

# Florida Studies Weekly

## State History



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## Avast, Ye Matey!



Pirates are an amazing part of history. Today, we tell stories about sword-swinging sailors jumping from ship to ship as they searched for treasure. Movies about pirates are usually very popular. People love to tell stories about hidden treasure and exciting battles. Sadly, not all of these stories are true, but that doesn't mean we can't enjoy this exciting part of Florida's history.

### Pirate Flags

One of the most popular pirate images is the famous "skull and crossbones." Almost every ship flew a flag. That flag let others know where they came from. The black flag with a skull and bones let everyone know they were dealing with a pirate. In real life, pirate ships carried a lot of flags. Whenever they saw another ship, pirates would put up whatever flag they thought would not alarm the other ship. The ships would think the pirates were friendly, so they wouldn't suspect a trap. Once the pirates got close, they would put up a pirate flag to scare the crew on the other ship.

Pirate flags differed between pirates. Many pirate captains designed their own flags to set themselves apart from other pirates.

### Battles on the High Sea

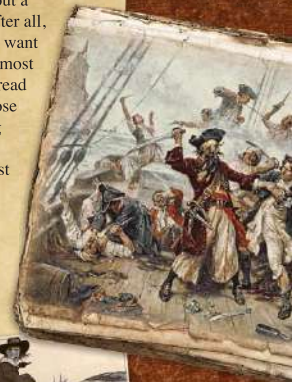
Many pirate stories talk about big fights between ships. They tell about pirates who use swords and pistols to fight and steal. In truth, pirates liked to avoid fighting. Most pirates did not have doctors with them, so even small injuries could be very serious. Most pirates tried to be as scary as possible. Attacking a ship might destroy the goods they wanted to steal. Pirates

wanted their victims to give up without a fight. Most of the time, it worked! After all, the sailors they were attacking didn't want to fight either. Pirates would then let most of their victims go, so they would spread stories and rumors. The next time those pirates found a ship to attack, scaring the crew was even easier! When pirates did fight, it was usually against military ships that were trying to protect people living in the area.

### Buried Treasure

Another famous story about pirates is how they buried their treasure. In these stories, pirates take their loot to a small island and bury it. Then they make maps so that they can find it again later. While some pirates like Sir Francis Drake and William Kidd did bury gold and jewels, most pirates did not. They usually spent their money very quickly on food, alcohol and gambling.

There are still legends about some big treasures. Some people think that a British captain named William Thompson buried \$200 million worth of treasure somewhere in Costa Rica. It can be fun to believe treasure is out there. Do you think people will be able to find more pirate treasure?



Pirate flags of:

- A) Calico Jack Rackham
- B) Bartholomew Roberts
- C) Stede Bonnet
- D) Edward Low

## Connections

## Hunting for Treasure—Geocaching

Pirates may not have buried any gold, but that doesn't mean you can't go treasure hunting. If finding hidden treasures sounds like fun, then geocaching might be the hobby for you. Geocaching is when people use a GPS to look for and find objects that have been hidden by other people. A cache may be a lunchbox filled with small toys or a small camera for people to take pictures. Most caches also have a notebook, so people can write their name and the date

they found it. Caches are almost always found somewhere in nature, and people who look for them usually agree to clean up any trash they see while they are looking.

People who enjoy the hobby use the website [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com) to tell others where they have hidden a cache. Sound interesting? If so, you can go to that site and find a list of places where things have been hidden. Make sure you bring



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**Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards:** SS.4.A.1.1: Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant individuals and events throughout Florida history. SS.4.A.1.2: Synthesize information related to Florida history through print and electronic media. SS.4.A.3.1: Identify explorers who came to Florida and the motivations for their expeditions. SS.4.A.3.6: Identify the effects of Spanish rule in Florida. SS.4.A.3.7: Identify nations (Spain, France, England) that controlled Florida before it became a United States territory. SS.4.A.8.4: Explain how tourism affects Florida's economy and growth. SS.4.A.9.1: Utilize timelines to sequence key events in Florida history. SS.4.G.1.1: Identify physical features of Florida. SS.4.G.1.2: Locate and label cultural features on a Florida map. SS.4.G.1.4: Interpret political and physical maps using map elements (title, compass rose, cardinal directions, intermediate directions, symbols, legend, scale, longitude, latitude).





