

A photograph of Keira Knightly as Elizabeth Swann from the movie Pirates of the Caribbean. She is wearing a black, ornate, high-collared dress with gold embroidery and a dark, layered skirt. She is holding a thick rope with her right hand and looking off to the side with a serious expression. The background shows the rigging of a ship.

## Before You Read

**A. Completion.** Read the information and complete the definitions below.

The Golden Age of Piracy produced a number of famous pirates. While piracy is mainly seen as an activity for men, a minority of the pirates were actually fierce women, with a **fleet** of ships of their own. One such terrifying pirate, who **attacked** boats and stole goods, was an English woman named Charlotte De Berry. Berry started her pirate career when she cut off the head of a cruel captain, who was also her husband, and **captured** his ship.

1. If you **attack** a person or thing, you try to (hurt / help) them.
2. A **fleet** is an organized group of (ships / people).
3. If you **capture** something or someone, you (take / free) it.

**B. Predict.** On the next page, look at the title and headings, and read the first sentence of each paragraph. Answer the questions below. Then read the passage to check your answers.

1. Why do you think the women became pirates?
2. What do you think happened to them?

▶ Keira Knightly plays a female pirate named Elizabeth Swann in the movie *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

# WOMEN OF THE WAVES

- 1 Throughout history, the majority of pirates have been men. But were there any women pirates? Absolutely! Below are two from different parts of the world.

## | Mary Read: Pirate in Disguise

- 5 Mary Read was born in England around 1690. She lived most of her life disguised as a man. As a teenager, looking for adventure, she dressed as a boy and got a job at sea. Later, as a young woman (still **pretending** to be a man), she found work on a ship and **sailed** to the Caribbean.
- 10 On one journey, pirates attacked Mary's ship. Instead of fighting, she joined them. But Mary had to be careful because many pirate ships had a rule: No women allowed. If the men discovered her true identity, they might **shoot** and kill her. So at first, Mary stayed by herself and **avoided**
- 15 the others. But soon, she made a surprising discovery: One of the pirates on the ship was actually a woman! Anne Bonny was the captain's girlfriend, but she was also a pirate herself. Mary told Anne her secret, and the two women became good friends, and powerful fighters.
- 20 They fought together until they were captured in 1720.



▲ Mary Read

## | Ching Shih: Pirate Queen

- In the early 1800s, pirate Ching Shih **terrorized** the Chinese coast. When her powerful pirate husband died, control of his 500 junks<sup>1</sup> **transferred** to Ching Shih. While she was in charge,
- 25 she expanded her fleet to almost 2,000 ships.

- A **fearless** fighter, Ching Shih led nearly 80,000 pirates—both men and women. They **targeted** ships and towns along the coast of China. For years, leaders throughout the region **failed** to stop her. Eventually, Ching Shih retired, a rich and
- 30 **respected** woman.

<sup>1</sup> A **Junk** is a traditional type of Chinese sailing ship.

## Reading Comprehension

**Multiple Choice.** Choose the best answer for each question.

Purpose

1. What is the main purpose of this reading?
  - a. to describe two female pirates
  - b. to compare male and female pirates
  - c. to describe the challenges that pirates faced
  - d. to show that female pirates were very common

Vocabulary

2. Look at the word *disguised* in line 6. Here, *disguise* means to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. wear beautiful clothes
  - b. change your appearance
  - c. hide your feelings
  - d. look for adventure

Reference

3. In line 15, what does *others* refer to?
  - a. ships
  - b. pirates
  - c. women
  - d. rules

Detail

4. What unusual discovery did Mary Read make?
  - a. The captain was a woman.
  - b. Women weren't allowed on pirate ships.
  - c. The captain was her father.
  - d. Another pirate was actually a woman.

Paraphrase

5. In lines 22–23, what does *Ching Shih terrorized the Chinese coast* mean?
  - a. Ching Shih took control of the Chinese coast.
  - b. Ching Shih created fear among people on the Chinese coast.
  - c. Ching Shih bought all the ships on the Chinese coast.
  - d. Ching Shih attacked everyone who tried to leave the Chinese coast.

Detail

6. Which statement about Ching Shih's ships is NOT true?
  - a. All of the sailors were women.
  - b. There were about 2,000 of them.
  - c. Both male and female pirates worked on them.
  - d. There were almost 80,000 people on them.

Detail

7. Who was married to a pirate?
  - a. Mary Read
  - b. Ching Shih
  - c. both Mary Read and Ching Shih
  - d. neither Mary Read nor Ching Shih



### Did You Know?

This 1,400 kg (3,000 pound) anchor was recovered from Blackbeard's ship. It had been underwater since 1718.

## Vocabulary Practice

**A. Completion.** Complete the information with the correct form of words from the box. One word is extra.

**avoid fearless pretend sail shoot target transfer**

Even today, pirates are common in places such as the Strait of Malacca in Southeast Asia. As it is the world's most important shipping region, about 70,000 cargo ships **1.** \_\_\_\_\_ through this area every year. Like 18th-century pirates, many of today's pirates are **2.** \_\_\_\_\_ killers, but now they have better weapons and faster boats. They mostly **3.** \_\_\_\_\_ cargo ships—for both goods and money. Some things today's pirates steal (and resell) are oil, wood, animals, and weapons.

Modern-day pirates sometimes **4.** \_\_\_\_\_ to be a boat in trouble and stop in front of a cargo ship. The cargo ship slows down to **5.** \_\_\_\_\_ hitting the boat. This gives the pirates a chance to climb onto the ship. The pirates sometimes capture people and say they will **6.** \_\_\_\_\_ the people if they don't get money.

**Word Link** The prefix **trans-** means movement or change, e.g. *transfer, transport, transatlantic.*

**B. Words in Context.** Read the sentences and circle **T** (true) or **F** (false).

- |  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| 1. If you <b>terrorize</b> someone, you make them fear you.                      | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 2. If police <b>fail</b> to catch a killer, they are successful in catching him. | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 3. If you <b>respect</b> someone, you like and think highly of them.             | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 4. If you <b>transfer</b> from one bus to another, you change buses.             | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |

✓ Pirate attacks are still common today in the Strait of Malacca.



