

# Activity Notes

## Introduction

Peter Pan is 100 years old this year. In this feature we look at two new movies and the story of how the character was created.

## What to Do

1. Read the story of how Peter Pan was created.
2. Look at the 10 things you should know about Peter Pan.

## Study Section (page 33)

- ▶ Match people and places related to Peter Pan
- ▶ Test what you know about Peter Pan.

## Answer Key (page 35)



### Online

- ▶ [www.peterpanmovie.net](http://www.peterpanmovie.net)
- ▶ [www.miramax.com/jmbarries\\_neverland](http://www.miramax.com/jmbarries_neverland)

## Glossary

All the words and phrases below appear in the magazine feature. These words are marked with an asterisk (\*).

**grow up** (v) become an adult; **mark** (v) celebrate; **event** (n) something that happens, especially something important; **tube** (n) London underground; **successful** (adj) well known; **according to** (exp) expression that introduces what someone has said or thinks; **awfully** (adv) very; **play** (n) work presented by actors in a theatre, **perform** (v) present in public; **take on** (exp) accept the responsibilities of; **strike** (v) *past=*struck arrive and make a strong impact; **drown** (v) die underwater; **on average** (exp) normally; **royalties** (n) money that is paid to the writer of a play every time it is in a theatre; **arrangement** (n) particular way to organise a situation; **expire** (v) finish; **copyright law** (n) law that protects the work of authors, composers and artists against illegal copying; **sink** (v) go underwater in an accident; **refuse** (n) say no to; **lifeboat** (n) small boat used to save the passengers of a ship when it goes underwater; **unbearable** (adj) so bad you can't watch it; **a lecture on tax-free investments** (exp) a talk about complicated financial operations; **apart from** (exp) in addition to; **twisted** (adj) cruel; **scary** (adj) frightening; **warped** (adj) that have become bad, immoral.

# The Lost Boys

**Peter Pan, the boy who never grew up\*, is 100 years old this year! Two movies are marking\* the event\*. In *Peter Pan*, which was released earlier this year, director P. J. Hogan created a live-action version of the story, while *Finding Neverland*, starring Johnny Depp, tells the story of how the character was created.**



## The Story of the Boy Who Never Grew Up

It's April 5, 1960, 63-year-old publisher named Peter Llewellyn Davies crosses London's Sloane Square, walks into the tube\* station, and throws himself under a train. The next day the newspaper headlines read: "Peter Pan Killed by London Subway Train;" "Peter Pan Commits Suicide;" "The Boy Who Never Grew Up Is Dead." This was to be the last in a series of tragedies that surrounded the story of Peter Pan.

James Matthew Barrie was born in Scotland on May 9, 1860. When he was a young boy, his 14-year-old brother, David, was killed in an ice skating accident. Many years later, Barrie realised that, by dying so young, his brother would remain a boy forever in the minds of all those who had known him.

By 1897, Barrie had become a successful\* writer, both in Britain and the United States, and was married to actress Mary Ansell. They never had any children of their own, but Barrie had many friends who were children. The Barries' London home was very close to Kensington Gardens, a large park, and it was here that he first met the Llewellyn Davies boys—George, Jack and Peter. He described their mother as "the most beautiful creature I had ever seen" and soon he was a frequent visitor to their house, where he would tell the boys stories.

One of these stories was about the youngest boy, Peter, who, according to\* Barrie, would one day fly away to Kensington Gardens so that he might be a boy

## ! Ten Things You Should Know about Peter Pan

*Peter Pan* was first performed on December 27, 1904. It was performed every year after that until its run was interrupted by war in 1939–1940. It then continued until 1969. The play is usually performed at Christmastime, and on average\* there are 25 productions of *Peter Pan* in Britain at Christmas.

Author J. M. Barrie said that he wanted the royalties\* from productions of *Peter Pan* to go to the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children in London. When this arrangement\* legally expired\* in 1988, the British parliament decided to change the copyright law\* so that the hospital would continue receiving money.

In the theatre, the part of Peter Pan is traditionally played by a woman. This is because an old law said that child actors could not work after nine o'clock at night. The first actress to play the part was Nina Boucicault. In the new movie version, the part is played by a boy, Jeremy Sumpter.

