

## Treasure Island - Learning Resources

## Roles of women in the 18th Century (up to 60 mins)

This exercise asks pupils to consider why a modern production of Treasure Island might choose to have some key characters played by women, rather than men, as they were written in the novel. It then invites pupils to investigate the different roles open to women in different fields at different points in history.

## Who is it for?

This learning resource is for students studying History at Key Stage 2 (years 5 & 6)

### Learning outcomes

#### Learners will:

- Select/organise relevant historical information
- Understand how the past is constructed from a range of resources
- Look at change, similarities and differences across history
- Cover the PSHE curriculum: Living in the wider world

## You will need

- Access to the production of Treasure Island in the On Demand player.
- Access to the internet and/or reference books on different historical periods
- A copy of Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson

#### **Activities**

1.

Read with the class an extract from towards the end of Chapter I, where Dr. Livesy first appears, beginning "Dr. Livesy came late one afternoon to see the patient, took a bit of dinner from my mother..." until the end of the chapter.

2.

Watch the scene in the play where the character of the Doctor appears (Start at 05:00, finishing at 07:00)

3.

It is clear that Robert Louis Stevenson imagined the character of the doctor as a man, but the character in the play is a woman. Ask the class why Stevenson might have intended the doctor to be a man, and ask them if they think it makes any difference to the play to have the character portrayed as a woman.

4.

Explain that when Stevenson wrote the story, women weren't allowed to be doctors. Ask the class what they think about this, and why they think this might be.



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#### 5.

Ask the class to break into pairs and investigate the different roles women had in society in different periods of history. Encourage them to use a variety of different books or websites to corroborate their findings. Assign each pair a different century and different area of working life. You can choose your own categories or take inspiration from the list below.

Pre-15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

Education, Military, Home life, Careers, Politics, Performance, Fashion, Architecture, Science

#### 6.

Ask each pair to present the most interesting thing they found as part of their research, and collect them into a table to chart the course of women's roles in each of your chosen categories over time.

#### 7.

Ask the class if they can think of any reason why a woman couldn't do the same job a man could do – or any job that only a woman could do. Ask them to look at how women's roles in society have changed over the past few centuries, and suggest how things might change (or how they might like them to change) over the next hundred years.