his [crew](#), and he risked being put on trial for murder when he returned.

[00:10:13] Kidd was becoming increasingly desperate to find a target. He needed to return with huge riches so that the King would be happy, and that he would have a better chance of not being charged with murder.

[00:10:27] A couple of months later he came across a huge Armenian ship called the Quedagh Merchant, which was carrying vast amounts of [silk](#)³³, [textiles](#)³⁴, and [opium](#)³⁵, treasure that would be valued at tens of millions of euros in today’s money.

³⁰ very bad

³¹ extremely angry

³² the practice of training people to follow orders and obey

³³ a type of soft cloth

³⁴ a type of cloth

³⁵ a drug made from the seeds of a flower called poppy



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[00:10:44] **Crucially**³⁶, the ship was flying under French colours.

[00:10:49] England was at war with France, and so this ship was **fair game**³⁷, it looked like it was ok to attack.

[00:10:57] But, when Kidd's sailors **boarded**³⁸ the ship, they discovered firstly that the owner of the goods was a Mughal **lord**³⁹, and the captain of the ship was an Englishman. The entire trip had also been organised by the East India Company, a British company. Suddenly it wasn't so clear whether this ship was actually ok to attack.

[00:11:23] Kidd **reportedly**⁴⁰ tried to return the goods, but his men **rebelled**⁴¹, they refused.

[00:11:29] Kidd took the treasure, and with it he had completed the **transition**⁴² from **privateer**, or **state-sponsored**⁴³ pirate, to real pirate.

³⁶ in a way that is very important

³⁷ something that is considered a reasonable target

³⁸ entered, went aboard

³⁹ a man of high rank

⁴⁰ according to what people said

⁴¹ refused to obey authority

⁴² change from one form to another

⁴³ supported by the government



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[00:11:40] As news returned to England, the king was **furious**. Kidd was a wanted man, and eventually he was **lured**⁴⁴, he was tricked into returning to New York, **whereupon**⁴⁵ he was arrested, sent back to England, and **hung**⁴⁶.

[00:11:56] As a warning to other and future pirates, Kidd's body was left **hanging**⁴⁷ on the edge of the river Thames.

[00:12:05] Now, not all pirates took the same route as Kidd, and went from **privateer** to pirate.

[00:12:12] Most **skipped**⁴⁸ the **privateer** step.

[00:12:15] Many would actually come from merchant ships that had been attacked by pirates, and they weren't all forced to become a pirate either.

[00:12:25] The life of a pirate, although dangerous and often short, was an attractive one while it lasted.

⁴⁴ attracted by the hope of something

⁴⁵ at which point

⁴⁶ killed by tying a rope around his neck with no support from below

⁴⁷ with no support from below

⁴⁸



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[00:12:33] It was [remarkably](#)⁴⁹ democratic, compared to normal life back on land but also on a merchant ship.

[00:12:41] On a merchant or navy ship, the captain held all the power, and conditions were terrible for normal sailors.

[00:12:50] On a pirate ship, there was a captain, and a certain [hierarchy](#)⁵⁰, but it wasn't nearly as strict, and it was a lot more equal.

[00:13:00] Stolen goods would be shared between the men, and there were rules for how goods would be shared.

[00:13:07] Ordinary pirates would be given one share, and a pirate captain would be entitled to two to three times the amount of treasure that an ordinary pirate would.

[00:13:19] So, when one hears of the bosses of large companies being paid thousands of times more than ordinary employees, a pirate ship seems like an incredibly democratic [institution](#)⁵¹.

[00:13:33] What's more, pirates seemed to be far more [tolerant](#)⁵² of people from different backgrounds and of different races.

⁴⁹ unusually and in a worth mentioning way

⁵⁰ a system in which people are arranged according to their importance or rank

⁵¹ organisation

⁵² able to accept



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[00:13:41] Pirate **crews**⁵³ were made up of people from a **multitude**⁵⁴ of different countries, countries that were often fighting each other back in Europe.

