



ARTSCLUB
ALIVE ON THREE STAGES

In association with



TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

PETER PAN GOES WRONG

By

Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer and
Henry Shields

Based on *Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie

2022.23 Season

Stanley Industrial Stage

September 8th - October 16th, 2022

The show is generously sponsored by:



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PRE ATTENDANCE RESOURCES



IN WHICH WILL BE DETAILED RESOURCES AND
REFERENCES THAT MAY BE HELPFUL PRIOR TO
ATTENDING THE SHOW.

Welcome

This guide was created for teachers and students. It contains an overview of the play's story as well as informative resources and activities for teachers and students. The guide aims to provide background knowledge and critical perspectives on the play that will yield fruitful discussion and foster an understanding and appreciation of theatre arts.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions for the guide, please contact our

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"Second star to the right, and straight on 'til morning."

About The Arts Club Theatre Company



The Arts Club of Vancouver was founded in 1958 as a private club for artists, musicians, and actors. It became the Arts Club Theatre in 1964 when the company opened its first stage in a converted gospel hall at Seymour and Davie Streets.

Now in its 59th season of producing professional live theatre in Vancouver, the Arts Club Theatre Company is a non-profit charitable organization that operates three theatres: the Granville Island Stage, the Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage, and the Newmont Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre. Its popular productions range from musicals and contemporary comedies to new works and classics.

Learn more about the Arts Club Theatre Company at artsclub.com

About The Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage

The legendary Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage is a newly renovated art deco theatre that originally opened in 1931 as a cinema and Vaudeville House. Now beautifully updated, this 620-seat theatre has been home to musicals such as *My Fair Lady*, *Swing*, and *Sweeney Todd*, revitalized classics such as *Hamlet*, and comedies ranging from *Easy Money* to *Art*. The restoration of the venue received a 1999 City of Vancouver Heritage Award.





LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After viewing *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* and working through the following activities, students will:

- Engage with, and consider critically, adaptations of classic works.
- Experiment with the technical elements of a theatre space, and integrate those elements within creative work.
- Improvise and take creative risks.

BC CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

DRAMA 9

- The roles of performers and audiences in a variety of contexts.
- Develop and refine ideas and technical skills to improve the quality of performance pieces.

DRAMA 10-12

- Reflect on dramatic works and make connections with personal experiences.
- The role of the performer, audience, and venue.
- Strategies and techniques to support creative processes.
- Describe, analyze, and evaluate ways in which props, technologies, and environments are used in drama, using discipline-specific language.
- Health and safety protocols and procedures.

ENGLISH

- Recognize and appreciate how different forms, formats, structures, and features of texts enhance and shape meaning and impact
- Think critically, creatively, and reflectively to explore ideas within, between, and beyond texts
- Express and support an opinion with evidence
- Transform ideas and information to create original texts.

Synopsis

in which the plot of the

J.M. Barrie

play is summarized ...

Though not necessary to enjoy the comedy and chaos of Peter Pan Goes Wrong, a greater engagement to the adaptation might be made with an understanding of the original play that the actors of The Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society are attempting to perform...

J.M. Barrie's play, "Peter Pan, or, The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up", begins in the nursery of the Darling household in London.

Wendy, John, and Michael are going to bed, under the watchful eye of their "nursemaid", Nana... who also happens to be a dog. After their parents, George and Mary, leave for an evening out, the children are surprised by the arrival of Peter Pan and the fairy Tinker Bell.

Peter has come to retrieve his shadow, which he had previously lost there. While attempting to reattach the shadow using soap, Wendy approaches and provides Peter assistance in his efforts. Peter reveals that he lives in Neverland as captain of the Lost Boys (all of whom happen to be children that fell out of their baby carriages when their nurses were looking the other way).

Invited by Peter to come to Neverland to tell stories to the Lost Boys, Wendy and her brothers fly with Peter over London and into the night sky.

Neverland is populated by villainous pirates led by Peter's sworn enemy, Captain Hook; a crocodile that had been fed Hook's arm by Peter Pan and who wishes to eat the rest of him; and Tiger Lily, a young Indigenous lady, who is in competition with Wendy, and the jealous Tinker Bell, for Peter's affection.

Magical adventures take place and, at length, the Darling children decide to return home, taking the Lost Boys with them. Unfortunately, they are captured by the pirates. In a thrilling climactic battle, Peter Pan rescues everyone, and they do away with the pirates, including Hook. At last, the children return to London, leaving Peter Pan to his perpetual boyhood.

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR PETER PAN GOES WRONG SYNOPSIS...

See page 18 for
further resources and
links re: Barrie's
original works.

