

## APPENDIX A

### SAMPLE ANALYSES OF THE SOURCE TEXTS

This appendix provides additional exemplification for the features of Potter's tales analysed in Chapter 3.

#### 1. Interaction between the illustrations and the verbal texts

*Peter Rabbit*, pp. 8-9

"Now, my dears," said old Mrs. Rabbit one morning, "you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden."

Setting: the illustration and in the verbal text provide different information and are therefore complementary. The illustration shows the characters' clothes, which suggest an older historical period. The verbal text specifies the temporal coordinates ("one morning"), and establishes the areas where the rabbits are allowed to go ("into the fields" and "down the lane", which are safe) and those where they are forbidden to go ("Mr. McGregor's garden", which is not safe).

Characterisation: the illustration and the verbal text contribute different information (complementary). In the illustration, the human-animal duality is suggested by the characters' accurate physical details (animal), contrasted with their human gestures, upright posture, clothes and use of human objects (basket, bag). Mrs. Rabbit's clothes suggest her social class (possibly lower-middle class), while the young rabbits' clothes suggest their gender (red for the girls, blue for the boy) and the potential similarities and differences of character (all the girls are dressed in the same colour, only Peter wears another colour). The characters' grouping and positioning in relation to each other, the direction of the planes in the illustration also indicate this opposition: the girls are together, facing their mother, whereas Peter is pictured separately, his back turned to them and seemingly moving rightwards, impatiently. In the verbal text, the human-animal duality is suggested by Mrs. Rabbit's name (human title and animal surname) and her ability to speak. Additional information about her is given by her affectionate, cautionary address to her children and by the adjective "old".

*Benjamin Bunny*, pp. 6-7

“One morning a little rabbit sat on a bank. He pricked his ears and listened to the trit-trot, trit-trot of a pony. A gig was coming along the road; it was driven by Mr. McGregor, and beside him sat Mrs. McGregor in her best bonnet.”

Setting: the illustration and in the verbal text provide different information (complementary relationship). The illustration specifies the time of the day (“morning”), sounds in the setting (“trit-trot of a pony”) and elements which are not shown in the illustration (the McGregors are approaching, riding in a gig). The illustration shows the appearance of the bank on which the rabbit is sitting (there is moss and a tree trunk with some young branches) and the rabbits’ clothes and footwear.

Characterisation: there is a counterpointing element, as verbally the rabbit is pictured only as an animal, but in the illustration he displays a mixture of animal and human traits. While his anatomical details are those of a real rabbit, his posture, gestures, clothes and clogs are human.

*The Flopsy Bunnies*, pp. 52-53

“And Mr. McGregor was very angry too. One of the rotten marrows came flying through the kitchen window, and hit the youngest Flopsy Bunny. It was rather hurt.”

Setting: the illustration provides more information than the text (enhancing relationship). The text mention only the marrow flying through the kitchen window, whereas the illustration shows the house’s brick wall, an ivy-like plant growing next to the window, the leaves of the geranium in the kitchen, several French marigold flowers underneath the window, and the heads of two other Flopsy Bunnies, looking up towards their sibling.

Characterisation: generally the illustration and the text provide complementary information, but there is a counterpointing element. In the text, the youngest Flopsy Bunny is mostly animal (even referred to as “it”), but in the illustration it has a human facial expression of fright and is wearing a blue ribbon.

*Mr. Tod*, pp. 42-43

“As usual, when out of humour, he determined to move house. First he tried the pollard willow, but it was damp; and the otters had left a dead fish near it. Mr. Tod likes nobody’s leavings but his own. He made his way up the hill; his temper was not improved by noticing unmistakable marks of badger. No one else grubs up the moss so wantonly as Tommy Brock.”

Setting: some of the information in the two illustrations and the text is complementary. The text specifies where Mr. Tod had been (pollard willow) and what that place was like (damp,

dead fish) and provides information about his current whereabouts (the moss is disturbed), although this may also be suggested by the colour illustration (some brown lines among the general green). The colour illustration shows the trees among which the fox is walking, possibly beeches, his clothes and walking stick, pertaining to an older historical period and a specific cultural space (Western European style). The black-and-white illustration shows the appearance of the hill which Mr. Tod is climbing and suggests that the fox is covering a large distance. It also shows that he is carrying a bag.

