

Blackbeard

(about 1680?–1718)

Little is known about the famous pirate Blackbeard except for the last few years of his life. He is thought to have been born in either Bristol, England, or on the British-ruled island of Jamaica. We are not sure of Blackbeard's real name. Although he was known as Edward Teach, pirates commonly used false names to protect their families, so this may not have been his real name. One clue about his background was that he could read and write well, implying that he probably came from a rather well-to-do family.



During Queen Anne's War (1702–1713), Teach worked out of Jamaica as a privateer for England. Privateers were the commanders of private ships hired by the government in wartime to attack enemy ships. Teach had great success in his attacks on French and Spanish ships. When the war against France and Spain ended, many of the privateers, including Teach, turned to piracy.

Around 1716, Teach went to work for the well-known pirate Benjamin Hornigold, who made his headquarters at the town of Nassau in the Bahama Islands. Teach helped Hornigold capture ships around the Bahamas and was soon rewarded with his own vessel. After equipping it with seventy men and six cannons, Teach robbed so many ships in so short a time that he became a legendary figure even to other pirates. In 1717, Teach broke away from Hornigold and set out on his own. For the last year or so of his life he concentrated on robbing ships along and near the Carolina coast.

Teach wanted to be known as the world's most wicked pirate so that his

victims would surrender at the sight of him, and he wouldn't have to fight. About the time that he broke away from Hornigold, he grew his famous long black beard, adopted the name Blackbeard, and began sticking slow-burning matches under his hat so that his head appeared to be smoking. It was said that Blackbeard didn't harm people who turned over their valuables when he robbed their ships. But someone who didn't hand over a diamond ring might lose the ring and the finger it was on.

From time to time, the British kings and queens offered pardons to pirates who promised to become honest men. In early 1718 Blackbeard sailed to Bath, North Carolina, where he took the vow to give up piracy. He was pardoned for his past misdeeds and lived for a few months near Governor Charles Eden in Bath. He even married a 16-year-old girl in Bath who was said to be his fourteenth wife! Apparently all or most of the earlier marriages had been performed on shipboard and weren't legal.

Blackbeard soon broke his promise and continued to sail out from his hiding place at Ocracoke Inlet to rob ships. He seems to have done this with the blessing of Governor Eden. Finally in late 1718 Governor Alexander Spotswood of Virginia sent out the expedition that tracked down and killed Blackbeard in a sea battle near Ocracoke Inlet.

The Blackbeard legend continued to grow after his death. People claimed that after Blackbeard's headless body was thrown into the water, it swam about for quite a while before sinking! And for many years, when people along the North Carolina coast saw unidentified lights, they claimed that it was Blackbeard with a lantern looking for his head.

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1. Which fact about Blackbeard's adult life suggests the **most** about his childhood?
- A He worked out of Jamaica.
 - B He could read and write well.
 - C He was known as Edward Teach.
 - D He went to work for Benjamin Hornigold.
2. Who fought in Queen Anne's War?
- A The English fought the Spanish and the French.
 - B The Jamaicans fought the English.
 - C The French fought the Spanish and the English.
 - D The French and the Spanish fought the Jamaicans.
3. Why did Blackbeard want to be known as the world's most wicked pirate?
- A so he could impress Governor Eden
 - B so he would not have to fight people
 - C so he would be respected as a leader
 - D so he could become rich and famous
4. What is the **most likely** reason why the governor of Virginia ordered an expedition to track down Blackbeard after the North Carolina governor had pardoned him?
- A because the Virginia governor learned that Blackbeard had begun robbing ships again
 - B because the Virginia governor realized that Blackbeard had stopped being a pirate
 - C because the North Carolina governor was afraid to anger Blackbeard
 - D because the North Carolina governor only pretended to pardon Blackbeard
5. According to the information in the selection, which relationship is **most similar** to the relationship below?
- Blackbeard : Ocracoke Inlet
- A Spotswood : Eden
 - B Bristol : England
 - C Hornigold : Nassau
 - D Spain : France

6. How is the information in this selection organized?
- A by putting the most important information first
 - B by comparing past events with current events
 - C by putting the facts first and then adding an opinion
 - D by writing about events in the order in which they occurred

End of Set

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EOG Grade 5 Reading Sample Items

Selection Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Blackbeard	1	B	Evaluating	2.02
Blackbeard	2	A	Knowledge	2.02
Blackbeard	3	B	Knowledge	2.02
Blackbeard	4	A	Generating	3.01
Blackbeard	5	C	Analyzing	2.02
Blackbeard	6	D	Analyzing	2.01