

Neverland: The Imagination Game

by Matt Forbeck

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For Ann and all our children to be.

Part 1

Introduction

Welcome to *Neverland: The Imagination Game*, the game for both children and adults set in the world of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. *Neverland* is designed to allow a parent, teacher or other adult to introduce children into one of the most famous and well loved, fantastic fictional worlds where they can experience the magic of the fabled island of Neverland to the fullest.

The first part of this book contains the short, simple and easy to learn rules for the Imagination Game. The next part introduces you personally to all the inhabitants of Neverland from the Lost Boys to Captain Hook's pirates and even Peter Pan himself!

The third part of *Neverland* tells you everything you could ever want to know about the island of Neverland. The last part of the book offers a number of suggestions for adventures in Neverland and even provides you with one that's already fully developed and ready to play. Children who plan on playing Neverland should not read this first part or the final part of the book. They contain a few special surprises for them which, if they knew of them ahead of time, could spoil the game.

After all, what fun is a surprise if you already know what's coming?

What is *Neverland*?

Neverland: The Imagination Game is a new idea in the realm of children's games. Like many children's books, *Neverland* is not intended to be read and used exclusively by children. It's meant to be read and shared with a child or a group of children by an adult who wants to open up a world of adventure to these children.

The island Neverland is the fantastical, fictional world in which the largest (and the most fun!) part of James Matthew Barrie's *Peter Pan* is set. *Peter Pan* was first performed as a play on December 27, 1904, at the Duke of York's Theatre in London and was first published as a book over eighty years ago in 1911. It has delighted audiences and readers all over the world for over four generations and has been the inspiration for several films as well.

What's an Imagination Game?

An Imagination Game is a type of game in which one person known as the *storyteller*, usually an adult of some sort, tells a story to a group of children. This story is unusual in that the children are actually a part of it, and through their own actions, enthusiasm and decisions, they can affect the story's outcome.

For instance, perhaps the children are just out exploring and stumble across the legendary Mermaids' Lagoon. Or maybe it's up to the children to work with Peter to find the Lost Boys and warn them that Captain Hook has discovered the Home Below the Ground and is coming to take them away. The possibilities are endless.

Unlike other games which encourage competition, an Imagination Game requires children to work together to accomplish a common goal. This

encourages them to learn about and use creative and cooperative problem solving techniques.

How Do I Get Started?

Just read on. You'll find *Neverland* to be an interesting and entertaining read. If you like, you can even give it to the children you'll be playing the game with in order to get them interested in *Neverland* before you start actually playing. Just make sure they don't read this first section or the last section.

Even if they do, don't worry about it too much. With a little imagination on your own part, you can come up with your own original adventures, too. There is absolutely nothing that restricts you to using only the material presented here.

How Long Does It Take to Play?

Well, that's entirely up to you, and it depends a lot on how much time you have or how much of a hurry you're in. An Imagination Game can consist of only one short encounter, very much like a short story, or it can go on and on forever like a series of good books.

You see, one of the truly wonderful things about *Neverland* is that, just like with a traditional story, if you need to take a break for any reason whatsoever, just stop and say, "And that's all for now. Next time, we'll learn more about your adventures."

Just remember where it was in the story that you left off and pick it up at that same spot the next time you play. If you're prone to forgetting such things, you should write yourself a note to make sure that you remember. Even if you forget to do that, you can still work with the children to reconstruct

and recap what happened during your last play session. This will help them to remember exactly what has gone before and will whet their appetite for the adventures to come.

What Do I Need to Play?

All you need to play *Neverland* is this book, a single standard die, a storyteller and some children who would like to take part in the story. You're holding the book right now. Locating or recruiting the other ingredients and participants is entirely up to you.

Playing Neverland

Neverland relies heavily on the storyteller's judgment and abilities. It's up to you to make the game fun. Be enthusiastic and full of wonder and encourage each and every one of the children to be so as well. Be willing to forget what happened just minutes before and just play and play and play.

In the back of this book, there are a number of starting-out ideas for *Neverland* adventures as well as a fully developed adventure that's all ready to go. Once you finish playing the first adventure, dive right in and use each of the given ideas to develop entirely new adventures of your own. After all, you know the group of children that you're going to playing with far better than we do. In any case, you're far better qualified to tailor an adventure to the special strengths, weaknesses and interests of your own play group.

After playing the first game, however, you might find that you're still not totally comfortable devising adventures of your own. Or maybe you simply can't find the time to do make them yourself. Fortunately, **StarChilde** sells additional ready-to-go adventures, especially made for *Neverland*. Look for

them where you purchased *Neverland* or contact **StarChilde Publications** directly at the address listed in the front of this book.

The Game

Most often in a story, whether or not a child can perform a particular act is easily enough determined. Obviously, most children could, for example, walk down a hill easily enough, but they might have a harder time leaping across a gulch.

The thing that makes *Neverland* a game is that occasionally the children are going to want to do something that they may or may not be capable of doing, like climbing up the side of Captain Hook's ship, the *Jolly Roger*. When this happens, you should give the children a die to roll and tell them what number they need to meet or beat in order to succeed at whatever it is that they are trying to do.

***Example:** Brendan wants to swim out to Marooner's Rock which is in the middle of the Mermaids' Lagoon. Now, you know that Brendan is a fairly good swimmer, but there's still a small chance he'd tire out before he made it to the rock. You give him the die and tell him that if he rolls a 2 or greater, he's done it. Brendan rolls a 5. Voila! He's standing atop the rock!*

It's up to you to determine what the success number should be. Base your decision on what you know about the children you're playing with. If you're not sure about the children's abilities, don't be afraid to ask them. This is a chance for you to get to know more about them and for them to open up to you.

When choosing a success number, remember that the lower the number, the easier it will be for the child to succeed. Conversely, the higher the number, the harder it'll be. In any case, a roll of 1 should always fail and a roll

of 6 should always succeed. So the highest success number you can give is a 5 and the lowest is a 2.

How Can the Children Affect Their Chances?

The first thing to remember is that in *Neverland*, you can do anything at all, as long as you believe. Children that believe that they can do something should get an extra bonus for their belief.

For instance, learning how to fly is difficult, but Peter Pan does it all the time. This is because he believes that he can. It doesn't hurt, of course, that he's got fairy dust to reinforce his belief and help him along.

When you present a child with a die, try to gauge how enthusiastic the child is about succeeding at the task. If the child's full of wonder and belief, you should lower the success number. And if the child is full of doubt, you should raise it.

What Do I Do If a Child Fails?

Always keep in mind that *Neverland* is a game and you and the children are playing it to have fun. If a child fails a success roll, always give the child another chance.

This doesn't always mean that the child gets another opportunity to roll the die again. Instead, give the child another, different opening, another way in which to succeed. Or give another child a chance to help the one who failed the roll.

***Example:** Brendan's little sister Colleen swims after him, trying to make it to the rock. You know that Colleen can't swim very well, so you're inclined to give her a success number of 5. As you hand her the die, you look at her and see*

that she really wants to succeed badly and, more so, believes that she can. After all, if Brendan can do it, so can she!

You decide to lower her success number to 3. She rolls the die and gets a 2. She's failed to make it to the rock.

At this point, you have several options open to you, depending on how the game is going. You could give Colleen another last-ditch desperate try. Or you could present Brendan with the opportunity to jump in and save his sister. Or you could even have one of the mermaids swim up underneath Colleen and give her a not-so-friendly nudge up onto the rock. Or better yet, maybe Captain Hook rows up behind her, sweeps her into his boat and takes her away, providing an opportunity for an adventure!

Anyway, you should always present the situation to the children as dramatically as possible. Engage their interests at all time and keep the plot moving along quickly. Be as colorful as you can, and remember, have fun!

You must be enthusiastic. Cheer for the children when they succeed, and groan with them when they fail. And remember, there is always a way out of a bad situation. Give the children a chance to figure one out for themselves first, but if they can't it's up to you to save the day. Two words you should never be afraid of using are: "But, wait!"

Death and Injury in *Neverland*

There isn't any. At least not in any serious way.

Neverland is a light hearted game. There are no losers. In fact, there is no way for the children to lose. Every story should have a happy ending, and that means that no one should get hurt.

Of course, this doesn't mean that you can't keep the children guessing. Situations will come up where it looks like they're in danger—and they will

be—but they’ll get out of it somehow. You are allowed to give the children small scares—even big ones!—but you should never follow through.

After all, a boy like Peter Pan isn’t above taking Hook’s sword between his chest and arm and hamming up a good death scene. And just when everyone’s feeling the worst (except for Hook and the rest of the pirates, of course), Peter’ll jump up good as new and knock Hook right overboard and into the drink.

It’s true, however, that in *Peter Pan* pirates are dropping dead left and right. We feel that in the interest of not overly desensitizing children to violence, this should not be so in *Neverland*. We live in somewhat more enlightened days than Mr. Barrie did 80 or more years ago, and it’s perfectly easy to have just as much fun without anyone getting hurt. If you would still rather play your game closer to the original story, then you should realize that even in that version, although the other characters were fair game for all sorts of nasty occurrences, the children and their friends were never hurt.

In Conclusion

At this point, if you’re familiar with *Peter Pan* you could just turn to the last section of the book and begin preparing to play your first game.

If you’re not quite ready for that, that’s fine. Just read on straight through the book. It won’t take very long at all.

In fact, even if you want to jump right in and get started playing, you should probably at least skim through the intervening sections to brush up on your knowledge of the island of Neverland and its inhabitants. It’s pretty neat stuff, and it’s all been taken directly from J.M. Barrie’s novel, rearranged and presented to you in an easy-to-get-around format. Now, instead of flipping page by page through *Peter Pan* to find out exactly what the Home Below the

Ground looks like, just turn to the entry for it in this book and there it is: everything you ever wanted to know about it.

Part 2

The People

This section of *Neverland* tells you all about each of the different characters that appear in J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. While exploring Neverland, the children you're playing the game with will encounter many if not all of these characters.

As the storyteller, it's your job to act out the parts of all of these characters in your stories. All the children have to do is be themselves. You get to be everyone else.

Because of this, you need to know your cast of characters. You could even develop voices for each of them. When speaking a character's lines, try to do it like you think that character would. Mimic freely Peter Pan's careless gaiety and Captain Hook's menacing growl, just as you would if you were reading the lines straight out of a book. Go ahead and ham it up!

To be able to do this properly, all you need to do is read through this section. Each entry will tell you a little bit of the history behind and between each of the characters as well as something about their general demeanor. You'll soon feel as comfortable with these characters as if they were your old friends. There's nothing to it!

For further research about the characters in *Neverland*, check out every other variations of the Peter Pan story you can get your hands on. J.M. Barrie's book *Peter Pan* is the source behind *Neverland: The Imagination*

Game, but there are other influential versions of this story available in the theater, on videotape and on the shelves of better bookstores and your local library.

Peter Pan was originally a play. Most people who have seen it will happily remember Mary Martin or Sandy Duncan in the title role but, if you're really lucky, you'll be able to find an acting troupe putting on their own production of the classic play. If not, the production starring Mary Martin is available on videotape.

Many of us also remember the animated Disney version of Peter Pan. Originally released in 1953, this all-time favorite has recently been re-released on videotape as well. Although it's a bit dated, it's still extremely worthwhile to check this out.

For a more up to date version of the legend of Peter Pan, just keep your eyes open. More and more projects are popping up all the time. The Fox Television Network is currently showing a continuing animated series entitled *Peter Pan and the Pirates*.

