



# Robinson Crusoe

Author  
**Daniel Defoe**

Year Written  
**1719**

Original Language  
**English**

## OVERVIEW

### Survival Is the Greatest Adventure

Robinson Crusoe could have a comfortable life in England, but instead he seeks fortune and adventure on the high seas—and finds both. In the course of his unusual life, he becomes an enslaved person, a wealthy plantation owner, a resourceful castaway, and a respectable gentleman.



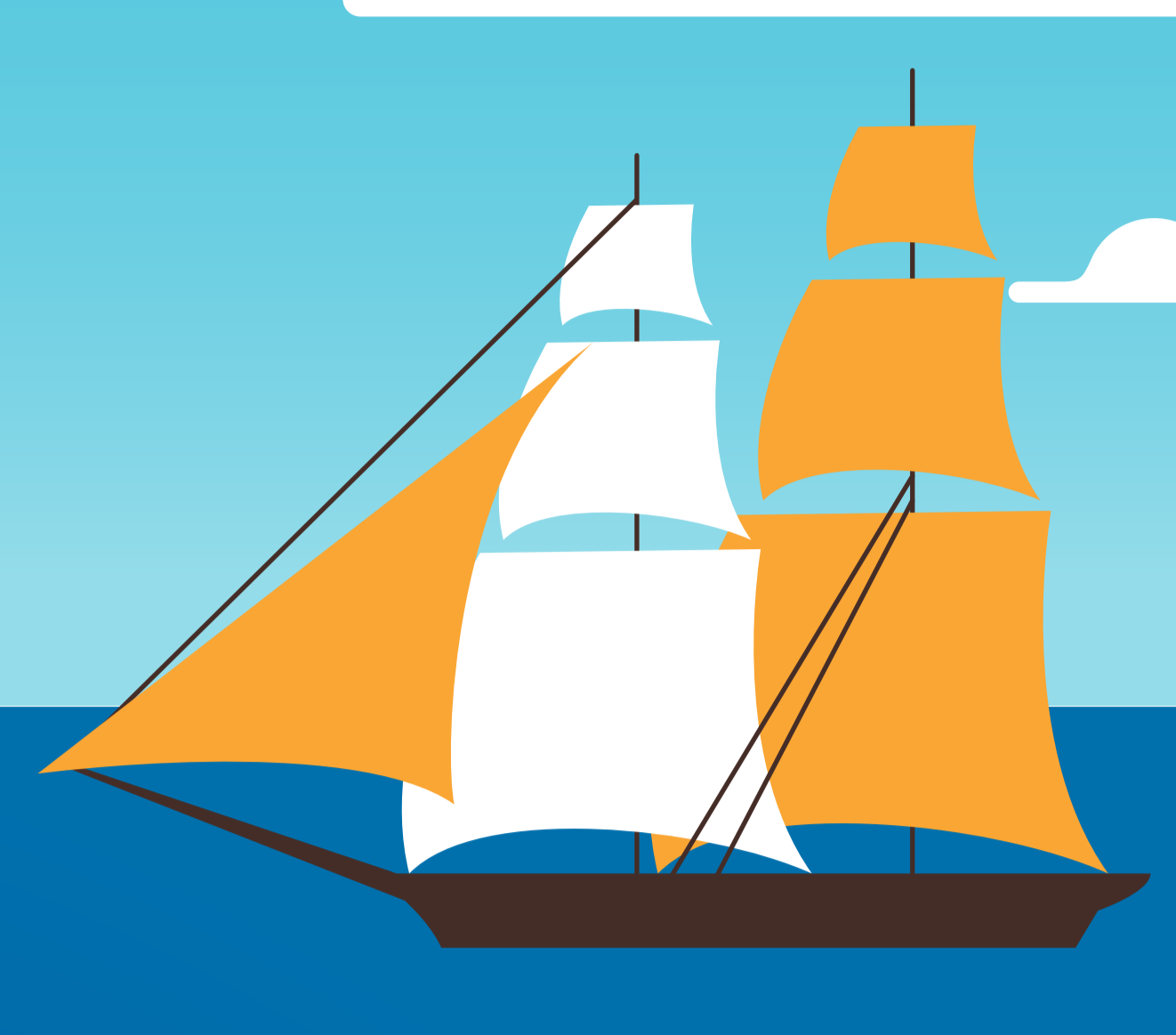
Robinson Crusoe's journey from England halts when he is captured by pirates.



Enslaved by a Moorish captain, Crusoe befriends his fellow slave, Xury.



After two years in slavery, Crusoe escapes with Xury.



Crusoe is rescued and returns to England; his plantation's fortunes have flourished in his absence.



