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# THE POWER OF *imagination*

When no one is around, Sara's doll Emily, like all other dolls, reads, talks and moves around the room. Sara is absolutely sure of this. And she is also sure that she is a princess. A 'real' princess who 'sprinkles' kindness over anyone who needs it. Sara's vivid imagination makes real life seem magical. The creative power of imagination is one of the main themes in *A Little Princess*. Sara's imagination not only entertains her, but it also helps her to cope with life, even in the most difficult situations.

## How Sara uses her *imagination*

When her father has to leave her and go back to India, Sara comforts herself by pretending that her doll is real, and she talks to her about her father. Then something terrible happens and Sara's life suddenly changes. But she still believes that she can be a princess, and that she can help people. And she uses her imagination to make her miserable life seem better and the horrible Miss Minchin less mean and frightening.

In pairs, think of a time when you used your imagination to help you.



Share stories.



### OVER TO YOU

Sara imagines that she is a princess. Who would you like to be?

## How Sara's *imagination* makes her strong

Sara teaches us that imagination is a very powerful tool\*. A tool that can help us in lots of different ways. It allows us to think differently, and to look at situations from other points of view. Sara believes that her imagination can make things become true, and this gives her real strength and power. The people who make fun of her and are mean to her soon realise that they can't hurt Sara. She is stronger than they are, and they become afraid of something that she has, but they haven't. And this is the power of imagination.

### GLOSSARY

- **absolutely:** completely; 100%
- **comforts herself:** makes herself feel better
- **cope:** find a way to accept
- **entertains:** gives happiness to
- **mean:** nasty and horrible
- **miserable:** very sad
- **sprinkles:** puts a little
- **tool:** useful thing
- **vivid:** (here) very strong



# A LITTLE PRINCESS



Captain Crewe

Miss Minchin

Jessie

Lavinia

Emily

Sara

Ermengarde





Miss Amelia

Mr Carmichael

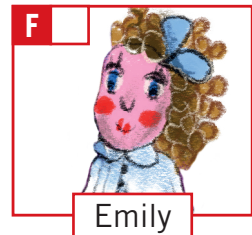
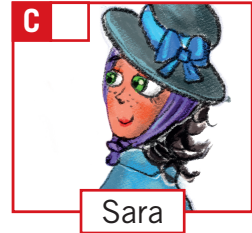
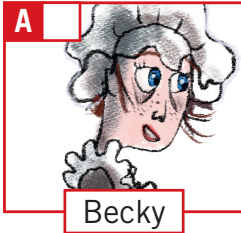
Ram Dass

Mr Carrisford

Becky

## BEFORE READING

-  1 Listen and match the descriptions to the characters. Number the pictures 1 to 6.



-  2 Listen again. Choose the correct adjectives to complete the sentences about the characters in Exercise 1.

blonde    cold    pale    slim    soft    thin

- a** Emily was a large doll and she had curly golden-brown hair and blue eyes with ..... thick eyelashes.
- b** Sara was tall and ..... . She had short black hair and big green eyes, with lovely long eyelashes.
- c** Sara saw one girl, about her own age. She had ..... hair and blue eyes, and she seemed kind and friendly.
- d** Miss Minchin, the head of the school, entered the room. She was tall and thin, and she had large, ..... eyes, and a cold smile.
- e** Two servants helped a tall, thin man with a ....., unhappy face to get out of the carriage.
- f** A ..... little girl entered the room, carrying a heavy coal box.





- 3** Listen and check.
- 4** Look at the words in the box. Which of the following can they describe? Some may be used more than once. What other words can be used?

• bodies • eyes • eyelashes • faces • hair

black	large
blonde	long
blue	pale
brown	short
cold	slim
curly	tall
dark	thick
golden-brown	thin
green	unhappy

- 5**  Which adjectives in Exercises 2 and 4 have similar meanings? Discuss the differences between the words with a friend.

- 6** Match the jobs to their definitions.


