SCUOLA SECONDARIA DI II GRADO - B1

AHOY, MATEY! IT'S TIME TO TALK LIKE A PIRATE

If you think September is all about going back to school or to work, you arrr very wrong: it is also the month to talk like a pirate!

On September 19th, many people celebrate a funny holiday called International Talk Like a Pirate Day. The name says it all: on this day, people around the world have fun speaking like pirates.

But when did this holiday start? Everything began in 1995. Two American friends, John Baur and Mark Summers, were playing a sport called racquetball. During the game, they suddenly started talking like pirates for fun. They liked it so much that they decided to do it every year on September 19th.

At first, the holiday was just for friends. But then a famous writer called Dave Barry heard about their idea. He wrote about it in his newspaper column because he thought it was very funny. Thanks to him, Talk Like a Pirate Day became popular and spread around the world. Today it is especially popular on the Internet. For example, Facebook has sometimes offered a translation of the site… into pirate slang!

But how do you actually talk like a pirate? Most people imagine pirates speaking in a strong voice, full of words like "Arrr!" and "Matey!" This way of speaking was created by the actor Robert Newton in a 1950 Disney film called Treasure Island. He played the pirate captain Long John Silver using his native Somerset accent, from the West Country of England. Since then, this has become the classic "pirate sound" we all know today.

So why not try it this September 19th? Just say "Ahoy!" instead of "Hello!" and have some fun!

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EXCERCISES

1. Read the text. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

1. International Talk Like a Pirate Day happens in October. .....
2. John Baur and Mark Summers were playing tennis when they got the idea. .....
3. Dave Barry helped make the holiday popular by writing about it. .....
4. The holiday is only celebrated in America. .....
5. Robert Newton was a real pirate from the 18th century. .....
6. Facebook has offered a translation into pirate language on its site. .....

2. Match the pirate words with their meanings.

1. Ship
2. Treasure
3. Parrot
4. Captain
5. Island

a) A person who leads the crew on a ship
b) A bird that often repeats words
c) A boat big enough to travel across the sea
d) A piece of land surrounded by water
e) Gold, jewels or other valuable things

3. Invent your own funny holiday! Write a short description (60-80 words) including:

- **The name of your holiday**
- **When it happens**
- **What people do to celebrate**
- **Why you think people would enjoy it**

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SOLUZIONI

1. 1. F - It happens on September 19th
   2. F - They were playing racquetball
   3. T
   4. F - It's celebrated around the world
   5. F - He was an actor who played a pirate in a Disney film
   6. T

2. 1-c; 2-e; 3-b; 4-a; 5-d

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