Synopsis of Peter Pan, or, The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up adapted from:
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Peter-Pan-play-by-Barrie>

SYNOPSIS


PETER PAN GOES WRONG

In Peter Pan Goes Wrong, The Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society makes a valiant, albeit doomed, effort to stage J.M. Barrie's classic play as their annual Christmas production. Hoping to outshine some of their past theatrical holiday offerings (thanks, in large part, to an increased budget), the directors and performers try their best to honour Barrie's beloved text... Unfortunately, interpersonal disputes, underwhelming artistic ability levels, and technical malfunctions, continually manage to derail the proceedings.

Actors crash through the scenery, while they forget every line they have rehearsed (if those lines were ever memorized in the first place). Performers try, in vain, to portray a huge cast of characters, with very little time to ensure that costumes can be properly changed. Sets tumble, Tinkerbell causes an electrical blackout, and a Shadow/Stagehand narrowly avoids pyrotechnic calamity. Despite it all, bad luck, bad timing, and bad acting, the artists persevere to the last, after all ...
the show must go on !!



About the Playwrights



James Barrie

(J.M. Barrie's Signature)



Sir James Matthew Barrie (J.M. Barrie) | May 9, 1860 - June 19, 1937

Born and educated in Scotland, Barrie moved to London as an adult and wrote a number of successful novels and plays. Barrie was the ninth of ten children, born to a modest family. The children were all well educated and their parent's hoped for them to have professional careers.

James was known for his storytelling abilities from a very young age. At the age of six, his older brother David (just shy of his 14th birthday) was killed in an ice-skating accident, devastating the family. Young James would try to comfort his mother, even wearing his brother's clothes. According to Barrie's biographical account of his mother (Margaret Ogilvy), she found comfort in the idea that David would remain young forever, instead of growing up and leaving home.

Barrie found success and fame through a series of novels that were released in the late nineteenth century and then turned his attention to theatre. "Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up" had its first stage performance on December 27, 1904. The play contrasts the societal constraints of late Victorian/Edwardian middle-class domestic reality, with Neverland, a world where morality is ambivalent.

The contemporary playwright, George Bernard Shaw, described the play as "ostensibly a holiday entertainment for children, but really a play for grown-up people", which suggested a tendency of Barrie's work to integrate his beliefs towards societal concerns of the day into the fictional worlds he created.

In 1911, the play was adapted into the novel "Peter and Wendy".

In 1929, the copyright on all Peter Pan works was signed over to the Great Ormond Street Hospital, the leading children's hospital in London.

Barrie died of pneumonia on June 19, 1937 at the age of 77.

About the Playwrights



Henry Lewis

Henry is an Olivier Award-winning writer, actor and producer and is the artistic director of Mischief Theatre. Henry's work has been produced in over 40 countries.

A co-founder of Mischief Theatre, Henry has been nominated for multiple Olivier Awards and What's On Stage Awards - two prestigious award bodies in the UK.

In addition to countless other projects, he helped to write and create the "Goes Wrong" series of plays, which have been performed on stages around the world.

Outside of Mischief Henry produced and performed in the critically acclaimed West End revival of Philip Ridley's *Mercury Fur* and produced the UK premiere of Tracy Letts' *Superior Donuts*.

Jonathan Sayer

Jonathan is an Olivier award-winning writer and a director of all Mischief Theatre companies working as a writer, actor and producer. He is a graduate of LAMDA (The London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art).

Another co-founder of Mischief Theatre, Jonathan has been nominated for multiple Olivier Awards and What's On Stage Awards - two prestigious award bodies in the UK.

In addition to countless other projects, he (also) helped to write and create the "Goes Wrong" series of plays, which have been performed on stages around the world.

Jonathan teaches improvisation and has taught at LAMDA, Mountview and Cambridge School of Visual and Performing Arts (CSVPA).



Henry Shields

Henry is an Olivier award-winning writer and has been a member of Mischief Theatre since 2009.

The final co-founder of Mischief Theatre, Henry has been nominated for multiple Olivier Awards and What's On Stage Awards - two prestigious award bodies in the UK.

In addition to countless other projects, he (too) helped to write and create the "Goes Wrong" series of plays, which have been performed on stages around the world.

He initially studied nursing at university but dropped out after a year and auditioned for drama school, gaining a place at LAMDA. It was while there that he met the collaborators with whom he would go on to form Mischief Theatre company.