- a  lawyer      d  secretary  
b  nurse      e  servant  
c  maid      f  shop assistant

- 1 person who writes letters, etc. for another person
- 2 person who sells things in a shop
- 3 person who works with legal and business things
- 4 person who works for a rich person
- 5 female servant who works in a rich person's house
- 6 person who looks after ill people





# 1 Sara

 It was a dark winter's day in London, and there were lights in all the shop windows. A carriage drove slowly along the wide streets. Sara Crewe and her father, Captain Crewe, were sitting in it. His arm was around her, and she was looking sadly out of the window. She was thinking about the long journey• on the ship from Bombay• to London. She moved closer to her father.

'Papa,' she whispered•.

'What is it, darling•?' asked Captain Crewe.

'Is this "the place"?'

'Yes, little Sara, it is. We're here at last,' her father said. Then he laughed and kissed• her. He was sad, too, but he couldn't say that to Sara. So, he held her very closely as the carriage drove into a big square.

Sara's mother was dead and her father was her only relative• in the world. They always played together, and they loved each other very much. They were very rich, and they lived in a beautiful big house. Sara had toys and pets and an *ayah*• who loved her, too. But her father wanted her to go to school in England, so when she was seven, they left India to go to "the place".

'Can't you stay with me, Papa?' she asked.

'No, I can't, darling. It's a lovely school, and there are lots of little girls to be friends with. There are lots of books there, too.'

Sara loved books.

## GLOSSARY

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- **ayah:** (in India) woman who looks after children.
- **Bombay:** the old name for Mumbai
- **darling:** somebody you love very much
- **journey:** act of travelling from one place to another
- **kissed:** touched with the mouth to show love
- **relative:** family member e.g. aunt
- **whispered:** said quietly

Finally, the carriage stopped in front of the school. It was a big, tall house with a sign above the door.



## MISS MINCHIN'S Young Ladies' Academy

'Here we are, Sara,' said Captain Crewe in a cheerful voice. Then he lifted her out of the carriage. They walked up the steps and rang the bell. A maid opened the door and she took them into a sitting room.

Sara sat down on a hard chair, and she looked around her. 'I don't like this place,' she thought.

Just then, Miss Minchin, the head of the school, entered the room. She was tall and thin, and she had large cold eyes and a cold smile.

Miss Minchin smiled at Captain Crewe. She knew he was a rich father and that he spent a lot of money on his daughter.

'I'm happy to have such a beautiful child at my school,' she said. And she took Sara's hand. 'She's very clever, I hear. And a clever child is a great treasure in a school.'

Sara sat quietly, with her eyes on Miss Minchin's face. 'She doesn't really think that I'm beautiful. She knows I'm ugly,' she thought. 'She's lying.'

However, Sara was not ugly. She was tall and slim. She had short black hair and big green eyes, with lovely long eyelashes. She didn't like the colour of her eyes, but many other people did.

### GLOSSARY

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- **cheerful:** happy
- **eyelashes:** short hairs around the eyes
- **lying:** saying something that isn't true
- **maid:** girl working in a rich person's house
- **treasure:** (here) very valuable, important thing



Sara listened to the conversation between Miss Minchin and her father. ‘Sara must have a pretty bedroom and her own sitting room,’ said her father. ‘She must have a pony• and a carriage, and a maid.’

‘I’m not worried about her education,’ he continued, with his happy laugh. ‘She loves learning, and she reads all the time. She gobbles up• books like a little wolf. You must take her away from her books. She must ride her pony, or go out and buy a new doll. She needs to play more.’

‘Papa,’ said Sara, ‘I don’t want lots of dolls. I just want one doll. That’s Emily.’

Miss Minchin looked at Captain Crewe.

‘Who is Emily?’ she asked.

‘Tell her, Sara,’ Captain Crewe said, smiling.

‘Emily’s a doll that I haven’t got yet,’ said Sara. ‘But she’s going to be my best friend. When I’m sad, I can talk to her about my father.’

## Sad

What do you do when you are sad?

‘What a darling little girl!’ said Miss Minchin with her cold smile.

