

Buccaneers Reading Comprehension

Name _____

Nearly 400 years ago, in the 17th century, the Caribbean islands became the home of many buccaneers. They were a mixed group of mostly English, French, and Dutch men and women. Many of them were shipwrecked and marooned off the coast of Hispaniola. They hunted wild boar and cattle, and learned from the Carib people how to cure meat. Curing is a way of preserving meat with salt and spices so that it does not spoil in a hot climate. The meat was spread in strips over a wooden grate or boucan. This was placed near a slow-burning fire. The heat dried the meat to a fine red color. It had a delicious taste. The sailors sold the meat (which was also called boucan) to ships that passed by. This is why they were called buccaneers. They took to sea and lived by capturing Spanish ships. They later became known as pirates.

1. The word “buccaneer” is related to...

- a. How people in the Caribbean islands captured Spanish ships
- b. The native peoples from the Caribbean islands
- c. How people in the Caribbean island preserved meat
- d. The shipwrecks that occurred in the Caribbean islands

2. Which is NOT true about curing?

- a. The meat turned red after it was dried
- b. The buccaneers learned how to cure meat from the Caribs.
- c. Curing required salt and spices
- d. Cured meat was spread over an iron grate or boucan.

3. Which following best describes the meaning of “marooned” as used in the following sentence?

Many of them were shipwrecked and **marooned** off the coast of Hispaniola.

- a. trapped
- b. interested
- c. sickened
- d. bored

4. Why were they called buccaneers?

- a. Because they were actually pirates
- b. Because they lived in the Caribbean
- c. Because they sold meat to ships
- d. Because they were shipwrecked

5. What was the EFFECT of drying the meat near the slow-burning fire?

- a. It turned red
- b. It sometimes spoiled
- c. It couldn't be sold
- d. It created the boucan