Most notably, Steven Spielberg released *Hook* this last Christmas, the story about what happens when Peter Pan leaves Neverland and grows up. This should also be out on videotape by the time this book is released.

It's likely that both you and the children you play *Neverland* with have already had your ideas about Neverland shaped and influenced by one or more of the above sources. These sources can be used for inspiration for character voices and mannerisms and yet more exciting, new adventures. The more you know about what is out there, the better you'll be able to breathe life into your own private Neverland.

The Darlings

Mr. and Mrs. Darling live at Number 14, Kensington Gardens, London, England, with their three children, Wendy, John and Michael, their maid, Liza, and their Newfoundland dog nurse, Nana. We are, of course, most interested in the children.

The children's bedroom is on the building's fourth floor. It's thirty feet from their window to the ground and nothing to climb up to it by. This is one of the reasons that Wendy, John and Michael's parents don't give their descriptions of Peter Pan flying in through the window a second thought. After all, flying boys are impossible, right?

There's a fireplace in one wall of the bedroom. Nana's kennel (or dog house) sits to one side of it. Normally, Nana can be found sleeping in her kennel, but when Mr. Darling gets mad at her for whatever reason, he ties her up out back. It was on such a night that Peter Pan came and led the children away.

The Darlings are a wonderfully interesting family, and each of them is described more fully below. Although many of them, particularly Mr. and Mrs. Darling and Nana and Liza, might not appear in your stories, they are included here for completeness. After all, it's the story of this family's encounters with Peter Pan that form the basis for everything we know about Neverland.

If you wish, you can use any of these characters, especially Wendy, John and Michael, in your own modern stories. Your players might find chatting and adventuring with turn-of-the-century English children quite entertaining, particularly if they need someone (besides Peter, of course) to give them a tour of Neverland.

Mr. Darling

Mr. Darling is an extremely practical man who knows all about such arcane matters as stocks and bonds. At least, he knows as much about them as anybody else in the world which, as you likely know, isn't nearly as much as they would prefer you to believe.

He is a proud man and a decent enough father, even though he reduces everything down to pounds and shillings (which, for those who don't know, is how the English break things down to dollars and cents). This causes him to worry about money a lot, as the Darlings are not wealthy people and don't have many pounds and shillings to have things broken down to.

Even so, Mrs. Darling managed to convince him that they could afford to keep their children, despite the fact that they had to hire on Nana as a nurse rather than find themselves a proper one. Mr. Darling is more than a little embarrassed by the fact that their children are cared for by dog, rather than a person like most children are, even though Nana is admittedly better than most normal nurses.

Still, Mr. Darling is bothered by a feeling that Nana looks upon the children as puppies. This is especially disconcerting because Mr. Darling, like many Christians doesn't believe that dogs (or any other animals for that matter) have souls. This would mean that Nana didn't think that the children had souls, which might make her treat them less carefully.

Actually, Mr. Darling is simply jealous of the children's affection for Nana. They display this openly and are a bit more reserved about their feelings about him. Instead of talking to the children about it, Mr. Darling usually takes his frustrations out on Nana. Ever the good nurse, Nana takes it all without complaint, which of course makes Mr. Darling feel even worse about the whole affair.

Mr. Darling's main problem is that he always does everything to excess. In many ways, he's just a little boy trapped in a man's body and burdened with all of a man's responsibilities.

He has a terrible flair for melodrama and often makes things out as ten times worse than they really are. He depends on his wife to be the balancing influence in his life. For instance, he simply can't tie his own tie, which causes him to rush about like a tornado, ranting about how embarrassing this sort of thing is and how he'll lose all respectability if he shows up at a dinner party without a tie and on and on and on. Of course, Mrs. Darling can tie it for him, and she always does so with a smile. He doesn't hold this against her, like some other men might. It's one of the many reasons he loves her so.

Mr. Darling claims to be a proud and reserved man, but he still loves to romp around with his children whenever he gets the chance. And just like his sons, he hates to take his medicine. Strangely, he's willing to trick Michael into taking his medicine, but he will do his best to weasel out of taking his own. There is still much of the child in this man.

When working at home, Mr. Darling wears a wet towel around his head to keep his brain clear. Oddly enough, before his children disappear, he blames all strangeness about the house (a good deal of which he is personally responsible for) upon having a dog for a nurse.

After they're gone, however, he lays the blame on himself and curses "that fiend Peter Pan!" Directly afterwards, he crawls into the kennel and vows to stay there until the children return. He made good on his vow, too, even going so far as to have some people carry him in the kennel to work.

At first, this is a great embarrassment to an extremely proud man. When it gets out as to why he's acting so strangely, though, the public rallies around his cause and showers him with admiration for his inspiring humility.

Mrs. Darling

Mrs. Darling is probably the most mother-like mother that ever was. It is her example that provides Wendy with the means to know how to be a mother herself.

Although she's ever the adult, Mrs. Darling loves and cares for her husband and their children with all her heart. She has a romantic mind which is given to fancy, but she usually keeps it firmly under control.

Mrs. Darling has a kiss on the right side of her mouth, which is perfectly obvious to anyone who looks for it, but can never seem to be caught by anyone who tries for it. Not even Mr. Darling, who has long since given up trying.

Mrs. Darling does everything she can to make do with what little the Darlings have in the way of money. She makes much of the children's clothing herself and even borrows Wendy's bracelet to wear when she goes out for dinner.

Mrs. Darling is a kind-hearted woman who can never hold anything against her children. As long as they ask, she will always forgive them.

She sings to them at night before they go to bed and then leaves them in the nursery with their night lights on. Night lights are, as you know, the eyes a mother leaves behind to watch over her children.

Similarly, Mrs. Darling can never scold Peter. The kiss on the side of her mouth simply won't let her. Funnily enough, Peter can take her kiss quite

easily, probably because (as he claims) his mother had a mouthful of such kisses.

Nana

Nana is a fine Newfoundland dog who used to wander around Kensington gardens poking her nose into baby carriages and keeping an eye on the nurses who weren't paying enough attention to their young charges. This used to annoy the lazier nurses quite a lot.

Fortunately, the Darlings were able to hire her on as a nurse for their children. Nana is a very conscientious nurse and always takes the best care of the children that she possibly can. She knows that Mr. Darling frets about her being a dog, but that's the way she was born. There's nothing she can do about it, so she simply ignores it and does the best that she can under the circumstances. She doesn't care if she gets tied up out back for the night or even if Mr. Darling were to whip her, as long as the children are safe.

Nana gets an evening off once per week, but most often she simply stays at home and entertains herself with the children. The children love her so and spend as much time with her as they can.

One of Nana's most interesting traits is that she has different types of barks which the children can recognize. Among these are a happy bark and an unhappy bark, and even a bark for when she smells danger. She's also strong enough to break her chain if she has to and smart enough to find the children's parents if she has any clue as to where they are.

Nana knows trouble when she smells it, and Peter Pan stinks of it. Of course, since Mr. and Mrs. Darling don't believe in Peter Pan until it's too late, all of her efforts to warn them are doomed to come to naught.

Liza

Liza is the Darling's other servant: their maid. Mr. and Mrs. Darling often refer to her as "the servants," even though there's only one of her. Apparently, it makes them feel as if they're rich enough to have more than one at their disposal.

Liza is a small, young thing, not much older than Wendy, although she swears up and down that she's well over 10. Sometimes, Liza joins in the children's romps but never when there's anyone else around to see. She fears that outsiders might not understand such frivolity.

Liza does all of the cooking for the family as well and is reputed to make some awfully fine Christmas puddings. She's good at her job. She is, however, not too quick on the uptake and her sense of fancy has been weakened from disuse.

Wendy Darling

Wendy's full name, as she'll be happy to tell you or anyone else who will listen, is Wendy Moira Angela Darling

Wendy is a tidy child. She knows she is going to grow up eventually and does not mind. In fact, she likes it. She is a wee bit vain and looks forward to being a mother as she expects she'll be exceptionally good at it. This is the main reason why she decides to go with Peter to Neverland: it's a chance to be a mother to so many at such a tender young age.

Wendy is the first to admit that she is not really a mother, but she is "a nice motherly person" which is exactly what Peter and the Lost Boys need. Wendy makes a good mother, scolding the boys with frowns when they are bad and rewarding them with smiles when they are good. And she tells the best stories.

She cooks for them and sews patches in their clothes and does their washing and all of the other things that a parent would do. She often stays up after all the other children have gone to bed so that she can have a few quiet moments to herself. Nothing makes her happier than to be a mother to the Lost Boys.

She even makes them rest for a while after lunch before going swimming again, as it would be bad for their digestion. Whether the meal was real or make-believe makes no difference. The rules are the rules.

The only problem with Wendy's mothering is her inexperience which causes her to follow the rules quite literally. For instance, once she almost didn't wake up the Boys when Hook was coming because they'd not yet finished their after-lunch nap.

Wendy also has an untimely habit of speaking up when she's offended, even if she's hiding and revealing herself is really the last thing she wants to do. This has gotten her in trouble more than once. None of these faults bother the Lost Boys, though. They still think that "the Wendy lady" is the finest mother they could ever ask for.

Wendy often talks about exchanging kisses with Peter, even though he doesn't seem to understand what a kiss actually is. Wendy loves Peter and is interested in him romantically, but whenever she tries to pin Peter down about how he feels about her, he tells her that he feels to her as would a devoted son, much to her great disappointment. Tiger Lily and Tinker Bell have the same designs on Peter, which causes no small amount of friction between the three of them, individually and collectively. It's really pointless, though, as Peter has absolutely no real concept of what any of them is going on about.

In Neverland, Wendy often wears a frock she made of leaves and berries. She also wears an acorn button that Peter gave her on a chain around her neck. This is rather fortunate for it is this button that deflects the arrow that Tootles fires at her as she approaches Neverland from the sky.

Wendy is one of those girls who likes to grow up, and when she does she has a daughter named Jane. Later on, Jane has a daughter named Margaret. If you wish, your players can meet Wendy's descendants when they return to the island for more adventures. Time flows strangely in Neverland and things like this can happen.

John Darling

John is the Darling's eldest son, although he's still younger than Wendy who is their eldest child. He tries to act the part of an eldest son, being proper and responsible and otherwise altogether boring, but often it simply doesn't work and his boyish nature bubbles out.

At his age, he despises girls, naturally. This does not, of course, include his sister Wendy, whom he thinks the world of. Many nights after their parents have tucked them in bed, Wendy stays up with the boys and tells them the most spectacular bedtime stories. John can't tell a decent story to save his life, and because of this, he appreciates that ability in others all the more.

John is a bit slow to get up in the mornings and can literally sleep through being kicked out of bed. When they left for Neverland, he was in such a foggy state of mind that he took along his Sunday hat even though he was still dressed in his pajamas.

John is a natural leader. He can think quick and take charge when he has to, particularly if it involves hiding. Owing to these qualities, John often

thinks of Peter as a show off. Of all of the boys on the island, John is the least likely to be overawed the famous Peter Pan. His head is simply screwed on too tight for that.

John has always wanted to be a pirate, but wouldn't join up with a pirate band if it would possibly hurt his friends. If he were to become a pirate, though, he'd call himself Red-handed Jack.

Michael Darling

The youngest of the three, Michael is the only one of the boys in Neverland to not sleep in the great bed in the Home Below the Ground. This is because he is the smallest and therefore the baby of the extended family. As such, Wendy makes him sleep in a basket hanging from the ceiling of the Home.

He complains of this occasionally, but Wendy just says, "I must have somebody in a cradle, and you are the littlest. A cradle is such a nice homely thing to have about the house." And that's the end of that. Especially since no one else is willing to speak up for Michael for fear that they would have to then become the baby in his place.

