Robinson Crusoe explores all three of the pillars of education that Marsais laid out in his article: knowledge of the body and health, creating and being a willing pupil, and attention to morality. When Crusoe falls sick, we can see him adjusting his diet from fowl to turtle eggs to recover (123), a health conscious move that shows a certain understanding of the body. The third pillar, morality, is demonstrated all throughout his sickness. He calls upon God profusely to cure him, and he even has a vision of a man descending to make him repent (120). When he is eventually cured, he gives God all of the glory and shows his devotion. While on the island, the only books Crusoe has are Bibles, and this puts the final two pillars to work simultaneously. Crusoe chooses to engage his mind through reading these texts when he could have ignored them. He also reflects at great length upon what he reads which is education in the eyes of Marsais. He does the experiential learning of Locke when he first arrives on the island, but he turns to the books he has to really engage his mind. Finally, he has the chance to impart his knowledge upon the native Friday, and in this teacher-student relationship, we can see more examples of education in the 18th century. This combination is the epitome of education and the principles of the Enlightenment at the time.

From the preface of the novel, we learn right away that this book is intended to teach. Defoe establishes that the story “is told…with a religious Application of Events to the Uses to which wise Men always apply them (viz.) to the Instruction of others by this Example…” (45). Should any of the readers find themselves on a deserted island, they will have Robinson Crusoe’s experiences to guide them through the journey. It is an idea so important that Defoe repeats it at the end of the preface, essentially stating that the novel will be a quick read that will in equal parts be a “Diversion” and an “Instruction” to the reader (45). These will be so great that “he does them a great service in the Publication” (45) of the novel. With this kind of introduction, Defoe explicitly claims that the book is an educational one, and he invites the reader to view it in that light.

It is interesting to note that Robinson Crusoe rejects formal education, a law degree, to go on his adventures. He learns how to work on a ship, how to fish, and how to run his own plantation through observation and practice. Once on his island, he puts his pre-existing knowledge to practice, but he also must learn a great deal about the natural resources around him and how to best use them to survive. In this way, by using his senses, he is really the figure that Locke describes—one who has a tabula rasa, in one regard, and learns through experiences. This learning process is clearly seen when Robinson tries to make bread from the grains he has grown. In desiring bread, he quickly realizes “I neither knew how to grind or make Meal of my Corn, or indeed how to clean it and part it; nor if made into Meal, how to make Bread of it, and if how to make it, yet I knew not how to bake it…” (145-46). He then resolves to “employ all my Study and Hours of Working to accomplish this great Work of Providing my self with Corn and Bread” (146). He lacks a manual for this practice, but he can use trial and error and observation to make his dream a reality. Robinson goes into great detail about the tools he uses and the improvisations he makes on his quest for bread. These pages in particular read as an “instruction” manual, just as Defoe outlined in the preface. In this way, Robinson both shows how his skills as an observer teach him what he needs to know about making the things he wants and shows the reader how to go about some of the processes of settling an isolated island.

The most formal moment of education in the novel, besides when Robinson teaches his parrot, Poll, to speak, is when Robinson begins teaching Friday, the native he saves from a warring tribe. The first thing Robinson teaches Friday is how to speak to him. He gives Friday his name, teaches the native to call him “Master” (220), and the meaning of yes and no. He goes on to teach him to eat goat flesh instead of human flesh. He also teaches him how to various tasks around the island, thereby increasing his labor force and increasing the things he can grow and do. Friday is a quick and able learner, and Robinson goes so far as to call him the “aptest Schollar that ever was” (224).

