

Imaginative Projects

A resource book of project work for young students

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1 The island



LEVEL: Elementary–intermediate +

USING THIS PROJECT: This project is about islands. The parts of it can be done in any order, although they are presented here in a suggested logical order.

It begins with students inventing the world of their project by creating an island of their own (1.1), followed by a survival-type game (1.2). Students are then invited to imagine themselves really stranded with only a CD player for company (1.3), before studying the most famous castaway of all, Robinson Crusoe (1.4).

There are plenty of ways of extending this project: keeping 'castaway diaries' in which students record their (imagined) struggles to survive, making messages in bottles that they can send to other students / classes, or even setting up island communities with rules and structures that they have to persuade other students to obey.

In terms of timing, this project can be spread out over a long period of time as the links are primarily thematic and can, therefore, be integrated at appropriate points of a syllabus without relying on students having done the previous sections.

	1.1 Island poster	1.2 Travels with my rucksack	1.3 Desert island students	1.4 Robinson Crusoe
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● speaking ● writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● speaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● speaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● speaking ● reading ● writing
TIME	60–90 minutes	45–60 minutes	30–40 minutes	45 minutes
PREPARATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● finding magazine pictures ● photocopying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● photocopying ● producing an island map if 1.1 was not done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● photocopying ● optional: finding popular songs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● photocopying ● cutting up
CLASS SIZE	3 plus	6 plus	6 plus	any
PAGE NUMBER	20	22	24	26



1.1

Island poster

Topic area

travel, survival, maps

Language focus

descriptions

modals of ability

prepositions of position

Key vocabulary

geographical words

(*desert, jungle, wood, sea, forest, stream, mountain, plain, meadow, town, city, village, ruins, etc.*)

Skills

speaking

writing

Level

elementary–

intermediate

Time

60–90 minutes

Materials

old magazines with lots

of pictures of places

1 x page 21 per 3
students

sheets of A3 card

scissors

pens

glue

(See page 13 for extra
activity on creating
things.)

Before class

- 1 Find old magazines with pictures of landscapes / seascapes that students can cut up.
- 2 Photocopy one page 21 for each group of three students in the class.

In class

- 1 Make sure that students know the language used in creating things (see page 13).
- 2 Brainstorm all of the types of terrain that the group can think of and write them on the board (pictures from magazines or maps can be used as prompts here). Useful words include: *desert, jungle, wood, sea, forest, stream, mountain, plain, meadow, town, city, village, ruins, etc.*
- 3 Get the students into groups of three and hand out copies of page 21 (one per group).
- 4 Tell the students to fill in the map with their own plan of the area, including different terrain types, etc. They should decide on specific icons to represent different terrain and complete the key with those icons. In addition, they can use terrain types that are not included in the key and add the symbols themselves in the blank space next to one of the = signs.
- 5 Now tell the students to paste their maps into the centre of a piece of A3 card.
- 6 Each group selects five areas of their map they feel are of special interest (e.g. some old ruins, a beautiful mountain range, a city, etc.). On a separate sheet of paper they write a short paragraph describing each area, as well as some information about what you can see and do there.
- 7 When the paragraphs are completed and checked, the students stick them around the map of the island and draw lines to connect the texts to the map.
- 8 Finally, to make the posters more attractive, the students choose pictures from magazines and glue these under (or above) each paragraph as illustrations of what can be seen at each place of interest.

Variation

The pictures can be found before the text is written to provide additional inspiration. It also allows more precise descriptions and vocabulary activation, although it can mean that students spend too long on the picture selection and not enough on the writing, so you should set a strict time limit.