If Michael were ever to become a pirate, which he would never do under Hook, he'd call himself Blackbeard Joe.

Peter Pan

It's said that eventually we all have to grow up, but for one child this just isn't true. Peter Pan is the one boy who never grows up.

Peter is all original. He still has his first laugh, and he still has all of his baby teeth. You can see Peter in the faces of women who have no children. He looks very much like Mrs. Darling's elusive kiss.

The clothes he wears are made of skeleton leaves stuck together with sap. One of the ways the Darlings knew that Peter Pan was not from anywhere near England was by the fact that skeleton leaves are not to be found in that part of the world.

Peter stands about as tall as Wendy which makes the two of them the tallest children in Neverland. They're taller than John or Michael, of course, and taller than any of the Lost Boys as well.

Peter carries a long, thin sword, with which, it is said, he killed the infamous pirate Barbecue. Additionally, he wears a small knife at his belt.

He also carries with him a set of pipes, often called panpipes. Sometimes he likes to play these before he makes an appearance, as the Lost Boys know that the sound of Peter's pipes means that he can't be far off.

Peter has an extremely short memory, but he's so cheerful, it rarely matters. This power of forgetting is what keeps him young. He never has a past to catch up with him or to weigh him down. He will remember something if you keep repeating it to him, though, like your name.

This may explain, at least partly, just why Peter doesn't know how old he is. He claims to have run away the day he was born because he heard his parents talking about what he was to be when he grew up to be a man. He didn't hold with any of those ideas at all, least of all those about growing up, so he determined to stay a boy all his life. That same day he ran away to Kensington Gardens to live with the fairies.

Peter may swear up and down that he cares not a bit for grown ups, especially parents, and mothers in particular, but he's lying. He was deeply hurt by the way his own mother went on without him after he left home, but in his heart of hearts, he knows it's really his fault, not hers. He'd probably feel guilty about it if his memory weren't so spotty. Instead, he blames his mother

on one hand and takes comfort from surrogate mothers on the other. After all, if he hates mothers so much, why did he bring Wendy to Neverland to be a mother to the Lost Boys?

Still, Peter blames grown ups for everything wrong in his life, which is not much, mind you. There is a saying in Neverland that every time you breath, somewhere on the mainland a grown up dies, and when Peter gets mad, he goes out and huffs and puffs like crazy.

Peter is a proud boy, though. When it comes time for the children to leave Neverland and go home, he won't stop them. He won't even try to convince them to stay, at least not openly. He just tells them to have a good trip and, he adds darkly, "I hope you find your mothers. I hope you will like them." He will then shake hands with them and send them on their way.

In reality, Peter knows nothing whatsoever about his mother, although he still brags proudly about her often. He claims her mouth had even more thimbles (kisses) than Mrs. Darling's.

Peter claims that he hates all mothers, except for Wendy, of course, but this really isn't true. Even though Peter claims his mother abandoned him because she went and had another child after he left, he still has a soft spot in his heart for mothers and motherly types. For instance, Peter tries to be tough and trick the Darlings into staying with him, but when he realizes how much their mother misses them, he conscience bothers him, so he relents.

Peter also has a habit of considering any friendly female not a native of Neverland to be a surrogate mother, and thus a person worthy of respect. At least while he's thinking about it. He often forgets himself and treats them just like any other girl.

In any case, Peter is considered the father of his little family, and Wendy is the mother. Of course, everyone knows that neither Peter nor Wendy

are their parents, but this doesn't prevent them from pretending like they are, particularly around mealtimes and bedtimes. Peter even goes so far as to call Wendy "old lady" and to pretend that he's grown up, even if just for a short while. Although Peter has a hard time telling make-believe from reality, he's always extremely careful not to grow up. If he pretends for too long, though, he gets nervous and looks to Wendy to quickly and happily confirm that he's not actually grown up and the father of so many children.

Like most children, Peter can eat as well as or better than anyone else, but he never wants to just sit around and be full like other children. It quickly bores him to tears.

This lack of an attention span has hurt Peter's ability to learn about larger concepts. He cannot read nor write, but on the other hand, he really doesn't see the use of it and therefore doesn't care to learn how. He considers himself above that sort of thing. Besides, on Neverland he's right—there's no need for it.

Another handy ability Peter has is the ability to mimic voices with uncanny accuracy. He does a particularly good Hook, and he can even imitate the sound of the crocodile's clock.

When Peter sleeps, he is often assailed by terrible and mysterious dreams which no doubt have something to do with the story of his origin. At these times, Wendy will take him out of bed and hold him soothingly until his wailing ceases. Then she puts him to bed again quickly before he wakes up and realizes what sort of an indignity she has placed upon him.

Peter is not afraid to cry when frustrated, especially when he thinks no one's watching him. Even so, he'll never publicly admit to doing it.

Although some may comment on how much time Tink and Peter spend together, Peter staunchly denies that Tink is *his* fairy. This is true, he claims,

because he is a gentleman and she is a lady. Peter Pan as a gentleman may be a hard concept to swallow, but believe it or not, Peter has learned how to be a gentleman at the fairy ceremonies and can be quite charming when he likes.

As J.M. Barrie wrote and Captain Hook often lamented, “There was never a cockier boy.” No woman has ever been able to resist his voice, and Peter is perfectly willing to sweet talk any female given the slightest opportunity.

Oddly enough, Peter doesn’t know what a kiss is. He thinks it’s something small that you give someone like a thimble or an acorn button. Conversely, he believes that a kiss is called a thimble.

Peter sometimes lives in Kensington Gardens and sometimes in Neverland, although most often he can be found in Neverland. A statue of animals dancing around Peter’s feet as he plays his pipes has been erected in Kensington Gardens and is there to this day. If you ever visit London, you could look it up.

Peter often disappears from Neverland by himself and returns days later. Sometimes he comes back filled with unbelievable tales of adventure, other times he says nothing, as if he’s already forgotten the time he had, but you can almost always be sure that something happened. Or at least that he believes it did.

Things on Neverland are always quieter while Peter is away, but as soon as he returns, the island immediately springs back to life. He hates lethargy and is always full of energy. Peter cannot resist a game. It is one of his few weaknesses.

One of his others is that Peter truly enjoys danger. If there are two ways out of a situation, and one is safe and the other is risky, you can bet he’ll take the risky way every time. The safe way’s too boring.

And he always calls it close. He likes danger and the opportunity it gives him to make himself look clever. He is so entirely courageous, it's almost frightening. This boy is so used to running headlong into peril that he can literally smell danger in his sleep.

Sometimes, Peter likes to sneak up behind the stars and try to blow them out. They don't take to this very well, but they enjoy watching his adventures so much that they drop any hard feelings they might have against him and occasionally even give him a hand by playing lookout for him and blowing good fortune his way. After all, every now and then he comes up and talks to them, which is more than most people do.

Fortunately, Peter is likely the luckiest person in the world. Although he get into narrow scrapes more often than anyone else in the world, he always manages to get through them somehow. He leads a blessed life and attributes all of it to himself.

Peter is as conceited as can be, although it often seems that he has every right to be. Conceit is not a gentlemanly thing, but Peter's not a man. He's a boy!

To listen to him, you would think that no one besides Peter ever has a really great idea. As you could probably guess, that's not exactly true. It's just that upon hearing a great idea Peter always pretends like it's his own. Occasionally afterwards, Peter forgets his manners and engages in fits of self-congratulation.

When he's in action, Peter gets a strange smile on his face and none of the Lost Boys dare to try to talk with him. They simply do what he says and do it as well as they can. The children under Peter's command must go along with Peter's ideas, too, or become scorned outcasts.

One other thing that makes Peter different from the others is that—to him—make-believe is real. He honestly cannot see the difference. Most times, the others think that this is really neat, since when Peter makes unreasonable requests, like “Go get a doctor,” all they have to do is dress one of them in a fancy hat and presto!—instant doctor. The fun wears a bit thin, though, when they have to pretend that they’ve already eaten their dinners.

If the Lost Boys—or any of Peter’s other friends—ever break down in holding together their make believe, Peter raps them a good one across the knuckles. He simply won’t stand for someone ruining his fun.

Peter calls himself, “Peter Pan the avenger!” He has a strong sense of right and wrong, and this includes both decorum and fairness. He’s often willing to overlook all of this, however, if he’s excited and distracted by something else.

He will never, though, attack someone entirely unawares (like, for instance, in their sleep). He always lets them know that he’s around first, as is only fair. Peter is much on rightful retribution, too, particularly when he’s doling it out, but even so, he’d never willingly hurt a person he considered a friend.

Peter is an excellent swordsman, but he doesn’t let that overshadow his sense of fair play. If a foe drops his sword, Peter will allow him to retrieve it before continuing the bout. Peter always roots for the underdog, no matter what side he’s on. This is one reason that he likes to face difficult foes, for then he can root most strongly for himself.

Every child who fights under Peter must promise that, if they ever meet Captain Hook in an open fight, they’ll leave him to Peter. So far, every child, knowing Hook’s horrible reputation, has readily agreed.

Peter is a reasonable boy and will stay that way until Hook makes a foray against the Lost Boys and captures all of his friends. At this point, Peter happily swears, "Hook or me this time," a terrible oath to put an end to the war with the pirates' evil captain once and for all

Peter does fear death. Particularly when he can see it coming slowly and surely. But he doesn't fear it much. He simply faces it with a smile that says, "To die will be an awfully big adventure."

Stories tell that when children die, Peter goes part of the way with them so that they won't be frightened.

Flying

Only the gay and innocent and heartless can fly. In other words: children. When you grow up and are no longer these way, you become too weighed down with your adultish troubles to make it into the air. Normally, children can't fly without fairy dust, and even then you have to think happy thoughts which will lift you right up into the air.

Most importantly, you have to believe you can fly. Most adults find this impossible, as their sense of fancy has been too badly crippled by the realities of adult life. Children, still untainted by such harsh facts, can do this with ease.

When you first start out, you can't fly while sleeping, so it's dangerous to go on long trips when you're tired. Unless, of course, you're accompanied by someone who will stay awake and rescue you at the first sign of your nodding off.

Peter can sleep while flying, but this is because his thoughts are so absolutely happy that you can make him fly faster by coming up behind him and blowing. In fact, he can fly much faster than any other child.

If you lie flat on a strong wind, it'll hold you up and carry you along so well that then even novice flyers can relax and fall asleep.

As you get more experienced, when you fall asleep (even in a soft breeze) you only drift toward the ground, which is okay, as long as you're over a patch of land. Actually, this is how John and Michael landed on Neverland.

Wendy disembarked from her flight a bit more roughly, felled by an arrow from Tootles' bow. Luckily, her acorn button pendant deflected the arrow and the pixie dust prevented her from being too badly hurt in her abrupt landing.

The Fairies

According to Peter Pan, "When the first baby laughed for the first time, its laugh broke into a thousand pieces, and they all went skipping about, and that was the beginning of fairies."

A new fairy is born every time a new baby laughs its first laugh. Now, if you think about it you'll realize that there ought to be a fairy for every boy and girl, but there isn't because whenever a child stops believing in fairies, somewhere a fairy dies. Because the span between a child's first laugh and when that child stops believing in fairies is fairly short, so is the life span of fairies. Fairies may not live very long, but don't feel too bad for them. They are so little (only about as long as your hand) that a short time seems a long while to them.

There is, however, one way to save a dying fairy. If enough children clap to show that they believe in fairies, the dying fairy can be saved by the faith that the children have in her. Unfortunately this doesn't happen as often as you might like to think.

