

STEPPING STONES™

a chapter book

CLASSIC

Peter Pan



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Chapter One

Peter Breaks Through

All children—except one—grow up. They begin to know it after they are two. And that was when Wendy Darling began to know it.

The Darlings lived in London at number 14. Wendy was the oldest. Then came John and little Michael. Mrs. Darling loved her children and wanted everything just so. But Mr. Darling was always worried about money. So the children had a nurse.

But the nurse was a huge dog named Nana.

Nana's kennel was in the night nursery. She awoke at the slightest cry. Nana was a treasure, as Mr. Darling well knew. But sometimes he worried that the neighbors talked. Even worse, he worried that Nana did not admire him enough. Being admired was very important to Mr. Darling.

The Darlings were a happy family. That is, until Peter Pan came.

Mrs. Darling first learned of Peter when she was tidying up her children's minds. All good mothers do this after their children go to sleep. It is quite like tidying up drawers. Mrs. Darling tucked the bad thoughts down at the bottom. She folded the beautiful thoughts right on top. Ready for

her children to put on as soon as they awoke in the morning.

Have you ever seen a map of a child's mind? Each one is different. But all of them are very confusing. A child's mind is a Neverland. It is filled with skipping stones and chocolate pudding, verbs, and the first day of school. There are zigzag lines everywhere. Those are the roads on the island.

For the Neverland is always an island. It has caves and pirates and lagoons and mermaids. And children are always at play on those magic shores.

Mostly Mrs. Darling did not worry about what she found in her children's minds. But then she came across the word *Peter*.

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One magical night, the window to the children's bedroom bursts open. In flies Peter Pan, the boy who never grows up. He whisks Wendy and her brothers away to the secret island of Neverland. But watch out! The pirate Captain Hook has wicked plans. No one is safe—not Wendy, not the fairy Tinker Bell, and *especially* not Peter Pan!

