TREASURE ISLAND

Key learning outcomes
Creative thinking  Days of the week
Storytelling  Number recognition

Activity
Create a class story over a week using a pirate treasure map, with the added twist of buried treasure to be found. In Monday’s story time look at a map from the collection of Pirate objects as well as simple maps of islands in children’s atlases. Can children spot that an island is completely surrounded by sea?

Draw a grid on a large piece of display paper and number the squares. Using letters on one axis and numbers on the other means some children may recognize how to give simple coordinates from games like ‘Battleships’. Draw an island outline, making sure that there are enough squares within it for children to choose a square each. Secretly write the coordinates of one of the squares on a piece of paper and seal it in an envelope marked ‘treasure’.

Each day invite a number of children to choose one square each and draw a ‘feature’ in their square. They need to put their name against that square on a list of coordinates because at the end of the story on Friday you will open the envelope and see who has found the treasure.

Children might draw sharp rocks, deep wells, scary caves, smelly swamps. Use the children’s ideas to build the story of the pirate’s week as he or she explores the island they have landed on, day by day.

Historical note: buried treasure was not common as pirates would have sold their loot as quickly as they could.

Resources
Display paper
Long ruler
Drawing materials
Envelope
Children’s atlases

More ideas
Older children can keep the pirate’s daily diary as they explore the island.

Animate the journey using a webcam, with children providing the narrative and soundscapes.

Use the map to develop positional and location vocabulary: should the pirate turn left or right, go north or south?