‘Yes,’ said Captain Crewe. ‘She is a darling little girl. You must take great care of• her for me, Miss Minchin.’

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• **gobbles up:** eats very quickly; (here) reads very quickly

• **pony:** small horse  
• **take care of:** look after

Sara and her father left the school and went back to their hotel. Sara stayed at the hotel with her father until he left for India. Every day, they went shopping together, and they bought lots of things. Captain Crewe wanted his little girl to have everything she liked. He bought her pretty dresses, beautiful hats and warm winter coats. He bought boxes of expensive gloves and colourful scarves. The polite young shop assistants whispered to each other, 'Perhaps she's a princess – perhaps she's the daughter of an Indian *rajah*.'

Sara and her father went to lots of toy shops until at last they found Emily.

'Oh, Papa!' cried Sara. 'There's Emily! She's waiting for us! Let's go in and meet her!'

They went into the shop, and Sara took Emily in her arms. She was a large doll, and she had curly golden-brown hair and blue eyes with soft thick eyelashes.

They bought Emily and some beautiful clothes for her, too.

That night, Captain Crewe had a sad thought. 'Now Sara has got Emily, it's time for me to leave.'

The next day, he took Sara to Miss Minchin's. 'Give Sara everything she asks for,' he said. 'She never asks for anything she doesn't need. She's a very sensible girl.'

## GLOSSARY

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- **polite:** well behaved
- **rajah:** Indian king or prince
- **sensible:** practical; who doesn't do stupid things





He went with Sara into her little sitting room and they said goodbye. Sara sat on his knee•, and she looked long and hard at his face.

‘Are you learning me by heart, little Sara?’ he asked.

‘No, I know you by heart. You’re in my heart,’ she answered, and she hugged• him. Then Captain Crewe left.

### Learn by heart

When you learn or know something ‘by heart’, you know it so well that you can never forget it.

What things do you know ‘by heart’?

How do you say ‘learn by heart’ in your language?

‘Go to Sara Crewe’s room, Amelia. Check that she’s OK,’ Miss Minchin ordered her sister. Miss Amelia obeyed•. She always obeyed her sister because she was frightened of her.

‘Sara, I can’t open the door,’ said Miss Amelia.

‘It’s locked•,’ replied Sara. ‘I want to be on my own.’

Miss Amelia went downstairs again. ‘Sara’s a strange little girl,’ she told her sister. ‘She isn’t crying.’

‘Good,’ Miss Minchin replied. ‘I hate it when the girls cry.’

‘All her clothes are in her wardrobe now,’ said Miss Amelia. ‘They’re so expensive. What do you think of them?’

‘They’re a waste of• money,’ replied Miss Minchin. ‘They’re the clothes of a little princess.’

### GLOSSARY

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• **hugged:** put her arms around him to show love

• **knee:**



• **locked:** closed with a key

• **obeyed:** did as somebody told her

• **waste of:** bad use of

## AFTER READING VOCABULARY

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### 1 Use five of the words in the box to complete the sentences.

coward homesick pavement pillow  
refuse relative roof wicked

- a Sara's father was her only ..... in the world.
- b Mr Carrisford left Sara little presents under her .....
- c Who is going to ..... an invitation from the heiress to a diamond mine?
- d At first, Sara thought that Mr Carrisford was .....
- e Mr Carrisford thought of himself as a .....

### 2 Write sentences with the three words left out in Exercise 1.

### 3 Complete the sentences with the correct form of *make* or *do*.

- a Sara likes ..... up stories and telling them to herself.
- b Sara pretends the doll can walk. And that, she says, ..... it true.
- c A princess is usually kind and ..... good things.
- d 'Oh, no!' whispered Lavinia, 'Miss Minchin is going to ..... a speech!'
- e Miss Minchin asked Becky what she was ..... under the table.
- f When he found Sara, Mr Carrisford soon began ..... plans for her.
- g Sara wished she could ..... Becky feel better.
- h Now the diamond mines were ..... very well, and Sara was rich again.
- i A magician is someone who can ..... magic.