# The Golden Age of Piracy

## The Golden Age of Piracy

The Caribbean Sea is home to thousands of islands. European colonies on these islands brought wealth and trade to countries in Europe, but they were hard to govern. With so much wealth and so little government, it was easy for pirates to steal from ships. Historians call this time the Golden Age of Piracy. Not everyone agrees on exactly when it started, but many agree that it lasted from the 1650s to the 1730s.

## Pirates and Privateers

A pirate was anyone who used ships and the ocean to steal from others. Most people think that all pirates were killers and thieves. Many of them were, but some were really privateers. A privateer was someone who was hired by a country to attack and steal from other ships. Usually, privateers were only allowed to attack ships from certain countries. For example, the king of

France might hire a privateer to attack only ships from England. The privateer got to keep part of whatever he took, but the rest had to go back to the king.

## Sir Francis Drake

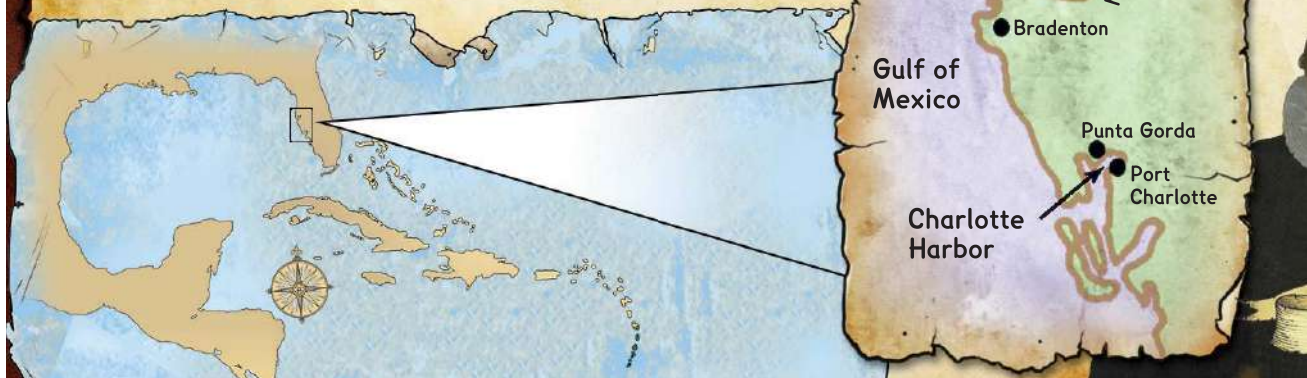
Sir Francis Drake was one of England's most famous privateers. Queen Elizabeth I hired him around 1572. She wanted him to attack Spanish ships in the Caribbean. His first target was the town of Nombre de Dios. Spanish ships used the town as a place to drop off gold and silver from South America. Drake and his crew of 73 men were able to capture the town, but he was hurt in the fight and had to leave. After he healed, his men attacked many other settlements in the area. Drake and his men captured a lot of Spain's gold and silver.

Drake didn't stay a privateer forever. He was one of the first explorers to completely sail around the world. He also became an

admiral in the English navy!

## Blackbeard

Blackbeard is one of the most famous pirates of all time. His real name was Edward Teach. He started out as a privateer, but he soon decided to become a full-time pirate. Blackbeard knew he needed a powerful reputation. He was already a tall man with a loud voice, but that wasn't enough. He grew a long, black beard that he twisted into braids. He also stuck pieces of rope into his beard. Whenever he spotted another ship, he would light that rope on fire. The ropes gave off smoke that made



## Florida Facts

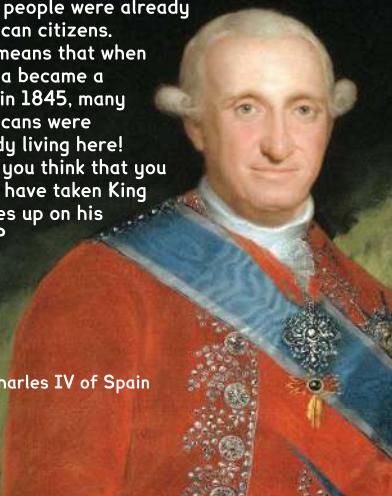
### Land Ho!

