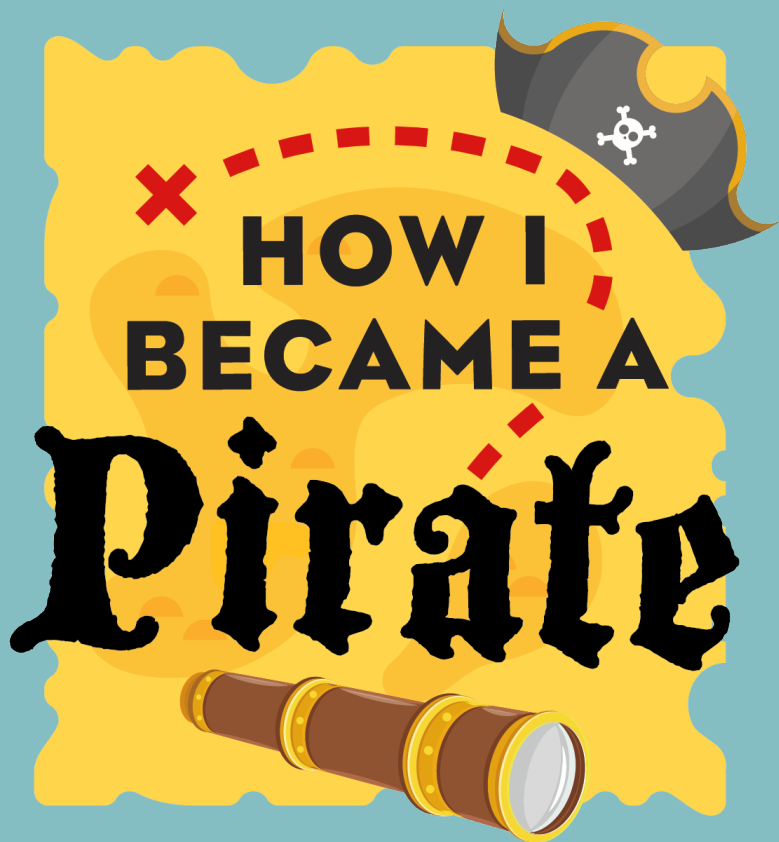




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Getting to Know You:

The Cast of *How I Became a Pirate*

We asked this fine crew to tell us what the best thing is about being a pirate. Here's what they said.



Steve Betz (*Seymour*) The best thing about being a pirate is you don't have to brush your teeth!



Payton Boesch (*Max*) The best thing about being a pirate is getting to have Petey the Parrot!



Mary Bricker (*Pierre*) There's a lot to love about being a pirate! You get to wear cool clothes, have lots of new adventures, and

travel the world on the open seas. And the best part of all? You get to do it with your pirate buddies!



Madeline Davis (*Scurvy Dog*) The best thing about being a pirate is all the fun adventures you go on!

When you're not finding a place to bury your treasure, you get to sail all around the world and discover things like new islands and places!



Charlotte Rempe (*Jeremy Jacob, shared role*) I think the best part about being a pirate is not having a bedtime! Pirates can stay

up as late as they want, driving the ship, star-gazing, or singing sea shanties!



Isabella Rempe (*Jeremy Jacob, shared role*) I think the best thing about being a pirate is getting to go on treasure hunts! I would love to travel to different parts of the world to find stuff to make me rich!



Cody Schug (*Braid Beard*) The best thing about being a pirate is not having a bedtime. Oh sure, everyone thinks you just stay up late all the time but it's not true. We still need our rest! We keep things flexible and go to bed when our bodies tell us they're tired.



Brett Spahr (*Sharktooth*) The best thing about being a pirate? Not the ballet! Seriously, it's definitely a childhood dream to be a pirate! Me cutlass is arrresome! However, the eyepatch is a bit tricky after wearing it for a few hours.



Robert Uy (*Swill*) The best thing about being a pirate is going to sea and having adventures.



Franny Winn (*Tibben*) My favorite part about being a pirate is going swimming every day with the crew.