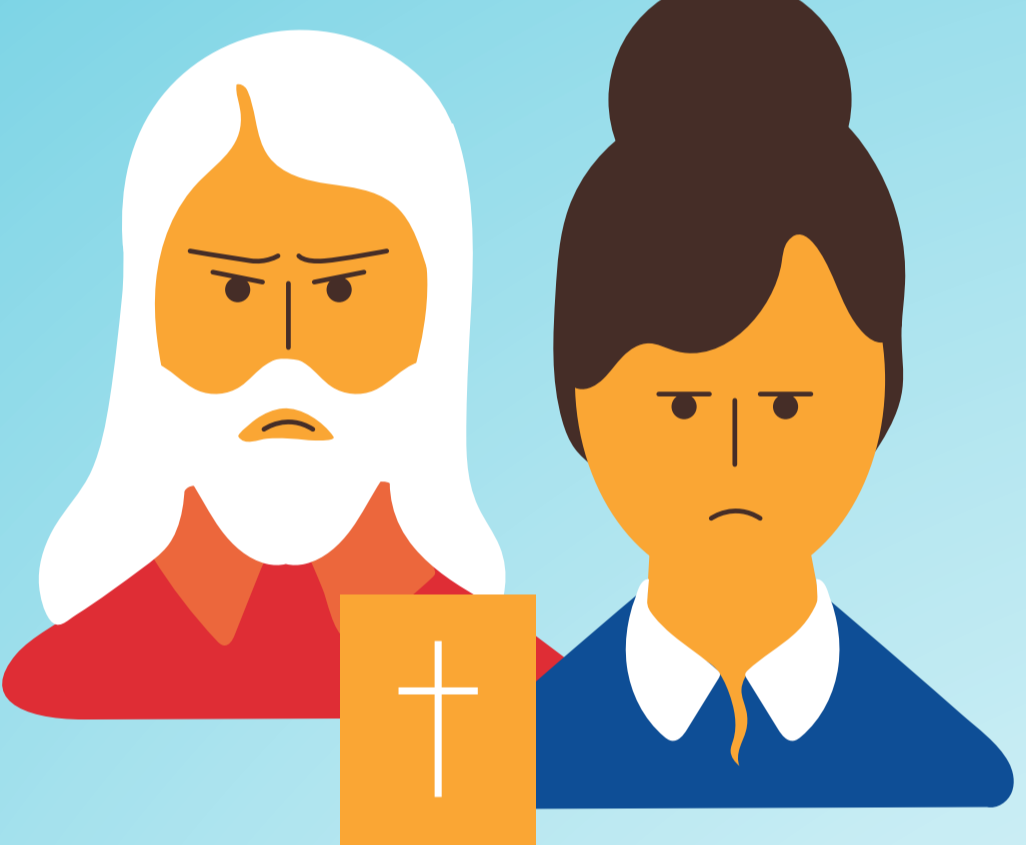
Crusoe is marooned on an island for 28 years; he grows food and encounters native people.



In Brazil, Crusoe sells Xury to a Portuguese captain and buys a plantation.

## Main Characters

Friendship Family



**Mr. & Mrs. Crusoe**  
Robinson Crusoe's parents; warn their son against wandering



**Xury**  
Enslaved man; helps Crusoe escape captivity in Africa



**Robinson Crusoe**  
Adventurer; shipwrecks on an island but eventually returns to civilization



**Friday**  
Crusoe's native companion on the island



**Widow**  
Widow of a ship's captain; manages Crusoe's money

## Symbols

**Gun**  
Represents Crusoe's power over the island



**Tools**  
Symbolize Crusoe's ability to shape his world on the island



**Boats**  
Represent progress to better places and escape from peril



**Calendar Post**  
Connects Crusoe with civilization

## Author



**DANIEL DEFOE**  
1660–1731

An English merchant turned writer and journalist, Defoe is well known for popularizing the form of the novel in England. At age 60 he wrote *Robinson Crusoe* to an overwhelmingly positive response, spurring creation of a sequel. He was also prolific on economics and politics.

## Robinson Crusoe by the Numbers



Publications of *Robinson Crusoe* during its first year in print, reflecting its popularity and rapid sales



Years Alexander Selkirk, the real-life inspiration for Robinson Crusoe, spent marooned on an island off the coast of Chile



Year Defoe was imprisoned for publishing a pamphlet that offended the church



Languages into which *Robinson Crusoe* has been translated

**B**eing the third son of the family, and not bred to any trade, my head began to be filled very early with rambling thoughts.

*Robinson Crusoe*, Chapter 1