

## **Descriptive notes for Five Go on an Adventure 2024**

These descriptive notes will give character and set descriptions, and a full summary of the performance including visual moments.

### **Main Characters**

Julian, who's the oldest. He's taller than the others with flop of hair parted to the side and wears a sensible collared shirt, blue shorts and sand shoes.

Dick, who has a mane of shoulder-length black curly hair. He has a bright smile and wears a knitted vest over a red t-shirt, with black shorts and trainers.

Anne, who's the youngest. She has a yellow shirt, yellow knee length socks and a yellow head band in her shoulder length hair. She wears a patterned skirt. She's bouncy and energetic.

Their cousin George. They have short mousey-blond hair. George wears blue overall shorts over a collared shirt and has sturdy leather shoes.

Timmy, who is George's beloved dog. Timmy is a puppet operated by an actor with one hand controlling his lower back and the other, the back of his head. Timmy moves so naturally, that we soon forget the puppeteer is even there. Timmy is about George's thigh-height. The puppeteer is able to move Timmy with subtle head movement, natural running gait and sitting and lying stance and keeps Timmy alive and alert throughout the whole show.

**Other characters** – Posties, Shopkeeper, Shopkeeper's son, Innkeeper, Farmer, Woman (Dirty Dick's mother), Prisoner, Dirty Dick, Girl, Maggie, Inspector, Police Constables. We also have actors pushing the walls around the stage and holding and moving signs to give a sense of the journeying of the children and Timmy.

### **Set Descriptions**

The first part of the show happens in front of the big red curtain that are closed to hide the rest of the stage.

When the curtains open, two spindly trees that frame the stage left and right are revealed. At the rear right corner is a narrow building of stone - it's just wider than the door at its centre and has a triangle roof-top. The front of this building just pokes into view on the stage and acts as different building in different places in the story.

It's a village shop with a tiny striped awning and an 'OPEN' sign; it then becomes an Inn in Beacons Village (the awning gone and sign saying 'INN'); it then becomes a cottage, when it pokes out straight across the stage, revealing a curtained window and returns again as the Inn.

The other important set items are two low stone walls. These are moved around constantly to create new places. Sometimes they're arranged as one long wall, other times they are split into two. Sometimes other actors push them along next to the children to create a wall-lined path and give a sense of movement and travel through the landscape.

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There are rafts that float on a lake. The rafts are small flat wooden rectangles that roll across the stage floor which is lit blue to create the effect of them floating on water.

## **Story Summary**

Warning - spoiler alert. The following gives a summary of the entire performance, so if you'd rather not know what happens in the show, then read no further.

### Scene 1 of 15 scenes

The red theatre curtain is in position. We hear the theme song of the show and the four children, Julian, George, Dick and Anne march on followed by Timmy. They all leave the stage apart from Anne who receives a letter from a postie. Each of the children receive and send a letter via the posties (one of whom wheels a bike). The children then all arrive on stage telling us of their plans. Anne and George leave. Julian and Dick start walking in place as the curtains open.

### Scene 2

The curtains reveal a village store. Julian and Dick ask the Shopkeeper for some orangeade. Then one for Anne who arrives, and then one for George when they arrive. The Shopkeeper leaves some sandwiches out for her son to collect. The children ask if she could make them some. The Shopkeeper's son arrives to collect the sandwiches with a message for his mother to say he has to take some stuff to the prison. When the Shopkeeper returns she warns the children to stay away from the prison. They head off with packages of sandwiches and a fruit cake.

### Scene 3

We see the children journeying – their hike is helped by other actors pushing the walls along or holding signposts to show the distance they are walking. They arrive at a moor apparently with lots of rabbits. "Timmy will love that", says George.

### Scene 4

Timmy begins to race after (unseen) rabbits and sniffs the trail of one. He ends stuck in a hole and so Anne pulls him out. He is hurt and George tells Anne off for hurting him as she tried to help. Julian suggests lunch. They sit down and eat but George is worried about Timmy and decides that they must find a vet in the nearest village. The Innkeeper at Beacons Village tells them there is no local vet but suggests they see a Mr Gaston. George and Julian take Timmy off while Julian tells Dick and Anne to make their way to Blue Pond Farm.

