



## How I Became a Pirate

By Melinda Long

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### How I Became a Pirate By Melinda Long

*Pirates have green teeth—when they have any teeth at all. I know about pirates, because one day, when I was at the beach building a sand castle and minding my own business, a pirate ship sailed into view.*

So proclaims Jeremy Jacob, a boy who joins Captain Braid Beard and his crew in this witty look at the finer points of pirate life by the Caldecott Honor-winning illustrator David Shannon and the storyteller Melinda Long. Jeremy learns how to say “scurvy dog,” sing sea chanteys, and throw food . . . but he also learns that there are no books or good night kisses on board: “Pirates don’t tuck.” A swashbuckling adventure with fantastically silly, richly textured illustrations that suit the story to a T.

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## How I Became a Pirate By Melinda Long Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Young Jeremy Jacob is plucked from obscurity while innocently constructing a sand castle and is thrust into a brand-new life as a pirate. Captain Braid Beard and his crew recognize Jeremy as an exceptionally talented digger and they happen to be in desperate need of a digger to help them bury a treasure chest. Jeremy thinks a pirate life sounds like fun, as long as he's back the next day in time for soccer practice, and so he goes along with the ragtag group of seafaring thugs (with hearts of gold, naturally). And while Jeremy adores the pirates' lack of table manners and opposition to vegetables, he comes to realize that a life away from his parents lacks some of the niceties to which he's become accustomed. Nobody tucks him in at night, for instance, and the only book available to read is a treasure map. Melinda Long's story, narrated with a sense of boastful exaggeration by Jeremy, is full of a sense of high adventure that's lovingly evocative of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic tales. David Shannon's illustrations, full of a goofy vibrancy, are a perfect accompaniment to the story. (Ages 4 to 8) --*John Moe*

#### From School Library Journal

PreSchool-Grade 3-Long has selected an irresistible combination for this age group-pirates and soccer. Jeremy Jacob is building a sand castle when a pirate ship lands nearby. His parents are preoccupied with other chores, so he takes off for an adventure on the high seas to help the men bury their treasure chest. He learns that buccaneers don't bother with manners or bedtimes, which is just fine with him, but it also means no bedtime stories or being tucked in. He tries to teach the pirates to play soccer, at least until the ball gets swallowed by a shark. When a storm hits, forcing the crew to return to shore, Jeremy solves the dilemma of where to bury the treasure-in his own backyard. He even makes it home in time for soccer practice. Paired with Shannon's energetic acrylics of a colorful crew of pop-eyed, snaggly toothed pirates seen from a variety of zany viewpoints (including upside down) and a small boy who is clearly having the time of his life, this rollicking adventure is sure to be a favorite with the storytime crowd.

*Laurie Edwards, West Shore School District, Camp Hill, PA*

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#### From Booklist

PreS-Gr. 3. "Pirates have green teeth--when they have any teeth at all." So begins young Jeremy Jacob's witty recounting of his unexpected high-seas adventure. While building a sand castle at the beach, Jeremy spies a pirate ship. When he's asked to join its crew, he can't resist. On board, he does all sorts of fun pirate stuff: singing sea chanteys, learning pirate lingo, eating with one's hands. And he doesn't have to eat vegetables or take a bath! But, alas, Jeremy soon discovers, there's no goodnight kiss or bedtime story, so there's something to be said for home; besides, he has soccer practice. The rollicking tale is a charmer, with a lively, witty, first-person narrative, highly expressive characters, and farcical elements, including pirate captain Braid Beard's braided beard and his crew's enthusiastic vocal repetitions, in big, bold type, which add read-aloud pep. Shannon's acrylic art is marvelously animated, with bright, bold colors and extraordinary details, from the not-too-scary pirates' green teeth to the deep-blue sloshing sea. Along with swashbuckling humor and fantasy, kids will find much to relate to and appreciate--from excitement and family comforts to the joy of playing soccer. *Shelle Rosenfeld*

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**Joshua Bush:**

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