[00:13:50] A pirate called Blackbeard, whose story we'll hear shortly, had a **crew** that was 60% black.

[00:13:57] They were also **meritocratic**⁵⁵ organisations, if you did a good job as a pirate you would get promoted quickly, no matter who you were, where you came from, or what colour skin you were.

[00:14:11] So, although they might have been living a life of crime, they lived, in lots of respects, in a very **forward-thinking**⁵⁶ society, at least one that was a lot more **tolerant** and democratic than “normal society”.

[00:14:26] Plus, of course the major attraction of being a pirate was the opportunity to get rich.

[00:14:32] Their standard pay was pretty low, but each time they successfully managed to attack a ship they would typically receive goods that were valued at around a year's salary.

⁵³ groups of people who work together on a ship

⁵⁴ a large number

⁵⁵ a system in which advancement is based on individual ability

⁵⁶ forward-looking, ready to accept new ideas



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[00:14:45] So, there was of course a large **incentive**⁵⁷ to attack as many ships as possible.

[00:14:51] And when it came to these pirate attacks, for many people there's this idea of pirates being incredibly **vicious**⁵⁸ and aggressive, attacking ships and killing everyone onboard.

[00:15:04] But this isn't actually completely true.

[00:15:08] Pirates wanted you to think that they wouldn't **hesitate**⁵⁹ to kill you if you resisted, but if you **surrendered**⁶⁰ without a fight they would **spare**⁶¹ your life, and perhaps would even invite you to join them as a pirate.

[00:15:24] Pirates really were early masters of the power of image, of the power of PR - they knew that what people thought about you was more important than the truth.

⁵⁷ something that encourages or motivates you to do something

⁵⁸ very violent and dangerous

⁵⁹ have second thoughts or hold back in doing something

⁶⁰ gave up and accepted defeat

⁶¹ stop themselves from taking



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[00:15:37] If word got out⁶² that pirates would kill every sailor on board, then these sailors would have fought bravely⁶³ and aggressively⁶⁴, they would have fought to the last breath if they believed that certain death awaited⁶⁵ them.

[00:15:52] But if they knew that they would escape with their life, and perhaps even be able to escape the terrible life of a merchant seaman and become a pirate, then they were much more likely to give up without a fight.

[00:16:06] The important thing was that people needed to be afraid of pirates, and to think that they were so ferocious⁶⁶ that it was better not to even challenge⁶⁷ them.

[00:16:17] A master of this was a famous pirate captain called Blackbeard.

[00:16:23] His name, of course, wasn't actually Blackbeard, his name was Edward Teach. But he was known by everyone as Blackbeard.

[00:16:32] He had a huge long beard, which reportedly went up to just below his eyes.

⁶² it became known

⁶³ showing no fear

⁶⁴ in an angry and violent way

⁶⁵ waiting for

⁶⁶ frightening and violent

⁶⁷ fight, defy



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[00:16:38] He would [twist](#)⁶⁸ the hair of his beard into little [plaits](#)⁶⁹, and when it was time to attack a ship he would light matches and stick them in his beard and under his hat, so there was smoke coming out from his head.

[00:16:55] Above his ship he would fly a flag with a [skull and crossbones](#)⁷⁰, but also a red heart to indicate death.

[00:17:05] He knew that his reputation was far more powerful than his sword.

[00:17:10] [Ironically](#)⁷¹ perhaps, given his reputation as a [fearsome](#)⁷² and terrifying pirate, there are no [verified](#)⁷³ reports of Blackbeard actually killing anyone.

[00:17:22] Most often, instead of actually [resisting](#)⁷⁴ a pirate attack, especially against someone with the [fearsome](#) reputation of Blackbeard, merchant ships would simply [surrender](#)⁷⁵.