What about YOU? What do you think is the best thing about being a pirate?

Meet the Creative Minds Behind the Story!



Melinda Long wrote the original story, *How I Became a Pirate*. We emailed Ms. Long to ask her what it was she did as a kid that helped her become a writer.

"This story has two very pertinent parts. First, when I was a kid back in the dark ages, my mother tried to get me to stop bothering her on a rainy day by giving me rubber stamps of Yogi Bear and his friends with a stamp pad and paper and asking me to write a story about Yogi. I liked telling stories but I hated holding a pencil, so my mother

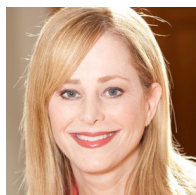
let me use her old manual typewriter and after that I couldn't get enough of writing stories, even with a pencil. Here's the second part: I was a very skinny and shy little girl. I loved to play pretend. One of my favorite pretend games was Pirate! I would go outside and bury my treasure (usually Mama's earrings) and then draw a treasure map to find them. Some things you do as a child just take hold and won't let go."



We wrote Mark Friedman, who helped adapt the script for the stage, and asked what he did as a kid that helped him become a composer.

"Growing up I had two brothers and I was the one in the middle. We built our own small theatre in the basement with working lights. We adapted our own scripts of existing musicals which we would perform live or using puppets. We would also write our own music. Every Friday night we would put on shows for our relatives who came over to the house.

I loved watching movie musicals on TV and thought about how people in those shows would break into song just walking down the street. So sometimes during the day I would compose songs like, 'I'm just waiting for the bus to go to school' or 'Hey, I'm playing first base today' or 'Riding my bike down a big scary hill!' I know – weird! I also wrote my own radio commercials. I guess writing and composing was in my blood. Mom could sing opera beautifully and Dad was a USO emcee in the army and was a terrific writer. Today it's a long-time dream come true to see my music come to life on real stages all over the country!"



Janet Yates Vogt and Mark Friedman are writing partners. We asked Janet, when she knew she was going to be a composer.

"When I was six years old, I used to make up songs on my walk to school and then sing them for my first grade teacher, Mrs. Forrester. She would take a great big piece of paper and a black magic marker and draw big music staff lines on it, add my melody and lyrics to it, and put the paper up on the bulletin board and teach my song to the whole class to sing. I knew I

was a composer! And by the way, I still have a few of those original 'big note' songs. My favorite game was pretending like I had my own TV show (I called it *Kiddieland*) and I composed little songs for the many episodes all staged in my backyard with neighborhood friends as guest stars. Imagination isn't just the beginning of any song or story you might write. It's also the beginning of imagining everything you'd like to be. My son asked me once, 'Mom, should I be an architect or a cartoonist?' I told him the answer is simple: 'Both.' Remember: you don't have to be just one thing!"

In 1640, pirates formed a kind of fraternity. They adopted a set of rules called the Custom of the Brothers of the Coast. It was always signed by the whole ship's company before departure. Some of the rules were:

PIRATES' CREED OF ETHICS

- ✓ If one Brother steals from another, he is to be given a musket, bullets, and a bottle of water and then be marooned on an island.
- ✓ If a captain's vessel is shipwrecked, the crew pledges to remain until he has possessed himself of a vessel.
- ✓ The spoil (or treasure) taken from a captured ship is to be distributed in equal portions.
- ✓ Quarrels between several brothers whilst aboard ye ship shall be settled ashore with pistol and sword. He that draws first blood shall be the victor. No striking another whilst aboard ye ship.

CREATE YOUR OWN CREED OF ETHICS

Every group (theatres, classrooms, families) has to have a set of rules to live by! Of course, it is easy to recite what the rules are, but it is more fun to translate them into pirate language.

THEATRE RULE: If it is not your prop, don't touch it!

PIRATE TRANSLATION: If ye lay hands upon a Brother's possession, it may well be the last thing ye touch!

CLASSROOM RULE: Speak with your "inside" voices.

