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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

The Grammar dog Guide to Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson

**All exercises use sentences from the novel.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Gramwardog

Gramwardog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Gramwardog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Gramwardog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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TREASURE ISLAND by Robert Louis Stevenson – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the novel.

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - TREASURE ISLAND by Robert Louis Stevenson

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

p.n. = predicate nominative

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

- ___ 1. He was a very silent man by custom.

- ___ 2. All the time he lived with us the captain made no change whatever in his dress but to buy some stockings from a hawker.

- ___ 3. I remember the appearance of his coat, which he patched himself upstairs in his room, and which, before the end, was nothing but patches.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

- ___ 1. To see him leap and run and pursue me over hedge and ditch was the worst of nightmares.

- ___ 2. By his own account he must have lived his life among some of the wickedest men that God ever allowed upon the sea, and the language in which he told these stories shocked our plain country people almost as much as the crimes that he described.

- ___ 3. At last in strode the captain, slammed the door behind him, without looking to the right or left, and marched straight across the room to where his breakfast awaited him.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label underlined words:

p = personification

s = simile

m = metaphor

o = onomatopoeia

h = hyperbole

- ___ 1. Mostly he would not speak when spoken to, only look up sudden and fierce and blow through his nose like a fog-horn; and we and the people who came about our house soon learned to let him be.

- ___ 2. The evening breeze had sprung up . . . the cordage had begun to sing a little softly to itself and the idle sails to rattle to and fro.

- ___ 3. I remember his breath hanging like smoke in his wake as he strode off, and the last sound I heard of him as he turned the big rock was a loud snort of indignation, as though his mind was still running upon Dr. Livesey.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - *TREASURE ISLAND* by Robert Louis Stevenson

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the type of allusion or symbol in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. historical b. mythological c. religious d. geographical e. folklore/superstition

- ___1. The captain spun round on his heel and fronted us; all the brown had gone out of his face, and even his nose was blue; he had the look of a man who sees a ghost, or the evil one, or something worse, if anything can be . . .
- ___2. Every man on board seemed well content, and they must have been hard to please if they had been otherwise, for it is my belief there was never a ship's company so spoiled since Noah put to sea.
- ___3. Another pause, and then, not a quarter of a mile in front of me, I beheld the Union Jack flutter in the air above a wood.

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

He was a very silent man by custom. All day he hung round the cove or upon the cliffs with a brass telescope; all evening he sat in a corner of the parlour next to the fire and drank rum and water very strong. Mostly he would not speak when spoken to, only look up sudden and not speak when spoken to, only look up sudden and fierce and blow through his nose like a fog-horn; and we and the people who came about our house soon learned to let him be. Every day when he came back from his stroll he would ask if any seafaring men had gone by along the road. At first we thought it was the want of company of his own kind that made him ask this question, but at last we began to see he was desirous to avoid them. When a seaman put up at the Admiral Benbow (as now and then some did, making by the coast road for Bristol), he would look in at him through the curtained door before he entered the parlour; and he was always sure to be as silent as a mouse when any such was present. For me, at least, there was no secret about the matter, for I was, in a way, a sharer in his alarms. He had taken me aside one day and promised me a silver fourpenny on the first of every month if I would only keep my “weather-eye open for a seafaring man with one leg” and let him know the moment he appeared. Often enough when the first of the month came round and I applied to him for my wage, he would only blow through his nose at me and stare me down, but before the week was out he was sure to think better of it, bring me my fourpenny piece, and repeat his orders to look out for “the seafaring man with one leg.” (From Chapter 1)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 He was a very silent man by custom. All day he hung round the cove or upon the cliffs with a brass
- 2 telescope; all evening he sat in a corner of the parlour next to the fire and drank rum and water very strong.
- 3 Mostly he would not speak when spoken to, only look up sudden and not speak when spoken to, only look
- 4 up sudden and fierce and blow through his nose like a fog-horn; and we and the people who came about our

SAMPLE EXERCISES - TREASURE ISLAND by Robert Louis Stevenson

5 house soon learned to let him be. Every day when he came back from his stroll he would ask if any seafaring
6 men had gone by along the road. At first we thought it was the want of company of his own kind that made
7 him ask this question, but at last we began to see he was desirous to avoid them. When a seaman put up at
8 the Admiral Benbow (as now and then some did, making by the coast road for Bristol), he would look in at
9 him through the curtained door before he entered the parlour; and he was always sure to be as silent as a
10 mouse when any such was present. For me, at least, there was no secret about the matter, for I was, in a way,
11 a sharer in his alarms. He had taken me aside one day and promised me a silver fourpenny on the first of
12 every month if I would only keep my “weather-eye open for a seafaring man with one leg” and let him know
13 the moment he appeared. Often enough when the first of the month came round and I applied to him for
14 my wage, he would only blow through his nose at me and stare me down, but before the week was out he
15 was sure to think better of it, bring me my fourpenny piece, and repeat his orders to look out for
16 “the seafaring man with one leg.”

- ___ 1. All of the following descriptions are used to create suspense EXCEPT . . .
- a. *he sat in a corner of the parlour next to the fire* (Line 2)
 - b. *he would ask if any seafaring men had gone by along the road* (Lines 5 - 6)
 - c. *he would look in at him through the curtained door before he entered* (Lines 8-9)
 - d. *let him know the moment he appeared* (Lines 12-13)
- ___ 2. All of the following descriptions are parallel in meaning EXCEPT . . .
- a. *He was a very silent man by custom.* (Line 1)
 - b. *he would not speak when spoken to* (Line 3)
 - c. *we began to see he was desirous to avoid them* (Line 7)
 - d. *he was always sure to be as silent as a mouse* (Lines 9-10)
- ___ 3. The underlined words in Line 8 are examples of . . .
- a. assonance
 - b. consonance
 - c. alliteration