⁶⁸ turn

⁶⁹ lengths of hair put over each other

⁷⁰ a picture of a human skull above two crossed bones

⁷¹ in a way that is interesting because it is very different from what one would expect

⁷² frightening

⁷³ having been proved

⁷⁴ fighting against

⁷⁵ give up and accept defeat



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[00:17:34] The pirates were well armed, and there were almost always more pirates than sailors, there were normally around 20 sailors on a merchant ship and 80 to 100 pirates.

[00:17:45] The pirates had this terrible reputation and were better armed, so in most cases the sailors would simply [surrender](#), resulting in pirates actually ending up doing significantly less fighting than most people think.

[00:18:00] In fact, the most [vicious](#) of the pirate battles were almost always against the British navy, the official sea forces of the government.

[00:18:11] And it was in one of these battles, in 1718, that the pirate career of Blackbeard was to be ended.

[00:18:20] Blackbeard was one of the most wanted pirates in the whole world, and eventually his ship was found by a British navy [lieutenant](#)⁷⁶ named Robert Maynard.

[00:18:30] A fierce battle [ensued](#)⁷⁷, and Blackbeard was killed on deck.

⁷⁶ an officer rank in the armed forces

⁷⁷ happened as a result



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[00:18:36] In order for Maynard to collect the [reward](#)⁷⁸ for killing Blackbeard, he needed to prove he was dead. So, Blackbeard head was [chopped off](#)⁷⁹, and [hung up](#)⁸⁰ from one of the [masts](#)⁸¹, the wooden bar that holds the sails.

[00:18:52] His [headless](#)⁸² body was thrown over the side of the ship, and the legend goes that it swam all the way around the ship several times looking for its head before sinking to the bottom of the ocean.

[00:19:08] And Blackbeard's [fate](#)⁸³ was not unique.

[00:19:11] Most pirates, like Blackbeard, were victims of their own success.

[00:19:17] The more ships they attacked, the more they drew attention to themselves, the greater problem they [posed](#)⁸⁴ to the powers back in Europe, and the more forces were sent to deal with them.

[00:19:29] In 1670, there were just two British Royal Navy warships in the Caribbean, where most pirate activity was taking place.

⁷⁸ something given in exchange for his good work

⁷⁹ cut off

⁸⁰ tied up

⁸¹ the tall poles or posts of a ship that supports its sails

⁸² without its head

⁸³ final result, outcome

⁸⁴ caused



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[00:19:38] By 1718 there were 124 warships, and by 1815 there were 214.

[00:19:46] What's more, in 1698 Britain had changed the laws around piracy, making it easier for pirates to be put on trial and executed.

[00:19:58] Before, they would have to be captured and taken back to England and then tried.

[00:20:04] After 1698 the pirates could be put on trial anywhere, and executed immediately.

[00:20:12] Put simply, it was a lot harder to be a pirate and survive for long, and by around 1720, the Golden Age of Piracy was over.

[00:20:22] Most pirates had been killed, either at sea or were captured and executed back on land.

[00:20:29] Some had actually retired from a life of piracy.

[00:20:34] Although we think of pirates as living at sea, of course they needed to come to land to spend their money, and they often had close relationships with people on land.

[00:20:45] They had to exchange their stolen goods, and they would need to come [ashore](#)⁸⁵ to find ways to spend their money - it's not much good having a load of gold or

⁸⁵ to the shore, on land



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[silk](#) on your pirate ship; you need to exchange that into something you can actually use.

[00:21:03] So, for some pirates, they took their riches and essentially retired, using them to buy pieces of land and live an honest life.

[00:21:14] Now, the legacy that pirates have left is... [vast](#)⁸⁶, and incredibly impressive for such a small group of people.

[00:21:23] It's hard to know exactly, but at its [peak](#)⁸⁷ historians believe that there were around 5,000 pirates [roaming](#)⁸⁸ the seas.

[00:21:33] [In the grand scheme of things](#)⁸⁹, this is an absolutely tiny group, but one that has fascinated people ever since.

