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But Robinson Crusoe is simply a story about an ordinary, capable, recognizable person doing things ordinary readers could imagine themselves doing. In that respect, it's "realistic" in a way its peers were not. In the novel, written in Crusoe's voice as an account of his adventures, Defoe sticks to detailed accounts of how Crusoe survived, such as having Crusoe note the exact latitude of his shipwreck. Everything Crusoe does is humanly possible: Crusoe is an ordinary person or everyman. This is not literally true. Alexander Selkirk, the inspiration for Crusoe would have been familiar to Defoe but the character is largely of Defoe's invention. He describes his characters with so much circumstantial detail that the reader can only conclude that things actually happened in just that way. Statue of Robinson Crusoe at Alexander Selkirk's birthplace of Lower Largo by Thomas Stuart Burnett. Book on Alexander Selkirk. The last and most crucial difference between the two stories is Selkirk is a pirate, looting and raiding coastal cities. Andrew Lambert states, "The economic and dynamic thrust of the book is completely alien to what the buccaneers are doing," Lambert says. "The buccaneers just want to capture some loot and come home and drink it all, and Crusoe isn't doing that at all. He's an economic imperialist. Novelist James Joyce noted that the true symbol of the British Empire is Robinson Crusoe, to whom he ascribed stereotypical and somewhat hostile English racial characteristics: "He is the true prototype of the British colonist. Robinson Crusoe belongs to the adventurous type of novel and some even consider it to be the beginning of that type. The theme is an imaginary autobiography. It is considered to be the story of Alexander Selkirk. He's a Scottish sailor who spent four years on an island and the Chilean government called him Robinson Crusoe. The novel is about the strength of the human spirit in comparison to nature. The theme is the survival of a castaway on a deserted island and his great persistence and struggles to survive. The author gave specific time limits of the novel, and in the plot, we can see the battle between man and nature. Book Summary. Robinson Crusoe was born in 1632 in York as the third son. He didn't have a vocation, so he started to dream of adv