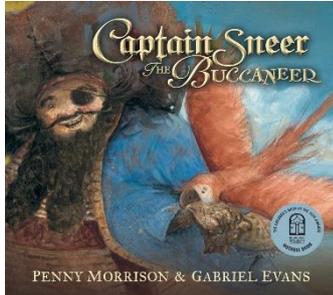


Classroom Ideas



Captain Sneer the Buccaneer

Author: Penny Morrison

Illustrator: Gabriel Evans

Publisher: Walker Books, \$24.99

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Outline:

Captain Sneer boasts about his bravery as he leads his crew to find the gold. But is he as brave as he claims?

Author/Illustrator Information:

Penny Morrison

Penny Morrison is the author of *Captain Sneer the Buccaneer*, *Hey! is that how God made me? Hey! Is that how God made animals?* and *The Mighty Mighty King Christmas Book*. Penny has previously worked as a preschool teacher, travelled full-time with a rock band, run playgroups and music groups and loves visiting schools to talk about her books or run writing workshops. Penny lives on the Northern Beaches of Sydney with her husband and three kids. She dresses up as a pirate at every opportunity. For more information see www.pennymorrison.net

Gabriel Evans

Gabriel is an illustrator of over twenty books with publishers including Walker Books, Koala Books and Penguin-Random House. His books with Sally Murphy, *Roses are Blue*, and Penny Morrison, *Captain Sneer the Buccaneer*, were notable titles in the Children's Book Council of Australia's Book of the Year award 2015 and 2017 respectively. He works in traditional mediums from a small, messy studio and travels Australia giving workshops and talks. When he's not painting, he's growing trees, exploring hidden beaches and drinking tea. For more information see gabrielevansartist.com

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

Themes:

Pirates, treasure, mother, bravery, courage, boasting

Gabriel Evans on *Captain Sneer, the Buccaneer.*

The Sneer illustrations were created in charcoal pencils, watercolour, gouache and coloured pencil on watercolour paper. They were painted with a mix of traditional watercolour techniques combined with contemporary approaches involving hog hair brushes, the wrong ends of paint brushes, palette knives, goose feathers, spray bottles and fingers!



Fun fact: Polly the Parrot is unique. Crests are only found on cockatoos and cockatiels. Yet Polly has a crest! Could she be a new variety of parrot? Or could the illustrator have made a mistake? I'll let you decide.



Penny Morrison on *Captain Sneer, the Buccaneer.*

I first had the idea for Captain Sneer when my youngest child four years old and was dressed up as a pirate. He was on one seat of the glider swing, swing back and forth, back and forth, calling out to me, 'Mum! I'm on a pirate ship, come and sail with me.'



I was hanging out the washing, so I called back, 'I'm just putting up the sails.'

He kept chanting, 'Mummy! I'm on a pirate ship, come and sail with me. Mum, I'm on a pirate ship, come and sail with me.'

This gave me the idea for a rough, tough pirate who secretly wanted his mummy.

Discussion questions and activities

Before reading the book

Look at the cover. Ask students to identify the title, author, illustrator and publisher.

What does 'sneer' mean? What does 'buccaneer' mean? Do you think the pirate on the cover suits the name 'Captain Sneer'? Why do you think the illustrator chose to give the character this style? What is happening in the cover illustration? Does this give any extra clues to what the book might be about? Read the blurb. Does this give any further clues?

Can you talk like a pirate? What are some pirate exclamations? Do you know what they mean? Have you ever heard a pirate say these phrases?

Shiver me timbers!

Thar she blows!

Ahoy, me hearties!

Scrub the deck!

Land ahoy!

I want my mummy! (Would a pirate say this?)

Why/why not?)

Discussion during reading

Title Page

Does the illustration on the title page give you any further clues about the character or story?

Spread 1

Do you notice any difference between what Captain Sneer says and what the illustration shows?

Spread 2

How do you think Captain Sneer will finish his sentence on the next page?

How would you feel if you were in this situation?

What do you think he should do?

Spread 3

How do you think Captain Sneer feels in the illustration? How can you tell?

Have you ever pretended you weren't scared, even though you were?

Spread 4

Do you notice any difference between what Captain Sneer says and what the illustration shows? Why do you think Gabriel illustrated the text this way?