About Mischief

Mischief Theatre is a British theatre company specializing in comedy. The company was **founded in 2008 by a group of students from The London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art** in West London. Since its inception the company has performed scripted and improvised comedy in the West End, across the UK, and in Europe and Asia. **The company is led by Artistic Director, Henry Lewis, and Company Director, Jonathan Sayer.**

Mischief Theatre performed **their first show *Let's See What Happens* on Tuesday 15 July 2008** at The Questors Studio Theatre in Ealing. *Let's See What Happens* ran at The Questors Theatre for a week before it moved to The Edinburgh Festival the following month. Since then, **Mischief Theatre** has **produced three more** of its own **improvised shows**: *Lights! Camera! Improvise!*, *Late Night Impro Fight*, *Improvaganza*, and **scripted shows including**: *The Murder Before Christmas*, *Magic Goes Wrong* and *The Buffoons*. **The Mischief Theatre Company** was formerly known as The Scat Pack.

OTHER WORKS BY MISCHIEF THEATRE:

- *The Play That Goes Wrong*
- *Magic Goes Wrong*
- *REPLAY: Mischief Movie Night*
- *The Goes Wrong Show*
- *12*
- *Groan Ups*
- *The Comedy About a Bank Robbery*
- *A Christmas Carol Goes Wrong*
- *Mischief Makers Podcast*

See **Page 18** for some links to info re: other works by Mischief Theatre

POST ATTENDANCE RESOURCES



IN WHICH WILL BE DETAILED RESOURCES AND
REFERENCES THAT MAY BE HELPFUL AFTER
ATTENDING THE SHOW.

Character List

(Dramatis Personae)



Peter Pan Goes Wrong is a play-within-a-play, so there are two sets of characters; the characters of the 'Actors of the Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society', and the characters of Peter Pan.

♣ Actors of the Cornley Polytechnic Drama Society ♣

♣ **CHRIS (plays GEORGE DARLING and CAPTAIN HOOK)**

The uptight director of the Society has cast himself in the show's most coveted role. Rigid, high-status clown. Deeply committed to his art and everything going smoothly – his pain is evident when something goes wrong and every time someone laughs the pain becomes worse. He has utter disdain for the audience and takes his frustration out on them and the rest of the cast.

♣ **ROBERT GROVE (plays NANA and STARKEY)**

Robert likes to think he is a leading man, although he may not entirely resemble one. He truly believes that he can act his way out of every predicament. Committed to the play 100%. This is not a parody of bad acting, it's just that Robert is unaware of those around him. Single-minded and bombastic. Auguste clown.

♣ **DENNIS TYDE (plays JOHN DARLING and MR SMEE)**

Wretched, low status and terrified of being in a play. The sole reason he joined the Society was to make friends but this has backfired somewhat. Not a good actor at all but imbues everything with a painful truth. Naïve clown.

♣ **TREVOR WATSON (the STAGE MANAGER of the play)**

The Society's stage manager. Doesn't like actors, and certainly doesn't want to be one.

♣ **JONATHAN HARRIS (plays PETER PAN)**

The handsome 'hero' of the play. Jonathan joined the Society for a laugh.

♣ **MAX BENNETT (plays MICHAEL DARLING and THE CROCODILE)**

Only cast because his uncle put up the money. Devoid of any theatrical talent but longs for the spotlight. Earnest, sincere and sweet, audience connection is vital for this role. Naïve honest clown.

♣ **ANNIE TWILLOIL (plays MARY DARLING, LISA, TIGER LILY, and TINKER BELL)**

After an unexpected taste of the spotlight, Annie is deeply committed to each of her many roles but finds herself biting off more than she can chew.

♣ **SANDRA WILKINSON (plays WENDY DARLING)**

Ambitious, flirtatious with a huge ego. Believing herself the quintessential leading lady, she tries to steal the scene at every turn which leads her to constantly overact.

♣ **LUCY GROVE (plays TOOTLES)**

Robert's niece in the company. Timid, naïve and vulnerable clown. She suffers from stage fright and is terrified by the whole experience of performing, however, finds her voice and confidence at the end.

♣ **FRANCIS BEAUMONT (plays NARRATOR and CECCO)**

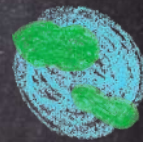
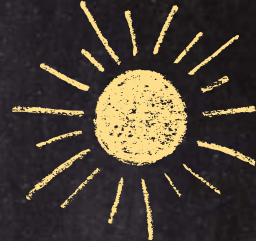
A robust professional who, despite his best efforts, fruitlessly tries to keep the production together.

This one



DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS



PRE-SHOW

J.M. Barrie wrote the play "Peter Pan, or, The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up" in 1904. There are animated adaptations, spin-off novel series, and television shows... Tinkerbell is on the side of lunchboxes around the world, but...

