

Anne Bonny Printable Reading Comprehension

Early Life

Anne Bonny is one of only two well-known female pirates. Her birthday is not known, but most historians think she was born in Kinsale, County Cork, Ireland, in 1697 or 1698. Her name was Anne McCormac. Much of her early life is unknown and nearly all that is known came from *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates*, written in 1724 by Captain Charles Johnson. Anne's father, William McCormac, was a lawyer in Ireland and her mother, Mary Brennan, was a maid in his home. William eventually separated from his wife, took Anne, and settled in Charles Towne, South Carolina. William changed their last name from McCormac to Cormac, started a new career, and eventually bought a plantation. By the age of thirteen, Anne had supposedly developed a fierce and violent temper.

Teaming up With Calico Jack and Mary Read

Anne fell in love at sixteen and married a small-time pirate named James Bonny, which resulted in her father disowning her. The couple settled in Nassau, Bahamas, which was known as a sanctuary for English pirates. When Governor Woodes Rogers arrived in 1718, Anne's husband became his informant (giving information on pirates which would lead to their arrests). Anne became ashamed of her husband, as she had befriended many pirates in the taverns. In 1720, she met John "Calico Jack" Rackham and left her husband. Together with Calico Jack and a new crew, the unlikely duo met great success pirating small ships in the Caribbean. It was very unusual for women to be pirates, but Anne Bonny had a fierce personality and fought alongside the men, earning their respect. Eventually, another female named Mary Read joined them. They continued pirating merchant ships in the Caribbean, along the Jamaican coast, until their ship was captured on November 15, 1720, by Captain Jonathan Barnet. The women fought hard, but the men were too drunk to put up much of a fight. They were put on trial in Jamaica, and the men were executed. Calico Jack visited her before his execution and it was said that she told him she was sorry to see him there, but if he'd fought like a man he need not have been hanged like a dog.

What Happened to Anne Bonny?

The women went to trial on November 28 and were found guilty and sentenced to death, but executions were delayed because they were both pregnant. Mary Read died in prison the next year. There is no historical record of Anne's release, but some evidence suggests that her father paid a ransom to have her released and brought back to Charles Town, where her child was born.

1. Select all of the following that are true.

- a) Anne Bonny was one of many well-known female pirates.
- b) Anne Bonny was said to have a violent temper.
- c) Very little of Anne Bonny's early life is known.
- d) She was born in South Carolina.

2. Why did Anne's father disown her?

- a) Because she was becoming a notorious pirate.
- b) Because her temper was out of control.
- c) Because he separated from Anne's mother.
- d) Because she married James Bonny.

3. Which of the following would be the best answer on a test if the question was

Why did Anne Bonny leave James Bonny?

- a) Because she met Calico Jack Rackham.
- b) Because she was ashamed that he was an informant.
- c) Because she was friends with many pirates she met at taverns.
- d) Because she wanted to move to the Bahamas.

4. Which of the following is the best definition for the word "sanctuary" as it is used in the following sentence?

The couple settled in Nassau, Bahamas, which was known as a sanctuary for English pirates.

- a) Safe place
- b) Dangerous place
- c) Small place
- d) Interesting place

5. Which question is not answered?

- a) Why did Mary Read join Calico Jack and Anne Bonny?
- b) What did Anne Bonny say to Calico Jack Rackham before he was executed?
- c) When was Anne Bonny captured?
- d) Why didn't the men in the ship put up a good fight when it was being captured?

6. After her execution was delayed, what happened to Anne Bonny?

- a) She was executed
- b) Her father paid a ransom to get her out of prison.
- c) No one really knows
- d) She was found guilty of piracy

7. According to the last word spoken between Anne Bonny and Calico Jack Rackham..

- a) Jack believed that Anne fought hard.
- b) Anne believed that Jack was going to die a hero.
- c) Anne believed that Jack should have tried harder to escape jail.
- d) Anne believed that Jack may have escaped capture if he would have fought harder.

-----Key-----

1. (b) (c)
2. (d)
3. (b)
4. (a)
5. (a)
6. (c)
7. (d)