Spread 5

If your ship was about to be struck by a cannon, how would you finish the sentence, 'I want my ... '?

What do you think Captain Sneer wants?

Spread 6

Why does Captain Sneer say he 'had to check'?

Spread 7

How does Captain Sneer feel? Why? What other information do you get from the illustration?

Spread 8

Who might have put the trap there?

How do you think he will finish the sentence?

Spread 9

Did you expect Captain Sneer to say 'map'? Why/why not?

Does this illustration tell us anything new about Captain Sneer?

Spread 10

When do you most want to impress other people? What makes us want to impress others?

How does the text compare to the illustration?

What sort of relationship do you think the crew have with their captain?

What do you think they will find in the cave?

Ask students to draw what they will find in the cave before finishing the story.

Spread 11

What does it mean to have butterflies in your tummy? Have you ever had that feeling?

What do you think might happen next?

Spread 12

What might the various characters be thinking in this picture? What would you say if you were Captain Sneer?

Spread 13

How does the mum feel?

How does Captain Sneer feel?

Spread 14 – Final spread

What does it mean to have ‘a heart of gold’?

Does Captain Sneer have a heart of gold?

How do the different characters feel? Why?

What do you think might have happened after this?

Imprint page

Do you think the mum stayed angry?

Why/why not?

After reading

Do you see a difference between the text and the illustrations? Why do you think the author and illustrator did this?

How are Captain Sneer’s words different to his feelings and actions?

Do you think Captain Sneer could be a true story? How can you tell?

Are there pirates in real life? What were/are they like? What did/do they do?

What sort of relationship do you think Captain Sneer has with the other characters in the story?

Have you ever pretended you weren’t scared, even though you were?

Is there anything you used to be scared of, but aren’t anymore? How did you overcome your fear?

What dangers did Captain Sneer face? What other dangers might a pirate have to face?

When do you most want to impress other people? What makes us want to impress others?

What does it mean to be brave? Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to be brave but couldn’t be? Can you think of a situation when you were brave?

What does it mean to have ‘a heart of gold’? Does Captain Sneer have a heart of gold?

What does Captain Sneer treasure most in his life? What do you think would be a treasure worth pursuing? What is your greatest treasure?

Which is your favourite page?

Compare this story to other picture books about pirates. How are the characters, plot or themes different or similar?

Language

Some of the text is in capitals or bold text. Why?

Make a list or poster of all the pirate words and phrases in the book and others you can find. See the [printable pdf 'Captain Sneer Pirate Words'](#).

Rhyming Words

See the [printable pdf 'Captain Sneer Rhyming Pairs'](#). Cut up the cards, then mix them up. Students can match the rhyming cards and record them on the recording sheet.

Can you think of a word to rhyme with: Sneer, mummy, map, rough, bold, storm, charge, deck, shoot, dry, way, brave, impressed.

Names

What does 'sneer' mean? How well does Captain Sneer suit his name? What do you think his first name might be?

What does your own name mean? What would you call yourself if you were a pirate?

What pirate names can you think of from books, movies or TV?

What type of character would a pirate have with the name 'Captain Crocodile Smile'? or 'Captain Sharktooth'? or 'Captain Marshmallow'?

See the [printable pdf 'Captain Sneer's Pirate Names'](#). What would these pirates want? What might stop them from getting it? Write a story starring characters you have created.

Opposites

Captain Sneer said he was brave, but really he felt the opposite. What is the opposite of brave?

Can you find any other opposites in the book?

See the two [printable pdf sheets 'Captain Sneer opposite words' and 'Captain Sneer opposites advanced'](#).

Spread 1: Captain Sneer said he was brave, but really he felt the opposite. What is the opposite of brave?

Spread 2: What is the opposite of calm?

Spread 3: What is the opposite of relaxed? What is the opposite of warm?

Spread 4: What is the opposite of near?

Spread 5: What is the opposite of friendly?

Spread 6: What is the opposite of above?

Spread 7: What is the opposite of dry?

Spread 8: What is the opposite of dangerous?

Spread 9: What is the opposite of lost?

Spread 10: What is the opposite of follow?

Spread 11: What is the opposite of dark?

Spread 12: What is the opposite of heavy?