- 1 Are you familiar with the original story of Peter Pan?
- 2 What are the core plot points and themes of Peter Pan?

POST-SHOW

Like so many fiction and non-fiction works from that era, there are aspects of J.M. Barrie's play (and eventual book) that would not be considered inclusive today...

- 3 What similarities or differences did you notice in the adaptation, "Peter Pan Goes Wrong"?
- 4 If J.M. Barrie wrote Peter Pan today, what sorts of make-believe characters and adventures would the story contain?

"Peter Pan Goes Wrong" is a play that requires huge technical precision: Lights flash and fall; actors crash through (and get stuck inside) the set; voices on loudspeakers interrupt the action. Think about a moment where a technical element was used, or a stunt performed...

- 5 How do you think the artists created that moment?

And, lastly, one could argue that this play's core goal was to make you laugh...

- 6 Did you find this play funny?
- 7 What moment(s) made you laugh?

Warm-Up Activity

If you're a Drama Teacher ... you have probably played a version of this at some point ...
great for all occasions ... but, especially, Pirate-based occasions!!

Pirate Ship

Number of players: 5+
(depending on the space ... ∞)

1. The instructor will be the Captain OR select one player to be the captain. The captain stands at the front of the designated play space.
2. All other players line up single file, facing the captain.
3. Introduce the various commands and actions to be used in the game (see below).
4. When ready for play to commence, the captain calls out a command. The players do the action associated with the command.
5. Play continues with the captain calling and the 'crew' responding. The faster the actions are called and performed, the trickier (and funnier) the game becomes.

Basic commands:

- Portside: run to the left.
- Starboard: run to the right.
- Stern: run to the back.
- Scrub the deck: crouch down and make a scrubbing motion with your hands.
- Hit the deck: lay on your stomach.
- Clear the deck: everyone must have their feet off the floor.
- Up periscope!: lie on your back with one leg raised straight in the air. Twist the raised foot as if a scanning periscope.
- Captain's coming: stand to attention and salute your Captain.
- Climb the rigging: pretend to climb a rope.



Partner commands:

- Love Boat: players pair up and dance together
- Abandon ship!: players must pair up, sit face to face and pretend to row a lifeboat
- Crow's nest: players pair up and the lightest player rides on their partner's back (piggyback)

Extension:

- If you wish to add a competitive element to the game, players that perform the wrong action are "thrown overboard" (removed from the game) and the last player standing becomes the new Captain.
- Alternatively, players who are eliminated could perform ten jumping jacks before rejoining the game.

ACTIVITY #1

Part I

- In **small groups (4 - 5)**, students will be given a **familiar narrative** from their instructor (e.g. **a classic fairy tale or piece of children's literature**).
- Students will create a **2-minute adaptation of their assigned story** to perform for the class.
- The instructor will **provide each group with a "Something Goes Wrong!" prompt** to incorporate into their scene (see below).
- These prompts should **take effect at roughly the one-minute mark** of each scene (e.g. at the one-minute mark, one of the characters suddenly faints).
- **For beginner levels**, the prompt can be given before they present and can be integrated as students devise and rehearse.
- **More advanced levels** can be given the prompt at the one-minute mark of their performance, meaning **they must improvise** based upon the new information provided by the prompt.

"Something Goes Wrong!" Prompt Suggestions:

- A character from a different story has arrived.
- Two characters have fallen madly in love.
- There is a mysterious ticking sound.
- A character has suddenly dropped dead.
- A natural disaster occurs (Earthquake, volcano eruption, hurricane winds, etc.).
- One of the characters is living with narcolepsy (and falls asleep).
- The characters suddenly realize the audience is full of bears and they must create a plan to escape (wolves, witches, etc... whatever the core nemesis of the main characters happens to be).
- The "writer" of the story steps in to comment on the action.
- Time jump to fifty years in the character's future.

ACTIVITY #1

Part II

This part of the activity can either be **added to Part I** (see previous page) or it **can be done as a separate activity**. If students are starting here... See Part I, but provide a **"Something Goes Wrong... Technically!"** prompt instead of the Part I prompts.

If Students did Part I...

- Using the **same scenes** that were rehearsed in Part I, students should now begin to **integrate technical elements into their pieces**.
- Depending on the facilities and technologies available, students should consider integrating **sound cues, light cues, projection cues, a set transition, etc.**
- It is suggested that **two groups work together... taking turns providing technical assistance** for the performances.
- **Integration of the prompts from Part I is optional...** i.e. the scenes can revert to their original (pre-prompt) state if that is preferable.
- **Whichever group is running tech** should be given a **"Something Goes Wrong... Technically!" prompt** prior to the performance (or during the devising process for Beginner Levels). Some of these prompts can also be given to performers... but, should be kept secret.