PIRATE TRANSLATION: Don't be bellowing like a blowfish.

FAMILY RULE: If the mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy.

PIRATE TRANSLATION: If the Captain suffers, all suffer!

Now, write your own creed of ethics for your own classroom or even your own room at your house!

AFTER THE SHOW: TALK ABOUT IT

Pirates are popular in movies, books, and plays. Almost everyone has imagined what it would be like to live the carefree life of a swashbuckling sword fighter. **What do you think makes pirates so appealing to readers, writers, and actors?**

Jeremy always has trouble going to sleep. He enjoys hearing stories, listening to lullabies and getting tucked in. **What is your sleep time routine?**

What do you think the following pirate sentences really mean?

- "Ahoy me hearties, weigh anchor and be ready to collect yer swag!"
- "We'll fill our bellies on grub and bumboo, and anyone who takes me share is a scurvy dog."
- "Avast mateys, there's a storm a-brewin' and bad sailin' ahead."
- "Shiver me timbers, there's land ahoy!"
- "Blow me down, me hearties, the plunder has vanished!"

Draw It Draw a picture of what actors might see from the stage. What would they see when they look out into the audience? What are the expressions on the audiences' faces? What would actors see if they were backstage? What would actors see if they're standing up high on the ship?



WRITE ABOUT IT

Melanie Long has written a sequel to *How I Became a Pirate* called *How a Pirate Changes a Diaper*. In it, the pirates return to Jeremy's house and are forced to babysit for Jeremy's younger sister. You could write your own sequel about the pirates making a stop at your house. What kind of adventure would you go on?.



BURIED TREASURE

Even though buried treasure is the focus of *How I Became a Pirate*, very few pirates actually did that. Captain William Kidd is said to have buried his treasure on Oak Island near Nova Scotia, Canada. Pirates got their treasure by stealing it from other ships. Fleets of ships were sent from Europe to the Americas to bring home gold. The Spaniards stole gold and silver from the indigenous people in South America. The Spaniards even made them melt down the precious metal into coins. The gold coins were called doubloons and the silver coins were called pieces of eight. Since the Spaniards stole the treasure, pirates did not think it wrong to steal it from them, so most of the treasure never reached Spain.



AND WHAT DO THEY CALL YE?

Finally, you get to choose your pirate name.

Follow the directions below to see what they be callin' you on the high seas! Aaaarggggh!

First letter of your first name

A = Peg Leg
B = Scumbucket
C = Landlubber
D = Scoundrel
E = Scallywag
F = Mad
G = Tentacle Toes
H = One Eyed
I = Dreadful
J = Sharkbait
K = Sinister
L = Stinky
M = Dirty
N = Captain
O = Jolly
P = Cutthroat
Q = Clumsy
R = Ruthless
S = Tiny
T = Grizzly
U = Ol'
V = Whirlpool
W = Scurvy
X = Codswallop
Y = Buccaneer
Z = Toothless

First letter of your middle name

A = Stubby
B = Plank
C = Gold
D = Rat
E = Spike
F = Mc
G = Lily-Livered
H = Fluffy
I = Creepy
J = O'
K = Thirsty
L = Salty
M = Yellow-Bellied
N = Crusty
O = Grubby
P = Ratface
Q = Squinty
R = Parrot
S = Von
T = Windy
U = Slappy
V = Groggy
W = Crabby
X = Davey
Y = Jellyfish
Z = Whirlpool

First letter of your last name

A = Keelhauler
B = Shipwreck
C = Sea Rat
D = Monkeyfoot
E = Feathersword
F = Maroon
G = Caesar
H = Lobster Claw
I = Hornswaggler
J = Doubloon
K = Armpit
L = Kraken
M = Squid
N = The Ruthless
O = Iron Hook
P = Dog
Q = Tidal Wave
R = Three Toe
S = Chum for Brains
T = Barnacle
U = Chowderhead
V = Booty
W = Blacktooth
X = Fishface
Y = Barbosa
Z = The Plunderer



AUTOGRAPHS