Spread 13: What is the opposite of big? What is the opposite of catch?

Spread 14: What is the opposite of stay? What is the opposite of quick?

Spread 15 – Final spread: What is the opposite of grumpy?

Research

Who were the famous pirates throughout history? What were they famous for?

Do pirates still exist today? Where are they? What do they do?

What are the different parts of a pirate ship? What are the jobs on the ship?

Make a list of nautical terms and their definitions.

Science

Try wearing an eye patch. Hold out one thumb and try to touch it with the other thumb. Now try it without the patch. Try walking a plank or stepping stones. How is it different? Set a challenge for a partner to do while wearing an eye patch.

Research depth perception. Why are activities difficult while wearing an eye patch?

Research parrots. How many different breeds are there? Where do they live? Why do they make good pets? Did pirates really have them as pets? What must be done to care for a pet parrot?

Buy a coconut from the fruit shop and discover how to drink and eat it.

Creative Writing

Rewrite the story from the perspective of one of the crew members.

Write the story of Captain Sneer's next adventure.

Imagine you were part of the crew of a pirate from history. How did you become part of the crew? Write a story or diary entries about what may have happened.

Art

Draw Captain Sneer's treasure map. See [printable pdf 'Captain Sneer's treasure map'](#).

Create an old fashioned looking map. What dangers might you include? What methods could you use to make the paper look old? Where might the map be hidden?

Make a treasure chest. What materials could you use? Egg carton? Shoe box? What will you put inside?

Use white chalk to draw a jolly roger flag on black paper.

Make a 'wanted' poster for Captain Sneer.

Make a Mother's Day card for Captain Sneer to give to his mummy.

What materials could you use to make a model pirate ship?

Work together to make a class pirate ship. Bring in cardboard boxes or other items from home to build it together.

Drama

Dress up as pirates and go on a class adventure.

Hide some treasure for your classmates to find. How will you give them clues?

Rhymes

We dig for gold

We dig for gold, we're on a quest

We dig for gold, a treasure chest

Open the chest, take a glance

It's filled with Grandma's underpants!

We dig for gold, we're on a quest

We dig for gold, a treasure chest

Open the chest, who would've guessed?

Chocolate coins—they're the best!

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5 nasty pirates

5 nasty pirates, sailing on the sea

They were rough, they were tough, and as MEAN as could be

1 nasty pirate, fighting with his sword

Oops! Splash! And he's o-o-overboard.

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Illustration Challenge

Use the following text to create a sequel for Captain Sneer.

I'm Captain Sneer, I Be the Best

I'm Captain Sneer. I be the best.

I'm more impressive than the rest.

So join me crew and soon you'll see

That there be no-one quite like me.

Arr!

I cook great stew and pour great tea.

The greatest chef is plainly ...

Jeff. What? His stew's divine?

I think he must have copied mine.

I'm Captain Sneer, the buccaneer.

Me ship be huge. I always steer.

I shout directions. 'Stern!' or 'Bow!'

'Starboard!' 'Port!' 'Where are we now?'

Arr!

I'm good with charts. Norwest! You see?

The best map-reader is surely ...

Frieda. What? When she's around
I guess the map's not upside down.

I'm Captain Sneer, the buccaneer.
My singing be the best you'll hear.
I dance a jig—impress me crew.
And now a treat—I'll play for you.

Arr!
I'm classically trained. Fiddle-de-dee!
On violin they all want ...

Flynn. What? Well he's alright.
I s'pose I'll play another night.

I'm Captain Sneer—under attack.
Fight on crew! I've got ye back!
When I fly forward on me rope
Me scurvy crew be filled with hope.

Arr!
I swing! I lunge! I fight with glee!
The best with a sword is clearly...

Maude. What? It isn't me? (*Illustration note: He's captured. His crew escaped*)

I thought I be best, but maybe ... not.

Without respect, what have I got?

I'm Captain Sneer. I'm lost at sea. (*Illustration note: Being forced to walk the plank*)

It seems me crew's abandoned me.

Goodbye now, Polly. Farewell, dear crew!

I wish you knew I cared for ...

you. Yes, you—have outsmarted those thugs. (*Illustration note: His crew have rowed their life-boat to catch him.*)

But I be the best at ...

Big, warm hugs.

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