[00:21:41] It is, on one level, a completely understandable fascination, both at the time and now.

[00:21:49] During The Golden Age of Piracy people would hear or read about pirates, mysterious people who lived on ships, taking treasure, creating their own society, and one that was very different to the one on shore.

⁸⁶ extremely big

⁸⁷ highest or best point

⁸⁸ moving around, wandering

⁸⁹ in the complete picture of things



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[00:22:04] Much like the Highwaymen we heard about in the last episode, the life of a pirate was [alluring⁹⁰](#), it was attractive, it was interesting, it was completely understandable that normal people were so curious about them.

[00:22:20] Pirate executions, when pirates were caught and publicly killed, might be the first and only time that anyone would ever see a pirate, and they were always incredibly popular events.

[00:22:34] And even now, we as a society are obsessed with pirates.

[00:22:39] We make films about them, we dress up as them, there is even an International Talk Like a Pirate Day, which was on September 19th by the way.

[00:22:48] We have also created this image of a pirate which isn't completely true, so before we end let's [bust⁹¹](#) some of these myths, and confirm some that are partly true.

[00:23:01] Firstly, no there is no record of real pirates ever having parrots on their shoulders. This all comes from a book by Robert Louis Stevenson called Treasure Island.

[00:23:13] Secondly, there was no real "pirate language".

⁹⁰ attractive and exciting

⁹¹ show that they are not true



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[00:23:17] Most pirates came from Britain, so most would have spoken English, but there wasn't some secret pirate language, although there were no doubt a few words or phrases that pirates would have used.

[00:23:30] The “pirate language” we think of is actually a form of accent from Cornwall, in south west England. This accent has come to be associated with pirates only because of a comic opera called Pirates of Penzance, written by Gilbert & Sullivan.

[00:23:49] Thirdly, did pirates have [hooks](#)⁹² for hands or wooden legs? Actually, yes they probably did.

[00:23:56] Losing a hand or leg was quite common not just for a pirate, but for anyone working on a ship.

[00:24:03] Pirate ships would often [specify](#)⁹³ how a pirate would be [compensated](#)⁹⁴, how much they would be paid if they lost certain body parts. And there is evidence of pirates having [hooks](#) and using wooden [prosthetics](#)⁹⁵ replacing their legs, making at least that one partly true.

[00:24:23] And finally, did pirates actually [bury](#)⁹⁶ their treasure?

⁹² curved devices used to catch things

⁹³ explain exactly

⁹⁴ paid in exchange for something that has been lost or damaged

⁹⁵ artificial (made by human beings) body parts

⁹⁶ put into the ground



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[00:24:28] Well, there isn't much evidence of this. The myth of pirate treasure comes from books such as Treasure Island, and is based on the real story of Captain Kidd and the treasure he took from the Quedah Merchant.

[00:24:42] While he was in prison, [awaiting⁹⁷](#) execution, he wrote a letter to a friend saying that he knew the location of goods valued at £100,000, which is around 25 million Euros in today's money.

[00:24:58] But, Kidd was a desperate man, and historians believe that he had written this in the hope that it might save his life.

[00:25:07] It didn't, and this treasure, if indeed it ever existed, has never been found.

[00:25:15] OK then, that is it for today's episode on Pirates.

[00:25:20] I hope it's been an interesting one, that you've learnt something new, and that you now know a little bit more about pirates than you did 25 minutes ago.

[00:25:28] One thing we didn't talk about in this episode is piracy today.

[00:25:33] And you will probably know that pirates aren't sailing around the Caribbean with large black beards, but piracy today is debatably an even bigger problem than it was 300 years ago, the pirates have just changed location.

[00:25:48] Luckily we did an episode on Modern Pirates, it is episode number 78, so if you want to learn more about that, then I'd recommend giving that one a listen.

⁹⁷ waiting for



[00:25:58] As always, I would love to know what you thought of this episode.

