

MY SECRET COUNTRY
Transcript with timecode

01:00:06.708 --> 01:00:08.000

- [Marlo - narrator] Why is imagination and creativity so important?

01:00:10.375 --> 01:00:15.375

- [Dori] Because imagination is what makes creativity.

If you don't, people try as hard as they can.

They work really, really hard to be creative, but they just, they don't know how to have fun.

01:00:26.583 --> 01:00:30.875

(upbeat instrumental music)

01:00:33.458 --> 01:00:37.500

[Marlo - narrator] So, how do you like to have fun?

01:00:38.416 --> 01:00:42.791

- [Max] There are lots, and lots, and lots of imaginary friends. A lot of kids have an imaginary friends and they go to that world.

01:00:52.083 --> 01:00:52.916

- [Marlo - narrator] Oh really?

01:00:52.916 --> 01:00:54.500

- [Max] Yeah.

01:00:54.500 --> 01:00:56.416

- [Marlo - narrator] So what do they all do there?

01:00:58.375 --> 01:01:01.250

- [Peter Gray (VO)] What is play and what do we really mean, what exactly is imaginative play?

01:01:04.458 --> 01:01:07.458

- [Marjorie Taylor (VO)] I'm just curious about why children would start thinking about things that don't exist.

01:01:09.583 --> 01:01:12.125

- [Maxine] It's kind of like a whole different universe.

01:01:12.125 --> 01:01:14.083

- [Max] It's like, magical.

01:01:14.083 --> 01:01:14.958

- [Michele Root-Bernstein (VO)]

We need a lot of people who can think inside the box, then there are questions, they're gonna require us to create a new box.

So, how do you create that new box?

01:01:24.583 --> 01:01:27.541

- [Maxine (VO)] As we age, we lose the sense of doing things outside of the possible. We could all learn a little bit from children.

01:01:32.000 --> 01:01:35.750

- [Maxine] I pretend I have plugs into my mind. I give the plugs to all my imaginary friends, they can see my stories.

01:01:40.708 --> 01:01:42.833

- [Marlo - narrator] So, take me into the process, tell me a story.

01:01:44.916 --> 01:01:46.583

- [Maxine] Dessert is going extinct

01:01:46.583 --> 01:01:49.833

[Dori] and everybody's ruled by a huge Goblin King.

01:01:49.833 --> 01:01:50.791

- [Marlo - narrator] Wait, so did you say that dessert is going extinct?

01:01:52.500 --> 01:01:53.625

- [Dori] Like, what?

01:01:53.625 --> 01:01:55.375

- [Marlo - narrator] Cookies, cakes, cream pies, don't tell me, chocolate. Why don't we really jump into this, dive into your minds, your imaginations and go on an adventure together, okay? So, let's start here.

MOVIE TITLE: MY SECRET COUNTRY

TITLE: MAXINE (Age 10)

01:02:19.916 --> 01:02:21.541

- [Maxine] Well, I have an imaginary world where my imaginary friends live, and they come to visit me.

01:02:27.958 --> 01:02:31.583

- [Maxine] This is my imaginary friend creator workshop.

So, this is kind of a sidebar where I choose what I'm drawing. And I like to imagine it as like in a video game, like where I'm creating something and I have like all these colors and I just draw it in my head.

01:02:47.458 --> 01:02:50.291

- [Maxine] What I like most about imaginary friend world is the people there.

There's a lot of people that live there, like a billion maybe, there's a lot.

They come in all sorts of shapes and sizes, and also, I can delete them.

I just wanted to see what that would be like. So I made one kind of mean and just deleted it.

But that's the only one I've ever deleted though 'cause it all kind of important to me.

01:03:20.416 --> 01:03:22.500

- [Maxine] Devil Man is my favorite.

He was my first imaginary friend. Oh, I made him when I was like really young, preschool. So he's like, everyone would think he would be mean but he's really nice. He lives in my lamp in that one right there, so it's like right where I sleep.

