

Bedtime stories about pirates.

5 stories to read aloud at bedtime, each with its own picture and a calm, sleepy ending. Written for ages 3 to 8.



Captain Pebble and the Treasure of Stars

about 2 min

The Map to Bedtime Bay

about 2 min

The Quietest Ship on the Sea

about 2 min

The Pirate Who Collected Yawns

about 2 min

The Little Pirate's Goodnight Song

about 2 min

Reading times assume a slow bedtime pace of about 110 words a minute. Every story is also free to read online at pimlo.app/bedtime-stories/pirates.



Captain Pebble and the Treasure of Stars

Captain Pebble had the smallest ship on the whole sea. It was painted blue, with a patched sail and a bell that went ting when the wind blew. Her crew was a parrot named Biscuit and a very old, very wise cat.

"Tonight," said Captain Pebble, unrolling a crinkly map, "we find the Treasure of Stars." The map showed a tiny island shaped like a crescent moon. Biscuit fluffed his feathers. The cat opened one eye.

They sailed through the evening as the sea turned gold, then gray, then dark and shining. The little ship rocked gently, and the lantern on the mast swung back and forth, back and forth.

When they reached the crescent-moon island, there was no chest and no gold. Instead the sand glowed with hundreds of tiny shells, each one holding a speck of starlight. "The best kind of treasure," said Captain Pebble softly.

She took just one shell and set it beside her pillow in the cabin. Biscuit tucked his head under his wing, the cat curled up at her feet, and the little blue ship rocked them all to sleep beneath the stars.

The end. Goodnight.



The Map to Bedtime Bay

Captain Juno found the map tucked under her pillow. It was drawn in crayon, and at the very bottom was a big red X marked Bedtime Bay.

"All hands on deck," she whispered to her crew, a toy crocodile and a sock monkey. The first clue said: Sail across the Bubbly Sea. So Captain Juno splashed through her bath, and the bubbles popped like tiny waves.

The second clue said: Polish the Pearls. So she brushed her teeth, round and round, until they shone. The third clue said: Raise the Captain's Sails. So she wriggled into her softest pajamas.

The last clue said: Hear one story by lantern light. So Captain Juno climbed into her bunk, switched on her little lamp and listened to a story about the sea until her eyelids began to droop.

"Land ahoy," she mumbled sleepily. The crocodile and the sock monkey snuggled close. And there, right where the X had been, Captain Juno found the treasure: a warm, cozy bed, and a whole night of dreams.

The end. Goodnight.



The Quietest Ship on the Sea

Most pirate ships are noisy. They have clanging bells and stamping boots and crews who shout "Yo ho!" But the Hush was different. The Hush was the quietest ship on the sea.

Her captain, Captain Rosa, wore soft slippers instead of boots. Her crew rowed with padded oars. Even the ship's parrot only ever whispered.

Every evening the Hush sailed out to collect the sea's quiet treasures: a shell that held the sound of waves, a feather from a sleeping gull, a drop of silver moonlight caught in a jar.

Tonight they found the best treasure of all: a calm bay where the water was as smooth as glass. The crew lowered the anchor slowly, so it wouldn't make a splash, and Captain Rosa hung a lantern at the bow.

Then everyone climbed into their hammocks. The ship swayed gently, side to side, side to side. The parrot whispered one last "goodnight", and the quietest ship on the sea fell fast asleep under the stars.

The end. Goodnight.



The Pirate Who Collected Yawns

Captain Mo was not like other pirates. She did not collect gold or jewels. Captain Mo collected yawns, and she kept them in a big glass jar with a cork in the top.

Every evening she sailed her little green ship, the Snoozy Sue, from island to island. On Turtle Island, an old turtle stretched his neck and gave a long, slow yawn. Captain Mo caught it in her jar. Pop went the cork.

On Pelican Point, three pelicans yawned all at once, their big beaks opening wide. On Seal Rock, a baby seal yawned a tiny, squeaky yawn. Pop, pop, pop went the cork, and the jar began to glow a soft, sleepy blue.

As the moon rose, Captain Mo looked at her jar. It was nearly full. "Just one more," she said, "and it will be the biggest collection of yawns on the whole sea."

She waited and listened. The waves whispered against the ship, and the lantern swayed. Then Captain Mo opened her mouth and gave the biggest yawn of all. She popped it into the jar, climbed into her hammock and was fast asleep before the cork was back in.

The end. Goodnight.



The Little Pirate's Goodnight Song

On the good ship Starfish, the crew had a song they sang every night before bed. Tonight, for the very first time, little Pip would sing the last line.

First the captain sang, in a deep, soft voice: "The sails are down, the anchor's set." Then the cook sang: "The pots are clean, the deck is wet." The ship's cat purred along, and the waves rocked the Starfish gently.

Next the lookout sang from high up on the mast: "The moon is up, the stars are bright." And the old parrot sang, a little out of tune: "So tuck your toes in, nice and tight."

Then everyone turned to Pip. Pip took a deep breath and felt a little shy. The captain smiled. "Sing it soft," he whispered. "The sea will help."

So Pip sang, as quietly as the water lapping at the ship: "Goodnight, sea. Goodnight, me." The whole crew sighed a happy sigh. And one by one, from the captain to the cat, they drifted off to sleep.

The end. Goodnight.