

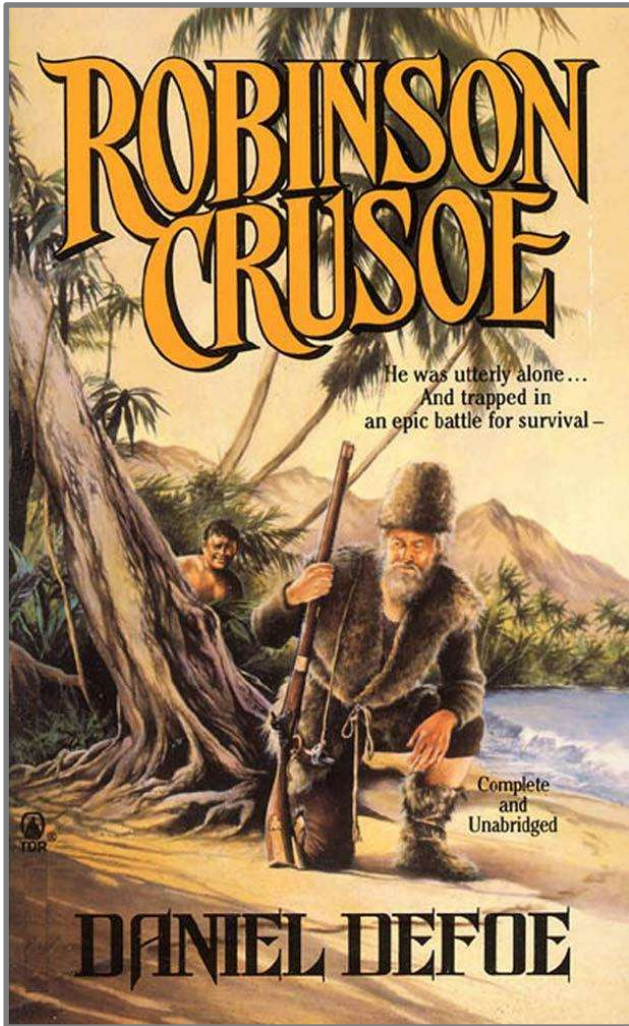
The Artios Home Companion Series Literature and Composition

Robinson Crusoe

by Daniel Defoe

Literature For Units 1 – 4

(Suggested: Scholastic Junior Classics version)



We will read *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe while discussing early exploration. Writing projects for this unit will center on writing friendly and business letters.

Note: While using a junior version is suggested for younger students, there are many versions of this classic book available. Select a version that is most appropriate for the reading level of your students, and adjust the chapters to be read during each unit accordingly.

Be Sure to Notice...

Daniel Defoe based his main character, Robinson Crusoe, at least in part on the real-life adventures of Alexander Selkirk. Mr. Selkirk was a Scottish sailor who was shipwrecked on an island in the South Pacific. The book sparked much interest in the literary world, and many people consider it to be the origination of “realistic fiction” as a new genre in literature.

This book is written in first person narrative, which means that the story is told by the character himself. So, in this story, Robinson Crusoe is telling his own story, and refers to himself as “I.”

Context Resources

The more you learn about Robinson Crusoe, the more fun you will have with this book. Within the **ArtiosHCS** curriculum website at www.ArtiosHCS.com you will find a collection of websites for further exploration along with Vocabulary Lists and Literature Projects to help you explore and understand the literature as you read.

Unit 1 – Assignments

Against his parents' warning, young Robinson Crusoe embarks on an exciting journey at sea. He becomes shipwrecked on a deserted island, and he encounters many adventures during his almost-thirty years alone on the island.

Literature

- Begin by completing an author profile for **Daniel Defoe**. You will find an **Author Profile Form** in the **Language Arts Resources** section of the **ArtiosHCS** curriculum website at www.ArtiosHCS.com. You can find information about the author through various Internet sources. Make sure you get a parent's permission before accessing the Internet.
- Read Chapters 1-6 in *Robinson Crusoe* (from "I Am Saved From the Sea" through "Getting Food"). If you are using an alternate version of this text, you will want to read roughly one-third of the book during this unit.
- As you discuss these chapters with your family, focus on these questions: Would Robinson Crusoe have been better off listening to his parents' advice and staying away from the sea? What does the Bible say about respecting your parents?

Composition

- Print three copies of the Character Template found with the **Resources** section of the website onto card stock. Cut them out, and then use various art materials to create three shipwrecked sailors. You will be mailing each one of these, along with a letter to a friend in a different part of the country.
- Friendly letters are written to share information with people who are familiar to us, such as family or friends. There are five main parts of a friendly letter: heading, greeting, body, closing, and signature.
 - **Heading:** The heading of a friendly letter contains your street address, city, state, zip code, and the date. In some situations it is acceptable to write only the date. It should be in the upper right-hand section of your paper.
 - **Greeting:** This part of a friendly letter usually begins with the word "Dear" and is followed by the name of the person you are addressing, ending with a comma. It should be written below the heading, along the left margin of the paper.
 - **Body:** Skip a line after the greeting, and then write the main text of your letter. This is the place where you share all the things you want to say with the person to whom you are writing. You'll want to remember to indent, or leave a short space, at the beginning of each paragraph.
 - **Closing:** Skip another line after the body. The closing of a friendly letter is where you say goodbye. It begins with an expression such as "Love," "Your friend," or "Sincerely yours," with only the first word being capitalized. This should be written/placed along the right-hand margin, in line with your heading.
 - **Signature:** The signature is the place where you sign your name, and it should be directly below the closing.
- Write your own friendly letter to three friends who live in different parts of the country. You might want to leave the heading blank and just make two copies of your letter. In your letter you should:
 - Introduce your shipwrecked sailor, tell your friend that you are reading about the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, and ask them to take a picture of your sailor having an adventure somewhere exciting around where they live.