I would think like, what if I got rid of the lamp? Like where would he go? I don't know, if I move I would have to take the lamp.

01:03:56.541 --> 01:04:00.000

- [Maxine] The are whole family's like the Hairstyle family. I have another one called Bem, he's a huge eyeball. I like Betchaboo, he shoots things like ice cream and candy. And there's Fugatz, and he smiles a lot.

01:04:16.708 --> 01:04:20.166

- [Maxine] If they do have mouths, they do speak Unique, which is a language I made up. It would be like swirls, and loops, and stuff like that. And if you speak it, it also sounds like a foreign language. And, do you guys wanna tell me some words to translate?

01:04:35.875 --> 01:04:38.500

- [Marlo - narrator] How about, I love you?

01:04:38.500 --> 01:04:41.416

- [Maxine] Algea

01:04:41.416 --> 01:04:45.416

- [Maxine] I also have another language that some of them speak called Tuh, and it's just a bunch of lines and dots.

01:04:53.250 --> 01:04:57.625

- [Maxine] There's the Timmy family, there's little Timmy, Mrs. Timmy, and Mr. Timmy. And there's EA, he likes sports, and there's Mr. Smiley face, Mr. Ladybug, and Invisible man, and

Katy. I made Milo an imaginary friend, my dog. It was before she died but I was thinking like, she's not gonna last forever. So if I make her an imaginary friend, she will.

01:05:25.250 --> 01:05:27.500

- [Marlo - narrator] So what are your imaginary friends up to right now? It looks like they're in a desert.

01:05:36.583 --> 01:05:39.166

- [Maxine] Well, my character's are bad at spelling and they thought it was the Sahara dessert, and they wanted some dessert. So they were confused because they didn't find any dessert and they traveled all over the desert looking for it.

01:06:01.458 --> 01:06:04.708

- [Marlo - narrator] Do you think they should look for dessert not in the desert? But wait, how do they get around?

01:06:09.166 --> 01:06:12.166

- [Maxine] Like, they just have a portal, whenever they want to go, it appears right in front of them and it comes out wherever they want to go.

01:06:19.958 --> 01:06:23.458

(upbeat music)

01:06:30.375 --> 01:06:33.666

- [Marlo - narrator] Wow, what is happening to dessert

TITLE: MAX (Age 5)

01:06:42.500 --> 01:06:44.666

- [Marlo - narrator] Max, have you seen any dessert? Or has your imaginary friend, Scwigee seen any dessert lately? Does Scwigee even like dessert?

01:06:54.250 --> 01:06:58.625

- [Max] What he likes to eat is wrinkly flowers.

01:06:58.625 --> 01:06:59.708

- [Marlo - narrator] Wrinkly flowers?

01:06:59.708 --> 01:07:01.791

- [Max] Wrinkly flowers.

01:07:01.791 --> 01:07:03.750

- [Marlo - narrator] That sounds very nutritious.

01:07:03.750 --> 01:07:05.083

- [Max] Yeah.

01:07:05.083 --> 01:07:07.666

- [Opal, Max's sibling] So, do you wanna cut the flowers for Scwigeer?

01:07:07.666 --> 01:07:12.166

- [Max] Oh yeah, okay, Scwigeer will eat that.

01:07:14.083 --> 01:07:18.166

- [Opal, Max's sibling] Yeah, that's good, here you go. Okay, so cut it like right down, yeah, that's good. Okay, and then should I do this one?

01:07:27.208 --> 01:07:28.791

- [Max] If it's wilted.

01:07:28.791 --> 01:07:31.375

- [Opal] Okay, do you think it's wilted? No?

01:07:32.458 --> 01:07:34.791

- [Max] I don't think it's wilted.

01:07:34.791 --> 01:07:36.041

- [Opal] Well, it is kind of crumply, right?

01:07:36.041 --> 01:07:37.916

- [Max] Well, let's see. Let's leave that one because these ones are mostly not dry, they're pretty wet.

