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Study Guide

# Alice in Wonderland

An Original Adaptation  
by Greg Alexander

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# BEFORE THE PLAY

## SYNOPSIS

Explore Greg Alexander's modern take on Lewis Carroll's classic children's novel. Alice's world revolves around two things: her phone and her friends. But when a trip down the rabbit hole denies her both, she embarks on a journey of self-discovery shared with all of Wonderland. Join the White Rabbit, the Caterpillar, the Cheshire Cat, the March Hare and Mad Hatter, the Queen and many more of Carroll's beloved characters in this wild and wacky adventure.

**THEMES:** Classic Literature, Fantasy, Fairytales

## THEATRE TERMS

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS  
3.0 Historical & Cultural Context

Make sure you know the following terms so you can use them later.

**SCRIPT:** The written play that tells actors what to say and what to do.

**ACTORS:** The people who say the words and do the actions on stage.

**CHARACTER:** The person or thing that an actor pretends to be or portrays.

**DIRECTOR:** The person who tells the actors how to say the words and how to do the actions.

**SCENERY or the SET:** The backdrops, furniture, and other pieces that show the audience where the play is happening.

**COSTUMES or WARDROBE:** The clothes and other things an actor wears to show who they are.

**PROPS:** The things that actors use (such as a book or broom) during the play.

**SOUND:** The sound effects (like a doorbell or thunder) that help to tell the story.

**LIGHTING:** The lights that help the audience to see the actors and scenery on the stage.

**THEATER:** The place where a play is performed. It is from the Greek word *THEATRON*, which means "watching place".

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

READING (Literature): Key Ideas and Details

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Comprehension & Collaboration

3.1 4.1 5.2

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas

3.6 4.6 5.6

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

1.0 Artistic Perception

1. How much of Lewis Carroll's original *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, or Disney's version of the work, can you recall? Who were the main characters and what did they do?
2. What is the difference between a play and movie? What is unique about each art form? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?
3. Introduce the terms listed in the Theatrical Terms list provided. Can you give examples of these terms from plays or movies you've seen?
4. What do the terms "modern" or "contemporary" mean? What do you think it means to modernize a story?
5. How do you know if a certain kind of food is good for you or not? What could you do to eat healthier?
6. What are counselors and support groups for and how do they help people?

# DURING AND AFTER THE PLAY

## DURING THE PLAY

### AUDIENCE BEHAVIOR

While watching a live theatre performance, it is important to sit quietly and listen. It does not mean that you need to be silent. Be sure to laugh at the funny parts (or cry at the sad parts), and certainly applaud at the end! Actors love it when an audience is involved with the show by actively watching and listening.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

READING (Literature): Key Ideas and Details

5.3 6.3 7.3 8.3

READING (Literature): Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

4.7 5.7 6.7 7.7 8.7

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Comprehension & Collaboration

3.2,3

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas

3.6 4.6 5.6

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

1.0 Artistic Perception

4.0 Aesthetic Valuing

5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications

1. Compare and contrast Lewis Carroll and/or Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* with Alexander's adaptation:
  - a. How were the characters similar and how were they different?
  - b. Did the playwright leave out any major events? Add any new ones?
  - c. What other aspects did he change, add, or leave out?
  - d. What themes did Alexander develop throughout the play? How did they differ from those Carroll or Disney developed? How were they similar?
2. Refer back to the Theatrical Terms list on page 3. What examples of these terms did you find in the play?
  - a. What did you think of the scenery, costumes, and props? Did they help you understand the story being told? Why or why not?
  - b. How did the music, lighting, and sound effects used during the play help you understand the story being told?
3. What did Alexander do to modernize the story of *Alice in Wonderland*? How did this change the story's action, characters, and themes? What stayed the same?
4. How would you describe the world of Wonderland that Carroll, Disney, and/or Alexander create? Can you think of some other books, movies, or plays where the author creates a world for the characters and action to inhabit instead of representing a real time and place?

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## VOCABULARY

### Activity 1: Read Me! Write Me!

LANGUAGE: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

3.4 4.4 5.4

READING (Foundational Skills): Phonics and Word Recognition

3.3 4.3 5.3

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications

The following words can be used in discussion of the play and in other activities.

- |              |               |                   |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. location  | 6. allergy    | 11. decline       |
| 2. reception | 7. carcinogen | 12. reinforcement |
| 3. calorie   | 8. imbibe     | 13. tedious       |
| 4. sinister  | 9. rouse      | 14. unsettling    |
| 5. warranty  | 10. pardon    | 15. forbidden     |

Use a DICTIONARY to do the following:

- Define the words and identify their parts of speech.
- Divide each word into syllables.
- Identify the language of origin for each word.
- Identify roots and any prefixes or suffixes in each word--can you add/take away any prefixes or suffixes to make different words?
- Do any of these words have multiple meanings? Describe the different meanings.
- Use any of these words in sentences.

