***Peter Pan and Wendy***

***Chapter 14***

***The Pirate’s Ship***

***Synopsis:***

Some of the pirates are sleeping on their ship, the Jolly Roger. Meanwhile, Hook paces the deck, feeling conflicted about capturing the boys and sweating profusely at his impending encounter with Peter Pan. He displays self-pity, lamenting that he has “no little children” to love him. Hook’s dejected demeanor soon changes, though, and he asks the other pirates if the children are chained. The children are brought to him, and Hook affirms that while six of them will walk the plank that night, he will allow two of them to be his cabin boys. Soon after, Hook singles John out of the group to question if he has ever wanted to be a pirate. John responds that he sometimes called himself Red-handed Jack. When Hook asks Jack and Michael to join the pirates, the two boys seem tempted but refuse after Hook commands them to vow “Down with the King.” Infuriated, Hook signals the other pirates to fetch Wendy and tells John and Michael that they will both walk the plank tonight. As Wendy appears, Hook taunts her. After she tells the children that all of their mothers would want them “to die like English gentlemen,” he orders the pirates to tie Wendy up. However, soon after, the crocodile’s ticking clock is heard. Hook collapses in fear, just as another pirate yells that the crocodile is boarding the ship. As he crawls away in anguish, Hook commands the other pirates to hide him. The pirates gather around Hook to obscure him from view, aware that they have no chance of winning against the crocodile. Hereafter, the boys run to the ship’s edge to see the crocodile; instead, they see Peter.

***Critical Analysis:***

[Captain Hook](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Captain_Hook) is pacing the deck of his ship, the *Jolly Roger*, in what ought to be a moment of triumph. He thinks he has successfully killed [Peter Pan](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Peter_Pan) and soon will have [Wendy Darling](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Wendy_Darling) all to himself as a mother. Yet Captain Hook is depressed, not elated. He imagines that the upper class young men with whom he had once been at school would look down on him if they could see him now. They would be accusing him of not behaving according to something he calls "good form."

Hook orders all the boys dragged from the ship's hold. "Six of you walk the plank tonight," Hook says, "but I have room for two cabin boys. Which of you is it to be?" First Tootles, then Slightly, then the first of the twins all refuse the offer to escape drowning by signing on with Hook. "I don't think my mother would like me to be a pirate," Tootles says, although it is unclear whether he is referring to Wendy or his real mother here.

So Captain Hook turns to John Darling and Michael Darling, who at first think it might be fun to join Hook's crew. But John refuses when Hook tells him he can't be a pirate and a loyal subject of the king at the same time. "That seals your doom," Hook bellows. "Bring up their mother. Get the plank ready."

Wendy refuses to let Hook see her upset. She tells the boys that their real mothers want them to die bravely. Enraged, Hook orders that Wendy be tied to the mast where she will be forced to watch each boy walk to his death. Just when things seem to be at their worst for the captives, everyone aboard the ship hears the sound that Captain Hook fears most. It is "the terrible tick-tick" of the clock inside the crocodile hungry for more of Hook's flesh.

"Hide me!" he croaks and is shown ignominiously crawling across the deck as far as he can get from the ticking sound. Although still chained, the boys are able to shuffle to the railing of the ship, straining to see the crocodile. But she is nowhere about. "It was no crocodile coming to their aid. It was Peter," says the narrator.

The narrator reveals more enticing details about Hook's background here, but refuses to divulge his real name because it would scandalize the nation. However, the narrator assumes readers are able to tell from Hook's behavior that he attended a famous "public school." This is what elite private boarding schools are called in Great Britain. The author skewers the conduct of the English aristocracy by setting up a murderous pirate as an example of the kind of men their values and training produce.

Hook goes on and on about "good form," the practice of behaving appropriately and properly. In Hook's case this means maintaining a certain appearance and acting with superficially courteous manners—even when doing the utmost dastardly of deeds. Thus Hook laments he hasn't been able to change into clean clothes since slaughtering so many members of [Tiger Lily](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/character-analysis/#Tiger_Lily)'s tribe. He is also upset that he so "terribly alone" amongst all the low-class scum in his crew. But what galls Hook most is that one of these scurrilous men—his first mate, Smee—somehow manages to evince more good form than does Hook. Whatever this elusive quality is, Smee's alleged possession of it has caused even the captives he has mistreated to "love him" nonetheless.

In Hook's veneration of good form, [Barrie](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Peter-Pan/author/) is mocking the upper class traditions of many of his readers. "He remembered that you have to prove you don't know you have it before you are eligible for Pop," the narrator says. This is a reference to a sports team at the most famous public school in England, Eton. Founded in 1440 by the king and still operating today, alumni of Eton include many of the most famous and influential men in Britain. Barrie was made a baronet in 1913, which gave him to the title "Sir." However, he was not born into the upper class who sent their sons to elite schools such as Eton. His father was a poor Scottish weaver, and Barrie was lucky to scrape together enough money to attend the University of Edinburgh for two years. He achieved fame, success, and wealth through sheer hard work, so he never felt truly a part of the world of the aristocracy.

Yet for all the ridicule of Hook's obsession with good form, Barrie seems to admire the trait when Wendy and her brothers display it. When John and Michael come to their senses and refuse Hook's offer to be cabin boys, the lost boy Curly hails them with a "Rule Britannia!" And when Hook tells Wendy to say her last words to the boys he is about to kill, she responds with the apotheosis of good form. "I have a message to you from your real mothers," she says. "We hope our sons will die like English gentleman." Even the pirates cheer at this.

***Summary and analysis part by part:***

***Summary part 1:***

[Hook](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters/captain-jas-hook)’s ship, the Jolly Roger, emits a small green light as it floats. [Smee](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/peter-pan/characters) is sewing, and the other pirates are loafing or playing dice. Hook paces thoughtfully along the ship, thinking of his recent triumph. He is satisfied, but he is not happy: he does not enjoy the company of his crew, who are “socially so inferior.” The narrator implies that Hook was formerly quite a famous and upstanding British citizen. He went to an elite school, and its lessons and mannerisms still affect him strongly, especially the idea of “good form.”

***Analysis Part 1:***

Pirates have historically been linked to anarchism, a social philosophy whose advocates oppose all forms of authority, including social hierarchies. Pirates are free elements who do not swear allegiance to any government. Pirates and anarchists even have a symbol in common – the black flag. In this context, Hook’s obsession with minute social distinctions is sadly comical and suggests that adults can't actually ever escape those social strings enveloping them.