[00:26:02] For the members among you, you can head right into our community forum, which is at community.leonardoenglish.com and get chatting away to other curious minds.

[00:26:12] The place you can go to for that is leonardoenglish.com. You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:26:22] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]



Key vocabulary

Word	Definition
Countless	too many to count
Relieve	rob or steal something from someone
Land-robber	someone who robs people on land
Sea-robber	someone who robs people on sea
Spring to mind	come to mind
Pistol	a small gun held in one hand
Extravagant	meant to impress
Hook	a curved device used to catch things
Chronicled	provided a written record of something
Phenomenon	something interesting that has happened
Sought	tried
Boomed	developed



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Maritime	connected with human activity at sea
Conception	ideas or understanding
Boom	development
Grisly	bloody and extremely unpleasant
Heinous	shocking and ugly
Plantations	large farms
Proposition	offer
Characterised	having the characteristic of
Brutal	very cruel and violent
Ripe	fully developed or ready
Privateer	a commander of his own ship authorised by a government during wartime to attack and capture enemy ships
State-sanctioned	given certain permissions from the government
Disrupt	interrupt their activities and cause problems
Cannons	large, powerful guns that fire metal balls
Crew	the group of people who work together on a ship



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Eager	wanting very much
Suitable	acceptable, appropriate
Lousy	very bad
Furious	extremely angry
Discipline	the practice of training people to follow orders and obey
Silk	a type of soft cloth
Textiles	a type of cloth
Opium	a drug made from the seeds of a flower called poppy
Crucially	in a way that is very important
Fair game	something that is considered a reasonable target
Boarded	entered, went aboard
Lord	a man of high rank
Reportedly	according to what people said
Rebelled	refused to obey authority
Transition	change from one form to another



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State-sponsored	supported by the government
Lured	attracted by the hope of something
Whereupon	at which point
Hung	killed by tying a rope around his neck with no support from below
Hanging	with no support from below
Skipped	passed over, didn't do
Remarkably	unusually and in a worth mentioning way
Hierarchy	a system in which people are arranged according to their importance or rank
Institution	organisation
Tolerant	able to accept
Crews	groups of people who work together on a ship
Multitude	a large number
Meritocratic	a system in which advancement is based on individual ability
Forward-thinking	forward-looking, ready to accept new ideas
Incentive	something that encourages or motivates you to do something



A History of Pirates

Vicious	very violent and dangerous
Hesitate	have second thoughts or hold back in doing something
Surrendered	gave up and accepted defeat
Spare	stop themselves from taking
Word got out	it became known
Bravely	showing no fear
Aggressively	in an angry and violent way
Awaited	waiting for
Ferocious	frightening and violent
Challenge	fight, defy
Twist	turn
Plaits	lengths of hair put over each other
Skull and crossbones	a picture of a human skull above two crossed bones
Ironically	in a way that is interesting because it is very different from what one would expect



A History of Pirates

Fearsome	frightening
Verified	having been proved
Resisting	fighting against
Surrender	give up and accept defeat
Lieutenant	an officer rank in the armed forces
Ensued	happened as a result
Reward	something given in exchange for his good work
Chopped off	cut off
Hung up	tied up
Masts	the tall poles or posts of a ship that supports its sails
Headless	without its head
Fate	final result, outcome
Posed	caused
Ashore	to the shore, on land
Vast	extremely big



A History of Pirates

Peak	highest or best point
Roaming	moving around, wandering
In the grand scheme of things	in the complete picture of things
Alluring	attractive and exciting
Bust	show that they are not true
Hooks	curved devices used to catch things
Specify	explain exactly
Compensated	paid in exchange for something that has been lost or damaged
Prosthetics	artificial (made by human beings) body parts
Bury	put into the ground
Awaiting	waiting for

We'd love to get your feedback on this episode.

What did you like? What could we do better?

What did you struggle to understand?

Let us know in the forum community.leonardoenglish.com

