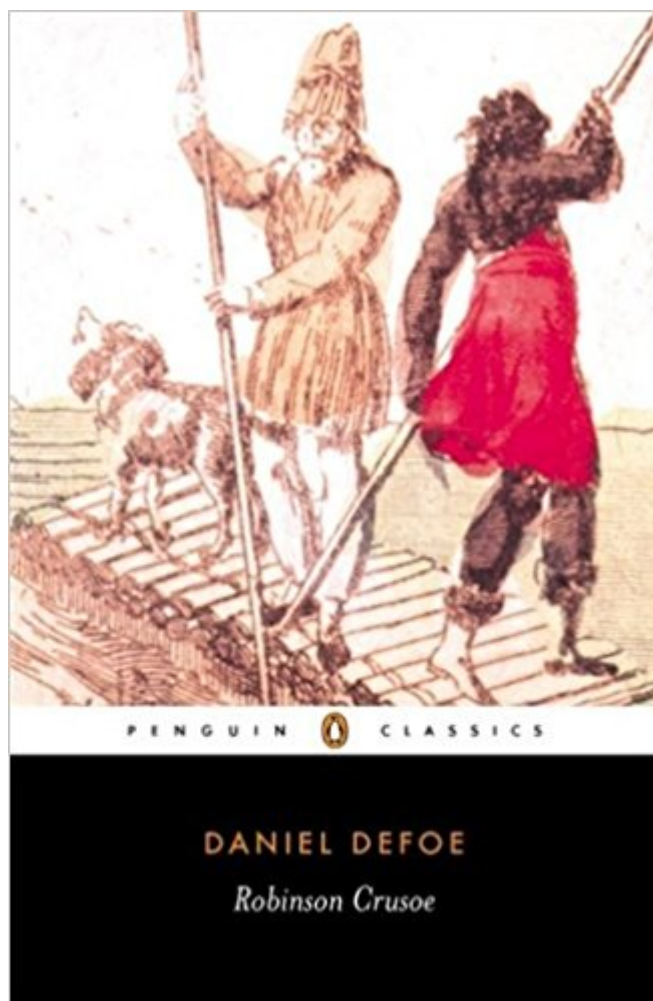


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# Robinson Crusoe (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

The original tale of a castaway struggling to survive on a remote desert island, and one of the first novels in English. The sole survivor of a shipwreck, Robinson Crusoe is washed up on a desert island. In his journal he chronicles his daily battle to stay alive, as he conquers isolation, fashions shelter and clothes, enlists the help of a native islander who he names 'Friday', and fights off cannibals and mutineers. Written in an age of exploration and enterprise, it has been variously interpreted as an embodiment of British imperialist values, as a portrayal of 'natural man', or as a moral fable. But above all is a brilliant narrative, depicting Crusoe's transformation from terrified survivor to self-sufficient master of an island. This edition contains a full chronology of Defoe's life and times, explanatory notes, glossary and a critical introduction discussing Robinson Crusoe as a pioneering work of modern psychological realism. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 7 Up-Defoe's classic novel of shipwreck and survival, now nearly 300 years old, is abridged competently in this recording. The flavor of the 18th century language is retained, but the plot moves

along at a pace more appealing to 21st century ears. The reader, Martin Shaw, has a pleasant voice, but unfortunately tends to trail off at the ends of sentences, losing whole words. As with all abridgements, large sections of the story and entire characters are omitted, but since most of the book tells of Crusoe's solitary sojourn on the island, this is not a major problem. This version is no substitute for the original, but it would be a supplemental purchase in libraries where abridgements are popular. Sarah Flowers, Santa Clara County Library, Morgan Hill, CA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

One of the first novels ever written, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the classic adventure story of a man marooned on an island for nearly 30 years, is part of our culture. From Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (1960) to the recent movie *Castaway*, the elemental situation of the person suddenly alone, who must make a life in a dangerous environment, continues to enthrall all ages. Yet few adults, never mind young people, can wade through Defoe's lengthy tome with its convoluted eighteenth-century prose. So here's a shortened storybook version--retold by Timothy Meis in accessible style, yet true to the spirit of the original and the time when it was first published--in a large picture-book format with clear type, high-quality paper, and more than a dozen unforgettable narrative paintings by Wyeth, first published in 1920 and newly reproduced here in glowing color. The story begins with the universal quest: the young man in Britain, torn between his safe home and his hunger for adventure, breaks away from his loving father and sails away into the unknown. After a series of harrowing escapes, he's shipwrecked on a desert island. His lively first-person account shows how his intelligence and education help him survive for many years, and how he uses technology, including guns and tools salvaged from the ship. He sets up home, reads the Bible, finds a parrot as a pet, and even devises a calendar to keep track of time. Then one day he finds a human footprint: "Was it someone who could save me and take me back to civilization? Or was it a savage who landed here?" When some "savages" arrive in several canoes, he uses his guns to get rid of them, and he rescues one of their captives, a handsome fellow with very dark skin. Delighted to have a companion at last, Crusoe names the newcomer Friday (since Crusoe found him on Friday). Crusoe teaches "my man Friday" to speak English, fire a gun, carve a canoe, and clothe his nakedness, and they live happily together. Later they rescue a white man and Friday's father from a group of "savages," and, eventually, they all return to their homes. Defoe is said to have based his novel on the true adventures of Alexander Selkirk (who spent four or five years on an island in the South Pacific) and on accounts of other castaways of the time. The survival adventure is still enthralling. But what about the racism? This is clearly the classic colonialist story,

