

Teaching Notes & Resources

Key Stage 2

Themes: Family & Home | Life Changes

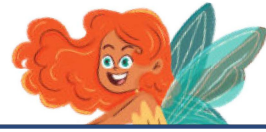
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Character Study - Lydia Marmalade



While reading *The Christmas Wish-tastrophe* by Cariad Lloyd, gather information about the main character, Lydia. You should add to each category as the story develops and you learn more about her.



What do you know about Lydia?

What is Lydia's personality? How does this develop throughout the story?

What challenges does Lydia face, and how does she deal with them?

Which other characters are important to Lydia? What role do they play in the story?



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Extract 1: Taken from Chapter Two - Peppomberley



The Christmas Wish-tastrophe

Lady Partridge headed for the door, putting on a large bonnet festooned with peacock feathers. Lydia exhaled as quietly as she could, thinking it was over, then suddenly the feathers swung back around to face her—

‘Understand this, Lydia Marmalade. If you are not good, modest, quiet and everything I expect of a girl of your age, you shall be removed from my house. Where you live after that will be no concern of mine. A workhouse for poor children, no doubt.’

Lydia found herself nodding. A workhouse? She had never seen one, but she knew it was where you were sent when you had no money and no family to help you. A terrifying cellar **full of spiders**, with the door locked, flashed in her mind.

Lady Partridge hesitated and picked up Lydia’s mother’s shawl from her chair. It was a delicate cornflower blue. For a moment Lydia thought she saw her cheeks flush, then she straightened.

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Peppomberley

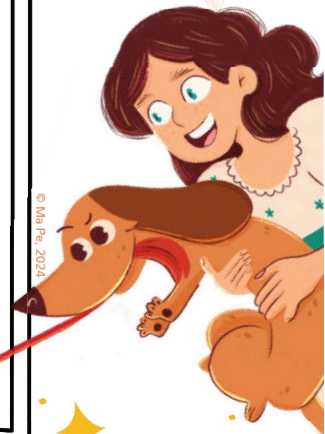
‘I will give you until Christmas Day. If you can behave like a *proper* lady until then, you may become a member of my household, indeed my family. If not ... I have made it clear what will become of you.’ She placed the shawl carefully back on to the moth-eaten chair. ‘Oh, and your dog is not welcome at Peppomberley. I tolerate no such useless animals. Be sure to be rid of him before the carriage calls for you.’

Lady Partridge did something with her face – Lydia realised that it was an attempt at a smile – and swooped out the door.

Lydia **slumped** on to the chair. For a second it felt as if nothing had happened, and her life was the same. She looked around the **dishevelled** cottage, and heard its silence. Then she knew it *had* changed. Everything had.

Colin ran in and curled on to her lap, licking her nose and letting out a **whimper**.

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Discussion Questions:

- ◆ What does the way that Lady Partridge speaks to Lydia tell you about her personality?
- ◆ Why do you think that Lady Partridge is being so strict with Lydia?
- ◆ How does Lydia feel when Lady Partridge mentions the workhouse? Why did Lady Partridge mention the workhouse?
- ◆ Why is the blue shawl important to Lydia? How does Lady Partridge react to the shawl?
- ◆ Why do you think that Lydia felt like nothing had happened, but soon realised that everything had changed? What did she mean?



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Extract 2: Taken from Chapter Eleven – The Midwinter Ball



The Christmas Wish-tastrophe

She'd thought she'd got better at it!

She ran back into the ballroom, but she couldn't see Bel anywhere! Neither could she feel the pull between them, so Bel must be nearby.

As she was wondering whether to start searching everyone's heads, she suddenly saw an orange **flash** high up in the tree.

Lydia felt anger rising. Why didn't Bel listen to her? She had promised to behave, but instead had gone and done what she wanted, as usual. Lydia stopped in her tracks. Bel's behaviour reminded her of someone ... herself.