Fairies look like a small light, no bigger than your fist. They make the light by flashing about so quickly, and you can only actually see the fairy when it sits still. Fairies can't fly as slowly as children and must circle them like a halo if they want to keep pace with them. Unfortunately, at night the fairy's light is easily visible in the air and makes a good target.

Fairies can't put out their light voluntarily. It only happens when they fall asleep or when they die. And they can't sleep unless they're sleepy.

Fairies live in beautiful, well-made and lavishly appointed nest in the tops of the trees of Neverland. As Wendy tells her mother, "The mauve ones are boys and the white ones are girls, and the blue ones are just sillies who are not sure what they are."

When fairies speak they sound like tinkling, golden bells. This is their language, which is all they ever speak, although they have no problem understanding human languages. The inhabitants of Neverland can understand their meaning through long practice, but their exact words are rarely understood. Peter, of course, can understand it precisely.

The fairies have a deep respect for Peter, and only give him loving tweaks at times when they would cause another no end of mischief. Peter likes fairies on the whole, but they do tend to get in his way so much that sometimes he gives them a hiding.

At any given time, fairies have to be all bad or all good, as there's simply not enough room in their tiny little bodies to be more than one way at a time. Stranger yet, they can change between these two ways at any time and they often do.

Fairies have elegant, well mannered ceremonies, which is where Peter claims he learned how to be a gentleman. More often than not, these affairs degenerate into loud and loose parties. Fairies, you see, are heavy partiers

and are often up until all hours of the night carousing around. Maybe in some ways they do feel the shortness of their lives and burn all the more brightly for it in their short time.

Tinker Bell

Tinker Bell is easily the most famous fairy of them all. She is a female and so her light is white. She wears a gown made of a single skeleton leaf, cut low and square to adequately cover her nice figure. She is called Tinker Bell because she mends pots and kettles.

Like most fairies, Tink loves guessing games and will often start a conversation by asking a person to guess what she has to tell them. Once she gets started relating the tale, it becomes apparent that Tink's grammar is atrocious. When she tells a story, she just spits it out like a magician drawing a streamer from his mouth in one long, unbroken chain.

Tink is almost always with Peter on his adventures, and he often carries her on long trips. Tink likes doing things she's never done before and being in places she's never been before, and Peter does these things and goes to these places quite often.

Tink would give her life for Peter without a moment's hesitation. She loves him wholly. Still, she gets angry with Peter all the time. She curses colorfully when mad and calls Peter (and sometimes the others) a silly ass.

Ms. Bell is quite jealous of Peter and Wendy, and once even tricked Tootles into shooting Wendy from the sky. When Peter found out about this, he banished her from his sight forever. Wendy persuaded him to reduce the sentence to only a week, but this only made Tink madder at her. Tink can't stand to be done a favor by Wendy.

The Lost Boys

Lost Boys are the children who fall out of their perambulators (also known as prams or baby carriages) when their nurse is looking the other way. They are sent to Neverland (to defray expenses) if they are not claimed in seven days.

Once in Neverland, new Lost Boys join with the others under their captain: Peter Pan. At the time that the Darlings visit Neverland, there are six of them, counting the Twins as two. You would think that there would be more Lost Boys, but nurses around the world are generally careful about letting their charges out of their sight. Besides which, Peter has a strong rule about any of his Lost Boys growing up. If they ever show any signs of doing so, they are immediately brought back to the mainland and abandoned to fend for themselves.

In any case, when the Darlings showed up, there were six Lost Boys: Curly, Nibs, Slightly, Tootles and the Twins. Each of them is described in a bit more detail later on.

Like Peter, none of the Lost Boys are ever willing to own up to the fact that there is something they don't know about. Most often, they simply play along with it, trying to seem knowledgeable about the subject.

During the day, each Lost Boy carries a dagger with him and wears the skin of a bear that he himself has slain. These skins are so round and furry that, when a Lost Boy falls, he actually rolls. Unfortunately, none of the Lost Boys know how to sew, and because of this, none of them have any pockets, like most children do. This is okay, though, because they don't have any real belongings to cart around with themselves anyway.

Their hearing is excellent, as they live as wild things in the woods. Normal children couldn't possibly hear the things they do. They're also as quick as creatures of the forest. Much more so than civilized children.

Sometimes the Boys talk about their mothers, although only when Peter is absent, as he absolutely forbids the raising of the topic when he's around. He says it's just silly.

Peter often leaves the Boys while traveling to far off lands (like England or even America) to collect stories for them. They always know when he's returning, though, by the sound of his crowing. When he arrives, they always cheer, except, of course, when they've done something wrong and are fearful of his wrath, in which case they hang their heads guiltily.

The Boys would do anything to please Peter, and they are so gullible about this that Tink can often get them to do whatever she wants by simply telling them that it's what Peter wants.

Whenever the Boys want their surrogate parents (Peter and Wendy) to let them do something special, like dance with them about their home, they simply complain that it's Saturday night. Whether or not it's Saturday night is of no matter. There are no calendars on Neverland and no one ever keeps track of the days.

The Boys love Wendy very much, almost as if she were really their mother. And they just go wild over her stories. They don't get enough of them in Neverland, and to hear new ones from Wendy is a real treat. They're big fans of all the classic children's tales, particularly Cinderella, it seems.

Often after a battle, the Boys will line up and get their bandages and slings from Wendy, whether they've actually been hurt or not. Then they spend the rest of the day wandering about, playing as if they were truly injured.

The Boys often do silly and seemingly dumb things because they do not know better. They have no mother to tell them otherwise.

Whenever they get themselves into a bad situation, though, they can generally get out of it by asking themselves what Peter would do. This is usually something strange, but oddly enough, it almost always works.

Unfortunately, the Lost Boys are lonely because there are no girls with them. “Girls are much too clever to fall out of their prams,” says Peter, flattering Wendy. Besides which, none of the Lost Boys know any stories to entertain each other with.

In fact, that’s the reason Peter goes to Wendy’s house: to listen for stories to bring back to the Lost Boys. Peter sees this as perfectly natural. After all, he claims that swallows build nests in the eaves of houses so that they can listen to stories just like he does. What could be more natural than a flying boy acting like a bird?

Peter likes the Cinderella story best, as do all the Lost Boys, but they simply enjoy them all. It’s Peter’s love for stories that convinces him to bring Wendy (along with John and Michael) back to Neverland with him.

Note that as your game progresses, some of your girl players may point out that the name of the Lost Boys should be changed to something less sexist. If they do, the Boys will groan and gripe about it, but Peter will agree to it, especially if the girls can prove that they can do things just as well as the Lost Boys!

Curly

Curly is the troublemaker of the group. He gets in trouble so often that when Peter demands to know who did something, Curly confesses to it out of habit, whether he actually did it or not.

The funny thing is that Curly never really feels sorry about what he's done. He may tell Peter or Wendy that he is, but no one really believes it. They just shake their heads and hope that it'll be just a little bit longer until the next time Curly finds himself in a fix.

Nibs

Nibs is easily the cheeriest of the Lost Boys, ever gay and debonair. One might almost call him a dashing young man if he weren't wearing a bear skin.

Like all the rest of the Lost Boys, Peter included, Nibs absolutely refuses to admit when he can't understand or has never heard of something. He just plays it off like he knows exactly what it is you're going on about.

Nibs is such a pleasant character, though, that he almost manages to pull it off convincingly. How could you not believe such a beautiful and congenial boy?

Slightly

Slightly is far and away the most conceited of all of the Lost Boys, and in this respect, he nearly rivals Peter. He believes that he can remember the days before he came to Neverland and so considers himself much more civilized than the others. He always has an answer for everything. Often the answer is not the correct one, but he always has it. Even more annoyingly, sometimes when he's talking to less-mannered people he looks down his nose at them.

Slightly disagrees with Peter's make-believe more often than the rest, which explains why his knuckles are often red and chapped. After managing to

successfully work his way through one of Peter's more complicated charades, Slightly often goes off by himself and blows big breaths to calm himself down.

Slightly is not a wholly unlikeable sort, though. He likes to cut and play wooden whistles and dance. He's easily the most musically gifted of the Boys and the rest of them often dance along with him.

While Slightly may be good at many things, he's a dreadful story-teller and has been known to finish a story soon after beginning it by apologizing for it being so boring and suggesting that they consider the beginning of the story its end.

Slightly is a kind of a misnomer, as Slightly is not very slight. He is, in fact, the largest of all of the Boys, almost as wide around the middle as Hook himself. Because of this, Hook can use his hollow tree to gain entrance into the Home Below the Ground.

The door handle is too close to the ground for Hook to use, however, so he can't actually get into the Home without breaking the door down. The door doesn't entirely fill the doorway, though, so Hook can reach in over the top of it and cause some quiet mischief if he likes, although this is limited greatly by his reach.

Tootles

Tootles is the unlucky one. He always misses out on all of the action. If this were to befall any of the other Boys it might have made them bitter, but it has only made Tootles sweeter. He takes it all with humble, good-natured resignation.

He is the humblest of the Boys. In fact, he's the only one of them that's humble at all, and so he holds a special place in Wendy's heart.

Because of his good nature, though, Tootles is the most trusting of the Lost Boys and therefore the most easily tricked. In addition to his dagger, he often carried a bow with him. It was this bow that Tink tricked him into using to shoot down what Slightly had called a Wendy bird.

Even though Tootles often bungles things, he always owns up to it sooner or later. He has a sense of responsibility, as do the rest of the Boys, although his is much more refined.

The Twins

No one can tell these two boys apart. What's more, Peter doesn't quite understand what a twin is, and since none of the Lost Boys are allowed to know things that Peter doesn't, the twins are often a bit confused about exactly who or what they are. Because of this, they tend to stick together to avoid embarrassingly confusing others.

Of course, this just compounds matters, so everyone just treats them as if they were one and the same person. The Twins have taken to this so much that they often act if it's true and do silly things like finish each others sentences.

The Pirates

The pirates are the meanest and nastiest folks on the island. The crew of the *Jolly Roger* includes Cecco, Noodler, Bill Jukes, Skylights, Robt. Mullins, Alf Mason, Geo. Scourie, Chas. Turley, Alsatian Foggerty, Ed Teynte, Smee and a few more scoundrels to boot. All told, seventeen men and one mangy cat sail upon this barnacle-encrusted brig, including their leader, the most dastardly of them all, Captain Hook.

With the exception of Hook, each of these cutlass wielding curs is an uneducated, simple-minded, dull-witted boor. By comparison, Peter and the Lost Boys can run circles around them brain-wise.

Besides that, like most sailors, Hook's pirates are as superstitious as can be. They have lots of silly beliefs, like if a ship is cursed, the evil spirit takes the form of the wickedest man on board, which in their case would be Hook, of course. If the children are clever, they can use this weakness against these rogues.

You might think that these scurvy dogs would be better off trying to pick the Boys off one by one, but Hook is always looking to catch all of the Lost Boys and Peter at once, as he figures that taking them out one at a time would simply be inviting a concerted attack from the remaining children. Additionally, while stalking the Lost Boys, the pirates have to be careful not to make too much noise for fear of arousing the Natives as well. Taking on both groups at once would be just short of suicide.

Sometimes when the pirates are approaching—not stalking or sneaking, mind you: just approaching—clouds steal in front of the sun and the beautiful Neverland days suddenly are turned sinister as if spoiled by the scoundrels' mere presence and shivers run up and down the children's spines. This adds quite a lot to the atmosphere, but doesn't always help the pirates, as it at once warns the children away and makes it hard for the pirates to see them.