### Scene 5

Dick and Anne set off to find Blue Pond Farm, the accommodation that Julian has organised for the night. They aren't sure of the directions and try to find their way. They meet a farmer who isn't helpful when they ask for directions. It is getting dark so Dick asks Anne to get his torch out from his pack.

### Scene 6

Dick and Anne enter a path running between two walls that Dick thinks is a shortcut. It starts to rain so they put their raincoats on (as do the two actors pushing the wall).

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### Scene 7

As Dick and Anne try and find their way in the dark, suddenly a loud bell rings out. It frightens them both. The bell stops and Dick sees a light which they walk towards. A cottage appears and Dick knocks on the door and is opened by a Woman. Dick says that his brother booked them in here for the night but the Woman says they can't stay there. But she feels sorry for the children and so agrees to letting Anne stay but Dick must sleep in the barn. She warns them both about her son who has a bad temper.

### Scene 8

Dick finds his way to the barn and settles down and keeps his torch on to keep an eye out for Julian and George. He falls asleep but is woken by a voice calling his name, and to hurry up and listen. Dick pretends and puts a deep voice on in response. The voice belongs to an escaped Prisoner trying to get a message to Dirty Dick (the son of the Woman of the cottage). The Prisoner drops Dick a piece of paper and leaves. Then Dirty Dick leaves the cottage and sits in the barn too. He mutters to himself.

### Scene 9

It is morning and Dick wakes up surprised to see that he is alone. He goes to get Anne and the Woman tells him to hurry. Suddenly, Dirty Dick appears and is angry to see Dick there. He tries to get him. Dick tells Anne to run. And they both escape. They try and figure out what went wrong. They pass by a Child who warns them not to go the cottage as it's dirty and to stay away from Dirty Dick. They find their way back to Beacons Village when Timmy comes bounding in, followed by Julian and George. They decide to have breakfast at the Inn.

### Scene 10

The Innkeeper brings various items of breakfast out to the children. He tells them that the bell ringing meant that a Prisoner had escaped. Dick shares what he experienced in the barn. The children think he had a dream until he shows them the note that the Prisoner gave to him. They finish their breakfast and decide to head to the location (Two Trees, Gloomy Water) in the message from the Prisoner.

### Scene 11

They rush to Gloomy Water and sit and work out what they know so far. They reckon that Nailer is in jail for a robbery of jewellery and he has hidden the jewellery somewhere nearby. He's given the location to both a person called Maggie and to Dirty Dick (but Dick got the message instead). Timmy growls and Maggie and Dirty Dick appear. The children pretend to be looking for lovely things of nature (rather than the same things they are). Dirty Dick threatens them but Timmy growls at them so they leave.

### Scene 12

George finds a raft and they decide to take it out on the lake to see if they can find the boat Saucy Jane. Anne and Julian locate the four points mentioned on the note they spy a sunken boat at the bottom of the lake. Maggie and Dirty Dick appear on a raft but decide to wait till the children have left and exit. Julian rolls off the raft and dives down to the bottom of the lake. He comes back with a package.

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### Scene 13

Julian and Anne return to shore and the children gather round the package. Julian opens it to reveal jewellery boxes. George recognises it as being owned by the Queen of Fallonia from newspaper stories. They put the jewellery in their rucksacks and head to the police station.

### Scene 14

Dirty Dick and Maggie arrive and find the discarded package and the empty jewellery boxes. They chase after the children. Julian tells the others to stay on the paths as they are surrounded by dangerous marshland. Maggie and Dirty Dick appear and try and cut the children off but get stuck in the marshland. Dirty Dick breaks his ankle when he falls over. The children continue on to the police station.

### Scene 15

The children are being interviewed by an Inspector who tells one of the constables to take a car and pick up Dirty Dick and Maggie stuck in the moorland. The children hand over the jewels and then watch as Maggie and Dirty Dick are led off in handcuffs. The Inspector congratulates the children and Timmy.

This is the end of the descriptive notes.