01:07:47.000 --> 01:07:49.416

- [Opal] Okay, but we can do this one.

01:07:49.416 --> 01:07:53.833

- Yeah, of course, the white ones, thanks.

01:07:55.750 --> 01:07:58.250

- [Opal] Wait, should I do this little guy too?

01:07:58.250 --> 01:08:01.166

- [Max] No, no, he's a sprout.

01:08:01.166 --> 01:08:02.750

- [Opal] Oh, okay.

01:08:02.750 --> 01:08:05.000

- [Max] He's a bit of a sprout.

01:08:07.000 --> 01:08:08.916

- [Opal] Okay, is that enough for Scwigee, or is he still hungry?

01:08:10.541 --> 01:08:11.875

- [Max] This is enough.

01:08:11.875 --> 01:08:13.041

- [Opal] Okay.

01:08:13.041 --> 01:08:15.541

- [Max] It's feeding time right now.

01:08:15.541 --> 01:08:18.291

- [Opal] There's one there and then I'll hide one...

01:08:18.291 --> 01:08:20.083

- [Max] It's hiding time.

01:08:20.083 --> 01:08:21.500

- [Opal] ...over here.

01:08:21.500 --> 01:08:22.958

- [Max] Oh, ooh, I have another one.

01:08:22.958 --> 01:08:26.416

- [Opal] Okay, so it's like an Easter egg hunt, right?

01:08:26.416 --> 01:08:28.458

- [Max] Yeah, except with flowers. Okay, then we can put these ones, here we go. He is very good at smelling, so he'll smell that and (growls). That's what they usually gulp.

01:08:42.916 --> 01:08:46.208

- [Opal] Okay, so then you wanna call Scwigee? So how do you call-

01:08:46.208 --> 01:08:49.166

- [Max] Scwigeeeeeeee, Scwigeeeeeeee!!

01:09:00.375 --> 01:09:01.541

- [Opal] Is he gonna come?

01:09:03.583 --> 01:09:06.458

- [Max] Yeah, "Okay, I'm coming."

01:09:07.666 --> 01:09:10.333

(wings buzzing)

01:09:13.000 --> 01:09:14.583

- [Marlo - narrator] Max, when did you first meet your imaginary friend Scwigee?

01:09:17.500 --> 01:09:22.500

- [Max] When I first met him I was like three or two. I don't know which one. He has wings and a shell. He is like a horse mixed up with a turtle. Those are dragons.

01:09:42.166 --> 01:09:45.166

(suspenseful music)

01:09:48.666 --> 01:09:51.916

- [Max] And he does not breath fire. He never does it because he lost all that gas, and you can't refill dragons. He is very happy that he can't, it's because it's a bit too violent.

01:10:10.083 --> 01:10:14.958

- [Max] He is still in preschool and he is not big. Like, he's really small so I can take care of him. And sometimes I need dragon sitting.

01:10:25.750 --> 01:10:28.458

- [Marjorie Taylor PhD] Parents don't know what to make of the products of their children's imagination sometimes. And they sort of alternate between being sort of amused, and proud, and worried, and concerned that, what does this mean about my child? For example, the stereotype of the child who has an imaginary friend is someone who's lost in fantasy, maybe is a little disturbed, can't make real friends, that maybe there's the dark side to it.

01:10:53.541 --> 01:10:56.208

(ominous music)

01:10:57.833 --> 01:11:00.375

- [Marjorie Taylor PhD] All of that is just wrong, it's completely wrong. These children are outgoing, less shy than other children. Mostly they're similar to other kids. But when we find a difference, they actually show an advantage. So they're able to take the perspective of another person better.

TITLE: EMPATHY

Sometimes they do better on tasks that involve some kind of social understanding. They're the kind of person who just enjoys people. And so, when they're by themselves they think about people.

01:11:23.666 --> 01:11:27.041

- [Max] By the way, elves are tiny.

01:11:27.041 --> 01:11:29.416

- [Marjorie Taylor PhD] Sometimes they show better language skills. They tend to do better on creativity tasks. So many children have imaginary friends, it's not rare.

TITLE: 65%

01:11:37.541 --> 01:11:39.458

- [Marjorie Taylor PhD] Having an imaginary friend is associated with resilience in kids. It's a place you can go and think things through. It's not a symptom of the problem. It actually shows that the child is actively coping. So sometimes children, they have an imaginary friend and they enjoy that so much, they start to have more imaginary friends and then they start to think about where their imaginary friends are when they're not with a child. And it becomes a whole imaginary world.

TITLE: DORI (Age 9)

01:12:08.541 --> 01:12:11.041

- [Doreen, Dori's Mom] When I first found out that Dori has an imaginary world, it didn't surprise me, but it was like, oh man, I haven't been paying any attention. (chuckles) I was kind of clueless, 'cause she's never really talked about an imaginary friend, you know? She's never really had a buddy. She made up somebody when she was younger and she could finally reach the light switches. She would turn the lights on, but she wouldn't turn 'em off. And so we were constantly saying, "Oh, you need to turn the light off. You need to turn the light off." And one day her dad said, "Doreanna, did you forget to turn the light off?" And Doreanna said, "No, bad Anna is in my bedroom and she needs a light on."

01:12:51.833 --> 01:12:54.208

- [Dori] I tried having an imaginary friend because I was an only child and it was boring, but it didn't work out, and I would just say, "Anna did it." Or, "Anna's reading in there." I used her as like my blame-model-thing.

01:13:04.583 --> 01:13:06.708

- [Doreen] So, occasionally when she still forgets to turn the light off, her dad goes, "Doreanna, has Anna returned, is she back visiting you?" And she's like, "Oh."

01:13:17.166 --> 01:13:22.125

- [Doreen] Right now we're at the point where opening night is tomorrow for Peter Pan Jr. So it's a culmination of about six weeks worth of work for Doreanna, and we're all pretty excited.

TITLE: Peter Pan Rehearsal

01:13:31.958 --> 01:13:33.750

- [Student] What's that in the sky?

01:13:33.750 --> 01:13:37.000

- [Students sing]

♪ Six, five, four, three, two, one ♪

♪ One, two, three, four,

five, six, seven, eight ♪

♪ One, two, three, four,

five, six, seven, eight ♪

01:13:44.291 --> 01:13:46.833

- [Tama Rowan, Theater Director]... And lost Boys and cast in general. You know, this is gonna be the first time we have the Lost Boys hide out on stage. We have spiked it so we know where the actual hideout is.

01:13:57.125 --> 01:14:00.416

- [Student] Tink, Wendy is my friend, she's coming with us.

01:14:00.416 --> 01:14:02.708

- [Student] Peter's taking us to Neverland.

01:14:05.416 --> 01:14:09.333

- [Students sing]

]♪ I'll never grow up, never grow up, never grow up ♪

♪ Not me, not me, not me, not me, no sir ♪

♪ Not me ♪

01:14:21.875 --> 01:14:24.958

(audience applauds)

Fade to black. Fade from black to Dori in her room.

01:14:29.791 --> 01:14:32.208

- [Dori] I like pet shops, they're fun. They're more fun, I like having friends over 'cause then you can actually kind of play with the pet shops 'cause it's no fun if you don't have a friend over. If you had a sibling, yeah, you'd get into fights a lot and kids say, "Oh, you're so lucky, you're an only child." But, I'm sure being, not an only child would have its advantages. Yes, it does have its advantages to be an only child, but you know, it's just not as fun 'cause you don't have somebody to play with when you're bored. You don't have somebody to watch a movie with. You don't have somebody to discuss stuff with. You just have adults, grownups, grownups everywhere.