Like many young children, the Boys are fascinated by pirates and the life that they think a pirate leads. They might even have been tempted join on with Hook if he and Peter hadn't been such mortal enemies and if Hook wouldn't insist on them renouncing their homelands in order to board his ship as pirates rather than prisoners or foes.

Pirate Terms

If you find yourself at a loss for just how to talk like a pirate, just pepper your speech with a few of the following colorful sayings. The words are in **bold**, and the meaning is in (parentheses). The word is then used in a sentence in *italics*.

Ahoy! (Hello! Hey, you there!) *Ahoy, the ship!*

Cast anchor. (To anchor your ship to the ground beneath the sea. Hook also used to threaten to use his hook as an anchor in his men.) *Get after that accursed boy or I'll cast anchor in you!*

Lubbers. Scugs. Dogs. Bullies. (Various not-so-nice words for pirates.) *Stand aside, me bullies. Pan is mine!*

Shiver me timbers! Blow me down! (I don't believe it.) *Well, shiver me timbers, if it isn't Tinker Bell!*

Aye, aye. (Sure thing.) *Aye, aye, Cap'n!*

Brimstone and gall! Odds, bobs, hammer and tongs! (Generic curses.) *Brimstone and gall! Bring me the head of Pan on a platter!*

The Pirate Songs

The pirates are famous for their songs (also known as shanties), if not their occasionally horrendous singing. Whenever the mood comes upon them, you can always count on them breaking into a rousing verse appropriate to the situation.

For example:

Avast belay, yo ho, heave to,

A-pirating we go,

*And if we're parted by a shot
We're sure to meet below.*

*Yo ho, yo ho, the pirate life,
The flag o' skull and bones,
A merry hour, a hempen rope,
And hey for Davy Jones.*

*Avast, belay, when I appear,
By fear they're overtook;
Naught's left upon your bones when you
Have shaken claws with Hook.*

*Yo ho, yo ho, the frisky plank,
You walk along it so,
Till it goes down and you goes down
To Davy Jones below.*

The pirate songs are uniform in that there are always four verses in each stanza, and each verse is done in iambic meter (the stresses go bum-BUMP, bum-BUMP, bum-BUMP). There are four BUMPs in the first and third verses and three BUMPs in the second and fourth verses, and the rhyme scheme is A-B-C-B.

Feel free to come up with pirate songs of your own as you like. Just follow the simply guidelines described above and presto! You've instantly got an authentic pirate shanty.

Captain Jas. (James) Hook

James Hook is the undisputed leader of the pirates in Neverland and the infamous captain of the disreputable Jolly Roger. Over the years before he entered our story, he had carved himself out a distinguished place in the history of piracy, but his career took a fatal blow when he sailed into Neverland and ran up against Peter Pan.

The pirate captain dresses in the fashion of Charles II with a large, overdone coat and hat (which is topped with a voluminous plume), a frilly shirt and fancy pants. This is probably because he fancies himself related to the Stuarts. He smokes his cigars in a unique forked holder he built himself which allows him to puff on two of them at once. He has long, black, curly hair and bright forget-me-not-blue eyes, which are usually melancholy, except when he's engaged in the act of killing. Then his eyes shine brightly with spots of furious red.

Hook is a cold-blooded man, capable of killing without a moment's hesitation and entirely bereft of mercy or remorse. What's more, he does so with only the slightest provocation. Sometimes when on the island, he rides around in a rough chariot drawn by his men. He enjoys treating his men like dogs, as they always obey him in that manner.

Before becoming the captain of the *Jolly Roger*, Hook sailed as the bo'sun for the legendary rogue Blackbeard. It is said that Hook is only man of whom the Sea-Cook and Barbecue (whom Hook knew in Rio) were afraid, and Flint himself feared Barbecue. The Darlings had heard of Hook before they came to Neverland, but this is probably due to the fact that recently Hook has wasted so much of his time trying to track down and destroy Peter Pan.

There are only two things that can scare Hook. One is the sight of his own blood, which is thick and dark. The other is crocodiles. Well, not really

crocodiles in general—just one in particular. The one that Peter tossed his hand to.

As you may already be aware, Hook is not his real name. His *nom de guerre* comes from the sharp iron hook that sits at the end of the arm where his right hand used to be. In a glorious battle, Peter cut off this hand which found its way into the mouth of a giant crocodile. For more about this and how it has affected Hook's life, see the description of the crocodile below.

Hook claims to be quite proud of his hook, saying it's much better than his old, weak, fleshy hand, but he still hungers for revenge on Peter more than anything. When the rogue's infuriated, he talks about his hook as if it had a temper and a mind of its own, one that he has little or no control over. Not surprisingly, vengeance is foremost on the hook's mind.

If Hook's real name were to be revealed, it would cause such a scandal, even today, as to shake the British empire to its very foundation. As such, in case he is taken alive Hook always carries on his person a small bottle of yellow liquid—a vile poison—with which to take his own life rather than be tortured to death. His own life is less important to him than his own reputation and the reputations of those his new identity protects.

Hook attended a famous public school in England. (In England, what they call public schools are what Americans call private schools, possibly just to be contrary.) This has left his mark upon him forever. Even when swearing as heartily as he can, Hook speaks with absolutely perfect diction, enunciating each word clearly and distinctly.

Hook has a sinister, chivalrous flair about him. Instead of ordering his pirates to manhandle Wendy as they do the Boys, he simply approaches her, offers her his arm and leads her away. She is simply too overawed by his manner to say or do anything about it.

What's most confounding about the man is that, in some very real ways, Hook is not totally evil. He loves flowers and is a great aficionado of fine music. In fact, he can play a mean harpsichord. He even had a mother who he remembers quite fondly, although he'll never admit this publicly. Unfortunately, due to the way that Peter's nature and his own clash, he often finds himself spurred on to commit horrible atrocities he would otherwise forego.

Hook is staunchly riveted to the ways of the upper class, no matter how far circumstances may have dragged him from his lofty beginnings. It shows in his clothes and in his distinguished slouch, but it shines through most brightly with his obsession with the way that things are properly done, in other words, with showing good form.

Most people's consciences nag them about whether or not they've been good today. Hook's nags him about whether he's shown good form. Hook worries incessantly about good form and is nagged most insistently by this question: is it not bad form to worry about good form?

This is yet another reason why Hook hates Peter as much as he does. Peter constantly shows good form and never any sign that he's aware of it. This strikes at the core of Hook's being and infuriates him more than anything else for, in his mind, Peter is constantly at the pinnacle of good form.

When Hook gets particularly depressed about Peter and the incredible shambles his life has fallen apart into, he sends the others away and confides in Smee his life story. At these times, he refers to himself dramatically and in the third person as if trying to separate himself from the monstrosity that he's become. Smee is so dim-witted, though, that he hardly knows what to think of it and rarely listens to any parts of it except the bits he knows personally, like the bits about Peter and Neverland.

Everyone is afraid of Hook. Everyone except Peter, that is, who just sees Hook as the most challenging opponent around. He gleefully rises to the opportunity to clash with Hook at every chance.

Even in the heat of battle, though, Peter's sense of fair play is still strong. This is one of his few weaknesses, one that Hook lowly exploits whenever he can. To be fair, as despicable and low-handed as he is, Hook is a brilliant swordsman and can hold his own with just about anyone, even in a fair fight. He just likes to tip the odds in his favor whenever he can.

Hook's unfairness shocks Peter, as unfairness does all children when they first run across it. It changes them in a way, which is a not-so-nice part of growing up. But Peter always forgets entirely about the incidents soon after they happen, which is probably what makes him different from any other child and keeps him from growing up. This frustrates Hook all the more, as he can never make a lasting impression upon the boy.

If it seems that Hook hates Peter with more emotion than one might expect a man to feel against a boy, he does have his own reasons. More than the fact that Peter cut off his hand and fed it to the crocodile, even more than Peter's good form, Hook hates Peter for the one thing that the boy would truly not be himself without: his cockiness.

Smee

Smee is Hook's Irish bo'sun on the *Jolly Roger*. In case you're not aware, *bo'sun* is short for *boatswain*, the man responsible for supervising all work done on decks, as well as for the general maintenance of the ship itself.

Smee is a lousy pirate and a worse bo'sun who doesn't command the respect of the men under him or scare anyone. He's so much kinder than the rest of the pirates that after killing, he wipes his spectacles off instead of his

sword. He's just too all-around lovable, compared to the other pirates, to inspire fear in the heart of anything larger than a fly. He's so much this way, in fact, that all of the children actually like him.

Smee has pleasant names for everything. For instance, he named his cutlass Johnny Corkscrew because he likes to wriggle it into the ground. For this and other reasons, he's the only Nonconformist in Hook's crew.

Sadly, Smee is such a dimwit that he doesn't even know what a mother is. This makes him so pitiful as to be even more endearing to the children, especially Wendy. This is particularly funny as he is the one who provides as much motherly care to Hook and the other pirates as they will bear. For example, it's Smee who patches their clothes on the ship sewing machine.

Smee is a pathetic and pitiful wretch of a man, even more so because he is blissfully unaware of it. Smee believes sincerely that all little children fear him, as they would any other pirate. He is completely clueless that they do, in fact, love him instead. Perhaps this is because, being so completely ignorant of good form, Smee shows the best form of all. This infuriates Hook who would kill Smee for it, but he realizes that to kill a man for having good form is bad form.

Although the children love Smee, they really don't want to have much to do with him personally. After all, a pirate's a pirate. Given the chance to escape the *Jolly Roger* if she becomes Smee's mother, Wendy states quite plainly that she would rather have no children at all.

In the original Peter Pan story, Smee survives the final battle between the children and the pirates. In later days, he makes his fortune by claiming that he is the only man that James Hook had ever feared.

Gentleman Starkey

Mr. Starkey got the nickname “Gentleman” because of his impeccable manners. Before he embarked upon a life of piracy on the high seas, Starkey spent several years as an usher at a well-known British public school. It is unclear whether or not this is where he first met Hook, but if so, it could explain why Starkey is the most likely of all the men to stand up to Hook when his life is on the line.

Owing to his days in which he was affiliated with the upper crust of English society, Starkey may kill, but he does so daintily. His eyes are still quick, probably from long practice looking after well-to-do English children, and he carries a pistol ever ready at his side.

In *Peter Pan*, Starkey jumped ship rather than have Hook order him to certain death, and so he survived the final battle between the pirates and the Lost Boys. When he reached shore, though, he was captured by the Natives who made him a nurse for their young papooses.

Cookson

Cookson is the ship’s cook, of course, and not a very good one at that. He claims he is Black Murphy’s brother, although no one can ever seem to prove this. Nor, of course, could they disprove it, and Cookson was willing enough to fight about it that it might as well have been true, so most people regarded it as such.

Other than all that, Cookson is a fairly regular pirate. Nothing good is to be said about him.

Cecco

Cecco is a dark, swarthy Italian pirate who wears pieces of eight (gold coins) as earrings. He is most famous for the fact that he actually escaped

from the prison at Goa, but not before he carved his name on the back of the prison's governor.

Cecco is far and away the bravest of the pirates. There is no one in this world that he is not ready, willing and able to stick with his cutlass. Things not of this world still give him the willies, as they would any other superstitious pirate.

Bill Jukes

Bill Jukes is a large African, tattooed from head to toe. Although he is not the only black man on the Jolly Roger, he is by far the most notorious. Jukes' greatest claim to fame is that he was wounded by Flint during a battle aboard the *Walrus*. Unlike most men Flint fought, though, Jukes lived to tell the tale.

