

## MARY POPPINS, THE PERFECT NANNY

*Mary Poppins* is a 1964 American musical film produced by Walt Disney, and based on the *Mary Poppins* series of children's books written by P.L. Travers and illustrated by Mary Shepard. Here is a brief synopsis of the film.

Growing up in London in 1910, the Banks children, Jane and Michael, need a nanny. Their father advertises conventionally for a nanny, but the kids write their own advertisement to put in *The Times*, asking for someone with kindness and imagination. Mary Poppins answers the children's ad by arriving at the Banks' home from the skies, parachuting down with her umbrella. She immediately endears herself<sup>1</sup> to the children. After their fun tidying up the nursery, the next day they meet Mary's old friend Bert, currently employed as a sidewalk artist. Mary, Bert, and the children hop into one of Bert's chalk drawings. Unfortunately for Jane and Michael, the outing in the chalk pavement picture is brought to an end by a sudden thunderstorm. Upon returning home, they prepare for the worst: "Children who get their feet wet must learn to take their medicine," Mary Poppins tells them. But no spoonful of sugar is necessary to make this medicine go down. Mary Poppins even joins a horse race, and upon winning it, she is interviewed about how such an accomplishment makes her feel. Her answer? "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!" Later, Jane and Michael pay visit to Bert's Uncle Albert, who laughs so hard that he floats to the ceiling. Though Mr Banks is pleased<sup>2</sup> that their children are behaving better, he is not happy with their fantastic stories. To show the children what the real world is like, he takes them to the bank where he works. A series of disasters follow which result in his being fired from his job. Mary Poppins' role in all this leads to some moments when it is possible to fear that all her good work will be undone, but like the magical being she is, all her 'mistakes' lead to a happy result by the end of the film.



**GLOSSARY**

- 1 makes herself liked
- 2 glad

### READING COMPREHENSION

● Answer the following questions.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Who are the main characters of the musical <i>Mary Poppins</i>?</li> <li>② How does Mary Poppins arrive at the Banks' home?</li> <li>③ Who is Bert?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>④ What does Bert do?</li> <li>⑤ Why does Mr Banks decide to take his children to the bank where he works?</li> <li>⑥ Why is Mary Poppins referred to as a "magical being"?</li> </ul> |
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### ACTIVITIES



### SPEAKING

● Do you think *Mary Poppins* is a good nanny? Why/why not?

