



Captain Jake

Shannon Stewart

illustrated by Ben Hodson

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About the Book

Jake loves to hunt for treasure, so when the famous pirate Captain Kidd asks him to be his cabin boy, he can't refuse. But Jake soon learns that bringing home an invisible pirate can be a real pain, especially when the pirate is terrified of Jake's teenage sister! Aboard the *Adventure Galley*, Jake learns the rules of the sea and faces his greatest fear. Suddenly, Boris Baxter, the meanest boy in the whole school, and his pet rat, The Plague, don't seem so scary when Jake returns from his adventures.

About the Author

Shannon Stewart's first collection of poetry, *The Canadian Girl*, was short-listed for the Gerald Lampert Award and the Milton Acorn People's Poetry Award. Her second collection of poetry, *Penny Dreadful*, is forthcoming with Signal Editions in the fall of 2008. She is the author of two children's picture books, *Sea Crow* (Orca Books, 2004), and *Alphabad: An Alphabet Book for Wicked Children!* (Keyporter Books, 2005). She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia, where she has also taught poetry in the Creative Writing Department. She lives in Vancouver with her husband and two children in a small cottage by the sea where she sometimes spots young pirates digging for treasure.

About the Writing

Shannon Stewart says she is surrounded by treasure hunters. Her father is a keen garage saler...he is always finding the most amazing stuff to bring home and restore to its original beauty. Her son, Jacob, is following in his grandfather's footsteps. Jacob has the knack of finding things on sidewalks, parks and beaches that no one else has noticed. Like her character Jake, Jacob's pockets are often bulging with interesting collections.

Teaching Ideas—Curriculum Connections**Prereading Idea**

Being picked on by a bully can be a very serious problem, and confronting a bully can take a lot of courage. What are some of the best ways children can try to manage a situation where a bully is involved?

Classroom Discussion Questions

Is courage an attribute you are born with or is it something a person can learn to build on?

If you could host an invisible guest from the past, who would you choose to meet?

Jake has a few fears. He doesn't like bullies or rats (or scorpions and spiders!) But Captain Kidd thinks he's very brave when it comes to his teenage sister, Gladys. How else does Jake show courage in this story? Is it possible for a person to be both courageous and fearful at the same time?

Jake loves to collect things. What sort of collections do you and your classmates have at home? What do you think is the most interesting collection in your class? Why do people have collections?

Suggested Activities

Humor is an important device in this story. Divide into groups of six (five characters and one narrator) and read or act chapter 3 ("Invisible") out loud. Try to decide what elements of dialogue, situation and character make this scene funny.

Who wants to act like a pirate? Using Captain Kidd's advice in chapter 4 ("Act Like A Pirate"), groups can role-play Captain Kidd teaching Jake to become an assertive pirate or the scene where Captain Jake stands up to Boris in chapter 7. Watch the skits afterward and see who makes the boldest pirate of all!

Jake isn't afraid to admit that he is scared of something. Talking about our fears is one of the best ways to begin dealing with them. Write a personal account of a situation in your life that you found scary. How did you deal with it?

Imagine that you are Richard Barleycorn and you have found the treasure from Captain Kidd's map! Write a letter of thanks from the past to Jake, telling him what your life is like now that you are rich and no longer a cabin boy.

Other Titles and Websites of Interest

Eyewitness: Pirate by Richard Platt

Imagine You're a Pirate! by Meg Clibbon

www.rochedalss.eq.edu.au/pirates/

Pirates Homepage—histories of famous pirates and some fun activities

<http://www.eyesonbullying.org/pdfs/toolkit.pdf>

<http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/bullies.html>

Other Books by the Author from Orca Book Publishers

Sea Crow (Out of Print)