



Topic-

THE BLACK SPOT

SUB TOPICS:

- About the Author
- Story in Brief
- Significance of the Black Spot
- Story in Detail
- Character sketches
- Assignment Questions

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDS:

- Presentation by screen-sharing
- Google Jamboard as whiteboard
- YouTube link - <https://youtube/xmlGPFzJUaE>

INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY:

Students to answer questions like- *Think of a time when you were scared or sad. Tell the class about it...*

What are the things that make you sad? What are the things that make you scared? List them in two columns....

A scary thing happens one evening while you are alone at home. How do you deal with it? Express yourself.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Each student will be able to –

1. Understand the chapter in light of the plot of the story.
2. Justify the title of the story.
3. Analyse the characters of Captain Billy Bones and Jim Hawkins.

LESSON DEVELOPMENT :



BLOCK I

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Louis Stevenson (born-November 13, 1850, Edinburgh, Scotland—died-December 3, 1894, Vailima, Samoa), Scottish essayist, poet, and author of fiction and travel books, best known for his novels *Treasure Island* (1881), *Kidnapped* (1886), *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), and *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889).

'Treasure Island' is an adventure presented with consummate skill, with atmosphere, character, and action superbly geared to one another. The book is at once a gripping adventure tale and an ironic comment on the ambiguity of human motives.

STORY IN BRIEF

Robert Louis Stevenson for his novel, 'Treasure Island' (serialized 1881–82) invented a literary device which he named as Black Spot.

This was to pronounce a verdict of guilt. This consisted of a circular paper which had one side blackened while the other side had a message and was handed over to the accused.

While the captain was significantly weakened by a stroke and the narrator preoccupied by all the duties and responsibilities of his father's funeral, a blind beggar visited the narrator's house and asked him to take him to the captain. When he reached there, he gave the captain a piece of paper with a black circle on one side and some words scribbled on the other.

The beggar walked off as if he was never blind and the captain was so shocked by whatever was written on the piece of paper that he died. Overall, the story is a very sad one revolving around the theme of sorrow.



BLOCK II

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BLACK SPOT

The black spot is an age-old pirate tradition, though it was actually invented by Robert Louis Stevenson himself. When the members of a pirate crew are dissatisfied with their captain, they present him with a piece of paper with a black spot printed on one side. This is a warning that the captain in question is about to be overthrown, or maybe even killed. Either way, the pirate captain who receives the black spot is served a notice that he's in serious danger of losing his ship's command as well as his life.

The black spot is literally just that, a black spot. It consists of a round piece of paper with a blackened spot on one side and a message on the other. It represents a condemnation of one pirate by his crew. If given to a captain, it means that his crew has lost faith in his ability to lead and he is

forced to step down from his command. In the case of Captain Billy Bones, the message on his black spot is a demand that he must appear before his former crew. It is presumed that failure to comply with a black spot could result in the death of the recipient.

In a way, the use of the black spot represents the democratic nature of pirate crews. Anyone can earn the censure of his shipmates and be called to task. Even captains are subject to them.

STORY IN DETAIL

Jim's father dies suddenly, so **Jim** doesn't have time to think about the **captain**.

Jim's father has not played a major role thus far, but now Jim is left entirely without a male authority figure—and the captain is not exactly a proper replacement.

The day after the funeral, a **blind man** with an eye patch comes up the road, calling out and asking where he is. **Jim** says he's at the Admiral Benbow in Black Hill Cove, and leads him inside, before the man asks to lead him to the **captain**. Jim begins to say that the captain is too weak, but he is soon scared by the man's cold, cruel-sounding rebuke, and leads him to the captain, whose face grows pale when he sees him.

The man slips something into the **captain's** hand and then quite nimbly races out of the house and back down the road. The captain opens his hand, cries, "Ten o'clock," which is six hours from that moment, and then falls to the floor, dead of apoplexy (internal bleeding from another stroke). **Jim** bursts into tears, even though he had always found the captain disturbing. He witnesses a second death when he is still not out of the grief of the death of his father.

CHARACTER SKETCHES

Jim Hawkins

Jim Hawkins is the narrator and the protagonist of the story, 'The Black Spot'. He works at his family's inn. He seems to be a caring and concerned fellow as he takes care of the captain who stays in their inn, despite his rough behaviour. He is kind hearted as though he did not like Captain Billy but he felt pity for him when he started keeping unwell and cried for him when he dropped dead in front of him. He is quite responsible as at an early age he helps his parents in running the inn.

Captain Billy Bones

Captain Billy Bones stayed at the inn, Admiral Benbow. He had been staying there for quite some time. He was described as a man of violent temperament. He did not mix up with the people and stayed lost in his own thoughts. Singing was his favourite pastime and he would often sing "ugly old sea songs". When the stranger handed him the card which had the black spot, he was quite disturbed and got a stroke and died.



BLOCK III

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. "It was the second death I had known, and the sorrow of the first was still fresh in my heart".

a) Whose deaths is the narrator talking about?

b) Why was the sorrow of the first death still fresh in the narrator's heart?

Q2. Why do you think all colour went out of the captain's face the moment he saw the blind beggar?

Q3. How did the blind man threaten the narrator?

Q4. "My poor father died quite suddenly that evening, which put all other matters on one side."

a) What "other matters" do you think the narrator is referring to?

b) What kept the narrator busy that he forgot "other matters"?

BBPS, PITAMPUR