Crusoe proves himself a worthy ruler in his attention to the education of Friday, according to Master Cater. A good ruler is one who provides “a good education for the children”. Friday, who has not had any formal schooling, can certainly be considered a child in the classroom. Even in a topic like Revolt, one can see the utter importance of education across the board during the Enlightenment. If a ruler did not provide a decent education for his pupils, it was the grounds for a revolt. Robinson’s men loved him, and “were willing to fight by his side and lay down their lives for him” (Master Cater). There was no need to revolt from his sovereignty because he attended to the needs, especially the educational ones, of his people.
Robinson is quick to tell the reader that "I was not wanting to lay a Foundation of religious Knowledge in his Mind" (228), placing Friday’s moral instruction above all the other things he had taught him. This goes directly back to the Encyclopedie—moral education is the most important part of a person’s scholarship. Marsais found that the topic was too big to include in his page, so he encouraged the reader to look at the page set aside for it or to pick up one of the "many good books on this subject". Robinson goes into some length about learning of "Benamuckee" (228) and instructing Friday about Jesus, God, and prayer. He found it easy to teach Friday about God, but "it was not so easie to imprint right Notions in his Mind about the Devil, as it was about the Being of a God" (230). Crusoe’s own knowledge of the Bible is not great enough to combat Friday’s questions about God’s power over the Devil and why the Devil even existed. This too goes back to Marsais’ article—teachers need to be knowledgeable to a high degree to sufficiently do their jobs. Robinson does his best, however, and admits that he had, “more Sincerity than Knowledge” (232) in his lessons. He found that in teaching about these things, he had to read more deeply, and he actually became a “a much better Scholar in the Scripture Knowledge, than I should ever have been in my own private meer Reading” (233). Defoe also works in a key passage about how Robinson’s observations of God’s goodness on the island are what truly prove His existence, and he uses this empirical evidence to further instruct Friday. In addition, Does Crusoe’s inability to believe allow readers to relate to the character even further? explores this idea of proof, citing the Encyclopedie when it states that “we believe allow readers to relate to the character even further? explores this idea of proof, citing the Encyclopedie when it states that ‘we can therefore feel convinced in any given case or on any given subject only if we listen to the voice of our conscience and our reason’”. Crusoe, in his isolated state, has no priest or parents to tell him what to believe—he instead listens to what his mind rationalizes from what he sees on the island. In this way, religion is not entirely based on Belief, but something more concrete. Robinson tries to relate this to Friday, but has a few details to work out before he can be entirely convincing.

Interestingly enough, Marsais found that there was a special relationship between students and teachers that created a great admiration between the two if the teacher was able and the pupil was willing. This certainly seems to be the case with Robinson and Friday, causing Robinson to say, “…I began really to love the Creature; and on his Side, I believe he lov’d me more than it was possible for him ever to love any Thing before” (226). Robinson’s instruction of Friday is vitally important for their relationship, their survival on the island, and the demonstration of an important part of the enlightenment period—the gaining and sharing of knowledge among people of all cultures and stations. As 02: Universal Passions discusses, the relationship between the two is mutually beneficial. Robinson cares for his pupil and teaches him, and Friday in turn reminds Robinson of the importance of companionship (possibly reawakening a Passion for society). They must learn from each other to survive and navigate the rest of their adventures.

Robinson Crusoe is not just a model for education in extreme retrospect—it was seen as such even during the 18th century, especially by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In his essay “Emilius and Sophia; or, a New System of Education”, he finds that this novel is not simply a tool for education, as Defoe stated in his introduction, but THE tool for education. Indeed, he found that Robinson Crusoe "affords a complete treatise on natural education" and will "for a long time, consist (his student’s) whole library" (361). Through this one novel, one can garner a complete education. He saw the value of this novel for all of society as "our guide during our progress to a state of reason" (361). He thought that students could learn how to experience and master the world around them by following Crusoe’s example. He wanted his students to dress as Crusoe did, rule over land as Crusoe did, and most importantly, use their reason and observations to make whatever they needed to survive as Crusoe did.
Rousseau truly thought that in using *Robinson Crusoe* alone as an educational text, teachers could raise perfect pupils and perfect citizens. Their students would be observers and innovators, producing products and knowledge to reflect the world around them and to aid society as a whole. To him, this novel is the epitome of what Marsais hoped for educators—a way to excite their students about learning, reading, and using their knowledge in positive ways. *Robinson Crusoe* can therefore be seen as the epitome of Enlightenment educational principles.