MAP OF THE ISLAND**Key**

= ocean

= ruins

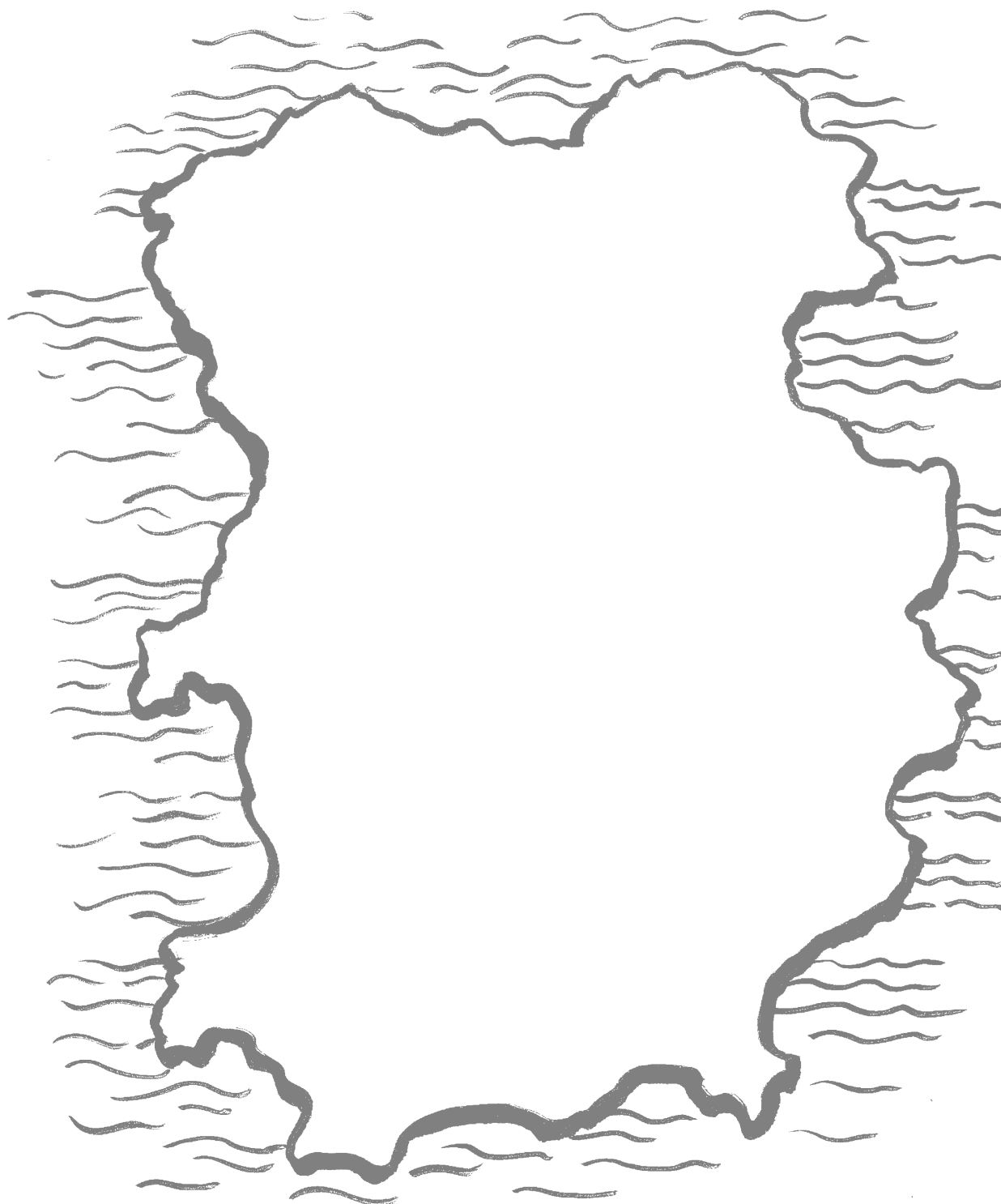
= river



= forest

= lake

= mountains





1.2

Travels with my rucksack

Topic area

travel, survival, desert islands

Language focus

conditionals
modals of possibility

Key vocabulary

rucksack, settlement
(some geographical words from 1.1)

Skills

speaking (See page 17.)