Noodler

Noodler is fairly normal and straightforward pirate with one small problem. His hands are fixed on backwards. The left hand is one his right arm, and the right hand is on his left arm. As you can probably imagine, this is often a source of difficulty and occasional dismay. After all, when your hands are arranged so, it makes it awfully hard to snatch up small children or to take a swing at some innocent with your cutlass. Still, Noodler manages to make do.

The Neverland Natives

In the original *Peter Pan*, the Neverland Natives were called the Piccaninny Indians. These characters were the kind of stereotypical (for the early 1900s) Native Americans that you might have seen in the early Western

films. As we all well know, this image is not an accurate one, nor is it flattering to the Native Americans or to those who created the stereotype. In the interest of presenting a more enlightened children's game, the name of the Piccaninny Indians has been altered to reflect what these people really are: the Natives of Neverland.

Neverland Natives bear a strong resemblance to Native American tribes of the early 1800s, well before the closing of the American frontier. They are a warlike people, always on the lookout for attacks by the pirates and the Lost Boys, and they often take the fight to their foes. An experienced eye can tell by the way their signal smoke curls whether or not they're actually on the warpath.

The Natives always walk silently, except just after a large meal, when they breathe more heavily than usual due to the extra weight in their bellies. This is about the only time they expose themselves to discovery, but much to their enemies' dismay, it never lasts for long.

When the Natives are on the warpath, they wear warpaint and oil down their bodies, and they wear their razor sharp tomahawks and knives by thongs on their belts. As a warning to those who would stand against the tribe, the scalps of both unlucky Boys and pirates are strung around the waists and chests of the veteran Native warriors.

Fights with the Natives always take the same form. Their enemies set up behind a rude stockade on the far side of a low stream of water and wait for them to attack. The Natives generally only attack at dawn, unless there is some special circumstance which calls for different timing. Throughout the night, the braves wriggle silently up to the site of the attack through the long grass, not even disturbing a blade.

They are utterly quiet with the exception of an occasional coyote cry, which they do even better than the coyotes. This usually serves to heighten the anxiety of their prey, except for those who have been through it before. These people simply mark this as they would a far-off clock chiming the early hours. Only Natives can move so silently through Neverland, with the exception of Peter of course.

By this honorable way of doing battle, the Natives and their foes always know exactly how the battle shall transpire. It is always done this way, and several sites on Neverland are named for battles with the Natives that have transpired this way, like Kidd's Creek, where the infamous Captain Kidd made his stand, and, of course, Slightly Gulch.

As it has been said before, though, Hook did not always play by the rules, and he is not above attacking the Natives in a different manner, simply to throw them off of their routine and catch them by surprise. The atrocity of this sort of ploy is only compounded by the fact that it is written in the book of the Neverland tribe that a brave cannot show surprise before someone who is not a member of the tribe. So instead of leaping up quickly to defend themselves from Hook and his men, the poor braves must simply wait for the pirates to arrive as if they had been invited, thus acting like they have been expecting the attack all along. In some ways it's hard to fault the pirates for attacking in this way, though, as there is no other way that they can prevail over such valiant warriors except through just this sort of base treachery.

A death won in battle is not so bad, though, as this is an honorable way to expire and Natives who die in this way are bound for their own version of paradise. The Neverland Natives fear drowning more than anything else, for to them it is a death without honor. It is written in the book of the tribe that there is no path to the happy hunting-ground through water.

After winning a battle, it is the custom of the Natives to beat their victory out upon their tom-toms. Hook is even so low as to steal a set of tom-toms for himself so as to be able to trick the Lost Boys into thinking that his pirates were the Natives instead.

Note that *Neverland* games usually start at a period in time before the Native and the Lost Boys become friends. It's up to you as to when in the story of *Peter Pan* you want to play your game, but we recommend that you have your players arrive on the island shortly after the Darlings. As your game progresses, relations between the players and the other characters will evolve and change. How they do this is up to you and your players.

Often the children and the Natives will end up being friends. The information below describes how the Natives treat Peter and the children after this happens.

When the Native and the children become friends, the Natives take to calling Peter the Great White Father. Peter enjoys this very much, and acts the part to the hilt. His favorite phrase when talking to the Natives is "Peter Pan has spoken" after which there can be no argument. The braves simply then do as he says.

The Natives stand guard over the Home Below the Ground all night long, and during the day they sit about the tree holes, passing the peace pipe and chatting amongst themselves and the children. The Natives treat the Boys as they would any other braves, and they refer to Wendy as a squaw. This doesn't sit too well with them, as they are just the slightest bit jealous of all the respect that Peter gets, but they enjoy their new friends and keep their mouths shut about it.

Tiger Lily

Tiger Lily is the beautiful Native princess, who walks proudly erect, almost, but not quite, looking down her nose at those around her. She accompanies the braves when they are on the warpath and is often found in the rear of the Native party, the position most exposed to danger. She is absolutely gorgeous and every brave wants her for his wife, but she fends them all off determinedly. She's waiting for the right boy, and sometimes she thinks that he is Peter Pan.

She is a tough girl, extremely proud of both her heritage and her position as the chief's daughter. Plus, she is as brave as the bravest brave. Once, all by herself, she swam all the way from the island to the *Jolly Roger* with a knife in her mouth intent on doing some mischief to Hook and his men. Unfortunately, she was captured—but that's another story.

Great Big Little Panther

Great Big Little Panther is one of the greatest warriors of the Neverland tribe. Panther has managed to collect so many scalps that they make it hard for him to walk around quietly. Sometimes he walks around on all fours when tracking people, as if he's a bloodhound sniffing out their trail.

Because of his tracking ability, he generally can be found in the lead of a Native war party. The fact that he is so far from the most dangerous part of the party (the back) is by no means a slight upon his bravery. It's just that he's such a great tracker that they need him up front. Otherwise, all he could do is track the rest of his party in front of him, which would be rather pointless.

Lean Wolf

This is the only other Native brave mentioned by name in *Peter Pan*. Lean Wolf is a mighty warrior, second in the tribe only to Great Big Little Panther. He is often found next to Tiger Lily in the rear of the hunting party. This is a position of great honor and brings him closer to the fair princess, but no one feels jealously towards him, as they all know he has earned this prized position many times over.

The Mermaids

Hundreds of these watery young ladies live in Mermaids' Lagoon where they spend their days sitting there on Marooner's Rock, basking in the sun and combing their long hair in a lazy way. They never talk to Wendy or any of the Lost Boys, but Peter has their hearts. The children are not allowed to play with the mermaids, as they simply swim off as soon as Wendy or the Boys enter the water, splashing them as they go, but with Peter, it's different.

They sit on the rock and chat with him for hours on end, which is great fun for Peter who tells them of the places he's flown, while they tell him of the places they've swum. Once, Peter stole a comb from one of the mermaids as a gift for Wendy. They forgave him, of course, but are sometime still jealous of the comb (and Wendy, too).

The mermaids have bedrooms in the coral cave beneath the surface of the lagoon. Each of the bedroom doors has a tiny bell that rings when the door is opened or closed, and although above the water you really can't hear the doors opening or closing, you can hear the bells ringing softly in the morning and again at night.

In the night, at the turn of the moon, the mermaids swim to the surface and wail in the moonlight. It is said that it's dangerous for mortals to listen to these cries, and for this reason, most people give it a wide berth after dark.

Fortunately, Wendy always insists that the Boys are in bed by seven, so they never have to worry about stumbling across it accidentally. The Mermaids' plaintive song is the most musical and melancholy sound in the world, and Peter is the only one on the island who can bear to hear it.

The Animals

Neverland is chock full of all sorts of wild and exciting animals including sharks, flamingoes, turtles, wolves, tigers, bears and lions, just to name a few. Although you might think it dangerous to be running around the island with so many ravenous creatures about, if you keep your wits about you, you should be fairly safe.

You can confound many animals by simply doing something so strange that their smaller brain cannot deal with it. They usually prefer to stand off or even run away rather than deal with this sort of a new concept. Wolves, for instance, will take off with their tails between their legs if you bend over and look at them through your legs, and even the most ferocious lion will not cross a line drawn in the dirt if you dare him to. As you can see, quick thinking can get you out of almost any bad situation.

In addition to all of the regular animals, there are three creatures on Neverland about which it is worthwhile to go into a bit more detail: Wendy's pet wolf, the Never Bird and the crocodile.

Wendy's Pet Wolf

Wendy Darling dreamed about Neverland for years before she ever set foot on the island. In these dreams, Wendy met and befriended a friendly, young wolf that was forsaken by its parent with whom she often played during her nocturnal visits.

Soon after Wendy actually arrived on the island, the wolf heard about it and immediately tracked her down. They were absolutely delighted to see each other again, and after that, the wolf followed Wendy around just about everywhere, and it was rare that you'd see them apart.

The Never Bird

Once, like all of the other creatures of Neverland, the Never bird was a target of Peter and the Lost Boys' mischief. But one day, things changed. This stout bird built a nest in a tree overlooking the Mermaids' Lagoon, but soon after, the nest fell out of the tree and into the water. The bird paid this no mind and continued to sit on its eggs despite the situation. Peter saw and admired this incredible persistence in the face of daunting odds and gave orders that the bird was never to be disturbed again. A lucky thing, too, for in *Peter Pan* it is the Never Bird that saves Peter from drowning on Marooner's Rock after having been unfairly mauled by Hook.

The bird can maneuver its nest around the lagoon with its wings in quite an odd manner which it picked up soon after its nest landed in the water. It is an intelligent bird and can hold a decent conversation with other birds of its kind, but like most animals, does not understand the languages of humans and is not willing to learn. To be fair, most people are the same way about it, so her stubbornness about the matter should not be judged too harshly.

It's quite funny to watch an animal and a human try to communicate, as they are much like people who speak different languages trying to speak to each other. They work at it slowly and surely and with a great amount of effort, hopeful that the other will be able to glean just the slightest bit of

meaning from what they are trying to tell them. Of course, they almost always fail.

For example, when the Never Bird tried to give its nest to Peter so he could float upon it until he reached the shore, she said, “I—want—you—to—get—into—the—nest.” Of course, all Peter’s untrained ears heard was, “Quack—quack—quack—quack—quack—quack—quack—quack.” Never Birds have short tempers and like most animals—humans included—get frustrated with such silliness rather quickly.

Eventually the Never Bird simply shoved her nest against the rock and flew off, hoping Peter would get the message, which of course he did. He was even kind enough to take the Never Bird’s two eggs from her nest and place them in the pirate Starkey’s hat (which he had left behind in the earlier brawl).

Starkey’s hat worked so well as a nest that, even after Peter had gotten ashore, the bird decided to keep on using her new hat-nest. Later, Starkey often came down to the lagoon to forlornly watch the bird floating around in his hat. The hat-nest was such a success that now all Never Birds build their nests in this manner: deep in the middle and with a large brim upon which the young ones can stretch their little wings.

The Crocodile

This is the crocodile that ate Hook’s hand. She liked the taste of it so much that she has followed him around ever since, no matter where he goes, licking her lips in the hopes of getting to eat the rest of him. Smee once pointed out to Captain Hook that this could, in a way, be considered a compliment of the highest order, but Hook took little consolation in that idea.

The croc would've had Hook a long time ago had she not also swallowed a clock which continues to tick and which warns Hook of her coming. When the clock runs down and turns silent, she'll get him for sure, but in the meantime, just the sound of a clock's ticking can send Hook scurrying off to hide.

