

illustrated

READERS

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



# Kidnapped

retold by Virginia Evans



Express Publishing



# Robert Louis Stevenson



Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Scotland in 1850. He wrote many novels, poems and travel books. Stevenson suffered from ill health all his life. He often travelled to warmer climates to escape the cold, damp English weather. Stevenson married Fanny Osbourne in 1880 and, together with her son Lloyd, they travelled to many exotic places.

Stevenson began writing his most famous book, *Treasure Island*, in 1881. It began as a game for his stepson Lloyd and soon became a

novel in 1883. From 1884-1887 Stevenson lived in Bournemouth in the south of England. It was here that he wrote *Kidnapped*, which was published in 1886. The novel shows Stevenson's love of Scottish history. During this time, he also wrote another famous book, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

In 1889 Stevenson and his family settled in Samoa. The weather in the South Sea Islands was good for him and his health improved, but then Stevenson died suddenly in December, 1894.

After his death, he was thought of mainly as a writer of children's stories, but in recent years he has come to be appreciated as one of the most famous adventure writers of all time.

Read R.L. Stevenson's biography and answer these questions:

- 1 Why did Stevenson find living in England difficult?  
.....
- 2 How did the idea for *Treasure Island* begin? When was it published?  
.....
- 3 Which one of Stevenson's interests is clearly shown in *Kidnapped*?  
.....
- 4 Which two books were written in Bournemouth?  
.....
- 5 Where and when did Stevenson die?  
.....

## Kidnapped

*Kidnapped* is a classic adventure story set in Scotland in 1751. This was a dramatic period in British history as the Scottish people were divided over who was the 'rightful' King. Many people in Scotland supported Prince Charles Edward. They were called Jacobites and were considered to be rebels by the English. Other Scotsmen were on the side of King George II and they were called Royalists. King George sent soldiers to Scotland to try and destroy the Jacobites. These soldiers were called Redcoats because of the colour of their uniforms.

*Kidnapped* takes place a few years after Charles Edward's army was defeated by the English. He fled to France where he lived in exile with many of his supporters. In Scotland, the Jacobites called him "The King Across the Water".

Our main characters are young David Balfour, who is a Royalist, and Alan Stewart, who is a Jacobite. Even though they do not agree on who should be king, they have many adventures together and become good friends.

Read the text and answer the questions.

- 1 Who did the Jacobites support?  
.....
- 2 Were all Scottish people Jacobites?  
.....
- 3 Who were the Redcoats? Why did they have this name?  
.....
- 4 Who did Alan and David support?  
.....
- 5 What did the Jacobites call Prince Charles Edward?  
.....



# 1. LEAVING HOME

After young David Balfour's father dies, he decides to leave his home town to see the world. Mr Campbell, a friend of David's father, comes to see him off...

1 I'll miss you, David. Are you sure you want to leave?

2 Your father left you this letter about your inheritance. Go to the house of Shaws in Cramond. There you'll find your Uncle Ebenezer. He will tell you all about it.

3 Now that both my parents have died, I think it's time for me to go.

4 An inheritance?

3 David sets off for Cramond. On the second day, he meets an old woman on the road.

Excuse me, I'm trying to find a house. It's called The Shaws.

4 It's over there, but I wouldn't go if I were you! The owner is a miserly, nasty old man. Nobody likes him.

5 The house is old and seems to be unfinished. His Uncle Ebenezer lets him in. David remembers the old woman's words.

You can stay here, but you must not tell anyone where you are and you must do what I tell you!

6 He's my uncle but he's so unfriendly and mean – not like my father at all!

I promised your father I would save some money for you. Here it is. Now, I want you to go to the old tower. Bring me the chest that's at the top of the stairs.





David goes to the tower and slowly climbs the stairs. Uncle Ebenezer would not give him a light so everything is dark.

7

It's so dark in here.

I can't see anything! I wonder why he wouldn't give me a light.

8

Aaaagh!  
Help!

If I can just reach the top...

9

My plan is working perfectly!

David carefully climbs down the stairs. He is very angry.

10

I'm safe for now.

11

I could have been killed. Is that what Uncle Ebenezer wants? But why?



# 7.

## FRIENDS OR ENEMIES?

### activities



#### *Before Reading*

- 1 Put the adjectives under the correct heading.
  - ruthless • generous • reliable • heartless • aggressive
  - patient • understanding • cold-blooded • violent • kind

Friend

Enemy



#### *While Reading*

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and match the words below to words in the episode that mean the same.

1 hazardous = .....

2 loathe = .....

3 wrestle = .....

4 amiable = .....

5 chance = .....

- 3 Read the episode again and put the events in the correct order. Then retell the story using the simple past. Try to add any events that you think are missing.

.... David apologises to Alan.

.... David tells Alan that he hates him.

1 Alan says it's dangerous to rest out in the open.

.... Alan sees a cottage and hopes that the people there are friendly.

.... David can't move.

.... Alan refuses to fight with David.

.... Alan knocks on the door.



#### *After Reading*

- 4 Read and listen, then take roles and act out the episodes.
- 5 Do you ever argue with your friends? What kind of things do you argue about? How do you settle your arguments.?
- 6 Who do you think will be in the cottage? Friend or enemy?





### *Before Reading*

- 1 Look at the pictures in the episode. Which picture(s) show(s):
  - a rope? • a path? • a blanket? • a bridge? • a river? • a boat?



### *While Reading*

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and answer the questions.
  - 1 Why did David and Alan lie to the woman?
  - 2 What promise did David make to Alan?
  - 3 How would you describe the expression on Mr Rankeillor's face?
- 3 Complete the sentences using your own words.
  - 1 Mr Maclaren helps David and Alan because ...
  - 2 David isn't really sick, he is ...
  - 3 David tells the lawyer that his name is Balfour because ...
  - 4 The person in this episode who is in the most danger is ... because ...



### *After Reading*

- 4 Read and listen, then take roles and act out the episodes.
- 5 In pairs, write a dialogue for the scene between David and Mr Rankeillor. Decide if Mr Rankeillor believes David or not. If he does, show what he will do to help. If he doesn't, show what David will do. Act out the scene for the rest of the class.





# Kidnapped

Young David Balfour sets off to find his Uncle Ebenezer and claim his inheritance. Ebenezer arranges to have David kidnapped and sent to America to be sold as a slave. A shipwreck, a murder and a chase through the Highlands of Scotland, all lead to an unforgettable adventure!

## Components:

- Reader
- Audio CD



Level 1   Level 2   Level 3   Level 4   Level 5

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