Characterisation: the illustrations and the text provide complementary information. The text uses narrator description and comments to characterise the fox and the badger. The human-animal duality is suggested here, on the one hand, by the use of the personal pronoun “he” and the title “Mr.,” the attribution of human feelings to the fox (being out of humour, being annoyed), and, on the other hand, by the name of the fox and his animal characteristics (may live in a pollard willow). In the illustrations, the human-animal duality is indicated by the contrast between animal physical features and human posture, clothes and accessories. The fox’s clothes also suggest that he comes from an upper-class background.

*Jemima Puddle-Duck*, pp. 8-9

“Her sister-in-law, Mrs. Rebecca Puddle-duck, was perfectly willing to leave the hatching to some one else —‘I have not the patience to sit on a nest for twenty-eight days; and no more have you, Jemima. You would let them go cold; you know you would!’

‘I wish to hatch my own eggs; I will hatch them all by myself,’ quacked Jemima Puddle-duck.”

Setting: Only the illustration provides setting elements, showing that the dialogue in the text takes place in a barn with a specific architecture, where there are agricultural tools, hay and several other animals.

Characterisation: the information in the illustration and text is complementary, although the human-animal duality is much stronger in the text than in the illustration, which therefore are somewhat counterpointing. The text mentions specifically animal characteristics (hatching eggs, quacking), while integrating human elements (kinship, title, proper names, speech, being patient). The illustration does not give the animals any human characteristics, except for their grouping and position: Jemima is alone and all the other animals are grouped and looking at her, which suggests that they are talking. Their grouping also indicates that Jemima is not supported by anyone.

*Squirrel Nutkin*, pp. 18-19

“The squirrels filled their little sacks with nuts, and sailed away home in the evening.”

Setting: there is a complementary relationship between the text and the illustration. The text specifies the time of the day (evening) and the destination of the squirrels which are shown to be going away on the rafts (“sailed away home”). The illustration offers detailed information about the place where the squirrels are: the banks of the lake, where there are reed and a tree.

Characterisation: The human-animal duality is suggested in both illustration and text by different means (complementary relationship). The text mentions “nuts”, which squirrels usually eat, but it also gives the squirrels human features (using sacks and sailing). In the illustration, the squirrels are accurately represented, but they are working collaboratively, using human objects (rope, sacks, rafts) and their gestures are also human.

*Taylor of Gloucester*, pp. 48-49

“Simpkin came away from the shop and went home, considering in his mind. He found the poor old tailor without fever, sleeping peacefully.

Then Simpkin went on tip-toe and took a little parcel of silk out of the tea-pot, and looked at it in the moonlight; and he felt quite ashamed of his badness compared with those good little mice!

When the tailor awoke in the morning, the first thing which he saw upon the patchwork quilt, was a skein of cherry-coloured twisted silk, and beside his bed stood the repentant Simpkin!”

Setting: the illustration and the text offer complementary information. The text first mentions setting elements related to previous events (the shop, the tea-pot at home, moonlight) and then sets the time of the day for the picture (morning). The illustration shows details regarding setting elements, some of which are mentioned in the text (the appearance of the bed, of the chair that Simpkin is standing on, which suggest a particular historical period and cultural space).

Characterisation: While verbally the cat is given only human characteristics (reflecting, walking on tiptoe, feeling ashamed and repenting), the illustration shows a mixture of animal anatomy (enhanced by the lack of clothes) and human posture. Therefore, the text and the illustration are counterpointing in the characterisation of the cat.

## 2. Read-aloud qualities

### Typography

ONCE UPON A TIME there  
were four little Rabbits,  
and their names were –  
    Flopsy,  
    Mopsy,  
    Cotton-tail,  
and Peter. (*PR*, p. 7)

She sat there for *five hours*. (*BB*, p. 44)

... for I have NO MORE TWIST. (*TG*, p. 16)

### Punctuation: semi-colons and dashes

First he ate some lettuces and some French beans; and then he ate some radishes; and then,  
... (*PR*, pp. 23-24)

In the middle of the lake there is an island covered with trees and nut bushes; and amongst  
those trees... (*SN*, p. 8)

There were twelve pieces for the coat and four pieces for the waistcoat; and there were  
pocket flaps and cuffs, and buttons all in order. For the lining of the coat there was fine  
yellow taffeta; and for the button-holes of the waistcoat... (*TG*, pp. 11-12)

The shed was almost quite full of feathers—it was almost suffocating; but it was comfortable  
and very soft. (*JPD*, p. 31)

This is a Tale about a tail—a tail that... (*SN*, p. 7)

When Flopsy and Benjamin came back—old Mr. Bouncer woke up. (*MT*, p. 16)

### Alliteration and assonance

All day long while the light lasted he sewed and snippeted, piecing out his satin and  
pompadour, and lutestring; (*TG*, p. 7)

a flutterment and a scufflement (*SN*, p. 48)

Old Mr. Bouncer coughed and laughed; and Tommy Brock puffed and grinned. (*MT*, p. 15)

### **Onomatopoeia**

a pitter-patter, pitter-patter (*BB*, p. 47)

The bluebottles buzzed... (*FB*, p. 20)

Tommy Brock snored industriously, with rather a snort. (*MT*, p. 53)

### **Interjections**

'Now my dears,' said old Mrs. Rabbit... (*PR*, p. 8)

One day—oh joy!—there were... (*FB*, p. 16)

“Now ...” (*TG*, p. 20)

### **Narrator comments**

I think he might have got away altogether... (*PR*, p. 35)

(I once bought a pair at a bazaar). She also sold herbs, and rosemary tea, and rabbit-tobacco (which is what *we* call lavender). (*BB*, p. 11)

... not one mouse was left in the tailor's kitchen when Simpkin came back with the pipkin of milk! (*TG*, 27-28)

### **Orality-based syntax**

The cat got up and stretched herself, and came and sniffed at the basket. (cumulative “and”) (*BB*, p. 43)

Then he came back to the basket and took out his son Benjamin by the ears, and whipped him with the little switch. Then he took out his nephew Peter. The he took out the handkerchief ... (narrative “then”, cumulative “and”) (*BB*, pp. 51-52)

There were jam pots and paper bags, and mountains of chopped grass from the mowing machine (which always tasted oily), and some rotten vegetable marrows and an old boot or two. (in-sentence cumulative “and”) (*FB*, p. 16)

One day he was living in a stick-house in the coppice, causing terror to the family of old Mr. Benjamin Bouncer. Next day he moved into a pollard willow near the lake, frightening the wild ducks and the water rats. (parallel structure) (*MT*, p. 8)

Here he had rooted up the moss and wood sorrel. There he had dug quite a deep hole for dog darnel; (parallel structure) (*MT*, p. 18)

There were twelve pieces for the coat and four pieces for the waistcoat; and there were pocket flaps and cuffs, and buttons all in order. For the lining of the coat there was fine yellow taffeta; and for the button-holes of the waistcoat, there was cherry-coloured twist. (repetition, parallel structures, cumulative “and”) (*TG*, p. 12)

Peter sat down to rest; he was out of breath and trembling with fright, and he had not the least idea which way to go. Also he was very damp with sitting in that can. (coordination by punctuation, “and”, “also”) (*PR*, p. 47)

One morning a little rabbit sat on a bank. He pricked his ears and listened to the trit-trot, trit-trot of a pony. A gig was coming along the road; it was driven by Mr. McGregor, and beside him sat Mrs. McGregor in her best bonnet. (coordination by punctuation and “and”). (*BB*, p. 7)

When Benjamin Bunny grew up, he married his Cousin Flopsy. They had a large family, and they were very improvident and cheerful. I do not remember the separate names of their children; they were generally called the "Flopsy Bunnies." (coordination by punctuation) (*FB*, p. 8)

### **3. Stylistic features**

#### **Conciseness and reserve**

Peter asked her the way to the gate, but she had such a large pea in her mouth that she could not answer. She only shook her head at him. Peter began to cry. (*PR*, p. 51)

Then he came back to the basket and took out his son Benjamin by the ears, and whipped him with the little switch. Then he took out his nephew Peter. (*BB*, p. 51)

One of the rotten marrows ... hit the youngest Flopsy Bunny. It was rather hurt. Then Benjamin and Flopsy thought that it was time to go home. (*FB*, pp. 52, 54)

#### **Language register**

Peter sat down to rest; he was out of breath and trembling with fright, and he had not the least idea which way to go. Also he was very damp with sitting in that can. (simple standard English with slightly dated or formal language: “fright”, “had not the least idea”) (*PR*, p. 47)

They got amongst flower-pots, and frames and tubs; Peter heard noises worse than ever, his eyes were as big as lolly-pops. He was a step or two in front of his cousin, when he suddenly stopped. (standard English with dated language, “amongst”, hyphenation) (*BB*, p. 39)

‘My Uncle Bouncer has displayed a lamentable want of discretion for his years,’ said Peter reflectively, ‘but there are two hopeful circumstances. Your family is alive and kicking; and

Tommy Brock has had refreshment.’ (formal register with colloquial phrase, “alive and kicking” – also wordplay, since the rabbits were really kicking in the sack) (*MT*, p. 24)

‘Madam, I beg you not to trouble yourself with a bag; I will provide oats. But before you commence your tedious sitting, I intend to give you a treat. Let us have a dinner-party all to ourselves! May I ask you to bring up some herbs from the farm-garden to make a savoury omelette? Sage and thyme, and mint and two onions, and some parsley. I will provide lard for the stuff—lard for the omelette,’ said the hospitable gentleman with sandy whiskers. (formal language) (*JPD*, p.36)

#### **4. Humour**

##### **Understatement**

Little Benjamin did not very much want to see his Aunt. (*BB*, p. 12)

Sometimes Peter Rabbit had no cabbages to spare. (*FB*, p. 12)

Mr. Tod had had an unsatisfactory night. (*MT*, p.41)

##### **Language registers**

Then the mouse came out of her jam pot, and Benjamin took the paper bag off his head, and they told the doleful tale. Benjamin and Flopsy were in despair, they could not undo the string. But Mrs. Tittlemouse was a resourceful person. She nibbled a hole in the bottom corner of the sack. (standard English with more formal and poetic language “doleful tale” “in despair”, “resourceful person”) (*FB*, p. 35)

Tommy Brock squeezed himself into the rabbit-hole with alacrity. (*MT*, p. 14)

A long new pipe and a fresh supply of rabbit-tobacco was presented to Mr. Bouncer. He was rather upon his dignity; but he accepted. (*MT*, p. 79)

##### **Repetitions**

The sight that met Mr. Tod's eyes in Mr. Tod's kitchen made Mr. Tod furious. There was Mr. Tod's chair, and Mr. Tod's pie dish, and his knife and fork and mustard and salt cellar and his table-cloth that he had left folded up in the dresser—all set out for supper (or breakfast)—without doubt for that odious Tommy Brock. (*MT*, p. 45)

Tommy Brock was sitting at Mr. Tod's kitchen table, pouring out tea from Mr. Tod's tea-pot into Mr. Tod's tea-cup. He was quite dry himself and grinning; and he threw the cup of scalding tea all over Mr. Tod. (*MT*, p. 67)

### **Wordplay**

In half a minute less than no time... (*BB*, p. 40)

I am undone and worn to a thread-paper (*TG*, p. 16)

I shall make my fortune – to be cut bias – the Mayor of Gloucester ... hath ordered a coat... (*TG*, p. 19)

### **Visual-verbal relationship**

In *BB*, the verbal text recounts that Mr. Bunny “took out the handkerchief of onions [collected by Peter and Benjamin], and marched out of the garden.” (p. 52). However, the corresponding illustration shows Mr. Bunny carrying not only the onion “bag”, but also a lettuce stolen from Mr. McGregor’s garden. This refers back to the beginning of the story, where Benjamin tells Peter that he and Mr. Bunny often come to the garden to take lettuces. The humorous effect arises, therefore, when readers discover, in the picture, that Mr. Bunny acts in accordance with his habitual behaviour even under those troubled circumstances, a piece of information which the written text does not provide.

In *FB*, pp. 16-17, the text does not mention yet that the rabbits are eating the lettuces. The illustration shows not only the young rabbits eating, but that their equally hungry father, instead of supervising them, is gorging on the lettuces as well.