Oddly, it turns out that the crocodile's clock is the only one on the island, with the exception of a small watch hanging in Hook's quarters. If the children want to know what time it is, they have to find the crocodile and then hang around her until the clock strikes the hour. Peter will often do this at Wendy's request so that she can figure out how close it is to the children's bed time.

Part 3

Places

Neverland is the fantasy land that children visit in their dreams. Each version of Neverland differs at least slightly from the next according to the preferences of and the influences upon the child doing the dreaming, but there do tend to be some almost universal similarities. Neverland is always an island of some sort, and it is generally a place where the children can have loads of adventures but still, at least upon occasion, feel safe.

Neverland: The Imagination Game is usually played in the version of Neverland set forth in J.M. Barrie's novel *Peter Pan*. That is to say, it is the Neverland that Peter Pan took Wendy, John and Michael away to visit and live on for a short while. You should by no means feel that you must limit your own personal Neverland to looking just like the Darlings'. It can be just about anything that you and the children you're playing with would like. In this book,

however, we concentrate almost solely upon the traditional Neverland, as it is the only one that we can be sure that most people have any experience at all with.

Neverland

How does one get to Neverland? According to Peter Pan, who you would think might know, “Second to the right, and then straight on till morning.”

Now what exactly does that mean? Absolutely nothing. It’s just what Peter says, and Peter simply says the first thing that pops into his head. The only way you can actually get to Neverland is if the island is looking out for you, which if you’re innocently off searching for adventure, it won’t fail to do.

Neverland is a long ways away (or maybe only a short ways away, but a way filled with so much as to make it seem like almost forever). On the way there, you can playfully feed yourself by snatching food from birds, who of course do their best to snatch it right back. The birds don’t mind; it’s a delightful game to them, too.

When you finally get there, you can’t miss it. The sun itself, in a friendly gesture, directs a million golden arrows towards its magical shores. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on your point of view), this doesn’t long last. Sometimes Neverland is a dark and creepy place, too, with lots of shadowy crannies for people and creatures and other things to hide in.

The weather on Neverland is incredibly variable. Most often it seems like summer or spring, but when evil is afoot, things grow colder and snow has even been known to fall in the middle of such nights.

Time in Neverland also works differently than it does back in the real world. On the island, time is told by the moons and suns, and there are more

of these there than on the mainland. What seems like a long time spent on the island is actually a much shorter time back home.

Most notably, Neverland has an odd effect upon the people who visit it and spend any amount of time there. After a while you begin to forget all about the mainland and the life you led back there. In fact, if no one were to ask you about it and start you thinking, you might actually forget you ever lived anywhere but Neverland.

Mountains

Although not explored much in *Peter Pan*, Neverland's mountains can provide endless opportunities for adventure. There can be vast mines full of endless treasures and gnomes, and dwarves and other creatures living in subterranean cities just begging to be explored. The mountains call out to those who want to know what goes on beneath Neverland's lush facade.

Sugar Cane Field

This is a large field chock full of tall, ripe sugar cane. It's a great place to hide from the Natives or the pirates or to simply hang out. Besides which, the cane makes a lovely, sweet snack for the ever-voracious children.

Wendy doesn't like the Lost Boys to spend too much time down in the sugar cane field for fear they'll rot their teeth, but they don't let this stop them. They just find a Native or a pirate or an animal and get it to chase them into the field so they have an excuse to hide between the sugary stalks.

Kidd's Creek

Kidd's Creek is named for Captain Kidd, the notorious pirate who made his last stand against the Neverland Natives here. Every the slippery

one, Kidd managed to escape with his life, although just barely. In the process, he left behind not only several of his men, but his name as well.

Kidd's Creek empties into the ocean at the mouth of the Pirate River.

The Pirate River

The Pirate River empties out into the sea in the bay in which the pirate ship is anchored. It's named the Pirate River because the pirates often take their dinghy up it to get as far into Neverland as possible before disembarking upon the banks of the river and exposing themselves fully to attack by the Lost Boys and the Natives.

The Native Camp

This is where the Neverland Natives have lived since the beginning of time (or possibly since the beginning of Neverland, which may have been even earlier). All of the Native braves, squaws, warriors, maidens and papooses live here, farming and hunting, cooking and sewing, and doing all of the other things necessary to keeping up their way of life, which they do quite well.

If the children make friends with the Natives, they will be invited to the camp for a extravagant feast, but until then, the camp is strictly off limits to them. The Natives like their privacy and will fight to the death to keep outsiders away. The pirates are well aware of this and give the area a wide berth.

Mysterious River

The Mysterious River is the main source of fresh water in Neverland. It nearly entirely circles the mountains, and both ends of the river are located

fairly close together. There's a ford somewhere in it near its midway point where the Neverland beasts like to come and drink.

It's often hard to tell which end of the river is the start and which is the finish as the river switches the direction it flows in from day to day. One day it might flow clockwise, and then it'll go counterclockwise the next. That's why it's called the Mysterious River.

Slightly Gulch

Slightly Gulch probably once held an arm of the Mysterious River long ago when it still ran from the center of the island out into the sea. When the river doubled back on itself, this old path dried up and formed a huge gulch.

It's called Slightly Gulch because it was here that the Battle of Slightly Gulch occurred soon after Slightly stumbled across a Native scouting band. See below for more details about this legendary battle.

The Mermaids' Lagoon

"If you shut your eyes and are a lucky one, you may see at times a shapeless pool of lovely pale colors suspended in the darkness; then if you squeeze your eyes tighter, the pool begins to take shape, and the colors become so vivid that with another squeeze they must go one fire. But before you see the fire, you see the lagoon. This is the nearest you get to it on the mainland, just one heavenly moment; if there could be two moments you might see the surf and hear the mermaids singing."

— *Peter Pan*, Chapter 8, The Mermaids' Lagoon

In the center of this watery paradise lies Marooner's Rock (see below), upon which the Mermaids lay all day long while combing their hair and bathing in the sun. Wendy and the Boys love to come here to swim and play in

on hot days. Most often they stay clear of the Mermaids who have made it quite clear that they would rather leave than be bothered, but sometimes, just for mischief's sake, they take it to them for all they're worth before the finny maidens can slip away.

Often after a gentle rain, a rainbow settles across the lagoon and the mermaids surface by the hundreds to play with multi-colored bubbles made of the rainbow water. These bubbles are actually more like balls, and the mermaids love to play with them by knocking them along the rainbow until they burst. There's a goal at each end of the rainbow, and only the keepers are allowed to use their hands; the other Mermaids are only permitted to use their tails or their heads. The Mermaids love this game, and they play and play until the rainbow finally fades away.

Marooner's Rock

Marooner's Rock earned its name twice. Not so far away, at one edge of the lagoon, there's a boat with its sides stove in, sunk long ago from a rough encounter with the massive stone formation. That's how it first got its name.

Since then, many evil ships' captains, Hook included of course, have made it work for the second way it earns its name. These dastardly men have been known to leave innocents and other foes tied upon the rock to die, for when the tide comes in, the rock is submerged and those marooned upon it are drowned.

There is a staff stuck into the rock which at one point marked a buried treasure trove left there some time ago by pirates long forgotten. The Lost Boys found it and dug it up long ago, and since they had no use for the trinkets in the case, they just tossed the tidbits to the gulls as if they were food.

Needless to say, the gulls didn't find this nearly quite so funny as the Boys did.

In *Peter Pan*, Peter took the staff and used it for a mast and his shirt for a sail along with the Never bird's nest for a boat when he was left stranded by Hook upon the rock.

The Jolly Roger

Home to Hook and his pirates, the Jolly Roger is a good-sized brig (a 2-masted, square-rigged wooden ship) that has fallen into disrepair. In his obsession with the death of Peter Pan, Hook has let his attention wander from his ship's care, leaving it the less-than-capable hands of Mr. Smee. The ship is filthy dirty from its crow's nest to its keel and, like the pirates themselves, in dire need of a good scrubbing.

The living quarters for the men are fairly Spartan, and they often sleep above decks. Hook's cabin, though, is full of all sorts of treasures and knickknacks and mementos of the various people and places he's plundered.

The ship is outfitted with several standard cannons and one particularly large one. The big cannon's name is Long Tom. When old Tom is fired, while its shots are searching for a target they seem to say: "Where are they, where are they, where are they?" Just the wind from one of these formidable shots can send a child flying.

Probably the most terrifying part of the ship is what is normally just an ordinary piece of lumber. It may look normal, but dozens of men have met their end after walking along this piece of wood to a watery doom. Hook calls this evil board Johnny Plank.

In his arrogance, Hook never posts a watch on the ship, boasting that the wind of his name frightens away foes for no less than a mile around. This

is clearly not true, as Peter and the Lost Boys and the Natives have all made small raids upon the *Jolly Roger* on several occasions, but Hook's men always seem to spot them before they can do too much harm anyway.

The pirates have a dinghy they use to get to shore with and to run evil errands like leaving victims on Marooner's Rock. They only have one such boat, though, and when it's in use, the only way for the rest of them to get around is to swim. Not even Hook is above taking a dive in the drink when he quickly needs to get from point A to point B.

The Little House (Wendy's House)

When Wendy was shot down by Tootles while approaching Neverland, it took her some time to recover. Peter and the Lost Boys didn't want to pick her up and drag her into the Home Below the Ground, as they thought that would be disrespectful to treat their new mother so. They couldn't very well leave her out in the open, though, for she'd likely die of exposure. What were they to going to do?

Peter had the answer, of course: they'd build a little house right around her where she lay. When the Lost Boys got confused as to what kind of a house Wendy would like, Peter asked her to sing to them her answer. Without opening her eyes (which would've spoiled their fun), she did.

The little house ended up exactly like she wanted, or at least as close as the Lost Boys could manage. It has a roof of green moss and red walls with little windows poked into them. The windows have blinds made of large yellow leaves, and the outside of it is covered with make-believe roses. A knocker made of the sole of Tootles' shoe hangs on the door, and John's hat with the top knocked out of it serves as the chimney.

The house has a bit of magic about it. The house's chimney smokes real smoke, even though there's no fireplace inside, and no matter how many friends need to cram into it, there's always seems to be just enough room.

Peter and the Boys never sleep in the little house. Wendy always orders them into their nightgowns and then tucks them safely in their beds in the Home Below the Ground (see below) as they begin to nod off. Sometimes she sleeps in the Home Below, but when she chooses to stay in the little house, Peter stands guard outside it all night long to keep her safe from pirates and wolves. He usually falls asleep before too long, but never has Wendy come to harm because of it yet.

In *Peter Pan*, when the pirates captured the children, they tossed them all into the little house and carried it upon their shoulders to their dinghy. They left it abandoned there upon the shore, but it didn't remain there for long. After the Darlings left Neverland, the fairies hauled the little house high up into the trees. Peter and Tink lived in it, safe from the pirates who had obviously discovered the location of the Home Below the Ground.

The Home Below the Ground

This is where Peter and the Lost Boys hang their bearskins. There are seven entrances to the Home, each in the center of a large, hollowed out tree. After Wendy, John and Michael arrive, Peter made three more, so there are then ten. Hook had never been able to find these holes, until later in the story, that is, when he sits on the Home's chimney.

When enemies are around, the Boys plug up the chimney with a mushroom so as to leave no trace of the fire below. If you pull the plug out, the smoke pours out and you can hear them talking below. The Boys feel safe within the Home. It's a great shock to them when Hook finally finds it.

Hook laughs at the Boys because they each have their own hole by which they enter the Home Below the Ground, but it's really quite practical. It's difficult, you see, to get up or down a hole that's too big or too small for you, and none of the Boys were exactly the same size.

