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*Dramatic Publishing*

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A Participation Play for Children

# **treasure island**

Based on the story by  
Robert Louis Stevenson

By  
Steve and Kathy Hotchner



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TREASURE ISLAND  
a participation play for children  
For Two Men and Four Women

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C H A R A C T E R S

JAMIE

CAPTAIN SMOLLET

LONG JOHN SILVER

RED

CROSSBUN

BEN BULBA

Place: From London to Treasure Island.

Time: Early Nineteenth Century.

# treasure island

Enter JAMIE from UR. She is a tomboy, in jeans. She comes on stage and crosses DC into spotlight, looks at audience for a second or two, then:)

JAMIE. Have you ever been captured by pirates? (Goes to various audience members.) Have you? Have you? Or you? (Waits for response, then takes map out from behind back.) Me neither. Do you see this old map here? It's a treasure map give me by an old blind woman. She said it belonged to a Captain Flint. A mean pirate, a savage pirate. My uncle, Captain Smollet, as jolly a captain as ever sailed the seas, wants to go after the treasure. And so do I. Do you want to come, too? Children, my uncle Captain Smollet is going to take you and me all the way from London, across the ocean, to Treasure Island. Are you ready to voyage to Treasure Island with me? (Children respond.)

(CAPTAIN SMOLLET enters with a telescope, crosses DR, and winks at the audience, then looks through the telescope.)

CAPTAIN. Hoist anchor. Set sail. (Sings.) "As I was a walking down . . ."

JAMIE. But, Uncle, we don't have a crew.

CAPTAIN (looking around). The crew? Where are they? I hired an old sea dog today. Long John Silver is his name. Where is he?

JAMIE. Long John Silver? The man with the crutch?

CAPTAIN. Yes, he walks with a crutch.

JAMIE. Uncle, I've heard terrible rumors about Long John Silver. He's not to be trusted. This is going to be a very long journey and we've got to have other members of the crew we can trust.

CAPTAIN. Such as?

JAMIE. These children. You're capable sailors, aren't you? (Children respond.)

CAPTAIN. Children aboard my ship? (Goes to different

sections of the audience and asks the following questions.) I don't know. Have you ever gotten seasick? Have any of you ever sailed in a storm with waves fifty feet high? Have you ever survived on salt pork and water? I don't know. Maybe, maybe.

JAMIE. Oh, children, my uncle is very stubborn. Just wait. I'm sure I can convince him to take you along. (Goes to different sections of the audience with the following questions.) Have you ever wanted to sail toward the North Star with a sea breeze blowing in your face? And have you ever wanted to sit around a camp fire all night and sing songs about pirates and sailing ships and treasure? (Children respond.) There. There's a crew you can trust.

CAPTAIN. Well, all right. Pick the crew and let's hoist anchor.

JAMIE. I need you and you and you -- (Points out several children in audience.) -- to help haul up the anchor. (JAMIE takes two or three children and lines them up beside the CAPTAIN, DR.) Now you get in a line like this and pull. (Demonstrates.) Pull. That's it, keep pulling. The anchor is very deep and heavy.

CAPTAIN. Pull, everybody. Heave ho. Let me hear you out there. Heave ho. Heave ho. (Sings.) "Way-hey blow the man down." Sing that to my lines. (He pulls anchor with the children as he sings.)

As I was a walking down Paradise Street  
Everybody!

Way-hey blow the man down.

A saucy policeman I chanced to meet

Way-hey blow the man down.

Heave ho. (CAPTAIN and children continue to haul up anchor as JAMIE picks the rest of the children.)

JAMIE. Now, will you and you -- (indicating.) -- hoist the top sail. (JAMIE takes these children DL.) Pull hard on this rope. This is the rope up here. You pull down like this and the sail goes up. (Children begin to pull on sail.) Now, someone to steer. (Hands go up. JAMIE takes this child to C and shows him or her how to steer.)

CAPTAIN. Heave ho. Let me hear you out there. Heave ho.

JAMIE. Keep pulling on the sail. Pull up that anchor. Now

I need someone who can cook their own scrambled eggs. (Hands go up. JAMIE picks a child.) And someone who knows how to sweep their room? (Hands go up. JAMIE picks another child.) Good -- you come up, too. And very important. Someone to brew a hot grog? (Hands go up. JAMIE picks the third child and leads all three to the CAPTAIN who is still pulling on the anchor.) Now you three will be the cooks and the cabin boy. (She goes to DR and hands them their equipment.) Here is a pot for you and a pan for you and a broom. Your crew, Captain.

CAPTAIN (stopping his pulling on anchor to give instructions to crew). Keep pulling in the anchor, sailors. Set that sail. Steer, sailor, steer. Crew, I want you to go up there -- (Points UR.) -- and start making breakfast. We're all hungry. And, cabin boy, this cabin needs sweeping. Jamie, do you have the map?

JAMIE. Right here. (Hands map to CAPTAIN. He goes back to pulling anchor.) Then pull, everybody. We've almost got her up. Heave ho. Heave ho.

(Enter LONG JOHN SILVER from UR, hopping on one leg and supporting a leg with a crutch. He comes to C.)

LONG JOHN. Here I am, Captain, here I am. I've been called rascally, treacherous, tricky but I am, if I say so myself, a lovable sort of man. (Stops, stares at the children on stage.) So. This is the crew.

JAMIE. Keep hauling up the anchor, sailors. And set the sail. Don't forget to steer. We want to impress the first mate.

LONG JOHN (circling each of the crew). Are any of you spunky enough to sail after treasure with Long John Silver? I don't know. Mighty puny bunch.

JAMIE. They're good sailors. And so are they. (Indicates audience.)

LONG JOHN (to audience). I've brought along me own pirate friends.

(RED and CROSSBUN have entered UR and crossed to LONG JOHN.)

LONG JOHN (winking). From old Flint's crew. Red . . .



Crossbun.

RED (bringing out a burlap bag and slinging it DL). A waste of time. Take over the ship now, that's what I say.

CROSSBUN. That's what I say, too, don't I, Red?

LONG JOHN. Now, Red, just lay the stuff out. (RED and CROSSBUN begin to lay out rope and pirate bandannas on the stage, DL. LONG JOHN prowls the edge of the stage, looking at the audience and the crew.) I don't know. Not much meat on you. A few tough-lookin' potential pirates. Maybe. Now, lads and lassies, let me hear you sing this song and then I'll know if any of you have what it takes to sail with Long John Silver. (Sings. RED and CROSSBUN sing with him and help lead the children.)

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest

Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum.

Let me hear you, me hearties.

ALL (singing).

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest.

Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum.

LONG JOHN. Not bad, not bad for green legs. Red, Crossbun, you help those sailors set the other sails.

Me, I'll help these mates pull up the anchor.

CAPTAIN. Let's sing my song as we haul and we pull.

As I was a walking down Paradise Street

Way-hey blow the man down.

A saucy policeman I chanced to meet.

Way-hey blow the man down.

JAMIE. We're almost ready to sail. Is the anchor up?

CAPTAIN and CHILDREN. Aye.

JAMIE. Is the sail set?

RED and CHILDREN. Aye.

JAMIE. Have you got us on a straight course, navigator?

Cooks, is breakfast ready? Cabin boy, is the cabin almost clean? Then I'll go below and get the thunder sheets. And oh, yes, you sailors who hauled anchor and set sail, you can go back to your seats. There's danger ahead and we'll need you there. You stay there, wheelman. (Children go back to their seats. If one wants to stay, he or she can join the Captain's crew.) Cooks and cabin boy, you stay with the Captain if you have the courage. I'll get the thunder sheets. (JAMIE exits UR.)