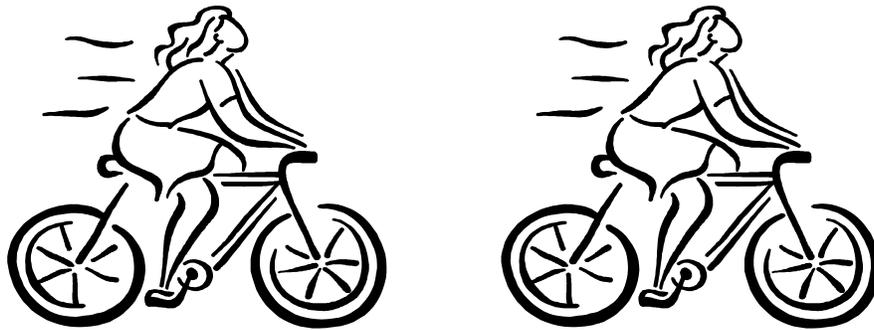


Five Go A-Role-Playing



**A Rainy-Day Role-Playing Game
by
Steve Darlington**

Published By



Disclaimer:

The following document includes rampant sexism, racism, class oppression, cultural imperialism, historical inaccuracy and general old-timey values about How Things Should Be. This is done so in the name of high accuracy to the source material and low comedy for the reader. Ms Blyton was a national treasure and one of the great authors of the last and any century, but she was also a product of her time and upbringing. Part of why she endures is nostalgia for an England-That-Never-Quite-Was, a place as white-washed as it is idyllic, and all the richer for it; as indeed, is our modern world enriched by recalling exactly how things once were. Which is not to say Ms Blyton was not herself progressive: her chief heroine broke social taboos by climbing trees and wearing pants. I encourage all of you reading these rules to be equally defiant of your own cultural prejudices and restraints.

The Other Disclaimer, or Wait, Why Isn't This Called "Lashings of Ginger Beer"?

Of course, Lashings of Ginger Beer is the obvious title any RPG about Enid Blyton's work demands. I declined to use it because I was beaten to the punch by the inestimably clever Simon Washbourne. You can find his game, Lashings of Ginger Beer (totally free!) as well as other great stuff from Beyond Belief Games, on his website at <http://beyondbeliefgames.webs.com/>

Credits

Writing, Design and Layout by Steve Darlington

Playtesters: Tim Bugler, Helga Erichsen, Jody Macgregor and Marselan Wignall

Saved From a Disastrous System Crash Thanks to the Wonderful Donations Of: David Astley, Craig Oxbrow, Luke Maclean, Claire Morris, Rich Ranallo, Andrew Smith, Ilan Muskat, Steve Dempsey and Peter Blake. Lifesavers and sanity-savers, every one of them.

Chapter 1: How to Play

When half-hols roll around each summer, children of all ages, all over England, all have similar dreams: a summer filled with riding bikes, having picnics, perhaps even messing about in boats, and always, always, seeking out exciting adventures. But sometimes, the weather is not quite so obliging as adventurous children would wish. Stuck inside on a rainy day, there is little to do but play a few games of Old Maid or I-Spy. Certainly no chance for adventure. Until now.

In this book you will find rules for creating your own make-believe adventures. One player takes the role of the Story-Teller, and he presents his fellow players with a situation or series of events. The other players play themselves, or children much like them, and tell the Story-Teller what they would do in such a situation, or in response to such events. Then the Story-Teller responds in turn by describing the new situation. With this to-and-fro dialogue, the players create a flight of fancy where they imagine themselves roving around on their bikes, having delicious picnics and stumbling into terrific adventures, all without leaving the parlour!

Example: Justin, the Story-Teller, announces to his friends that instead of sitting inside waiting for the rain to stop, the other children have instead gone to Dorset to visit Uncle Dennis' farm. Gillian knows that on farms she loves to look at the baby chickens, so announces that she will race to the chicken run to see if any have hatched. Justin then describes to Gillian that she finds two new chicks, one yellow and one speckled.

Other times, the Story-Teller will present a player with a choice of what they might want to do, or a problem to be solved. The children must think hard about the best choice or right way to act before telling the Story-Teller their answer. He then decides how things will proceed based on that.

Example: Justin now tells Gillian that she has spied a hole in the chicken run, big enough that some of the chicks may have got out. Justin asks her if she wishes to look for them, or run and tell Uncle Dennis. Gillian tells Justin she will look around first, whereupon Justin announces that she stumbles upon a sly fox lurking in the bushes, looking for delicious chicks to eat! Gillian tries to think of a way to scare off the fox, while Justin decides how a fox might act in response.

In order to make the story interesting, we also use some dice, just like in a game of Crown and Anchor or Snakes and Ladders. Each of the players playing children writes down on a piece of paper things they are good at and things they have trouble with. Just as sometimes, when climbing a tree, children fall out, so too do your imaginary children not always succeed at what they wish to do! When you tell the Story-Teller that you wish to do something he decides is challenging, you must roll two dice and note the total. Your character sheet tells you what you need to roll to succeed. Do so and the story goes on as if you succeeded, fail and the Story-Teller will describe the consequences that brings. Usually this will not be catastrophic, and in many cases, you might even have a chance to try again.

Example: Gillian tells Justin she will try to shoo the fox away before he can snap up any chickens. She tries to do this by running at him and making a loud noise. Justin says that as this requires a Games roll. Gillian rolls two dice and gets a 3 and a 2 – which adds up to a five. This is not high enough, so she fails to scare the fox – she is just not fast enough. Justin says that the fox slinks away unafraid, no doubt to return soon. Gillian will have to find any lost chickens quickly!

Gillian doesn't know yet if any chicks have escaped, and Justin won't tell her until she describes her character doing actions to find out for sure. Nor does she realise that the chicken run was torn open deliberately, by people who want to run Uncle Dennis off his farm! As the game goes along, she and her friends will discover these things as they explore the farm and talk to their relatives. Justin not only makes up what they see, but also what other people say, based on what he knows about them, and how the story has gone along. Uncle Dennis will definitely be cross that a fox is going for his chicks, but he won't come running out to do something, because Gillian hasn't told him about it yet!

There are more rules included in this book, to handle all types of adventures, but now you know enough to play the game. If you'd like to start playing now, you can use the character sheets for Julian, Dick, George and Anne, or the children from the "Island of Adventure" series, all of which are located on pages @@@. If you are a Story-Teller, you should read the adventure plot called "Five Across the Sea" which starts on page @@@. More tips on how to be a Story-Teller are in Chapter Five.

If you wish to make up characters for yourselves or of children of your own devising before you start playing, turn to the next chapter!



Jane and Simon, their packs full, set on down the road to the farm

Chapter 2: Boys and Girls

This chapter tells you how to make a Boy or Girl for you to play in the game. First, select your character sheet. This is the piece of paper that tells you all about the Girl or Boy you are playing, and they are located at the back of this book. If you are a boy, take the sheet headed Harrow Academy For The Sons of Gentlemen. Girls, take the sheet entitled St Clair's School for Young Ladies. Both of these sheets are made to look just like your school report cards, and they represent just this for your character too! Boys are assumed to go to Harrow and Girls to St Clair's as these are very appropriate schools for young children, but if you prefer a different school (such as your own), you can change this.

Naturally, there are different rules for Boys and Girls. Boys are typically rough and tumble scallywags, and even those good at lessons are always up for sports and games and climbing trees. As a result, Boys get a bonus to all their Games rolls. Girls aren't as rough as Boys, and the properly-raised ones would never be found climbing trees, but Girls are known to be far more polite and well-behaved, so grown-ups are more likely to trust them. Girls get a bonus to all their Manners rolls. Both of these modifiers are listed on the character sheet. Girls are also usually not as clever or brave as Boys, so some over-imaginative Girls may want to play Boy characters. This is not very proper, but your Story Teller may allow it.

Now that you have your sheet, it's time to fill it in. Yes, you get to write your own report card! Firstly, decide if you are playing yourself or a make-believe child. If you are not playing yourself, choose a name for your Boy or Girl. If you like, draw a picture in the box of your Boy or Girl, and colour it in with your colours.

Grades

Now, you have to choose your grades in your subjects. Just like in School, having a good grade means your Boy or Girl will be good at doing things related to that subject. To make things simple for the game, we don't list every subject you might learn at school, or every category on which you may be marked. Instead, we have the following four:

Lessons: Lessons covers all the things you learn in class – reading, writing, arithmetic, geometry, history, geography, French, classics, and anything else you can think of. It doesn't include home economics or cooking, though, that comes under Manners. Lessons are just things that use your brain! Julian in the Famous Five is very good at Lessons.

Games: Games covers how good you are at any physical activity, whether it is playing cricket or rugby on the school fields, or climbing trees or fording streams while on summer hols. As mentioned, Boys are naturally much better at Games than Girls. Dick in the Famous Five is very good at Games.

Manners: Children who get high marks in Manners are polite, well-behaved children who never talk out of turn and always make excellent conversation. Well-mannered children are more likely to be trusted by grown-ups, and always

make a good impression on others. Girls are of course naturally more polite than Boys, even when they insist on being tomboys! Anne in the Famous Five is very well-Mannered.

Spunk: Spunk might also be called pluck, courage or determination. Children who are full of spunk are usually full of high spirits at all times. Those with high grades in Spunk are eager to muck in on the rugger field or organise a charity fundraiser. They will also be plucky enough to enter smuggler's caves and spooky cottages. George in the Famous Five is just bursting with Spunk.

Each of these subjects has a rating: A, B or C, just like your school subjects. However, as you know, nobody is good at everything, so you cannot have all As. You may have one of the following combinations instead:

The typical student: A, B, B, C

The gifted student: A, A, C, C

The well-rounded student: B, B, B, B

Once you have chosen which combination you want, assign your grades to whichever subjects you wish. Alternatively, pick the combination which best represents your own abilities! After you have done so, you should also write a number in brackets after your grade. This number we will use for rolling the dice (see the next chapter). **If you have an A write 4, a B write 6 and a C write 8.** It may seem odd to have lower numbers associated with higher grades, but this will be explained in Chapter Four.

A = 4

B = 6

C = 8

If you are a Boy, you need to account for your natural strength, athleticism and tendency for rough-housing. This is done by improving your Games number. If you have an A in Games, write down 3 in brackets instead of 4. If you have a B or C, write down 5 or 7 respectively.

If you are a Girl, the same change applies to your Manners grade, because we all know Girls are more polite and well-mannered than Boys. If you have an A in Manners, write down 3. Write down 5 if you have a grade of B and 7 if you have a grade of C.

Example: Tristan decides he wants to play a really clever brainbox called Steven. He decides that Steven will take the typical combination of grades, so he puts his A grade into Lessons. That fits with being a brainbox! Tristan thinks that Steven is a bit of a shy and reclusive lad who is often late for dinner or rugger practice because he'd rather be building crystal radios and such, so he puts his Manners at C. Thus his Games and Spunk are set at B. His final grades are:

Lessons: A (4)

Games: B (5)

Manners: C (8)

Spunk: B (6)

Activities

Next, you must choose an Activity. This is something you do after school or on the hols: the sport you play, hobby you enjoy and any clubs and socs you belong to. Naturally, Boys do different Activities to Girls – take note, Boys, because this is a good reason why you should let some Girls come along on your adventures! Chapter Three describes the Activities in more detail, and lists many of the common advantages each Activity might provide, but this list is not exhaustive! If you can think of a new Activity to do, or something different an Activity might help with, suggest it to your Story Teller.

Activities make it easier to do things on adventures. For example, if you are fond of an Activity that involves lots of climbing (such as doing Gymnastics) you likely find it easier to climb up a tree. If you study Department, you will always make a good impression on adults and society. In general, you should add one to a die roll when your Activity would help you out.

If you can't decide what Activity your Boy or Girl might do, we have numbered them so you can roll a die to find out instead.

Boy Activities:

1. Boy Scouts
2. Cadets
3. First Aid
4. Gymnastics *or* Rugger
5. Historical Society
6. Pony Club

Girl Activities:

1. Department
2. Domestic Arts
3. First Aid
4. Girl Guides *or* Women's League
5. Historical Society
6. Pony Club

Possession

Next, you get to choose one special possession that your Boy or Girl owns. Obviously, Boys and Girls have all sorts of possessions as well as this! In particular, all children in the game are assumed to have bikes, satchels or backpacks, stout walking shoes, rainslickers and boots for the wet and of course plenty of food and drink for adventures. To get to adventures, every child also has a bicycle with room for hampers on the back.

Once again, Boys can have more and different possessions than Girls, because Boys are more interested in such things. You can choose one or roll two dice and add them together and read the result off the table. Just like Activies, if you have a useful Possession you can usually add one to your die roll. See Chapter Three for more.

If you don't wish to have any Possessions, Boys and Girls can take two Activities and no Possessions. You can also have two Possessions and no Activities. Again, you'll find descriptions of these things in Chapter Three.

Boy Possessions:

- 2 or 3. Junior Detective Badge
- 4. Magnifying Glass or Telescope
- 5. Fishing Rod or Cricket Bat
- 6. Camping Gear
- 7. Animal Companion(s)
- 8. Catapult
- 9. Musical Instrument
- 10. Penknife
- 11 or 12. Crystal Radio

Girl Possessions:

- 2 or 3. Junior Detective Badge
- 4. Extra Pocket Money
- 5. Sewing Kit
- 6. Boiled Sweets
- 7. Animal Companion(s)
- 8. Parasol
- 9. Skipping Rope
- 10. Musical Instrument
- 11 or 12. Camping Gear

*Remember!
If you don't want to
have a Possession,
you may have two
Activities instead – or
vice versa!*

Example: Tristan has decided that Steven likes crystal radios, so decides he is a member of Cadets, where he learns all about the radios used by the Army and Royal Air Force. He would like to have a crystal radio, but since he has poor manners, he feels he needs a way to make Grown Ups more likely to listen to him, so he chooses a Junior Detective Badge for his Possession.

Teacher's Comments

In this last section, you can pretend you are your own Teacher and write some comments about your school behaviour. The idea is to present some information about your personality, the kinds of things that can't be expressed in your Grades, Activities or Possessions. It is also a good way to explain what your Grades mean. If you can't think of anything, talk to your Story Teller. Explain your character ideas to him, and he can write the comments for you.

Example: Tristan has already decided that Steven is a bit distracted, so he writes "Steven is a clever child but is often distracted in class and late for dinners." Tristan also wants to mention the fascination with crystal radios so he adds: "Steven shows a great aptitude for electronics and works independently on such projects. He may perhaps grow up to join the Royal Engineers."

With that done, your character is now ready to play!

Chapter 3: Activities and Possessions

Activities are more than just fun things to do of an afternoon after lessons or to fill a rainy day. Possessions are more than just nice things to keep in your toybox or under the bed. They also help you when you have adventures.

In the case of Activities, they represent things you know and enjoy, and do often, or indicate skills you likely possess. Possessions, meanwhile, are things you have and are carrying with you. Possessions are things you can easily change between games if you like, but the same is true of Activities – you may have been in Boy Scouts last year, but this year you're in Pony Club! Should a Possession break or be destroyed, the Storyteller will allow you to get a replacement after a short while. This doesn't count if you did something spiteful, like it break it over your knee or throw it in the lake, however!

Activities and Possessions should always be used as expansively as possible. If there's any way you can imagine that your Parasol or your Department lessons could help with a situation, you should be able to use them. When you do use them, they typically provide +2 to your die roll.

Activities List:

Boy Scouts/Girl Guides

Lord Baden-Powell instituted the Boy Scouting movement to train young Boys of the Empire in the skills of wilderness soldiering. Since Boys are too young to learn to handle weapons, Scouting (and Guiding, for young Girls) concentrates on teaching nature skills and survival techniques. Scouts and Guides can navigate through rough countryside, can silently track a quarry and know a great many things about local flora and fauna. Scouts and Guides also learn to be polite, considerate and exemplary citizens of the Empire, allowing this Activity to add its +2 bonus to certain Manners rolls, as well as appropriate Lessons and Games tests.

Cadets

Cadets is a club where boys learn about being in the armed forces proper. They learn how to recognise different insignia, weapons and vehicles from different nations, as well as the basics of discipline, tactics and strategy. A good cadet can dig a trench, perform a colour drill and communicate in Morse code. They also learn the basics of mechanics and repair of radios and vehicles. In any situations where these skills could be useful, Boys gain +2 to Lessons or Games rolls. They also get +2 to Manners rolls when talking to soldiers and officers of Her Majesty's forces.

If your Activity or Possession would help in a situation, you may add +2 to your die roll!

Department

Girls take Department classes to help them put their best foot forward to the world. This involves many physical skills, such as walking, dancing and sitting appropriately. They study how to act in polite society, and even among the rich and important. Most importantly, they learn the correct ways to dress and set their hair. Girls with Department skills are sure to make a good impression so may apply +2 to Manners rolls in such situations, or which involve associating with wealthy or important people.

Domestic Arts

Domestic Arts is a subject many Girls learn at school, although in some schools it may be split into several subjects. It includes cooking, sewing, cleaning and all the other skills a young woman should know for running a household when she is a wife or mother. These might not seem like useful skills for having adventures, but adventures always involve good food, and sewing up a disguise could be very useful indeed. More importantly, someone skilled in Domestic Arts often makes a good impression on people as she is a skilled hostess. Add +2 to Lessons or Manners rolls in such situations.

First Aid

With the continuing possibility of war or invasion, a sensible child should learn some basic First Aid. It allows a child to clean and dress all but the worst wounds, splint broken bones and treat common diseases. They can also diagnose these afflictions and provide suggestions on how to prevent them. Characters with the First Aid are assumed to take a First Aid kit with them when adventuring. This Activity normally adds to Lessons but it could also add to Spunk or Games for overcoming shock, pain or illness.

Gymnastics

Gymnastics is an important skill for any Boy. It builds both strength and flexibility to a high level. Gymnasts are good at climbing, jumping, leaping, tossing, squatting and tumbling down safely if they mistimed a toss! A Lessons roll could help judge how difficult such exploits might be! However, gymnasts learn to be fearless of heights (and backflips) so they try such things anyway (and gain a bonus to Spunk rolls when facing such dangers). Most of the time, however, Gymnastics provides its +2 bonus to Games rolls.

Historical Society

Almost every town in England has an Historical Society, as do most schools. Here children learn about all kinds of history, but with a focus on English kings and battles and an even greater focus on the local area. Of course, unless the children travel far away for their hols, local history will be the most useful to them on adventures. History doesn't have to be hundreds of years ago, either: Historians have access to all sorts of information about their town and the surrounding country. Almost always, Historical Society members add their +2 to Lessons rolls.

Pony Club

Even large cities have pony clubs, with children simply riding on nearby moors or parklands. Of course, there is more to being a member of Pony Club than simply learning to ride (and jump) your beast. Children learn all the skills of caring for and dressing their horse, fitting saddle, reigns and harness and how to be a good judge of horse flesh. Good riders also tend to be fearless so Pony Club members may add +2 to Spunk rolls involving moving fast, even if it is on a bike! Most of the time, however, this bonus will be to Games or Lessons rolls.

Rugger

The Duke of Wellington declared that the Battle of Waterloo was truly won on the playing fields of Eton and Rugby. Certainly rugger can be a warlike sport that teaches Boys courage, strength and tenacity. It also makes them excellent tacklers, wrestlers, runners and squirmers. Rugger players get +2 to any Games rolls involving such things, which, in exciting adventures, will probably come up when trying to escape the grip of nefarious Grown Ups. Like most sporting activities, it also can add to Spunk rolls, as Rugger Boys fear no opponent, nor any mud-puddle.

Why Not Cricket?

Boys may wonder why they can't take Cricket as an Activity, but it is assumed that all Boys can play Cricket!

Women's League

The Women's League is an association for local women, often run through the church. Their interests include local politics, social events and moral guidance of the community. They also organise fetes, bake sales, dances, jumble sales and use the money raised to fund the preservation of old buildings, education and entertainments for the young and caring for the poor. Their younger members quickly learn organisational skills, civic-mindedness and an intimate knowledge of their town and its inhabitants, and acquire a sense of how powerful a few women with sharp political cunning can be. Mostly this will involve Lessons or Manners rolls, but Spunk could definitely turn up.

Possessions

Animal Companion(s)

A few Children are lucky enough to own a pet, even if they live in the city. Dogs and horses are more common in the country, but both can run on an easement and be easily available for most adventures. Meanwhile, cats, rabbits, mice, caged parrots and finches and even stranger things will suit any life. Other children don't have one pet but simply have a habit of making friends with them quickly, like Phillip of the Adventure... children. They may have a new Animal Companion in each story. In the case of smaller animals, this represents more than one – one dog is worth a half a dozen mice or a pair of lovebirds. Animal companions rarely add to a die roll: rather they provide access to abilities the child might not have, such as flying a message back home or digging under a fence to aid an escape. A dog or horse could certainly add +2 to Games rolls in many situations, however.

Boiled Sweets

All Children are assumed to have access to some nice things to eat (see Chapter Five for more). This possession indicates a Child that has special access to a large number of such things, thanks to a doting relative or a large expenditure of several weeks' pocket money. Children with Boiled Sweets gain +2 to all Manners rolls to talk to other Children, as Children are always keen to help those who have sweets! Boiled Sweets also give Children energy on long rambles or bike rides, which may give them a bonus to Games tests or Spunk rolls.



Camping Gear

Children always go out with a coat and some basic supplies, but on longer trips it can be useful to take some extra gear. This kit includes a small tent, a tiny camp stove with some paraffin, some matches and some dry kindling for a fire and a forked stick to hang the dixie on. A dixie is a small metal can for boiling water and so forth, and comes with a metal spoon. Camping gear allows Children to rough it over night if they have to, or have the comforts of home even in the most remote of places.

Catapult

With a catapult, a Boy can hit someone or something with a small stone from perhaps a hundred yards away. This won't cause any harm beyond a sharp sting of pain, but could be useful to break something or cause a distraction. Using a catapult is always a Games test.

Cricket Bat and Ball

Now with this a boy can cover more than a hundred yards and do considerable more damage than a tiny stone. However, you can't hide a bat and ball in a pocket or a sleeve!

Crystal Radio

Thanks to the wonders of science, a clever and industrial boy these days can build a simple radio set with just a few pieces of copper wire, a receiver and a drainpipe. This can only be reliably used to tune in to existing frequencies, listening to radio broadcasts made by others, but with a successful Lessons roll you can transmit short messages too, to anyone who might be listening.

Extra Pocket Money

No child would be foolish enough to leave home without some change for a bus ride or an ice-cream. Children with this Possession have generous parents or have saved well enough to have much more than that. They won't be able to afford anything so wizard as a penknife but it could buy any manner of less expensive things.

Fishing Rod

Most children make do at the fishing pond with a simple reel or bunched line, but if your parents are wealthy or you save your jam-lids, you may have a

proper tin rod for casting at great length. A fishing rod is great for grabbing anything at a distance, not just fish, and comes with a ready supply of strong string. Casting a line is usually a Games roll, but fitting and tying hooks and lures is a complex process that requires talent at Lessons.

Junior Detective Badge

If Children prove useful to the local constables in uncovering criminal activity, the police may issue those Children with Junior Detective Badges. Such a gift indicates that the local police are aware of the Children and will be much quicker to believe and act upon any reports they make of suspicious events. Children with the badge can also show it to other Grown Ups to prove they are not being silly when asking their important questions (usually gaining a +2 to appropriate Manners rolls).

Magnifying Glass or Telescope

Your average Boy is keen on science, and is always lifting rocks or logs to examine the life beneath. A magnifying glass is the perfect tool to aid in this, and also comes in handy to look at small clues such as scraps of paper or fingerprints. On the other hand, Boys may prefer to see the insignia of military vehicles far away, or the plumage of birds on the wing, and for this they may have a simple reflecting telescope. Such devices are only really toys, not the wonders your average ship's captain would own, but can bring things a little closer to the eye. Both might give a +2 to Lessons rolls to learn things about your surroundings.

What About My Bike? Or a Picnic Basket?

Possessions represent something special a Child has as an individual. Children are all assumed to have everything they need for adventures, including bikes, rucksacks and picnic hampers full of food and ginger beer.

Musical Instrument

Many Children enjoy music class and playing in the band, and a very trustworthy and responsible Child might even be allowed to borrow an instrument or own one of their own. Of course, there are less valuable instruments too: Girls may have a simple wooden recorder or flute, and Boys are well known for always blowing their trumpets and bugles! Violins, drums, harmonicas and even matchbox guitars are possible. What use is an instrument? Besides making excellent noises to scare, enthuse, amuse or arouse attention, they are the foundation to a lovely evening of sing-songs, and the perfect companion for a night by the campfire.

Parasol

A parasol may be a Girl's best friend. It keeps the sun off when hot, the rain when wet and the wind when brisk. Spun, it provides a cool breeze, and a pretty sight. Folded down it makes an excellent walking stick while remaining lady-like. It can be used to trip a miscreant, signal a passing taxicab or even hold a crystal radio aerial. A Girl with a parasol can almost always gain +2 to her Manners rolls.

Penknife

A penknife is almost exclusively owned by Boys but lucky Girls who are Guides or in Pony Club may also have this useful device. It contains a blade, a

corkscrew and a very important device for getting the stones out of horses' hooves. The blade is strong enough to lever open things and act as a screwdriver if needed. This will help Children break into things and out of things, and fix or break things if they need to.

Sewing Kit

This is not something that provides a lot of outdoor or raucous fun, but a Girl can't always be focussing on such things. Stitching and embroidery are an excellent hobby for a young lady, teaching her appropriate temperament at the same time as she learns useful skills for motherhood. Complete with needles, pins, many spools of thread, spare buttons, thimbles and a tape measure, a Girl with such a kit can repair almost anything made of cloth – and many more things besides.

Skipping Rope

Girls keen to stay active and keep a slim figure often enjoy jumping rope. Any stout piece of rope will do, but Girls prefer one of just the right length and girth. A fine pair of wooden handles to grip also comes in handy and they can be painted bright colours. A piece of stout rope at hand is useful for more than just skipping of course – it can be used for climbing, tying people up and makes a handy weapon, giving +2 to Games rolls in each case.



Professor Barnsworth examined the document the children had handed to him....

Chapter 4: Rules of Play

Now that you've got your character, you'll want to know how to use it. In order to play the game, you will need two dice, just like the ones in your Monopoly set or Snakes and Ladders. One set is enough but a few more will help. You'll also need a few coins for each player – pennies or ha'pennies will do nicely. If your allowance is too small, just ask Father for some coins, or use matchsticks instead.

Two Dice

Most of the time, you'll just be telling the Story-Teller what you are doing – reading about pirates, talking to a constable, riding your bikes, investigating the mysterious old lighthouse on Smuggler's Bluff, and so on. As long as you are doing things that you all know you can do, things you yourself do every day, then there's no need to roll the dice. Everyone can ride a bike!

Other times, you might try to do things which are impossible. You might try to read about pirates but there are no books on pirates in the library. Similarly, there might not be any constables to talk to, or the old lighthouse might be locked. If you're feeling silly, you might even say you are riding your bikes across the lake! In situations like this, where the Story-Teller knows something is not possible, there is also no need to roll dice. He'll simply say you can't do it, and you'll have to think of another way around the situation.

Finally, there will be times where you are doing things which are difficult, dangerous or just downright adventurous, and you and the Story-Teller can't quite see if you'd be able to do those things or not. Perhaps you're trying to find out the name of an ancient pirate in the library, or convince a constable that there are poachers in Potter's Wood, or ride your bike up a big hill, or explore the spooky cellar of the old lighthouse. In these cases, you must roll the dice. The Story-Teller will tell you when to do this.

You roll your two dice and add them up, to get a number from two to twelve, just like when you play Monopoly. Only instead of moving that number of spaces, you use this number to find out if you could do what you were trying to do. To find out, compare the number you rolled to the number on your character sheet. Which number depends on what you were trying to do.

If you were trying to find out about pirates, you'd compare your roll to your Lessons score to see if you were good enough at Lessons to find what you were looking for.

If you were trying to ride your bikes up a steep, rocky hill, you'd use your Games number to see if you could make it.

If you were trying to convince the constable about the poachers, you'd look at your Manners score to see if the constable thought you were telling the truth.

If you were exploring the spooky basement, you'd use Spunk to see if you were brave enough.

You need to roll **the value of your score or higher** to succeed. So if you have an A in Lessons, that's a value of 4. So any roll of 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12 will mean you succeed. A roll of 2 or 3 will mean you fail.

Automatic Failure and Automatic Success

A roll of 2 – two ones – is always a failure. Sometimes, even your best efforts aren't good enough. Conversely, a roll of 12 – two sixes – is always a success. In addition, when you roll a 12, you get to add a Gosh! to the story as well, without spending a coin. Goshes! are explained below.

Activities

The Activities that you do at school teach you specific skills and abilities that are more specific than all the things covered by your grades. You can use your Activity to get a bonus to your roll, if that activity would likely improve your skills in what you are trying to do. If your Activity is useful, you may usually add two to the number you roll on the dice. For more details on the benefits of each Activity, see the previous chapter.

Example: Although only an average student (with a B in Lessons) Thomas is a proud member of the History Club at school. Searching for information on pirates is something he does a lot, so when it comes time to look up the name of the ancient pirate who plagued Cornwall's coast, he may add two to his roll. He rolls a four and a one, which is a five. With a B in Lessons, he would need to roll a 6 or higher to succeed. Thanks to his time in History Club, however, his 5 becomes a 7 and he is soon reading avidly about the adventures of Captain Scarlet.

Easy and Hard Tasks

Very occasionally the Story-Teller will ask you to add one or two to your roll, or subtract one or two, to reflect things that are much easier or much harder than the average task. Climbing a tree you've climbed many times before would be easy, so you would be able to add two to your dice roll before comparing it to your Games score. On the other hand, climbing a rocky cliffside would be quite hard indeed, and you might have to subtract two from your roll before comparing it with your Games score. As always, the Story-Teller will tell you what numbers to add and subtract when you need to do this.

Goshes! and Gulps!

The adventurous tales we all love are full of unexpected moments. Very often, the characters jump with fright as a result of them - or jump for joy if they are nice surprises. In this game, we call good surprises Goshes!, and bad surprises Gulps! So if you suddenly found out your uncle's cottage was built on top of Smuggler's Cove, that would be a Gosh! But if your uncle decided to lock you in your rooms on your first night, that would be a Gulp!

You can only have so many Goshes! and Gulps! even in the most exciting story. The number of these that can happen is represented by the pennies or

matchsticks you collected earlier. Hand two coins to each player, plus one “for the pot”. At the start of the game, the Story-Teller will place a big dish in the centre of the table. This is the Gosh! Dish. During the story, any player may put a coin into the Gosh! Dish. When they do so, they are allowed to add something new to the story, and since it is a Gosh!, it should be something nice and jolly – some good news for the children in the story.

For example, the Story-Teller may say that the characters are all going down to Brighton for their summer hols. At this point, Simon tosses a coin into the Gosh Dish and says to the group “Gosh! That’s near the air-force base where my Uncle Bill works! Maybe we can visit him!” This piece of news is definitely exciting and may lead to all sorts of adventures, so is certainly worth a Gosh!

You can also use Goshes! to help your character when you don’t roll what you wanted on the dice. By spending a Gosh! coin, you find a different way to make your character succeed, even if they failed, or reduce the bad things that would happen from a failure. In short, they get some sort of lucky break which compensates for their error.

For example, Simon is trying to climb a tree to see what’s happening in Old Man Johnson’s barn. He must make a Games check but he fails. He doesn’t want to slip and fall so he pays a Gosh! coin and says “Gosh! Lucky that old wheelbarrow was there to catch my feet!”

Players can spend Gosh! coins as often as they like, but they can never spend more than one in a row. Someone else must always spend before the first player spends another. Also, the Story-Teller has the final say on whether the suggested idea is suitable for his game. The Story-Teller may also limit the number of Gosh! coins spent to a certain amount per chapter of the story, or he may stipulate that no player may spend one until everyone else has also taken one, and proceed around in a circle. The Story-Teller is trying to make sure everyone gets their fair share of Goshes!

Of course, players can’t pay any more Goshes! when they have run out. So how do they fill it up again? They fill it up with Gulps! Gulps are the opposite of Goshes! – they are those moments when something bad, scary or strange happens to the characters. Generally this happens when they stumble onto trouble!

For example, Sally and Rose overhear Fosters talking to a foreign gentleman about some “goods” which are supposed to be picked up tonight. Excited by this clue, they run to tell the boys, but Sally notices she is all out of Goshes!. She takes a coin into the dish and says “We turn to run, but find Fosters is now standing right in front of us! Gulp!”

Just as Goshes! might not necessarily benefit the story immediately or may even turn out to be a mixed blessing (Simon doesn’t know if he will see his Uncle Bill at the air-force base, or whether his uncle is even nice), Gulps can likewise turn out to be not so bad – just momentarily unsettling or disturbing.

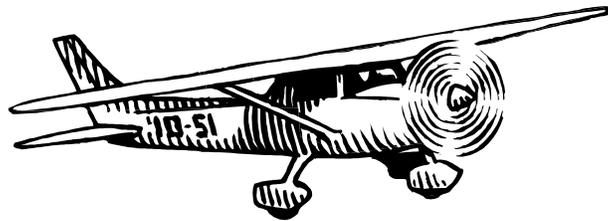
For example, Simon and Roger are standing by a stile watching the cows in the meadow. Everything seems fine, but Roger pulls a coin from the dish and says “Suddenly, two big hands thump onto our shoulders and lift us up off the ground! Gulp!” The Story-Teller then reveals that the hands simply belong to Fosters, the hired hand, who thinks the boys should be helping him with the milking. Fosters may in fact be up to no good, but for now all he has done is startle our heroes and given them a job to do.

The Story Teller can also provide Gulp! counters, when he places the Boys and Girls in trouble without any chance to get away from it. Sometimes, it is important for a really exciting story that the players have no chance for their Boys or Girls to escape being captured or fail to solve a tricky puzzle, even if one of the players knows the answer. At times like this, the Story-Teller will announce his Gulp! and let each player involved take a coin from the bowl.

For example, Simon has managed to climb the tree and spied Fosters loading Old Man Johnson’s prize cow onto a truck. He wants to run and tell a constable, but the Story Teller feels it would be more exciting for everyone if Simon and Roger discovered Rose and Sally are tied up in the barn. He puts a Gulp! token in the bowl and says “Suddenly a shingle slides off the roof, and before you can move, Fosters looks up and spots you! He yells ‘Get that meddling scrap! I’ll fix him good!’” Simon didn’t fail any rolls to cause this so it is definitely worth him gaining a coin back from the bowl!

If a player comes up with an idea for a Gosh! and has no coins, he may ask the Story Teller to put one in for him. This way, good ideas are never wasted!

At the beginning of the game, the players have plenty of Goshes! in hand, so your characters will be having lots of nice things happen to them, and only a few bad things. However, as the game goes on, they will have to have lots of Gulps if they want to keep having the safety net of Goshes! for when the dice let them down! On the other hand, the Story-Teller is always adding new Gulps! to the plot, so as the situation gets worse, players have more help coming their way.



John saw the Spitfire circling and waggled his trumpet with glee!

Chapter 5: Telling Stories

At first, being a Story Teller for your chums may seem like a frightening proposition. But it isn't so difficult. In the main, it comes down to two things: telling good stories, and coming up with good stories to tell. We will look at these in order, but before we start it is important to remember something when doing both these things: the other children are here to help you! You're not working alone as a Story Teller, and there are more of them than there are of you. So don't take the burden wholly on yourself when you don't have to – when the other players can be helping out.

This is obvious when it comes to the business of Gulps! and Goshs! – everyone is taking part in telling the story then. But it is also important when it comes to making rolls on Grades. You should encourage the other children to suggest any uses they can think of for their Grades and their Activities, whenever they might think of them. You can always say no if you think they are too silly or impossible.

You don't want to say no to often however – not if you want the game to be at all jolly!

The other tool you have to draw on is of course, the great works of Enid Blyton and her contemporaries and imitators. Not everyone is likely to have read all the Famous Five, Secret Seven and Children of Adventure books! Just pick one off your shelf and start there. Or pick two and combine them! If one is about a trip to the circus run by gypsies and another about smugglers on an island, put the smugglers in the circus, and the gypsy kidnappers on the island!

As well as a great source of ideas, you will also find most of Enid Blyton's books about young Children having adventures follow a similar structure in their plot. By selecting elements to fit that structure, you can create infinite new adventures. And we can help with this selection with some random tables, provided below.

Most jolly adventures start with an Exciting Setting (see Table 1) – a location or place to visit or other holiday event that really sets things apart from just a normal holiday stay at home or in the city. An Exciting Setting is important as it not only provides the seed for all your other ideas, but it also makes everything that happens there feel more exciting by association!

Of course, it wouldn't be an adventure if there wasn't a Mystery (Table 2). Adventures don't start off telling you what they're going to be about – indeed they often start not seeming like adventures at all! Things usually begin with something strange, out of place or out of the ordinary – anything that is different or doesn't make sense. Being curious about why or how such a thing came to be is what leads the Children into their adventure!

Of course there are other things to enjoy on their holiday, even on top of the exciting Setting. These may be related to the Mystery, or lead to more information about it, or it may simply be another part of the story to interest or

entertain the Children. Roll on table 3 to think of an Excitement that can add to the Adventure.

Of course, there is always an explanation to the Mystery, secrets to uncover, and villains to unmask. The Discovery ties all the things together, and gives the Children something to defeat or overcome (because surely they will not let such villainous activities go ignored). Doing so might be simple, but it might be incredibly difficult or extensive – sometimes the Discovery is only the very beginning of the adventure, as it leads the Children into further journeys, possible capture and more and more Mysteries. Table 4 provides a list of Discoveries.

Finally, the one thing that always makes for an excellent adventure and jolly good time is Food. Any good meal will be full of most or all of the things on Table Five, but some adventures will feature a special food in a special way, or more frequently. A farm is more likely to have fresh whipped butter at every meal, for example, while camping by a mountain stream may ensure fresh river trout for tea each night. Yum yum!

Using the tables is as simple as rolling on each table. Roll two dice and read off the corresponding entry, and write down what you find. When you have written down all your ideas, you can easily use them to assemble your story. You may like to roll twice on some of the tables to provide more inspiration – for example, extra Mysteries or Excitements for longer stories, or extra Food ideas to go with them.

Example: I roll the following – Across the Sea as a Location, An Enormous Vehicle as the Mystery, Fun in the Snow as the Excitement and Counterfeiters as the Discovery. For Food I get Lemon Ice Tea. Since it is clear the Children will be in the snow I change that to Hot Lemon Tea. But where is there snow across the sea? Perhaps the Children are lucky enough to be going on a trip to Bergen, in Norway, to go sledding and skiing with their Uncle Ronald and Aunt Kirsten who live there. Going across the sea suggests boat travel, so I decide the Enormous Vehicle might be a big boat – which is obviously a haven for the Counterfeiters. Pulling these ideas together, I get the following story:

Five Across The Sea

A trip to Bergen leads to exciting fun in the snow, with a thermos of hot lemon tea and fresh market fish from the harbour. There they see an enormous ocean liner bringing tourists from across the world. Unused to the Norwegian currency, it is easy for counterfeiters in the hold to provide the tourists with fake money – something that is first noticed when the children buy some hot tea the next day on the slopes. Sneaking back aboard the ship the next night uncovers the scheme but the children are seen and chased into the woods! Lost in the snow they will have to rely on their scouting skills or animal companions to get back to town in time to call the police – before the boat leaves port with all the evidence!

Roll	Location	Roll	Location	Roll	Location
1,1	A Seaside Cottage	2,1	The Lakes District	3,1	A Gamekeeper's Reserve
1,2	A Big Spooky House	2,2	A Scottish Castle	3,2	An Old Manor House
1,3	A Boarding School Lodge	2,3	The Cornish Coast	3,3	A Grand Palace
1,4	To Stay With Friends	2,4	The New Forest	3,4	A Big Factory
1,5	A Holiday Camp	2,5	A Cotswold Village	3,5	A Busy City
1,6	A Park With Gypsies	2,6	The Yorkshire Moors	3,6	A Great Landmark
Roll	Location	Roll	Location	Roll	Location
4,1	A Hill Ramble	5,1	A Network of Caves	6,1	The Beach
4,2	A Bicycle Trip	5,2	Up a Mountain	6,2	The Circus
4,3	Punting On The River	5,3	A Remote Island	6,3	The Theatre
4,4	Sailing	5,4	Across The Sea	6,4	The Museum
4,5	On a Train Journey	5,5	Up in A Balloon	6,5	The Zoo
4,6	Orienteering	5,6	An Army Base	6,6	The Hospital

Roll	Mystery	Roll	Mystery	Roll	Mystery
1,1	Distant Cousins	2,1	A Hidden Room	3,1	Strange Noises or Lights
1,2	Odd Uncles	2,2	A Trapdoor	3,2	Movement During the Night
1,3	Rich or Famous People	2,3	A Smuggler's Hold	3,3	A Secret Meeting
1,4	Servants	2,4	A Secret Path	3,4	A Strange Old Man
1,5	Identical Twins	2,5	A Locked Room	3,5	A Pack of Gypsies
1,6	Naughty Children	2,6	A Mysterious Package	3,6	A Policeman
Roll	Mystery	Roll	Mystery	Roll	Mystery
4,1	A Haunted House	5,1	A Ruffian	6,1	A Strange Experiment
4,2	A Lighthouse	5,2	A Snob	6,2	Lots of Old Books
4,3	A Cave	5,3	A Bully	6,3	Buried Treasure
4,4	A Dark Forest	5,4	A Foreigner	6,4	Ancient Legends
4,5	An Enormous Vehicle	5,5	A Scary Animal	6,5	Ghost Stories
4,6	A Smuggler's Lair	5,6	An American	6,6	A Crazy Hermit

Roll	Excitement	Roll	Excitement	Roll	Excitement
1,1	Horse Riding!	2,1	A Gymkhana!	3,1	Parlour Games!
1,2	Baby Animals!	2,2	Kite Flying!	3,2	Putting on a Play!
1,3	A New Pet!	2,3	Ball Games!	3,3	Dancing!
1,4	Working on a Farm!	2,4	A Cricket Match!	3,4	Arts and Crafts!
1,5	Performing Animals!	2,5	A Footrace!	3,5	Bob A Job!
1,6	An Animal Show!	2,6	Swimming!	3,6	Making Models!
Roll	Excitement	Roll	Excitement	Roll	Excitement
4,1	A Campfire!	5,1	A County Fair!	6,1	Christmas!
4,2	In the Snow!	5,2	A Thrift Drive!	6,2	Shrove Tuesday!
4,3	Beach Fun!	5,3	A Royal Visit!	6,3	Guy Fawkes!
4,4	Famous Places!	5,4	An Army Parade!	6,4	Easter!
4,5	Famous Artists!	5,5	A Church Event!	6,5	A Slap-Up Feast!
4,6	People Making a Movie!	5,6	Foreign Customs!	6,6	Presents!