Level

intermediate +

Time

45–60 minutes

Materials

1 x page 23 per 4 students

1 x island map per 4 students

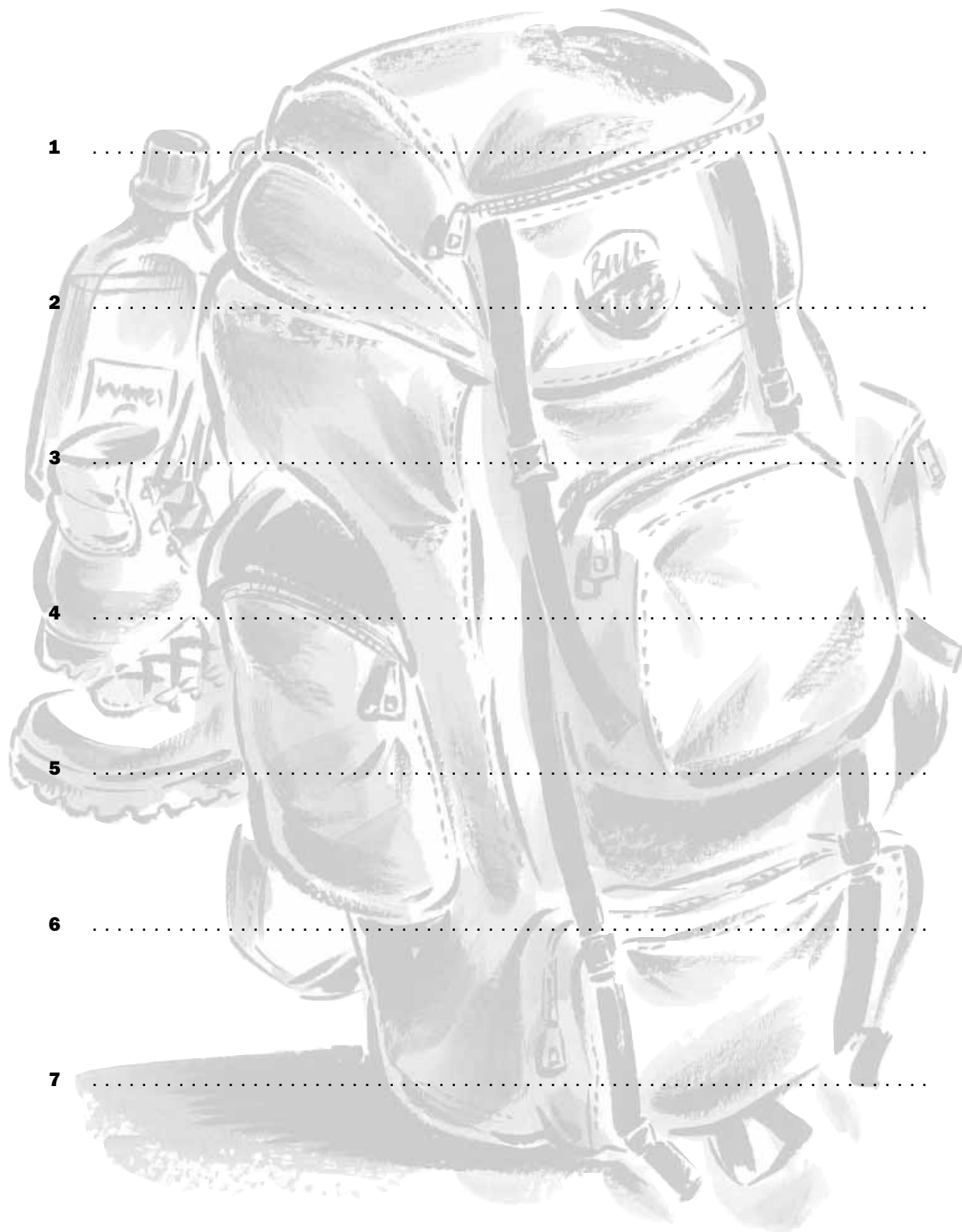
Before class

- 1 Photocopy page 23 once per four students in your class.
- 2 If students have not done 1.1, Island poster, you will need to draw a quick sketch map of an island for them using the outline on page 21. Photocopy this once per four students.
- 3 If students have done 1.1, Island poster, then choose one of their maps and photocopy it once per four students in your class.

