

Robinson Crusoe (1719)

by Daniel Defoe

The Life and Strange Adventures of Robison Crusoe of York, Mariner (based on the experiences of Alexander Selkirk on the uninhabited island of Juan Fernandez), is probably the most famous adventure story in English literature. It tells the story of a man who is shipwrecked off a desert island, where he spends 28 years.

The story is divided into three parts.

In the first part of the book we are told about Crusoe's early life and about he runs away from home to sea rather than accept the life of leisure his father promises him (his father wanted him to become a lawyer). When he is nineteen he leaves home without asking permission and begins his new life.

After various adventures he goes to Brazil, where he becomes a plantation owner; this is an occupation he doesn't really like but which brings him **prosperity**. One day Robinson Crusoe has to go to Africa with some other plantation owners: **they need slaves to work for them**. During a storm, their ship is wrecked and Robinson Crusoe is washed ashore to a desert island: he is the only survivor.

The second part of the book is **in form of a journal**, in which Crusoe writes about life on the island: how he uses his strength and intelligence to overcome the difficulties of the situation and eventually become the **master of the island**.

It is in this part that he meets a **"savage"**: he calls him Friday and **decides to convert him to Christianity**; Robinson teaches him the rudiments of his language and culture, including how to use a gun to hunt animals for food and later to defend themselves from attack.

The third and final part of the book tells of their rescue and of Crusoe's return to England with Friday as **his servant**, and then of his eventual journey to Brazil.

FIRST-PERSON NARRATOR

Robinson Crusoe is written in the first-person in the form of an **autobiography**.

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p. 116 - 118