



The Cursed Map of Skeleton Isle

Y5 Scholarship



The background of the entire image is a collage of various old, sepia-toned maps. In the center-left, there is a prominent image of a torn piece of an old map with a magnifying glass resting on it. The magnifying glass is focused on a dark, circular area on the map, which appears to be a small island or a specific location. The torn edges of the map are jagged and white, suggesting it was pulled out from a larger sheet. The overall aesthetic is that of a treasure hunt or a historical discovery.

Introduction

Twelve-year-old Jack Hawkins discovers an old map hidden in his grandfather's sea chest. The map leads to the legendary Skeleton Isle, rumoured to hold a cursed pirate treasure. As Jack deciphers the map's clues and embarks on a perilous journey, he must outwit rival treasure hunters, face treacherous waters, and confront the island's dark secrets to claim the treasure and break the curse.



Narrative Outline

01

The Map in
the Sea
Chest

02

Setting
Sail

03

Mutiny on
the High
Seas

04

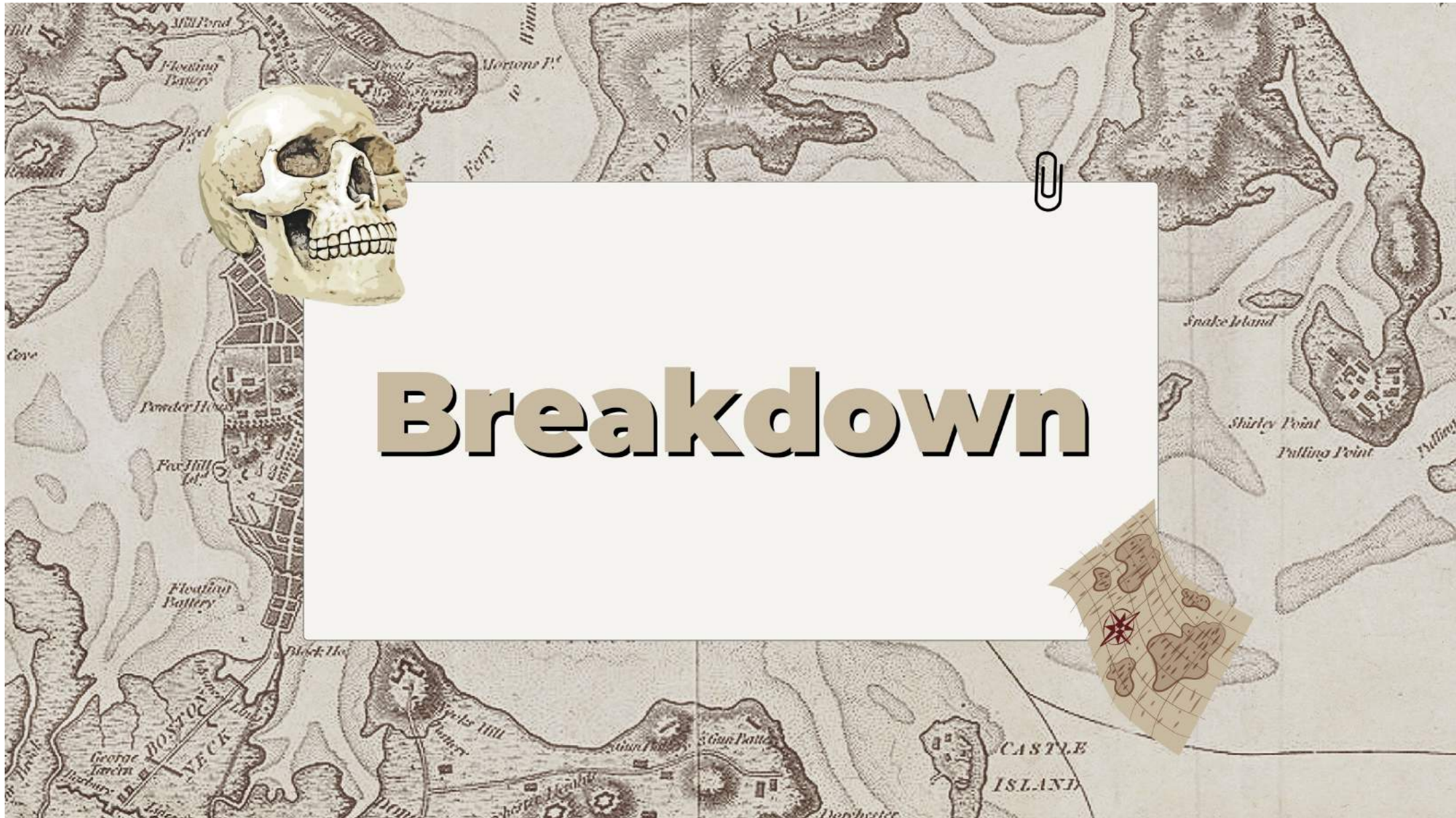
Skeleton
Isle's
Secrets

05

The
Cursed
Treasure



Breakdown



1. The Map in the Sea Chest

Setting the Scene:

