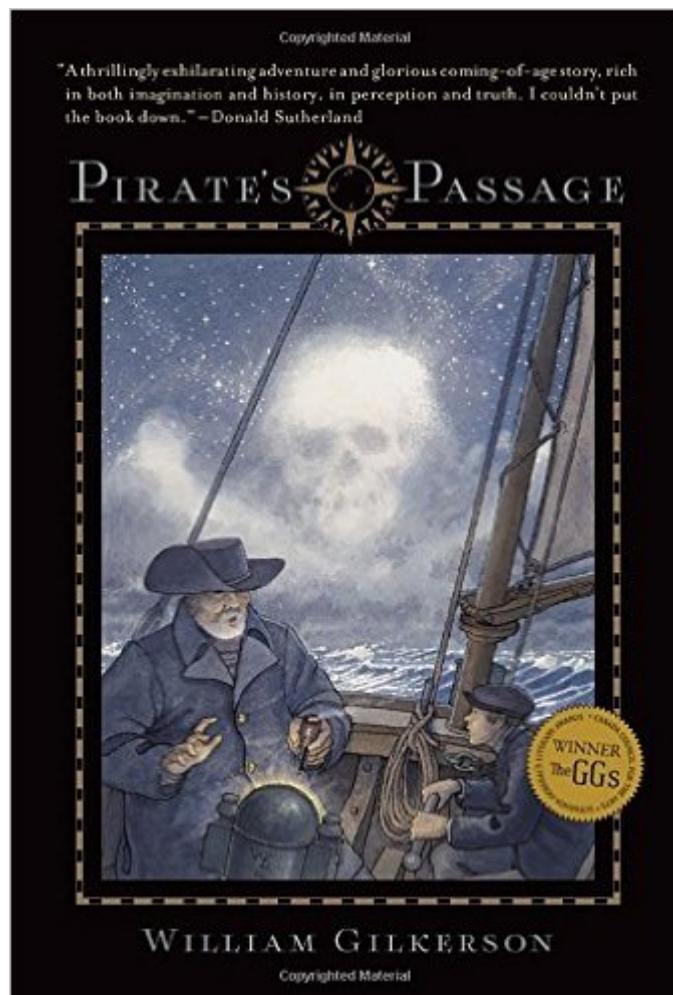


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# Pirate's Passage



## Synopsis

"A thrillingly exhilarating adventure and glorious coming-of-age story, rich in both imagination and history, in perception and truth. I couldn't put the book down." Donald Sutherland  
Nova Scotia, 1952. Not exactly the place you'd expect to run into pirates. But an old mariner, his boat driven ashore in a gale, brings with him enough stories about buccaneers and their lore to make it seem that he must have had firsthand experience of the pirate life. But how is that possible? Captain Charles Johnson's uncanny knowledge of seamanship's dark side fuels the imagination of the young boy he befriends, setting him on his own journey of mysterious adventure.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Mr. Gilkerson has written something wonderful here; even 50 pages in and at the tender age of 40+ I was enjoying the ride. This is one fun book to read, and aside from some of the nautical terms used, seems very appropriate for an early adolescent. Also, as a hobby pirate historian, I can fully appreciate what the author has done in providing a background for the history of piracy in his narrative. He has provided this history in what I consider to be a very engaging manner; a manner that will drag the younger reader along entertainingly and educationally. Three hundred plus pages later, I was just as engaged as the author wound up his narrative. There are only a couple of minor things that could have been included to help the young reader: 1) a glossary of terms, 2) a labeled image of ship rigging, and 3) a collected bibliography for further reading. In the end, those are fairly minor points when considered in the context of the overall entertainment value of the book. My hearty thanks to William Gilkerson for entertaining me with this splendid tale. P-)

William Gilkerson's novel *Pirate's Passage* is a tour de force. It is miscast as a children's book, as the author disingenuously categorizes it. Although it is cleverly enough written so that it can be read by a young reader and is nicely illustrated, it has layered depths of meaning, provoking the mind of the most sophisticated reader. The author's prose is beautifully crafted. He introduces an enigmatic storyteller whose tales are both real and magical at the same time. The author examines the subject from all angles, teaching lessons that, in his hands are both ageless and mystical, all in a setting that rocked my boat like a surprise shift of the wind. This is the first true pirate classic since *Treasure Island* itself, but with deeper sands in which to dig, and for a greater treasure. "*Pirate's Passage*" deserves at least the five-star maximum, plus many more.

This book first attracted my attention because of the pirate theme. I was looking for something to read to my son. This book has been great because it is keeping us both very engaged and giving us lots to talk about, tons of new words and concepts for his fertile mind - and mine. If history were this fascinating when I was in school, I would have paid closer attention! I will warn that while fascinating, the straightforward details are fairly graphic - the non-glorious aspects of a battle and the payment schedules for lost limbs are mentioned, for example. While I do not feel the author dwelled on them, he did mention them which I think is important to portraying a more realistic picture. So, I do not read this before bedtime, instead I read it to my son in the mornings while he was waking up (which I have found makes our morning routine much more pleasant all the way around). Also, I do find myself naturally swapping some vocabulary along the way to make it easier for him to read, but I would rather have it that way. It probably would be more appropriate for a slightly older kid, but I am glad we stumbled upon it - what a true treasure! By the way, I very much agree with the second reviewer's suggestions about adding a glossary, ship schematic, and such.

A coming-of-age tale and a history of pirates in one, this story held my interest more than I'd expected. Just who - or what - the mysterious Captain Charles Johnson is is never definitively explained; he certainly knows more than any living man ought to about the golden age of piracy, and his stories have an uncanny way of drawing a boy in. The roguish man helps young Jim do some much-needed growing up, lending his not-strictly-legal assistance to the struggling family inn. Jim's dreams of pirate glory are tempered by Johnson's tales of the reality of a pirate's often-desperate life. Just who, or what, a pirate is becomes a blurry line when examined closely - when the same governments condone and condemn piracy depending on how much of a cut they got, when the hunters prove more bloodthirsty and amoral than the hunted, where is the line to be

drawn, and by whom? It's a testament to Gilkerson's skill that I eagerly read history lessons in the middle of a novel. An enjoyable, somewhat enigmatic tale!

A book for writers and readers! I think I clicked on this out of boredom a year ago because it was cheap or free. I really hope Gilkerson is making a good living off his books, because I'm only a quarter way through this, but I can tell he deserves it. A reader likes to read a book where the author doesn't keep jabbing his talent in the reader's face every sentence. A reader signs on for a story and wants the writer to get out of the way. A writer likes to read a book the same way, but enjoys it when the author shows off a bit of flair without being obvious. I'm enjoying this so much, I couldn't wait to finish it before I could give this guy five stars. He has me roped in with the kid, the mother, and the captain. The descriptions are in vivid 3-D, so I know the entire lay of the land. Slowly, the author is slipping in evil characters in between the characters you like, and the ones you aren't sure about. This is shaping up to be a 1952 version of Treasure Island, but I can't be sure. I do know that the author has made sure that I have found myself in the very setting he is writing about, and that I care about the people in the story he wants me to, and that I hate the people I am supposed to hate. As a reader and a writer, there is no better pleasure than putting yourself in the hands of a writer who has shown you he can be trusted to lead you to the end of a wild and satisfying story. I will now return to this book, and I doubt my enthusiasm will dampen one bit, if not peak just a little bit more.

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