

Live Theatre Analysis; Peter Pan. Year 9

Name:

Name of production: Peter Pan

Date and venue: National Theatre 2017, 2020

Production Director: Sally Cookson

Writer: JM Barrie

Music: Benji Bowler

Set Design: Michael Vale

Lighting: Aideen Malone

Costume: Katie Sykes

Puppet Director: Toby Olie

Style and genre of production:

Physical Theatre



Character: Captain Hook

Use these pages to respond to the questions:

1. What dramatic impact does it have on the audience to have the role of Captain Hook played by a woman?

One of the key ways in which Hook being played by a woman has a dramatic impact on the audience, is the fact that there is only one other grown woman, who plays the role of a woman in the performance, and that is Mrs Darling. Despite the fact that both the characters are played by the same actress, when we compare and analyse the 2 characters, we can clearly understand that there is a substantial difference between the two of them. This is illustrated by the fact that Mrs Darling is a kind-hearted a comforting woman, who stays at home most days in order to complete housework. This clearly highlights that the performance is set in the Edwardian time period, as women were subservient to men as shown through the fact that the man of the house is the one to tell the woman what to do. This is quite unnerving for the audience since the character of Hook completely contrasts the common role of women at the time. For example, she is none of the things that you would expect from an Edwardian Woman, as she can be described with words such as brutal, cruel-hearted and vengeful, as shown when she wants Peter Pan to pay for what he has done. In addition to this, another way in which Hook being played by a woman has a dramatic impact, is the way that women are often people whom we would trust, and as Hook is probably the most untrustworthy person the stage, fear is struck into the audience. As well as this, men are often seen to have mercy towards women, however, the audience is clearly being deceived by this woman who should be both kind and loving, as she would have no mercy for neither man nor woman, unlike a man may behave. Therefore, we can clearly understand that there are several dramatic impacts as a result of Captain Hook being played by a woman.

2. What makes Captain Hook so menacing (threatening, dangerous) and fascinating to watch on stage?

Include comments on **key performance skills** for the five points:

1. **Voice** (RP Received pronunciation she talks posh!)
2. **Gait** – way in which she walks around stage (swaggers, confidence, arrogant)
3. **Gestures** – how she uses her hook (as a weapon)
4. **Facial expressions** – dramatic use of make-up, teeth braces.
5. **Costume** – how does it convey the Edwardian period?
Age, status and emotional state of the character
(purple colour of dress, feathered hat)

Voice is one of the many ways in which Hook can be seen as a mean and menacing person. For example, the volume of her voice is very loud, which is a factor that strikes fear into both the audience and those around her. In addition to this, her voice often drops from a high-pitched tone to a rather low-pitched tone, to create a sinister atmosphere. This links to the fact that her mood often drops as well throughout the performance. One scene that illustrates this, is the one where one of her crew begins to cry when they rip the head off the teddy bear; her voice starts very high to try and convey sympathy, and then it abruptly lowers again when her mood suddenly changes to anger. Furthermore, she uses received pronunciation, which is uncommon for a pirate who we would expect to speak in almost the opposite tone. This conveys that she not only has status over several of the other characters, but also that she should be taken seriously, and clearly conveys her influence over those around her. Moreover, Captain Hook almost walks around the stage like a man, which is once again a factor that conveys status and influence over her crewmates which are mostly men, and this influence a woman would have over a man would be quite unusual at the time period of the Edwardian era, as it was usual the men that had status over women.

The actress of Captain Hook also uses many facial expressions and gestures which she uses as a way to show that she is a menacing and dangerous character in the production of 'Peter Pan'. One of these is the way how she often glares her metallic teeth at the audience, which stand out on her face vividly with the makeup that she also wears, making her look almost ghost-like. These teeth can be almost associated with a shark, which is a sinister creature, and hints to the idea that Hook is like a shark with her mean characteristics. In addition to this, a gesture that Captain Hook often uses is how she sways around her hook freely, which is not only used as a weapon, but also as a means to intimidate all those around her. This is illustrated throughout the first act, where the rest of her crew flinch and shudder as she brandishes her hook towards them.

