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Prestwick House
Literature
Teaching Unit

Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



**Alice's Adventures
in Wonderland**

by Lewis Carroll

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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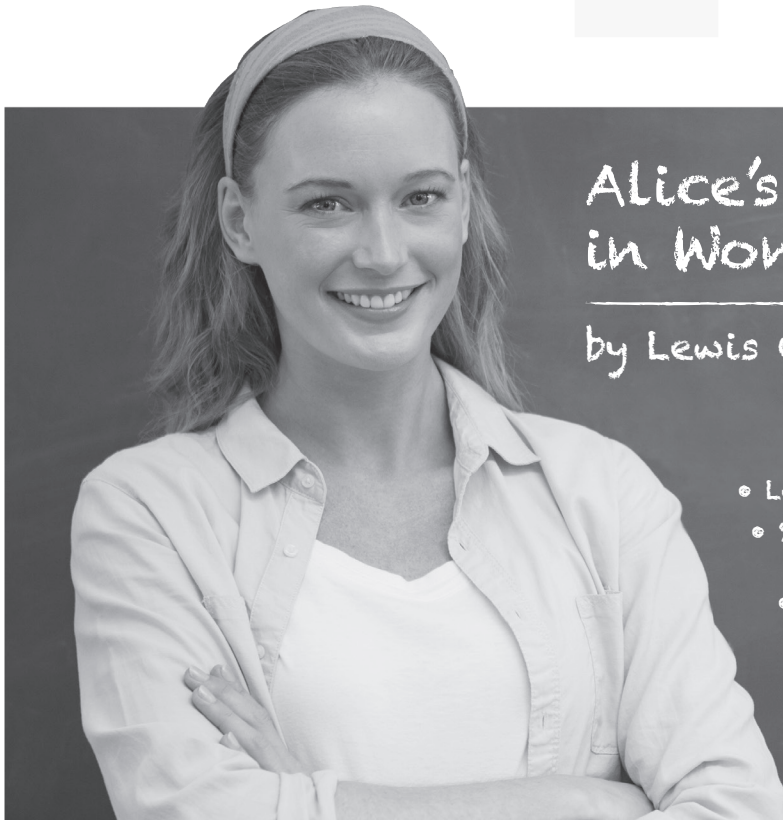
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Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Objectives

All references come from the Prestwick House Literary Touchstone Classic edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, copyright 2005.

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. define the following literary devices, and identify examples of them in the text:
 - personification
 - irony
 - satire
 - figurative Verse
2. explain what a parody is and why Carroll's poems are examples of parody.
3. point out various examples of puns, and comment on how they add interest and humor to the story and add to Alice's general confusion.
4. define vocabulary terms as they are used in the story.
5. discuss how Carroll uses satire and parody to poke fun at political races, the monarchy, moralistic education, social conventions, and rules of etiquette during the Victorian period, citing examples from the book.
6. discuss the changes Alice undergoes in the story, and relate these changes to her transition from childhood to adulthood.
7. comment on Alice's ability or lack of ability to cope with Wonderland's inconsistent laws, rules, and argumentative inhabitants.
8. discuss in what ways the animals in the story represent people in Alice's real life.
9. discuss why the story is a classic and continues to be studied.
10. discuss what elements make *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* a coming-of-age story.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Discuss the type of humor in this story, and explain why it was appealing to children in Victorian times and why it remains appealing to adults and children today. Cite incidents from the story to support your answer.
2. Select two social issues important during the time period in which Carroll wrote *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Cite incidents from the story illustrating how he satirizes these issues.
3. Describe the character of the Cheshire Cat and the role he plays in the story. Why do you think Carroll chose to make a cat the one character in Wonderland that is most helpful to Alice?
4. When Alice first arrives in Wonderland, she insults everyone she speaks with, but eventually she learns how to talk to the animals without insulting them. Discuss how these interactions mirror Alice's real life.
5. What makes *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* a coming-of-age story? Describe the ways in which Alice changes or matures over the course of the novel. Cite examples from the text that demonstrate her transition from childhood to the early stages of adulthood.
6. Why do you think Carroll chose to make the characters and situations in Wonderland illogical and deliberately misleading? Describe the tactics that Alice uses to cope with the bizarre things she encounters there.
7. Explain the significance of Alice's plunge down the rabbit-hole. How can the rabbit-hole be understood in metaphorical terms? What does it symbolize?
8. When Alice first arrives in Wonderland, she finds herself in a hallway. All of the large doors in the hallway are locked and the only door for which she has a key is too small for her to fit through. Explain the symbolic significance of Alice's situation here. What do the doors represent?
9. Identify at least two instances in the text in which Alice changes in size. What causes her to change? Which of the novel's motifs is emphasized by her continual changes in size?
10. At several points during the story, Alice finds herself questioning her own identity. What causes her to do so? Why is she confused about her identity throughout much of the novel?
11. Describe the Caucus-Race. How does Carroll use it to satirize political races?

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Chapter I

Vocabulary

croquet – a game in which players hit wooden balls through hoops

curious – strange; interesting

currants – berries

earnestly – seriously; sincerely

fancy – imagine

poker – a metal rod used to stir ashes in a fireplace

remarkable – outstanding; striking

ventured – took a risk

1. What is suggested by the fact that the rabbit Alice sees speaks and wears clothing?

2. Considering that Alice has fallen asleep and is dreaming, how can her plunge down the rabbit-hole be understood metaphorically? What might the fall represent?

3. What literary device is employed by the author when he describes the rabbit?

4. Why does Alice begin to recite her multiplication tables? Which of the novel's major concepts is highlighted here?

5. At one point during the chapter, Alice finds herself "up to her chin in salt water." What is her first explanation for this strange situation? What does the pool of salt water actually turn out to be?

6. What does Alice's conversation with the Mouse reveal about how she feels regarding her conversations with adults?

Chapter IV

Vocabulary

coaxing – gentle; inviting
feebly – weakly
hedge – a row of bushes
hookah – an ornate Middle Eastern tobacco pipe
lest – “for fear that”
thistle – a weed with prickly leaves

1. In Wonderland, the normal order of things is typically upset or reversed. How is this idea demonstrated at the beginning of the chapter, in the scene between Alice and the White Rabbit?

2. Why does Alice drink the potion at the White Rabbit's house?

3. Why is it significant that Alice grows too large when she drinks the potion? How does this relate to Alice's outlook on the future when she associates growing up with becoming an old woman and staying young with always having lessons to do?

4. Why does Alice leave the tea-party before hearing the end of the Dormouse's story?

5. Identify the literary term that the Hatter uses when he describes time in the following quote:

“If you knew Time as well as I do,...you wouldn't talk about wasting it. It's him.”

6. How does Carroll satirize the English tradition of tea-time in this chapter?

7. What happens to Alice after she leaves the tea-party and enters the woods?
