

PETER PAN

Chapter 1: PETER BREAKS THROUGH

All children, except one, grow up. They soon know that they will grow up, and the way Wendy knew was this: One day when she was two years old, she was playing in a garden, and she plucked another flower and ran with it to her mother. ~~I suppose s~~She must have looked rather delightful, for Mrs. Darling put her hand to her heart and cried, "Oh, why can't you remain like this for-ever!" This was all that passed between them on the subject, but ~~henceforth~~, Wendy knew that she must grow up. ~~You always know after you are two.~~ Two is the beginning of the end.

Of course, they lived at 14 ~~[their house number on their street]~~, and until Wendy came her mother was the chief ~~one~~. She was a lovely lady, with a romantic mind and such a sweet ~~mocking~~ mouth. ~~Her romantic mind was like the tiny boxes, one within the other, that come from the puzzling East, however many you discover there is always one more; and her sweet mocking mouth had one kiss on it that Wendy could never get, though there it was, perfectly conspicuous in the right hand corner.~~

The way Mr. Darling won her was this: the many gentlemen who had been boys when she was a girl discovered simultaneously that they loved her, and they all ran to her house to propose to her. ~~E~~except Mr. Darling, who took a cab and nipped in first, and so he got her. ~~He got all of her, except the innermost box and the kiss. He never knew about the box, and in time he gave up trying for the kiss. Wendy thought Napoleon could have got it, but I can picture him trying, and then going off in a passion, slamming the door.~~

Mr. Darling used to boast to Wendy that her mother not only loved him but respected him. He was one of those deep ones who know about ~~stocks and shares~~. Of course, no one really knows, but he quite seemed to know, and he often said stocks were up and shares were down in a way that would have made any woman respect him.

~~Mrs. Darling was married in white, and at first she kept the books perfectly, almost gleefully, as if it were a game, not so much as a Brussels sprout was missing; but by and by whole cauliflowers dropped out, and instead of them there were pictures of babies without faces. She drew them when she should have been totting up. They were Mrs. Darling's guesses.~~

Wendy came first, then John, then Michael.

For a week or two after Wendy came it was doubtful whether they would be able to keep her, as she was another ~~mouth to feed~~. Mr. Darling was frightfully proud of ~~her~~, but he was very honourable, and he sat on the edge of Mrs. Darling's bed, holding her hand and calculating expenses, while she looked at him ~~imploringly~~. She wanted to risk

Commented [WLB1]: This is a pretty out dated transition, and your target audience might not understand. Consider changing your word choice.

Commented [WLB2]: Consider naming the street here. The address would come across without having to explain what "14" is.

Commented [WLB3]: Her mother was the chief woman? Please specify.

Commented [WLB4]: "Mocking" sounds like it has a negative connotation, and I don't think that's what you're going for, please change your word choice.

Commented [WLB5]: In both paragraphs about the parents, I feel like we don't need the extensive characterization of the mother and father. Maybe we need a little bit to understand the kids, but this story is about the kids, so leave it that way. The convoluted box metaphor doesn't really help develop the story.

Commented [WLB6]: Consider cutting the bit about stocks and shares. Your target audience (young children) will not care nor understand references to stocks and shares. I feel like they would want to know about the kids and magic ASAP, and this is just delaying the plot.

Commented [WLB7]: This paragraph is unneeded characterization of the parents. I think you could probably condense all of this information to one paragraph and then move forward with Wendy's story, which is what you used to draw the readers in.

Commented [WLB8]: This is a really nice way of showing that the family was poor without explicitly stating it. Nice job!

Commented [WLB9]: Unclear whether this refers to Wendy or Mrs. Darling

Commented [WLB10]: Your audience might not be able to grasp this word. Consider simplifying the language.

it, come what might, but that was not his way; his way was with a pencil and a piece of paper, and if she confused him with suggestions, he had to begin at the beginning again.

“Now don't interrupt,” he would beg of her.

“I have one pound seventeen here, and two and six at the office; I can cut off my coffee at the office, say ten shillings, making two nine and six, with your eighteen and three makes three nine seven, with five naught naught in my check ~~que~~-book makes eight nine seven—who is that moving?—eight nine seven, dot and carry seven—don't speak, my own—and the pound you lent to that man who came to the door—quiet, child—dot and carry child—there, you've done it!—did I say nine nine seven? yes, I said nine nine seven; the question is, can we try it for a ~~year on nine nine seven?~~”

“Of course we can, George,” she cried. But she was prejudiced in Wendy's favour, and he was really the grander character of the two.