In class

- 1 Make sure that students know language for speaking activities (see pages 17–18).
- 2 Explain to the students that they have won first prize in a school competition and are going to be sent on a round-the-world cruise.
- 3 Put them into groups of three or four and get them to imagine all of the things that they might see on the trip. Try to involve all the senses. Sitting on the deck, what do you hear? What can you smell? Does the air have any taste? etc.
- 4 Now put the students into different groups. Ask them to report to their new colleagues on what they discussed in Step 3.
- 5 Once everybody is comfortable, tell them that disaster has struck! There has been an explosion in the engine room and the ship is sinking. They can feel the heat of the flames and smell burning. (Alternatively, show them a clip of James Cameron's *Titanic* to get them in the mood.) There is only time for them to retrieve one rucksack's worth of supplies per group.
- 6 Give each group a copy of the Rucksack chart on page 23 and tell them that they have five minutes to fill it in with the things that they want to take with them.
- 7 Collect the completed Rucksack charts and then tell the students that the confusion is so great, with everybody trying to escape from the ship, that they accidentally pick up the wrong bag. Then, shuffle the Rucksack charts and hand them out again (making certain that no group receives their own back).
- 8 Fortunately, you can tell them, they are all strong swimmers and manage to make it to safety on a nearby island. Give each group a map of the island (see Before class Steps 2 and 3).
- 9 Each group is then given 15 minutes to deal with three basic problems:
 - (i) Where are they going to set up their base – and why?
 - (ii) What are they going to eat?
 - (iii) How are they going to defend themselves against predators?Remember they can only use things that grow naturally or the supplies in their rucksacks. Write the three problems on the board or an OHT for the students to refer to.
- 10 The groups report back on what rucksack contents they ended up with and how they used the objects to solve their problems. Allow the other groups to challenge them if their solutions are not practical.
- 11 The groups then suggest ways in which they might be able to attract attention or build a ship to get off the island. This should be quite a brief part of the activity.
- 12 The students report back on their ideas for escape. You can decide the winner based on the best method of escape, or simply declare that any group with a reasonable escape plan manages to get away.

RUCKSACK CHART





1.3

Desert island students

Topic area

travel, music, desert islands, food (see Variation)

Language focus

question forms
past verb forms

Key vocabulary

none

Skills

speaking (See page 17.)

Level

pre-intermediate–
intermediate

Time

homework preparation:
30–40 minutes
if additional activities
are used: up to 2 hours

Materials

1 x page 25 per student
+ 10 extra copies
optional: recordings of
popular songs
optional: tape recorder
and/or CD player
sheets of A4 paper

Before class

- 1 Photocopy one page 25 for each student and ten extra.
- 2 The day before you want the students to do this activity, give them a copy of the blank Top ten desert island songs sheet (page 25) and for homework ask them to fill it in with the name of their ten favourite songs and the artists who perform them.
- 3 Optional: Gather together a collection of currently popular songs (or ask the students to bring in a few of their favourites).

In class

- 1 Make sure that students know classroom language for speaking activities (see page 17).
- 2 Tell the students that they are going to be marooned on a desert island for six weeks. They are only allowed to take with them ten songs and one item of food.
- 3 In pairs, they have to compare their lists and then come up with a combined list of ten songs. Give them a limit of about ten minutes to do this.
- 4 When the pairs have completed this task, put them with another pair and get them to make a new list of ten songs. (They will have twenty to start with, but it is likely that some of these will be on both lists, and so this will not take very long.)
- 5 The process is repeated (i.e. each four combines with another four, then eights with eights, etc.) until the whole class is together, or, in the case of a very large class, there are only two groups.
- 6 The students are then put into ten groups (or fewer with small classes). Each group is given one song, which everybody in that group needs to know, so the groups should be based on that criterion. They must then decide what the song makes them think of – it may be a memory, a smell, an event, anything. If they cannot think of anything, they can invent something.
- 7 Each group should take an A4 piece of paper and record everybody's experiences in two or three sentences to make a 'Memory sheet' which can go on the wall next to the top ten songs as a part of the project. Meanwhile, play as many of the students' songs as possible (if you have brought them in, see Before class Step 3) to help create the atmosphere.

Variation

This activity can be done with food rather than music for younger students, or TV programmes if you have a class who are not particularly musical.

Follow up

Students can make their own version of *Desert Island Discs*, a British radio programme, in which the host interviews famous people about the eight CDs they would like to have when stranded on a desert island. The guest explains why the CDs are important. In class this can be done in groups, with a 'host' asking several other students about one CD each. Help groups prepare a suitable list of questions, and monitor answers, which need not be true. If possible, record the programme including the music as appropriate. This also ties in nicely with the Radio show (6, page 75).