but whose history is it? And how will young people read it today? Is it just boring, politically correct nitpicking to object to the use of the word "savages" throughout the book and even on the book flap? Yes, there are some bad guys among the whites, but even they are called "men

My mom bought this scholastic rendition for me when I was in the 5th grade. It may have been one of the 99 cent books at the time. I thought it looked dumb and wouldn't read it. Until that eventful day I ran out of books to read and had no choice but to pick it up. I couldn't put it down. One of the most memorable books I ever read. I gave the very same book to my oldest kids in the 5th grade to read. They grudgingly picked it up as well, and they too fell in love with it. My son is in the 5th grade this year. The copy from my childhood was now falling apart. I searched to find the same one. Luckily he was excited to read. More so when he heard the history of why we all love it. He also fell in love with it. Loaned it to my nephew in the 5th grade as well, he also loved it. Thank you to my sweet mom who probably had no clue what she'd start by buying a cheap scholastic book order book. Truly a classic everyone should read :)

For anyone who is not familiar with the Penguin Clothbound Classics editions, you're missing out on something wonderful. These are well produced clothbound editions, much better quality than most "hardbound" books now. The price is very low--if you buy them when they first come out...drat that I missed the Madame Bovary and Crime and Punishment releases that now cost hundreds of dollars. The price is typically lower than other "hardbound" books; in fact, the price is not that much more than the price of the Penguin Paperback edition of the work, but this copy will last a lifetime. As with the other Penguin Clothbound Classic editions, this too includes introductory material and appendices typical of other Penguin editions. I hope Penguin continues to release titles in the Clothbound Classics series, and I wish it would release more titles per year in the series.

For those only familiar with the more "abridged" versions of the story that are popularly printed, this version is the original. It's less a story of a man castaway on a remote island than the story of a man railing at a god he professes not to believe in--complaining about having to live with the consequences of his decisions and blaming that same god for giving him a hard life. Those unfamiliar with the original text and context should also be aware that the racism of the times comes through very clearly in Crusoe's thoughts about and treatment of the "natives" he encounters. Generally I'm a big fan of NOT abridging classic texts and I'm sure there's merit in this well-known classic but I found it hard, slow reading.

Robinson Crusoe is a classic. However, I have always found the middle of the book very boring. Defoe spends, in my opinion, too much time discussing the mundane activities Crusoe performs for survival rather than developing his character. Defoe is also a proponent of slavery because he writes numerous times about Crusoe's desire to obtain servants and going on a journey to obtain slaves. Besides my couple personal issues it is a wonderful book and a must read classic.

Read this because it was referenced in another novel, Crusoe's Daughter. Since I had never read it and it's considered a classic, I thought I should read it. There were quite a few surprises to me. I thought I knew the general plot, but I had no knowledge of any details. It was worth my time to have read it.

What a great story. There is so much more to it than a person would realize. Most people would know about the Island part of the story. Yet the Island is only a section of the book. The whole adventure is quite long with twists and turns. The old English style takes a bit to get used to, however the reader soon adapts, and the writing is really very good. I read the book via Kindle so the dictionary came in handy to understand some words that have fallen out of use in today's English. Also, it gives an excellent insight to the times the book is set in. The best book I've read this year.

I finished this a couple months ago and really enjoyed it. If nothing else, this classic is historically interesting for revealing the worldview of a 17th-century Englishman. The world was far more interconnected even in that day that we might imagine. Crusoe's forays into Portugal, Morocco, Africa and Brazil speak to that. I came away with a greater appreciation for the problem solving skills, critical thinking, creativity, and physical strength that pre-modern humans had to draw on daily. As moderns, most of us plop ourselves in front of the computer screen or television and lead a comparatively easy life. The inspiration in this story is Crusoe's ability to find the positive in any situation. He starts out grumbling about his isolation on the island, and his dim prospects for any rescue. He comes to see though, that he alone was saved from drowning in the shipwreck. So he comes to appreciate the very fact of life. He also comes to appreciate how he has been provided for, and that the simple things in life are most important. He comes to an increasingly deepening awareness of and faith in God. One of the only items salvaged from the ship was a Bible. Crusoe's thoughts on God and his interaction with the biblical text show how central religious faith was to the

author, and the pride of place it held in most Europeans' lives at that time.

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