

## Year 7 English Task 3

### Spoken Language

What do you know about the story of Peter Pan? Discuss with a trusted partner.

Would you like to remain a child forever? Why? Why not? Consider the points below:

Yes – no pressures, such as work or saving money; fun with friends; all your life ahead of you etc.

No – freedom of choice as an adult; new experiences as you get older; chance to start a family etc.

### Reading

Peter Pan by J M Barrie

*The novel Peter Pan began as a play in 1904, and was made into a novel in 1911. It is the story of three English children: Wendy, John and Michael Darling. They meet the amazing Peter Pan, a boy who lives in magical Neverland. In this passage, the reader is introduced to Nana, the Darling children's nurse and nanny. As you read the extract, make notes about your first impressions of the Darling family.*

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 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 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 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 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 especially 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.

#### Peter Pan: Text-focused questions

1. What is unusual about the Darlings' nanny?
2. Nana is described as 'prim'. What does this word mean? Write a definition.
3. Find three more references in the text which present Nana in a similar manner to 'prim'.
4. Barrie writes that Nana '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.' How do the words 'engaged' and 'acquainted' help to make Nana seem a more appropriate nanny?
5. Mr. Darling is repeatedly shown to be insecure and anxious over his social position. Find five pieces of evidence from the text which suggest this.
6. Barrie writes 'There is a room in the basement of Miss Fulsom's school where the nurses wait.' What tense is this written in, and how is this different from the rest of the extract? How does this help to make the story seem more realistic?
7. What does the final sentence imply about the effect of Peter Pan's arrival upon the Darling family?

#### Writing



Describe the image above using CAMPERS devices (colour, adjectives, metaphors, personification, emotive language, range of verbs, similes and senses).