“Remember mumps,” he warned her almost threateningly, and off he went again. “Mumps one pound, that is what I have put down, but I daresay it will be more like thirty shillings—don't speak—measles one five, German measles half a guinea, makes two fifteen six—don't waggle your finger—whooping-cough, say fifteen shillings”—and so on it went, and it added up differently each time; but at last Wendy just got through, with mumps reduced to twelve six, and the two kinds of measles treated as one.

There was the same excitement over John, and Michael had even a narrower squeak; but both were kept, and soon, you might have seen the three of them going in a row to Miss Fulsom's Kindergarten school, accompanied by their nurse.

Mrs. Darling loved to have everything just so, and Mr. Darling had a passion for being exactly like his neighbours; so, of course, they had a nurse. As they were poor, owing to the amount of milk the children drank, this nurse was a prim Newfoundland dog, called Nana, who had belonged to no one in particular until the Darlings engaged her. She had always thought children important, however, and the Darlings had become acquainted with her in Kensington Gardens, where she spent most of her spare time peeping into ~~baby carriages~~~~perambulators~~, and was much hated by careless nursemaids, whom she followed to their homes and complained of to their mistresses. She proved to be quite a treasure of a nurse. ~~How thorough she was at bath-time, and up at any moment of the night if one of her charges made the slightest cry. Of course her kennel was in the nursery. She had a genius for knowing when a cough is a thing to have no patience with and when it needs stocking around your throat. She believed to her last day in old-fashioned remedies like rhubarb leaf, and made sounds of contempt over all this new-fangled talk about germs, and so on.~~ It was a lesson in propriety to see her escorting the children to school, walking sedately by their side when they were well behaved, and butting them back into line if they strayed. On John's footer [in England soccer was called football, “footer” for short] days she never once forgot his sweater, and she usually carried an umbrella in her mouth in case of rain. There is a room in the

Commented [WLB11]: I understand that this is a conversation about money, but it is very difficult to understand and follow. Consider breaking it up and using “dollars” to make it more clear

Commented [WLB12]: It might be interesting to make this more of a conversation between the parents, describing what their life would look like if their children were to become sick. It may be easier for the readers to follow as well .

Commented [WLB13]: This could be confusing, especially for children.

basement of Miss Fulsom's school where the nurses wait. They sat on forms, while Nana lay on the floor, but that was the only difference. They affected to ignore her as of an inferior social status to themselves, and she despised their light talk. She resented visits to the nursery from Mrs. Darling's friends, but if they did come, she first whipped off Michael's ~~pinafore overalls~~ and put him into the one with blue braiding, ~~and~~ smoothed out Wendy, and made a dash at John's hair.

No nursery could possibly have been conducted more correctly, and Mr. Darling knew it, yet he sometimes wondered uneasily whether the neighbours talked.

He had his position in the city to consider.

Nana also troubled him in another way. He ~~had sometimes a feeling~~ ~~sometimes had a feeling~~ that she did not admire him. "I know she admires you tremendously, George," Mrs. Darling would assure him, and then she would sign to the children to be ~~speciall~~ ~~especiall~~ nice to father. Lovely dances followed, in which the only other servant, Liza, was sometimes allowed to join. Such a ~~midget~~ she looked in her long skirt and maid's cap, though she had sworn, when engaged, that she would never see ten again. The ~~gaiety of those romps!~~ ~~And gayest of all was Mrs. Darling, who would pirouette so wildly that all you could see of her was the kiss, and then if you had dashed at her you might have got it.~~ There never was a simpler happier family until the coming of Peter Pan.

Mrs. Darling first heard of Peter when she was tidying up her children's minds. It is the nightly custom of every good mother after her children are asleep to rummage in their ~~minds~~ and put things straight for next morning, repacking into their proper places the many articles that have wandered during the day. If you could keep awake (but of course you can't) you would see your own mother doing this, and you would find it very interesting to watch her. It is quite like tidying up drawers. You would see her on her knees, ~~I expect,~~ lingering humorously over some of your contents, wondering where on earth you had picked this thing up, making discoveries sweet and not so sweet, pressing this to her cheek as if it were as nice as a kitten, and hurriedly stowing that out of sight. When you wake in the morning, the naughtiness and evil passions with which you went to bed have been folded up small and placed at the bottom of your mind and on the top, beautifully aired, are spread out your prettier thoughts, ready for you to put on.

