

A PIRATE'S GUIDE TO FIRST GRADE

Written by James Preller

Illustrated by Greg Ruth

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Story Summary

It's time to get up and go to school...it is the first day of first grade! It's all hands on deck for a young pirate and his crew. How much trouble can they get into? What will they do at recess? What treasure awaits them at school? As this story is told by the young "pirate" in this video, the children will learn a new way of expressing themselves...just as the pirates did! Everyone will have a good time learning pirates' vocabulary.

Objectives

1. To learn substitutions for common words in "pirate vocabulary." *
2. To develop the ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy.
3. To develop expressive language skills.

Before viewing the video

Tell the children that they will be meeting the author, James Preller, in the video. Tell them to pay careful attention to the illustrations, as some are in color and some are not. Ask the class if they have ever pretended to be someone else or a character in a book or movie. In this video they will meet a boy who is beginning first grade, but he has quite an imagination! Tell them to listen very carefully, as there will be many expressions they have not heard before.

Questions to ask after viewing the video

1. How does this boy wake up for his first day of school?
2. When he gets ready for school, what are some of the things he really does? What are some of the imaginary things he does?
3. How do you think his mother feels about sending him off for his first day?
4. In his imagination, how is he getting to school?
5. What does he call the other children on the school bus?
6. What does he really mean when he says “we dropped anchor?”
7. What is he doing when he “stows his gear?”
8. What were the classroom activities of the day? What did everyone do at recess?
9. What happens when a pirate “walks the plank?” What happened when the little girl “walked the plank?”
10. What treasure was waiting for the boy at the end of his first day?

Activities

1. Make a list of the “pirate vocabulary” you hear in the video. Ask the class to supply a synonym for each word or expression.
2. Ask the children to talk about the way the illustrator, Greg Ruth, separates reality from fantasy in his drawings.
3. Have the children restate the sentences written with pirate vocabulary by substituting typical everyday language.
4. Have the children create their own illustration from the video and label it two ways: in “pirate language” and everyday language.

* Author James Preller has included a “Pirate’s Vocabulary” to be found on the end paper of his book *A Pirate’s Guide to First Grade* published by Feiwel and Friends (an imprint of Macmillan) ISBN 978-0-312-36928-6

Inclusive:

ADDLED – insane, or foolish

AFT – rear of ship

BUCCANEER – Caribbean pirate

CHOPPERS – teeth

CROW’S NEST – a platform near the top of the mast to give a lookout a better view

DEADLIGHTS – eyes

DOUBLE QUICK – in a hurry

FIDDLER’S GREEN – a pirate’s idea of heaven

FORE – the bow or front of the ship

GALLEY – kitchen aboard a boat

GANGWAY – a warning to step aside

GOB – mouth

GOGGLES – eyes

GRUB – food

GROG – drink

HEARTIES – friends, crew

JOLLY BOAT – small, but happy, boat

KISSER – mouth

LOOKOUT- someone who keeps watch

LUBBER – a non-sailor

MATEY – a cheerful way to address someone

OLD SALT – an experienced sailor

SET SHEETS TO THE WIND – tighten a rope attached to a sail

SCURVY – a disease

SHANTY – a sea song

SHIVER ME TIMBERS – surprise, amazement

SMARTLY – quickly

SNAPPERS – teeth

SWABBIES – shipmates

SWAG – loot, booty, treasure

WALK THE PLANK – forced off a ship to fall into the water below

WINKS - sleep