### Activity 2: The Name Game

Reading (Foundational Skills): Phonological Awareness

Reading (Foundational Skills): Phonics and Word Recognition

Alice does not like her given name. Think of three different names that you would like to have, and write them out in separate syllables on small slips of paper.

Example: David = day + vid      Elizabeth = ee + liz + ah + beth

Put the slips of paper in a hat and draw out three new syllables. Use them to spell a new, nonsensical name with them. Does your pronunciation of these syllables change? How?

Example: Daylizah or Vidahbeth

OR

Write out all the letters in your name and see how many different nicknames you can come up with like Alice did.

Ex: Alice Liddell – Allie, Al, AL, Liddie, Dell, Dellie, L.-to-the-I.-to-the-D.-to-the-E-L-L

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## Activity 3: Off to Wonderland

WRITING: Text Types and Purposes

1.3 2.3 3.3

Authors of books like *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Chronicles of Narnia* and the *Harry Potter* series all create unique and complex worlds for their characters to live in. Their stories would be completely different if they had to happen in a real time and place. Have your students write or tell a simple story about something that happened to them in the past week, but have them set it in an imaginary world of their own creation. How does the story change because it takes place in this world?

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Comprehension and Collaboration

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications

Listen carefully to your classmates' presentations and ask them questions.

## WRITING

WRITING: Production and Distribution of Writing

3.4-5 4.4-5 5.4-5 6.4-5 7.4-5 8.4-5

WRITING: Range of Writing

LANGUAGE: Conventions of Standard English

LANGUAGE: Knowledge of Language

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications

Be sure to revise and edit what you write.

## Activity 5: It's Your Turn: Modernize It

READING (Literature): Key ideas and Details

1.2 2.2 3.2 4.2 5.2

WRITING: Text Types and Purposes

1.3 2.3 3.3 4.3 5.3

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

2.0 Creative Expression

Sometimes, in order to show that an older story is still relevant and relatable to us now, playwrights, filmmakers, and authors will re-imagine it in our day and time.

Divide the class into groups and have each group choose a common myth, fable, folktale, or fairytale to re-imagine in our time. They may want to use the following questions to get them started:

- How would the story or characters' choices change if their world included cell phones, the internet, cars, or other modern inventions or conveniences not available to them in their original context?
- Would the characters still have the same jobs and hobbies? How would their jobs and hobbies change?
- How might families or communities change?
- How would characters react to modern political, social, or environmental issues and conditions?

Have each group rewrite their story as a narrative or play and share it with the class.

## Activity 6: Staying Informed

WRITING: Text Types and Purposes

3.2 4.2 5.2

Alice has some very strong opinions about how children and those with mental health challenges should be treated and spoken about publicly. Choose a social issue that you feel passionately about and create a pamphlet or other written material to help educate your classmates on this topic. Is there specific vocabulary that should or should not be used? Facts that most people should but do not know? False assumptions or information to be corrected?

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## SCIENCE & MATH

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications

### Activity 6: Reading Food Labels

SCIENCE: Investigation and Experimentation

Alice refuses to drink from the Drink Me bottle because he does not have a food label that tells her what he is made of or how many calories he has. Use the short video on this site (<http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/labels.html>) to help your students understand how to read food labels and complete the following experiment.

Have your students choose three foods they like to eat that can be found at their local grocery store and have packaging that includes a food label. The store should offer a wide variety of brands and choices. Examples include: cereal, yogurt, chips, granola bars, milk, cake or muffin mixes etc.

As an out-of-class assignment, have your students go to the grocery store individually or in groups. Have them study the front packaging for each food of their choice and form a hypothesis stating which choice is the healthiest and why. They should record the information from the packaging that helps them form their hypothesis. Then, have them look at the nutrition label on each package and determine which choice is healthiest. They should record the main information on the nutrition label as part of their results.

### Activity 10: A Banker's Dozen

MATHEMATICS

1.OA 2.OA

Solve the following math problems, referring to the Theatrical Terms list on page 3 if needed:

1. B Street needs a painter to paint the set for *Alice in Wonderland*. The painter has 3 cans of yellow paint, 4 cans of red paint, and 2 cans of green paint. How many total cans of paint does the painter have?
2. The Mad Hatter and the March Hare are having a party! They put out 3 bowls of sugar packets for tea—one has 5 packets, one has 6 packets, and one has 7 packets. How many total packets of sugar have they put out?
3. The Queen ordered 12 tarts for her Croquet Party. If Alice eats 4 of them and the King eats 5 of them, how many are left?
4. Alice finally gets to take her test. The test has 3 types of questions--20 questions total. If the test has 12 multiple choice questions and 3 essay questions, how many fill-in-the-blank questions does it have?



# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## ANTI-BULLYING AND CHARACTER COUNTS

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Comprehension & Collaboration

K.2 1.2 2.2 3.2,3

SPEAKING & LISTENING: Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas

K.4,6 1.4,6 2.6 3.6 4.6 5.6

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications

7

### Anti-Bullying Thematic Questions for *Alice in Wonderland*

1. Which characters in the story are bullies? Which characters get bullied?
2. What do the characters do to bully each other? Why are these types of behavior unacceptable?
3. According to the play, why did some characters mistreat others? What were the consequences of their actions? How could these consequences have been avoided?
4. How did the characters who were bullied react? What did they do to stop others from mistreating them? How else could they have reacted?
5. What is the difference between bullying and abuse? What should you do if you know that a friend or loved one is being abused?
6. What do you think it means to be a co-dependent enabler? What can you do to avoid becoming a co-dependent enabler?

### Character Counts Thematic Questions for *Alice in Wonderland*

#### Respect:

Respect can be broken down in this acronym: TASC: Thoughtful, Aware, Sensitive, Courteous

1. What examples of these attributes did you see in the play? What examples do you see around you in school and at home?
2. In the scenes where you DIDN'T see them, what happened between the characters?
3. Why does Alice say that the Hatter has 'mental health challenges' instead of saying that he is 'mad?' Why is it important to use respectful terms or language like this?
4. You can't force someone to respect you. How do you gain someone's respect? How do you know how much respect is appropriate to give?

#### Individuality and Peer Pressure

1. What does it mean to be unique? What does it mean to think for yourself?
2. In the beginning, Alice is afraid to do, say or think anything that her friends don't do, say or think. How does she change by the end? Why doesn't she want to go to the party?
3. What is peer pressure? How is it created? How does it affect the choices people make and the ways they behave? How do or can you overcome it?
4. What makes you unique? Think of one of your friends and make a list in your head of what makes him or her unique? Why is it important to appreciate what makes other people unique?

#### Friendship

1. What makes someone a good friend?
2. How much should your friends' opinions of you and your interests effect the choices you make?
3. Alice says during the play that if she and her friends were not in each other's business all of the time, they would have nothing to talk about. How much interest and concern should you have in what your friends say and do? What happens when you are concerned too much? Too little?



# RESOURCES & ADDENDA

## FURTHER READING & LEARNING

### Electronic Resources

Figuring Out Food Labels <http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/labels.html>

National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health—Children's Mental Health Awareness Week

[http://www.ffcmh.org/?gclid=CjwKEAju55K4BRC53L6x9pyDzl4SJAD\\_21V1aZS6SWpSqyMCXXOQvp4V2jlzJ8LEx6xqMbx7En4vMBoCLL3w\\_wcB](http://www.ffcmh.org/?gclid=CjwKEAju55K4BRC53L6x9pyDzl4SJAD_21V1aZS6SWpSqyMCXXOQvp4V2jlzJ8LEx6xqMbx7En4vMBoCLL3w_wcB)

Literature.org—Full text of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* online

<http://literature.org/authors/carroll-lewis/alices-adventures-in-wonderland/>

### Web Activities

Writing I Spy Riddle Rhymes with Jean Marzollo: A Writing with Writers Activity [http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/poetry/jean\\_home.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/poetry/jean_home.htm)

Descriptive Writing with Virginia Hamilton: A Writing With Writers Activity

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/activity/descriptive-writing-virginia-hamilton-writing-writers-activity-0>

### Story Starters

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/story-starters/>

## INDEX

### READING

Literature: Key ideas and Details: 3, 4, 6

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### WRITING

Text Types and Purposes: 6

Production and Distribution of Writing: 6

Range of Writing: 6

### SPEAKING & LISTENING

Comprehension & Collaboration: 3, 4, 6, 8

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### VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

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2.0 Creative Expression: 6

3.0 Historical & Cultural Context: 3

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5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

### SCIENCE

Investigation and Experimentation: 7

### MATH

Operations and Algebraic Thinking: 7

# A Book Without Words???

## Word Search

Find these words in the word search.

- |              |               |                   |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. location  | 6. allergy    | 11. decline       |
| 2. reception | 7. carcinogen | 12. reinforcement |
| 3. calorie   | 8. imbibe     | 13. tedious       |
| 4. sinister  | 9. rouse      | 14. unsettling    |
| 5. warranty  | 10. pardon    | 15. forbidden     |

M O R O H L Y R U N Q W S O I  
T N T O N Y S E O Q U A U Q F  
E O O D U N B I U G T R O T R  
U N U I B S T N V L N R I S T  
Q P I X T A E F U C E A D C T  
W O V L C P U O A O D N E N C  
F X M O C E E R B C D T T A H  
O J L L B E C C P A I Y L C H  
D J Q I F I D E E W B O X D R  
Z J B M N U P M U R R P L R Q  
E M N O E F K E I I O Q H Y N  
I U G A M Y N N E A F E C B W  
J E G N I L T T E S N U K N Q  
N S I N I S T E R P A R D O N  
Z F Y G R E L L A M V N R A M