

Use the text to help you answer the questions about crew on a pirate ship.

## The Crew of a Pirate Ship

Pirates are sailors who rob from other ships at sea. While there are still pirates today, the most famous pirates sailed the seas about 400 years ago. They attacked other ships, stealing gold, silver, jewels, cloth and any other items the pirates could sell or use. The ships that pirates attacked were usually merchant ships, which carried valuable items ready to sell or trade. Pirates were dangerous and ruthless and were feared by many people, especially sailors.



### Crew

The crew of a pirate ship was often quite large. This was because the pirates wanted to make sure they had enough people on board to be able to overpower the crew of merchant ships. Some pirate ships had crews as big as 100! The crew of a pirate ship included a captain, a quartermaster, a cooper and a cook.



The **captain** was chosen by the rest of the crew. They had to be good at fighting but also very skilled at sailing. The **quartermaster** was in charge of sharing out the treasure as well as food and water supplies. The role of quartermaster was very important in stopping fights between crew members. The **sailing master** was in charge of sailing the ship, including navigation. They had to be very skilled at reading maps and using the compass. The **cook** was responsible for making food for the whole crew. A pirate sometimes became a cook because he had been injured in battle and was no longer able to fight. A **gunner** was a pirate in charge of operating the cannons. This was a very difficult job because pirates often wanted to avoid sinking the other ship. This meant the aim had to be just right. The **cooper** had that job of making and fixing wooden barrels. Wooden barrels were very important to pirates as they were used to store food, water and any other items that were needed on board.



1. Pirates didn't just steal gold silver and jewels. List 4 other things pirates might have stolen.

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2. Why were there so many people on board a pirate ship?

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3. In what way was the quartermaster responsible for stopping fights between pirates?

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4. Whose job was it to make sure the pirates didn't sink the ship they were attacking?

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5. Why do you think the pirates wanted to make sure they didn't sink the other ships?

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6. Which job on board a pirate ship would you choose? Explain your answer.

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## The Crew of a Pirate Ship **Answers**

Pirates are sailors who rob from other ships at sea. While there are still pirates today, the most famous pirates sailed the seas about 400 years ago. They attacked other ships, stealing gold, silver, jewels, cloth and any other items the pirates could sell or use. The ships that pirates attacked were usually merchant ships, which carried valuable items ready to sell or trade. Pirates were dangerous and ruthless and were feared by many people, especially sailors.



### Crew

The crew of a pirate ship was often quite large. This was because the pirates wanted to make sure they had enough people on board to be able to overpower the crew of merchant ships. Some pirate ships had crews as big as 100! The crew of a pirate ship included a captain, a quartermaster, a cooper and a cook.



The captain was chosen by the rest of the crew. They had to be good at fighting but also very skilled at sailing. The quartermaster was in charge of sharing out the treasure as well as food and water supplies. The role of quartermaster was very important in stopping fights between crew members. The sailing master was in charge of sailing the ship, including navigation. They had to be very skilled at reading maps and using the compass. The cook was responsible for making food for the whole crew. A pirate sometimes became a cook because he had been injured in battle and was no longer able to fight. A gunner was a pirate in charge of operating the cannons. This was a very difficult job because pirates often wanted to avoid sinking the other ship. This meant the aim had to be just right. The cooper had that job of making and fixing wooden barrels. Wooden barrels were very important to pirates as they were used to store food, water and any other items that were needed on board.



1. Pirates didn't just steal gold silver and jewels. List 4 other things pirates might have stolen.

Answers will vary but should be items of value to be sold or used (compass, clothing, rope, sails).

2. Why were there so many people on board a pirate ship?

There were so many people on board to overpower the ships they attacked.

3. In what way was the quartermaster responsible for stopping fights between pirates?

The quartermaster had to make sure that treasure found was divided out accurately according to the rules. They also needed to make sure every crew member got their fair share of food and water.

4. Whose job was it to make sure the pirates didn't sink the ship they were attacking?

The gunner was responsible for making sure the pirates didn't sink the ship they were attacking.

5. Why do you think the pirates wanted to make sure they didn't sink the other ships?

Answers may vary. Pirates didn't want to sink the other ship because they wanted to be able to steal items from it. The whole ship might have been useful for them too.

6. Which job on board a pirate ship would you choose? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary.