

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Jack and Mary**

There was a laurel-hedged walk which curved round the secret garden and ended at the gate which opened into a wood in the park. Mary thought she would skip round this walk and look into the wood and see if there were any rabbits hopping about. She enjoyed the skipping very much and when she reached the little gate she opened it and went through because she heard a peculiar whistling sound and wanted to find out what it was.

It was a very strange thing indeed. She quite caught her breath as she stopped to look at it. A boy was sitting under a tree, with his back against it, playing on a rough wooden pipe. He was a funny-looking boy about twelve. He looked clean and his nose turned up and his cheeks were as red as poppies and never had Mary seen such round and such blue eyes in any boy's face. And on the trunk of the tree he leaned against, a brown squirrel was clinging and watching him and from behind a bush near by a pheasant was delicately stretching his neck to peep out and quite near him were two rabbits sitting up and sniffing with tremulous noses- and actually it appeared as if they were all drawing near to watch him and to listen to the strange, low, little call his pipe seemed to make.

When he saw Mary he held up his hand as he spoke to her in a voice almost as low as and rather like his piping.

"Don't move" he said "It'll frighten them"

Mary remained motionless. He stopped playing his pipe and began to rise from the ground. He moved so slowly, that it scarcely seemed as though he were moving at all, but at last he stood on his feet and then the squirrel scampered back up onto the branches of his tree. The pheasant withdrew its head and the rabbits dropped on all fours and began to hop away, though not at all as if they were frightened.

"I'm Jack," the boy said. "I know that you are Mary."

Then Mary realised that somehow she had known it was Jack. Who else would be charming rabbits and pheasants? He had a wide, red curving mouth and his smile spread all over his face.

"I got up slow" he explained, "because if you make a quick move it startles them. A body has to move gentle and speak slow when wild things are about."

He did not speak to her as if they had never seen each other before, but as if he knew her quite well. Mary knew nothing about boys, and she spoke to him a little stiffly because she felt nervous.

"Did you get Martha's letter?" she asked.

He nodded his curly, chestnut coloured head.

"That's why I came."

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

He stooped to pick something which had been lying on the ground beside him when he piped.

“I’ve got the garden tools, There is a little spade, a rake and a fork. They are good ones. There’s a trowel too. And the woman in the shop threw in some white poppy seeds when I bought the others.”

“Will you show the seeds to me ?” Mary said.

She wished she could talk as he did. His speech was so quick and easy. She noticed he smelt of clean fresh scent of heather and grass and the leaves about him, almost like he was made of them. She liked it very much and when she looked into his funny face with the red cheeks and round blue eyes she forgot she had felt shy.

*The Secret Garden Frances Hodgson Burnett*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer in sentences please.**

1. What does Mary decide she is going to do?

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2. What makes her stop and go through the little gate?

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3. What creatures are near Jack as he plays on the wooden pipe?

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4. What does Jack mean when he says "It'll flight them"?

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5. What evidence is there that Mary has heard of Jack before she met him ?

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6. Why does Mary speak stiffly to Jack?

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7. Why did Jack come and see Mary?

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8. What had he brought with him for her ?

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9. In what way does Jack speak differently from Mary ?

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10. Why do you think this is?

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11. What type of character ?

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12. What had he brought with him for her ?

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