

MARY POPPINS

Pamela Lyndon Travers

1934



Literal Questions

- In total, how many people take some medicine? [Five]
- Name these people in the order they take their medicine. [1st Michael, 2nd Jane, 3rd John, 4th Barbara, 5th Mary Poppins herself]
- Match each medicine flavour to the character that drinks it:

Milk	Lime – juice cordial	Rum punch	Strawberry ice
[The twins: John and Barbara]	[Jane]	[Mary Poppins]	[Michael]

Deductive Questions

- At first, did Michael want to take his medicine, yes or no? What 2 things does he do to prove this? [No – wrinkles up his nose and begins to protest] Show your teacher.
- Did Michael like the taste of his medicine, yes or no? How do you know? [Yes – smiled and asked ecstatically for 'More, more, more!']
- Did Barbara enjoy the taste of her medicine? How do you know? [Yes – licked her lips]

Inferential Questions

- What time of day do you think it is? Why? [Bedtime – the label on the medicine bottle states it should be taken at this time and Mary Poppins would keep to the rules]
- Do you think Michael, Jane and the twins come from a rich or poor family? What suggests this? [Rich – they have a nanny]
- What 3 things does Michael say when he protests to Mary Poppins? Act it out. ["I don't want it. I don't need it. I won't!"] What does this tell us about his character? [He can be naughty and stubborn at times. He doesn't like to follow rules or try new things]

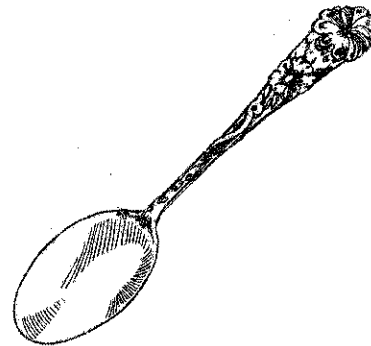
Evaluative Questions

- Do you think Mary Poppins is a good nanny to the children? Why?
- Do you think having a nanny would be a good or a bad thing? Discuss.

▲WARNING: Due to the content of this piece, it is important to end this lesson with a safety discussion, warning of the dangers of taking any medicine that is not meant for you!

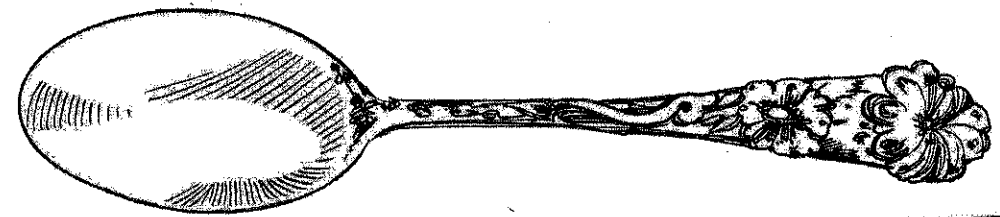
Essential Vocabulary

- Copy the picture of the spoon on a piece of paper.



Fill it with Michael's medicine and colour in your answer. What colour did you use? [Deep red] What word in the story describes this colour? [Crimson]

- Circle the word 'enquired'. What do you think this word means? Look it up in a dictionary.
- Where might you find an 'enquiry' desk? Why would you go to this desk?
- Highlight the word 'lapped'. Which animal do you think of when you hear this word: a cat or a mouse? [A cat] Draw your answer.
- Reread the final paragraph. Find the following:
A noisy word [Smacking]
An action word [Corking, pouring, popped]
An amazing word [Astonishment]
A magical word [Miraculous]
A serious, formal word [Solemnly]
- Which of these words can you act out? Show your teacher.



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Mary Poppins took out a large bottle labelled "One Teaspoon to be Taken at Bedtime". A spoon was attached to the neck of the bottle, and into this Mary Poppins poured a dark crimson fluid.

"Is that your medicine?" enquired Michael, looking very interested.
"No, yours," said Mary Poppins, holding out the spoon to him. Michael stared. He wrinkled up his nose. He began to protest.

"I don't want it. I don't need it. I won't!"
But Mary Poppins' eyes were fixed upon him, and Michael suddenly discovered that you could not look at Mary Poppins and disobey her. There was something strange and extraordinary about her – something that was frightening and at the same time most exciting. The spoon came nearer. He held his breath, shut his eyes and gulped. A delicious taste ran round his mouth. He turned his tongue in it. He swallowed, and a happy smile ran round his face.

"Strawberry ice," he said ecstatically. "More, more, more!"
But Mary Poppins, her face as stern as before, was pouring out a dose for Jane. It ran into the spoon, silvery, greeny, yellowy. Jane tasted it.
"Lime-juice cordial," she said, sliding her tongue deliciously over her lips.
But when she saw Mary Poppins moving towards the Twins with the bottle Jane rushed at her.

"Oh no – please. They're too young. It wouldn't be good for them. Please!"
Mary Poppins, however, took no notice, but with a warning, terrible glance at Jane, tipped the spoon towards John's mouth. He lapped at it eagerly, and by the few drops that were spilt on his bib, Jane and Michael could tell that the substance in the spoon this time was milk. Then Barbara had her share, and she gurgled and licked the spoon twice.

Mary Poppins then poured out another dose and solemnly took it herself.
"Rum punch," she said, smacking her lips and corking the bottle.
Jane's eyes and Michael's popped with astonishment, but they were not given much time to wonder, for Mary Poppins, having put the miraculous bottle on the mantelpiece, turned to them.

"Now," she said, "spit-spot into bed."