- Ask them to either email or mail you the picture, along with some information about the location where they took the photograph.

You will find an example friendly letter in the **Formats and Models** section of the website.

- Next, address three envelopes to your friends, including the following parts: address, return address, stamp.
 - Address: This is the name and address of the person to whom you are mailing your letter. It should be centered on the front of the envelope.
 - Return Address: This is the part of the envelope where you write the sender's name and address. It belongs in the top, left-hand section of the envelope.
 - Stamp: The stamp belongs on the top, right-hand section of the envelope.

You will find an example of an addressed envelope in the **Formats and Models** section of the website.

- Now, place a folded letter and one of your shipwrecked sailors in each of your three addressed envelopes and mail them to the three friends you selected. As you get pictures and responses back, keep them for an activity at the end of Unit 4.

Unit 2 – Assignments

Literature

- Read Chapters 7-12 in *Robinson Crusoe* (from “The Years Pass By” through “I Teach Friday”). If you are using an alternate version of this text, you will want to read roughly another one-third of the book during this unit.
- As you are reading, focus your discussions on how Robinson Crusoe experiences God's provision for his needs. Do you think God is trying to teach him anything through his experience?

Composition

- In this unit we will continue working with friendly letters. Using the structure that you learned in the last unit, write a friendly letter as if you were Robinson Crusoe writing to a family member back home. Tell them about some of the adventures you've had and what you miss about home.
- Then, pretend that you have just received this letter from Robinson Crusoe, and write a friendly letter back to him. Include some advice to him to help keep him safe, and tell him what you miss about having him at home.

If you are using this curriculum with a group of students, consider writing these letters back and forth to each other. If you are using this curriculum on your own, visit the **Comments** section of this unit's lessons on your **HCS Class pages** to find some friends who might like to write back and forth with you.

Unit 3 – Assignments

Literature

- Finish reading *Robinson Crusoe*.

Composition

- Now that you have gotten really good at writing friendly letters, we're going to move on to writing business letters. These kinds of letters are sent to companies, organizations, or professionals, and their purpose is to ask for information, give information, offer opinions, or persuade someone to act on our behalf. Many of these parts will look familiar to you; however, all of these pieces of information will start along the left-hand margin:
 - **Heading:** The heading of the letter contains your street address, city, state, zip code, and date.
 - **Inside Address:** This part of the business letter contains the first and last name of the person to whom you are writing, their street address, city, state, and zip code.
 - **Salutation:** This is the greeting of your letter. It usually begins with "Dear" followed by the name of the person to whom you are writing, and it ends with a colon (:). You should use the formal version of this person's name, i.e., Mr. Smith/Mrs. Smith.
 - **Body:** This is the "meat" of your letter; here you make your request, share your information, or offer your ideas. In a business letter you do not use indentations to start a new paragraph; instead you skip a full space between paragraphs and then begin all paragraphs along the left-hand margin.
 - **Closing:** Your closing is where you say good-bye. "Sincerely yours," makes an excellent closing for a business letter.
 - **Signature:** Here you sign your name. It is encouraged for you to use your formal name, i.e., Mrs. A. Person.

You will find an example of a business letter in the **Formats and Models** section of the website.

- Now you should write a business letter.
 - Imagine that you are the stranded Robinson Crusoe and you are writing to the owner of a fleet of ships, and you are imploring this owner to send a ship for your rescue.
 - You will need to be persuasive in your argument if you want this individual to comply with your request, so think carefully about the reasons that you should give to try to win him or her over.
 - You should also consider whether there is something of value that you might be able to offer in return.
 - You should create both the name and address of this fleet owner, as well as a creative address for yourself.
 - Address an envelope using all of the elements that you have previously learned.

Unit 4 – Assignments

Composition

- Collect the pictures you have received from your friends around the country.

If you are using this curriculum as part of a group, use one large map and display your class information together. If you are using this curriculum on your own, visit the **Comments** section for the lessons in this unit on your **HCS Class pages** to find some friends with whom you can share the locations and information that you have discovered.

- Find a map and use push pins to mark the locations where each picture was taken, and mark each push pin with a number.
- Next, mount each of your pictures to a piece of card stock.
- With a parent's permission, briefly research this part of the country.
- Under each of your pictures, write a few sentences to describe this location.



Pictorial map of Crusoe's island, a.k.a. "Island of Despair," showing incidents from the book