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# Pirate Treasure

## Classroom Guide

*The real treasure was never in the chest — it was in the journey*

**CASEL Competency:** Relationship Skills

**Grade Level:** Pre-K–2

**Duration:** 40–50 minutes

**Category:** Adventure

## Learning Objectives

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- Discover that the journey matters more than the destination
  - Learn that teamwork and trust get you through storms
  - Understand that real "treasure" is the bravery, friendship, and growth along the way
  - Practice map-reading, clue-following, and collaborative problem-solving
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## Overview & Preparation

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### Key Vocabulary

Treasure • Map • Voyage • Compass • Storm • Island • Crew • Courage • Clue • Journey

### Materials Needed

- The personalized story
- Treasure map (teacher-made or template)
- Small boxes for "treasure chests"
- Paper and crayons
- Optional: gold coins/foil, eyepatch props

## Before Reading

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### Connection Question

*If you found a treasure map, what do you think the treasure would be? What would the journey look like?*

### Background Building

The hero finds a map and sets sail for treasure. But the real story isn't about the treasure chest at the end — it's about the JOURNEY: building a ship together, navigating a storm, solving riddles on mysterious islands, crossing rickety bridges, and finally opening the chest only to discover that the most valuable thing was the courage and friendship gained along the way.

## During Reading — Pause Points

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- **When the storm hits and the hero has to trust their crew** — The waves are huge! The hero can't do this alone — they need their team. When have you needed help from friends to get through something hard?
- **When the hero solves a clue on the island** — The hero figured it out by thinking carefully! What strategies did they use? Did they rush or take their time?
- **When the treasure chest is opened** — What do you think is inside? ... Was it what you expected? What is the REAL treasure?

## Discussion Questions

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**1.** The treasure chest at the end held a surprise — the real treasure was the journey itself. Do you agree that the journey matters more than the destination?

↳ Think of a trip or an experience. Was the best part arriving or everything that happened along the way?

**2.** The storm was scary, but the hero got through it with their crew. Why is teamwork important in hard moments?

↳ Who is on YOUR crew — the people you trust when things get tough?

**3.** The hero followed clues to find the treasure. What "clues" help you solve problems in real life?

↳ How is following clues like learning something new step by step?

**4.** If YOU could put anything in a treasure chest for someone to find, what would it be?

↳ Why did you choose that? What makes something a treasure?

## Facilitation Tips

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If possible, set up a classroom treasure hunt with clues. The physical experience of following a map and solving clues makes the story come alive. The "treasure" at the end should be meaningful, not just candy.

## Emotional Payoff

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*Every pirate story promises gold, but this one delivers something richer: the realization that the treasure was never in the chest. It was in the shipbuilding, the storm-surviving, the clue-solving, and the friendship-building. The hero returns home richer in courage and connection than any gold could provide.*

## After Reading Activities

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### Classroom Treasure Hunt

Duration: 20 min | Materials: Pre-made clues, hiding spots around room, treasure chest with meaningful prize

Create a 5-clue treasure hunt. Each clue requires teamwork to solve (reading, counting, physical challenge). The treasure chest contains something meaningful — a class photo, friendship bracelets, or a certificate. Discuss: was the HUNT or the TREASURE the best part?

### Build a Ship Together

Duration: 15 min | Materials: Large cardboard box, tape, markers, fabric for sail

Build a class "ship" from a box. Everyone contributes: some paint, some add details, some make the sail. Sit in it together and "set sail." The building is teamwork in action.

### My Treasure Map

Duration: 10 min | Materials: Paper (tea-stained for effect), markers, crayons

Each child draws a map of their life journey so far. Mark the "islands" (important moments), the "storms" (hard times), and the "X" (where they are now). What treasure have they already found?

## Writing Prompts

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- Write a clue that leads to your favorite spot in school. Make it tricky but solvable!
- If you opened a treasure chest and found something surprising inside, what would it be? Draw it.
- Write about your crew — the people you trust when the "storm" comes. Why are they your treasure?

## Home Connection

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### Family Letter

Dear Families,

Today we read "Pirate Treasure," about a hero who sails the seas following a map to treasure. The surprise? The real treasure wasn't gold — it was the courage, teamwork, and friendship gained along the journey. Your child went on a classroom treasure hunt and discovered that the hunt itself was the best part.

Here is how you can continue this learning at home:

- Create a mini treasure hunt at home with 3 clues for your child to follow
- Draw a family "journey map" together — mark your adventures, storms, and treasures
- Ask: "Who is on your crew? Who helps you in hard moments?"

With warmth,

Your Child's Teacher

### Related Books

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- How I Became a Pirate by Melinda Long
- Pirate Pete by Kim Kennedy
- The Pirate Cruncher by Jonny Duddle
- Tough Boris by Mem Fox