Barrie erected a statue of Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens. He did it in the middle of the night so that people would think it had appeared by magic. The statue was based on the photographs Barrie had taken of Michael Llewelyn Davies.

In 1915, when the ship *Lusitania* was sinking\*, *Peter Pan*'s original American producer, Charles Frohman, heroically refused\* a place on a lifeboat\* and said, "Why fear death? It is the greatest adventure in life."

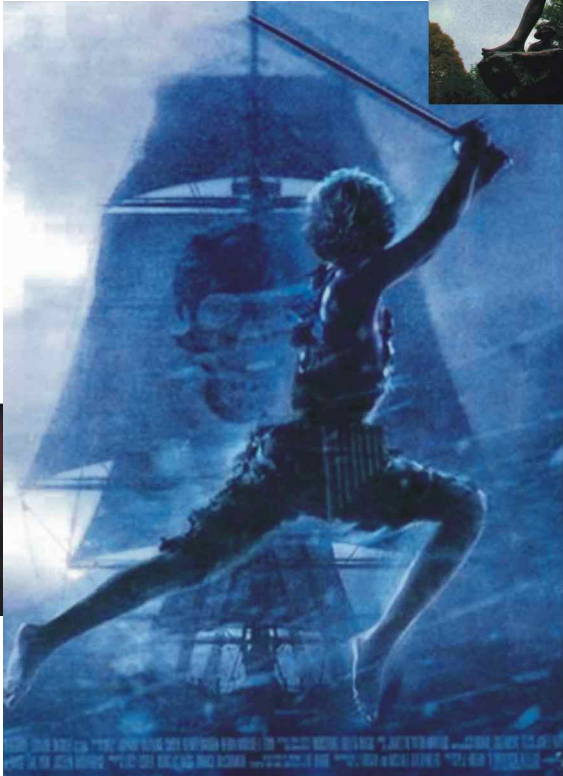
In 1920, Barrie wrote a movie version for Paramount. Charlie Chaplin was going to play the part of Peter. A silent film was made in 1924, but not with Chaplin. The Disney animated movie was made in 1953.

Movie director Steven Spielberg created his own version of the story in the movie *Hook*. Critics said the movie was "unbearable\*" and "as magical for kids as a lecture on tax-free investments.\*" Spielberg once said, "I've always been Peter Pan. That's why I wanted to do this movie."

Another Peter Pan fan is one-time "king of pop", Michael Jackson. Apart from\* wanting to play the part in a movie, he called his home the Neverland Ranch. The ranch was in the news in 2003 when it was raided by police shortly before Jackson's arrest.

In *Finding Neverland*, Johnny Depp plays the part of the author J. M. Barrie. The movie, which is released this autumn, tells the story of the events that led to Barrie's writing the story.

The recent live-action *Peter Pan* movie was directed by P. J. Hogan and set in London in 1904. One longtime Peter Pan tradition is to have one actor play two important roles: that of evil pirate Captain Hook and that of Mr Darling, the children's father. Jason Isaacs, who plays both parts in the movie, says, "The book is a really great, twisted\*, dark tale where childhood is a terrifying place and growing up is an even scarier\* place, and it's full of death and destruction and warped\* characters."



forever. When children died, Peter would take them on a journey to a place called Never Never Land. When George heard the story, he said that "dying must be an awfully\* big adventure!" Barrie wrote the words down. They would later become the most famous words spoken in *Peter Pan*.

Barrie wrote the story several times before he decided to turn it into a play\*. The play's producer thought it would be a disaster, but the story of "the boy who never grew up" was an instant success when it was first performed\* at the Duke of York's Theatre in London in 1904.

J. M. Barrie's relationship with the Llewellyn Davies family continued. Two more boys were born into the family, Michael and Nico. When the boys' father and mother both died of cancer, Barrie took on\* the role of the boys' father. But soon tragedy struck\* again. In March 1915, George was killed, a victim of the First World War. In May 1921, a few weeks before his 21st birthday, Michael, who could not swim, drowned\* in the river Thames. Barrie later referred to him as the boy "that will never be old."