01:15:27.708 --> 01:15:29.291

- [Marlo - narrator] Do you think that part of the reason you ended up creating imaginary worlds is because you are an only child?

01:15:35.208 --> 01:15:37.375

- [Dori] And I get tired of my life? Well, everybody gets tired of their life at times and it's just fun to get a little break from it, you know? But, you can always come back when you want.

01:15:49.041 --> 01:15:53.958

- [Dori] Good dog, stay, come here, come here, come here, come here.
Sit. Now do a flip. Do a flip. Good dog.
See?

01:16:10.291 --> 01:16:13.625

- [Dori] When I first created my very first Imaginary world, it was when I was in preschool and I had Kittietopia. Basically, all the buildings were made out of scratching posts and cat food grew on trees and lots of cats lived there, blue cats, purple cats. Kittietopia is more cute and cuddly.

♪ La, la, la, la, la,
prancing round the garden. ♪

Oh hi, would you like to have a tea party? It was little kid stuff.

01:16:44.916 --> 01:16:47.375

- [Dori] Kittie Topia, G. And if Verasigh were in the movies, it'd probably be PG-13, if not R.

01:16:54.000 --> 01:16:56.625

- [Dori] Verasigh is more scary. Really, really scary things in Verasigh. I didn't decide to start working on a new imaginary world. I was in second grade, and I was bored, and I thought of a cool name. And so, it just started getting more, and more, and more complex. If they were to be made, like what happens in Verasigh, to be made into a book, you'd have to read a whole entire series of textbooks before you read the books to understand what's happening. It's more complex than, "Hobbit."

01:17:28.750 --> 01:17:31.125

- [Marlo - narrator] Can you describe what it feels like when you create and play in Verasigh?

01:17:34.833 --> 01:17:37.041

- [Dori] I don't really play in Verasigh, it's not playing, it's sort of like visiting it. Like, I can see down from the clouds what's going on. It's like sort of like a big giant movie. Well, I just act it out and I just keep going and make it up as it goes.

01:17:53.125 --> 01:17:54.666

- [Marlo - narrator] So the people in Verasigh are more like characters to you than imaginary friends?

01:17:58.125 --> 01:18:01.791

- [Dori] Yeah, and so, I don't know all of the people 'cause there's so many people and I can just make up a new character whenever I want to. And one of my favorite characters that everybody knows about is Vera. She was born into a family of evil spiritrins. They're kind of like people. They've got red eyes, they can turn into ravens, they can make their teeth vampires, they can suck out people's souls. They all believed in death and blood, but she believed in life and happiness. And everybody on that side is evil, and they're ruled by a huge Goblin king. The goblins are really blood thirsty. Like, the king might say, "Oh my." Like, he doesn't think they're good enough. Like, everybody looks up to him and stuff. And goblins are just blood thirsty, cruel beings. The backstory of Vera, she stood up for one of the goblins that was gonna be killed because the king was bored and stuff, and everybody was like, "What?" And the king didn't like her. Nobody liked her because she wasn't blood thirsty like everyone else. She wasn't really evil and stuff, and so they threw her out.

01:19:24.041 --> 01:19:26.333

- [Marlo - narrator] Oh he threw her out. So we're gonna have to find out what happened to Vera, but tell me a little bit more about The Goblin King and what he's up to now.

01:19:37.666 --> 01:19:40.125

- [Dori] The goblin king is really selfish. He wants to make other people miserable and so he does terrible things. So maybe he created an inner critic because he's miserable to make everybody else in the world miserable by having the inner critic tell them they can't do this and stuff like that.

01:19:56.500 --> 01:19:58.666

- [Marlo - narrator] So he creates an inner critic and sends it to earth?

01:20:01.458 --> 01:20:04.250

- [Dori] Some of the things he does are just evil.

01:20:04.250 --> 01:20:07.083

(thunder roaring)

01:20:15.458 --> 01:20:17.166

(bird chirps)

01:20:17.166 --> 01:20:19.500

(owl hoots)