Roll	Discovery	Roll	Discovery	Roll	Discovery
1,1	Spies!	2,1	Blackmailers!	3,1	Germans!
1,2	Smugglers!	2,2	Dealers in Stolen Goods!	3,2	Gypsies!
1,3	Kidnappers!	2,3	Roughnecks!	3,3	Jewel Thieves!
1,4	Bank Robbers!	2,4	Pirates!	3,4	Art Thieves!
1,5	Counterfeiters!	2,5	Foreigner Agents!	3,5	Forgers!
1,6	Escaped Criminals!	2,6	Evil Scientists!	3,6	Treasure Hunters!
Roll	Discovery	Roll	Discovery	Roll	Discovery
4,1	Prisoners Escaping the Country!	5,1	Wealthy Financiers!	6,1	Hunters!
4,2	Gangsters!	5,2	War Profiteers!	6,2	Scaremongers!
4,3	Bootleggers!	5,3	Evil Land Barons!	6,3	Pickpockets!
4,4	Traitors!	5,4	Greedy Local Merchants!	6,4	Drug Smugglers!
4,5	Saboteurs!	5,5	Bad Policemen!	6,5	Sheep Stealers!
4,6	Corrupt Politicians!	5,6	Poachers!	6,6	Lunatics!

Roll	Item	Roll	Item	Roll	Item
1,1	Honey Ham	2,1	Dripping	3,1	Shiny Red Apples
1,2	Glazed Pork	2,2	Roast Pumpkin	3,2	Freshly Picked Strawberries
1,3	Cold Chicken	2,3	Creamy Mashed Potatoes	3,3	Orchard Oranges
1,4	Smoked Turkey	2,4	Sweet Green Beans	3,4	Bread Fresh from the Oven
1,5	Extra-Long Bangers	2,5	Leek and Onion Soup	3,5	Farm-Fresh Butter
1,6	Stuffing	2,6	Delicious Brussel Sprouts	3,6	Goose-Liver Pate
Roll	Item	Roll	Item	Roll	Item
4,1	Bacon Butties	5,1	Bread and Butter Pudding	6,1	Cups of Warm Tea
4,2	Egg, Sausage and Chips	5,2	Plum Pudding	6,2	Lemon Iced Tea
4,3	Seaside Cockles	5,3	Chocolate Cream Cake	6,3	Sweet Soda Pop
4,4	Toast with Honey and Cinnamon	5,4	Scones with Jam and Cream	6,4	Fresh Lemonade
4,5	Currant Buns	5,5	Baked Custard	6,5	Tall Glasses of Milk
4,6	Iced Buns	5,6	Rice Pudding	6,6	Lashings of Ginger Beer



Mickey barked excitedly as if he knew exactly what they had said

Chapter 6: Some Children You Know (And Some You Don't)

The Famous Five

The Famous Five consist of Julian, his younger brother Dick, their sister Anne and their cousin Georgina. Georgina is a tomboy and prefers to be called George. She also owns the fifth member of the five, Timmy, a border collie, who works on her uncle's farm. They always meet up at hols for riding or camping trips, as they love the outdoors. Their fame for solving mysteries is well-known across England.

Julian

Lessons A (4)
Games C (7)
Manners B (6)
Spunk B (6)

Historical Society
Scouts

Dick

Lessons C (8)
Games A (3)
Manners C (8)
Spunk A (4)

Penknife
Catapult

George

Lessons B (6)
Games B (6)
Manners C (7)
Spunk A (4)

Animal Companion (Timmy the Dog)
Camping Gear

Anne

Lessons A (4)
Games C (8)
Manners A (3)
Spunk C (8)

Domestic Arts
First Aid



The warm summer day seemed to last forever...

The Children of Adventure

Phillip and Dinah and their cousins, Jack and Lucy meet up for the most exciting adventures to islands, mountains, valleys and even across the sea. Phillip seems to find animal friends wherever he goes – much to Dinah’s distaste. Jack’s loyal friend is Kiki the Australian Cockatoo. They also know Bill, a member of the Secret Service, who helps them out when they stumble on great threats to the Empire.

Phillip

Lessons B (6)
Games B (5)
Manners B (6)
Spunk B (6)

Animal Companions (several)
Boiled Sweets

Dinah

Lessons A (4)
Games B (8)
Manners B (5)
Spunk C (8)

Department
Extra Pocket Money

Jack

Lessons B (6)
Games B (5)
Manners C (8)
Spunk A (4)

Animal Companion (Kiki)
Telescope

Lucy

Lessons B (6)
Games C (8)
Manners A (3)
Spunk B (6)

Domestic Arts
Sewing Kit

Steve and Paula

These two slightly older children are just a few tugged-pigtails away from young love – if they can survive their many misadventures with the macabre! They both love history and stories about witches and ghosts and when school is out, like nothing more than traipsing across London uncovering mysteries.

Steve

Lessons A (4)
Games B (5)
Manners C (8)
Spunk B (6)

Historical Society
Crystal Radio

Paula

Lessons A (4)
Games C (8)
Manners B (5)
Spunk B (6)

Junior Occult Detective Badge
Parasol

**HARROW ACADEMY FOR THE SONS
OF GENTLEMEN
TERM REPORT**

Boy's Name: _____

Master: _____

Term Ending: Summer, 193_

Subject	Grade	Target Number <i>A=4 B=6 C=8</i>
Lessons		
Games		<i>Subtract one!</i>
Manners		
Spunk		

Activities: _____

Possessions: _____

Master's Comments: _____

**ST CLAIR'S SCHOOL FOR YOUNG
LADIES
TERM REPORT**

Girl's Name: _____

Master: _____

Term Ending: Summer, 193_

Subject	Grade	Target Number <i>A=4 B=6 C=8</i>
Lessons		
Games		
Manners		<i>Subtract one!</i>
Spunk		

Activities: _____

Possessions: _____

Master's Comments: _____
