

Peter Pan

J. M. Barrie

Teacher notes: *Peter Pan*

Curriculum references: Years 5–6

Programme of study: Reading comprehension

Children should be taught to:

- maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by:
 - continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks
 - reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
 - making comparisons within and across books
 - preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience
- understand what they read by:
 - drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
- participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
- explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary.

Running the task

- Explain to the children that they are going to read a playscript based on a play and novel called *Peter Pan* by J. M. Barrie. This extract is from the start of the story. Tell them they will be answering questions 1 to 5. Then, in groups, they will reread the play so that they can perform it. Speaking, listening and acting will help the children to engage with the text.
- Allow the children time to read the text. Ask how they can tell this is an extract from a playscript. Discuss the features as a class.
- Ask the class to answer questions 1 to 5.
- Place the children in groups and assign roles. Allow them to reread the script in their groups.

Assessment guidance

Use the list below to identify the content domains that the children are working on in this task.

Typically, children working at the expected standard will:

- accurately and selectively summarise main ideas, events, characters and information in fiction and non-fiction texts **2c**
- make developed inferences drawing on evidence from the text **2d**
- explain and justify inferences, providing evidence from the text to support reasoning **2d**
- make accurate and appropriate comparisons within texts. **2h**

What to expect

- 1 Why do you think Mr Darling says “Be a man, Michael”? Tick one.** (2d)

Most children should be able to answer this question correctly.

- 2 What sort of person do you think Mr Darling is?** (2d)

The majority of children should say that Mr Darling is childish because he refuses to take his medicine and says that it is not fair, he will be sick, etc. However, some children working at greater depth within the expected standard may also point out that he is lying at the start when he says he takes his medicine without a fuss, or that he is hypocritical because he tells Michael to take his medicine but will not do the same.

- 3 How does Wendy see her father? Support your answer with evidence from the text.** (2d)

Children working at the expected standard may say that Wendy is deliberately making her father look silly by fetching his medicine. Children working at greater depth within the expected standard should realise that she does this quite innocently as a way to get Michael to take his medicine because she is “puzzled” when her father makes a fuss. Some children may realise that Wendy is acting more like a parent than her father and when she says “Oh, father!” at the end, she sounds as if she is addressing a child.

- 4 Number the events below from 1 to 5 in the order that they occur in the text.** (2c)

Most children should be able to answer this question by correctly sequencing the events.

- 5 How does Mr Darling’s attitude towards medicine change during the course of the extract?** (2h)

Children working at the expected standard should be able to explain that at the start he is acting bravely until he is faced with his own medicine. Children working at greater depth within the expected standard should be able to clearly explain the change in his attitude.

- 6 Your group is going to perform this script. Your teacher will tell you which part you will be reading. Practise acting it out and then perform it for the class. Think about whether the audience enjoyed it, and whether you think you acted your character well.** (2d)

Observe and listen to the children reading. Note how appropriate their expression is to the part they are playing and to the written script. Assess how well the children can draw inference from the text, so look for use of tone and gesture to convey the meaning. Some children will be nervous, or struggle with the reading. If you feel this is the case, ask them to reread part of the text individually later so that you can assess them more accurately.

- 7 When you have seen all the other groups perform, say which ones you think portrayed the characters best. Did any of them make you change your mind about the characters? Explain your answer.** (2d)

Most children should be able to identify portrayals they think are good without necessarily being able to fully explain why or respond based on their own feelings. Some children may discuss more fully the way characters are shown with reference to the text, what the characters say and the stage directions. There may also be children who are able to compare how characters are portrayed in films and playscripts.

From *Peter Pan* by J. M. Barrie

Scene: The living room

Present: *Michael, Wendy, John, Mr & Mrs Darling, Nana (the dog).
Mr & Mrs Darling are ready to go out for the evening. It's time for Michael's medicine.*

Mr Darling: Be a man, Michael.

Michael: Won't; won't!

Mrs Darling: I will get you some chocolate for afterwards. *(Exit Mrs Darling.)*

Mr Darling: Mother, don't pamper him. Michael, when I was your age I took medicine without a murmur. I said, "Thank you, kind parents, for making me well."

Wendy: That medicine you take, father, is much nastier, isn't it?

Mr Darling: Ever so much nastier, and I would take it now as an example to you, Michael, if I hadn't lost the bottle.

Wendy: I know where it is, father. I'll bring it! *(Exit Wendy.)*

Mr Darling: *(shuddering)* John, it's most beastly stuff. It's that nasty, sticky, sweet kind.

John: It will soon be over, father. *(Wendy enters.)*

Wendy: *(panting)* I have been as quick as I could.

Mr Darling: *(sarcastically)* Wonderful. Michael first.

Michael: *(suspiciously)* Father first.

Mr Darling: I shall be sick, you know.

John: Come on, father.

Mr Darling: Hold your tongue, John.

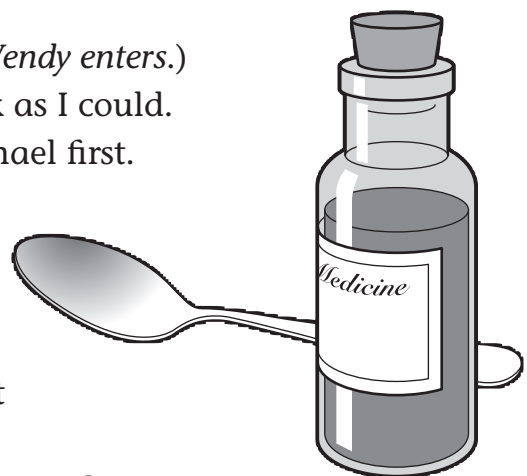
Wendy: *(puzzled)* I thought you took it quite easily, father.

Mr Darling: That is not the point. The point is, that there is more in my glass than in Michael's spoon. And it isn't fair: I would say it though it were with my last breath; it isn't fair.

Michael: *(coldly)* Father, I am waiting.

Wendy: Why not both take it at the same time? Ready? One, two, three. *(Michael takes his medicine, but Mr Darling slips his behind his back. Michael yells.)*

Wendy: Oh, father!



Name:	Class:	Date:
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Read the text, then answer the questions.

1 Why do you think Mr Darling says “*Be a man, Michael*”? Tick **one**.

because Michael is tall, like a man

because he wants Michael to be brave, like a man

because Michael is old enough to be a man

2 What sort of person do you think Mr Darling is?

3 How does Wendy see her father? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

4 Number the events below from 1 to 5 in the order that they occur in the text.

Michael takes his medicine.

Wendy gets father’s medicine.

Mrs Darling offers Michael chocolate.

Mr Darling says he has lost his medicine bottle.

Michael will not take his medicine.

5 How does Mr Darling’s attitude towards medicine change during the course of the extract?

6 Your group is going to perform this script. Your teacher will tell you which part you will be reading. Practise acting it out and then perform it for the class. Think about whether the audience enjoyed it, and whether you think you acted your character well.

7 When you have seen all the other groups perform, say which ones you think portrayed the characters best. Did any of them make you change your mind about the characters? Explain your answer.