Perhaps Bel didn't mean to disobey Lydia. It's just that these weren't the right rules for her.

Lydia **hissed** up to her, 'Bel! Bel! Come down here now!' Bel dived down further into the tree and hid amongst the spiky pines.

There was nothing for it. Lydia grabbed as much tree as she could and shook it, trying to be as quiet as

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The Midwinter Ball

possible. She could see Bel **swinging** around but although she was little, she was fierce, and she would not let go. She **glared** at Lydia and shouted down (in her small sprite voice), 'Frolicking frostbite! Stop wagging the tree, Lyddy, or I shall fall and crash on to my bottom!'

The two women Lady Partridge had been speaking to appeared by Lydia's side just as she shouted into the tree, 'Oh Bel, please come down!'

'Is everything quite well, my dear?' one asked.

'Oh yes,' Lydia said quickly. 'Yes, why I am just ... singing and shouting into the tree as we used to do in Hopperton. We need to let the tree know that if it doesn't listen to us, then spring will not come.' She stared at the tree with **gritted** teeth.

'So many strange rumours about this Hopperton,' the other lady whispered to her sister. 'Lady Partridge is indeed more kind than we knew to take in such a wild thing ...'

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Discussion Questions:

- Why did Lydia want to get Bel out of the tree? What did she think might happen?
- Why didn't Bel listen to Lydia? What do you do if someone isn't listening to you?
- Why did Bel's behaviour make Lydia feel angry? What did it make her realise about herself?
- How did putting herself in Bel's shoes help Lydia understand Bel's behaviour better?
- What do the two women think about Lydia shaking the tree? What does their whispering tell you about them?



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Extract 3: Taken from Chapter Twenty-one – Revealed



The Christmas Wish-tastrophe

Lydia laughed. The first page was a map, with all the twisting corridors and small doors marked on to it, and a tiny compass mark in the corner, so she could find her way round the house. Her mother had known she would start exploring straight away. There was another map of the formal gardens, and a beautiful sketch of the woods at the back. Underneath, her mother had noted, 'my favourite view of Peppomberley' – Lydia had stood on that very spot and felt the wind rush past her, seen how old and small Peppomberley had looked from there, and her mother had too. Lydia could even see some sparks flying up from the trees – maybe her mother had known about the sprites in the woods! There were more sketches and thoughts, a recipe for a pudding she liked, wildlife Lydia should look out for. And then, a letter on the last page.

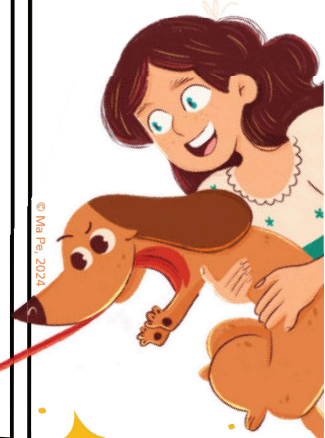
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My dearest Lydia,

I know you shall want to cause mischief in such a grand house. Peppomberley has that effect on some of us! I'm sure you have settled in now and that Georgiana (Lady Partridge to you) has told you the truth about how we knew each other, and lost each other. Underneath everything, she is the kindest soul, but not always the most willing to be silly until she is tricked into it – then I assure you she is more fun and trouble than even you are prepared for.

Enjoy Peppomberley, my darling girl. Whenever you need me, I am here – in the stars, in the roots of the trees, in the air all around you. I am not gone, I am in your heart beating with you. Miss me, Lydia, but do not ever feel alone.

Your loving mother xxx



Discussion Questions:

- Why did Lydia's mother include a map in her *A Guide to Surviving Peppomberley*? Why did it make Lydia laugh?
- How do you think Lydia felt when she realised that she had shared the same view as her mother? Why was this important for her?
- Do you think Lydia's mother had known about the sprites? How would the possibility that her mother had encountered the sprites make Lydia feel?
- What do you think Lydia's mother means when she says that Lady Partridge is more fun when "she is tricked into it"?
- How do you think Lydia feels about the letter? What do you think Lydia will do next after receiving this letter? How will it influence her actions?