- Jack's discovery of the map in his grandfather's old sea chest
- The legend of Skeleton Isle and its cursed treasure
- Jack's decision to embark on the adventure



1. The Map in the Sea Chest

Exemplars:

1. "Jack's hands trembled as he unfolded the brittle parchment. Faded ink revealed a menacing skull-shaped island, with a blood-red 'X' marking the spot. In the corner, spidery writing warned: 'Beware the curse of Skeleton Isle. Only the pure of heart may claim the treasure.'"
2. "As thunder cracked outside, Jack's grandfather hobbled into the attic. His eyes widened at the sight of the map. 'By Neptune's beard,' he whispered, 'you've found old Captain Flint's map. The curse is real, boy. Are you brave enough to face it?'"
3. "Jack traced the route to Skeleton Isle, his mind racing with visions of adventure. But a chill ran down his spine as he noticed a dark stain on the map's edge. Was it merely age, or something more sinister? The curse's first warning, perhaps?"

2. Setting Sail

The Adventure Begins:

- Jack assembles a crew and acquires a ship
- The journey's early challenges and setbacks
- Signs that the curse is already at work



2. Setting Sail

Exemplars:

1. "The Salty Maiden creaked and groaned as she left the harbour. Jack stood at the bow, excitement battling with fear in his gut. Behind him, he heard the gruff voice of Long John Silver: 'A red sky at morning, sailor's warning.' Jack looked up to see blood-red clouds gathering on the horizon."
2. "Three days out, and disaster struck. The ship's cook accidentally set fire to the galley, destroying half their provisions. As Jack helped douse the flames, he couldn't shake the feeling that this was no accident. The curse was testing them, and this was only the beginning."
3. "Jack awoke to panicked shouts. Racing to the deck, he saw a massive kraken-like creature attacking the ship. As tentacles threatened to drag them under, Jack remembered a detail from the map. He grabbed a nearby lantern and shone it into the beast's eye. With a roar, it released the ship and vanished into the depths. 'Quick thinking, lad,' Silver grunted. 'But I fear worse awaits us at Skeleton Isle.'"

3. Mutiny on the High Seas

Unravelling the Mystery:

- Tensions rise among the crew as they near Skeleton Isle
- Jack uncovers a plot to steal the map and treasure
- A fierce battle for control of the ship



3. Mutiny on the High Seas

Exemplars:

1. "Jack's heart pounded as he eavesdropped on Silver and his conspirators. 'We strike at midnight,' Silver hissed. 'The boy dies first. Then we claim the treasure for ourselves.' Jack's mind raced. He had to warn the captain, but how to escape without being seen?"
2. "Chaos erupted on deck as loyalties shattered. Jack found himself back-to-back with the captain, fending off mutineers. 'We can't win this fight, lad!' the captain shouted over the clash of steel. 'We need to abandon ship!' As they dove into the roiling sea, Jack clutched the map tightly. Skeleton Isle loomed in the distance, a dark promise on the horizon."
3. "Washed up on a small atoll, Jack and the remaining loyal crew assessed their dire situation. No ship, dwindling supplies, and Skeleton Isle still days away. As night fell, Jack noticed strange symbols on the back of the map, glowing faintly in the moonlight. Perhaps the key to their salvation - or their doom - lay hidden within the map itself."

4. Skeleton Isle's Secrets

The Final Challenge:

- Arrival on the foreboding Skeleton Isle
- Navigating the island's dangerous traps and puzzles
- Confronting the true nature of the curse



4. Skeleton Isle's Secrets

Exemplars:

1. "The black sands of Skeleton Isle crunched under Jack's feet as they landed. Mist clung to bleached bones scattered across the beach - grim warnings from failed expeditions past. A skeletal arm jutted from the sand, its bony finger pointing towards a dark jungle path. Jack gulped. 'Well,' he said, trying to steady his voice, 'I suppose that's where we're meant to go.'"

2. "They stood before a massive stone door carved into the cliff face. Ancient symbols matched those on the map. 'It's a puzzle,' Jack realised. 'We need to press the symbols in the right order.' As he reached for the first symbol, the ground beneath them began to shake. 'Choose wisely, lad,' the captain warned. 'One wrong move, and we might join the island's permanent residents.'"