What's your favourite song?



TOP 10 DESERT ISLAND SONGS

1

By

2

By

3

By

4

By

5

By

6

By

7

By

8

By

9

By

10

By

Why do you like it?

Who is it by?





1.4

Robinson Crusoe

Topic area

desert islands, survival, stories, famous people

Language focus

narrative tenses
articles
reference devices

Key vocabulary

mutineer, mutiny, pirate, shipwreck, castaway, native, cannibal, cave, fence, footprint, bones

Skills

speaking
reading
writing

Level

intermediate +

Time

45 minutes

Materials

1 x page 27 per 3 students
1 x page 28 per 3 students
optional: class readers
optional: glue

Before class

- 1 Photocopy one page 27 per three students (or per pair if the class is small) and cut the cards up.
- 2 Photocopy one page 28 per three students (again, one per pair if the class is small).

In class

- 1 Ask the students what they know (if anything) about Robinson Crusoe. (He was the hero of a novel by Daniel Defoe written in the early 18th century. The story was inspired by the experience of Alexander Selkirk, a castaway from 1704–1709. Robinson Crusoe was on his island for nearly 30 years.)
- 2 Check that they understand the key words for this exercise. If necessary, use drawings or act out the words.
- 3 Divide the students into equal-sized groups and give each group a shuffled set of the cards on page 27 and the chronology chart on page 28. Their task is to put the cards in order. They should look at dates, tenses, and words such as *later*, *after that*. They stick or place cards on the correct square of the chronology chart, beginning in 1632 with the earliest card.
- 4 The groups compare notes and report back. Give the solution if there is disagreement.

SOLUTION

1=E; 2=J; 3=H; 4=B; 5=M; 6=C; 7=L; 8=D; 9=F; 10=A; 11=G; 12=I; 13=K

This activity can be done as a stand-alone writing / grammar exercise to introduce or practise the use of reference devices.

Follow up

- 1 Students read a graded reader of *Robinson Crusoe* and write their own diary entry for the castaway.
- 2 (for an advanced group or a literature course) The story of Robinson Crusoe can be used as a basis of comparison with other castaway stories, such as Lucy Irvine's *Castaway* or William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. One group can read each story and compare the way in which each survivor / group of survivors dealt with the problems of shelter, food and companionship. They can present their work orally or in writing.
- 3 (to encourage students to use graded readers) Each group reads another reader and makes a set of cards for that book, like the ones on page 27. They shuffle their cards and exchange sets with other groups who must arrange them correctly. This exercise has huge potential in that it really gets them to look at linkers and reference devices, but it needs very careful monitoring to make certain that the cards really can be sequenced.

ROBINSON CRUSOE CARDS

Cut the following cards out and shuffle them.

E

My name is Robinson Crusoe. I was born in 1632. My father did not want me to become a sailor, but I became one when I was 27.

J

We had been at sea for twelve days when there was a terrible storm and everybody else on the ship was killed.

H

When I woke up, I was alone on a desert island. I found a cave to live in and cut down trees to make a home to protect myself.

B

Ten months later, I began to explore the island for the first time.

M

After looking around the island, I decided to make a boat – but, after four months' work, I discovered that I had built it too far from the sea. I felt stupid!

C

I felt very unhappy because of my mistake.

L

I had recovered from my disappointment when, one day, I saw a footprint in the sand. I was terrified by the idea that other people might be on my island. I made my fence much stronger.

D

A few months later, I saw another sign: a boat and some human bones. Cannibals had been on my island. I watched the sea every day for two or three months in case they returned.

F

Nothing happened until a few years later when I saw five boats of cannibals arriving with two prisoners ... ready to be eaten.

A

I saved one of them. He started to learn English and I gave him a name: Friday.

G

We lived together for many years after that. When I was 55, an English ship arrived at our island. However, there was a problem.

I

The captain had been taken prisoner by his crew.

K

We rescued him and helped him defeat the mutineers. He was very grateful and took us both back to England.

ROBINSON CRUSOE CHRONOLOGY CHART

Put the cards in the correct place.

1 – 1632

8

2

9

3

10

4

11

5

12

6

13 – 1687

7