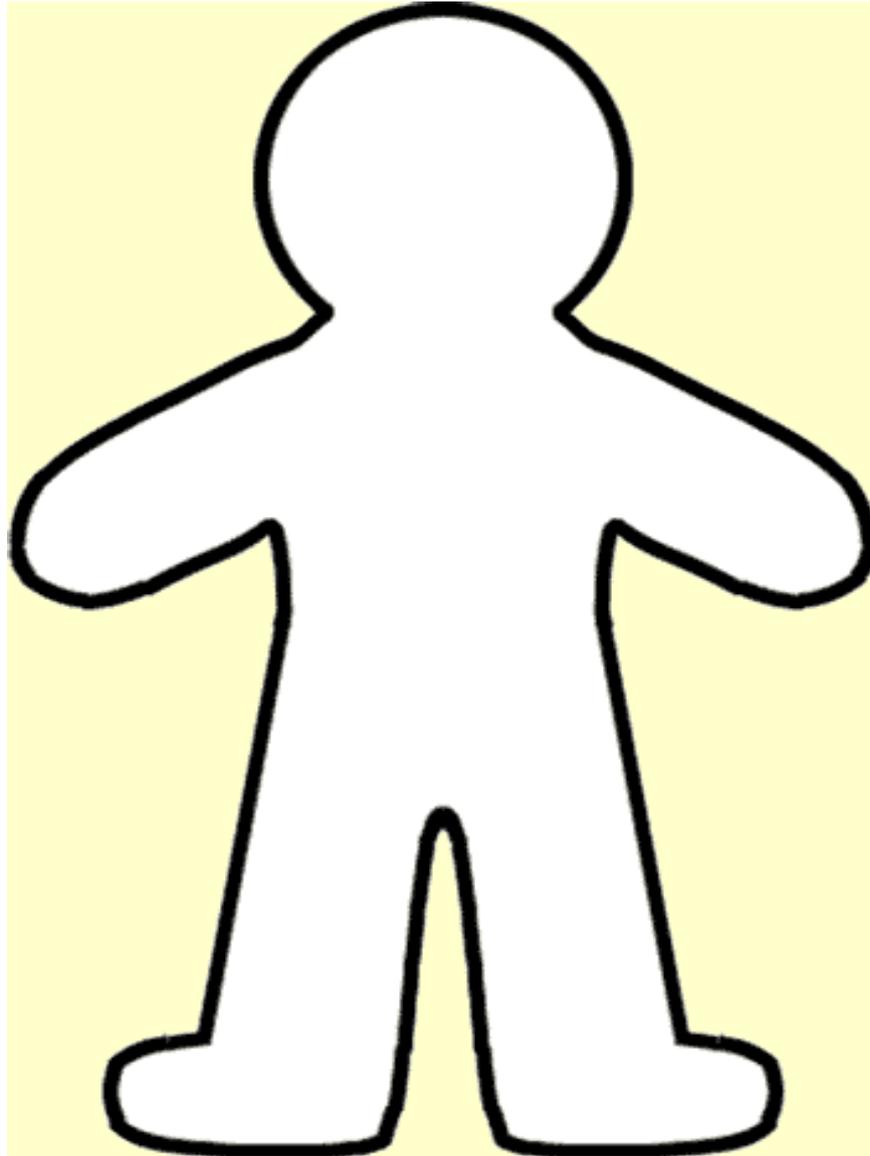
In terms of costume, the character of Hook wears a purple frill dress with a rather tight waist which fits in with the Edwardian time period. Also, the purple colour suggests royalty, which conveys that she is quite big-headed and thinks a lot of herself in comparison with the other characters. In many people's eyes the dress, could be seen as the only thing that shows that Hook is being played by a woman, as the character, despite this, is still being played in a manly way, which is fascinating. Therefore, there are several different factors that convey that Captain Hook is a menacing and threatening, but still interesting character on the stage.

3. Role on the wall

Using the outline below, create a detailed profile of Captain Hook.

INSIDE: write down everything you can think of to describe her inner thoughts, feelings and characteristics What makes her who she is on the inside?

OUTSIDE: write down all the external factors that impact on her life. These can be things that have happened to her in the past or present to affect the way she behaves and feels.



Inside

- . She is vengeful, and she wants revenge on a lot of characters, especially Peter Pan.
- . She is a mean and menacing woman and treats others unfairly
- . Her past has shaped who she is now
- . Hook is boastful, and doesn't really care for anyone but herself
- . The only thing that she wants is Peter Pan
- . She is cruel and has little sympathy for others
- . She doesn't like anything or anyone even her own crew probably

Outside

- . She lost her hand because of Peter Pan which has caused her to want revenge on him
- . She probably has no family left which could be a factor why she has no empathy for others
- . The character has begun to notice that many others fear her which is probably what makes her so full of herself.

- . Hook is still yet to have got Peter Pan, which is the source of her anger, but also the source of her drive
- . She may be a narcissist which is a personality disorder which is where people are inflated with their own importance. This might explain why she is a big-headed character that believes she is more important than her other crewmates, which is shown throughout the first act.