3. "In the heart of the island, they found a cavern lit by an unearthly glow. Spectral forms of pirates past swirled around them, their anguished wails echoing off the walls. Jack saw the treasure ahead, but between them stood the ghostly figure of Captain Flint himself. 'Only one pure of heart may pass,' the apparition intoned. 'Face your greatest fear, or join us in eternal torment.' Jack stepped forward, determination steeling his nerves."

5. The Cursed Treasure

The Adventure Concludes:

- The final confrontation with the curse and rival treasure hunters
- Jack's ultimate choice and its consequences
- The journey home and lessons learned



5. The Cursed Treasure

Exemplars:

1. "Jack stood before the mountain of gold, Silver's pistol trained on his back. 'You've led us well, lad,' Silver sneered, 'but this is where your journey ends.' Suddenly, the cavern began to rumble. The curse's final trap had been sprung. Jack had seconds to make a choice that would determine all their fates."
2. "As Jack placed the cursed amulet around his neck, he felt a searing pain. Visions flashed before his eyes - the greed and cruelty of all who had sought the treasure before. He understood now. The true treasure wasn't gold, but the wisdom gained from the journey. With a surge of will, he shattered the amulet. The cavern shook as centuries of dark magic unravelled."
3. "Sailing home aboard a Royal Navy ship, Jack reflected on their adventure. The Salty Maiden was lost, the tangible treasure left behind, but he had gained something far more valuable. He looked at his now-tattered map, a reminder that the greatest adventures aren't about the destination, but the journey itself. And somewhere out there, new mysteries awaited, calling to the adventurer he had become."

Vocabulary List

1. Parchment: A type of material made from animal skin, used for writing
2. Mutiny: A rebellion or uprising, especially on a ship
3. Ominous: Giving the worrying impression that something bad is going to happen
4. Treacherous: Dangerous or unreliable
5. Apparition: A ghost or ghostlike image of a person
6. Curse: A solemn utterance intended to invoke a supernatural power to inflict harm or punishment on someone or something
7. Foreboding: A feeling that something bad will happen
8. Spectral: Ghostly or supernatural
9. Amulet: An ornament or small piece of jewellery thought to give protection against evil, danger, or disease
10. Unravel: To undo or become undone; to solve or explain

Vocabulary List

11. Perilous: Full of danger or risk
12. Cryptic: Mysterious or obscure, often intentionally
13. Sabotage: Deliberately destroy, damage, or obstruct something
14. Rendezvous: A meeting at an agreed time and place
15. Maroon: To leave someone in an isolated place, especially an island
16. Plunder: To steal goods forcibly, typically during war or civil disorder
17. Smuggle: To move goods illegally into or out of a country
18. Galleon: A large sailing ship, typically used for war or commerce
19. Cutlass: A short, thick sword with a curved blade, used by sailors
20. Scurvy: A disease caused by a lack of vitamin C, common among sailors

Writing Prompt

Imagine you are Jack Hawkins, having just returned from your adventure on Skeleton Isle. Write a concise yet vivid summary of your journey for the Royal Geographical Society. Include key events, challenges faced, and lessons learned, while capturing the excitement of your adventure. Use at least 5 vocabulary words from the list in your summary.





Exemplar Response

Esteemed members of the Royal Geographical Society,

I, Jack Hawkins, recently returned from a perilous expedition to the fabled Skeleton Isle, guided by a cryptic map discovered in my grandfather's sea chest. Our journey aboard the Salty Maiden was fraught with challenges from the outset, including a near-disastrous fire that I now suspect was sabotage.

As we neared our rendezvous with destiny, a mutiny erupted, led by the treacherous Long John Silver. Forced to abandon ship, a small loyal crew and I reached Skeleton Isle's foreboding shores. There, we faced spectral guardians and deadly traps that protected Captain Flint's cursed treasure.

Exemplar Response

In the heart of the island, we confronted the curse itself – an ominous apparition that demanded we face our greatest fears. It was there I learned the true treasure wasn't gold, but the wisdom gained from our ordeal. By destroying a cursed amulet, we broke the island's dark enchantment, though we left the plunder behind.

This adventure taught me the value of courage, loyalty, and the power of choice in the face of temptation. While we returned without gold, the knowledge and experiences gained are worth more than all the treasure in the Spanish Main.

I stand ready to provide a more detailed account at the Society's convenience.

Yours in adventure,
Jack Hawkins