

Pirates

Pirates are not a made-up fairy tale. They really existed! Back when the world used ships to travel, there were lots of pirates. The word *pirate* means a person who breaks the law at sea. Pirates knew how to break the law. They stole other people's food, weapons and clothing. They were not as horrible as some people think. Pirates wanted treasure and would steal all of it if they could. Once pirates took over a ship, the people surrendered quickly. That way, no one got hurt.

Pirates got their ear pierced and wore gold earrings. They did this so they would always have something of value with them. If their bodies washed on shore, they at least had their earring. One gold earring could pay for their funeral.

Pirates were good at treating other pirates fairly. Once they took their treasure, they split it with the other pirates. Sometimes the captain was not nice. If that happened, they could agree not to listen to him. This kept everyone on a pirate ship happy.

Other ships were sent to look for pirates. Kings wanted to keep the waters safe. They wanted to make sure their treasures did not get taken.