I don't know whether you have ever seen ~~a map of a person's mind~~. Doctors sometimes draw maps of other parts of you, and your own map can become intensely interesting, but catch them trying to draw a map of a child's mind, which is not only confused, but keeps going ~~around~~ all the time. There are zigzag lines on it, just like your temperature on a card, and these are probably roads in the island, for the Neverland is always more or less an island, with astonishing splashes of colour here and there, and coral reefs ~~and rakish-looking craft~~ in the offing, and savages and lonely lairs, and gnomes who are mostly tailors, and caves through which a river runs, and princes with six elder brothers, and a hut fast going to decay, and one very small old lady with a

Commented [WLB14]: This language can be offensive, please change.

Commented [WLB15]: This language is a little outdated, please find something a little more modern

Commented [WLB16]: This is a confusing metaphor, and I think there might be an easier way to get the same point across.

Commented [WLB17]: This is a really interesting way of describing a mind, especially a child's. Thinking of what is to come in this story, try building off of this, maybe even mention it earlier.

hooked nose. It would be an easy map if that were all, but there is also first day at school, religion, fathers, the round pond, needle-work, murders, hangings, verbs that take the dative, chocolate pudding day, getting into braces, say ninety-nine, three-pence for pulling out your tooth yourself, and so on, and either these are part of the island or they are another map showing through, and it is all rather confusing, especially as nothing will stand still.

Of course, the Neverlands vary a good deal. John's, for instance, had a lagoon with flamingoes flying over it at which John was shooting, while Michael, who was very small, had a flamingo with lagoons flying over it. John lived in a boat turned upside down on the sands, Michael in a wigwam, Wendy in a house of leaves deftly sewn together. John had no friends, Michael had friends at night, Wendy had a pet wolf forsaken by its parents, but on the whole the Neverlands have a family resemblance, and if they stood still in a row you could say of them that they have each other's nose, and so forth. On these magic shores children at play are for-ever beaching their coracles [simple boat]. We too have been there; we can still hear the sound of the surf, though we shall land no more.

Of all delectable islands the Neverland is the snuggest and most compact, not large and sprawly, you know, with tedious distances between one adventure and another, but nicely crammed. When you play at it by day with the chairs and table-cloth, it is not in the least alarming, but in the two minutes before you go to sleep it becomes very real. That is why there are night-lights.

Occasionally in her travels through her children's minds Mrs. Darling found things she could not understand, and of these quite the most perplexing was the word Peter. She knew of no Peter, and yet he was here and there in John and Michael's minds, while Wendy's began to be scrawled all over with him. The name stood out in bolder letters than any of the other words, and as Mrs. Darling gazed, she felt that it had an oddly cocky appearance.

"Yes, he is rather cocky," Wendy admitted with regret. Her mother had been questioning her.

"But who is he, my pet?"

"He is Peter Pan, you know, mother."

At first Mrs. Darling did not know, but after thinking back into her childhood she just remembered a Peter Pan who was said to live with the fairies. There were odd stories about him, as that when children died, he went part of the way with them, so that they should not be frightened. She had believed in him at the time, but now that she was married and full of sense, she quite doubted whether there was any such person.

"Besides," she said to Wendy, "he would be grown up by this time."

Commented [WLB18]: This word can also be kind of outdated/degrading, consider changing it to something more common.

Author: James Matthew Barrie
Editor: Leah Wright
Date: 4/10/19
Title: Peter Pan
Genre: Children's Fiction

Dear Mr. Barrie,

First off, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to edit your manuscript, *Peter Pan*. I have a feeling there is something really special here, and I'm really looking forward to working with you. Communication and transparency are key in this process as we move forward, and I hope that these suggestions find you well. I feel that we can definitely work through any other problems that we may find along the way.

I have organized this memo into a couple different subsections. In these subsections, I will elaborate on some of the major issues I saw at hand. All of these were made keeping your target audience, young children ages 6-12, in mind. On the other hand, I only edited the first 1500 words or so, but I read the rest of the manuscript. Even though many of my edits only concern the first 1500 words, I will reference later parts of the manuscript as well. Without further ado, let's get started.

Language

To begin, some of the language in this piece was a little outdated. This is understandable, given that the book was written over 100 years ago. For a couple of the dated words I came across, I utilized a thesaurus to help find more modern words to replace them. You can find many online thesauruses that are very easy to use, but *Roget's Super Thesaurus* is also a great

hard-copy resource that I've enjoyed using. It may be beneficial for you to get your hands on one of these, for it has really helped me with editing.