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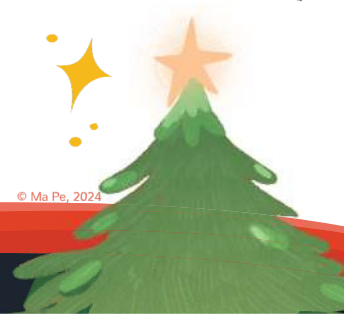
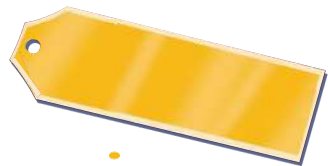
A Christmas Wish



In *The Christmas Wish-tastrophe* by Cariad Lloyd, Lydia makes a Christmas wish that the sprite, Bel, has a magical duty to grant.

Imagine that you had the opportunity to make a Christmas wish. What would you wish for? Would it be a wish for yourself or for someone else?

Write your Christmas wish on the label below and decorate it.



Wordsearch



Cross out each word as you find it.

P	A	R	T	R	I	D	G	E	Y	H	S	I	W	R
P	E	P	P	O	M	B	E	R	L	E	Y	Z	X	J
E	X	H	B	Y	A	N	P	O	R	T	R	A	I	T
V	D	W	I	A	D	T	C	O	L	I	N	J	T	E
D	O	U	V	F	N	H	E	E	P	O	M	M	O	C
C	W	I	T	Y	U	A	P	I	O	A	O	O	Y	X
H	N	M	H	Z	M	F	Y	B	R	O	J	Y	M	T
R	E	A	D	O	D	P	E	M	R	R	I	O	B	U
I	T	R	S	A	E	R	A	L	R	M	A	C	H	R
S	I	I	F	E	T	L	L	A	A	M	J	H	N	D
T	R	A	V	I	A	A	Y	R	R	I	A	D	G	N
M	P	N	E	D	B	I	T	D	K	A	I	C	S	N
A	S	N	E	T	E	H	B	E	L	Y	D	I	A	G
S	E	E	T	G	A	A	N	K	A	P	V	J	N	U

BALLROOM

EDMUND

PARTRIDGE

BEL

HARRIET

PEPPOMBERLEY

BERTIE

LYDIA

PORTRAIT

CHRISTMAS

MARIANNE

SPRITE

COLIN

MARMALADE

WISH

MARTHA



Wordsearch Answers



P	A	R	T	R	I	D	G	E	Y	H	S	I	W	R
P	E	P	P	O	M	B	E	R	L	E	Y	Z	X	J
E	X	H	B	Y	A	N	P	O	R	T	R	A	I	T
V	D	W	I	A	D	T	C	O	L	I	N	J	T	E
D	O	U	V	F	N	H	E	E	P	O	M	M	O	C
C	W	I	T	Y	U	A	P	I	O	A	O	O	Y	X
H	N	M	H	Z	M	F	Y	B	R	O	J	Y	M	T
R	E	A	D	O	D	P	E	M	R	R	I	O	B	U
I	T	R	S	A	E	R	A	L	R	M	A	C	H	R
S	I	I	F	E	T	L	L	A	A	M	J	H	N	D
T	R	A	V	I	A	A	Y	R	R	I	A	D	G	N
M	P	N	E	D	B	I	T	D	K	A	I	C	S	N
A	S	N	E	T	E	H	B	E	L	Y	D	I	A	G
S	E	E	T	G	A	A	N	K	A	P	V	J	N	U

BALLROOM

EDMUND

PARTRIDGE

BEL

HARRIET

PEPPOMBERLEY

BERTIE

LYDIA

PORTRAIT

CHRISTMAS

MARIANNE

SPRITE

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