In 1790, King Charles IV of Spain began to offer free land to any foreigner who wanted to settle in Florida. A foreigner is somebody who is from a different country. He offered 100 acres to every head of household with an extra 50 acres for each member of the family and each slave.

A lot of people took up King Charles' offer, and Florida saw many new settlers. Many of these people were already American citizens. That means that when Florida became a state in 1845, many Americans were already living here!

Do you think that you would have taken King Charles up on his offer?

King Charles IV of Spain



## Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties

## Florida Counties

**Pinellas County:** This county's claim to fame is sponges. The county seat is Clearwater, but the sponge divers work in Tarpon Springs, the sponge capital of the U.S. Did you know sponges are sea animals? Pinellas has about 587 miles of coastline. That's a lot of sand! If you guessed this county is a peninsula, you're right. Some people think the county looks like a thumb sticking out into Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. That made it a good place for Spanish explorers like Pánfilo de Narváez to stop.

**Hillsborough County:** When you visit this county, you'll have a hard time deciding what to do. In the county seat of Tampa Bay, you can watch professional football and hockey. Go to Busch Gardens and see the animals or ride a thrilling roller coaster. Dress like a pirate, mateys, during the annual Gasparilla Festival. Or visit Ybor (ee-bohr) City to learn about history and have some delicious Cuban arroz con pollo (chicken and yellow rice). Yum!





him look like a ghost or monster.

His plan worked so well, he almost never needed to fight at all! After two years of stealing as much as he could, Blackbeard tried to retire and enjoy his wealth. He sailed to North Carolina, where an English officer named Robert Maynard found him. Maynard killed Blackbeard after a long and bloody fight. Even though he was dead, stories and myths about Blackbeard continued for hundreds of years.

## Anne Bonny

Not all pirates were men. Anne Bonny was born around the year 1700. Her family moved to the New World while she was a child. Her mother died a few years later, while her father became a successful merchant. Bonny worked in local alehouses and got to know many of the pirates in the area. Soon, she joined a crew that stole from ships near Jamaica.

Bonny never became the captain of her own ship, but she still had a reputation as a good sailor and a strong fighter.

She became one of the most famous pirates of her time. Bonny's ship was captured in 1720, and she was caught and jailed. Nobody is sure what happened to her. Bonny was supposed to have been executed, but some say she was let go because she was pregnant. Others think her father paid for her to be released. Whatever happened, Bonny proved that women could also be successful pirates.

## William Kidd

Capt. Kidd was another pirate who started out as a privateer. The English hired him to attack French ships in the waters near India. After a few years, he decided to turn to piracy.

Kidd became famous after he captured a valuable ship named the *Quedah Merchant* in 1698. A few years later, he was arrested and put on trial. He was found guilty of murder and piracy and sentenced to death. Kidd is one of very few pirates who actually did bury his treasure. Some of it was found after his arrest, but some people think that more of his treasure is still out there, waiting to be found.

## TIMELINE

British settle in Florida, 1763



The Revolutionary War begins, 1775



The Declaration of Independence is signed, 1776



Control of Florida is returned to Spain, 1783



The War of 1812 begins, 1812



## Why are there so many myths about pirates?

### This Week's Question

Movies about pirates can be very exciting, but they do not always tell the truth. Real pirates were often very different from what those films show. Over the years, people have come to enjoy the idea of what they think pirate life was like.

The truth is that pirates were thieves and criminals. They stole what they could and were not afraid to hurt people. What are some things you have learned about pirates this week? How are those facts different from what people may think pirate life was like? Why do you think there are so many myths and legends about pirate life? Write down your ideas and share them with a classmate.

Photo by David Ball



## The Gasparilla Pirate Festival

## History

Do you want to see some pirates in action? Think about a visit to the Gasparilla Pirate Festival. The festival honors the legend of José Gaspar, a mythical pirate who is supposed to have lived in Florida. The celebration is held in Tampa during late January or early February.