I marked some of the very obvious places in the text where the language became a little complex: henceforth, imploringly, perambulators, etc. These are examples of language that you as an adult writer may be familiar with, but we have to remember that *Peter Pan* is meant for young children to read or to be read to. They might not understand the big words, and it will just make the story more complex for them. Instead, think of creating big ideas with little language.

Again, a wonderful resource to that I have been using to learn a little more about the rules of grammar in modern language is *Grammar: A Pocket Guide* by Susan Behrens. It's short and simple, great at explaining the rules of adverbs, clauses, prepositions, and really all things grammar. I have used it to double check my suggestions to your work, and I think it could really help you learn more about the way language has changed since this story was originally written, and we can avoid these language issues in the future.

Metaphor

Next, I would like to evaluate your use of metaphor. There are a couple of times that I as an editor become confused, so I can't imagine what it would be like for a child to come across one of the complex metaphors you have in the first 1000 words. First there is the one at the very beginning when you are characterizing Mrs. Darling, and you refer to her mind as a set of boxes. This is an interesting concept, but it seems that the more it is elaborated on in the text, the more confusing it gets. You attempt to connect "a sweet, mocking mouth" and a "kiss" that was in the "right-hand corner." I feel that the boxes and the sweet mouth/kiss are so far apart from each other that stretching them to be similar enough for metaphorical connection only makes it more

complex. At another point in the manuscript, you have a very nice metaphor where you connect the minds of children to maps. This is an intriguing and interesting comparison! But as far as the box/kiss metaphor, please consider cutting parts to make it simpler, or rewriting the passage.

Perspective

Overall, your perspective was consistent throughout. I think because of the amount of characters, it's a good idea to utilize third person. There are a couple instances where you write with first person "I," and this starts to get confusing. In the first paragraph, you write "I suppose she must have looked rather delightful..." and I think you can get the same point across if you eliminated "I suppose" and simply started the sentence "She looked rather delightful..." This way, you can avoid the entire trickiness of switching perspectives, and it gives your audience a much simpler way of reading or listening to the story. This happens a couple more times in the text, so please read through and eliminate the first person.

Characters and Characterization

Right off the bat, you introduce many characters into this story. First, we have Wendy, who I assume to be the main character. Right afterwards, we are introduced to an extensive characterization of Wendy's parents, then it is mentioned that Wendy has two brothers, then we meet the nanny, and then there is more detail about the parents.

At this point, it seems like Wendy's original uniqueness and storyline is lost within the extensive and unnecessary detail about the adults in this story. It seems that this is a story about

children, imagination, and childhood at the core, so why are we spending so much time elaborating on stocks, shares, and potential diseases?

I understand that a small characterization of the parents, brothers, and nanny need to be told in order to frame and understand Wendy's life, but this can be consolidated into a couple paragraphs, and not a couple pages. Wendy is barely characterized at all in these first pages, and she is the main character of the story. I suggested a few details to cut within the manuscript but please read over and decide what is really important.

Pace

Going off of the elaborate characterization of secondary characters, I believe it also drastically slows down the pace of the story.

The readers, presumably young children, could get so lost in elusive metaphor and characterization that they may lose track of the story. The story is titled *Peter Pan*, and the chapter "Peter Breaks In," yet, Peter Pan isn't even mentioned in the first thousand words. Your readers will want the magic to start right away, especially after the incredible and perplexing first line: "All children, except one, grow up." This line immediately hooks the reader in, and gets them thinking about what the story will entail – you don't want to lose that spark of interest, especially in children.

It might be a good idea to get right into the heart of the story, right off the bat. Take us straight to the night that Peter comes through the window and uncover all the traits of the secondary characters as the story moves forward. This would really keep your readers attention, and not let them put the book down.

Setting

Lastly, I would like to talk about setting, or lack thereof. You mention very briefly that the family “lived at 14,” but the readers don’t have very much else to grasp onto in regard to setting. I want to know what the house looked like, where in the world this family is, what time of year it was. I feel like this story could really benefit from concrete details really working to ground the tale. There is elaboration on what each of the kids’ “Neverlands” look like, but we don’t know what their reality looks like, so it’s difficult to compare. It would make the story much more accessible if your young readers had something to hold onto and picture in their heads.

All in all, this is a really great story. While these may seem like huge organizational changes, I think with a little tweaking and rearranging, this story could easily become a modern-day favorite again. As for next steps, please take these changes into account and send me your second round of edits as soon as you can. Thank you again for allowing me to work on this with you, and I look forward to us working together to make *Peter Pan* the best it can be.

Sincerely,

Leah Wright