

FAMOUS BURIED TREASURES

From abandoned gold mines to the Titanic shipwreck, buried treasures have fascinated people throughout history.

Pirates were legendary for burying their loot. Captain Kidd was the most famous pirate of all. Many people have tried, but no one has ever found his treasures. In May 2015, divers thought they found a huge bar of silver in the wreck of Kidd's ship. But it turned out to be just a big hunk of lead.



There is a famous treasure pit on Oak Island in Nova Scotia. People have been digging there for over 200 years! But it is rigged. When you move certain rocks, water rushes in from the sea. No treasure has ever been found, but still people keep digging.

One real-life treasure was from a Spanish ship called the Atocha. It sank in a hurricane off the coast of Florida in 1622. In 1985, a treasure hunter named Mel Fisher found the sunken ship with silver, gold and precious gems. So far, the treasure is valued at over 400 million dollars – and they're still digging!

Forrest Fenn was an American millionaire who wanted to start a treasure hunt. He filled a treasure chest with gold and jewels worth over a million dollars. In 2010, he hid it somewhere in the Rocky Mountains. Then he wrote a book with clues to find the treasure. But if you think you'd like to join the hunt, you're too late. The treasure chest was found in June 2020.

There are still many buried treasures out there – and many stories about them. But chances are, they're going to stay buried for a long, long time.

BEFORE READING:

What do you think of when you hear the words “buried treasure”? Pirates? Gold mines? Tombs of the pharaohs? Buried treasures have captured the interest of people since ancient times. Read this article to learn about famous buried treasures.

WHILE YOU ARE READING:

Circle any words you don’t know and can’t figure out from the passage. Put a question mark in the margin beside any information you don’t understand or is new to you.

AFTER READING:

Things to think about:

1. Most pirates didn’t really bury their loot. What do you think they did with it?
2. It says that the treasure pit at Oak Island is “rigged.” What do you think that means?
3. Who do you think should get the treasure from the Anocha ship? Why?
4. Thousands of people tried to find Forrest Fenn’s treasure. Five people died. But one person got rich. Do you think Fenn’s idea was a good or bad one?

Something to do:

Create a treasure hunt for your friends or family.

1. Decide on a “treasure” and hide it.
2. Think of 8-10 places to hide clues.
3. Write a clue for each hiding place. Try not to make it too easy.
4. Put the clues in the hiding places. Remember that the clue in each place is always for the *next* place.
5. Help your friends try to figure out your clues and find the treasure.

Ideas for clues:

- A hint: “Oh music, sweet music” (piano)
- A rhyme: What rhymes with *tail fox*? (mail box)
- A coded message, where some letters represent others (z=a; y=b, x=c, etc.) YRIW SLFHV (bird house)
- Scrambled or backwards letters: REDNU EHT REWOLF TOP (under the flower pot)



