

Peter pan- coming of age

Life



PETER PAN- COMING OF AGE Coming of age can be simplified as the stepping stones that path our way to adulthood and intellectual maturity. It is a period of change experienced by a young person when they face a new way of understanding and accepting new ideas and views. The time when this transition occurs is different in everyone. Certain individuals reach this stage through a tragic, painful event which affects them to such extent that they are completely changed. Other individuals reach this time by simply growing older and having a better understanding of the world around them.

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M Barrie's Peter Pan is a touching portrayal of a young girl who grows up through various events. The main protagonist Wendy first encounters Peter in a nursery where she was brought up. Along with her two brothers, John and Michael went to the enchanted island Neverland which is the home to Peter. It is also there where Wendy encounters love for the first time, and is forced to reconcile the various facets of her emerging womanhood. Family relationships can influence the way we come of age quite drastically. In the Victorian era, parents believed in strict conformity in their children, to set them right from an early age. Forget them, Wendy. Forget them all. Come with me where you'll never, never, never have to worry about grown up things again. " Quoted Peter. Repetition is used here to emphasise Peter's desperate need of a mother. Wendy chose to go to Neverland with Peter not because of rebellion but she wished so much to become a mother to Peter, without even hesitating of leaving her parents behind. The way she thinks is a consequence of the education given to Victorian girls. To learn how to

become good wives and good mothers. After a period of time in Neverland, Peter and the lost boys experiences what it's like to have a mother.

This turns out to be very significant, because after having a mum. All except Peter wants to come back to reality, to the stage where you grow up. Wendy also misses home and her parent's love. Being the elder sister, she knows she has the responsibility, not only to take care of the boys but to realise that the most important thing in the real world is to have a mother. Decision making is a process both the lost boys and Wendy had to go through. Making the right decision to leave their childhood once and for all and take their first step into adulthood.

The author describes Wendy's thoughts and feelings throughout this decision making process. The internal view of the character enables us to relate to her and understand her better. The ' window' is symbolic in Barrie's book. It was through this window that the dream of living in Neverland came true, as the fulfilment of an incredible adventure, and it was again through the same window that all adventure came to an end and the children came back home. The whole cycle of coming of age begins at the window and ends at the window.

Wendy finally understands the full meaning of looking at things from a different perspective; as they say " One never really knows a man until one stands in his shoes and walk around in them. " Just taking on the role of being a mother to Peter and the lost boys was enough. Coming of age is inevitable; it isn't about choice or obligations. It is a process that we all must face at one stage or another. When one learns to put oneself in different

perspective, one sheds the irresponsibility of childhood. It is then when one truly matures into a young adult from a child.