

## Extracts from “Treasure Island” by Robert Louis Stevenson

### **Captain Billy Bones**

I remember him as if it were yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest following behind him in a hand-barrow—a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man, his tarry pigtail falling over the shoulder of his soiled blue coat, his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails, and the sabre cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white. I remember him looking round the cover and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sang so often afterwards: “Fifteen men on the dead man’s chest— Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!” In the high, old tottering voice that seemed to have been tuned and broken at the capstan bars.

### **Long John Silver or Barbecue, as the men called him**

Aboard ship he carried his crutch by a lanyard round his neck, to have both hands as free as possible. It was something to see him wedge the foot of the crutch against a bulkhead, and propped against it, yielding to every movement of the ship, get on with his cooking like someone safe ashore. Still more strange was it to see him in the heaviest of weather cross the deck ... “He’s no common man, Barbecue,” said the coxswain to me. “He had good schooling in his young days and can speak like a book when so minded; and brave—a lion’s nothing alongside of Long John! I seen him grapple four and knock their heads together—him unarmed.” All the crew respected and even obeyed him. He had a way of talking to each and doing everybody some particular service. To me he was unweariedly kind, and always glad to see me in the galley, which he kept as clean as a new pin, the dishes hanging up burnished and his parrot in a cage in one corner.

### **Blind Pew**

...I was standing at the door for a moment, full of sad thoughts about my father, when I saw someone drawing slowly near along the road. He was plainly blind, for he tapped before him with a stick and wore a great green shade over his eyes and nose; and he was hunched, as if with age or weakness, and wore a huge old tattered sea-cloak with a hood that made him appear positively deformed. I never saw in my life a more dreadful-looking figure. He stopped a little from the inn, and raising his voice in an odd sing-song, addressed the air in front of him, “Will any kind friend inform a poor blind man, who has lost the precious sight of his eyes in the gracious defence of his native country, England—and God bless King George!—where or in what part of this country he may now be?” “You are at the Admiral Benbow, Black Hill Cove, my good man,” said I. “I hear a voice,” said he, “a young voice. Will you give me your hand, my kind young friend, and lead me in?” I held out my hand, and the horrible, soft-spoken, eyeless creature gripped it in a moment like a vise. I was so much startled that I struggled to withdraw, but the blind man pulled me close up to him with a single action of his arm. “Now, boy,” he said, “take me in to the captain.” ... I never heard a voice so cruel, and cold, and ugly as that blind man’s. It cowed me more than the pain ...

1. Name 4 things we learn about Billy Bones
2. Name 4 things we learn about Blind Pew
3. Name 4 things we learn about Long John Silver
4. Identify the features that we have come to associate with pirates. In which other books and films do we find similar characters?
5. Highlight all the references in these descriptions to unattractive physical characteristics and disabilities. Why do you think the author uses these descriptions?
6. Describe the appearance of Long John Silver
7. Describe the appearance of Blind Pew