

**Title:** Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle's Magic

**Author:** Betty MacDonald

Illustrated by Hilary Knight

**Genre:** Fiction

**Theme:** Magic, getting children to behave

**Setting:** Small town USA

**Characters:** Mrs. Piggle Wiggle and various families

**Plot:** Parents call Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle when they can't figure out how to make their children behave. Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle always has a home remedy.

**Summary:**

## **Chapter 1:**

Pages 1-7

- New Vocabulary
  - o Splotchy (4)
  - o
- Spelling words
  - o special (4)
  - o difficult (7)
- Questions
  - o The children like Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle. Give examples from this chapter showing why they like her.
    - Molly drooled on Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle's pictures and she didn't get mad.
    - Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle laughed at Dicky when he crashed through her window. She didn't get mad, but showed him how to fix a window.
    - She didn't get mad when Marilyn broke her teapot, but commented on how she didn't like that one anyway and wanted a new one.
    - She always hangs up pictures that children make for her.
    - She didn't make fun of Susan's hard cookies, but commented that they are best when dipped in tea.
    - She wore Julie's scarf even when it was too long.
    - She listens to the children's dreams.
  - o Why do all the mothers in town love her?
    - She is patient with the children even when they are being difficult. She has a cupboard full of pills and potions to cure children's bad habits.

## **Chapter 2:**

Pages 8-24

- New Vocabulary
  - o Absently (8)
  - o Groping (8)

- Spelling words
  - o Anxious (8)
  - o Obediently (9)
  - o Whether (9)
- Questions
  - o This chapter is called 'I-Thought-You-Saiders,' what does that mean?
    - The children keep saying 'I thought you said...' and then twist what was said into a silly sentence.
  - o Why were the children always saying 'I thought you said...'"
    - They do it to be funny, to get people to laugh.
  - o On page 13 the author wrote the words said by Mrs. Teagle in an interesting way. Why did she do that?
    - Mrs. Teagle was showing her how to speak carefully and slowly so that the children can understand.
  - o What was Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle's cure?
    - Sprinkle powder into the children's ears.
  - o How did it work?
    - They could hear even the quietest noises.

### **Chapter 3:**

Pages 25-38

- New Vocabulary
  - o Maneuvering (31)
- Spelling words
  - o Galoshes (25)
- Questions
  - o At the beginning of the chapter, Wendy said that no one liked her and she didn't like them either. How do you feel about tattletellers?
    - Answers will vary.
  - o How did the children come downstairs in the morning? (p 32)
    - Wendy had summer clothes and sandals on, and Timmy had put his clothes on over his pajamas.
  - o Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle gave Wendy's mom little black pills, what did they do?
    - Whenever a child tattled instead of the tattling coming out, a small black cloud came out. The little black cloud has as many tails as the number of tattles the children were going to say.
  - o What does a tattle look like?
    - It looks like a small black cloud.
  - o Do you think the children will tattle again?
    - Answers will vary.

### **Chapter 4:**

Pages 39-57

- New Vocabulary

- Gradually (40)
- Dreadful (40)
- Whet (the appetite) (41)
- Compulsory (41)
- Keen (48)
- Glutton (54)
- Criticisms (55)
- Spelling words
  - Quarter (45)
  - Guest (46)
- Questions
  - Re-read the second paragraph on page 40. How did Christopher eat his meals?
    - He chewed with his mouth open. He smacked his lips, he gulped when he swallowed, he made huge piles of food, he thrust his food down his throat. He used his thumb to balance food on his fork. He buttered his bread with his hand, he chopped and mashed his food until it looked like dog food, he picked up his soup bowl and held it under his chin, he talked while he was chewing, and he gestured with his fork and bits of food would fly around the room.
  - What did Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle send home with Christopher?
    - Her pet pig Lester.
  - How does Lester sleep/eat?
    - He has fantastic manners, See page 45 for more details.
    - He slept on a blanket in the basement.
  - What did Lester do with Christopher's apple?
    - He took Christopher's apple out of his hand, got a knife and cut it up for him. He also showed him how to take small bites instead of putting the whole section in his mouth.
  - Could anyone in your house benefit from Lester?

## **Chapter 5:**

Pages 58-69

- New Vocabulary
  - Indulgently (59)
  - Lemme (60)
  - Nifty (60)
- Spelling words
  - Guarantee (62)
  - Eager (66)
- Questions
  - What was Mr. and Mrs. Franklin's problem at the beginning of the chapter?

- Their children kept interrupting. Then conversations kept getting louder, no one could finish a story.
- They decided to call Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle. What did Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle give them? What were the effects?
  - She gave them a little box with interrupter powder and two little blowers.
  - When someone has powder blown on them they freeze and aren't able to interrupt. Their mouths snap open and shut, but no sound comes out.
- Did you think her powder worked better than talking to the children about interrupting?
  - Answers vary.

## **Chapter 6 The Headless Breaker:**

Pages 70-85

- New Vocabulary
  - Heedless (70)
  - Solicitously (73)
  - Theory (75)
  - Repentant (78)
  - Regally (82)
- Spelling words
  - Beautiful (70)
- Questions
  - What does the phrase “look before you leap” mean?
    - Think about your choice and make sure it is a good decision.
  - How does Mr. Roger want to deal with Sharon?
    - He thought Sharon should get a good sound spanking whenever she breaks something and pay for everything she breaks out of her allowance.
  - What happened to Mrs. Rogers' chandelier?
    - She gave her favorite golf ball a good bounce and it bounced high and broke three danglers from the chandelier.
  - How does the magic powder work?
    - You sprinkle it on the bed and it makes the person move very very slowly.
  - How did Sharon's day go afterwards?
    - Good. She didn't rip her sock, she didn't break anything while sweeping. See pages 82-84 for more details.
  - Sharon tried skating after sleeping with the magic powder, how did it go?
    - (page 84) She was a very graceful skater.

## **Chapter 7 The Never Want to go to Schoolers:**

Pages 86-106

- New Vocabulary
  - Playing possum (88)
  - Ignorant (88)
  - Amoebic dysentery (88)
  - Hydrophobia kleptomania (88)
  - Esophagus (88)
  - Sneer (90)
  - Wistfully (90)
- Spelling words
  - Suspiciously (89)
  - Convinced (89)
- Questions
  - Do you have to go to school to be a carpenter?
    - Page 89, bottom paragraph. Jody doesn't think so, he says, "Mrs. Robinson doesn't know anything." about carpentry.
  - Why did Jody's mother call Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle?
    - Jody refuses to go to school.
  - What did Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle prescribe?
    - Ignorance Tonic that he needs to take three to four times each day until he asks to go back to school.
  - What happened?
    - Jody slowly got dumber and dumber until he couldn't play with the other kids anymore because he wasn't smart enough. Jody asked to go back to school and his mom stopped giving him the medicine and Jody knew how to do everyday tasks again.
  - Do you think Jody will keep going to school?
    - Answers vary.

## **Chapter 8 The Waddle-I-Doers:**

Pages 107-126

- New Vocabulary
  - Disconsolately (108)
  - Repose (109)
- Spelling words
  - Building (114)
  - Drawers (118)
- Questions
  - Why was Mimi so mad she almost cried?
    - She is crying because it is raining so there won't be a picnic.
  - Why does Mr. Warton think modern children are spoiled? (p 109)

- Children are spoiled because they should be excited to clean.
- Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle's home was built upside down. Why?
  - (Page 114) When Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle was little she would lie in bed and wonder what it would look like if a house was built upside down. When she grew up she convinced Mr. Piggie-Wiggle to build an upside down house.
- Mr. Piggie-Wiggle made all of the secret drawers and kept treasure in them. Where did he get the treasure?
  - Before they were married Mr. Piggie-Wiggle was a pirate, and over the years he collected a lot of treasure.
- What do the chapters in the book have in common?
  - They all have the same theme (Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle cures the children of bad habits.) In each chapter there are parents that have a problem with their children.
- Do you think that Mr. Piggie-Wiggle was really a pirate?
- How do you think Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle learned her tricks and how to make the potions?

**Extension/Projects to go with the book**

- This book has many chapters, they can stand alone, but they have Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle in common. It is a different style of writing. Write a story that has a common character throughout it's chapters.
- What would a house that was built upside down look like? Draw a picture.