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Robinson Crusoe

1 10.4.1 Why is Daniel Defoe considered the father of the English novel? Read the biography to find out.



Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) was an important English writer born in London, England. As a young man, he travelled a lot around Europe as a merchant and wrote for many magazines and newspapers.

His first and best-known novel was *Robinson Crusoe*, which was published in 1719 when Defoe was 59 years old. Other famous novels include *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*. They are all about people who are in difficult situations and struggle through life, whether physically, financially or spiritually.

Although many parts of Defoe's personal life remain unknown, a great deal of his writing has survived, and he has had an incredible influence on English literature. *Robinson Crusoe*, for example, is one of the first examples of the novel in the English language, with some elements that would become standards of the new genre, such as a quite eventful and realistic plot. It is for this reason that Defoe is often called the father of the English novel.

Background analysis

3 10.4.2 Read the text and answer the questions.

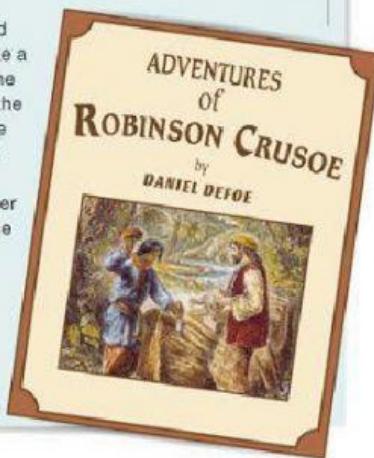


Robinson Crusoe is one of the earliest examples of a realistic novel in the English language. It tells the story of a young Englishman called Robinson Crusoe, who dreams of becoming a sailor and travelling the world. When his father refuses to let him go to sea, he runs away.

After several misadventures, he ends up in Brazil and becomes rich. Soon, he decides to take a trip to Africa to buy some slaves, but his ship is hit by a storm and he ends up alone on a desert island. With a few supplies from the shipwreck, he builds a house, a boat and a new life.

One day, Crusoe encounters people on the island. He discovers that they are natives from a nearby island with some prisoners. He even helps a prisoner escape, who eventually becomes his servant and close friend. He names him Friday, after the day of the week they met, and teaches him to use his tools and speak English. After many years, a European ship comes to the island and Crusoe is finally rescued.

Crusoe and Friday make a deal with the captain of the ship and he takes them back to Europe. After 27 years, he returns home to England.



- 1 Why did Crusoe run away from home?
- 2 Where was Crusoe going when his ship was wrecked and why?
- 3 Where did he end up?
- 4 Who is Friday?
- 5 How long did he stay on the island?