The event starts when a "pirate ship" named the *José Gasparilla* lands in Tampa. The pirate captain comes out and demands that the mayor give up the city. Sometimes the mayor agrees, and sometimes he does not. Either way, the pirates hold a parade through the streets. A lot of people join the parade, dressed up as pirates.

The festival is one of Florida's biggest tourist attractions. About 300,000 people usually come to watch the parade. That makes it one of the biggest parades in the country. The parade brings in about \$20 million dollars. That's a lot of money for our state! Have you ever been to the Gasparilla Pirate Festival? What was it like?

Photo by Christopher Hollis





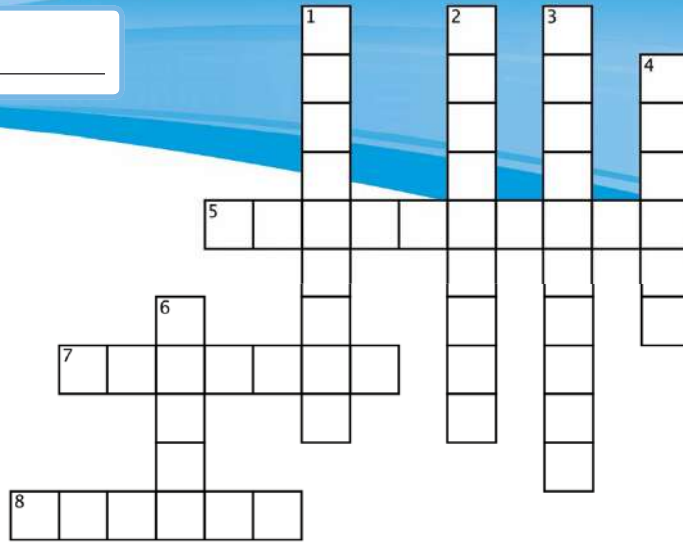
Name \_\_\_\_\_

### ACROSS

5. famous pirate who was killed by Robert Maynard
7. King \_\_\_\_\_ IV offered free land to people who moved to Florida.
8. person who uses ships or the ocean to steal from others

### DOWN

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ was hired by a country to attack ships from another country.
2. a famous female pirate
3. a great hobby for people who want to search for "hidden treasure"
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ Age of Piracy lasted from the 1650s to the 1730s.
6. city where you can see a famous pirate parade



As you read this week's lesson, circle or highlight all proper nouns with any color pen or highlighter. This will help you find some of the crossword answers and get ready for this week's test.

Kings and queens in Europe often hired privateers to attack ships from other countries. Many privateers were successful, but a lot of them eventually became regular pirates who attacked anyone. Do you think hiring privateers was a good idea? Why or why not? Use information from this week's issue to help you write your response. Remember to use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation!

## Let's Write

## Pirate Biography

## Activity

There were a lot of pirates who sailed during the "Golden Age of Piracy." They stole from traders all over the Caribbean Sea and the waters near Florida. Use the Internet to find out about another pirate. Use the lines below to take notes. Then, prepare a short presentation about your pirate to share with the class.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Born: \_\_\_\_\_

Died: \_\_\_\_\_

What we know about his/her childhood:

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What the pirate is most famous for:

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Was the pirate ever caught? How?

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## Language Arts Connection

Choose one article from this week's issue of Studies Weekly and read it again. Circle or highlight the main idea of the article. Underline at least three supporting details. (LAFS.4.RI.1.2)

1. What did Blackbeard do to make sure he had a scary reputation?
2. Why might pirates want to avoid fighting other ships?
3. What were some of the things Sir Francis Drake did after he worked as a privateer?
4. What are some things you would see if you visited Tampa's Gasparilla Pirate Festival?
5. How did Anne Bonny become a pirate? What happened to her after she was caught?

## Think & Review

### Hunting for Treasure—Geocaching

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

water, a flashlight, extra batteries and a first-aid kit with you. You should also bring some small toys or trinkets. Most people who find a cache will make a trade. They'll take something as a souvenir but also leave something behind for the next person.

Geocaching is a great way to enjoy nature while also having the fun of searching for hidden treasure!