"Something Goes Wrong... Technically!" Prompts:

- A sound cue is played at the wrong time.
- An incorrect, totally wild, sound cue plays instead of the planned cue.
- An incorrect lighting cue (if you have a follow spot... PERFECT!)
- An unexpected blackout.
- A stagehand enters and places an incorrect set piece (or pieces).
- A stagehand gets stuck on/in a set piece.
- Someone enters wearing the wrong costume.
- Someone enters wearing their costume backwards.

ACTIVITY #2

THE CRITICAL THEATREGOER

Depending on the grade level, preference of the instructor, and content of the course, students will write a review of (or reflection on) the play based on one of the following prompts:

I. COMPOSE A PIECE OF CRITICAL WRITING

Your review should include the following...

- A short synopsis of the play - the basic details of the plot (i.e. inciting incident, major conflict, climax, etc).
- A reflection on your favourite actors/characters.
 - Why did you like their performance?
- A reflection on the technical elements of the production.
 - Describe: sets, costumes, lights, special effects (e.g. fog or flying).
 - How were they effective?
 - Are there any technical elements you would use differently?
- To wrap up, summarize your ideas, and conclude with a critical review of the play itself.
 - What were the perceived goals of this script/production?
 - Did the production achieve those goals?

II.COMPOSE A "SCATHING" REVIEW

- Do all of the steps above, BUT...
- Imagine you are the Arts and Culture Critic for the local Cornley Newspaper, "THE DAILY KERNAL". You are very snooty.
- You were hoping this show might have fewer problems than the production last Christmas... it did not.
- Write a scathing review on how it "failed to live up to your expectations."

III.COMPOSE J.M. BARRIE'S REVIEW

- Imagine you are J.M. Barrie, and you have just attended the same performance of "PETER PAN GOES WRONG".
- As J.M. Barrie, Write a reflection on how you enjoyed or didn't enjoy, this adaptation.
- Did he absolutely LOVE the production? Or did he DESPISE it, leaving the theatre disappointed?
- Exaggerate his point-of-view in your writing.



FURTHER RESOURCES

RE: J.M. BARRIE

"Peter Pan, or, The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up" | PDF Script:
<https://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300081h.html>

"Peter and Wendy" by: J.M. Barrie | Novel; Full text and Illustrations:
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/26654>

Gender and Performance in Peter Pan | A video essay (likely too dry for students, but informative for teachers) re: gender roles in J.M. Barrie's original novel:
<https://youtu.be/HwhO1Kqgg8>

RE: MISCHIEF THEATRE

"The Play That Goes Wrong" | Trailer:
<https://youtu.be/kPVEPoMKgB8>

"The Play That Goes Wrong" | First 10 Minutes of the Show:
<https://youtu.be/USger0TP238>

Getting to know the Playwrights | A Short Interview with Mischief Theatre:
<https://youtu.be/Q7xgghj9SgE>

PLAYS AND MEDIA LIKE PETER PAN GOES WRONG

- "The Play That Goes Wrong", by: Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer and Henry Shields
- "Noises Off", by: Michael Frayn
- "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)", by: Adam Long, Daniel Singer and Jess Winfield
- "Shear Madness", by: Paul Pörtner
- "Fawlty Towers" | Available to stream on Prime Video (as of May 2022)

OTHER RESOURCES

'Identity Crisis (Jane)' | A monologue by Christopher Durang:
<https://www.dailyactor.com/monologues/identity-crisis-jane/>

About the play | Mischief Theatre's own description of "Peter Pan Goes Wrong":
<https://www.mischiefcomedy.com/our-work/peter-pan-goes-wrong/about>

Broadwayworld.com Review of Citadel Theatre's original production:
<https://www.broadwayworld.com/edmonton/article/BWW-Review-PETER-PAN-GOES-WRONG-is-a-Side-Splitting-Comedy-Adventure-20220305>

Sources

Playwright Bio's:

- <https://mischiefcomedy.com/about-us/members/henry-lewis>
- <https://www.mischiefcomedy.com/about-us/members/jonathan-sayer>
- <https://www.mischiefcomedy.com/about-us/members/henry-shields>

Peter Pan Plot:

- <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Peter-Pan-play-by-Barrie>

Mischief Theatre:

- <https://mischiefcomedy.com>

J.M Barrie Bio & Character List:

- <https://citadeltheatre.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Peter-Pan-Goes-Wrong.pdf>