To get down a hole, you simply climb in and take a deep breath and you slide gently down into the home. To leave the home, you get into a hole and breath in and out quickly and so wriggle your way to the top. It's tough getting up and down at first, particularly if you're afraid of tight spaces, but after a day or two, it's just like crossing the street.

The holes are measured to fit you as well as your clothes. This means that after the hole is made for you, you must maintain that weight, not becoming any heavier or lighter. If you don't fit the hole on the first try, Peter does things to you to make sure that you fit. After that, you generally try to keep your shape.

Each of the holes have latched doors. Some of the doors fit their holes well and others do not. Peter's, for instance, fits perfectly, while Slightly's has a largish gap between the top of the door and the top of the hole. Tink often enters the Home through Peter's hollow tree, but in a pinch, she could fly in over the top of Slightly's door.

The Home Below the Ground is one large room with a dirt floor, perfect for digging up nightcrawlers if you want to go fishing. Handily, a Never Tree grows in the center of the room, which is quite handy. Never Trees, you see, never die. Nor can they be killed. Every morning, the Boys saw the tree's stump down level with the ground. By tea-time (mid afternoon), it has grown about two feet, so the Boys just slap a door over it and use it as a table. When they're through, they clear the table and saw the trunk down again so they

have more room to play. This works out extremely well for them spacewise, plus they never need to go out to search for firewood.

There is a small recess in one corner of the Home Below the Ground, no larger than a bird cage. It is often kept covered by a small curtain, as this is Tinker Bell's apartment, and Tink likes her privacy. And what an apartment it is! It's the most lavishly laid out bedchamber a woman of any size ever had, filled with all sorts of rare, valuable and sumptuous fairy furniture. Tink is rightfully quite proud of it—some might say conceited—and so she seem to always be looking down her nose at the rest of the home.

Large hardy mushrooms, which the Boys use for stools, sprout from the floor, and the Lost Boys axes and other assorted tools and weapons lay in a pile next to the fireplace which takes up almost an entire wall of the Home. Wendy often dries her little family's washing by stringing it on fibers in front of the gently burning fire while she cooks their dinner.

Wendy cooks wonderfully for the Boys, and they eat much better than they ever did before. Peter is careful not too let them gain so much weight that they won't fit up their trees. Whenever he thinks they've got it too good, he makes them all have a make-believe meal instead of a real one. On the other hand, one of the best ways to get a good meal is to convince Peter that you're becoming too skinny to properly fit up your hollow tree.

Peter enjoys the make-believe meals, even if no one else does. He's so good at make-believe, you see, that while he's eating a make-believe meal, you can actually see his belly getting rounder.

Wendy has certain rules during meals which must (or at least should) be obeyed. For one, you cannot hit back at meals. Instead, you must raise your hand and point out the offender, stating "I complain of so-and-so." This seems

like it could work, and it would if the Boys didn't so often forget to follow the rules on some occasions and then follow them too strictly on others.

Wendy is also always on the Boys about changing their flannels (their underclothes) and taking their medicine before they go to bed. Even though the medicine is really only water, she shakes it up in a hollowed out gourd, measure it out by the drop and serves it up to them on a spoon and the Boys all make a great show of not liking the taste.

The bed is turned up against one of the other walls during the day and only let down at 6:30. It takes up nearly the entire room, and all of the Boys sleep on it, with the exception of Michael who, acting as mother Wendy's baby, sleeps in a basket which hangs from the ceiling. After a pillow fight or some other rowdiness, they all calm down and are in bed by seven o'clock, ready for Wendy's story—the final one of the night.

Towards the end of the Darlings' stay in Neverland, Wendy tells one story more frequently than any other. It is a story the Lost Boys love best and Peter hates the most. It's the story of how the Darlings left their home in Kensington Gardens and how they will one day return, and the window to their bedroom will still be waiting open for them as proof of their mother's undying faith and love.

Peter staunchly denies that this is true. He claims that he tried to come back home once, and when he did, the window was shut and barred and another little boy had taken his place in his mother's heart. Whether this is true or is simply a story Peter tells to the Boys to keep them from leaving Neverland is unimportant. Either way, Peter believes it and it goes a long way to explaining why Peter feels as he does about parents and the rest of the grownups on the mainland.

Part 5

Adventure Ideas

Adventures happen daily on Neverland, if not even more often. In *Neverland: The Imagination Game*, your stay on Neverland should be any but boring. Every step, every moment should be full of potential just waiting to be taken advantage of. And it's up to the storyteller to make it all happen.

Peter once got a great kick out of trying a new sort of adventure Wendy invented. It involved having absolutely no adventures at all, just like Michael and John had done all of their lives. To Peter, this was an extremely novel notion, and it thrilled him to no end. Eventually, like with all other things, the thrill wore off. In the meantime, though, John and Michael had to pretend to enjoy it or suffer Peter's annoyance. Things should never be like this in your game, except maybe for a short while, as a little joke.

If you've just read through the rest of this book, you're probably brimming over with dozens of ideas for adventures to take your players along on. If so, that's great! More power to you. But for those of you who may be struggling with coming up with some fresh ideas about what you're going to do, you've come to the right place.

Below, you'll find a number of adventure seeds: short little ideas which can be the jumping off points for larger, full-blown adventures. After that, by way of example, there's a ready-to-go adventure all set for you to start in on right away.

Memory Games

Do you remember things about their homes? Wendy might ask you about your parents to make sure you haven't forgotten them. And on later visits, she might ask you all about what you think you remember about Neverland.

Peter refuses to play memory games about life before Neverland, as he refuses to admit he had one, but he might be willing to quiz the children about Neverland. Strangely, Wendy's questions are in the past tense, since she's beginning to forget all about home herself.

Playing Follow the Leader

This was a favorite game of Peter's, whether he was flying out over the ocean or he was roaming about Neverland.

Any time Peter tries to do something difficult, like swooping down and touching the tail of a shark for instance, have each child in the line roll in turn to see if they successfully copy Peter's feat. The game should start out simply at first, with Peter doing easy things, like running three times around a tree or doing a somersault, and then becoming progressively harder, like swinging from tree to tree on a vine.

Play until the children get tired of it, and end it by having Peter do something so insanely difficult that no one could follow it. If the children try, give them a chance, and if they fail, have Peter rescue them before they get hurt.

The Battle of Slightly Gulch

If you like, you could reenact the famous Battle of Slightly Gulch. While the children are walking along the gulch, they stumble upon an Native scouting party and a scuffle ensues.

Remember that no one is to be hurt. If a Native brave catches a child, he'll probably just sit on him or her until he or she manages to squirm out from underneath him. Similarly, the children should not seriously injure the Natives.

As the fight is going along, Peter will suddenly switch sides in a fight, just to make sure that things are fair. When he does this, he calls out, "I'm a Native today. What are you Tootles?"

The reply to this is obviously, "I'm a Native today, too. What are you, Nibs?"

This goes on down the line until all of the children are Natives. At this point, there's no reason for anyone to fight because they're all on the same side. What are they going to do?

Well, if one of the players suggests it, the Natives will be more than happy to switch sides and become Lost Boys for the day so that the battle can go on.

Hook's Cake

This is best run more like a running joke. Hook cooks a cake with sickly, green frosting and leaves it down by the edge of the sea in the Mermaids' Lagoon. He figures that the Boys will eat the rich, damp cake and die of a horrible case of indigestion. He and his men keep leaving it all around the island, waiting for the Boys to eat it, but Wendy keeps snatching it out of their hands and shoving it to one side before they can swallow any of it.

Eventually it'll get hard as a rock. When this happens, Peter'll grab it and use it to bomb the ship. He won't actually hit anyone with it, but Hook will trip over it in the dark.

In Search of the Never Bear

Soon after the children arrive on the island, they'll run into the Lost Boys who, as they will no doubt notice, are each wearing the skin of a bear that they killed. The Lost Boys will insist that if the newcomers want to join their band that they go out and get skins of their own.

Now there are plenty of bears on the island, and if the players like, they can rush off and try to kill one of them, but as you might guess, taking on a good sized bear with their bare hands or armed only with small knives can be quite a daunting task for a group of children. And if you consider the fact that they'll need a skin for each of them, the odds of them surviving this adventure seem to go down dramatically. Accomplishing such a task should be nearly impossible, you would think. So then, if it's nearly impossible for a bunch of kids to kill and skin a bear for each kid in the group, how did the Lost Boys manage it?

Answer: they didn't.

None of the Lost Boys has ever killed a bear, or any of the other creatures on the island for that matter. They may like to mischief the animals on occasion, but they're just having fun and mean them no harm. The animals are aware of this, and it's for this reason that they don't hunt down and kill the children themselves. All in all, everyone is generally quite friendly.

So how do they get their skins, you ask? Why, from the Never Bear, of course.

The Never Bear is a comparatively small beast. He's only about as large around as Slightly, and on his hind legs, he stands just taller than Peter. His is a gentle nature. He feeds himself mostly on nuts and berries, a diet supplemented only by the occasional fish caught fresh from the Mysterious River.

The odd thing about the Never Bear is that he sheds his skin from time to time, much like a snake might do if it were actually a bear. Conveniently, the Never Bear always returns to his lair to remove his skin, as it apparently can be a lengthy process. The Bear has been doing this for several years and has built up quite a collection of skins inside which he likes to hibernate during the winters (which on Neverland are rather short).

The first thing the players have to do is extract this information from either Peter or the Lost Boys. If they are unable to do this, or simply don't think to ask the appropriate questions, send them out to hunt bears. After an encounter or two with a regular bear (which should not, of course, end up with them successfully obtaining a skin), have them run into a naked bear.

This is the Never Bear, who has just recently shed his skin again. As you can imagine, it takes him a while to grow another thick coat of hair on his new skin, and in the meantime, he has to walk around buck naked. He is just a little bit embarrassed by this state of affairs, but he has to eat, so he is out foraging for food.

When the Bear spots the children, he blushes a bright red all over his body and heads for his lair at top speed. If the children are quick about it, they can follow him back to his den in the foothills of the mountains. If not, Peter will show them where it is if they ask him about it later.

When the players get to the den, the Never Bear is holed up inside and refuses to come out. He is entirely embarrassed by his nakedness and will growl menacingly at any one who approaches the mouth of the cave.

Now it's up to the players to do some brainwork. How are they going to get the Never Bear out his cave so that they can grab a couple of his skins?

Some of the children may question if it's right to take the skins. If they do Peter will assure them that when the Bear is covered in a new coat of fur,

he's always been more than happy to let the Lost Boys use his furs. In fact, the Bear seems to be flattered by all the attention. So much so in fact, that the Bear has gone as far as protecting the children who wear his skins as if they were his cubs. It's just that right now, the Bear is embarrassed.

Unfortunately, they need the skins now, since otherwise they can't be new members of the Lost Boys.

If the children are clever, they'll realize that the Bear is hungry. If they lay down some food in a trail leading away from the den, the Bear will follow it, although at a far enough distance that he can be sure that the children can't see his nakedness. While one child or group of children leads the Bear away from the cave, the others can grab as many of the skins as they need.

Once they've done this, they can head back to the Home Below the Ground and become full members of the Lost Boys.

A Final Word

Thanks for taking the time to learn all about *Neverland: The Imagination Game*. You won't regret it. Time spent with children to sharpen their problem-solving skills and broadening their imagination is always worth the while.

If you enjoy the game, please mention it to your friends and neighbors. Introduce it to your local schools. Together, we can all have fun while we learn how to interact with each other and the world around us, whether it's make-believe or real.

Good luck to you and your players in all your adventures in Neverland. May you learn as much from them as they do from you.